



**arts&ideas**  
events for life long learners

**LEWIS UNIVERSITY**  
SPRING 2022

## PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

# LYNX: Amplify Project



**FEB. 21, 2022 • 7:30P**

*St. Charles Borromeo Convocation Hall*

### SELECTED SONGS COMMISSIONED BY LYNX FOR THEIR 2020-2021 AMPLIFY SERIES

Hope! (2021)	Music by Michelle Isaac
I. Trapped	Text by Benjamin Smidt
II. Faith	
III. Hopeful	
IV. Freed	
V. Beauty	
<i>Nicholas Ward, baritone and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	
I Love You (2021)	Music by Liza Sobel
<i>Olivia Doig, soprano and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Mitchell Robins
Weather Songs (2021)	Music by Mike McFerron
What is in a Wind Sound	Text by Aiden Levy
The Clouds were Piling	
<i>Nicholas Ward, baritone and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	

### SELECTIONS FROM BEAUTIFUL SMALL THINGS (LYNX'S DEBUT ALBUM)

The Sixth Extinction (2019)	Music by Tariq Al-Sabir
<i>Nicholas Ward, baritone and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Kenta Mignot
My neatest friend Z (2017)	Music by Travis Reynolds
	Text by Rahul Sivaruban
People Wish for Love (2019)	Music by Travis Reynolds
<i>Olivia Doig, soprano and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Michael Zepf
In the Dark Night (2019)	Music by Tariq Al-Sabir
	Text by Michael Zepf
Rap About Girls (2020)	Music by Benjamin Krause
<i>Nicholas Ward, baritone and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Aarush Srivastava from <i>Defined by Words</i>
March 2017: Lucky (2019)	Music by Joel Balzun
<i>Olivia Doig, soprano and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Luke Burke from <i>Was/Am/Will Be</i>
Lake Erie (2020)	Music by Benjamin Krause
<i>Nicholas Ward, baritone and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Darren Stella from <i>Defined by Words</i>
beautiful small things (2017)	Music by Emily Cooley
<i>Olivia Doig, soprano and Daniel Baer, pianist</i>	Text by Ryan Harris

## PROGRAM NOTES

*"Autistic children really want to be heard and speak for themselves. Being autistic somewhat conditions me to being passed over when someone asks a question and they look at my mom for the answer. I want people to take the time to communicate with autistic people and actually hear us for we have a lot to say."*

- Ritthik Sinhasan, 2017 Amplify Series writer

Through the Amplify Series (formerly Autism Advocacy Series), LYNX collects poetry and prose written by autistic individuals who are primarily nonspeaking and commissions composers to set their words as song. These youth communicate by spelling words on a letterboard, iPad, or keyboard. Their rich inner lives often go unnoticed and unacknowledged by those not directly connected to the autism or letterboarding communities.

The Amplify Series began in 2016 with a group of youth from Cincinnati, OH. It has always been of utmost importance to LYNX that the Amplify Series is a true collaboration that honors each participating voice—that of the poet, the composer, the singer, and the pianist—distinctly. Since its inception, over four hours of new music has been commissioned, and the voices of 15 poets and 16 composers have been featured. In March 2022, LYNX will release their debut album, beautiful small things, featuring selected songs from the Amplify Series, as well as a sheet music anthology. For more information, please visit [www.lynxproject.org](http://www.lynxproject.org).

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## SONG TEXTS

### **BENJAMIN SMIDT** Hope!

Do you ever feel trapped with no way out? Only thoughts, and no vehicle to deliver those thoughts? That was my life, and I was trapped with no exit. This was the case until I was 12 years old. I wanted to talk so bad it piloted my every prayer. Hope comforted me, because I knew that one day God would answer my prayer. So, in 6th grade, a necessary connection was made and the rest is now the story titled 'Hope!'

During my sixth grade year, I wasn't able to do much of anything. I had no challenge, no friendships, and I deeply craved both of those things. I always just wanted to die, because I had no life- at least that was my perception at the time. At school, I worked on getting the basics. They had no clue that I already knew them, and I would get so frustrated and livid when I couldn't show them the correct response. I so desired to learn, yet at that time my dream was off the table. I did have two good things going for me, though, my family and trust in God! I had a mustard seed of faith, and a hope that God would eventually send the sunshine. That was my comfort at the time.

In the second semester of 6th grade, everything started to become hopeful. In December, my parents had met a lady from a church nativity program named Kristen. I started working with her a few times a week. She had given me a ton of challenges. I was introduced to so many rich topics: pre-algebra, poetry, wars, and hard readings that actually made me think. It was so exciting for me, but also so terrifying and hard. During the first few months, my arms ached because I was pointing and using my arms, wrist, and fingers for long periods of time. My challenges during my RPM lessons were major during the time as concentration, sitting, thinking, and writing were all unpracticed things. Yet, I grew and all of that became another common practice in my life. I was also afraid that eventually I would fail. I didn't know if I would ever have a voice, like I do now. Still, I worked. Soon I had choices, and then a word. I never knew how liberating one word would be, but I finally was able to express. That had never been plausible or attainable in my life. It was a big ordeal.

