

Alyssa Peterson  
*double bass*

Recital in partial fulfillment of the  
Bachelor of Music degree, 2025  
Student of Donald Palma

with  
Rafe Schaberg, piano  
Caroline Smoak, violin  
Maureen Sheehan, viola  
Miruna Eynon, cello  
Misha Bjerken, speaker

Thursday, March 14, 2024  
8:00 p.m.  
Williams Hall

## PROGRAM

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**Sofia Gubaidulina**  
(b. 1931)

**Sonata for Double Bass and Piano (1975)**

Rafe Schaberg, piano

**Alfred Schnittke**  
(1934–1998)

***Hymnus II* for Violoncello and Double Bass (1974)**

Miruna Eynon, cello

**Stella G. Gitelman Willoughby**  
(b. 2000)

***Establishing Space* for Solo Double Bass (2024)**  
*World Premiere*

Brace

In the Basement

Baseless

*Intermission*

**Fred Lerdahl**  
(b. 1943)

**Waltzes (1981)**

Grazioso:

A congenial wind-up waltz

Con brio:

Two Chopin waltzes gone mad

Cantabile:

A cello melody reminiscent of a tune in  
*Swan Lake*

Leggiero:

String harmonics give a special twist to a  
passage in Ravel's *Valses nobles et  
sentimentales*

Valse triste:

No Sibelius here, just soulful phrases  
slowly tossed between the violin, viola, and  
cello

Misterioso:

Five against two within 3/4 time, in the  
ghostly guise of a presto minuet

Amoroso:

Another nod to Ravel's *Valses nobles et  
sentimentales*, with passionate intent

Humoresque:

A wild fantasy, with *pizzicato* and *legno*  
effects, climaxing in a quote from my  
Second String Quartet, accompanied by  
glissando harmonics

Vivace:

A cress-accentual whirlwind

Lento:

The double bass speaks from the depths

Delicato:

An intimate duet for viola and cello,  
converting a 2/4 turn from Schumann's  
*Carnaval* into a waltz rhythm

Waltz-fugue:

A veritable *grande valse brillante*,  
alternating with two fugal sections that  
culminate in quadruple inversion  
counterpoint

**Alan Ridout**

(1934–1996)

Words by David Delve

*little sad sound*, a melodrama for speaker and  
double bass (1974)

*Thank you to everyone who made it out tonight.  
It means the world to have my friends and family gathered in one place,  
sharing a night of contemporary music.*

*A huge thank you to everyone who shared the stage with me  
- this program quite literally would not exist without your time,  
dedication, and musical voice!*

*Thank you to my family and friends who have supported and encouraged me  
through all the ups and downs of my journey thus far.*

*Thank you to my parents for their unconditional love and support.  
Without them, I simply would not be where I am today.*

*Finally, thank you to my teacher, Don Palma.  
His patience, guidance, and belief in me has allowed me to grow into the musician I am today.*

### **Gubaidulina**    *Sonata for Double Bass and Piano*

Shostakovich was said to have warned Sofia Gubaidulina saying, “Everybody thinks you are going in the wrong direction... But I hope you will continue following that ‘wrong’ path.” Both Gubaidulina and Schnittke were one of three major Moscow composers of the post-Shostakovich era. Despite having her music blacklisted by the Soviet Government, she remains one of the most highly respected composers alive.

Gubaidulina’s *Sonata for Double Bass and Piano* is composed in one extended movement, and while titled a sonata, it requires careful interpretation and execution to convey this, albeit loose, structure. Despite a distinct lack of traditional melody, every moment can be played in a singing manner and made to be almost hauntingly melodic.

### **Schnittke**    *Hymnus II for Violoncello and Double Bass*

Alongside Sofia Gubaidulina, Alfred Schnittke was one of the leading Soviet composers of the post-Shostakovich era. While his music was never officially black listed, both he and his music were often viewed with great suspicion by the Soviet Government. It was around 1965 that Schnittke converted to Christianity and created a new style called “polystylism.” With this style, he combined music of various genres, past and present. *Hymnus II* brings both of these important elements to Schnittke’s life together, beginning with the inward, meditative quality of prayer only to be interjected by forces which puncture this feeling of serenity. Like many of Schnittke’s compositions, the ending disintegrates into the nothingness from which the hymn arose.

