

PRESENTS

ALEXANDER PERSHOUNIN, BASS  
CHRISTOPHER MERZ, SAXOPHONE  
MICHAEL CONRAD, PIANO  
JOSH HAKANSON, DRUMS

**Waltzes for solo Double Bass, no. 1-3** ..... Domenico Dragonetti  
(1763-1846)

**Bourrée, from Cello Suite #3, BWV 1009** ..... Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

**Etudes-Caprices, no. 1** ..... Édouard Nanny  
(1872-1942)

Alexander Pershounin, bass

**Nested Times** ..... Alexander Pershounin

**Fascinating Rhythm** ..... George Gershwin  
(1898-1937)

**Pulsar** ..... Alexander Pershounin

**She's Leaving Home** ..... Paul McCartney  
(b. 1942)

**Blues for You and I** ..... Alexander Pershounin

Christopher Merz, saxophone  
Michael Conrad, piano  
Josh Hakanson, drums

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Alexander Pershounin** has performed extensively throughout Europe and United States in both classical and jazz settings and has been featured as a performer and composer on such internationally recognized music events as Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, Pori Jazz Festival in Finland, Europe's Jazz Contest in Belgium, and New Orleans Jazz Fest, among many others. His performing credits include collaboration projects and appearances with world-class artists ranging from Bob Berg, Mulgrew Miller, Conrad Herwig, and Benny Golson to Itzhac Perlman, Yo Yo Ma, and Ray Charles, among many others. He also has recorded several commercially released compact disc albums and music to four full-length motion pictures. He holds DMA and MFA degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi and MFA and BM degrees from Russia's most prestigious music institution: Gnessins' State Academy of Music in Moscow. Before joining the UNI faculty as a bass studio and music theory instructor Dr. Pershounin had taught at Columbus State University, Minnesota State University Moorhead, Westfield State College, University of Southern Mississippi, and various music institutions in Russia. His students won national and international competitions, were accepted in most prestigious music institutions, and successfully developed their own professional music careers.

**Christopher Merz**, Professor of Music, has served as Director of Jazz Studies and Director of the award-winning UNI Jazz Band One at the University of Northern Iowa since 2002. Under his direction, the band has traveled to Thailand as well as the east coast of the US, and has recorded 13 CDs featuring many original compositions and arrangements by student and faculty writers. The 2006 recipient of the CHFA University Book and Supply Outstanding Teaching award, Merz was the 2016 recipient of the John L. Baker Faculty Development award, and was inducted into the Iowa Jazz Educators' Hall of Fame in 2015. He is a Past President of Jazz Educators of Iowa (JEI), and the founder and director of the UNI Combo Camp, an annual event for high school jazz students and music educators, which takes place each June. His recording credits include Steve McCraven, Darius Brubeck, John Rapson and Jon Snell, as well as his own projects; Counterculture, the Chris Merz/Bob Washut Duo, The X-tet, and Equilateral. His 1997 release with the X-tet, *Mystery is My Story*, prompted Dave Brubeck to write, "I am very pleased with this wonderful band. Naturally I would admire a group like yours that, to me, is a grand extension of what we were doing...when we were the 'new thing'". Current projects include Colossus Central (an exciting new big band led by UNI alum Michael Conrad) and the quartet, Christopher's Very Happy. Band., which performs Merz's originals exclusively. CVH.B.'s debut cd, *We Are Bathed in Sunlight*, was recently released on RealTown! Records. An accomplished composer/arranger for large jazz ensembles, Merz has received commissions from university and high school big bands throughout the country, and is published through UNC Jazz Press and ejazzlines. He is also a highly sought-after

guest soloist, clinician and conductor at university and high school jazz festivals nationwide, and is endorsed by D'Addario and TM Custom tenor saxophones.

**Mike Conrad** joined the UNI Faculty in the Fall of 2018. He has been recognized for his arranging and composing with four ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Awards and seven DownBeat Awards, as well as awards and commissions from organizations like the Bundesjazzorchester of Germany, the West Point Jazz Knights, and the American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers. Conrad's arrangements have been performed all around the world, including a 2014 premiere at Carnegie Hall, and a performance at the US Presidential Inauguration in 2013. Recently, Conrad was selected to participate in the 2017 Metropole Orchestra Arrangers Workshop with Vince Mendoza and was chosen as a finalist for the "Spheres Of A Genius" composition competition through the Vienna Radio Symphony. As a performer, Dr. Conrad has toured China, played at the Umbria Jazz Festival in Perugia, Italy, and appeared at various jazz festivals and venues all over the United States. He has enjoyed playing piano in ensembles like the Alexa Tarantino Quintet, Dave Chisholm's Calligraphy, and Christopher's Very Happy. Band. (a quartet led by UNI Director of Jazz Studies Chris Merz). Equally accomplished on both trombone and piano, Conrad truly loves collaborating with other musicians, and always brings his creativity and expressiveness to every performance he gives and every composition that he writes. From 2013 to 2015, Conrad was the Head Band Director at West High School in Waterloo, Iowa where he directed the Wind Symphony and Jazz Ensembles and taught Music Theory and Jazz Improvisation. He has also led his own large jazz ensemble called COLOSSUS and released an album of original music featuring Alex Sipiagin with his 15-piece group, the All Angles Orchestra. Dr. Conrad is in high demand as a clinician and guest director for jazz bands, and he continues to come up with fresh and exciting works for a wide variety of ensembles. Many of his compositions and arrangements are published by UNC Jazz Press, ejazzlines, and his own website, [www.mconradmusic.com](http://www.mconradmusic.com). Dr. Conrad earned degrees from the University Northern Iowa (BM and BME), the Eastman School of Music (MM), and the University of Northern Colorado (DA).

**Josh Hakanson** is a musician and educator based in Cedar Falls, IA. On drum set, Hakanson has played professionally in the Northwest and Midwest in a range of musical styles, encompassing jazz, rock, hip-hop, and fusion. As a student and professional performer, he has made appearances with such musicians as Bobby Shew, Adam Kolker, John Wojciechowski, Luis Bonilla, Benny Green, Steve Owen, Idit Shner, Joe Manis, Bob Washut, Chris Merz, Dave Rezek, Don Jaques, and many others. As an educator, he has taught private lessons to all ages, coached large and small jazz ensembles at the collegiate level, and administered music clinics at the middle and high school level.