

## ***Headwinds (2014)*** **Program Notes**

*Headwinds* is a three-movement woodwind quintet hybridizing elements of jazz and classical music. Movements one and three function as contrafacts of two jazz repertoire mainstays: the twelve-bar blues and “rhythm changes.” These two movements are also played with swing and feature idiomatic jazz melodies, harmonies, and rhythms.

Movement one, *A Bolt From the Blue*, opens with a modern take on the blues in F, with the quintet mimicking a small jazz ensemble. The bassoon imitates upright bass walking lines, and each instrument is featured in a written improvisation over one chorus of the form. The beginning of the horn solo playfully quotes the main theme of Strauss’ *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*, which also served as Thelonious Monk’s inspiration for his blues *Straight, No Chaser*. After the solos, the quintet begins a shout chorus with a quote from John Coltrane’s *Giant Steps*.

The middle movement, *Vignette*, transforms melodic and rhythmic motives from the first movement into a lushly orchestrated, impressionistic and through-composed ballad.

Movement three, *Changes*, sets a new melody to the chord progression of George Gershwin’s *I’ve Got Rhythm*, known fondly to jazz musicians as “rhythm changes.” As with movement one, *Changes* pays homage to generations of jazz musicians’ re-interpretations of the standard repertoire.