



## SENIOR RECITAL SERIES | SPRING 2024

Sunday, April 21, 2024, 7 PM

Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

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# Isaac Yi '24

## Jazz Studies: Tenor Saxophone

### The Feeling of Jazz

Featuring:

Charles Dutta '27 - Piano

Ryder Walsh '26 - Drums

Ari Freedman GS - Bass

Gabriel Chalick '24 - Trumpet

Simon Law '27 - Tenor Saxophone

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#### 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.

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).



ARTWORK BY PAIGE MIN '24

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## PROGRAM

### **DAY BY DAY**

Axel Stordahl  
arr. Isaac Yi '24

### **DEAR LORD**

John Coltrane

### **BEBOP ISLAND**

Azat Bayazitov  
arr. Isaac Yi '24

### **MERRY GO ROUND OF LIFE**

Joe Hisaishi  
arr. 明日郎

### **EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE A CAT**

Al Rinker  
arr. Roy Hargrove

### **YES OR NO**

Wayne Shorter

### **DARN THAT DREAM**

Jimmy Van Heusen  
lyrics by Eddie DeLange

### **HEY LOCK!**

Eddie Davis

*The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.*

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## PROGRAM NOTES

By Isaac Yi

Welcome to "The Feeling of Jazz." This evening is an invitation to explore the vast emotional landscape painted by jazz, a genre that resonates deeply with many people around the world.

Jazz is not just music; it's a journey through history, emotions, and the very essence of human expression.

Born from resilience and creativity, jazz has the unique power to speak the unspeakable, to transform the intangible into something palpable. It's a reflection of life's complexities, a celebration of its diversity and spontaneity, and a testament to the enduring spirit of those who have shaped its course throughout history.

Tonight, I hope to connect with you in this universal language to evoke a spectrum of emotions— where every note tells a story, every chord carries a message, and every rhythm sparks a feeling, carrying the weight of struggles, joys and sorrows.

As we share in this experience, I hope you find, as I have, a deeper appreciation for the power of jazz not only as a form of music but as a medium of profound emotional and cultural expression.

With that said, jazz is a living, breathing conversation—between the musicians, our instruments, and you, the audience. It thrives on spontaneity and shared moments of discovery and appreciation. So, I encourage you: if a particular melody moves you, if a solo captivates you, or if a rhythm sets your foot tapping, don't hold back and be free. Let your natural reactions, whether a vocal expression, foot-tapping, or dancing, be part of tonight's experience.

Welcome to my senior recital, where we celebrate, together, the feeling of jazz.

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**“Day by Day”** (1946) is a jazz standard written by Axel Stordahl, Paul Weston, and Sammy Cahn, first recorded by the Frank Sinatra Orchestra, about the feeling of love that grows more passionate with each passing day. Its simple yet profound message of love's ability to brighten life inspired my own arrangement of the tune. This song holds a special place in my heart and I hope to reflect its optimistic portrayal of love's enduring impact.

Lyrics:

Day by day, I'm falling more in love with you  
And day by day, my love seems to grow  
There isn't any end to my devotion  
It's deeper, dear, by far than any ocean  
I find that day by day, you're making all my dreams come true  
So come what may, I want you to know  
I'm yours alone, and I'm in love to this day  
As we go through the years, day by day

**"Dear Lord"** (1965) from John Coltrane's "Transitions" (1970) deeply resonates with me, and not just as a piece of music. Coltrane, whose introspection and reverence for God in his works such as in his album "A Love Supreme" (1964), has profoundly influenced me in more than just musicianship. My decision to perform "Dear Lord" reflects the testament of my struggle for purity, my way of giving thanks for the life I've been given, and recognizing blessings given by God. Although I will never match Coltrane's genius, I wish to connect with the spirit of his prayer, making it a pivotal part of my own spiritual and musical expression.

I first fell in love with jazz through bebop, a style of jazz music born in Harlem, NY in the 1940s, characterized by a fast tempo, complex chord progressions with rapid chord changes and numerous changes of key, and improvisation.

**“Bebop Island”** (2013) by Azat Bayazitov captures the fast-paced swing, the infectious groove and progression, and the angular lines of bebop. I chose this piece because I found the melody of this tune so catchy, to the point where I sang it randomly throughout the day! I hope you enjoy this Charlie Parker-inspired bebop composition.

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For years, the melody of **“Merry Go Round of Life”** (2004) from “Howl’s Moving Castle”—a film that holds a special place in my heart—has echoed in my mind, intertwined with the rich, expressive textures of jazz. This piece, with its haunting blend of nostalgia, enchanting wonder, adventure, and romance, almost feels like it was crafted for the freedom, exploration, and emotional layers jazz offers. This arrangement by 明日郎 seeks to intertwine Joe Hisaishi's magical composition with the vibrant, living essence of jazz, journeying through a suite of styles and moods.

