

Kristofer Monson  
*jazz bass*

Recital in partial fulfillment of the  
Doctor of Musical Arts degree, 2025  
Student of Jason Palmer and Miguel Zenón

with  
Marshall Keegan-House, piano  
Cecil Alexander, guitar  
Alex Yoo, drums  
Delfina Cheb Terrab, voice

Saturday, March 4, 2023  
8:00 p.m.  
Eben Jordan

PROGRAM

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**Jimmy Van Heusen, Johnny Burke**    *Like Someone in Love*

**Kris Monson**    *Del Boca Vista*

*The Happy Song*

*You Can Only Lead a Horse to Water*

**Harry Warren, Al Dubin**    *Lulu's Back in Town*

**Delfina Cheb Terrab**    *Las Grullas*

**Donald Byrd**    *Fly Little Bird Fly*

**Abbey Lincoln**    *Learning How to Listen*

**Kris Monson**    *T.N.T. (Two Note Tune)*

Keegan Marshall-House, piano  
Cecil Alexander, guitar  
Alex Yoo, drums  
Delfina Cheb Terrab, voice

*Kristofer Monson is the recipient of a scholarship made possible by the  
Gertrude G. and Malcolm S. Morse Memorial Fund.*

**Van Heusen & Burke** *Like Someone in Love*

Originally written for the 1944 film *Belle of the Yukon*, this has become a jazz standard that has been interpreted by countless musicians. Delfina and I started playing this together in preparation for our performance at the Panama Jazz Festival this past January.

**Monson** *Del Boca Vista*

I wrote this tune during the first couple weeks of the Covid-19 lockdown. My wife Lizzie and I left our apartment in New York and moved into her Aunt Janet's condo in Ocean City, MD. We ended up staying there for two and a half months before going back to New York. The title refers to the unofficial name of our temporary home in Ocean City, which is itself a fairly obscure *Seinfeld* reference – the Florida retirement community where Jerry Seinfeld's parents reside. In the spirit of the cultural melting pot of South Florida, *Del Boca Vista* mixes the rhythms of the Afro-Cuban "son clave" with the quiriness of George Costanza, Elaine Benes, Kramer, and even Newman.

**Monson** *The Happy Song*

I love this piece because the underlying rhythmic craziness is masked by cheerful major chords and a catchy melody. I can't help but smile every time I play this – it feels good and exudes joy. The Happy Song!

**Monson** *You Can Only Lead a Horse to Water*

I wrote this piece during the thick of the pandemic while struggling with the anxiety, frustration, and confusion surrounding the constant risk of unknowingly exposing family members and loved ones to the virus. These feelings were amplified when people close to me made decisions that I thought were dangerous or reckless, and I couldn't do anything to stop them. This piece was my reckoning with that feeling – "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." As many of my compositions are, this piece is organized by its melody and bassline.

**Warren & Dubin** *Lulu's Back in Town*

Originally written for the 1935 film *Broadway Gondolier*, this was recorded and popularized by Fats Waller in the same year. Frank Carlberg taught me this tune during a lesson last semester, and I immediately fell in love with it.

**Cheb Terrab** *Las Grullas*

This is a beautiful song written by Delfina that we also performed at the Panama Jazz Festival in January. Written in the tradition of the Argentine zamba, *las grullas* translates to "the cranes."

**Byrd** *Fly Little Bird Fly*

Harmonically built upon ascending and descending major key centers, Jason Palmer recommended this piece to me as we were working on improvising in parallel chord

qualities. This piece is like a prism – it has perfectly mathematical internal symmetry yet somehow constantly creates surprises and bursts of light.

**Lincoln** *Learning How to Listen*

I've had the honor of getting to learn from pianist Marc Cary and play in his trio for the past number of years. Marc was in Abbey Lincoln's band and recorded this with her in 1999. I am constantly in awe of the intensity and intentionality of Abbey Lincoln's music. Marc showed me this piece of hers about a year ago and I keep coming back to it. Learning how to listen.

**Monson** *T.N.T. (Two Note Tune)*

As the title suggests, this melody is built on a two-note motif and has textures that expand beneath it. Most importantly, it's fun to play.

*Thank you to my wife Lizzie, my parents, and the Elfinans  
for their enduring support of my doctoral studies.*

*Thank you to my wonderful teachers here at NEC  
for their ongoing guidance and inspiration: Ken Schaphorst, Brian Levy,  
Katarina Miljkovic, Jason Palmer, Miguel Zenón,  
Frank Carlberg, Henrique Eisenmann, and many others.*

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