



FACULTY ARTISTS SERIES

Celebrating the 46th Anniversary of Douglas Yeo's Wheaton College Senior Recital, April 1976

Douglas Yeo, *bass trombone, le nouveau
trombone Sax à six pistons et à tubes
indépendants, serpent, and ophicleide*

Michael Messer, *piano*

Tony Payne, *organ*

Eric Barnes, *trombone*

Michael Rocha, *trombone*

Jonah Brabant, *bass trombone*

Armerding Center for Music and the Arts
Concert Hall

Saturday, April 23, 2022

2:00 p.m.



**WHEATON
COLLEGE**
CONSERVATORY of MUSIC

For Christ & His Kingdom

Program

A Senior Recital

Greeting and Invocation by

*Dr. Michael Wilder, Dean of the Conservatory of Music and
Division of Arts and Communication*

Quia fecit mihi magna from Magnificat, BWV 243 (1723)

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685–1750)

arr. Douglas Yeo

performed on bass trombone with piano

Concertino (2006)

David F. Wilborn

(b. 1961)

performed on bass trombone with piano

Oraison funèbre

from *Grande Symphonie funèbre et triomphale, H. 80 (1840)*

Hector Berlioz

(1803–1869)

arr. Douglas Yeo

performed on le nouveau trombone Sax à six pistons et à tubes indépendants with piano

Turning Point (2008)

Elizabeth Raum

(b. 1945)

performed on bass trombone with piano

Canzon primo basso solo, F. 8.06b (1628)

Girolamo Frescobaldi

(1583–1643)

recomposed by Eddie Koopman (b. 1962)

performed on bass trombone with electronics

Poetry recitation: *On Springfield Mountain*

anonymous
(19th century)

Variations on “The Pesky Serpent” (1996)

Clifford Bevan
(b. 1934)

performed on serpent with piano

The Lost Chord (1877)

Arthur Sullivan
(1842–1900)

performed on ophicleide with organ

***Achieved is the Glorious Work*
from *The Creation, Hob. XXI:2 (1798)***

Joseph Haydn
(1732–1809)
arr. Donald G. Miller

performed by trombone quartet

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM BY DOUGLAS YEO

At 7:00 PM on Monday, April 19, 1976, Dr. Harold M. Best, Dean of the Wheaton College Conservatory of Music, walked on stage in Pierce Memorial Chapel, welcomed an assembled audience, and offered a prayer. A few seconds later, I walked on stage with my piano accompanist, Timothy Salzman ('77), we bowed, and then played the first piece on my senior recital, J. S. Bach's *Quia fecit mihi magna* (For He that is mighty has done great things). I was 20 years old—I turned 21 exactly one month later—and the recital was the first of several memorable events over my final two months as a Wheaton College student that culminated in graduation day, June 14. During those exhilarating weeks, I played my recital, my trombone quartet (with James Roskam, '76; William Meena, '77; and Eric Carlson) played a recital and a recording session, the band played a concert with guest conductor and composer Vaclav Nelhybel, and the band and orchestra played commencement concerts. Music making at Wheaton College shaped me, and no more so than in my final days as a student.

I had intended to perform this recital, what I am calling **A Senior Recital**, in April 2021, on the 45th anniversary of my Wheaton College Senior Recital. It was in 2021 that I turned a page of my life on my 65th birthday and, according to the United States Social Security Administration and Medicare, I officially became a "senior." But 65 is the new 25, so they say, yes? Well, maybe not, but now and then we old folks need to remind the young'uns—and ourselves—that we can still make contributions. However, the coronavirus pandemic upended the plan for a recital last year so here we are in April 2022—albeit without the nice symmetry of the intended anniversary—grateful for this opportunity to make and share music together.

This afternoon's program has several tie-ins with my 1976 Senior Recital. Dr. Best gave the invocation in 1976 so I have asked Dr. Wilder, our current Dean of the Conservatory of Music and Division of Arts and Communication, to do so at my *Senior Recital*. I chose to open both recitals with Bach's affirming *Magnificat* aria. The collaborating artists on my 1976 recital were all friends and classmates at Wheaton College and today, my collaborators are (apart for one piece with pre-recorded, electronic accompaniment) either friends who are Wheaton Conservatory faculty members and alumni of the College (Tony Payne, '79, and Michael Messer, '14), or current students (Jonah Brabant, '22, Eric Barnes, '23, and Michael Rocha, '24).

