



CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, February 15, 2026 at 2:00 P.M.
Montgomery College
Cultural Arts Center
Silver Spring, MD
GySgt Connor Mikula, coordinator

Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

Roland Szentpáli (b. 1977)

Pearls (1999)

Ducati SPS 916
My one and only love
Susi

SSgt Andrew Ribo, euphonium

Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)
arranged by Junichi Sato

Trio, FP 43

Lento; Presto
Andante
Rondo: Très vif

GySgt Connor Mikula, soprano saxophone
SSgt Joshua Tuttle, baritone saxophone
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

Xavier DuBois Foley (b. 1994)

Key West Quintet (2023)

SSgt Kelly Cho, violin
SSgt Rachel Halvorson, viola
SSgt Atticus Mellor-Goldman, cello
SSgt Jonathan Keith, bass
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

Charles M. Loeffler (1861–1935)

L'étang from Two Rhapsodies

SSgt Belinda Rosen, oboe
SSgt Rachel Halvorson, viola
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

Emma O'Halloran (b. 1985)

meditation for metal pipes (2021)

SSgt Austin Cantrell, SSgt Alexander Garde,
SSgt Mary La Blanc, SSgt Bradley Loudis, and
SSgt Michael Rogers, percussion

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PROGRAM NOTES

Pearls (1999)

Roland Szentpáli (b. 1977)

Hungarian tubist, composer, and arranger Roland Szentpáli is known in the tuba-euphonium world for creating jazz works for low brass instruments, which are otherwise often relegated to the “oompah” of bass lines. Though originally written for trumpet, *Pearls* has earned its place in standard euphonium solo repertoire with its energetic and catchy melodies. Each movement takes on a different musical genre and gives the player ample room to improvise. “Ducati SPS 916” is an energetic funk selection whose growls, trills, and hyperactive melodies allude to its namesake, which was one of the fastest legal motorcycles at the time of composition. The second movement, “My one and only love” is a jazz ballad written for Cornejo-Garas Denissey, who was the composer’s girlfriend for over nine years. To end with an energetic sendoff, “Susi” takes listeners through a Brazilian-inspired samba. The carnival-invoking introduction gives way to a soaring melody, which inspires a series of technical variations that build to a lively close.

Trio, FP 43

Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)
arranged by Junichi Sato

Francis Poulenc, part of the famous group of composers known as Les Six, was one of the most well-known French composers of the twentieth century. His music is full of charming and witty melodies written out over traditional, and sometimes utterly basic, harmonies. Even Poulenc himself said, “I know perfectly well that I’m not one of those composers who have made harmonic innovations like Igor [Stravinsky], Ravel or Debussy, but I think there’s room for new music which doesn’t mind using other people’s chords.” The result of his melodic innovations over familiar harmonic structures is a very accessible and enjoyable listening experience for everyone, from the most highly-trained musicians to an untrained, first-time listener.

This piece, Trio, FP 43, is no exception, as Poulenc’s memorable and singable melodies are on full display. Originally written for oboe, bassoon, and piano, this version has been transcribed for soprano saxophone and baritone saxophone with piano. Each movement’s themes are playful and sometimes border on sarcastically happy. Poulenc’s sense of humor comes through in his compositional style as he describes himself as “a melancholy person who loves to laugh like all melancholy persons.” The irony of this statement is detectable throughout the piece with its jump-scare reprisals, comedic melodies, and unexpected endings. The piece was dedicated to Spanish composer Manuel de Falla “to prove to him for better or for worse my tender admiration.”

Key West Quintet (2023)
Xavier DuBois Foley (b. 1994)

Xavier DuBois Foley is a trailblazing composer and performer in the double bass world. Originally from Marietta, Georgia, Foley is a 2016 graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied both composition and performance. He has won many awards and grants, including the Sphinx Competition, the Young Concert Artists Auditions, the Astral Artists National Auditions, and the Avery Fisher Career Grant. As a soloist, he has made featured appearances with the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, Sphinx Virtuosi, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Nashville Symphony. As a composer, he has been commissioned to create new works by Carnegie Hall, the Sphinx Organization, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and the New World Symphony.

