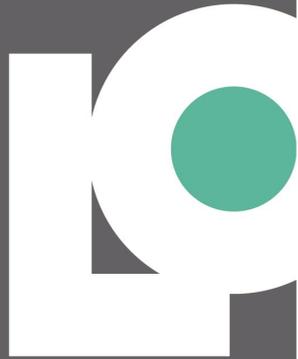


TEDDY
ABRAMS+



LOUISVILLE
ORCHESTRA



Daniel Boone Escorting Settlers through the
Cumberland Gap
George Caleb Bingham (1811-79)

FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN MUSIC II: AMERICAN JOURNEY

APRIL 28, 2017 AT 11 AM

TEDDY ABRAMS, CONDUCTOR

BARBER
SNIDER

Overture to *The School for Scandal*, Op. 5

Four Selections from *Penelope*

1. The stranger with the face of a man I loved

4. The lotus eater

9. Dead Friend

13. Baby teeth, bones, and bullets

Susan Narucki, soprano

ARGUE
HANCOCK
REICH
ABRAMS

Transit

Cantaloupe Island

Triple Quartet

Selections from *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali*

Jecorey Arthur, spoken word

Susan Narucki, soprano

Festival of American Music II; American Journey

What makes music American? Is it solely defined as being written by Americans? Maybe a better question is what makes the American sound? Is it instrumentation or style or even subject matter?

In this second year of the Festival of American Music, we continue to look at the wide variety of American music from composers including George Gershwin, Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, and many more.

This particular concert focuses on the old and the new American sound. Samuel Barber has a classic American feel while still pushing the envelope, Sarah Kirkland Snider finds inspiration in *The Odyssey*, Darcy James Argue explores jazz, Steve Reich's music is all about minimalism, Herbie Hancock revels in funk and Teddy Abrams' celebrates musical mash-ups.

The Composers

Samuel Barber (1910–1981)



Samuel Barber
Photo by Carl Van
Vechten, 1944

"To begin with, I was not meant to be an athlete [sic]. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I'm sure." Such were the words of nine-year-old **Samuel Barber** in a note to his mother, and he was right. Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1910, his father was a doctor and his mother was an amateur pianist. Music ran in his family as Barber's aunt was Louise Homer, a renowned contralto at the Metropolitan Opera and his uncle Sidney Homer composed art songs (Sidney would be an influential mentor to Barber until his death in 1953). So perhaps it was inevitable that Barber would follow a musical path. Barber began piano lessons at six, composition at seven and by the age of twelve, he had written an

opera and was the organist at a local church. At fourteen Barber entered the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia to study piano, voice, composition and conducting. There he met fellow composer Gian Carlo Menotti who would become his longtime companion and collaborator. His first orchestral work was [The School for Scandal](#) (1931) that was premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra and in 1935, Barber won the American Prix de Rome and a Pulitzer traveling grant allowing him to study abroad. An avid reader of poetry, Barber's ability to create melody as a tool for communication was unparalleled. In addition to a gift for songwriting, Barber created a unique musical form in his [Essays](#) for piano (he would also write three for orchestras). Barber's essay form, similar to a written essay, explored the development of a work through a single theme.

Throughout the early 1930s Barber and Menotti spent summers abroad and it was during this period that Barber worked on his String Quartet, Op. 11; the second movement would become the [Adagio for Strings](#). At age twenty-six, Barber captured the mood of the Depression-era nation on the brink of war. While not an official "essay," Barber utilized similar techniques starting the *Adagio* by holding a single pure note in the upper violins before adding the remaining strings. The opening phrase is full of emotion and sets the tone for the rest of the piece. "You never are in any doubt about what this piece is about," says music historian Barbara Heyman. "There's a kind of sadness and poetry about it. It has a melodic gesture that reaches an arch, like a big sigh... and then exhales and fades off into nothingness."

