

Liberty University School of Music

presents

Student Recital Series

Junior Recital **Benjamin May, *guitar***

March 26, 2026
Doug Oldham Recital Hall
MUSIC 170
6:30 PM

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES: JUNIOR RECITAL

Benjamin May, *guitar*

Program

Bourrée in Em, BWV 996

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Jesu, bleibet meine Freude, BWV 147

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Streets of Laredo

Traditional
arr. Chet Atkins (1924-2001)

Days of Wine and Roses

Johnny Mercer
(1909-1976)
Henry Mancini
(1924-1994)

Benjamin May, *guitar*
Maxwell Kruth, *drums*
Treson Behn, *piano*

Here's That Rainy Day

Jimmy Van Heusen
(1913-1990)
Johnny Burke
(1909-1964)

Benjamin May, *guitar*
Maxwell Kruth, *drums*
Treson Behn, *piano*

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES: JUNIOR RECITAL

Program (cont.)

How Insensitive

Antônio Carlos Jobim
(1927-1994)
Norman Gimbel
(1927-2018)

Benjamin May, *guitar*
Maxwell Kruth, *drums*
Treson Behn, *piano*
Cristalle Canino, *vocal*

Feels So Good

Chuck Mangione
(1940-2025)

Benjamin May, *guitar*
Maxwell Kruth, *drums*
Treson Behn, *piano*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Bourrée in Em, BWV 996

Bourrée in E minor, BWV 996, by J.S. Bach, is an iconic piece in the classical guitar repertoire. Although originally written for the lute, this bourrée seems well-suited for the guitar because of its energetic rhythms and use of counterpoint. The work is in binary form, with the A section repeating while the contrasting B section ventures into varied harmony. This piece can be challenging for many guitarists due to its brisk tempo and the contrasting harmony between the bass and treble strings. For academic standards, it develops not only great technical ability but also a deep appreciation for the Baroque genius of J.S. Bach, making it an essential learning experience for any guitar student.

Jesu, bliebet meine Freude BWV 147

Jesu, bleibet meine Freude, BWV 147, by J.S. Bach, is best known for being a tune played at Christmas or weddings. However, this composition is much more than background music for social gatherings; it is the evidence of an obvious spiritual pursuit. The combination of poetry and the expert musical rendering by Bach echoes a heavenly language that we have yet to hear. The original arrangement is full of life and focuses on the collective praise of God, but this arrangement takes the choral setting and creates an intimate, personal experience through the guitar's beauty.

*“Jesu, joy of man's desiring,
Holy wisdom, Love most bright,
Drawn by thee, our souls aspiring
Soar to uncreated light.”*

Streets of Laredo

Streets of Laredo is as country as you can get. It tells of a cowboy who has been shot and shares his last words on the streets of Laredo. This timeless melody has been sung and played for centuries, but each rendition is unique. This arrangement by Chet Atkins (Mr. Guitar) emphasizes the melancholy nature of the tune and adds a Southwest flair with its use of sliding thirds on the treble strings. This tune is a ballad, which means the music remains the same while the words differ each time the melody is played. Since this is purely an instrumental, Atkins creates a different texture, dynamic, and feeling for each verse, adding interest as the tune goes on.

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Days of Wine and Roses

Days of Wine and Roses, written by Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer, is a classic swing tune of the 60's written for the movie of the same title. The song's lyrical content speaks of love, as all great songs do, but it does so in a melancholic mood, given the tragedy of how alcoholism ruins relationships in the film. The song begins with an F major 7th chord, seemingly beginning a standard love song. However, the harmony shifts out of the key to an E-flat dominant 7th with a raised 11th, which introduces a certain amount of tension. What may have been the start of a lasting romance is now but a memory that is marred with the reality of addiction; the contrast of love gained yet lost. Performed by many famous artists, including Frank Sinatra, Wes Montgomery, and Andy Williams, this tune seems to have become a timeless addition to the American Songbook.

Here's That Rainy Day

Here's That Rainy Day, composed by Jimmy van Heusen and Johnny Burke, is a melancholic reflection on love within relationships. The harmonies of this tune can be seen as a throwback to the romantic era of classical music. This is because there are many chord substitutions, added tonalities, and chromatic mediant relationship chords, which were common harmonic techniques used by composers in the Romantic era. The melody shifts in and out of various keys, and the harmonic structure is also challenging for musical improvisation. At the beginning of this tune, I will perform it in the style of chord melody, originally composed by William Leavitt.

How Insensitive

How Insensitive, written by Antonio Carlos Jobim (English translation by Norman Gimble), is a beautiful Latin tune. This song offers a different perspective from other jazz and swing songs, which often focus on the male side of a relationship. Regardless of the point of view, the song expresses the sorrow and loss of a love that could have been so much more. The melody emphasizes this feeling with a long descending line that begins in D minor and then shifts to C minor. It returns to the original key of D minor at the end. There is no happy ending for a relationship that has lost its passion.

Feels So Good

Feels So Good, composed by the late Chuck Mangione, is a fantastic instrumental. It is a tune that seems to exude happiness. The laid-back feel of the original recording is what helped Mangione excel on the pop charts, and he gained much popularity from his signature style. As you leave the recital tonight, I hope this memorable melody will have you saying that everything "Feels So Good."

Thank you for attending my Junior Recital! I am honored by your willingness to be present here and to see what God has allowed me to accomplish as a musician over the last three years. I would first like to thank the LORD for directing my path towards this moment. The journey has not been easy to anticipate, and it did not go the way I intended. Nevertheless, He has brought me to this point, and I am humbled and grateful that He has given me the gifts and talents necessary for me to perform tonight for His glory. I would also like to acknowledge my family, who have supported me and made it possible for me to attend Liberty. I am forever grateful to them for instilling a passion and a desire for music in my heart. To my professor, Dr. Keith Cooper, I am thankful for his help in cultivating the talent God has granted me and for seeing in me the things I could not see in myself. To the countless others who have made this journey at Liberty possible either through prayer or through simple encouragement, I could not do it without you.



Benjamin May is a student of Dr. Keith Cooper.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music in Commercial Music: Recording Engineering and Producing Concentration degree.

**We would like to thank the
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their faithful support of the School of Music.**

Dr. Dondi Costin, President
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The School of Music Administration, Faculty, and Staff

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