



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Departmental Recital | Tuesday, April 14, 2026 | 8:00 p.m.
Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theatre

Spectrum:

A Performance of New Works by North Texas Composers

Vocalise (2026) Pak Hei (Alvin) Leung
(b. 1997)
Fixed media (stereo audio)

Erosion Index (2025) Barret Allen
(b. 2002)
Chelsea Strayer, double bass

Concrete Forest (2025) Cheuk Shing "Sampson" Li
(b. 1995)
Video by Manet, Tam Man Ho
Fixed media (stereo audio and video)

Delayed Reluctance (2026) Anderson Kurk
(b. 2003)
Anderson Kurk, trombone
Fixed media (stereo audio)

Sheen of melted time (2026) Shahrzad Talebi
(b. 1995)
Fixed media (stereo audio and 5-screen video)

Program five hundred twenty-three of the 2025–2026 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

My Existence is a Momentary Lapse of Reason (2025)George McGuinness
(b. 2000)

George McGuinness, electric guitar
Fixed media (ambisonic audio) and live electronics.

-INTERMISSION-

Our Hands Were Tied (2026)David Stout
(b. 1955)

Fixed media (stereo audio and video)

Yarazu no Ame (Lover's Rain) (2026).....James J. Bain III
(b. 2005)

Fixed media (stereo audio)

Western Meadowlark (2025)Yoonjae Choi
(b. 1993)

Michael Salm, piccolo and flute
8-channel live electronics

¿Why Chromosome (2026).....Connor Scroggins
(b. 1997)

Connor Scroggins and Kahan Taraporevala, voice
Fixed media (Stereo audio, live audio, and 5-screen video)

When Left To His Own Devices (2018)Jon Christopher Nelson
(b. 1960)

Fixed media (stereo audio)

Program Notes

Vocalise (2026) | Pak Hei (Alvin) Leung (b. 1977)

Vocalise (2026) utilizes SoundID VoiceAI, an AI voice changer, to generate audio from the software's vocal and instrumental packages, based on my recorded vocal input. (Remarks: according to Sonarworks, vocalists in these packages worked with the company and were compensated.) The work is a result of artistically compiled human vocal recordings, as well as various snippets of (vocal and instrumental) audio clips generated from the tool as a response to the recordings. The vocal clips recorded, varied between around 10-40 seconds, include free improvisation that explores extended vocal techniques (e.g., vocal fry and mouth sounds), as well as some gestures or phrases. In terms of the AI-generated sounds, I am interested in moments from those responses that sounds particularly digital: either that there are artifacts or glitch in the sounds, or that what is being "sung" or "played" is almost impossible for a human performer. Various Digital Signal Processing tools, such as reverb and tremolos, are added as suited. As snippets of human voice are integrated as part of the piece alongside AI-generated audio, it is expected that audience might not be able to distinguish between the two. This resonates with the artistic goal of the piece being to explore the voice - something I perceive as highly connected to one's identity - in the further digitalized world.

Concrete Forest | Cheuk Shing "Sampson" Li (b. 1995)

Concrete Forest is a sonic picture of the towering cityscape in metropolitan cities like Hong Kong or New York. Where buildings stand like trees, their steel and glass facades reflecting the sunshine. The rhythmic pulse of this music mirrors the vibrant energy and motion from the city.

Audio recorded during a reading session with Ensemble Dal Niente.

Delayed Reluctance | Anderson Kurk (b. 2003)

Crafted entirely from the sounds of a trombone, this composition centers on the concept of a performer's instrument as an extension of their own voice through the lens of a practice session. The fixed media initiates and ends with percussive scraping and tapping; an instrument being taken out of and put back into its case. A focus on multiphonic techniques emerges in the middle—the use of the performer's voice combined with conventional playing. Long multiphonic sustains morph and extend into deeper soundscapes. The subsequent reluctance to practice after harsh self-criticism inspired the basic concept behind this composition.

My Existence is a Momentary Lapse of Reason | George McGinness (b. 2000)

"My Existence is a Momentary Lapse of Reason" is a piece which is a part of my ongoing interest in bringing together my influences in contemporary classical music and non-academic avante-garde music. Specifically, this piece aims to combine free improvisation, noise/feedback music, musique concrète, and post-rock. The piece is also an exploration of the electric guitar and its relation to feedback as a basic part of the instrument's sonic pallet. Spanning 11 minutes in total, the piece takes the listener on a dynamic and brutal journey through all the ways in which the electric guitar and feedback can be manipulated by both live and fixed electronics.

Our Hands Were Tied | David Stout (b. 1955)

"Our Hands Were Tied" is a common excuse to avoid culpability. The film is an unsettling rumination on the secrets we keep, the traumas we hold and the masks that we wear. The cast of hostages, suffering from ambiguous self-inflicted and societal tortures, are simultaneously rendered as victims, perpetrators and innocents who, try as they might, cannot fully outrun or shed their own judgements, postures or denials.

The film draws inspiration from diverse traditions including Eastern European stop-motion animation, Japanese Butoh, and artist Joseph Beuys' use of fat as a visceral aesthetic material. None of these artistic references are used in the prompting of AI imagery, other than a variety of qualitative descriptions of lard, butter and fat. Instead, the prompting strategy has focused on emotional resonance and specific gestural evocations much like the director's work with physical actors and dancers. Similarly, the sample library used to construct the music was also prompted with AI and then sliced into bits and mixed with foley, environmental sound, electronic instruments, and vocal utterances.

Yarazu no Ame (Lover's Rain) | James J. Bain III (b. 2005)

Yarazu no Ame (Lover's Rain) is an electronic work featuring all synthesized sounds except for the vocals, which were provided by Marisa Cravero. This piece took me 9 months to complete, and is my first work that relies heavily on electronic sounds. Conceptually, I was inspired by the idea of a rain that prevents your lover from leaving, while aurally, I was inspired by combining traditional western music with gamelan. You may think of this song as a lonely prayer for both rain and love.

Western Meadowlark | Yoonjae Choi (b. 1993)

Western Meadowlark is a work based on the analysis of the song of the Western Meadowlark, a species of meadowlark, and its musical reinterpretation. The vocalizations of this bird undergo a variety of patterned transformations depending on environmental conditions and processes of transmission, much like dialectal variation in human language. Based on these characteristics, individual phrases were categorized and then reinterpreted musically in an effort to emulate birdsong more directly. In addition, these sounds were harmonized through spectral analysis and imitated using various sound synthesis techniques, enriching the density and complexity of the sonic layers. This work was composed with permission from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, using recordings of the Western Meadowlark by Wil Hershberger from its library as reference material.

When Left To His Own Devices | Jon Christopher Nelson (b. 1960)

When Left to His Own Devices (2018) is a composition that revels in sounds and their manifold relationships with one another. Drawn from a vast collection of recordings amassed over many years, the diverse audio samples utilized in this work include household items, children's toys, musical instruments, antique devices, and an old broken windmill from an abandoned farm. These sound samples are manipulated using a variety of means, compared to unveil their sonic commonalities, and mixed to create an animated sense of musicality. This process relies on both customized software tools and personal compositional strategies. This work represents one possible result when one is left to their own devices.