Barber orchestrated the movement at the request of Arturo Toscanini who conducted the premiere in a 1938 live radio broadcast. The *Adagio* has become one of the most called upon pieces to express great national sorrow and loss. It was played at the funerals of Franklin D. Roosevelt (1945), Albert Einstein (1955), John F. Kennedy (1963), Princess Grace (1982) and Leonard Bernstein (1990) as well as the BBC Proms for 9/11. Filmmakers also recognized the power in the *Adagio* including David Lynch for his film *The Elephant Man* (1980) and Oliver Stone in *Platoon* (1986). In 1967, Barber set the *Adagio* as a choral piece using the Latin text setting of the [Agnus Dei](#) (Lamb of God). In a 2010 interview with NPR, composer Rob Kapilow noted "The simplicity of the logic is to make you feel the universality of the journey: from the simple note to the high emotional wailing to release and to final acceptance, but never in the place you thought it was going to lead you to. The slowness is at the core of the piece," he adds. "Because acceptance is not a rapid process."

Barber won two Pulitzer prizes; for his opera [Vanessa](#) (1958) and [Concerto for Piano and Orchestra](#) (1963). But his third opera [Antony and Cleopatra](#) (1966) was a failure and in 1973, his relationship with Menotti ended. Barber became increasingly depressed and suffered from alcoholism. Samuel Barber died of cancer on January 23, 1981 at the age of seventy.

Sarah Kirkland Snider



Sarah Kirkland Snider
Photograph by Willy Somma

Sarah Kirkland Snider was born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey and has an M.M. and Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music and a B.A. from Wesleyan University. With an ear for both the structural and the poetic, Snider's music draws upon a variety of influences to render a nuanced command of immersive storytelling. Of her orchestral song cycle, [Penelope](#), [Pitchfork's](#) Jayson Greene proclaimed: "Snider's music lives in...an increasingly populous inter-genre space that, as of yet, has produced only a few clear, confident voices. Snider is perhaps the most sophisticated of them all." Snider's works have been commissioned and performed by some of the most prestigious orchestras, ensembles, and soloists throughout the world, including the San Francisco, Detroit, Indianapolis, and North Carolina Symphonies; the Residentie Orkest Den Haag, American Composers Orchestra, and National Arts Centre Orchestra; violinist Anne Akiiko Meyers, percussionist Colin Currie, and vocalist Shara Nova (formerly Worden); Ensemble Signal, The Knights, yMusic; Roomful of Teeth, Cantus, and the Brooklyn Youth Chorus; and many others.

In 2010, Snider released her first album, *Penelope*, a J. Paul Getty Center-commissioned song cycle with lyrics by playwright Ellen McLaughlin, featuring vocalist Shara Worden (*My Brightest Diamond*) and Ensemble Signal, conducted by Brad Lubman, on New Amsterdam Records. *Penelope* was named No. 1 Classical Album of 2010 by *Time Out New York* and one of NPR's Top Five Genre-Defying Albums of 2010. Charting on both the CMJ 200 and the top ten of Billboard's Crossover Classical list, *Penelope* also drew high praise from *The Los Angeles Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The Believer*, *New Music Box*, and many others.

The 16/17 season will feature some exciting premieres and performances of Snider's work. March 2017 will feature a tour in the U.S. and Europe of Snider's acclaimed song cycle, [Unremembered](#). Vocalists Padma Newsome, Shara Nova, and D.M. Stith will the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra for the full U.S. premiere at its acclaimed Liquid Music series, to be followed by performances with

The Knights at Knoxville's Big Ears Festival and Brooklyn's National Sawdust, and performances with the North Carolina Symphony in Raleigh, NC, and the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. The North Carolina Symphony will perform [Hiraeth](#), Snider's large work for orchestra and film, at the Kennedy Center as part of its invitation to the SHIFT Festival.

Snider splits her time between New York and Princeton, where she lives with her husband, Steven (Mackey); son, Jasper; and daughter, Dylan. Biography from Snider's official website: <http://sarahkirklandsnider.com/biography/>.

