

# Music

AT EASTERN

Eastern Washington University Presents

## A Senior Recital



## Carl Christensen, Composition

Saturday, May 18, 2019

7:30pm

Eastern Washington University Music Recital Hall

*Student from the Studios of Dr. Don Goodwin  
& Dr. Jonathan Middleton*

*This recital is presented as partial fulfillment  
of the Bachelor of Music Degree in Composition*

## PROGRAM

(all compositions composed by Carl Christensen)

### Double Decades Pt.1

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Derik Mills, flute  
Nick Walsh, alto saxophone  
Matt Henson, tenor saxophone  
Richard Shockley, baritone saxophone  
Kim Snow, French horn  
Nathan James, trumpet

Billy Taylor, bass trombone  
Ethan Seid, violin  
Phil Pintor, violin  
James Marshall, viola  
Tim Gales, cello  
Aiden Burrows, bass  
Austin Davis, drum set

### 100 MPH

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Derik Mills, flute  
Nick Walsh, alto saxophone  
Matt Henson, tenor saxophone  
Richard Shockley, baritone saxophone  
Kim Snow, French horn  
Nathan James, trumpet  
Billy Taylor, bass trombone

Ethan Seid, violin  
Phil Pintor, violin  
James Marshall, viola  
Tim Gales, cello  
Jon Williams, marimba  
Andres Martinez, marimba  
Ashley Gibson, vibraphone  
Aiden Burrows, bass/crotales  
Austin Davis, drum set

### Fossil Record

Jon Williams, vibraphone  
Carl Christensen, marimba/voice

Austin Davis, drum set

### Blisters

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Richard Shockley, clarinet  
Nick Walsh, alto saxophone  
Matt Henson, tenor saxophone  
Ethan Seid, violin  
James Marshall, viola

Tim Gales, cello  
Jon Williams, marimba  
Andres Martinez, vibraphone  
Aiden Burrows, bass  
Austin Davis, drum set

### Interlude/ We Fake Depression to Get Therapy Dogs

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Derik Mills, flute  
Richard Shockley, flute  
Kim Snow, French horn  
Nathan James, trumpet  
Billy Taylor, bass trombone

Ethan Seid, violin  
Phil Pintor, violin  
James Marshall, viola  
Tim Gales, cello  
Jon Williams, marimba  
Andres Martinez, vibraphone

### Idaho Spring Time

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Nathan James, trumpet  
Ethan Seid, violin  
Phil Pintor, violin

Jon Williams, crotales  
Andres Martinez, glockenspiel  
Austin Davis, drum set

## **Good Mourning (based on The Antlers' *Hospice*)**

Ethan Seid, violin  
Phil Pintor, violin

James Marshall, viola  
Tim Gales, cello

## **None of Us are Saints**

Carl Christensen, voice/guitar  
Derik Mills, flute  
Nick Walsh, alto saxophone  
Matt Henson, tenor saxophone  
Richard Shockley, baritone saxophone  
Kim Snow, French horn

Nathan James, trumpet  
Billy Taylor, bass trombone  
Jon Williams, vibraphone  
Andres Martinez, marimba  
Aiden Burrows, bass  
Austin Davis, drum set

These songs were written over the course of the last 3 years during my time as a composition major. In early April all the songs listed were recorded in the nearby studio at SFCC & today these recordings are being released to the world. I think that the music a person makes will resemble a blended cocktail of all the music they have loved in life. Tonight you will hear my own strange mix of rock, punk, prog, classical, singer-songwriter, emo, minimalist, and electronic music. I sincerely hope you enjoy, and thank you so much for being here. *Double Decades* (the album) is available today on all streaming services.

### **Double Decades**

Double Decades serves as an introduction to the project both sonically and lyrically, the main concept behind many of the songs tonight is attempting to find a middle ground between singer-songwriter and classical music. So Double Decades features a chamber orchestra along with lyrics discussing the constant inescapable feeling of aging.

### **100 MPH**

In short, 100 MPH is about the ecstasy of rushing into something against your better judgment. It started as some lyrics and a few chords on guitar and I pretty imminently knew I wanted to expand it into a larger ensemble. I've always been drawn to songs that break the fourth wall and songs that heavily feature dialogue. I think that both of these effects make for great story-telling vehicles, and so if you analyze the lyrics of 100 MPH you will find both of these techniques.

### **Fossil Record**

Over Christmas break I got very into paleontology. The concept of a hole in the fossil record is something that we don't know about because no evidence of it fossilized. I began to think of how our own "fossil records" are almost entirely digital, and how easily they could be entirely erased in the event of an apocalyptic catastrophe. My aim with fossil record was to write a math-rock song that featured mallets instead of guitars, and lyrically dives into this idea of a world-ending event and how people would react. Each stanza of the text focuses on a different character and how they are choosing to spend their final moments. I tried to shed a light on both the positive, uplifting and the negative, depressing acts, which would doubtlessly occur.

