

## Akropolis Reed Quintet

Kari Landry (clarinet) Andrew Koepp ( bass clarinet)

Tim Gocklin (oboe) Ryan Reynolds (bassoon)

Matt Landry (saxophone)

### PROGRAM

***Splinter*** (2014)

Marc Mellits (b.1966)

*Scarlet Oak*  
*Sugar Maple*  
*Linden*  
*River Birch*  
*Cherry*  
*Red Pine*

***Rites for the Afterlife*** (2018)

Stacy Garrop (b.1969)

*Inscriptions from the Book of the Dead*  
*Passage through the Netherworld*  
*The Hall of Judgement*  
*The Field of Reeds*

***"For All We Know"*** (1934)

Nina Simone, Coots/Lewis (1933-2003)  
Arr. Jelte Althuis (b.1967)

### Intermission

***Sprocket*** (2019)

Steven Snowden (b.1981)

Guest Percussionist Chris Sies

*Like a drifting fog; irreverent, funky*  
*Ringing, reverberant; sinuous*  
*A little janky*  
*Coy, flirtatious*  
*Brutal; ferocious, merciless*

***Homage to Paradise Valley*** (2019)

Jeff Scott (b.1967)

*Ghosts of Black Bottom*  
*Roho, Pumzika kwa Amani (Spirits, Rest Peacefully)*  
*Club Paradise Jump!*

## Program Notes

### ***Splinter***

*Splinter*, by Chicago-based composer Marc Mellits, is probably the most popular work of the reed quintet repertoire. Composed in 2014 expressly for the reed quintet instrumentation of clarinet, oboe, saxophone, bass clarinet, and bassoon, Mellits delivers a work suitable for introducing the reed quintet to ears which may never have heard it before. *Splinter* is comprised of short "miniatures," each with their own personality. Combined, they each express unique emotional qualities through hocketing rhythms and colorful orchestrations. Mellits often composes for amplified acoustic instruments, including percussion, piano, and strings. Rhythmic drive and development is a major component to his music, but does not overshadow his use of elongated phrases, subtle and effective harmonic motion, and beautiful textural creations.

### ***Rites for the Afterlife***

After Akropolis and two other reed quintets chose Stacy Garrop as winner of the 2018 Barlow Prize for music composition, she was granted the Barlow Endowment's prestigious prize to compose her first reed quintet, which Akropolis premiered in 2018. It was the first time the Endowment chose the reed quintet to award this prize for a new composition.

Stacy chose for her subject matter the Egyptian's beliefs about the afterlife. The piece follows the soul into and through the afterlife, including the spells and enchantments contained in The Book of the Dead, the funerary barque which tows the soul through the Netherworld, its arrival in the Hall of Judgement to be weighed against a feather from Maat—the goddess of truth—and its final resting place at the field of reeds where it is united with family members, harvesting plentiful crops along the Nile under a brilliant blue sky forever.

### ***For All We Know***

"For All We Know" was originally published in 1934 and written by J. Fred Coots and Sam M. Lewis. The version performed by Akropolis is arranged from Nina Simone's performance on her 1959 record, *Nina Simone and Her Friends*. On this track, Simone accompanies her voice on piano with classical-style, contrapuntal music that weaves itself in and out of the music's lyrics, making an arrangement for reed quintet a natural fit. The individual, but blended sounds of the oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and bass clarinet play the role of the piano, while saxophone carries the melody: "But tomorrow may never, never come, for all we know."

### ***Sprocket***

Sprocket was composed by Steven Snowden for Akropolis' Together We Sound festival in Detroit, MI, and premiered in June 2019. Commissioned by Akropolis with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Sprocket combines reed quintet with percussion. In Detroit the percussion instruments were assembled into a rideable percussion bicycle which reflected the massive cycling culture of Detroit. Each movement utilizes different components of the reed quintet timbre in combination with different percussive elements. The original percussion bike was designed and built by Detroit resident and Kresge Arts Fellow, Juan Martinez, and premiered at Wasserman Projects gallery and the Dequindre Cut bike path in Detroit.

### ***Homage to Paradise Valley***

Homage to Paradise Valley was commissioned by and composed for Akropolis in 2019, with support from the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program, and generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Paradise Valley, a now-displaced neighborhood of Detroit, Michigan, became of interest to Jeff Scott after he and Akropolis visited the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, while Jeff's quintet, Imani Winds, was passing through Detroit on tour. Homage to Paradise Valley utilizes Jeff's diverse musical background as a jazz and studio musician in New York City.