Darcy James Argue



Darcy James Argue
photo: Lindsay Beyerstein

The Vancouver-born, Brooklyn-based composer and bandleader has toured nationally and internationally with his 18-piece ensemble, Secret Society, garnering countless awards and nominations and reimagining what a 21st-century big band can sound like. "It's maximalist music of impressive complexity and immense entertainment value, in your face and then in your head" writes Richard Gehr in the Village Voice.

Argue made his mark with his critically acclaimed 2009 debut *Infernal Machines*. 2013 saw the release of *Brooklyn Babylon*, which, like *Infernal Machines* before it, earned the group nominations for both GRAMMY and JUNO Awards. His most recent recording, *Real Enemies*, released in the fall of 2016, earned a third consecutive GRAMMY nomination and has been praised as "wildly discursive, twitchily allusive, a work of furious ambition... deeply in tune with our present moment" by The New York Times' Nate Chinen.

Proclaimed "a mind-blowing example of truly great, era-defining jazz composition, and a contender for album of the year" by London Jazz News' John L. Walters, *Real Enemies* is a 13-chapter exploration of America's fascination with conspiracy theories and the politics of paranoia. The album grew out of a multimedia work Argue co-created with writer-director Isaac Butler and filmmaker Peter Nigrini for the 2015 BAM Next Wave Festival, in a uniquely immersive experience that Stereophile's Fred Kaplan called "a remarkable work, maybe an oddball masterpiece: riveting, head-spinning, at once spooky and witty, abstrusely complex and foot-tappingly propulsive." The multimedia performance was next staged at the 2016 Holland Festival, a production JazzNu's Rinus van der Heijden praised as "a visual and auditive spectacle without precedent, which overwhelms, dwarfs, and makes you aware that innovation in music theatre is still possible."

Secret Society maintains a busy touring schedule, with European, Canadian, and South American tours, global festival performances, and four appearances at the Newport Jazz Festival. Secret Society's performances have been celebrated for their "slashing fury and awesome full-ensemble precision" (The New York City Jazz Record), "brilliant soundscapes" (Globe and Mail) and "gorgeous musical details, maneuvers and transformations" (Ottawa Citizen). Their London Jazz Festival debut was declared "a contender for gig of the year" by The Guardian. In addition to his work with Secret Society, Argue has toured Australia and New Zealand leading the Jazzgroove Mothership Orchestra and was featured in the Orquestra Jazz de Matosinhos' inaugural international Jazz Composers Forum. He has led performances of his music by the WDR Big Band, the Danish Radio Big Band, the Frankfurt Radio Bigband, the Cologne

4 Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, the Big Band Palácio das Artes, and the West Point Jazz

Knights. Argue has composed works for chamber duo and string quartet, art songs for New-speak, and created arrangements for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted residencies and workshops at the University of North Texas, McGill University, the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, Cornish College, Western Connecticut State University, and with the Western Australian Jazz Youth Orchestra, among others. In 2012, he was composer-in-residence for Missouri State University's annual Composition Festival.

In 2015, Argue was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in Music Composition and a Doris Duke Artist Award. He has received commissions from the Fromm Music Foundation, the Jazz Gallery, the Manhattan New Music Project, the Jerome Foundation, and BAM, as well as ensembles including the Danish Radio Big Band, the Hard Rubber Orchestra, the West Point Jazz Knights, and the Orquestra Jazz de Matosinhos. He is the recipient of grants and fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, New Music USA, the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Composers Now, the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the MacDowell Colony. <http://www.secretsocietymusic.org/#&panel1-1>

Herbie Hancock (b. 1940)



Herbie Hancock

Herbie Hancock is a Grammy Award winning American pianist, keyboardist, and composer who performs funk, jazz, and fusion music. Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1940, he was a prodigy on piano and performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at age eleven. He studied with Chris Anderson at Grinnell College before attending Roosevelt University followed by the Manhattan School of Music. He recorded his first album [Takin' Off](#) with [Blue Note Records](#) in 1962 (which included his popular track [Watermelon Man](#)).

