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## Acclaimed visiting ensemble premieres music about small-town nostalgia

*Contemporary music group in residency shares concert and musicianship with community.*

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**EAST LANSING, Mich.** – Contemporary music group [NOW Ensemble](#) will be in concert on the MSU campus for a performance that features the premiere of a new work written by Michigan composer [Griffin Candey](#). As part of the College of Music’s Showcase Series, underwritten by the [MSU Federal Credit Union](#), the newly composed music highlights the nostalgia for small towns that will be performed in public for the first time on **Thursday, March 7 at 7:30 p.m. at MSU’s Fairchild Theatre.**

MSU is honored that NOW Ensemble, a chamber group comprised of dynamic instrumentalists and composers, has chosen their stop on campus to premiere their latest collaboration with an emerging composer. While in residence at the college, the ensemble will also conduct masterclasses, perform site readings of works authored by MSU composition students, and visit local middle and high schools to hold workshops for young aspiring musicians.

The group’s visit is part of the College of Music Entrepreneurial Musical Artist in Residence program, which is also supported by the MSU Federal Credit Union. In its fifth year with events on campus that are free and open to the public, the program brings innovative artists to the greater MSU community for the benefit of students and music lovers of all ages. In this case, the collaborative musicians of NOW Ensemble bring their unique sounds to the stage, offering a stimulating perspective on what the classical tradition of chamber music could look like today.

“It’s rare to get an up-close look into the forces that drive a music group’s collaborative and creative energy,” says [Yvonne Lam](#), MSU assistant professor of violin and chamber music coordinator. “We are looking forward to their work with our students and eagerly anticipate the new work they will premiere by Griffin Candey.”

Given her success as a former co-artistic director and violinist/violist of the renowned chamber group [Eighth Blackbird](#), Lam understands first-hand why NOW Ensemble is steadily gaining international recognition. Having performed in music halls across the globe, the ensemble continues to innovate, drawing inspiration from their various tours. Several works within their repertoire grace the stage as new interpretations of classical pieces, contrasting boldly to the works the ensemble is commissioned to premiere.

The group’s work with composer and MSU College of Music alumnus Griffin Candey on the piece “Everybody Leaves If They Get The Chance,” portrays music that explores the relationship between the individual and their community, underscoring how he has navigated this phenomenon throughout his upbringing in Michigan. Candey received his Bachelor of Music from MSU in 2011 and studied vocal performance. NOW Ensemble members include Erin Lesser, flute; Yoonah Kim, clarinet; Mark Dancigers, electric guitar; Lizzie Burns, bass; Michael Mizrahi, piano; and composers Patrick Burke and Judd Greenstein. NOW Ensemble has held several residencies across some of the nation’s largest cities and released the critically acclaimed album *Before and After* in 2021.

Created in 2019, the [MSUFUCU Entrepreneurial Musical Artist in Residence \(EMAR\)](#) endowment focuses on entrepreneurship in the musical arts and brings MSU College of Music students an opportunity to learn from and network with successful and progressive artists. Residency events located at the Music Building, 333 West Circle Drive on campus are open to the public:

- Clarinet Masterclass, 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 6, Eichler Hall
- Composition Reading, 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 6, Murray Hall
- Chamber Music Masterclass, 3:30 p.m., Friday, March 8, Large Rehearsal Hall

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All Showcase Series concerts are reserved seating, except for the *Barbara Wagner Chamber Music Competition Showcase* which is general admission. Reserved seating tickets are \$17 for adults, \$15 for seniors (age 60 and older) and \$7 for students. Information on these and other concerts, as well as ticket links can be found on the [MSU College of Music website](#).