Comprised of 3 movements, Jeff Scott provides these notes about each movement:

"1. Black Bottom was a predominantly black neighborhood in Detroit, Michigan. The term has sometimes been used to apply to the entire neighborhood including Paradise Valley, which reached from the Detroit River north to Grand Boulevard. In the early 20th century, African-American residents became concentrated here during the first wave of the Great Migration to northern industrial cities. Informal segregation operated in the city to keep them in this area of older, less expensive housing. The name of the neighborhood is often erroneously believed to be a reference to the African-American community that developed in the 20th century, but it was named during the colonial era by the early French settlers because of its dark, fertile topsoil (known as river bottomlands). Black Bottom/Paradise Valley became known for its African American residents' significant contributions to American music, including Blues, Big Band, and Jazz, from the 1930s to '50s. Black Bottom's substandard housing was eventually cleared and redeveloped for various urban renewal projects, driving the residents out. By the 1960s the neighborhood ceased to exist.

2. From the Bantu language of Swahili, "Roho, Pumzika kwa Amani" (Spirits, Rest Peacefully) is a lullaby. My humble offering to the many souls who came before me, and preserved through the middle passage, decades of slavery, disenfranchising laws, and inequality. I am who I am because of those who stood before me. May their spirits rest peacefully.

3. Orchestra Hall where the Detroit Symphony Orchestra now performs closed in 1939, but reopened in 1941 as the Paradise Theater. For 10 years it would then offer the best of African-American musicians from around the country. Duke Ellington opened Christmas week with his big band, admission was 50 cents, and patrons could stay all day. There were 3 shows every day and 4 on weekends. "B" movies were shown between acts. During the glory days of jazz the Paradise Theater saw Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Eckstine, Billie Holiday, and many more. "Paradise Theater Jump" is dedicated to the famed theater and harkens to the up-tempo style of "jump blues," usually played by small groups and featuring saxophone or brass instruments."

One can learn more about this part of Detroit's history by visiting the Detroit Historical Society website at [detroithistorical.org](http://detroithistorical.org).

## AKROPOLIS REED QUINTET

Hailed by *Fanfare Magazine* for their “imagination, infallible musicality, and huge vitality,” the Akropolis Reed Quintet was founded in 2009 at the University of Michigan and has won seven national chamber music prizes since 2011, including the Fischhoff Gold Medal, Fischhoff Educator Award, Plowman Grand Prize, and MTNA Grand Prize. Akropolis has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, New Music USA, Chamber Music America, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, CultureSource, Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Alice M. Ditson Fund, Amphion Foundation, High Wire Lab, and more.

Akropolis delivers over 120 annual performances including ticketed recitals, K-12 outreach, and community residency activities. Celebrating their 10th anniversary, Akropolis’ 2019-20 season features 10 commissions for the ensemble including *Storm Warning*, the first concerto for reed quintet and wind band by Roshanne Etezady; *CANE*, by Jenni Brandon with guest bassoonist Monica Ellis of Imani Winds; *Homage to Paradise Valley* by Jeff Scott with support from the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Fund, celebrating the history of Detroit’s displaced Black Bottom neighborhood; and *Sprocket*, a work for reed quintet and rideable percussion bicycle by Steven Snowden. Akropolis will also co-produce a 10-show staged production with BodyVox Dance in Portland, Oregon.

Akropolis has given collaborative concerts with David Shifrin, Jennifer Frautschi, the Dover Quartet, BodyVox Dance, YAK, New Music Detroit, HarperCollins-published author and scientist, Vic Strecher, Arabic language poets Abdulrahman Alhumairy and Saeed AlMehrzzi, and others.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* dubbed Akropolis’ recent third album release, *The Space Between Us*, “pure gold.” Akropolis’ discography has been aired around the United States including WNYC *New Sounds*, WQXR, and WRCJ Detroit. They have given live performances on WFMT Chicago, *Performance Today*, and more. Akropolis’ upcoming fourth album release will feature guest soprano Shara Nova as well as music composed for Akropolis by 2018 Pulitzer Prize finalist, Michael Gilbertson, and 2019 American Academy of Arts and Letters Music Award winner, Stacy Garrop.

Akropolis has premiered more than 70 new works and was selected to adjudicate and premiere the 2018 Barlow Prize funded by the Barlow Endowment, the first time the prize was given for a reed quintet work. Akropolis’ members are the first

of any reed quintet to judge major chamber music competitions including the Fischhoff Junior (2018) and Chamber Music Yellow Springs (2019) competitions. Each June in Detroit, Akropolis presents its own 16-event festival, Together We Sound, featuring multidisciplinary collaborators, a workplace concert series, and educational outreach, expanding and diversifying arts access throughout the city. Akropolis' members teach music business courses at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, and they have given hundreds of "Akropolis WORKS" workshops to university musicians around the United States. Akropolis also reaches more than 5,000 K-12 students annually, including a school year-long residency with students at three Detroit high schools.

