



Brandon Patrick George, Flute

Toyin Spellman-Diaz, Oboe

Mark Dover, Clarinet

Jeff Scott, French Horn

Monica Ellis, Bassoon

Program

Startin' Sumthin'

Jeff Scott

Quintet for Winds

John Harbison

iv. Scherzo

v. Finale

Kites Over Havana

Paquito D’Rivera

arr. Valerie Coleman

Pavane

Gabriel Fauré

arr. Jeff Scott

Dance Mediterranea

Simon Shaheen

arr. Jeff Scott

Opening Act

Assistant Professor of Music Matthew Evan Taylor

If not NOW, then WHEN!

Matthew Evan Taylor

Alto Improvisation 3, Contrasts

Program Notes

Jeff Scott

Startin' Sumthin'

Startin' Sumthin' is a modern take on the genre of Ragtime music. With an emphasis on ragged! The defining characteristic of Ragtime music is a specific type of syncopation in which melodic accents occur between metrical beats. This results in a melody that seems to be avoiding some metrical beats of the accompaniment by emphasizing notes that either anticipate or follow the beat. The ultimate (and intended) effect on the listener is actually to accentuate the beat, thereby inducing the listener to move to the music. Scott Joplin, the composer/pianist known as the “King of Ragtime,” called the effect “weird and intoxicating.”

—*Note by Jeff Scott*

John Harbison

Quintet for Winds

John Harbison studied with Walter Piston at Harvard, with Boris Blacher in Berlin, and with Roger Sessions and Earl Kim at Princeton; in 1969 he joined the faculty at MIT. His compositions include two operas (one on Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*), orchestral works, concertos for piano, violin, and brass quintet, chamber music, and vocal settings on an impressive range of texts. Harbison has also made a career as a conductor; he has been conductor of the Boston Cantata Singers and has guest conducted the San Francisco and Boston Symphony Orchestras. He has been composer-in-residence at Reed College, with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Harbison composed his *Quintet for Winds* in the summer of 1978. Himself a pianist and string player, Harbison has written on several occasions of his pleasure in composing

for winds and in working with wind players, and the *Quintet for Winds* may be seen as a celebration of that pleasure. In a prefatory note in the score Harbison suggests a key to this music when he says that it “emphasizes mixtures and doublings.” Individual parts are notated and phrased with unusual precision, and the quintet offers varied textures and contrasts between different combinations of instruments—there are frequently several layers of sound and several musical events happening simultaneously.

The *Scherzo* is in ABA form, and the blistering runs by solo instruments are set off by sharp staccato attacks from the other instruments. A faint air of parody hangs over the high-spirited *Finale*. After a slow introduction, the movement erupts with jaunty themes, syncopated rhythms, and unusual markings: *ruvido* (“coarse”), *amoroso* (“loving”), and *troppo dolce* (*esagerato*). At the end, the

music begins to press ahead and rushes to an energetic close.

—*Note by Eric Bromberger*

Paquito D’Rivera; arr. Valerie Coleman

Kites over Havana

Composer, clarinetist, and saxophonist Paquito d’Rivera, one of the most celebrated jazz and Latin musicians of his generation, has also built a reputation as a classical performer and composer since appearing as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra in the premier of Roger Kellaway’s *David Street Blues* in 1988. His original compositions blend the influences of Cuban, African, American, jazz, popular, and classical idioms. D’Rivera has been artist-in-residence at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and artistic director for jazz programming of the New Jersey Chamber Music Society, and serves on the

boards of Chamber Music International, Chamber Music America, and the New York Virtuosi Orchestra. He is also artistic director of the *Festival Internacional de Jazz en el Tambo* in Punta del Este, Uruguay. D’Rivera has authored an autobiography (*My Sax Life*) and a novel (*En Tus Brazos Morenos*).

Imani Winds has provided the following information about D’Rivera’s *Kites Over Havana*:

Kites over Havana was inspired by the following anonymous poem, which is spoken throughout the piece:

I would like to be a kite, and soar up over the trees. I would like to try to reach the sky with butterflies and bees.

I would like to be a kite, and with my tail of red and white I'd love to fly so high, the things below would disappear from sight.

When once you have tested flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return.

The poem is analogous to the concept of freedom. When truly free, one can soar like a kite and once that feeling is experienced, there is no turning back. However, even in freedom there are precincts, and although the kite has the freedom of flight, the string keeps it bound to the earth.

Mr. D'Rivera was motivated to write *Kites* for Imani Winds because he felt the ensemble exemplifies this notion of freedom that is manifested through music and culture.