A driving theme in planning this recital was the model I used for my 1976 Senior Recital: a rambunctiously diverse program. The playlist for that recital included two pieces where I was accompanied by piano, and other works where I collaborated with harpsichord, brass trio

and string quartet, a duet for vibraphone (me) and marimba—way back then, instrumental music performance majors at Wheaton College needed to have a minor instrument and I chose percussion, and I was taught by Kathleen Kastner, '71, who is still on Wheaton's faculty—and, like today, a trombone quartet to finish the program. On this program you will hear music from an international cadre of composers and arrangers from Germany, the United States, France, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, England, and Austria, individuals who are living and deceased, female and male, Black and white. Such is the diverse world of music. And the Kingdom of God.

Further to this theme of diversity are the many instruments you will hear. I began playing the trombone at the age of nine—I wanted to play the trumpet but by the time my band director got around to students whose last name began with “Y,” the trumpets were gone, and I was handed a trombone—and that has remained my core vehicle for musical expression. But in the 1990s, I began exploring other instruments that had long fascinated me and you will see and hear me play two ancestors of the low brass family, the serpent and ophicleide (OK, let's all say it together: OH-fee-clyde), as well as one of the most curious forms of the trombone ever invented, Adolphe Sax's six-valve trombone with seven independent tubes. When you see it, you will understand where Dr. Seuss got his inspiration for his fanciful musical instruments in “How the Grinch Stole Christmas.” Sax had the “Who-hooper” beat by over 90 years.

Likewise, today's program has a structure, an arch. From Bach's aria that celebrates God's leading from my 1976 Senior Recital, I'll turn to a dramatic *tour de force* for bass trombone and piano, *Concertino*, by David Wilborn. What follows is a nod to the loss we have all felt in the last two years as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic, the *Funeral Oration* from Hector Berlioz's *Grand Funeral and Triumphant Symphony*. This recitative and aria for trombone was frequently played during his lifetime on Adolphe Sax's six-valve trombone, and you can imagine your own words to this purely instrumental work. Imagine it being played as it was at its premiere, at the site of the Bastille where fallen heroes of the 1830 Revolution were being laid to rest, with a band of 200 players on the march, Berlioz conducting while walking backwards, and trombone soloist Antoine Dieppo intoning the solemn but hopeful funeral oration. Elizabeth Raum's *Turning Point* follows, a piece Mike and I first performed last summer on a faculty recital for the Wheaton College Summer Music Camp. It seemed appropriate to play it at that time since at that moment, we felt that we were beginning to emerge from the pandemic—we were at a “turning point”—even as that hope soon proved to be misplaced and the pandemic worsened. I reprise *Turning Point* today along with our shared prayer that God will deliver us from the scourge of the pandemic as we turn even more to Him and learn important lessons from the challenges of the last two years.

I have played Frescobaldi's *Canzone* (one of several he wrote for unspecified bass instrument) on many occasions, accompanied by piano, organ, or harpsichord, but I confess I enjoy playing it the most with smile-inducing techno-pop accompaniment by Netherlands-based composer, arranger, and percussionist, Eddy Koopman. I think it is an exciting, fun way to bring together the old and new, and for this piece I'll be using my carbon fiber conversion by Butler Trombones of my Yamaha YBL822G bass trombone, one of the most promising steps in modern brass instrument evolution.

I've been playing the serpent—that aptly named instrument that came to prominence in the late sixteenth century to play an important role accompanying plainchant in churches in France—since 1994, and I've been an evangelist for it and the ophicleide (which I began playing in 2001). I've played both instruments on many occasions in modern and early music groups, in recitals, and in countless museum demonstrations and audio guides. I recorded Cliff Bevan's *Variations on "The Pesky Serpent"* on my serpent CD, *Le monde du serpent*, and I like its connection to a nineteenth century New England folk song about a rattlesnake (a creature I became all too familiar with during the six years my wife and I lived in Arizona before moving to Wheaton in 2018 to live closer to our grandchildren), the words to which I will recite in my best stentorian voice. Arthur Sullivan's *The Lost Chord* was a sentimental Victorian-era favorite among nineteenth and early twentieth century ophicleide players and along with it we will hear Wheaton College's new Taylor & Boody organ in action.