Akropolis is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization generously supported by individuals nationwide. Akropolis remains its founding members: Tim Gocklin (oboe), Kari Landry (clarinet), Matt Landry (saxophone), Andrew Koeppe (bass clarinet), and Ryan Reynolds (bassoon).

### **Tim Gocklin, Oboe**

Known for his “remarkably beautiful oboe playing” (Fanfare Magazine), Tim Gocklin is oboist of the Akropolis Reed Quintet and serves as Artist-in-Residence in Oboe and woodwind chamber music coordinator at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, CO. Prior to his present position in Colorado, Tim lived in New Haven, CT and performed in a wide variety of settings with ensembles such as The Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Le Train Bleu, New York Chamber Soloists, Mozart Orchestra of New York under the direction of Gerard Schwarz, the Argus String Quartet, and The Phantom of the Opera on Broadway.

Tim is a two-time winner of the Yale School of Music’s Chamber Music Competition. In 2013, he performed works by Hindemith in Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall and Weill Recital Hall as part of the Yale in New York series. He has performed at Chamber Music Northwest with David Shifrin and oboist Allan Vogel in a program of Dvorak’s Wind Serenade, Op. 44 and Mozart’s Gran Partita in B-flat, KV 361. He has appeared at the Caramoor Festival with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, the Cape Cod Music Festival, the Yellow Barn Music Festival, the Colorado Music Festival under the direction of Peter Oundjian, and held fellowships at the Norfolk and Sarasota Chamber Music Festivals.

Tim can be heard on the NAXOS and Block M record labels, including two recordings with the University of Michigan Symphony Band. These works were taken on a tour to China where the band performed at Beijing’s National Centre for the Arts and Shanghai’s Grand Theatre.

In 2012, Tim received his Bachelor’s degree summa cum laude from the University of Michigan where he studied with Dr. Nancy Ambrose King. He subsequently completed his Master of Music degree and an Artist Diploma at Yale University studying with Stephen Taylor.

### **Kari Landry, Clarinet**

Kari Landry is a Backun Artist and clarinetist of the Akropolis Reed Quintet, as well as the Marketing and Development Manager of Akropolis’ 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. She manages the organization’s branding, marketing, web design, advertising, social media, fundraising, and more. Since 2016, Kari has been an intermediate lecturer at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater, and Dance where she teaches music entrepreneurship courses.

For six years, Kari served as the Marketing & Programs Manager for the Ann Arbor Summer Festival, a month-long arts and music festival that presents over 175 free concerts and events. She oversaw the organization's annual \$100,000 marketing budget, created its digital and print content, managed press and advertising efforts, and programmed over 50 artistic, educational, and community events. While working in Ann Arbor, Kari received a Michigan EMMY for best historical documentary for her work on A Space for Music, A Seat for Everyone, showcasing 100 Years of University Musical Society Performances in Hill Auditorium. She has also been an intern at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Kari received her bachelor's and master's degrees in clarinet performance from the University of Michigan, studying with Cleveland Orchestra clarinetist Dan Gilbert. Committed to increasing arts access within communities, Kari earned an additional Masters Degree in Arts Administration from Eastern Michigan University.

Kari attended the Aspen Music Festival for two summers during college and was the E-flat clarinetist in the University of Michigan Symphony Band's 2011 tour to China, performing in "The Giant Egg" National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing and Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. Kari owes her musical success to her instructors Dan Gilbert, Chad Burrow, Ted Oien, and Suzy Dennis-Bratton.

### **Matt Landry, Saxophone**

Matt Landry is the Akropolis Reed Quintet's saxophonist and Executive Director of Akropolis' 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Matt was selected by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs as a 2018/19 Rising Leader among arts and cultural organizations in Michigan. He is a former middle school band director and worked as a community engagement specialist for the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce for four years. He teaches two courses for music majors at Michigan State University on entrepreneurship and fundraising and leads dozens of arts entrepreneurship workshops each year at universities nationwide.

Matt has been featured on several concerts with the Michigan Philharmonic Orchestra, including Milhaud's La Création du Monde, which he also performed in Portland, OR with eminent chamber musicians including Jennifer Frautschi and Tara Helen O'Connor. He has also performed Bernstein's On the Town with the

Dearborn Symphony. As well as Akropolis' three studio albums, he can be heard on two CDs produced by the UM Symphony Band under the Equilibrium Records label, *Raise the Roof* and *Classic Structures*. He was also an adjudicator for the 2019 Chamber Music Yellow Springs National Chamber Music Competition.

Matt received his Bachelor's degree Summa Cum Laude in Music Education and Saxophone from the University of Michigan, where he studied with Donald Sinta. He was a James B. Angell Scholar and commencement flag bearer.

