COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Senior Recital | Tuesday, October 20, 2026 | 8:00 p.m. | Lab West

Benedict Mpeti, jazz drumset

Adan Mantri, alto saxophone and flute
Lucas Haratsaris, soprano and tenor saxophone
Finn Sullivan, trumpet
Owen Troy, guitar
Aiden Frier, piano
Marco Salazar, bass

Boo-Boo Stikes Again (1993) ..... Eric Reed
(b. 1970)

Blessings (2026) ..... Benedict Mpeti
(b. 2005)
I. My Heart and Soul
II. Breaking the Cycle

Proof (2024) ..... Ben Wendel
(b. 1976)
arr. Benedict Mpeti

Connexion (2026) ..... Benedict Mpeti
(b. 2005)

Jamaica (1987) ..... Earl Klugh, George Benson
(b.1953, b.1947)
arr. Benedict Mpeti

Change Your Mind (2018) ..... Larnell Lewis
(b. 1984)

Program seventy-one of the 2026–2027 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Program Notes

Boo-Boo Strikes Again
This piece was one I encountered during lessons with Professor Davis, when I was focusing on swing and Greg Hutchinson's style that semester. The album "It's Alright to Swing" by Eric Reed inspired me with its groovy, lively energy and the balance of ecstasy and control. It resonated deeply with me, fueling my new passion for swing.

Blessings
This was the first song I composed in my first college semester, initially on a whim after getting Logic Pro, but it evolved into something more elegant and longing. It narrates my journey of overcoming challenges and feeling blessed as my prayers began to be answered after years of feeling lost. The first movement reflects my orchestral mindset at the time, choosing to express emotion through every instrument rather than just a marimba. The second movement celebrates my gratitude for my blessings and my mental and emotional growth, feeling free.

Proof
This is the most challenging piece I've played at this school. I discovered it in my jazz improv IV class, and it showed me how complex jazz can get. It's a contrafact of "Evidence" by Thelonious Monk, which itself is a contrafact of "Just You, Just Me." I find this piece fascinating and was determined to master it.

Connexion
This original piece explores the true roots of my life and culture being Congolese. I composed it when both my grandmothers were far away—one in Kinshasa and the other suffering from illness before passing away a year ago. Despite being born here, I wanted to express the spiritual connection I feel with God, my grandmothers, and Congo. It's dedicated to all of them.

Jamaica
This song was one of the first jazz pieces I listened to with my brothers when we started learning instruments at church. Although it's not from the album "Collaboration," specifically the tune "Since You're Gone," it helped me get through mental blocks by its calming melody.

Change Your Mind
I first heard this when I was diving into jazz in middle school and watching the Zildjian YouTube channel. I saw the announcement for "Zildjian LIVE!" featuring influential drummers performing with Ghostnote, led by Robert "Sput" Searight. I watched the live premiere before my middle school band's Midwest Clinic rehearsal and was amazed by Larnell's simple yet complex drumming. That moment in 2018 inspired me to emulate his style, and I felt this song would be the perfect end to my recital—thank you for listening! - Benedict Mpeti