### **Blisters**

Blisters started with the idea of writing a song about the relationship between creativity and depression. This is where the opening lines came from, but I quickly lost focus and ended up writing a song about depression in general. Julian Baker is one of my song writing idols. I've always admired the way she can cut her self open and candidly sing about her depression and mental health without coming across as whining or forcing herself into the role of a victim. That was the energy I hoped to channel while writing Blisters.

### **We Fake Depression to Get Therapy Dogs**

First and foremost, the title of this song is tongue-in-cheek which I know feels in poor taste. I know that many of the people I see on a daily basis struggle with mental health, but we collectively make jokes about mental health, typically at our own expense. Traditionally, making jokes about this sort of thing is viewed as an unhealthy coping mechanism. However, when my friends make jokes about mental health it reminds me that I am not alone in struggling with mental health. A comradely from the humor makes us feel less alone, which is very, very important. How better to title a song about making jokes about depression, then with a joke about depression?

### **Idaho Spring Time**

In the spring of 2018, my father and I moved my Grandmother into an assisted living facility in Southern Idaho. It was a 4-day weekend filled with the sterile and deafening silence that can only be found in retirement homes. My grandmother was in the process of losing herself to dementia. She recognized my father, and myself but when I showed her music I had been working on at the time, she was unable to connect the dots and understand that I was the one who had made the music. It was a solemn and humbling time. I wrote IST shortly after returning home. I fell in love with the idea of filling the performance space with an organic static. I had initially envisioned players crushing up paper, but after experimenting with several different materials, plastic bags yielded the best results.

### **Good Mourning**

I fell in love with The Antlers' *Hospice* my senior year of high school. For anyone who has not heard it, *Hospice* is a devastatingly depressive concept album, detailing the emotional journey of a man as he falls in love with a terminally ill cancer patient, then watches as the sickness slowly takes her life. The story is told via static filled whisper singing and is a breathtaking hour of music. In the winter of 2017 one of my closest friends was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and *Hospice* was a project that spoke to me deeply at this time. I wrote a string quartet using melodies and motifs that I lifted from *Hospice*. You will also hear the players recite a melody contrived from the DNA of an ovarian cancer cell using Dr. Middleton's Music Algorithms software. The piece then journeys through the five stages of grief; denial & isolation, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Thankfully, my friend who was diagnosed with cancer is now totally cancer free and living in the Spokane area.

### **None of Us are Saints**

I just wanted to show all my friends how much I appreciated them. I guess you could say I wrote them a love letter.

**Special Thanks To:**  
**Wentao Xing – Stage Manager/Recording Engineer**  
**Colleen Hegney, Administrative Assistant**  
**Dr. Jonathan Middleton, Department Chair**

### Double Decades

I'm not great with feelings and I don't  
read minds  
I take off this weekend you know that,  
right?  
I don't wanna lead you on or give you  
any false intentions  
she said "sometimes a girl just needs a  
little attention"  
and that's alright

We hit double decades at record pace  
and I swear to god these months feel like  
days  
I'll miss you before you're even out the  
door  
and if I walked home now I'd be alright  
but  
I refuse to say goodnight so lets hang out  
till I can say good morning

### 100 MPH

Well I woke up naked next to my best  
friend  
she said, "it's different with you  
because you are my best friend"  
and our ex's will say "oh I told you so"  
but we won't tell 'em  
at least not for a while

the night I picked her up she said,  
"would you stop speaking in clichés  
I'd like to speak with the person not the  
artist if you don't mind"

I was avoiding eye contact while singing  
Zelda & Scott  
It was not about you when I wrote it  
but it was about you when I sang it  
when your boyfriend was bartending  
down the block  
I had a gig at a different bar  
and you showed up to watch

And I got drunk that night and rode  
home in the bed of my friends truck with

all our amps and guitars making a kind  
of cocoon around me  
and I watch the street lights streak across  
the sky like shooting stars I wanted to be  
driving too fast with you in the  
passengers seat  
and our middle fingers out the window

I would drive anywhere in this car with  
you  
as long as I was driving somewhere in  
this car with you  
she said "shut up,  
What'd I say about clichés?  
I don't \*\*\*\* with that romantic \*\*\*\* so  
much"

the night that I came over I had  
sunglasses sunburn  
I must have looked like  
a pink and pale raccoon  
and she says, "oh my god, what have we  
done what if we can't go back?  
You're only honest with me when you're  
sleep deprived  
or have had too much to drink"

*We could drive 100 miles an hour with  
our middle fingers out the window \**

*\*feel free to sing along*

### Fossil Record

The siren blared  
saying "this is not a test  
go home be with your friends and loved  
ones with the time that you have left"  
a sergeant stares  
at a button labeled "Launch"  
His mind is on his daughter at home  
who's too young to be aware  
of the intricacies  
of a political climate  
that could lead to this putting it all to an  
end via nuclear warfare

David is calling his ex-wife  
saying, "I'm sorry how things turned out  
there is no time for pettiness now  
how are the kids? does any of that matter  
now?"

