

Second Year Master Recital

Michaël Fillion, Jazz Drums

Matt Aasen – Guitar

Antonio Cocuzzo – Guitar

Nicolina Bozzo – Vocals

Haiyue (Judy) Zhu – Vocals

Matthieu Savard – Upright Bass

April 5th, 2024, at 12h30 pm

Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Avenue

PROGRAMME

What We'll See Along The Way

Antonio Cocuzzo

Echos

Antonio Cocuzzo

Change Of Pace

Michaël Fillion

There Are No Problems, Always Solutions

Michaël Fillion

Boat Afloat An Ocean

Sienna Dahlen

Drifting

Matt Aasen

When I look At You

Michaël Fillion

Whispers From The Past

Michaël Fillion

This recital is in partial fulfilment of the Master of Music Degree in Jazz Performance

Michaël Fillion is a student of Ernesto Cervini.

Biography:

Michaël Filion, originally from Montréal, Québec, is a versatile musician with a passion for drumming, producing, and teaching. He began his musical journey in jazz drumming at a young age, quickly establishing himself as a talented percussionist. He continued to excel in various music ensembles during high school and Cégep. In 2015, he focused on Music Theory and Performance at Cégep de Saint-Laurent, and in 2018, he honed his skills further at York University under the guidance of Anthony Michelli. There, he participated in university-related groups and showcased his drumming talent with the York University Gospel Choir. Beyond University, Michaël expanded his musical horizons by collaborating with different groups and even recording an original composition titled "Morning Coffee," which received airtime on JazzFm91.1. During his undergraduate studies at York University in 2021/2022, he explored diverse music genres, becoming a highly versatile musician. Currently pursuing a master's degree in jazz performance at the University of Toronto under Ernesto Cervini's guidance, Michaël continues to collaborate and record with various artists in Toronto, including Nicolina. His repertoire spans Jazz, Pop, and Rock, reflecting his commitment to ongoing musical growth and exploration.

Program Notes:

My journey through my Master's studies at The University of Toronto has been an extraordinary journey, enabling me to not only enhance my skills as a drummer but also evolve as a musician. Throughout this period, I've discovered my unique musical identity both through playing my instrument and composing my own pieces. Over the span of two years, I've been fortunate to collaborate and share the stage with remarkable musicians, whose inspiration and mentorship have profoundly shaped my growth as an artist. It is with immense gratitude that I present to you my final recital, a testament to the invaluable lessons and experiences I've gained along my musical career.

The inaugural composition, "What We'll See Along The Way," performed solely as a trio, was composed by my close friend Antonio Cocuzzo. This piece resonates with me on multiple levels, with its intricate shifts in meter juxtaposed against a serene melody. It personally mirrors the many experiences we encounter throughout our lives—beauty, ugliness, and ultimately, the culmination of all these moments. Beginning my recital with this piece was paramount as it establishes the thematic essence of my performance. The second piece "Echos", also composed by Antonio, marks a complete shift in energy from the preceding one, exemplifying the versatility and multiple possibilities inherent in this recital. It highlights the breadth of a musician's capabilities, seamlessly transitioning from groovy rhythms to a Latin feel, skillfully marrying these two distinct styles.

Next in line is my inaugural composition of the recital, titled "Change Of Pace." This piece draws significant inspiration from the music of Brian Blade and the Fellowship. Shortly after witnessing their live performance, I found myself deeply inspired to create a new piece, and "Change Of Pace" vividly reflects this influence through its distinct groove, texture, and melodic selections. "There Are No Problems, Only Solutions" holds a profound significance for me. It was composed on the day of my grandfather's birthday, a man who played a pivotal role in my life and musical pursuits who unfortunately passed a few years ago. He ardently supported my journey, attending all my concerts at the beginning of my career. This composition evokes a blend of nostalgia and hope, encapsulating his energy. The title itself echoes his words, reflecting his creative mindset that always sought solutions to problems.

"Boat Affloat An Ocean" showcases the talents of two remarkable singers, Nicolina and Judy. I selected this piece for performance after experiencing Sienna Dahlen's composition in Andrew Downing's Hybrid ensemble. It left a profound impact on me, and upon listening to her album "Ice Age Paradise," I found a deep connection with this piece.

Now, transitioning to "Drifting," a composition written by my dear friend Matthew Aasen, this piece has consistently brought a smile to my face. Its melody has always struck a chord with me, evoking a sense of sweetness and warmth. The accompaniment textures add depth to the piece, leaving me with a hopeful outlook by its conclusion.

Approaching the conclusion of my recital, the last two pieces are compositions of my own, beginning with "When I Look At You." This piece was inspired by the profound experience of gazing into the eyes of someone deeply cherished, whether through love or friendship. That sentiment forms the essence of this song. Finally, "Whisper Of The Past" encapsulates a bittersweet sentiment. Being distanced from home and my family who lives in Montreal, I often find myself reminiscing about them, hoping for more time together. Despite knowing that my current place is here in Toronto, I sometimes daydream about moments from my youth spent with my family, unaware of where life would eventually lead me. This intricate song beautifully captures the essence of this bittersweet feeling.

This recital showcases my gratitude towards the many people I have met that inspired me to become a better musician. Displays and represent my sound as a drummer and musician and really showcase deep connections to specific emotions I have felt throughout my life.