



University of North Texas College of Music

Master's Recital | Monday, October 14, 2024 | 8:00 p.m.
Lab West

Mildred Mariel Pérez, jazz bass

Ana Maria..... Wayne Shorter
(1974) (1933 - 2023)

I Got Rhythm George Gershwin
(1930) (1898 - 1937)
Lyrics by Ira Gershwin
(1896-1983)

Moanin' Bobby Timmons
(1958) (1935 - 1974)

Leticia's Dream (A Ride in Mexico City) Mildred Mariel Pérez
(2024) (b. 1991)
arr. Mildred Mariel Pérez
(b. 1991)

Body and Soul Johnny Green
(1930) (1908 - 1989)
Lyrics by Edward Heyman
(1907-1981)
Lyrics by Robert Sour
(1905-1985)
Lyrics by Frank Eyton
(1894-1962)

*Program ninety-four of the 2024–2025 season
Photography and videography are prohibited*

Perfidia (Unfaithful) Alberto Dominguez
(1939) (1906 - 1975)
arr. Mildred Mariel Pérez
(b. 1991)

Without A Song Victor Youmans
(1929) (1898 - 1946)
arr. Mildred Mariel Pérez
(b. 1991)

Mario Montes, alto saxophone
Nathan Fisher, trumpet
Paul Covert, trombone
Aakash Sridhar, piano
Josh Ferrell, drumset

Bass Duet
Nicolás San Lee, bass

Mildred Mariel Jazz Orchestra

Trumpets: Cristina Smith,
Nathan Fisher, Ricardo Arana,
Barent Foley

Trombones: Ken Ebo,
Jason Schilling
DJ Rice, Paul Covert

Saxophones: Natalie Wagner,
Mario Montes,
Brian Lawrence,
Sarah Griego, Aidan Sears

Rhythm Section:

Aakash Sridhar, piano
Michael Morales, guitar
Josh Ferrell, drumset

Vocals: Dani Toralla

Percussion: Ashton Weigel,
Jackson Beebee,
Elijah Marrewa

Liner Notes

Ana Maria marked a turning point in my development as an improviser. For the first time, I had a clear vision of what I wanted to express in my solos. In my Advanced Jazz Improvisation class with Professor Davy Mooney, he emphasized the harmonic complexity of this composition, and the weekly evaluations were both stimulating and humbling, offering me the opportunity to learn more about myself and my creative voice. That semester also taught me the importance of letting go—both in music and in life.

Originally written by Wayne Shorter for his wife, *Ana Maria* is featured on the album *Native Dancer* (1974), which reflects Shorter's desire to explore world music influences and remains a significant work in his career.

After discovering a version of **I Got Rhythm** featuring bassists Slam Stewart and Major Holley during a listening session with Professor Lynn Seaton, I transcribed Stewart's bass activity for lessons last year. His unique approach of singing what he played opened up a new way for me to connect my voice with my instrument. The fact that he sang an octave higher than he played resonated with me, as I often wish to bridge the gap between my double bass's deep texture and my own vocal range.

The arrangement I am performing in this recital closely follows what I heard in that performance. Stewart has had a significant influence on my musical journey. Although I am not a vocalist, his style inspired me to explore singing while playing.

At the suggestion of my friend Daniela Toralla, whose experience I always value, I chose to perform **Moanin'**. Her encouragement came after I shared my enthusiasm about one of the first records I listened to from Professor Lynn Seaton, *Puttin' on the Ritz*, which features his own version of this tune. I was thrilled at the prospect of learning from Professor Seaton before coming to UNT, and as a nod to this connection, I decided to perform the piece alongside my friend Nicolás San Lee as a bass duet. The concept of distributing the melody between our two instruments was inspired by Professor Seaton's ideas. *Moanin'* became famous through the celebrated version by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers in 1958, recorded for the album of the same name.

