



## Evan Wright, composition

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When the Sun Comes Out (2022)

Evan Wright  
(b. 2002)

Evan Wright, alto saxophone | Selena Delgadillo, piano

Brothers' Suite (2023)

Zephaniah Samuel, clarinet | Selena Delgadillo, piano

Destination Unknown (2024)

Leslie Vazquez, Ben Jilbert, Justin Respicio, and Gerald Mendez, percussion

Boundless Grace (2024)

Alex Hawvichorst and Matthew Galinato, trumpets  
Anthony DePage, French horn | Michael Ruiz, trombone  
Hunter Dalton, tuba

Something Will Grow (2023)

Cathie Apple, flute | Sandra McPherson, clarinet  
Anna Presler, violin | Leighton Fong, cello

This Past Year (2024)

Joan Shalit and Natalie Albano, violin | Emily Kurulenko, viola  
Jasmine Anibaba, cello | Jake Fox, bass | Soraya Roman, flute  
Ethan Pham-Aguilar, oboe | Zephaniah Samuel, clarinet  
Victor Nuno-Robles, bassoon | Anthony DePage, French horn  
Alex Hawvichorst, trumpet | Michael Ruiz, trombone | Hunter Dalton, tuba  
Evan French, timpani | Leslie Vasquez and Aidan Lamont Smith, percussion

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Theory and Composition.  
Evan Wright is a student of Dr. Shuying Li.*

## PROGRAM NOTES

Evan Wright – March 19

***When the Sun Comes Out*** is an original composition I wrote in 2021, inspired by a poignant moment in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. The piece is influenced by the scene where Holden Caulfield, the protagonist, reflects on his visit to his late brother's gravesite. As he stands in the rain, lamenting that the tombstone is drenched, Holden muses, "It's not so bad when the sun comes out, but it only comes out when it feels like coming out." The composition seeks to capture the emotions of loss, longing, and the fleeting moments of hope amidst sorrow. While evoking the melancholy of Holden's reflection, I also hope to portray the glimmers of hope that allow us to continue to persevere in the most hopeless of times.

***Brothers' Suite*** is written for my two older brothers, Elijah and Elliot. The first movement was written after I went to visit Elijah shortly after he moved to Tennessee. It was the middle of winter when I visited him, and I asked how he was liking it there. He told me he had been enjoying his time, and I remarked on how beautiful the landscape was. He said, "It's beautiful now, but just wait until the trees have leaves." His optimism really struck me. There was something beautiful about looking forward to something you've never experienced before. As the youngest, I always had the privilege of watching things unfold before I had to go through them myself. But this was different—Elijah was stepping into a completely new chapter of his life, with no blueprint to follow. And yet, he wasn't just settling in; he was already looking ahead, anticipating the beauty to come.

The second movement is about my brother Elliot. Elliot was always the most mischievous of us all, with a twinkle of adventure in his eyes. He climbed trees with ease, spray-painted his bike in bright yellow, and even strung up the Christmas lights every year just so he could walk on the roof. The most rugged and fearless of us, he was always chasing the next thrill.

One day, I came across a collection of photos he had taken when we were younger—candid shots of our grandma's front yard, my uncle's dog, and moments of all of us together. Back when Elijah's afro piled high, and reached for the clouds, before Ethan's glasses grew so thick, and back when Samantha was just as wild as the rest of us. Elliot captured it all, freezing those moments in time. Seeing the sentimental side of Elliot changed how I saw him. This movement joins both the wild and mischievous and the sentimental and heartfelt aspects of Elliot to demonstrate the complexities of his personality.

***Destination Unknown*** seeks to capture the vastness and mystery of space, exploring both its awe-inspiring beauty and the overwhelming feeling of the unknown. In space, we are confronted with the infinite—an expanse where every star, every distant galaxy, exists beyond our full understanding. This piece embraces that ambiguity, using sound to reflect both the beauty of the cosmos and the eerie silence of the unknown. The percussion instruments in this ensemble represent the many forces that shape the universe—celestial bodies, cosmic winds, the delicate movements of time, and the profound stillness between stars. The ensemble navigates through shifting textures and unpredictable rhythms, mirroring the uncertainty and mystery inherent in space.

