



University of North Texas
College of Music

Senior Recital | Wednesday, March 26, 2025 | 8:00 p.m. | Paul Voertman Concert Hall

Max Rubenstein-Miller, composer

Moments in Time (2025) Max Rubenstein-Miller
I. Emergence (b. 2003)
II. Life in Flux
III. Shattered Realities
IV. Wheels of Memory

Agustín Alonso, conductor

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

Program Notes

Moments in Time is a multi-movement work for an expanded symphony orchestra. This ensemble includes saxophones (doubling woodwinds), double reeds, brass, strings, harp, percussion, and a rhythm section, including acoustic and electric piano, synthesizer, acoustic and electric bass, electric guitar, and drums. As someone who draws from a vast swath of influences and musical styles, this piece is the natural progression of my growth as an artist and composer. Ranging from romantic symphonic writing to free jazz, pop, Drum n' Bass electronica, and modern jazz/"fusion", the work itself is a musical journey which strives to transcend the arbitrary barriers between genres.

1. Emergence

"It is no-thing, but all things come from it. Anything that is a thing has emerged from this field of unity. It's Oneness."

— David Lynch (1946–2025)

An object or concept emerging from non-existence into existence requires an incredible amount of energy. We see this represented in the big bang, particle collision, childbirth, or finishing any creative project. The development of themes from this movement reflects this struggle, welcoming non-linear aspects of the creative process. Emergence explores large and small group improvisation, which taps into the absurdity of life and randomness of our world. In modern spirituality, the lines between what is the creation and the creator can become blurred, or even non-existent. Instrumental groups interact conversationally, presenting themes which blend in and out of the next. This movement represents kinesis and creative flow, exploring the potential for collective contribution, as well as an inclusive process where the creative artist is both the contributor and benefactor of inspiration.

2. Life in Flux

Life in Flux represents the stage when something has emerged, and begins its evolution from the moment of inception. This process oscillates between being smooth and abrasive, but, as in life, eventually becomes intense and overwhelming. The groove introduced later on in this movement represents the cathartic peak of energy and experience in life.

3. Shattered Realities

The beginning of this movement marks the utter and immediate destruction of one's own reality. There are impactful events in life that, in a moment, can completely change a person's perspective, often sparking a change in beliefs and priorities. These manifestations, usually uncomfortable and confusing, are also moments of rebirth. This movement uses a combination of harsh free jazz, disorienting orchestral passages, and blatantly emotionless funk, to encapsulate the idea of shattered realities and the inherently destructive character of these learning moments in my own life.

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4. Wheels of Memory

The end of any significant journey will inspire reflection. During this time, one's experience and appreciation of time can fluctuate in a way that opens up space for renewed wisdom, and appreciation for life's moments. During the end of the piece, the entire orchestra collectively builds more and more energy until the end, symbolizing a return to totality. We emerge, we live in flux and grow out of shattered realities, and in the end, we are left with a residual understanding of these life cycles and their significance to our lives. These experiences both define us as individuals, and open up opportunities to understand each other as spiritual beings living in the world. Wheels of memory symbolizes the contemplation of at the end of our lives, where we return to the utmost oneness and unity.

Biography

Max Rubenstein-Miller is a composer, arranger, pianist, vocalist, and improviser hailing from Upstate NY. His compositions span a wide variety of styles and instrumentations, including but not limited to, jazz band, choir, orchestra, percussion ensemble, and other various chamber configurations. Max has his own quintet which performs a mixture of original modern jazz and fusion compositions, as well as covers of other beloved jazz, r&b, and folk selections. Max contributed an arrangement of "Trinity" by Snarky Puppy towards the UNT Zebras' Downbeat Magazine Award-winning performance in Spring 2023. After graduating in May 2025, Max plans on moving to New York City to pursue a full time life performing, composing, arranging, and teaching.

He sincerely hopes you enjoy tonight's performance of Moments in Time!

Personnel

Reeds

Ryan Yumang, saxophones, flute & clarinet
Elijah Snyder, alto saxophone, flute & clarinets
Aidan Schwarz, tenor saxophone, flute & clarinet
Daniel Gomez, tenor saxophone, flute & clarinet
Kyle Leonard, baritone saxophone, flute & clarinets

Trumpet

Craig Schroeder
Seth Blitstein
Alex Muñoz
Carter Stanton

Double Reeds

Haydee Norris, oboe
Victoria Hartman, oboe & English horn
Jayden Guajardo, bassoon
Emaline Wylie, bassoon & contrabassoon

Horn

Deija Nunn
Caleb Barnett
Alex Mullins
Chelsea Song

Low Brass

Alex Parker, trombone
Marcus Anderson, trombone
Donald Nagle, bass trombone
Parker Taylor, tuba

Rhythm

Josh Garrison, guitar
Max Rubenstein-Miller, piano, electric piano & synthesizer
Patrick Bird, upright bass and electric bass
Todd Kiefer, drumset
Evan Bahm, Dominic Willis & Taylor Bowen, percussion

Violin 1

Joseph Reding ‡
Ysaura Merino
Marijn Meijer
Yuma Okada

Viola

Anthony Brooks
Audrey Lewis
Angel De Hoyos
Kseniya Klyukina

Violin 2

Ally Hocking Howe
Jade Wesley
Colton Weed

Cello

Tyler Aguiard
Hannah McDowall
Nico Clark

Double Bass

Aiyana Armstrong
Henry Perybrune

‡ Concertmaster

Maria De Jesus Contreras, harp