

DEPARTMENT OF  
**MUSIC**  
AT PRINCETON

**JAZZ**  
at PRINCETON  
UNIVERSITY

Saturday, April 13, 2024, 8:00 PM  
Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

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Princeton University Jazz Festival presents

**Dafnis Prieto**

**Composer, Arranger, Drummer**

**with the Princeton University Creative Large Ensemble**

**Darcy James Argue, *Conductor***

**Rudresh Mahanthappa, *Program Director***



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*The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance. **For more information about the Department of Music and other upcoming events, and to sign-up for our mailing list, please visit [music.princeton.edu](https://music.princeton.edu).***



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## PROGRAM

*selections from the following to be announced from the stage*

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| <b>Back to the Sunset</b>  | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>Danzonish Potpourri</b>   | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>The Happiest Boy in Town</b><br><i>Commissioned by Jazz at Princeton University</i> | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>Prelude Para Rosa</b>   | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>The Sooner the Better</b>   | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>Song for Chico</b>  | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>The Triumphant Journey</b>  | Dafnis Prieto |
| <b>Una Vez Mas</b>   | Dafnis Prieto |

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## PERFORMERS

### **PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CREATIVE LARGE ENSEMBLE**

Conducted by Darcy James Argue

#### **SPECIAL GUEST**

Dafnis Prieto, Drums

#### **WINDS**

Milan Sastry '26 (soprano sax, alto sax)  
Konstantin Howard '24 (alto sax)  
Preston Lust '24 (tenor sax)  
Jacob Jackson '26 (flute, piccolo, soprano sax,  
tenor sax)  
Adithya Sriram '24 (baritone sax)

#### **TRUMPETS**

John Brunozzi \*  
Gabriel Chalick '24  
Kalena Bing '26  
Matthew Chen \*

#### **TROMBONES**

Thomas Verrill '25  
Pranav Vadapalli '25  
Gloria Simmons '27  
Wesley Sanders '26

#### **GUITAR**

Rohit Oomman '24

#### **PIANO**

Charles Dutta '27

#### **BASS**

Ari Freedman, GS  
Max Vinetz, GS

#### **PERCUSSION**

Ryder Walsh '26

**\* Guest Artist**

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## ABOUT

**JAZZ AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY** serves to promote this uniquely American music as a contemporary and relevant art form. Its goals are to convey the vast musical and social history of jazz, establish a strong theoretical and stylistic foundation with regard to improvisation and composition, and emphasize the development of individual expression and creativity. Offerings of this program include academic course work, performing ensembles, master classes, private study, and independent projects. Jazz at Princeton University thanks you for joining them on this evening's journey of beauty, exploration, discovery, and hope.

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## Dafnis Prieto, Special Guest

From Cuba, Dafnis Prieto's revolutionary drumming techniques and compositions have had a powerful impact on the Latin and Jazz music scene, nationally and internationally.

Various awards include a 2011 MacArthur Fellowship Award; a GRAMMY Award and a Latin GRAMMY Award nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album for Dafnis Prieto Big Band Back to the Sunset in 2018; a GRAMMY Award nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album for Dafnis Prieto Sextet Transparency in 2021; a GRAMMY Award nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album for Absolute Quintet, and a Latin GRAMMY nomination for Best New Artist in 2007; and Up & Coming Musician of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association in 2006. Also a gifted educator, Prieto has conducted numerous master classes, clinics, and workshops throughout the world. He was a faculty member of Jazz Studies at NYU from 2005 to 2014, and in 2015 became a faculty member of Frost School of Music at UM (University of Miami), where he directs the esteemed Frost Latin Jazz Orchestra.

