

THE BUTLER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

The
DUCKWALL
ARTIST *Series*

A grand piano is positioned on a stage, illuminated by a warm, golden light that creates a soft glow around it. The piano is dark in color, and its lid is open. The background is a gradient of blue and orange, suggesting a stage setting.

MATT PIVEC AND OPEN SKY

Erin Benedict, vocals
Christopher Pitts, piano
Jesse Wittman, bass
Chelsea Hughey, drums
Sandy Williams, guitar
Matt Pivec, alto and soprano saxophone

Tuesday January 28, 2025
7:30 P.M.
Eidson-Duckwall Recital Hall

PROGRAM

End of A Love Affair

Edward Redding (1916-1984)

Emily

Johnny Mandel (1925-2020)

Johnny Mercer (1909-1976)

How Deep is the Ocean?

Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

Stardust

Hoagy Carmichael (1899-1981)

Skylark

Hoagy Carmichael

Rockin' Chair

Hoagy Carmichael

No More Blues

Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ERIN BENEDICT

Erin Benedict is a graduate of The Manhattan School of Music and holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Jazz Voice Performance and Commercial Music. While in school, she traveled with the Manhattan School of Music Big Band to Italy where they were featured performers at the Venito Jazz Festival. Erin had the privilege of studying under Jackie Presti while in school. During her years in New York, she worked as a session singer recording movie backgrounds for Disney, including the motion picture "Mission to Mars." If you visit the Hayden Planetarium of New York's Museum of Natural History, you will hear her singing in the featured program "Passport to the Universe," narrated by actor Tom Hanks. Erin toured the United States with "Pieces of 8," an eight-person a cappella jazz ensemble, performing songs written and arranged by Dr. Charles Mead. She now resides in Indianapolis with her husband Greg and three children. In addition to being a soloist at Second Presbyterian Church, Erin is also a regular session vocalist at The Lodge Studios, Aire Borne Studios, and Gaither Studios. She is a background vocalist for renowned Christian singer Sandi Patty's studio albums "Broadway Stories" and "Forever Grateful." In 2015, Erin released her first album "Steal Away," and currently serves on the jazz faculty at Butler University.

CHRISTOPHER PITTS

Pianist and composer Christopher Pitts is focused on connecting the deep roots of the jazz piano tradition with modern sensibilities through energetic performance, thoughtful collaboration, and aesthetic-focused compositions. Christopher's music stems from his eclectic mixture of influences from Jazz, Classical, Electronic, Trip Hop, Funk, Hip Hop, and traditional music from around the world.

Christopher joined forces with "Clint Breeze and the Groove" as keyboardist/co-composer and recorded their debut album and shared the stage with "Durand Jones and The Indications" and "Trombone Shorty." He has been featured with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Sara Reich Tap Music Project, Sean Imboden Large Ensemble, The Tucker Brothers, and Rob Dixon. Christopher is featured on Evan Drybread Quartets "Tiger Tail" release as composer and pianist, which reached the top 20 on Jazz Week charts.

In 2023 Christopher was a guest curator at Newfields for MLK Day Weekend, designing a weekend of live performances featuring spoken work, thoughtful music presentations, and dance. He collaborated with visual artists, rhythmic dancers, poets, and musicians to deliver the story of Indianapolis's diverse artistic community as musical director of "Convergence: Connecting Our Shared Experience Through Performance and Prose." This program was nominated for the "Awesomeness Award" at the 2018 Spirit and Place Festival.

In 2018, Christopher teamed up with Robert Newport to bring arts and culture to the historic McGowan Hall in Indianapolis's Old Northside. His piano trio "CP3" hosts live music at the "First Friday After Party," and recently collaborated with Michael Graves and The Bridge collective to feature curated art for the event.

Christopher is currently working on the release of his first EP "BE FREE" featuring original musical sketches for trio improvisation. He is committed to using his art to further the jazz piano tradition through collaboration with the arts and community engagement.

JESSE WITTMAN

Jesse Wittman is a bassist, composer, educator, and recording artist based in Indianapolis, Indiana. He holds a degree in Jazz Studies from Indiana University, where he studied with David Baker and Bruce Bransby. He also holds a master's degree in Composition from Butler University, where he studied with James Aikman and Michael Schelle. He currently teaches jazz bass at Butler University and has had the pleasure of working with great musicians around the country such as Nicole Henry, Marvin Hamlisch, Steve Houton, Anne Hampton Callaway, and trombonist Steve Davis.

CHELSEA HUGHEY

Chelsea Hughey is a jazz drummer, percussionist, and educator. An Indianapolis native, she attended Butler University and received a BA degree in Music focusing on classical percussion and jazz studies. Chelsea relocated to Jersey City, New Jersey, and attended New Jersey City University where she completed her MM degree in Jazz Performance. She studied with master drummer and composer Tim Horner, vibraphonist Mark Sherman, and Broadway drummers Paul Pizzuti and Jared Schonig.

Throughout her freelance jazz career, Chelsea has shared the stage with Indianapolis jazz legends Steve Allee, Rob Dixon, Frank Glover, and Frank Smith. She has also performed with notable NYC-based jazz musicians Walt Weiskopf, Bob Malach, Dave Douglas, Steve Davis, Steve Wilson, Jimmy Greene, Charles McPherson, and Bobby Sanabria.