One Saturday afternoon, while I was still living in my hometown, someone gave me a ride. During the drive, we listened to an album titled *Nicola Conte: Other Directions* (2004) Conte, a renowned Italian guitarist in the jazz scene of his country, captivated me instantly. His album became the soundtrack of my final weeks in Mexico and my early months in the United States. One track in particular, Conte's rendition of *Charade* by Henry Mancini (originally released in 1963), stirred a deep sense of nostalgia within

me. Inspired by the emotions it evoked, I embarked on a memorable composition process. Without a clear starting point, I played the track on repeat, singing along as I searched for a melody that felt just right. The result of this exploration is **Leticia's Dream (A Ride in Mexico City)**, an original composition I began working on during my Jazz Arranging classes with Professor Rich DeRosa.

Due to its style and instrumentation, I chose to perform this piece on electric bass, allowing for a deeper, more vibrant expression. I named this piece in honor of my mother, Leticia, who has lived her entire life in Mexico City and knows it intimately. This is a tribute to her and her love for our city.

Body and Soul has been an integral part of my personal journey this summer. I considered singing it because its lyrics resonate deeply with my relationship to the double bass. "My life a wreck you're making, you know I'm yours for just the taking. I gladly surrender myself to you, body and soul" speaks directly to how I feel about this. Rather than thinking of a person I long for, I reflect on the path I have walked with my instrument. It can be challenging at times, but my commitment remains unwavering—we are one. I chose a key that feels more natural for the double bass: D major. It is fascinating how each key has its own unique mood. For me, D major embodies both nostalgia and brightness, infusing the song with a sense of optimism. The first time we rehearsed it in the new key with the quartet was truly magical. My double bass has taken me to places I never imagined, and there is no other reason I am here today than because of it.

The idea to perform **Perfidia (Unfaithful)** came to me one summer afternoon while I was stuck indoors, avoiding the intense heat. I began listening to an album by Nikki Parrott titled *Papa Loves Mambo*, and her version of *Perfidia* immediately captivated me—particularly her voice and the way she delivered the lyrics with such a distinctive accent. The opening line, "Mujer, si puedes tú con Dios hablar, pregúntale si yo alguna vez te he dejado de adorar," stayed with me. In English, it translates to "Woman, if you can speak to God, ask Him if I have ever stopped adoring you." Over time, I realized that if I were to dedicate this song to anyone, it would be to Mexico itself, which I carry with me wherever I go, even though I have not lived there for the past two years.

Growing up with boleros, *Perfidia* has always been part of my musical landscape. Composed by Mexican musician Alberto Domínguez, it felt natural to include it in my recital as a tribute to my home country. The decision to arrange it for big band came later, inspired by Omara Portuondo's version of *¿Dónde Estabas Tú?* with the Buena Vista Social Club, transcribed by my band director's husband. This arrangement uniquely highlights the bass, which carries both the melody and rhythm without the support of a chordal instrument. Alongside Nat King Cole's iconic version of *Perfidia*, these influences shaped the arrangement I created for this recital.

I first encountered **Without a Song** during the pandemic in March 2021, while I was studying with Mexican bassist and UNT alum Toto Nava. During that time, we focused on transcribing Sonny Rollins' album *The Bridge* (1962). This album became particularly meaningful, as it accompanied me during a challenging period when my mother was dealing with health issues, and much of our time was spent in hospitals. I listened to the album constantly, and *Without a Song* was the first track we studied, making it even more significant to me.

Sonny Rollins recorded *The Bridge* after a two-year sabbatical during which he famously practiced on the Williamsburg Bridge in New York City. The story of his dedication and isolation resonated deeply with me, as it mirrored my own journey of self-improvement and growth. For me, UNT was my Williamsburg Bridge—a time of deep study and personal transformation, where I focused on refining my craft and preparing for what lay ahead.

This original arrangement I am presenting is also inspired by Christian McBride's Big Band version of *I Should Care*, where the double bass takes on the melody while the band supports it. Additionally, the saxophone soli is based on the final section of Sonny Rollins' solo from his recording of *Without a Song*, transposed into a different key to fit this setting. This represents the culmination of three years of hard work, from when I first applied to UNT in 2021, to now. It is a celebration of where I have come from, and the beginning of a new chapter in my life.