### **Willoughby**    *Establishing Space for Solo Double Bass*

What is “space?” Is it an interval of time? A place? A feeling? *Establishing Space for Solo Double Bass* leaves room for interpretation and debate while supporting each of these concepts and ideas. Drawing upon the unique and varied sonorities of the unaccompanied double bass, each of the three movements explores contrasting textures and techniques to further define and establish a sense of space.

*Establishing Space for Solo Double Bass* was composed for Alyssa Peterson. During our discussions leading up to this project, we spoke about her appreciation for her instrument, and the sonic timbres that most deeply resonate with her. Alyssa characterizes her instrument as having “glowing overtones” and a “ringing” quality, and expresses her feeling of emptiness when the basses drop out in a culminating passage of orchestral music. To Alyssa, the double bass fills a rich, resonant, and foundational role, and is imbued with a love that she “can’t even put into words.”

With *Establishing Space for Solo Double Bass*, the double bass and double bassist are offered a conspicuous moment in the spotlight - a solo, unaccompanied composition in which to establish, create, and enjoy their own space.

– Stella G. Gitelman Willoughby

## **Lerdahl    *Waltzes***

Composer and music theorist, Fred Lerdahl, born in Madison, WI, is best known for his work on musical grammar and cognition, rhythmic theory, pitch space, and cognitive constraints on compositional systems. It is with these tools that Lerdahl creates a musical form of his own invention and, in *Waltzes*, expertly draws upon inspiration from past composers while remaining true to this form. Lerdahl perfectly merges both past and present, and gives new life and meaning to masterpieces of classical music's past. "The piece includes occasional references to the music of past composers, transformed to fit my syntax and style and the playful character of the work... The part-writing and motivic treatment, which are quite classical in spirit, are woven out of a harmonic and voice-leading system of my own invention, one that I have used in one form or another in a number of pieces. This system is "tonal" in an extended sense and allows for orderly progression across the extremes of consonance and dissonance."

- Fred Lerdahl

## **Ridout    *little sad sound***

*little sad sound* sees the double bass as a story-teller. Becoming a vehicle with which characters are brought to life, as well as the atmosphere that surrounds them. Unlike the other pieces on tonight's program, *little sad sound* presents less of a technical challenge and more of a musical one. It pushes both narrator and bassist to bring what's on the page to life, to truly embody the story and convey that to an audience. So just as an author must decide how to present a character and stay consistent, so must the performers. In this way, the narrator and bassist become authors in their own right.

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Student of Jessica Zhou

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**Lihyeon Kim**, *piano* (MM)

Student of Alessio Bax and Pavel Nersessian

*Friday, March 15, 2024 at 8:30 p.m., Williams Hall*

**Felix Ko**, *percussion* (MM)

Student of Will Hudgins, Daniel Bauch, and Tim Genis

*Friday, March 15, 2024 at 8:30 p.m., Burnes Hall*

**Hang Zhong**, *piano* (MM)

Student of Bruce Brubaker

*Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Keller Room*

**Zoe Beck**, *bassoon* (BM)

Student of Suzanne Nelsen

*Monday, March 25, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Pierce Hall*

**Man To Kwong**, *viola* (GD)

Student of Nicholas Cords

*Monday, March 25, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Keller Room*

**Emily Mitchell**, *contemporary musical arts* (BM)

Student of Dominique Eade and Amanda Monaco

*Monday, March 25, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall*

**Letian Cheng**, *violin* (DMA '27)

Student of Paul Biss

*Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Keller Room*

**Clayton Hancock**, *violin* (BM)

Student of Ayano Ninomiya

*Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall*

**G Korth**, *contemporary musical arts* (BM)

Student of Liz Knowles and Malcolm Barsamian

*Wednesday, March 27 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall*

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