Key West Quintet was originally commissioned for the Ocean Reef Chamber Music Festival in Key Largo, Florida. The piece received its première performance on January 25, 2024, with Foley performing alongside members of the Dover Quartet and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott. The piece was inspired by Foley’s experience in Key West, Florida, including “amazing beach views, accompanied by mouthwatering fresh seafood,” as well as the contrast between the high energy of daytime activities and the “tranquil side of the region during the night.”

Like many of Foley’s compositions, the melding of classical, jazz, and folk music elements is evident from the start. Featuring a soulful melody from the violin, the piece establishes a funk-inspired feel held together by syncopated figures in the viola and cello, as well as a groovy bass line in the piano and double bass. Each instrument gets a chance to shine with the melodic material by trading it back and forth before moving into a more mysterious and contemplative middle section. The piece suddenly shifts into a Latin-jazz inspired groove with the piano taking more of the soloistic lead while the strings support with unison background figures. After a brief return of the contemplative material from the middle section, the final section of the piece reiterates the original themes found in the beginning and concludes with a satisfyingly strong statement from the entire ensemble.

L’étang from Two Rhapsodies
Charles M. Loeffler (1861–1935)

Charles M. Loeffler was a German-born composer and violinist who spent more than twenty years as the assistant concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Although born in Germany, he never felt much attachment to German culture, especially since his father—a politically outspoken writer—was repeatedly imprisoned by the Prussian government. Loeffler continued his musical training in Paris, studying violin with Lambert Joseph Massart and composition with Ernest Guiraud, the composer who wrote the recitatives for *Carmen*. Loeffler’s musical voice gravitates toward a French sound: fluid rhythms and melodies, rich harmonies, and an emphasis on atmosphere rather than traditional thematic development. He drew inspiration from a wide variety of sources in his compositions, including medieval chant, mysticism, folksong, and especially literature.

The Two Rhapsodies are revisions of songs he composed in 1898 using poems by French Symbolist writer Maurice Rollinat. The first rhapsody, *L’étang (The Pond)*, was dedicated to

Léon Pourtau, a clarinetist with the Boston Symphony from 1894 to 1898. Although both poems center on themes of death and lost love, there are moments of unexpected brightness throughout. *L'étang* opens with a dark, mournful exchange between the viola and piano in their lowest registers. A brief moment of lightness follows but quickly fades. The gloomy, haunting opening idea returns, and the piece ends with a quiet sense of resignation.

Originally written for bass voice, clarinet, and piano, the rhapsodies are heard here in a version for oboe, viola, and piano.

Translation of “The Pond”

Full of aged fish struck with blindness,
The pool, beneath a lowering sky rolling with muted thunder,
Disperses between its centuries old rushes
The lapping horror of its murky depths.

Down there, water-sprites act as lighting
For a swamp blacker than black, sinister and fearsome;
Nothing emerges from this desolate place
But the hideous din of its consumptive toads.

Whereas the moon[,] which rises just at this moment
Appears to regard herself so eerily,
One might say, as she catches sight of her ghostly form there.

Her flat nose and the strange ripple of her teeth,
A death's head illuminated from within
That would come to be reflected in a mirror of darkness.

meditation for metal pipes (2021)

Emma O'Halloran (b. 1985)

Irish composer Emma O'Halloran is known for her wide array of musical influences. A graduate of Princeton University, her works often draw inspiration from pop and electronic music, and her eclectic taste has led to her working in various mediums, from chamber ensembles to laptop orchestra and opera. O'Halloran says one of her main artistic focuses is connection, and *meditation for metal pipes* is no exception. Its performance hinges on the connection between the five performers, as its melodies are constructed through intricate hockets in which players pass around melodic material. Each player has just three tuned metal pipes, yet through careful coordination, they are able to create seamless phrases by alternating pitches and rhythms. The implementation of quick tremolos and hand-muffling adds interest to the work's otherwise serene texture.