

**M** Manhattan  
School of Music

# **MSM. Faculty: Create!**

**Reiko Fütting** (DMA '00), Coordinator

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025 | 7:30 PM  
GORDON K. & HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL

This year's performance season has been inspired by a unifying theme: *Humanity in Harmony: Rituals, Resistance, and Resilience*. We hope during this election year, the biggest in human history with over half the world's population having the opportunity to vote in 72 countries, that this theme reflects the power of the arts to unite us even in moments of discord and differences. The collective experience of collaboration – creating together – reminds us that even in our differences we can find common ground, stand up to tyranny and oppression, and elevate our work as artists to fulfill the hope and promise of a better tomorrow.

**James Gandre**, President

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**Council on  
the Arts**

*Manhattan School of Music's public programs are made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.*



*Funded in part by a grant from the New York City Tourism Foundation.*

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## PROGRAM

HAYES BIGGS

*In Recovery Mode* (2025)

**Curtis Macomber**, violin

**Paolo Marchettini**, clarinet

**Christopher Oldfather**, piano

CHRISTOPHER VASSILIADES *Passacaglia Mystica* (2022)

**Christopher Vassiliades**, piano

PAOLO MARCHETTINI

*Dialogo a Due* (2024)

**Duo Crepuscolo:**

**Francesca Abusamra**, violin

**Giuseppe Buscemi**, electric guitar

DAVID MACDONALD

*Aeneas in the Underworld* (2023)

poems by Virgil (Tr. Seamus Heaney)

1. The Sibyl Speaks
2. The House of the Dead
3. Groves of the Fortunate Ones
4. The Gates of Sleep

**Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek**, mezzo-soprano

**Calvin Wiersma**, violin

**Daniel Panner**, viola

**Chris Gross**, cello

**Blair McMillen**, piano

*Videos*

*Feuer*

*Wasser*

*Images*

*Truro MA* (2024)

*Kiss of Death* (2024)

**Kerstin Roofls**

# POETRY

## *Create*

Three lyrics celebrating the mission of Manhattan School of Music

This one is for the Lenape.

/manaháhtaan/ 'place for gathering the wood to make bows'

I.

After the audacity of believing one  
Has something to say, the frenzied delusion  
Begins — the feeling one attains believing one  
Has something to say when the whole matter  
Proves to be a shot in the dark  
As are truest arrows.  
Here we  
bend boughs into bows, turn  
Hurt into healing. Here we become  
Singing masters of souls.

II.

So we went down to the ship, our  
Mother the sea to see.  
We stood upon the shore, sharp wind  
Nicking our napes, cold bright sun  
Burning our eyes, our faces blessed  
with sea salt. In the air,  
This very air, rolling from the Atlantic,  
The cry of gulls, the smell of life  
Enduring among the tendrils.

III.

Each dawn we go down  
To the ship, our craft,  
Our backs beating against  
White-capped breakers urging us  
Homeward. We have other plans.  
We set forth, propulsive,  
Taking off hats to no one,  
Saluting the sun, all Walt Whitman.  
We understand. It all seems a bit much.

The surge, the sea,  
Manhattan rising,  
rivers rolling to Ocean.

But understand, this need for velocity,  
To create, is written in our stars. In New York,  
The only way is up.

*Poem by Delano Copprue*

# TEXTS

## *Aeneas in the Underworld (2023)*

### David Macdonald

#### I. The Sibyl Speaks

Blood relation of gods, Trojan,  
It is easy to descend into Avernus.  
Death's Door stands open day and night.  
But to retrace your steps and get back to the upper air,  
That is the task, that is the undertaking,  
Only few have prevailed.

#### II. The House of the Dead

In front of the house of the dead,  
Between its dread-jambs, is a courtyard where pain  
And self-wounding thoughts have ensconced themselves.  
Here too are pallid diseases, the sorrows of age,  
Hunger that drives men to crime, agonies of the mind,  
Poverty that demeans—all of these haunting nightmares  
Have their beds in the niches.  
And fanatical violence, her viper tresses astream.  
In a bloodstained tangle of ribbons.

#### III. Groves of the Fortunate Ones

They came into happy vistas and the green welcome  
Of the Groves of the Fortunate Ones who dwell in joy.  
Here a more spacious air sheds brightness  
Over the land; they enjoy their own sun here  
And their own stars—some at their exercises  
On the grass, some competing in earnest,  
Others are dancing dances  
And singing songs, Orpheus among them  
In his long musician's robe, keeping time,  
Plucking his seven notes from the seven-stringed lyre  
Now with his fingers, now with an ivory plectrum.

#### Others too

He sees on every side, feasting in lush meadows  
Or singing songs together to Apollo  
Deep in a laurel grove, where the Eridanus  
Courses through on its way to the earth above.

#### IV. The Gates of Sleep

There are two gates of Sleep, one of which, they say,  
Is made of horn and offers easy passage  
To true visions; the other has a luminous, dense  
Ivory sheen, but through it, to the sky above,  
The spirits of the dead send up false dreams.

# PROGRAM NOTES

## *In Recovery Mode* (2025)

### Hayes Biggs

The recovery here is from nothing dire, not illness nor computer-related disaster. It's more like reclaiming, repurposing, recycling, and reusing. This piece draws on a few musical ideas — tunes or fragments of tunes—that I wrote many years ago and have since recovered from the back of my mind. The introduction is based on a brief lullaby that I wrote in celebration of the birth of a friend's daughter some time in the late 1980s. That tune later became part of *When you are reminded by the instruments*, an instrumental septet from 1997. The first entrance of the clarinet introduces a fragment originally imagined for an abandoned solo clarinet work. The lyrical B-flat major tune that follows it is from the mid-1970s, I think when I was an undergraduate; I wrote it and never really could find a place for it. The ostinato introduced in the fast section that follows the B-flat major melody is of that same adolescent vintage. Otherwise, the piece traffics in rather stark stylistic juxtapositions.

## *Dialogo a Due* (2024)

### Paolo Marchettini

*Dialogo a Due*, for violin and electric guitar, emphasizes the contrasts between the two instruments: they are like two characters talking about unsimilar things at the same time and only in some moments finding agreement and harmony. Similarly to a real relationship, unification is only possible through facing differences.

*Dialogo a Due* is dedicated to my dear friends Francesca Abusamra and Giuseppe Buscemi.

## *Aeneas in the Underworld* (2023)

### David Macdonald

*Aeneas in the Underworld* is a work in progress. The complete piece will comprise a series of settings from Virgil's Aeneid, Book VI, in which the Trojan hero Aeneas visits the Underworld, meets with his father, Anchises, and learns about his glorious descendants and the Roman state they will found. In the first movement, the sibyl of Cumae warns Aeneas that the journey to the land of the

dead is usually irreversible. As the hero begins his descent, he encounters the house of the dead (second movement) with its “self-wounding thoughts” and “pallid diseases.” The third movement describes the pleasant “groves of the fortunate ones,” among which those who lived lives of honor and accomplishment are blessed with a blissful afterlife. In the last movement, Aeneas encounters two “gates of sleep,” one of which is a conduit for “true visions” and the other for “false dreams.” He returns to the world of the living via the latter.

# ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its 1,025 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from 54 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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## Land Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.



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