***Boundless Grace*** was written for my mom, who is the most selfless and graceful person I know. I have always been inspired by her unwavering generosity and care for the people she loves. While beautiful, her quiet nobility at times comes at the cost of her own well-being. This piece is an examination of both the beauty and sacrifice of her nobility. In three movements, the piece first begins with a triumphant character representing nobility and grace. In the second movement, the once noble character slowly begins to degrade and is eventually overtaken by a more menacing sonority. After the second movement's horrifying climax, the seemingly unresolvable conflict between the low and high brass subsides at last. The

jubilant yet absurd tone of the third movement is an abrupt detour from the previous dark and heavy character. The tumbling uneven groove represents a more nuanced illustration of grace and nobility, joyful yet unpredictable.

Ultimately, *Boundless Grace* is about the relationship between nobility and sacrifice. It is a tribute to my mom's quiet but profound strength and the unconditional love that she so readily gives to the people who are important to her. This piece is an attempt to give something back to the person that has given me everything I've ever needed.

***Something Will Grow*** was inspired by a series of poems entitled, "How Can Black People Write About Flowers at a Time Like This" by Hanif Abdurraqib. In these poems, Abdurraqib explores all aspects of the black narrative in order to create a complex image of blackness that juxtaposes black excellence with the horrific conditions that it is often born out of. Throughout the piece as the main theme returns it is presented alongside various different accompaniments. This is meant to represent how blackness must exist differently in different spaces. In this piece I hope to express the joyousness of blackness while also acknowledging the anguish it must often exist alongside.

***This Past Year*** is a deeply introspective composition, reflecting on my journey transitioning from a performer to a composer. It is a reminder to accept change and value my own authenticity no matter where life takes me. Through its melodic development, the piece grapples with the difficulties of confronting and overcoming self-imposed limitations.

The opening passages introduce a sense of contemplation, with delicate motifs woven into complex chord progressions, representing the inner turmoil and self-reflection. As the music progresses, themes of struggle and uncertainty emerge, depicted through fragmented melodies and rhythmic displacements. These moments symbolize the challenges I faced in acknowledging and grappling with the experiences of realizing what I thought I wanted for myself did not make me feel fulfilled.

The climax of the piece represents the grief that I felt as I slowly began to realize that the life that I had envisioned for myself for so long is not something that I wanted. The fear of an uncertain future can be heard in the low brass and woodwinds, while the high woodwinds and strings continue with a familiar motif. The juxtaposition of the whimsical woodwind melody and the haunting low brass line illustrates the complexity of my desire to be a great performer with the reality that performing does not make me happy. Ultimately, the piece concludes with a recapitulation of the beginning theme. However, while the harmony and melodies are almost identical the theme is reorchestrated to have a much more uplifting, dance-like quality. The restatement should ideally give the listener a sense of the progress that has been made throughout the piece, hopefully demonstrating that everyone has the potential to be more than what they could have imagined for themselves.

**Evan Wright** is an emerging composer and performer currently pursuing a double major in Music Theory and Composition and Jazz Performance at Sacramento State. With a passion for blending traditional and contemporary musical styles, Evan's work uses modern techniques to embellish conventional forms stretching the boundaries of his jazz and classical influences. Through his compositions Evan hopes to create complex narratives that reflect his experience in the world. He is also an active performer, leading his own jazz quartet and playing as a sideman in many local Sacramento jazz ensembles. In addition to composing and performing, Evan is also passionate about music education. Teaching beginning musicians both privately and in the classroom, Evan is an active member of the Sacramento music community and hopes to inspire the next generation of musicians through his work. Outside of school he enjoys traveling and playing online chess.