Finally, the arch of **A Senior Recital** concludes with an arrangement for trombone quartet of the closing movement of the second part of Joseph Haydn's oratorio, *The Creation, Achieved is the Glorious Work*. This was the signature piece of my Wheaton College Trombone Quartet of 1974–1976, and it seems to be just the right way to tie together the 48 years of music-making from the day I set foot on Wheaton College's campus as a student to today when I find myself, through God's serendipitous leading, the College's trombone professor. I have come full circle, and in the well-worn words of Guillaume de Machaut, Mary, Queen of Scots, T. S. Eliot, Leonard Bernstein, and many others, "In my end is my beginning." OK, "I'm not . . . (remember *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*) . . . dead yet," but you get the point. Wheaton College has shaped and continues to shape me, from my exuberant youth to these days of hoary (and disappearing) hair.

The "thousand tongues" of Wheaton College-based musical offerings and those who express them reverberate across time and space. Thank you for sharing this moment as we add to the re-creation and appreciation of art and artistic expression that has been with us since God spoke all things into being "In the beginning."

To God be the glory for Christ and His Kingdom.

INSTRUMENTS USED

Yamaha YBL822G bass trombone in B-flat/F/D—1991 (Hamamatsu, Japan)

Yamaha YBL822G bass trombone with carbon fiber conversion by Butler Trombones—2018 (Dallas, Texas)

Six-valve trombone in B-flat—c. 1897 (Joseph Persy, Brussels)

Serpent in C, two keys—c. 1812 (C. Baudouin, Paris)

Ophicleide in C, nine keys—c. 1855 (Roehn, Paris)

BIOGRAPHY



Recognized worldwide as a leading low brass performer, teacher, scholar, and author, **Douglas Yeo** was appointed to the faculty of Wheaton College Conservatory of Music as guest lecturer of trombone in 2019. From 1985–2012, he was bass trombonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and before coming to Boston, he was a member of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, a free-lance musician in New York City, and a high school band director. He served as Professor of Trombone at Arizona State University from 2012–2016 and has also been on the faculties of New England Conservatory of Music, Boston University, and the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. From 1998 to 2008, he was music director of the New England Brass Band which made five recordings in Boston’s Symphony Hall and twice won its section at the North American Brass Band Association national championship. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from Wheaton College (1976)—where he studied trombone with Edward Kleinhammer (Bass Trombonist of the Chicago Symphony, 1940–1985)—and his master’s degree from New York University (1979).

In 2014, Douglas Yeo was the recipient of the International Trombone Association’s highest honor, the *ITA Award*, given to him “in recognition of his distinguished career and in acknowledgement of his impact on the world of trombone performance.” He has authored dozens of book chapters and articles for many publications and written five books including two that were published last year, *Homer Rodeheaver and the Rise of the Gospel Music Industry* (co-authored with Kevin Mungons, University of Illinois Press), and *An Illustrated Dictionary for the Modern Trombone, Tuba, and Euphonium Player* (Rowman & Littlefield). His instructional DVD and six solo recordings have received critical acclaim.

As a teacher, Douglas Yeo has given master classes and recitals on five continents and has held residencies around the world including the International Trombone Festival (six times), the Banff Center (Canada), the Hamamatsu International Wind Instrument Academy and Festival (nine times) and the Nagoya Trombone Festival (Japan), the International Trombone and Tuba Festival (Beijing), and the Dutch Bass Trombone Open (Holland). His website, yeodoug.com (1996), was the first site on the Internet devoted to the trombone, and his blog, thelasttrombone.com—*Occasional thoughts on Life, Faith, and the Trombone*—was launched in 2016.



Douglas Yeo before a spring 1975 performance of Igor Stravinsky's *Octet for Wind Instruments*, Edman Memorial Chapel. This photo appeared in the 1975 Wheaton College Yearbook, *Tower*, and is reproduced with permission of Paul Chelsen, Wheaton College Vice President for Student Development.



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