

Jake Wall Senior Recital

Saturday, May 3, 2025

2:30 PM

Kirmser Hall (McCain 204), Kansas State University

PROGRAM

Fabian Theory (1987)..... Nigel Westlake (b. 1958)

Long Division (2024)..... Jake Wall (b. 2002)

Kyle Grimes, *trumpet*
Chase Wassom, *tuba*

NOLA (1915)..... Felix Arndt (1889-1918)

Arr. George Hamilton Green, William L. Cahn

Noah Dial, Grey Fluke, Jessi Solorzano, Jessie Whelan, *marimba*

Through Flame (2025)..... Jake Wall

Kansas State University ACDA Choir
August Siefkes, *piano*

Aibohphobia (2025)..... Jake Wall

August Siefkes, Jasper Vallad, Ryan Woodruff, *marimba*

POEMS (2024-2025)..... Jake Wall

- I. TREES
- II. BREATH
- III. LIFE

Shaun Wall, *vibraphone*

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Program Notes

Fabian Theory

Fabian Theory, completed in September of 1987 is a crucial piece in not only the history of percussion repertoire, but also in the history of electronic music. This piece was the first composition for marimba and electronic effect, utilizing both delay and looping effects. By employing delay to produce a signal about half of a second behind the live acoustic sound, a “multi-marimba illusion” and “rhythmic counterpoint” is created against the live performance. Very precise synchronization with the delayed signal and strict tempo changes are required by the soloist to achieve the desired effect. “The use of the delay gives rise to the title, which is a reference to the Roman dictator, Fabius Maximus who was victorious due to the use of delay tactics in battle.”

Nigel Westlake’s career, spanning almost 5 decades, began as a clarinetist touring Australia and the world with many orchestras, ensembles, and bands. He began composing from 1980, receiving offers to write for radio, theatre, circus, TV and film, and was appointed composer in residence for ABC Radio in 1984. In 1992, he was invited by guitarist John Christopher Williams to join his septet, *Attacca*, as performer and composer. He writes extensively for the concert hall, receiving commissions to write for orchestras, ensembles and soloists, receiving many awards, including two ARIA Awards, 15 APRA awards across both Classical and Screen categories, the 2022 APRA Distinguished Services to the Australian Screen Award, and the Gold Medal for Best Original Music at the New York International Radio Festival. He is a two time winner of the prestigious Paul Lowin Orchestral prize, and in 2020 he was awarded the Albert H. Maggs Composition Award by the University of Melbourne. He has conducted all the major symphony orchestras in Australia in performances and recordings of his own works, in 2016 he made his US conducting debut at the Lincoln Centre with the New York Philharmonic, and he made his European debut with the RTE Symphony at the National Concert Hall in Dublin in 2018. He holds an honorary doctorate in music awarded in 2013 by the University of NSW and was the recipient of the HC Coombs Creative Arts Fellowship at the Australian National University in 2004.

Long Division

This piece was my first attempt at writing for exclusively brass instruments. I wanted to incorporate the warm, sonorous texture of the Tuba with the power and ‘bite’ of the Trumpet, all while utilizing the rhythmic intensity I appreciate as a percussionist. The concept behind the composition was a ‘fight’ between the idea of duple and triple, 2’s and 3’s. The players continue to go back and forth in an argument of which rhythm to compromise on, bouncing between meters of 6/8 and 3/4. The combination of these concepts- metric music and a ‘disagreement’ that lasts the length of the work- led me to the title of *Long Division*.

A huge thank you to Kyle Grimes and Chase Wassom for premiering this piece!

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NOLA

NOLA was written by Felix Arndt as an engagement piece in 1915, ten months before his wedding to Nola Locke. She was also a composer, singer, and teacher who traveled as a soloist with the St. Louis Symphony. The tune was published in 1916 by Sam Fox and it is thought to be the first example of the novelty piano or novelty ragtime genre. This edition was then arranged for xylophone and marimba quartet by George Hamilton Green and William L. Cahn in 1991.

