Joey Miller MM Recital

Friday, October 23, 2026
5:30PM
Dancz Center for New Music
Hugh Hodgson School of Music
University of Georgia

Memory Deconstructed (2025/26)
for piano, disklavier,
and ambisonic live electronics

Peter Underhill, piano

The concept behind *Memory Deconstructed* was inspired heavily by the third movement from Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* as well as the use of sampling in popular genres of music including the songs by Daft Punk. In both cases, pieces and songs by other composers are recombined and recontextualized to create a brand new work, splicing these samples to form new melodies and beats while still holding a sense of familiarity. *Memory Deconstructed* uses various piano works by Fryderyk Chopin including several of his ballades, the "Raindrop" prelude, and most prominently his posthumous Nocturne in C-sharp minor, which acts as the scaffolding for the entire composition.

The electronics are intended to immerse the audience in the sound of the piano, acting as an expansion of the piano's sound rather than a separate instrument. This piece has been revised from the original stereo version to ambisonics in order to better achieve this effect. The chief use of the disklavier is as a "second performer," playing pre-composed music like a player piano. These moments supplement the live performer, sometimes the piano mimics what the performer has played down an octave and delayed. The Disklavier is also able to send information about what note has been played to the computer, and I use this to trigger different effects and samples.

The Soil is a Boundary (2026)
for saxophone quartet
and algorithmic ambisonic fixed media

Yun Qu Tan, soprano saxophone
Josh White, alto saxophone
Julien Berger, tenor saxophone
Carlos Vargas, baritone saxophone

The Soil is a Boundary is an experiment in using my preferred audio processing and synthesis software, SuperCollider, to algorithmically generate fixed media upon which ther performers play. The vast majority of the piece takes small samples of pre-recorded saxophone playing, layers them, adds effects, and spatializes them based on random parameters allowing for each performance to be wholly unique.

The idea behind the piece comes from the anthropological term *multinaturalism* which is the notion that everyone exists in their own "nature," that based on our own experiences, our worldviews are different and that these differences are what should be celebrated. It runs somewhat counter to the idea of multiculturalism which celebrates a common denominator among cultures— something which is shared— and in turn somewhat diminishing things that don't even exist across cultures. The piece treats each saxophone as existing in their own world, playing independent lines and gestures, and only occasionally being tasked with synchronizing. The final section is somewhat free improvisation, allowing the performers to share their own "natures" and allowing the audience to hear the differences and similarities among them.

The Snow Like Butterflies (2026)
for cello quartet

Haeun Chung, Zach Helms, Tristan Dempsey,
Yeong Kwang Choi, cello

Winter is my favorite season, and moving to Georgia for the past year has made me appreciate a proper Great Lakes winter even more. This past December, I traveled with my partner to Holland State Park in Holland, Michigan and stayed in a cabin with a clear line of sight to an icy Lake Michigan. when we arrived, the roads were treacherous, and the parking lot had completely snowed over. It was dark and we were the only ones in state park. Before we were even able to unpack, we had to shovel a path to the cabin as the wind had caused snow drifts well over a foot deep. The warmth of the cabin, of the hot chocolate, of my wool scarf, and playing board games and strolling downtown. It was a peaceful weekend with the snow gracefully floating like butterflies down from the sky.

The Snow Like Butterflies pays homage to Kaija Saariaho's *Sept Papillons*, one of her few works for solo cello. In *Sept Papillions*, Saariaho playes with bow pressure, pow placement, and harmonics to create seven sparkly and floaty miniatures. My piece uses many of the same techniques to evoke both the snow and the chill winter wind. My focus on gesture is much more minimalist in nature for this piece, allowing a single gesture to be repeated for minutes at a time, the fragility of the sound highlighting slight differences on each repetition. As an ensemble, the parts combine and interact in interesting and unique ways.

Spiraling (2026)
for saxophone and octophonic live electronics

Yun Qu Tan, saxophone

Spiraling comes from the tradition of "loop pedal" pieces in electroacoustic music. Pieces that chiefly use a physical or simulated loop pedal to interact with the performer. *Spiraling* capitalizes on the biggest advantage of recording the performer live, and that is to allow room for the performer to improvise and experiment. In the first and third sections of the piece, the performer is given pitches, rhythmic instructions, and a few small additional guidelines to create a few measures of a gesture or a melody. The electronics play these back, mostly in the same manner as a looping pedal, but gradually they start changing pitches, dropping out, and other processing effects. In the end, these no longer act quite as loops, but rather spiral out of control. In essence, taking a single small idea and blowing it out of proportion.