Hancock performed with the Miles Davis Quintet from 1963-68, recorded another successful solo album [Maid-en Voyage](#) in 1965, left Blue Note for Warner Brothers, and performed with various other jazz fusion groups until

forming Head Hunters in 1973. It's with this group that he composed and performed one of his most famous hits [Chameleon](#). He enjoyed collaborative success through the 70's and 80's including his 1983 hit [Rockit](#). Maintaining the pioneering nature of fusion jazz, Hancock began to integrate popular music into his creative process, as heard in [Rockit](#) and particularly so in [Dis Is Da Drum](#) (1994). Moving through to the 21st century, and continuing to integrate the popular music styles, he saw the success of his collaborative efforts on the album [Future 2 Future](#) in 2001. Re-touching his classic jazz roots, Hancock produced [River: The Joni Letters](#) in 2007 to much acclaim. In 2013, Hancock was inducted into the Kennedy Center Honors.

Learn more about [Herbie Hancock](#)



Head Hunters

Steve Reich (b. 1936)



Steve Reich

Born in New York and raised there and in California, Mr. Reich graduated with honors in philosophy from Cornell University in 1957. For the next two years, he studied composition with Hall Overton, and from 1958 to 1961 he studied at the Juilliard School of Music with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. Mr. Reich received his M.A. in Music from Mills College in 1963, where he worked with Luciano Berio and Darius Milhaud. In 1966 Steve Reich founded his own ensemble of three musicians, which rapidly grew to 18 members or more. Since 1971, Steve Reich and Musicians have frequently toured the world.

During the summer of 1970, Mr. Reich studied drumming at the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana in Accra. In 1973 and 1974 he studied Balinese Gamelan Semar Pegulingan and Gamelan Gambang at the American Society for Eastern Arts in Seattle and Berkeley, California. From 1976 to 1977 he studied the traditional forms of cantillation (chanting) of the Hebrew scriptures in New York and Jerusalem.

Mr. Reich's 1988 piece, *Different Trains*, marked a new compositional method, rooted in which speech recordings generate the musical material for musical instruments. In 1990, Mr. Reich received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Composition for *Different Trains* as recorded by the Kronos Quartet on the Nonesuch label. Mr. Reich won a second Grammy award in 1999 for his piece *Music for 18 Musicians*, also on the Nonesuch label. In 2000 he was awarded the Schuman Prize from Columbia University, the Montgomery Fellowship from Dartmouth College, the Regent's Lectureship at the University of California at Berkeley, an honorary doctorate from the California Institute of the Arts and was named Composer of the Year by Musical America magazine.

Three Tales, a three-part digital documentary video opera, is a second collaborative work by Steve Reich and Beryl Korot about three well known events from the twentieth century, reflecting on the growth and implications of technology in the 20th century: Hindenburg, on the crash of the German zeppelin in New Jersey in 1937; Bikini, on the Atom bomb tests at Bikini atoll in 1946-1954; and Dolly, the sheep cloned in 1997, on the issues of genetic engineering and robotics. Steve Reich's music has been performed by major orchestras and ensembles around the world, including the London Symphony Orchestra; New York Philharmonic; the San Francisco Symphony; The Ensemble Modern; the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra; the Saint Louis Symphony; the Los Angeles Philharmonic; the BBC Symphony; and the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted.

Several noted choreographers have created dances to Steve Reich's music, including Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker ("Fase," 1983, set to four early works as well as "Drumming," 1998 and "Rain" set to "Music for 18 Musicians"), Jirí Kylián ("Falling Angels," set to "Drumming Part I"), Jerome Robbins for the New York City Ballet ("Eight Lines") and Laura Dean, who commissioned "Sextet". That ballet, entitled "Impact," was premiered at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, and earned Steve Reich and Laura Dean a Bessie Award in 1986. Other major choreographers using Mr. Reich's music include Eliot Feld, Alvin Ailey, Lar Lubovitch, Maurice Bejart, Lucinda Childs, Siobhan Davies and Richard Alston.

In 1994 Steve Reich was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, to the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in 1995, and, in 1999, awarded Commandeur de l'ordre des Arts et Lettres.