—Note by Dr. Richard E. Rodda and Monica Ellis

Gabriel Fauré; arr. Jeff Scott

Pavane

Many French composers of Fauré's time recreated the spirit of the past, especially in fragile, evocative pieces that recalled the elegance and artifice of the rococo, or Late Baroque – the early 18th century artistic movement that reacted against the strict restrictions of the Baroque, instead emphasizing a more graceful approach. Fauré's Pavane dates from 1887 (characteristically composed during summertime), when he was called upon to contribute music for an entertainment at the Opéra-Comique that was conceived in the pastoral spirit of a painting by the rococo artist Jean-Antoine Watteau.

Graceful in melody and airy of texture, this work is also distinguished by the restraint of its emotional display. Fauré's use of solo woodwind is as gentle and refined as the pastel colorations of rococo art. The title itself suggests

a nostalgia for the past, one far preceding the rococo: the pavane was a slow, dignified court dance of the 16th century thought to have originated in Spain.

—Note by Mary Ann Feldman.

Simon Shaheen, arr. Jeff Scott

Dance Mediterranea

Dance Mediterranea is one of Shaheen's classic compositions. The essence of traditional Middle Eastern sounds met with virtuosic compositional technique is more than apparent in this multi-dimensional, multi-metered piece. It mixes improvisation with block ensemble writing concluding with a fiery finish. This arrangement stems from the collaboration Imani Winds has established with master oud player, Simon Shaheen.

—Note by Jeff Scott

Ensemble Biography

Imani Winds

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Toyin Spellman-Diaz, Oboe

Mark Dover, Clarinet

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Monica Ellis, Bassoon



Celebrating 20 years of music making, the Grammy nominated Imani Winds has led both a revolution and the evolution of the wind quintet through their dynamic playing, adventurous programming, imaginative

collaborations and outreach endeavors that have inspired audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

The ensemble's playlist embraces traditional chamber music repertoire, and as a 21st century group, Imani Winds is devoutly committed to expanding the wind quintet repertoire by commissioning music from new voices that reflect historical events and the times in which we currently live.

Present and future season performances include a Jessie Montgomery composition inspired by her great-grandfather's migration from the American south to the north; and, socially conscious music by Andy Akiho designed to be performed both on the concert stage and in front of immigrant detention centers throughout the country.

Imani Winds regularly performs in prominent international concert venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, Walt Disney Hall, and the Kimmel Center. Their touring schedule has taken them throughout the Asian continent, Brazil, Australia, England, New Zealand, and across Europe.

Their national and international presence includes performances at chamber music series in Boston, New York, Washington D.C., San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Houston. Festival performances include Chamber Music Northwest, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, Chautauqua, Banff Centre, and Music from Angel Fire.

Imani Winds' travels through the jazz world are highlighted by their association with saxophonist and composer Wayne Shorter, woodwind artist and composer Paquito D'Rivera and pianist and composer Jason Moran.

Their ambitious project, “Josephine Baker: A Life of Le Jazz Hot!” featured chanteuse René Marie in performances that brought the house down in New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and St. Louis.

Imani Winds’ commitment to education runs deep. The group participates in residencies throughout the U.S., giving performances and master classes to thousands of students each year. Academic and institutional residencies include the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Duke University, University of Chicago, Curtis Institute of Music, University of Michigan, Da Camera of Houston, and numerous others across the country.

The ensemble launched its annual Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival in 2010, bringing together young instrumentalists and composers from across North America and abroad for exploration and performance of the standard repertoire and newly composed chamber

music. Festival participants also take part in workshops devoted to entrepreneurial and outreach opportunities, with the goal of creating the complete musician and global citizen.

Imani Winds has six albums on Koch International Classics and E1 Music, including their Grammy Award nominated recording, *The Classical Underground*. They have also recorded for Naxos and Blue Note and released Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* on Warner Classics. Imani Winds is regularly featured on all media platforms including NPR, American Public Media, the BBC, SiriusXM, *The New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

In 2016, Imani Winds received their greatest accolade in their 20 years of music making: a permanent presence in the classical music section of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C.

We're committed to presenting this virtual season free of charge to our campus and community, but welcome your support to help secure the Performing Arts Series' future.

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Imani Winds

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David Shifrin, Clarinet

October 9 ■ 7:30 PM

Michael Brown, Piano

October 16 ■ 7:30 PM



Arnaud Sussmann, Violin

October 23 ■ 7:30 PM

**Alessio Bax &
Lucille Chung, Pianos**

October 30 ■ 7:30 PM



Gilbert Kalish, Piano

November 6 ■ 7:30 PM

Jupiter Quartet

November 13 ■ 7:30 PM