Chelsea is active in the Indianapolis jazz scene, frequently appearing at the Chatterbox Jazz Club and The Jazz Kitchen with various local jazz musicians including Frank Glover, Monika Herzig, The Cohen-Rutkowski Project, and the Gary Walters Trio among others. She currently shares the role of percussionist for Beef and Boards Dinner Theater, which includes performances of shows "An American in Paris," "Beauty and the Beast," "Grumpy Old Men," and "White Christmas" this season. Furthering her diverse experience and background, Chelsea has also performed with the Danville Symphony Orchestra and the White River Wind Symphony.

As an educator, Chelsea has had the opportunity to work with middle- and high school-aged students since 2010 in and around Indianapolis as well as throughout northern New Jersey. Currently, Chelsea teaches privately at Ben Davis High School, Roncalli High School, Zionsville High School, and Sycamore School. She has appeared as a

guest artist for the Butler Youth Jazz Program and as a mentor for Jazz Girls Day at Noblesville High School. In fall 2023, Chelsea joined the incredible faculty of Butler University's Jordan College of the Arts as Adjunct Instructor of Drum Set.

SANDY WILLIAMS

Sandy Williams has been a fixture on the Indiana music scene for several decades. His live performance credits include performing with Idina Menzel, John Waters, Liza Minnelli, Marvin Hamlisch, alt-country rocker Steve Earle, Michael Feinstein's live PBS special, the Steve Allee Big Band, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. He has performed in the pit orchestra for a number of touring Broadway shows, including "The Lion King," "Chicago," "Legally Blonde," "Motown," and "Beautiful." As a studio musician his credits include The Rounder Records box set (with Carrie Newcomer), jazz arranger John Clayton, John Mellencamp's movie soundtrack "Falling from Grace" (with Larry Crane), Hal Leonard publications' Essential Elements series, hundreds of jingles, and gospel singers Sandi Patti and Bill Gaither. He is the author of Live Sound for Guitar (pub. Cengage Learning) and technical editor for many of the Guitar for Dummies series. In November 2014 he performed four concerts in Guangzhou, China with jazz pianist Steve Allee.

MATT PIVEC

As a performer of jazz and popular music, Matt Pivec has worked with Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, The Temptations, Dave Rivello, Bob Brookmeyer, Peter Erskine, Maria Schneider, Julia Dollison, Melvin Rhyne, the Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Pops Orchestra, and the national touring companies of Hairspray, 42nd Street, and The Producers. As a band leader and soloist, Matt has performed at jazz festivals and venues throughout the United States. He has three albums to his credit: *Live at Snider Hall*, *Psalm Songs*, and the recently released *Time and Direction*.

Currently, Matt is the Director of Jazz Studies at Butler University where he leads the Butler University Jazz Ensemble and teaches courses in the jazz studies curriculum. Under his direction, the Butler University Jazz Ensemble was named the winner of the 2020 Downbeat Student Music Awards Undergraduate Large Ensemble category. Butler ensembles have performed with world-renowned guest artists such as Benny Golson, Stefon Harris, Maria Schneider, Kurt Elling, Christian McBride, Bobby Sanabria, Donny McCaslin, Fred Sturm, Melvin Rhyne, Steve Allee, Ted Poor, and the Wee Trio.

Matt received the Doctor of Musical Arts (Saxophone Performance and Literature) and Master of Music (Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media) degrees from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. While at Eastman, Matt studied with Ramon Ricker. He performed with the Eastman Wind Ensemble, the Eastman Graduate Saxophone Quartet, and served as lead alto saxophone of the Eastman Jazz Ensemble. Matt received the Bachelor of Music Education degree with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Matt has presented educational clinics and research at the Jazz Education Network Conference, the International Association for Jazz Education Conference, the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, and the Indiana Music Educators Association Conference. His publications have been featured in Teaching Music, InForm, Jazzed, www.musicforall.org, and www.jazzradio247.com.

Matt is a member of the national music honor society, Pi Kappa Lambda, and in 2013, he received the Mortar Board Excellence in Teaching Award from the Jordan College of the Arts. In 2021, Matt received the Outstanding Collegiate Educator Award from the Indiana Music Education Association.

Aside from his teaching at Butler University, Matt is also a founding/past president of the Indiana Jazz Education Association and founder/Artistic Director for the Butler Youth Jazz Program and Butler Summer Jazz Camp. From these programs, students have progressed to study at some of the top music conservatories and colleges in the United States

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We gather here at Butler University on the traditional homelands of Indigenous peoples who were forcibly removed from this place. These peoples include the Myaamiaki (Miami), Lenape (Delaware), Bodewadmi (Potawatomi), Saawanwa (Shawnee), Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), and Peouaroua (Peoria) peoples. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the indigenous peoples past and present who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This acknowledgement calls us to commit to hearing and engaging Indigenous voices and perspectives and to being better stewards of the land we inhabit. It also calls us to action. Learn more by scanning the QR code for additional information.



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