

# Contemporary Music for Trombone and Piano

Monday, September 15, 2025

7:30 p.m.

All Faiths Chapel, Kansas State University

PROGRAM

J2 Duo

Jiyoun Chung, piano and composer

John S. Neurohr, trombone

*Sonata in One Movement* ..... Kevin Day  
..... (born 1996)

*Song of Survival* ..... Susan Mutter  
Meyer ..... (born 1962)

Diagnosis--Prayer

Surgery

Thiotepa

Coming Home!

"Chang" from *Ariaria* ..... Jiyoun Chung  
..... (born 1982)

*Celestial Serenade* ..... Jiyoun Chung

*Sonata for Trombone and Piano* ..... Reena Esmail  
Rumbling ..... (born 1983)

Mysterious

Acerbic

**KANSAS STATE**  
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School of Music,  
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## J2 Duo

The J2 Duo began in May 2023 as a faculty trombone-piano duo recital at Central Washington University, dedicated to showcasing works by female composers commissioned specifically for this instrumentation. Since then, the duo has graced stages at esteemed events such as the College Music Society International Conference, International Women's Brass Conference, American Trombone Workshop, Festival of Contemporary Artists in Music, Evergreen Music Festival, SHE Festival, University of Wyoming Percussion and Brass Festival, and National Association of Composers USA National Conference. Comprising Central Washington University faculty members Dr. Jiyoun Chung on piano and Dr. John S. Neurohr on trombone, the duo is steadfast in its mission to broaden its repertoire canon by commissioning and performing works by historically underrepresented composers.

## Program Notes

A refreshing renaissance is now taking place within the brass community, and the composers represented on this program are among those whose works are quickly becoming established within the standard repertoire.

Recipient of the MacDowell Fellowship for Composition, Kevin Day takes inspiration from a broad range of sources including Romanticism, later 20<sup>th</sup>-century music, jazz fusion and gospel. His work explores the complex interplay of rhythm, texture and melody.

What happens when a 4-year-old gets cancer? We discover real superheroes wear hospital gowns, not capes! Meyer Mixdorf was diagnosed with Medulloblastoma, a form of brain cancer, in 2020. *Song of Survival* was written to reflect some of what he and his family went through in his fight to survive.—Susan Mutter

Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, blatant displays of racism surged as anti-Asian violence devastated the lives and communities of millions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. 창 (Chang), draws inspiration from the expressive techniques used by Korean traditional singers in 판소리 (Pansori, a form of musical monodrama), a particularly powerful portrayal of grief.—Jiyoun Chung

In a departure from my normal compositional approach, the harmonies in *Serenade* are primarily based on triads. Traditionally the trombone is known for its loud and triumphant brass qualities, often described as “masculine” or “manly.” However, its incredibly sweet, warm and delicate tone is often overlooked. Here I aim to highlight the lyrical and tender qualities of the trombone.—Jiyoun Chung

I wrote this sonata at the beginning of 2022, as we began to find our way back to one another in-person, after years of separation and isolation during the pandemic. In this time of reconnection, there was so much to catch up on, so much to say—and yet I was struck by how much I suddenly felt I couldn’t say. Either I no longer had the right words, or perhaps I realized the pandemic had changed my relationships to the point where we no longer had that collective vision and understanding of the world, that shared context and vocabulary.

This music was my way of exploring all the things I could no longer say in words. The moments where something dark was roiling inside me, and I feared that letting it surface would be too destructive. The moments where I wanted to sharply disagree, to lash out, and knew I couldn’t. The moments of internal reflection and reckoning.

Maybe you also experienced some of these darker moments as the world came back together. I hope this piece speaks to you, somewhere in your own internal dialogue. Even if the pieces of our society no longer fit together as they used to, may we find the new context together.

Much of the musical material in this piece comes directly from Hindustani classical music. The middle section of movement one is a chorale in Raag Megh. The melodic material in movement 2 alternates between Raag Chandrakauns and Raag Jog. Movement 3 is entirely in Raag Puriya Dhanashree.—Reena Esmail

## Kansas State University's Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

As the first land-grant institution established under the 1862 Morrill Act, we acknowledge that the state of Kansas is historically home to many Native nations, including the Kaw, Osage, and Pawnee, among others. Furthermore, Kansas is the current home to four federally recognized Native nations: The Prairie Band Potawatomie, the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas, the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska.

Many Native nations utilized the western plains of Kansas as their hunting grounds, and others—such as the Delaware—were moved through this region during Indian removal efforts to make way for White settlers. It's important to acknowledge this, since the land that serves as the foundation for this institution was, and still is, stolen land.

We remember these truths because K-State's status as a land-grant institution is a story that exists within ongoing settler colonialism, and rests on the dispossession of indigenous peoples and nations from their native lands. These truths are often invisible to many. The recognition that K-State's history begins and continues through indigenous contests is essential.

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