A couple of months later, one word turned into a sentence and that turned into paragraphs and essays. Conditions in my life began to change, because I was now heard. Life became beautiful. I could have friends, go to school, take finals, chat with my parents and cousins, have a sleepover with a friend, share at church and the list goes on and on. I was freed from the snares of hopelessness.

In all of this, I found part of my purpose- even though at times I still get too emotionally involved with what I lack ;). I have, though, learned much. I now treasure what I was taught by the Lord- beauty comes from overcoming pain and obstacles in life. You see, during that time of anguish and anger towards God, I hoped that one day God would eventually use it all and make a treasure from all the pain. He did just that, and since finding my voice, I am hopeful. That is how hope came to be.

**MITCHELL ROBINS** Adapted from Mitchell's blog, "Mitchell's Life with Autism"

"I lo-"  
I have been alone for most of my life inside my body  
"I lo-"  
People have tried to make me communicate before, but I couldn't stand the limitations.  
Nobody could ask me what I wanted and they assumed that I had no opinion and that I understood very little.  
I couldn't get what I wanted so I felt frustrated and angry.  
I am more complicated than some may think. I am constantly thinking about everything and keep it to myself.  
I am much more intelligent than people know, but I don't speak. I am bright, strong, and persistent. I have thoughts and needs like everyone else, but sometimes people don't realize that.  
"I lo-"  
It took me a long time to learn Rapid Prompting Method and it was a lot of work but it opened up my world.  
"I love you."  
I have learned how to answer questions, tell my needs, express myself and advocate for myself.  
"I love you."

**AIDEN LEVY** What is in a Wind Sound

What is in a wind sound  
That sings to the trees  
When falling leaves  
Are not green  
And the air is cold  
The day is short  
It gets dark  
Wind scatters leaves  
on the ground

The Clouds Were Piling

The clouds were piling  
Sky had lightning  
Piling, scaring  
Finally showering  
Streets were flowing  
Water rushing  
Thunder rumbling  
Clouds were piling

**KENTA MIGNOT** The Sixth Extinction

We are tiny  
We are young  
We are powerless  
We are foolish  
We are inhumane  
  
Our home is precious  
Our home is fragile  
Our home is crying  
Our home is yet resilient  
Our home is the miracle of accidental nature

Look at it from outer space, the deep blue  
Look at it from the inside, the melting red  
Look at it as a bird, the gradation of green  
Look at it as a fish, the diamond white in the water  
Look at it as a tree, the faint purple in the wind  
Look at it as a flower, the humming yellow of insects  
Look at it as the head of a lion pack, the warm brown  
of the earth  
Look at it as a star, the loving golden neighbor

I wonder if we do enough to protect it  
I wonder if we are really the most superior species in  
4.6 billion years  
I wonder if we are letting the sixth extinction happen

**RAHUL SIVARUBAN** My Neatest Friend Z

My neatest friend Z. I so really needed a friend like her. She only sees my strengths. Testing my tiny soul that she is leaving. She just helps. Others so scared of my Autism. She seems to get I only try to do my best. I met my neatest friend at Symmes Players. Symmes Players is an extracurricular with Drama. She is the neatest person I know.

**MICHAEL ZEPF** People Wish For Love

People love hugs and they wish for more  
Willing to wait forever  
Hoping for love to come once more  
Willing to wait forever  
Always hoping for more and more  
Willing to wait forever

In the Dark Night

In the dark night  
When the moon was white  
My sorrow was out of sight  
The world was looking all right

## AARUSH SRIVASTAVA Rap About Girls

Girls are all I see  
I smile when they look at me  
I think they are a pretty as rose  
How I just tingle in my toes  
How fun it seems to me  
To meet one just like me

## LUKE BURKE Blog Excerpt

Want my voice to work  
So sorry my body won't cooperate  
I am trying my best  
But my body won't listen to my brain

I think I have a lucky family  
Because they have me as a son

## DARREN STELLA Lake Erie

I wonder why it is so peaceful to stare.  
I wonder why the rocks are so grained in the land.  
I wonder why the lighthouse seems so abandoned.  
I wonder why the sky looks so magical over the water.  
I wonder why the tourists don't look at it the way I do.

## RYAN HARRIS I Want to See the World

I want to see the world not by the whole,  
but by the all too beautiful small things.

## My Overwhelming Emotion

My overwhelming emotion is that there is always hope.

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## ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

*The New York Times* has hailed **Daniel Baer** as a pianist who plays with “fluidity, warmth, and sparkle” who “achieved the often elusive...goal of putting virtuosity at the service of bigger ideas.” His New York debut was praised as a performance where “every note had color, depth, emotion, and meaning.” Dr. Baer has performed solo and collaborative recitals across the United States and Europe. Dr. Baer has been a prizewinner in many national and international piano competitions including first prize, the Marshall Prize, at the Grieg Young Artist Piano Competition.

Daniel Baer has studied with Seymour Bernstein since 2005, received his Master's Degree in Piano Performance at Juilliard where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal, and earned his Doctorate at the Eastman School of Music where he studied with Douglas Humpherys. He is currently on faculty at the Music Institute of Chicago.

