

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS

Boyer College of Music and Dance

Faculty Recital:
Matthew Levy, saxophone

Sum of Its Parts

A program of electro-acoustic music
for tenor saxophone

Friday, April 3, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Rock Hall Auditorium
1715 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Program

*can't find the words** (2019/2026)

Erin Busch (b. 1991)

*Sum of Its Parts** (2018)

Emma O'Halloran (b. 1985)

Brief Intermission

*See Your Shadow** (2022)

Nick DiBerardino (b. 1989)

Grab It! (1999)

Jacob TV (b. 1951)

**composed for Matthew Levy*

The use of photographic, audio and video recording is not permitted.

Please turn off all electronic devices.

Two hundred eighty-fifth performance of the 2025-2026 season.

About the Artist

Saxophonist, composer, curator, producer/engineer, and educator **MATTHEW LEVY** has made an enduring contribution to contemporary music as co-founder and executive director of the world-renowned PRISM Quartet, and as a collaborator with other artists and ensembles for more than 40 years. Matt has been hailed by *The Saxophone Journal* as “a complete virtuoso of the tenor saxophone” and by *The New York Times* for his “energetic and enlivening” performances. He is the recipient of fellowships from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, the Independence Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He has scored four motion pictures, including PBS’s *Diary of a City Priest*, featured at the Sundance Film Festival. Matt has recorded for Albany, BCM+D, BMOP/Sound, Deutsche Grammophon, ECM, Grammavision, Innova, Koch International, Navona, Naxos, New Dynamic, New Focus, Orange Mountain, Tzadik, and XAS, which he founded in 2016. *People’s Emergency Center*, a critically acclaimed double album of Matt’s original music that spotlights guest artists Jason Moran, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Tim Ries, Ben Monder, Jay Anderson, and Bill Stewart was described by *PopMatters* as “9 Stars, Best Jazz of 2014...too big to fail” and by WRTI as “magic with swirling precision.” A member of the Network for New Music Ensemble, Matt has premiered solo works by Emma O’Halloran, Paola Prestini, Nick DiBerardino, Renee Favand, Jacob Walls, Erin Busch, and David Ludwig; collaborated with a host of choreographers and dance companies, among them Nai-Ni Chen Dance Co., Philadelphia Ballet, Peter Sparling, Scrap Performance Group, and Group Motion Dance Theater; and appeared as a guest artist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Dolce Suono Ensemble, and counter-induction. His work with PRISM has included tours of China, Russia, and Latin America; concerto appearances with the Cleveland Orchestra and Dallas Symphony; and recital performances presented by Carnegie Hall and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He serves on the faculty of Temple University Boyer College of Music and Dance where he maintains a robust saxophone studio, is a member of the Producers & Engineers Wing and Songwriters & Composers Wing of the Recording Academy and performs exclusively on Selmer saxophones.

Program Notes

*can't find the words** (2019/2026)

Erin Busch (b. 1991)

can't find the words is about a struggle to verbally express difficult or complex experiences, the complications of memory, and the necessity of reframing our experiences so others might understand.

ERIN BUSCH is a composer and cellist residing in Philadelphia who serves on the faculty of Temple University and as Director of Music Ministry for the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing. Named one of Yamaha's 40 under 40 music educators, Temple University's 30 under 30, and Philadelphia Magazine's 2022 "Luminary Leader," Erin is the Founder and Executive Director of Wildflower Composers, a nonprofit that amplifies and supports female, transgender, nonbinary, and genderqueer composers. Erin is also the Co-Founding Director of the Gabriela Ortiz Composing Studio. She performs regularly with the Arcana New Music Ensemble and Symphony in C.

*Sum of Its Parts** (2018)

Emma O'Halloran (b. 1985)

Matthew Levy writes:

"Emma' O'Halloran's *Sum of Its Parts* is the first in a series written for me in which the composers record and synthesize elements of my own performance practice – from subtones and percussive articulation to growls, multiphonics, and microtones – to form a soundtrack of otherworldly textures for my live tenor sax. Many of these works allow for improvisation, which lets me contribute my own ideas to the compositions. I like the idea of working with composers to explode my approach to the instrument through electronics in a way that is not otherwise possible, even with multiple live saxes."

O'Halloran, who found her way into concert music via electronica, sought in *Sum of Its Parts* to, in her words, create "a backdrop of sound that Matt could interact with. In many ways, the piece is a product of Matt's musical inclinations as a performer and my interests as a composer, and the synthesis of these two elements created something unexpected and beautiful."

GRAMMY-nominated Irish composer **EMMA O'HALLORAN** is interested in joy, wonder, hope, and connection, and her music is driven by a desire to capture the magic of what it means to be human. Freely intertwining acoustic and electronic music, Emma has written for folk musicians, chamber ensembles, turntables, laptop orchestra, symphony orchestra, opera, and theatre, and her work has been described as “intensely beautiful” (*Washington Post*) and “unencumbered, authentic, and joyful” (*I Care If You Listen*). In 2021, in partnership with the Irish National Concert Hall, she founded the Creative Lab, a mentorship program for young composers from traditionally underrepresented groups in music composition.