And the recovered alcoholic hears the  
news that it's all over  
"lets go raid the liquor store, I do not  
plan on dying sober  
if I choke on my own vomit, at least I  
went out on my own terms"

it's the end of days baby, who on earth  
has time for self worth?

and the politicians begin to cry  
because the legacy that they will leave  
behind  
is one of gridlock leading to our demise  
but there's not legacy, nothing will  
survive

David's still calling his ex-wife  
Librarians trying to write stuff down  
put it inside of a bomb-proof box  
hoping that one day it will be found

cuz when the aliens come to put our  
bones in their museums  
there will be holes in the fossil record  
holes in the fossil record

holes in the fossil record

### Blisters

Fester in my emptiness  
hope something will come out of it  
there's just so many thrilling ways  
for me to waste time today  
when it makes more sense  
creator of my own darkness  
just competing with god I guess

So drive a little slower we'll have more  
time to talk  
bout how we could possibly be what we  
want  
how our melancholies are  
complementary  
every finger's a blister and blisters are  
what I need

a slurred proclamation after several  
vodka tonics  
We were just perfect when we were  
platonic  
but you held me on New Years Eve  
The way drowning sailors hold  
driftwood at sea  
Are you dizzy enough to honest with  
me?  
so we wont talk for weeks

So I have that dream again I'm driving  
home from the bar  
you've got rope burned wristed and  
suspicious marks  
and the sirens call me so I crash my car  
And I go screaming though the  
windshield into the dark

And if I sing loud enough maybe god  
will hear me  
and if I sob hard enough maybe I can fall  
asleep  
and I'm angry at god because when he  
built me

he left out the parts that allow me to feel  
happy

The neighbors down stairs are at it again  
if I turn off my heater I can hear the  
argument  
she thinks he is a monster he thinks she's  
screwing his friends  
same time next week nothing will be  
fixed  
and I know  
its wrong for me to listen  
I guess  
I was excited  
for the silence to be broken

### We Fake Depression to Get Therapy Dogs

None of my friends are alright  
all of my friends are just scraping by  
maybe we're just young and lost  
maybe the darkness has become our new  
gods  
maybe we're days away from breaking  
but we're probably just faking it to get  
therapy dogs, therapy dogs

We make jokes about suicide  
cuz we've all thought about suicide  
it's easier to laugh then it is to cry  
it helps remind us that it's gonna be  
alright

I tried to claw out my eyes  
the night that you screamed, "I hope that  
you die"  
I am the ugliest of my friends  
they keep me around because I  
sometimes sing for them  
I know that my parents worry a lot but  
its probably all a show so I can get a  
therapy dog, therapy dogs

### Idaho Spring Time

she held my fathers hand for balance as  
we shuffled through the labyrinth

I walked behind them on carpets with  
inoffensive floral patterns

she says, "they treat me fine there's  
always activities and movies on Sundays  
before dinner time"

my father and I shorten our step size so  
she don't feel rushed take all the time  
you like

and it was raining and sunny at the same  
time  
that's the sort of thing you only see in  
the Idaho spring time

photo album on my knee  
state champ 1980  
placard reads debate team  
she points to the picture asks "who is  
he?"  
my dad chimes in "Mom that's me"

ooo memory is not her long suit  
and she has the strangest head pains  
please describe what your feeling  
she puts her hands to her temples and  
makes fire work shapes

we put her cloths in  
black plastic bags  
a life time of fabric in  
thrift store donation bins

### None of us are saints

I wanna drink too much  
so I have an excuse to call you  
so I'll get drunk  
drunk enough to say, "I adore you"  
"come on shut up  
cuz there is nothing that I owe you"  
I'm not quite enough  
I knew that I would eventually bore you

but did you forget that I was crazy?

and don't you remember when I stripped  
naked?

I was sprinting thorough the streets like  
an asylum patient  
my teachers saying," that boy needs  
medication"

I tore a page  
out of an atlas  
so if I get lost  
I'll know exactly where a map it  
I'll spend this year  
chasing ghosts  
on the same page  
but different coasts

I got this memory like a Polaroid  
of you throwing ice cubes in your mouth  
they shimmer against the sunset for a  
split second  
then miss to make puddles on the ground  
and with this memory in mind I fly down  
I-5  
toward the place with the sign that reads  
"welcome for a day or a life time"

Balance is impossible  
best friends in the hospital  
nothings really stable playing  
cards under table  
legs week and knees are shaking  
for weeks and months and days and at  
night I'm chasing ghosts of the people  
that I know

and none of us are saints  
so when we die  
we'll go to the same place

oh take a good look at me this is the  
youngest I'll ever be again  
and I'm honestly worried when the drugs  
wear off  
you won't wanna be my friend  
and it just two years time we wont come  
back here no more

our biannual reunions will transform to  
our weddings and funeral  
and he tells me this and he looks at the  
ground he seems pale  
like he might pass out  
"I live with too many ghosts right now I  
gotta see everyone before I leave town  
it's amazing that we can still hang out  
and be sober and be happy and be sober  
and be honest and honestly be our most  
honest self's"

And she tells me  
"I can't believe  
that you  
are still friends with me"

but none of us are saints  
so when we die  
we'll go to the same place

we are different species then we were  
back then  
we are different species then we were  
back then