Chicago-based soprano **Olivia Doig** performs a range of classical and musical theater repertoire across the midwest. Recent performance highlights include Josephine in *HMS Pinafore* (Ohio Light Opera), Zaneeta in *The Music Man* (Ohio Light Opera), Amor in *Ariane et Bacchus* (Haymarket Opera), concerts as a resident artist with Florentine Opera, and productions with Music Theater Works, Opera Atelier, and Chicago Opera Theater. She has received awards from the American Opera Society of Chicago, the Musicians Club of Women, the Orpheus Competition, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Olivia co-developed the classical art song portion of LYNX Project's *Composition of a City*, a high school songwriting program which explores shared elements of classical art song and hip hop music. She holds degrees from Wheaton College and Florida State University and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois.

Baritone **Nicholas Ward** is thrilled to be returning to the Lynx Project for the 2021/22 season. He first performed with LYNX Project in the spring of 2020 for the Chicago Premiere of the Autism Advocacy Series. He has performed in opera across the country with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Union Avenue Opera, Winter Opera St. Louis, Florida Grand Opera, Opera in the Heights, Central City Opera, and many more. Recent concert and recital highlights include CCPA's PianoFest, Opera Birmingham's *Catch a Rising Star* series, the Saugatuck Center for the Arts, and the Steinway Gallery in Miami. He is a three-time Regional Finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and an award winner from the Opera Birmingham Competition, the Opera Guild of Dayton Competition, and FAVA's Grand Concours de Chant. He received his degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Cincinnati-CCM. He grew up in Pontiac, Michigan, and currently resides in Chicago.

## ENGLISH DEPT CREATIVE WRITING SERIES

**AUTHORS RITA MOOKERJEE & CARRIE MCGATH**

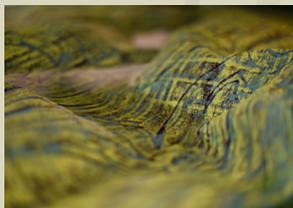
**Thursday, March 3 – 4 pm**

AS158

Dr. Rita Mookerjee is the Ida B. Wells-Barnett Postdoctoral Fellow at DePaul University. She holds a PhD in Literature from Florida State University. In 2020, she was a Fulbright fellow in Kingston, Jamaica. Her poetry is featured in *Juked*, *Hobart Pulp*, *New Orleans Review*, the *Offing*, and the *Baltimore Review*. She is the co-founder of *Honey Literary* and the Assistant Poetry Editor at *Split Lip Magazine*. Her book **FALSE OFFERING** is forthcoming from JackLeg Press.



Carrie McGath is a doctoral student in the Program for Writers at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her first collection of poems, **SMALL MURDERS**, was released in 2006 by New Issues Poetry and Prose. She is at work on her second full-length collection of poems tentatively titled, **THE LUCK OF ANHEDONIA**.



## ART GALLERY SHOW

**BENJAMIN F. CALVERT III**

**Art Reception & Gallery Talk**

February 7 - March 18

**Thursday, March 17 – 7 PM**

*Wadsworth Family Gallery*

Benjamin F. Calvert III is a third-generation printmaker. His passion for nature is reflected in his use of wood blocks to create relief prints on paper and canvas. Life experiences are translated to two-dimensional works of art.

## PERFORMING ARTS SERIES CATCH THE TWAIN

**TUESDAY, MARCH 22**

**TWO PERFORMANCES: 5 PM & 7:30 PM**

*Studio Theatre*

Experience the historic Mark Twain! In this one-of-a-kind show, Warren Brown brings the famed American writer to life and talks about his life and the philosophies which made him the unique personality and writer known throughout the world. If you have ever wished to ask a question of Mark Twain join us for this interactive dialogue and performance.

Warren Brown is one of the premier Mark Twain impersonators. He has spent his life learning about the real Mark Twain and has traveled the country interacting audiences to bring Mark Twain back to life. Through his performances, people can once again hear of Mark Twain's life adventures and world views.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>International Tea and Talk</b>	Tuesday, Feb. 22 – 2pm <i>McNamara, basement conference room</i>
<b>Magical or Magic? The Healing of Feeling Lost and Being Found</b>	Wednesday, March 2 – 6pm <i>Zoom</i>
<b>Beyond the Familiar: Careers in Theology and Peace &amp; Justice Studies</b>	Tuesday, March 15 – 2pm <i>AS150</i>
<b>musicBYTES</b>	Thursday, March 17 – Noon <i>Ives Hall</i>
<b>Music in VR</b>	Thursday, March 17 – 2pm <i>AS107-S</i>
<b>Monarch Winds Recital</b>	Monday, March 21 – 7:30pm <i>St. Charles Borromeo Convocation Hall</i>
<b>International Tea and Talk</b>	Tuesday, March 22 – 2pm <i>McNamara, basement conference room</i>



*Arts&Ideas Lewis programming is made possible by generous support from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, Arts Midwest, and the Illinois Humanities.*

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