Teddy Abrams (b. 1987)



Teddy Abrams

Teddy Abrams (b. 1987) An unusually versatile musician, [Teddy Abrams](http://www.teddyabrams.com/) is a widely acclaimed conductor, pianist, clarinetist and an award-winning composer. Music Director of the Louisville Orchestra and Music Director and Conductor of the Britt Classical Festival, he also served as Resident Conductor of the MAV Symphony Orchestra in Budapest.

Abrams continues to foster interdisciplinary collaboration with organizations including the Louisville Ballet, the Center for Interfaith Relations, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Speed Art Museum, and the Folger Shakespeare Library. His extensive community outreach continues to reach new audiences and bring orchestral music into increasingly diverse communities.

Teddy's 2016–17 season includes debuts at the Kennedy Center and with the Colorado, North Carolina, and New Jersey Symphonies, as well as a return to the New World Symphony. Recent guest conducting highlights include engagements with the San Francisco, Houston, Vancouver, Phoenix, and Jacksonville Symphonies; Florida Orchestra; and the Louisiana and New Mexico Philharmonics. He has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the Indianapolis Symphony, and recently conducted them with Time for Three for a PBS special. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Detroit Symphony from 2012 to 2014.

From 2008 to 2011 Abrams was the Conducting Fellow and Assistant Conductor of the New World Symphony (NWS) and has conducted the NWS in Miami Beach, Washington, D.C., and at Carnegie Hall, and recently returned to conduct the NWS on subscription with Joshua Bell as soloist.

An accomplished musician, Abrams has appeared as a soloist with a number of orchestras—including play-conducting the Ravel Piano Concerto with the Jacksonville Symphony in 2013—and has performed chamber music with the St. Petersburg String Quartet, Menahem Pressler, Gilbert Kalish, and John Adams, in addition to annual appearances at the Olympic Music Festival. Dedicated to exploring new and engaging ways to communicate with a diverse range of audiences, Abrams co-founded the Sixth Floor Trio in 2008. Together, they founded and direct GardenMusic, the music festival of the world-renowned Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami; they continue to tour regularly throughout the U.S.

Abrams studied conducting with Michael Tilson Thomas, Otto-Werner Mueller and Ford Lallerstedt at the Curtis Institute of Music, and with David Zinman at the Aspen Music Festival; he was the youngest conducting student ever accepted at both institutions. Abrams is a passionate educator—he has taught at numerous schools throughout the United States. His 2009 Education Concerts with the New World Symphony (featuring the world premiere of one of Abrams' own orchestral works) were webcast to hundreds of schools throughout South Florida.

Abrams performed as a keyboardist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, won the 2007 Aspen Composition Contest, and was the Assistant Conductor of the YouTube Symphony at Carnegie Hall in 2009. He has held residencies at the La Mortella music festival in Ischia, Italy, and at the American Academy in Berlin. Teddy was a proud member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra for seven seasons and graduated from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music with a bachelor of music, having studied piano with Paul Hersh.

<http://www.teddyabrams.com/>

The Guests

Susan Narucki, soprano



Susan Narucki
Photo credit: Joe Henson

With luminous tone and distinctive artistry, American soprano Susan Narucki has earned international acclaim for three decades. She has appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Netherlands Opera, San Francisco Symphony, MET Chamber Ensemble, on the Great Performers Series at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall with conductors such as Boulez, Levine, Salonen, Tilson Thomas, de Leeuw and Knussen. A dedicated advocate of the music of our time, Ms. Narucki has given over one hundred world premieres, and has enjoyed close collaborations with composers including Andriessen, Kurtág, Carter, Dusapin and Crumb.

