



University of North Texas
College of Music

Master's Recital | Saturday, March 22, 2025 | 6:30 p.m. | Paul Voertman Concert Hall

Ricardo Arana, composer

Rain in the Desert (2024) Ricardo A. Arana
(b. 1999)

Jacob Hanson, piano solo
Nick Mailes, trombone solo

Danny's Bossa (2024) Ricardo A. Arana

Jacob Hanson, piano solo
Jonathan Orellana, flugelhorn solo

Losing Focus (2025) Ricardo A. Arana

Lucas Haratsaris, tenor saxophone solo

What You Don't Know (2024) Ricardo A. Arana

Nathan Fisher, flugelhorn solo
Natalie Wagner, soprano saxophone solo

Opportunity and Freedom (2025) Ricardo A. Arana

Jacob Hanson, piano solo
Natalie Wagner, soprano saxophone solo
Jason Schilling, trombone solo

*Program four hundred forty-seven of the 2024–2025 season
Photography and videography are prohibited*

Program Notes

Rain in the Desert

"Rain in the Desert" is about my personal experience during rainy days in Las Vegas Nevada, my hometown. Las Vegas usually experiences unbearable heat, with temperatures reaching up to 115° Fahrenheit during the middle of the summer. Las Vegas experiences sunny and hot weather year round so rainfall is actually rare, which happens about 5-7 times a year at most. Rainy days were always a joy to me because of the drastic change of scenery and ambience of the desert, the calming smell of Petrichor in the air (the scent of rainwater mixing with dry soil) and the cool 70° temperatures. These days are the coziest and an escape from the painful heat.

Danny's Bossa

"Danny's Bossa" is a bossa nova piece dedicated to my brother Danny. My brother and I have grown together and have shared many of the same memories and experiences. Memories like traveling with family, attending school together, playing sports, listening to new music and so on. Something that I have always admired of him is his care and love for my family. Charismatic, joyous, energetic, and dedication are all words that describe my brother's best traits. And so, I wanted to portray that through the language of music. This piece features a mixture of the classic Bossa Nova groove with an added driving straight 8th note groove, and both elements of traditional and contemporary harmonies.

Losing Focus

"Losing Focus" is about ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), a neurological condition I was diagnosed with around the time I was 6 years old. I have always found it very difficult to focus on any tasks I was presented with, even tasks and activities that I love doing like watching movies/shows, reading, and composing music. As I have grown more mature as a composer and musician, I have found ADHD to be a useful tool in the creative process of writing. All these racing thoughts and ideas really help bolster my creativity and brainstorming flow. There are always ideas, motifs, and harmonic devices I can use from those moments where my brain is full of noise and chatter, and so, this piece of music showcases those struggles and advantages of ADHD.

What You Don't Know

"What You Don't Know", is the struggle of the latino immigrant who leaves everything behind and travels thousands of miles to the United States in search of a better life. The US has a broken immigration system with laws that are filled by lies and hate. The demonization of undocumented immigrants is common with racial slurs like "illegals" and "aliens", used by American conservative culture and propaganda. Mass deportation, family separation, poor material conditions, social divides, and classism are issues that immigrants have to struggle with. A nation built of immigrants we proudly are, yet today, we don't want them. This piece of music, shares the journey of ambitious latino immigrants who left everything behind in order to have a fair chance of success at life. I dedicate this piece to my Mother and Father, who left poverty in Mexico for a promising and prosperous new life.

Opportunity and Freedom

"Opportunity and Freedom" is about the American dream of prosperity and promise. Although the American dream is a reality for a select few, the reality of the matter is that it is not for the majority. A society where mediocrity is accepted and rewarded to some, and perfectionism is expected of others. This is a fact many Americans must struggle with in a country of double standards. Opportunity is one of the first steps in achieving freedom of any kind. It is gate-kept by those in positions of influence and power, where they give them to only people they choose, leaving many people of high qualifications left to be forgotten. Though their chances of success can happen as a result of dedication and hard work, luck of the draw is what propels people to the highest levels of society. This piece features the use of the blues, contemporary dissonant harmonies, and minor pentatonics, which I believe represents the feeling of struggle, uncertainty, and tension of the beloved American dream.

Ricardo Antonio Arana is an award winning composer, orchestrator, and arranger based in the Las Vegas area. His extensive portfolio spans across various genres of music including jazz, classical, and film. Ricardo earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Nevada - Las Vegas, where he was under the mentorship of Nathan Tanouye and Dave Loeb. Currently, he is pursuing his master's degree at the University of North Texas, studying under the tutelage of renowned Grammy-winning and nominated composers Richard DeRosa and Bruce Broughton.

During his time at UNLV, Ricardo achieved notable successes, including winning the prestigious Best Original Composition award from the International Downbeat Student Music Awards. In his master's program at the University of North Texas, Ricardo's original compositions and arrangements have been performed and premiered by the seven-time Grammy-nominated One O'Clock Lab Band. Ricardo co-founded Desert Sands Productions, a Las Vegas-based multimedia postproduction company that offers professional audio engineering and mastering, original music, foley, and Dialogue & ADR Supervision.

Ensemble Personnel

Woodwinds

Natalie Wagner, soprano and alto saxophones and flute
Ryan Yumang, alto saxophone and flute
Lucas Haratsaris, tenor saxophone and clarinet Aiden Shwartz,
tenor saxophone and clarinet
Aidan Sears, baritone saxophone and bass clarinet

Trumpet and Flugelhorn

Dan Foster
Isidoro Ramos
Alejandro Muñoz
Nathan Fisher
Jonathan Orellana

Horn

Jake Osmond
Seb Ruiz
Andrew Bennett

Low Brass

Nick Mailes, trombone
Jason Schilling, trombone
Colin Manocchio, trombone
Jeremy Kvale, bass trombone
Paul Covert, bass trombone
William Gompf, euphonium
Arturo Ortega, tuba

Rhythm

Ian Zinecker, guitar
Jacob Hanson, piano
Kai Wagner, bass
Parker Sibley, drumset
Jeffery Chaidez, percussion

Strings

Violin 1

Victoria Ricadale †
Ally Hocking Howe
Sandra Martinez
Jade Wesley

Viola

Anthony Brooks
Qianqian Fu
Kseniya Klyukina
Breanna Norton

Violin 2

Jacob Unruh
Yuma Okada
Janicesta Browne
Sofia Castellanos

Cello

Nico Clark
Dawn Mansfield
Elise Abbott
Addison Surrett

† Concertmaster