*See Your Shadow** (2022)

Nick DiBerardino (b. 1989)

Like O'Halloran, Nick DiBerardino, in his words:

“processed and combined Matt’s recorded sounds into a tenor sax orchestra, a kaleidoscopic collage of many Matts.” *See Your Shadow* was inspired by and is dedicated to Matt and his wife Willa’s daughter, Mae Priscilla Levy. Nick continues, “I met baby Mae, named after Matt’s late mother, when she was only a few months old, and her presence in the Levy house transformed my experience. I eagerly followed her progress via photo, email, and video. Soon, I couldn’t get the idea out of my head that my sax and electronics piece should really be for Matt and Mae. Matt obliged, and in a major way. For this piece, he took ‘field recordings’ of Mae for a couple of months. These are an incredible audio archive of her personal growth and her relationships with Matt and Willa. By the end of the recording process, Mae was aware of what was going on – imagine my surprise when she said ‘Nick’ and ‘recorder’ during one of the later recording sessions! In *See Your Shadow*, the field recordings sometimes remain intact, and at other times are deconstructed, including in some of the work’s most heartfelt moments, when harmonies are generated by very tiny, tuned slices of Mae’s voice. Matt made those audio recordings of his family during a period that coincided with the start of the coronavirus pandemic. I listened to them while isolating in my home. The sense of connection they brought me was an invaluable source of hope and light during a dark time. This piece is about that combination of heaviness and lightness – about seeing our shadows as we live in the intersection between the bright and the dark. Shadows play across this music in the form of sequences, echoes, and canonic voices that ‘shadow’ one another.”

Composer **NICK DIBERARDINO** welds the weird machinery of music's past to the post-genre present, crafting whimsical and thought-provoking sonic stories for our time. His inspirations span science, literature, and everyday life — from reef-saving coral research and Da Vinci's failed flying machines to his morning coffee and favorite episodes of Star Trek. A Rhodes Scholar, Nick is Provost and Dean of the Conservatory at Curtis Institute of Music, where he directs the Curtis New Music Ensemble and holds the Rock Chair in Composition Studies. He also serves as a composition faculty member and program coordinator at the Tanglewood Music Center.

***Grab It!* (1999)**

Jacob TV (b. 1951)

Growing up in the 60s with blues, jazz and rock, American music had a strong impact on Jacob TV. Language is one of the origins of music, which is for instance obvious in blues. In *Grab It!*, the 'no-man's-land' between speech and music is explored. Speech becomes music, when people get emotional. Like crying and singing can become one... *Grab It!* is based on speech samples from life-sentenced prisoners. Their verbal vitality and aggression match the harsh sound of the tenor sax. *Grab it!* is a competing duet, a 'battle' if you like, for tenor sax and speech grooves in unison. The sax 'competes' with a non-stop range of syllables, words and one liners, demanding endurance from the performer. In jail suicide is not uncommon: 'He tied one end around the pipe, and he hung himself. So, he went out the back door wrapped up in a green sheet with a tag on his toe.... You lose everything!' But *Grab it!* is not just sad, it can also be understood as a 'memento vivere'. Death row as a metaphor for life: Life is worth living. 'Grab it!'

Dutch 'avant pop' composer **Jacob TV** (Jacob ter Veldhuis, 1951) started as a rock musician and studied composition and electronic music with Luctor Ponse and Willem Frederik Bon at the Groningen Conservatoire. Hailed by the press as the 'Jeff Koons of new music,' he won the first BUMA Classical Award in 2016 for the best-selling classical export product from the Netherlands. With his continually updated reality opera *THE NEWS* he has been touring worldwide, his ballet music sounds from Moscow to Chicago.

Boyer College of Music and Dance

The Boyer College of Music and Dance offers over 500 events open to the public each year. Students have the unique opportunity to interact with leading performers, composers, conductors, educators, choreographers and guest artists while experiencing a challenging and diverse academic curriculum. The Boyer faculty are recognized globally as leaders in their respective fields. Boyer alumni are ambassadors of artistic leadership and perform with major orchestras, opera and dance companies, teach at schools and colleges and work as professional music therapists, choreographers and composers. Boyer's recording label, BCM&D records, has produced more than thirty recordings, five of which have received Grammy nominations.

boyer.temple.edu

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts consists of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, the George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater and the Temple Performing Arts Center. The School of Theater, Film and Media Arts engages gifted students with nationally and internationally recognized faculty scholars and professionals. A hallmark of the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts is the Los Angeles Study Away program, housed at historic Raleigh Studios. The George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater engages visiting performers, guest artists, set designers, playwrights and other Broadway professionals. The Temple Performing Arts Center (TPAC), a historic landmark on campus, is home to a state-of-the-art 1,200 seat auditorium and 200 seat chapel. More than 500 concerts, classes, lectures and performances take place at TPAC each year.

arts.temple.edu

Temple University

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. Conwell recruited volunteer faculty to participate in the burgeoning night school, and in 1888 he received a charter of incorporation for "The Temple College." His founding vision for the school was to provide superior educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, regardless of their backgrounds or means. The fledgling college continued to grow, adding programs and students throughout the following decades. Today, Temple's more than 35,000 students continue to follow the university's official motto—*Perseverantia Vincit*, or "Perseverance Conquers"—with their supreme dedication to excellence in academics, research, athletics, the arts and more.

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