Her extensive discography includes both a Grammy Award and Grammy Nomination for Best Classical Vocal Performance; her recording, *The Light that Is Felt: Songs of Charles Ives* (New World) with pianist Donald Berman was selected as Editor's Choice of BBC Music Magazine. Recent appearances include Opera de Montpellier (*Carter's What Next?* and Mathis Nitschke's *Jetzt*), the International Festival Cervantino, and the West Coast premiere of Andriessen's *Die Materie* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Ms. Narucki's creative projects introduce modern music to audiences outside traditional concert hall settings and illuminate broader issues in society. Her work has earned major grants from the Creative Capital Foundation, the MAP Fund for the Performing Arts/Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, UC MEXUS and the National Endowment for the Arts. Her most recent project is the critically acclaimed [Cuatro Corridos](#) (2013), a chamber opera that addresses human trafficking across the U.S.-Mexican border. With libretto by internationally acclaimed novelist Jorge Volpi and music by Hebert Vazquez, Arlene Sierra, Lei Liang and Hilda Paredes, *Cuatro Corridos* has had over a dozen performances in the United States and Mexico, including performance at CENART, Mexico City and at the 2015 FIL/Guadalajara International Book Fair, the largest Spanish language book fair in the world. The opera has been broadcast multiple times on CANAL 22, Mexico's art and culture broadcasting network.

Ms. Narucki is currently producing [Inheritance](#), a chamber opera, which focuses on gun violence in America. A collaboration with composer Lei Liang, librettist Matt Donovan and artist Ligia Bouton, *Inheritance* has been awarded major grants from the Creative Capital Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. It is scheduled to premiere in Fall, 2018.

Ms. Narucki was appointed Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego in 2008.

<http://www.susannarucki.net/>

Jecorey Arthur, rapper



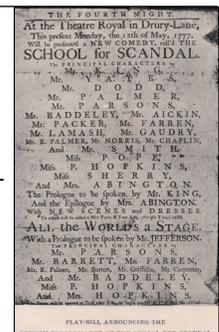
[Jecorey "1200" Arthur](#) is a music educator, composer, and performer from Louisville, KY. Prior to obtaining his Bachelor of Music Education at the University of Louisville, he had the chance to perform at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, TX and the Jungfrau Music Festival in Interlaken, Switzerland. Though 1200's music can be considered hip hop, it is heavily influenced by neo-classicism and fusion. While in college, 1200 co-founded a creative collective known as the United Legion of DOOM, which features musicians, artists, designers, producers, and creative intellectuals from around the globe. 1200 has co-executive-produced albums such as Nick B's *Transcendence* and Hwang's *It Was Only Yesterday*. 1200 additionally executive-produced and released his debut album, *SYMPHONY I*, in August 2014. *SYMPHONY I* is an exploration of life, narrated in an anachronistic fashion. The music features a variety of samples and influences from various genres including 1990s soul and contemporary classical works.

By day, Jecorey is a music educator who specializes in percussion pedagogy. His most recent educational endeavor has been to serve as the current Program Director for AMPED (Academy of Music Production Education and Development). Alongside his numerous performance and educational projects, 1200 most recently became an event curator and has organized with PechaKucha, Kleinser Events, City Collaborative, Louisville Downtown Partnership, and the Louisville Orchestra. After graduating in May 2015 with his Master of Arts in Teaching, 1200 co-founded CARDS Fest, a University of Louisville music festival organized by students and alumni. <http://wfpl.org/five-things-a-conversation-with-jecorey-1200-arthur/>

The Works

Overture to *The School for Scandal*, Op. 5 (1931)

In the summer of 1931, Samuel Barber was still a student at Philadelphia's renowned Curtis Institute of Music when he began to compose his first orchestral work, the [Overture to *The School for Scandal*](#). The original play *The School for Scandal* was written in 1777 by Richard Sheridan and was an English comedy of manners, wit and intrigue. Though Barber's piece was not written as incidental music for the play, Barber insisted that it was conceived "as a musical reflection of the play's spirit." Barber completed the work in the fall but the premiere wouldn't happen until 1933 with none other than the Philadelphia Orchestra. The piece received good reviews and also won Barber a composition prize for \$1,200. The piece continued to gain in popularity becoming an orchestral staple in the 1950s. This piece gave notice that a new school of American composition, headed by Samuel Barber and his peers, was on the horizon.



