



The Music Department Presents

IRIDESCENCE

a senior saxophone recital

Elán James Stadelmann Velasquez,
alto saxophone

With

Simon Wesley Hayes, *Piano*

Luke Eisman, *Bass*

Bob Halek, *Drum Set*

Friday, April 12th, 4:00 PM

Arthur Zankel Music Center

Helen Filene Ladd Concert Hall

Program

*All pieces arranged by Elán Stadelmann
unless otherwise indicated.*

Four	Miles Davis (1926-1991)
A Night in Tunisia	Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993)
Rigid Heddle	Elán Stadelmann (b. 2001)
Everything Happens to Me	Matt Dennis (1914-2002) As played by Charlie Parker (1920-1955)
Up Jumped Spring	Freddie Hubbard (1938-2008)
Wave (Vou Te Contar)	Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994) As played by Ahmad Jamal (1930-2023)

Program notes

Four

Written by Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vinson but attributed to Miles Davis in 1954,¹ the first version of this track I heard was off of *Workin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*.² While I love the straight-ahead typical intro for this song, I wanted to begin on something more pensive, almost like a ballad; I was particularly inspired for this arrangement by George Coleman's recording from his *Live at Smalls Jazz Club*.³ Listen for the solo breaks, as well as the instrumentalists trading improvisation over the form with the drums!

A Night in Tunisia

Gillespie wrote this tune in 1942, when he was working with Benny Carter.⁴ The first recording I ever heard of this track was also probably the first for many listeners - Charlie Parkers' Savoy and Dial sessions - and for good reason: Charlie Parker's masterful navigation of the daunting four-bar break. Parker's energy stuck with me in that recording, and in my own arrangement, I hope to both demonstrate that same energy in my playing, while additionally giving the other performers a chance to shine. Listen for the breaks - the moments when all other musicians drop out - and feel the energy each performer creates!

¹ Miles Davis Estate. "Four" Accessed 4/1/24 URL: <https://www.milesdavis.com/track/four-4/>.

² Davis, Miles. *Workin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*. Prestige Records, 1959.

³ Coleman, George. *Live at Smalls Jazz Club*. 2023.

⁴ Gillespie, Dizzy. *To Be, Or Not--to Bop*. U of Minnesota Press, 2009. 171-172.

Rigid Heddle

Believe it or not, simplicity can create beautiful jazz charts. "Rigid Heddle" is a tune I composed in the style of a riff blues, demonstrated in songs like Thelonious Monk's "Straight, No Chaser"⁵ and "Blue Monk,"⁶ as well as Clifford Brown's "Sandu."⁷ I find that the bluesy melody is evocative of a call-and-response, like two people having a conversation, which gives way to a more stepwise horizontal movement, before decaying back to the call-and-response melody. This song will feature solos and trading improvisation, honoring the tradition of doing so in the blues. Listen for the repeated musical motives and hear how they evolve over the form!

Everything Happens to Me

Hailing from the great American Songbook, recorded initially by Frank Sinatra and Tommy Dorsey in 1940,⁸ I first heard this song in the album (*Chet Baker Sings*) *It Could Happen To You*.⁹ This song is one I find myself relating to: someone who simply can't catch a break, seeming to have the worst luck possible. When playing this song, I try to encapsulate the somber vibrato that Chet Baker provides; however, the album *Charlie Parker With Strings*¹⁰ is the version that has inspired my arrangement. This is by far the

⁵ Monk, Thelonious. "Straight, No Chaser. Recorded 1967.

⁶ Monk, Thelonious. "Blue Monk." *Thelonious Monk with John Coltrane*. Riverside Records, 1957.

⁷ Brown, Clifford. "Sandu." *Clifford Brown & Max Roach*. EmArcy Records, 1955.

⁸ Dorsey, Tommy, and Frank Sinatra. *The Dorsey/Sinatra Sessions 1940-1942*. RCA Records, 1993.

⁹ Baker, Chet. *It Could Happen to You*. Riverside Records, 1958.

¹⁰ Parker, Charlie. *Charlie Parker with Strings*. Verve Records, 1950.

most emotional tune, and I hope the listeners will hear me almost singing through my instrument.

Up Jumped Spring

Who doesn't love a jazz waltz? Recorded initially by Freddie Hubbard in 1962,¹¹ this song is one of the happiest jazz charts I have ever heard, and reminds me of the seasons changing, flowers budding, and snow melting away. I like to think of this song as a very beautiful representation of the deceptively tumultuous nature of spring: polite and gentle one moment, then unsure and shifting the next. I was particularly inspired by George Coleman's recording of this song from his *Live at Yoshi's Set*.¹² Listen for the building of tension and release of energy at both the beginning and end of the song!

Wave (Vou Te Contar)

Debuting in 1967 under Jobim's album of the same name,¹³ the original recording is emblematic of Jobim's personality and style: a beautiful, laid back bossa. However, when arranging this for my recital, my bassist, Luke Eisman, introduced me to Ahmad Jamal's interpretation of the standard. Jamal utilizes a brighter tempo, as well as a distinct bassline that drives the tune forward.¹⁴ Both Jamal's and Jobim's arrangements remind me of waves; Jobim's waves are much gentler, while Jamal's are larger and crashing. Within my arrangement of the tune, I hope to

¹¹ Blakey, Art. *3 Blind Mice*. Blue Note Records, 1962.

¹² Coleman, George. *At Yoshi's*. Theresa Records, 1989.

¹³ Jobim, Antonio Carlos. "Wave." On *Wave*. A&M Records, 1967.

¹⁴ Jamal, Ahmad. "Wave." On *The Awakening*. Impulse! Records, 1970.

combine both feelings at different points in the piece. Keep your ears peeled for that bassline!

Elán James Stadelmann Velasquez began their saxophone journey at 10 years old, transitioning from the piano due to the unique allure of the instrument. Elán grew up listening to a variety of eclectic, jazz-infused records, such as Guru and Donald Byrd's *Jazzmatazz*, as well as Latin projects such as *Echado pa'lante* by Eddie Palmeri. For the past four years at Skidmore College, Elán has studied under saxophone professors Adam Hutcheson and Russell Haight, performed with various student groups and ensembles, and has participated in many masterclasses; moreover, their favorite Skidmore memory was the *Make Jazz Trill Again* jam session with Melanie Charles. Elán is currently recording an extended release, which will debut later this year. Elán is a Music and International Affairs double major, and plans to pursue a career in diplomacy while still composing music.

Upcoming Events

Skidmore in Concert:
Big Band & Vocal Soul Collective
Saturday, April 13, 7:00pm

Skidmore String Festival with the
Miró Quartet
Saturday, April 20, 7:30pm

Senior Piano Recital:
Raisa Ihnat & Dylan Salinger
Sunday, April 21, 12:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Small Jazz Ensembles
Tuesday, April 23, 7:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: Chorus
Thursday, April 26, 4:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
String Ensembles
Friday, April 26, 4:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Global Music Showcase
Saturday, April 27, 4:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: Concert Band
Sunday, April 28, 1:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Guitar Ensemble
Sunday, April 28, 4:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: Orchestra
Monday, April 29, 7:00pm