Felix Arndt was born on May 20, 1889 and died tragically during the flu epidemic on October 16, 1918. He was an American pianist and composer who lived and worked in New York. Arndt composed songs for vaudeville and recorded over 3000 piano rolls for Duo-Art and QRS Records. Additionally, Arndt was a major influence for legendary American composer George Gershwin, who would visit him at his studio.

Through Flame

Through Flame was written in support of the victims of the 2025 Los Angeles fires. When this work was completed, the wildfires remained ongoing, affecting over 40,000 acres within the state of California. Many lives were affected, including trumpet performer Jens Lindemann who I had the pleasure of seeing perform shortly after his family lost everything they owned to this tragedy. Hearing his story moved me deeply, and the sorrow, yet perseverance he exhibited are key inspirations behind this music. One of the concepts Jens Lindemann spoke about during the concert and the rehearsals we shared, was the unique healing aspect of music, so I wrote the lyrics to emphasize the importance of leaning on one another in times of sorrow and tragedy.

This choir work was composed for Kansas State University's first ACDA Choir Composition Competition in 2025.

Aibohphobia

A marimba trio featuring only one keyboard and a kick drum, this piece was inspired by the concept of a palindrome (a word spelled the exact same forwards and backwards). The second piece in the "Face your Fears" collection, the term "aibohphobia" is not only the diagnosis for a fear of palindromes, but the word itself is one! In *Aibohphobia*, measure 75 marks the point that the written music begins to "turn back" on itself, and the measure order reverses with minimal alterations. As an audience member, can you notice when this transition happens?

This piece was commissioned by the Akadiddles Trio during their undergraduate studies at Kansas State University and serves as a thank you to them for their friendship and excellent musicianship.

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POEMS

This work, titled *POEMS*, is a through-composed work that consists of three movements for vibraphone duet. These movements were each inspired by poetry that I appreciate, capturing the beauty in different facets of life.

TREES was composed in 2024 as its own work, but became the catalyst for the movements to follow. Inspired by Joyce Kilmer's poem of the same name, the work is a "passacaglia", a piece in which one voice, typically the lower one, is unchanging, while the accompanying melody continues to evolve. *TREES* is additionally the only movement of *POEMS* that utilizes the motor of the vibraphone to produce a unique doppler effect.

BREATH draws inspiration from Becky Hemsley's "Breathe". I once resonated very deeply with the struggle that trying to please everyone else brings, as well as the self-doubt that comes with it. You will hear a repeating "bell" tone chime periodically through this work that represents this complex feeling, and I consider the music surrounding the bell tone to be the freedom found when the approval of others no longer defines your life.

LIFE, pulled from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "A Psalm of Life", is the most rhythmically active movement of *Poems* as the poem calls for the audience to "act in the living present". A 3 over 2 polyrhythm is constant and this movement includes the most extreme dynamic changes as well. All of these movements have considerably different styles as their inspirations also vary, but they all contain elements that connect them, just as trees produce the breath that produces life.

This work is dedicated to my brother, Shaun, with whom I will be premiering it with. I could not be more grateful to be your older brother and I am excited to watch you carve your own path in life as you accomplish amazing things. "Let us, then, be up and doing, With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait."

Trees - Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Breathe - Becky Hemsley

She sat at the back
and they said she was shy,
she led from the front
and they hated her pride.

They asked her advice
and then questioned her guidance,
they branded her loud
then were shocked by her silence.

When she shared no ambition
they said it was sad,
so she told them her dreams
and they said she was mad.

They told her they'd listen
then covered their ears,
and gave her a hug while
they laughed at her fears.

And she listened to all of it
thinking she should,
be the girl they told her to be
best as she could.

But one day she asked
what was best for herself,
instead of trying
to please everyone else.

So she walked to the forest
and stood with the trees,
she heard the wind whisper
and dance with the leaves.

She spoke to the willow,
the elm and the pine,
and she told them what she'd
been told time after time.

She told them she felt
she was never enough,
she was either too little
or far far too much.

Too loud or too quiet,
too fierce or too weak,
too wise or too foolish,
too bold or too meek.

Then she found a small clearing
surrounded by firs,
and she stopped... and she heard
what the trees said to her.

And she sat there for hours
not wanting to leave,
for the forest said nothing
it just let her breathe.

A Psalm of Life - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,— act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.