In keeping with the spirit of the play, the overture opens with both a sense of fun and foreboding with sweeping lines in the strings and rhythmic interjections from the brass and winds. A brilliant melodist, Barber gives some beautiful lines first to the oboe then later to the English horn. Barber shifts the tone of the piece between lighthearted and melancholy rapidly giving it more than sense of a "Straussian" tone poem than an overture. Barber kept the spirited banter from the original play alive in the back and forth between instruments and shifting rhythms. While at

the time it may not have sounded uniquely Barber or even American, today we definitely hear elements that will come to populate many of Barber's later works including [Knoxville: Summer of 1915](#).

Four Selections from *Penelope*

Penelope is a song cycle by composer Sarah Kirkland Snider, with lyrics by playwright Ellen McLaughlin that was inspired by Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey*. *Penelope* is a meditation on memory, identity, and what it means to come home. *Penelope* originated as a music-theater monodrama in 2007-2008. In the work, originally scored for alto/actor and string quartet, a woman's husband appears at her door after an absence of twenty years, suffering from brain damage. A veteran of an unnamed war, he doesn't know who he is and she doesn't know who he's become. While they wait together for his return to himself, she reads him *The Odyssey*, and in the journey of that book, she finds a way into her former husband's memory and the terror and trauma of war. In 2009 Snider re-conceived *Penelope* as a song cycle, expanding and tailoring it to the unique talents of vocalist Shara Worden and the chamber orchestra Signal.

Transit

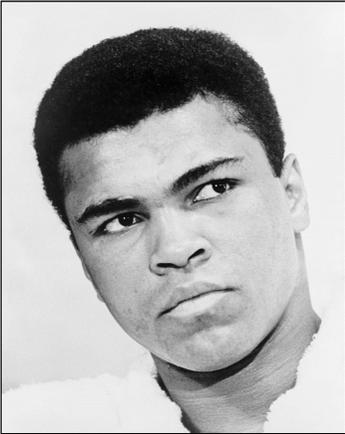
"*Transit* has the brass stating a solemn line at the onset before a swinging groove develops and the sharp ideas of the composer come to the fore. The palate is full. Listen to the sounds under Nadjé Noordhuis' flugelhorn solo. Remarkable. He needs 189 pieces. The colors come from the mind of someone developing a unique voice. The crescendo of sound that emerges is stirring, stimulating." from [All About Jazz](#).

Cantaloupe Island

In the 1960s, Herbie Hancock was a member of Miles Davis' jazz quintet but he was a composer and recording artist in his own right. In 1964, Hancock composed "Cantaloupe Island" for his album *Empyrean Isles*. Many artists have sampled *Cantaloupe Island* over the years and in 2000, the song was named #19 in the Jazz 100: 100 Quintessential Jazz Songs.

Selections from *The Greatest*

Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr. was born in Louisville, Kentucky on January 17, 1942. Named after his father (who was named in honor of Abolitionist Cassius Marcellus Clay), young Cassius grew up in the West End of Louisville with his sister and four brothers. His father painted billboards and his mother Odessa was a household domestic. Cassius attended Carter Elementary (now the West End School) and Central High School. At age twelve, Cassius' bike was stolen and this event would lead him to discover boxing. After telling police officer Joe E. Martin "I'm gonna whup whoever stole my bike!", Martin told Cassius that he better learn how to box first. His big personali-



ty and brash style earned him the nickname "the Louisville lip."

Young Cassius dedicated himself to boxing and Martin became his first trainer. The next six years of his amateur career culminated at the **1960 Summer Olympics in Rome** where Cassius won the gold medal in the light heavyweight division. One of the great myths about Cassius was that after he and a friend were refused service in a "whites-only" restaurant in Louisville, he threw his gold medal into the Ohio River. That turned out to be a myth as Cassius had actually lost the medal. He was given a replacement at the 1996 Summer Atlanta Olympic games.

