

# Jessie Whelan – Senior Recital

May 2nd, 2026

4:00 p.m.

Kirmser Hall, Kansas State University

## PROGRAM

*Motion No. 2* (2024) ..... Nicholas V. Hall (b. 1991)  
Jasper Vallad, percussion

*I Will See You Again* (2016) ..... Juan Álamo (b. 1978)

*Three Congations* (2012) ..... Brad Dutz (b. 1960)

*Persephone* (2016) ..... Bryce Craig (b.1990)  
Jake Daley, trombone

*Fly II* (2023) ..... Heng Liu (b. 1987)  
Javi Garza, marimba  
Ryan Woodruff, marimba  
August Siefkes, glockenspiel  
Mark McKinley, vibraphone  
Jasper Vallad, drumset  
Devon Autry, cajon

Audio by Jessie Whelan and Jake Daley

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

School of Music,  
Theatre, and Dance

## Program Notes

### Motion No. 2

“The second piece in a series of works for percussion duo, *Motion No. 2* is a study of common rock and funk rhythms. Originally derived from grooves on a drumset—and continuing the series’ goal of challenging two individuals to act as a single unit—each player performs separate segments of the primary and secondary musical material to create a cohesive whole. The combination of a laid-back feel and fast, intertwining rhythms creates the unique groove-based texture that is *Motion No. 2*.”

- *Nicholas V. Hall*

When programming for this recital, I decided I wanted to choose pieces as an homage to my college experience as a whole. I have played bass drum in the Marching Band for the last 4 years, so I would be remiss to not acknowledge how that has shaped me as a musician. Bass drum is centered around both independence and dependence, a balance I have not yet perfected as a musician and as a person.

- *Jessie Whelan*

### I Will See You Again

“*I Will See You Again* was originally premiered in Mexico in 2008 during the 8th International Marimba Festival in Chiapas, Mexico. The piece was first conceived as an improvised solo in memory of my brother in law Albert “Butchi” Medina. During my tour in Mexico in 2008, I was informed that he had passed away so in my next concert I decided to improvise something in his memory. Over time, the piece has evolved and become more of a structured composition but without losing the improvisatory feel which was originally intended.”

- *Juan Álamo*

Is it possible to grieve something that isn’t gone? Lately, I have been considering the fact that in one year, I will be finished with my degree and I will not be a student for the first time since I was three years old. I am grieving a version of myself that has been replaced. I think, as people, we all grow and leave behind different versions of ourselves for the better. But I also believe that we rightfully should grieve ourselves. I am a better person than I was, but I cannot ignore it; that version of myself was just as real and genuine as I am now.

- *Jessie Whelan*

### **Three Congations**

“Scored for 3 *congas*, this solo involves realizing different “melodies” or fragments of melodies, which are juxtaposed over recurring ostinato patterns. It employs a variety of hand techniques to achieve the subtle nuances required, while keeping the prominent groove moving.”

- Brad Dutz

One of the most difficult aspects of being a musician is the self-doubt that comes with it. I don't know a single musician who hasn't talked poorly of themselves at one point or another. What is it about creating art that makes us second guess ourselves? I remember during my freshman year of college, I asked an upperclassman, “At what point did you start to be confident in your ability?” She responded, “I haven't yet, but I'll let you know when I do.”

- Jessie Whelan

### **Persephone**

“*Persephone* was written for a good friend and colleague Nathan Brown who, in addition to being an active composer, is an excellent trombonist. The work is part of my “Pantheon Series,” which are based on figures in Greek and Roman mythology. According to tradition Persephone was the daughter of Zeus, king of the gods, and also acted as the goddess of vegetation. Due to her radiant beauty Hades, king of the underworld, forcefully abducted Persephone and made her his queen. Her absence began to cause the world's vegetation to wither, and Zeus demanded the return of his daughter to the surface so people would not starve. Hades obliged, but he first tricked Persephone to eating three seeds of a pomegranate fruit. Due to this act Persephone was forced to spend three months of the year as queen of the underworld, causing the creation of the winter season where nothing grows. The work depicts not only the brightness of the world under Persephone's guidance, but also her abduction and the resulting melancholy and despair of her absence.”

- Bryce Craig

*Persephone* represents the beauty, harshness, and grief that comes with love. Love cannot come without loss and loss only comes from love. This piece is a dedication to my family and loved ones. Without them, I would be nothing.

- Jessie Whelan

## Fly II

“Fly II, composed by Heng Liu, is a musical adventure filled with dreamy enchantment. The Handpan takes center stage in this enthralling 5-minute composition for percussion ensemble, promising to captivate and delight audiences.”

- *Edition Svitzer Publications*

As an exciting conclusion to my recital, I am a featured soloist on the *handpan*. The handpan is a descendent of the steel drum, designed in the 2000s as a form of steel pan that is played with the hands and fingertips. The unique sound is soft and calming, pairing nicely with this percussion ensemble. Learning how to play the handpan in the last year has been challenging, yet so rewarding. Since coming to K-State, I have had the opportunity to learn about so many new instruments and techniques, so to me, this piece is representative of my personal growth as a musician, and my hope for the future. There are so many peers and teachers who have had a hand in this growth, so I would like to dedicate this piece to all of the percussion studio members I have had the pleasure of performing alongside, my percussion professors, Dr. Kurt Gartner and Neil Dunn, and all of the other professors who have influenced me.

- *Jessie Whelan*