I have always admired the carefree and whimsical spirit of jazz. I aim to capture that in Roy Hargrove’s arrangement of **“Everybody Wants to Be a Cat”** (1970). Originally from the Disney film "The Aristocats," the phrase “everybody wants to be a cat” is sung by literal cats, which is a play on words. Back in the 50s and 60s, the term “cat” was used by jazz musicians and beatniks (hipsters of the time) as a way of describing someone cool, trendy, and popular. Who doesn’t want to be a cat? Well according to the Aristocrats, “Everybody wants to be a cat, because a cat's the only cat who knows where it's at!”

**“Yes or No”** (1965) is a composition by the late Wayne Shorter from the album “JuJu.” I chose this piece for its fluctuating dynamics and alternating moments of tension and release, providing an outlet for open and free expression. It captures the nuances of modal jazz, a style that places an emphasis on scales or modes rather than chord progressions, and is reliant on a texture or color rather than “correct notes.” This opens up expansive spaces for improvisation, allowing musicians to explore a broader range of emotional and musical landscapes. I hope to pay my homage to Mr. Shorter who recently passed away with our rendition of “Yes or No.”

**"Darn That Dream"** (1939), written by Jimmy Van Heusen and lyrics by Eddie DeLangeis, is a jazz ballad that always tugs at my heartstrings, with its bittersweet melody and yearning lyrics that beautifully capture the essence of longing and the pain of unfulfilled desires. As a musician, translating these deep lyrics is a tough endeavor. However, I hope to play with the same intensity of feeling and evoke the poignant mix of beauty and melancholy that this song embodies for me.

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Lyrics:

Darn that dream

I dream each night

You say you love me and hold me tight

But when I wake and you're out of sight

Oh, darn that dream

Darn your lips and darn your eyes

They lift me high above the moonlit sky

Then I tumble out of paradise

Oh, darn that dream

Darn that one track mind of mine

It can't understand that you don't care

Just to change the mood I'm in

I'd welcome a nice old nightmare

Darn that dream

And bless it too

Without that dream I never have you

But it haunts me and it won't come true

Oh, darn that dream

What better way to close off a set than with a tenor classic! Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis' **"Hey Lock!"** (1954) from the album "Blues Up and Down" is a quintessential example of hard-swinging jazz with its compelling groove and the playfully repetitive motifs and the sound of two battling tenor saxophones, originally featuring "Lockjaw" and Johnny Griffin. Loosely based harmonically off the popular jazz ballad "Body and Soul" (1930) by Johnny Green, the tenor titan duo play an energetic and swinging harmonized melody. Simon and I hope to channel Davis's and Griffin's signature hard-bop style, in this classic from its catchy melody to its infectious groove.

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## ABOUT

**Charles Dutta '27 (Piano)** is a current undergraduate first-year from Tenafly, NJ pursuing a potential major in the Philosophy Department as well as the Certificate in Jazz Studies. He is a member of the Small Group I and Creative Large Ensemble groups in Jazz at Princeton, led by Miles Okazaki and Darcy James Argue. He received an Outstanding Soloist award at the 15th Annual Charles Mingus Festival & Competition.

**Ryder Walsh '26 (Drums)** is a sophomore majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering. He is the drummer in the Creative Large Ensemble and Small Group I, and was also selected this year to play with the New Jersey Intercollegiate Jazz Band. He also likes to produce and compose music in Ableton in his free time.

**Ari Freedman GS (Bass)** is a fourth year graduate student in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology department. He has been playing bass since middle school, and now plays in Princeton's Creative Large Ensemble and Small Group I.

**Gabriel Chalick '24 (Trumpet)** is a senior majoring in Art History and minoring in Music Performance. He will probably go into music but will see what happens in the next year or two.

**Simon Law '27 (Tenor Sax)** is a freshman at Princeton University from Hong Kong intending to major in history. He has studied jazz saxophone for 3 years and is currently a member of Princeton's jazz small group A. His favorite jazz musicians include Hank Mobley, Eric Alexander, and Seamus Blake.

**Isaac Yi '24 (Tenor Sax)** is a senior from Leonia, NJ majoring in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and pursuing a certificate in Jazz Studies and a medical career. He has been a member of Princeton's Small Groups I and A and the Creative Large ensemble studying under Rudresh Mahanthappa, Miles Okazaki, Ralph Bowen, Nicole Glover, Julius Tolentino, Darcy James Argue, and performing with Seamus Blake, Michael Dease, Wayne Escoffery, Ole Mathisen, and Yuhan Su. He has pursued a formal music education at the Manhattan School of Music and Princeton University where he has received accolades from YoungArts, DownBeat Magazine, and the American Protégé Music Competition at Carnegie Hall (International Trio Competition Winner).

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