After his Olympic victory, 18-year-old Cassius Clay turned pro and had his first professional bout on October 29, 1960. He signed his professional contract with the Louisville Sponsoring Group who stated that "each of the 10 members of the group has admiration for Cassius Clay as a fine young man and confidence in his ability as a boxer. The principal purpose of the group is to provide hometown support for Cassius' professional career and to aid him in realizing the maximum benefits from his efforts." Cassius also had a new manager, Angelo Dundee. Over the next three years through nineteen matches, he didn't lose a single match.



Early on in his professional boxing career, Cassius made a habit of taunting his opponent outside the ring while praising his own abilities. Cassius actually took advice on his developing persona from wrestling star Gorgeous George. They met in 1961 and George told the nineteen-year-old "a lot of people will pay to see someone shut your mouth. So keep on bragging, keep on sassing and always be outrageous."



Charles Sonny Liston

After his early success, Cassius was now in contention to become the World Heavyweight Champion but he had to go through **Sonny Liston** to get it. By the time of the February 25, 1964 match with Cassius, Liston was one of the most feared and dominant boxers of his generations. He had won the title after knocking out Floyd Patterson, had fists that measured 15 inches around (a typical slow pitch softball is 11 inches) and one of the longest reaches (84 inches) in boxing history. Cassius was definitely the underdog coming into the match at 7:1 odds. But Cassius kept up the trash talk calling Liston a "big ugly bear" as a means of psychological warfare—to essentially throw Liston off his game.

In the opening round, Cassius was too fast for Liston but by the second round, Liston was landing some punches. Part of Cassius' tactics was to make Liston fight longer than two rounds (he assumed that Liston hadn't trained to fight a longer match) so by the third round, Cassius was gaining the upper hand. At the end of the fourth round, Cassius returned to his corner complaining that his eyes were burning and he couldn't see (likely due to the Monsel's Solution that Liston had on his cuts). So Cassius spent much of the fifth round staying clear of Liston until he could see and came out in a blistering sixth round. By the end of the sixth round, Liston's shoulder was practically useless and he called it quits. Cassius Clay became the World Heavyweight Champion and did what became known as the "Ali Shuffle." He also began shouting "I am the Greatest" and "I shook up the world."

After his stunning victory, Cassius announced that he was a member of the Nation of Islam and initially changed his name to Cassius X. Nation of Islam leader **Elijah Muhammad** re-named him **Muhammad Ali** in March 1964. Ali's alignment with the Nation of Islam was tricky. Many in the

"establishment", both black and white, were concerned and in some cases, unsupportive of Ali's decision. In a recent interview with NPR, co-author Randy Roberts, of *Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X*, commented on the fusion of politics and sports. "Once, we viewed sports as a world apart, untouched by the political and economic and racial problems of the day," Roberts said. "Well, since Muhammad Ali, we can never maintain that fiction."

In 1967, Ali was drafted to fight in the **Vietnam War** but he refused to join the army as a conscientious objector. Ali was stripped of his title, was banned from boxing and faced a jail sentence. After three and a half years, the sentence was overturned and Ali was allowed to return to boxing. Legendary fights with Joe Frazier, George Foreman and Leon Spinks would follow before Ali retired from boxing in 1981.



Malcolm X

In 1972, Ali made his first Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca (he made the second pilgrimage in 1988) and it inspired him in much the same way it had inspired **Malcolm X**. Ali was able to meet and interact with people from all over the world giving him a new outlook and spiritual awareness that would influence the rest of his life. In 1975, Ali left the Nation of Islam and converted to mainstream Sunni Islam, the same faith that Malcolm X had joined a decade earlier.

In 1982, Ali was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease but it didn't slow down his work to aide people around the world as well as lighting the Olympic cauldron for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2005, Ali was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush and that same year, the Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville was opened.

Muhammad Ali died of septic shock following a respiratory illness on June 3, 2016. Ali's six core principles (respect, confidence, conviction, dedication, spirituality, and giving) continue to inspire people around the world. And his legacy as not only the greatest boxer of all time but also as a humanitarian and voice for change will live on.