As a composer, Prieto has created music for dance, film, chamber ensembles, and most notably for his own bands ranging from duets to big bands, including the distinctively different groups featured by nine acclaimed recordings as a leader: *About The Monks*, *Absolute Quintet*, *Taking The Soul For a Walk*, *Si o Si Quartet-Live at Jazz Standard*, *Dafnis Prieto Proverb Trio*, *Triangles and Circles*, *Back to the Sunset*, *Transparency*, and *Cantar*. In 2022 Prieto premiered a new work for Latin band and string orchestra — *Tentación* — performed by People of Earth with the Louisville Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New World Symphony, and the Britt Festival Orchestra. He has received new works commissions, grants, and fellowships from Chamber Music America; Princeton University; Jazz at Lincoln Center; Museum of Modern Art; Whitney Museum; National Association of Latino Arts & Cultures; Jerome Foundation; East Carolina University; Painted Bride Art Center; Meet the Composer; WNYC; the Louisville Orchestra, the Britt Festival Orchestra, New Music USA, Hazard Productions, and People of Earth; and the Metropole Orkest.

Prieto has performed at many national and international music festivals as a bandleader presenting his own projects and music. Since his arrival to New York in 1999, Prieto has also worked in bands led by Michel Camilo, Chucho Valdés, Bebo Valdés, Henry Threadgill, Steve Coleman, Eddie Palmieri, Chico and Arturo O'Farrill, Dave Samuels & The Caribbean Jazz Project, Jane Bunnett, D.D. Jackson, Edward Simon, Roy Hargrove, Don Byron, and Andrew Hill, among others.

In 2016 Prieto published the groundbreaking analytical and instructional drum book, *A World of Rhythmic Possibilities*. In 2020 he published *Rhythmic Synchronicity*, a book for non-drummers inspired by a course of the same name that Prieto developed at the Frost School of Music.

Prieto is the founder of the independent music company Dafnison Music. He endorses: Yamaha Drums, Sabian Cymbals, Latin Percussion, Evans Drumheads, and Vic Firth Sticks.

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## Darcy James Argue, Conductor

Darcy James Argue, “one of the top big band composers of our time” (*Stereophile*), is best known for Secret Society, an 18-piece group “renowned in the jazz world” (*New York Times*). Argue brings an outwardly anachronistic ensemble into the 21st century through his “ability to combine his love of jazz’s past with more contemporary sonics” and is celebrated as “a syncretic creator who avoids obvious imitation” (*Pitchfork*). Acclaimed as an “innovative composer, arranger, and big band leader” by *The New Yorker*, Argue’s accolades include multiple GRAMMY nominations and a Latin GRAMMY Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Doris Duke Artist Award, and countless commissions and fellowships.

Dynamic Maximum Tension, Argue’s latest album with Secret Society and his label debut on Nonesuch Records, is named after the three words that inventor and futurist R. Buckminster Fuller combined to form his personal brand: “Dymaxion” — a term reflecting Bucky’s desire to get the most out of his materials, the utopian vision of his designs, and his quest to improve the pattern of daily life. The album has been called “his best to date — a work of stunning versatility and complexity, but thoroughly accessible” by *Tracking Angle*, and “an extraordinary album: one of the best of the year” by the *Winnipeg Free Press*. *Dynamic Maximum Tension* earned Argue his fourth consecutive GRAMMY nomination for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album.

Argue’s affinity for blurring genres and deftly weaving sociopolitical ideas into ambitious, culturally resonant work is exemplified in the “stunningly original” (*Wall Street Journal*) song cycle *Ogresse*, a collaboration with GRAMMY-winning vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant, and in the multimedia performance *Real Enemies*, a “breathtaking” (*JazzNu*) production co-created with writer-director Isaac Butler and filmmaker Peter Nigrini that premiered in 2015 at the BAM Next Wave Festival.

Secret Society maintains a busy touring schedule, with European, Canadian, and South American tours, global festival performances, and five appearances at the legendary Newport Jazz Festival. In addition to Secret Society, Argue has toured with the Danish Radio Big Band, the Frankfurt Radio Big Band, the Cologne Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, and the Jazzgroove Mothership Orchestra. He was featured in the Orquestra Jazz de Matosinhos’ international Jazz Composers Forum and has led performances of his music by the WDR Big Band, the Brussels Jazz Orchestra, The Hard Rubber Orchestra, Clasijazz Big Band Pro, and the West Point Jazz Knights.