### **Ryan Reynolds, Bassoon**

The Akropolis Reed Quintet's bassoonist, Dr. Ryan Reynolds is Adjunct Professor of Bassoon at Heidelberg University in Tiffin, OH. Prior to his current position, Dr. Reynolds taught bassoon at Miami University and was a Graduate Teaching Assistant for the Florida State University bassoon studio, where he received his Doctorate in Bassoon. He has performed with the Dayton Philharmonic, Savannah Philharmonic, Traverse Symphony, Springfield Symphony, and Ann Arbor Symphony.

Dr. Reynolds is also regular recitalist and contributor to the International Double Reed Society conferences. In 2018 at the Society's conference in Granada, Spain, he premiered composer Ethan Wickman's *Cuatro Escanas del Cante Jondo* for bassoon and piano, Per Bloland's *Asemic Patterns* for oboe and bassoon, and Chiel Meijering's *the green reed which blows in the wind* for 12 bassoons and string orchestra. At the Society's 2019 conference in Tampa, FL, Dr. Reynolds performed a set of masterworks for reed quintet with the Akropolis Reed Quintet to a full house.

An educator, Dr. Reynolds was a judge for the junior level at the 2018 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, and was Akropolis' representative to judge the Barlow Endowment's first prize for a reed quintet commission. He has taught at the Renova Music Festival, Bocal Majority, Operation Oboe Camps, and many master classes at the United States' top universities.

He has been featured on National Public Radio's "From the Top," Interlochen Public Radio, and can be seen in numerous videos in the University of Michigan Bassoon Studio and Akropolis Reed Quintet YouTube series.

After attending the Interlochen Arts Academy from 2004-08, where he studied

with Dr. Eric Stomberg, Ryan attended the University of Michigan for his BM and MM degrees and Florida State University for his DM. He studied with Dr. Jeffrey Lyman and Jeff Keesecker, respectively.

**Andrew Koeppe**, Bass Clarinet

The Akropolis Reed Quintet's bass clarinetist and an Ann Arbor, MI native, Andrew Koeppe majored in clarinet at the University of Michigan and studied with Chad Burrow, Deborah Chodacki, and Monica Kaenzig. Andrew can be heard on two University of Michigan Symphony Band albums, including interactions with acclaimed soloists Nancy Ambrose King and Adam Unsworth, as well as the premiere of William Bolcom's Symphony for Band. He was the featured clarinet soloist in Bolcom's band orchestration of "Graceful Ghost Rag" on the University of Michigan Symphony Band CD release, Artifacts. He has also performed with the Final Fantasy Symphony in Ann Arbor and with New Music Detroit, performing Annie Gosfield's Detroit Industry at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Andrew also attended the Buffet-Crampon USA Clarinet Academy in Jacksonville, FL in 2009 where he studied with clarinetists Eugene Mondie, Dan Gilbert, Andre Moisan, and Ixi Chen. In 2009 he played principal clarinet and bass clarinet in a small orchestral ensemble of select University of Michigan students in a weeklong multimedia workshop and final performance of Ask Your Mama with composer Laura Carpmann, curator Jessye Norman, and conductor George Manahan. This new work later premiered at Carnegie Hall.

Andrew enjoys teaching a large and exuberant studio of clarinet and bass clarinet players in Ann Arbor, MI.

**CHRIS SIES**, percussionist

Living in multiple musical dimensions, percussionist and composer Chris Sies seeks to bring visceral sonic experiences to audiences through his "virtuoso flair" (Detroit Free Press) and unique voice. Chris has composed, produced, and performed with numerous artists including New Music Detroit, the National Arab Orchestra, Nicole Mitchell's Black Earth Ensemble, My Brightest Diamond, Detroit Bureau of Sound, Tatsuya Nakatani, Man Forever, ska-pushers Stacked Like Pancakes, the experimental rock outfit Sam Cooper & The Sleepwalkers, and the art rock duo Throwaway, among many others. He has performed extensively throughout North America in venues such as the Kennedy Center for Performing

Arts, Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, (le) poisson rouge, Constellation Chicago, Princeton University, along with performances on the Vans Warped Tour, Summer Slaughter Tour, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, the Bowling Green New Music Festival, and Detroit's Strange Beautiful Music.

Among his many musical projects, Sies is the percussionist with the new music ensemble Latitude 49 and a member of the Willo Collective, a percussion-heavy trio of composers dedicated to creating collaborative and interdisciplinary work. Chris received his bachelor's degree in music performance and dual master's degrees in percussion performance and chamber music from the University of Michigan. Chris has further developed his work through residencies and fellowships at the Banff Centre for Creativity, the Bang on A Can Summer Festival, the Avaloch Farm Music Institute, and the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall. Chris is currently based in Waco, Texas where he teaches percussion at Baylor University and lives with his wife and pianist Jani Parsons and their cat, Sanu.