



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
SENIOR RECITAL

**Rachel Lewis, baritone saxophone**  
**John Cozza, piano**

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Escapades (2002) John Williams  
(b. 1932)  
I. Closing In  
II. Reflections  
III. Joyride

Tango Étude No. 5 (1987) Astor Piazzolla  
(1921–1992)

Soar (2016) Alastair Penman  
(b. 1988)

INTERMISSION

Open Tower (2021) Jenni Watson  
(b. 1985)

Unrelenting Universe (2018) Zack Browning  
(b. 1953)

Alyssa Abbott, soprano saxophone  
Bany Villarreal Hernandez, alto saxophone  
Jeffrey Grexton, tenor saxophone  
Rachel Lewis, baritone saxophone

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Saxophone.  
Rachel Lewis is a student of Dr. Keith Bohm.*



FRIDAY, 7:00 P.M.  
FEBRUARY 28, 2025  
CAPISTRANO HALL 151

## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Escapades by John Williams**

John Williams is one of the most well-known film composers, and his works include music from film franchises such as *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, and *Indiana Jones*. *Catch Me If You Can* is a 2002 DreamWorks film that was scored by Williams. He used the themes from this film to compose *Escapades*, a suite for alto saxophone and orchestra. Because the film is set in the 1960s, Williams aimed to “evoke the atmosphere of that time by writing a sort of impressionistic memoir of the progressive jazz movement that was then so popular.” The first movement, *Closing In*, depicts the cat-and-mouse chase between con artist Frank Abagnale Jr. and the FBI. The wistfulness of the second movement, *Reflections*, portrays Frank’s broken family relationship, while *Joy Ride* goes back to his thrills as a con artist.

### **Soar by Alastair Penman**

Alastair Penman is a British saxophonist, clarinetist, educator, and composer. *Soar*, one of Penman’s first compositions for the saxophone, was written for the Saxophone Composition Competition held by the Clarinet and Saxophone Society of Great Britain. Penman writes about his piece, “*Soar* tells the story of an injured eagle who has been kept in captivity before being released back into the wild. In the opening material we hear the bird lamenting its loss of freedom and voicing its frustration. After this brief introduction, however, we hear the eagle instantly return to its natural state, flying freely and instinctively enjoying dancing in and out of the patterns of the wind whilst it travels on its journey to rejoin its aerie.”

### **Tango-Étude No. 5 by Astor Piazzolla**

Known for his tangos, Astor Piazzolla was an Argentinian composer and bandoneón player of Italian descent. Piazzolla began studying the bandoneón at the age of eight after receiving it as a gift from his father. He was initially upset because he did not like tango and got his hopes up for roller skates. Shortly after, he became a prodigy on the bandoneón and began composing in the very genre he disliked. Piazzolla’s *Tango-Études*, originally for flute or violin, have been adapted for other instruments, including saxophone, clarinet, bassoon, and guitar. His impetus for writing these études was to introduce tango to classical musicians. The rhythm used in the fifth étude differs from the typical tango rhythm; every other measure, the short beat moves to the middle of the bar rather than the end, resulting in a disorienting groove.

### **Open Tower by Jenni Watson**

Hailing from the United Kingdom, Jenni Watson is a saxophonist and composer known for her contributions to the classical saxophone repertoire. Although her background is in classical music, her works are also influenced by jazz, funk, folk, and screen music. She quickly composed *Open Tower* for solo saxophone after experimenting with the echoey acoustics of an abandoned cooling tower, the first open space she was able to play in after the Covid-19 lockdowns.

### **Unrelenting Universe by Zack Browning**

Zack Browning is an American composer that writes “dramatic, exciting, rhythmic, and high-energy music.” His piece, *Unrelenting Universe*, was commissioned and premiered by the Borealis Saxophone Quartet, a chamber ensemble based in the United Kingdom praised for their “superb technique and style and great skill.” Like many of Browning’s works, the material used is generated through the use of feng shui and astrology. The premiere was set to be at Smith Square Hall (known at the time as St John’s Smith Square). Because of this, he uses the dates of events associated with famous “Johns” and the birthday of Gillian Blair, a member of the Borealis Saxophone Quartet.