Argue has been named Composer of the Year and Secret Society named Big Band of the Year by the *DownBeat* International Critics Poll. He has been commissioned by the MAP Fund, the Fromm Music Foundation, the Newport Festival Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, BAM, and the Jazz Gallery, as well as ensembles including the Danish Radio Big Band, the Canadian National Jazz Orchestra, NYO Jazz, the Hard Rubber Orchestra, the West Point Jazz Knights, and the Orquestra Jazz de Matosinhos. He is the recipient of grants and fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, New Music USA, Composers Now, the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the Canada Council for the Arts, and MacDowell.

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## Rudresh Mahanthappa, Program Director

Hailed by *Pitchfork* as “jaw-dropping... one of the finest saxophonists going,” alto saxophonist, composer, and educator Rudresh Mahanthappa is widely known as one of the premier voices in jazz of the 21st century. He has over a dozen albums to his credit, including the acclaimed *Bird Calls*, which topped many critics’ best-of-year lists for 2015 and was hailed by *PopMatters* as “complex, rhythmically vital, free in spirit while still crisscrossed with mutating structures.” His most recent release, *Hero Trio*, was considered to be one of the best jazz albums of 2020 by critics and fans alike. Rudresh has been named alto saxophonist of the year for nine of the last eleven years running in *Downbeat Magazine’s* International Critics’ Polls (2011-2013, 2015-2018, 2020-1), and for five consecutive years by the Jazz Journalists’ Association (2009-2013) and again in 2016. He won alto saxophonist of the year in the 2015-2018 & 2020 *JazzTimes Magazine* Critics’ Polls and was named *The Village Voice’s* “Best Jazz Artist” in 2015. He has also received the Guggenheim Fellowship and the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, among other honors, and is currently the Anthony H. P. Lee ’79 Director of Jazz at Princeton University.

Born in Trieste, Italy to Indian émigrés in 1971, Mahanthappa was brought up in Boulder, Colorado, and gained proficiency playing everything from current pop to Dixieland. He went on to study at North Texas, Berklee, and DePaul Universities (as well as the Stanford Jazz Workshop) and came to settle in Chicago. Soon after moving to New York in 1997, he formed his own quartet featuring pianist Vijay Iyer. The band recorded an enduring sequence of albums, *Black Water*, *Mother Tongue*, and *Codebook*, each highlighting Mahanthappa’s inventive methodologies and deeply personal approach to composition. He and Iyer also formed the duo Raw Materials.

Coming deeper into contact with the Carnatic music of his parents’ native southern India, Mahanthappa partnered in 2008 with fellow altoist Kadri Gopalnath and the Dakshina Ensemble for *Kinsmen*, garnering wide acclaim. *Apti*, the first outing by Mahanthappa’s Indo-Pak Coalition (with Pakistani-born Rez Abbasi on guitar and Dan Weiss on tabla), saw release the same year; *Agrima* followed nine years later and considerably expanded the trio’s sonic ambitions. In 2020, Rudresh released *Hero Trio*, an album of “covers” paying tribute to his musical heroes. He also co-led a project celebrating the centenary of Charlie Parker with the blessing of the Parker estate.

Mahanthappa has also worked with Jack DeJohnette, Mark Dresser, Danilo Pérez, Arturo O’Farrill’s Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra, the collaborative trios MSG and Mager, the co-led quintet Dual Identity with fellow altoist Steve Lehman, and another co-led quintet with fellow altoist and Chicago stalwart Bunky Green (*Apex*). His exploratory guitar-driven quartets on *Samdhi* and *Gamak* featured David Gilmore and Dave “Fuze” Fiuczynski, respectively. In 2015 he was commissioned by Ragamala Dance to create *Song of the Jasmine* for dancers and a hybrid jazz/South Indian ensemble.

### About the Department of Music:

The Department of Music at Princeton University provides its undergraduates—whether they major or minor in Music—the opportunity to learn from a world-renowned faculty of scholars and composers. Performance opportunities include student-led and departmental ensembles like symphony orchestras, multi-genre choruses, jazz, contemporary music, African music, steel band, laptop orchestra, and much more, and students have access to private instrumental and voice lessons from eminent performing artists. The graduate program offers two distinct and prestigious Ph.D. programs in composition or musicology; graduate students receive fully-funded, immersive experiences conducting research, advancing their craft, and collaborating with faculty within Princeton University’s inspiring, interdisciplinary campus.

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