

Breathe It In:

An Original Song Cycle

Composer: Kevin Kuska

Choreography: Michellina McNaughton

“Breathe It In” is an original song cycle that was named this based on the idea that when you are faced with mental obstacles, most of the time you need to step back for a moment and breathe that obstacle in - to take a minute and evaluate where you are and how you could find a way through. Since this cycle overall deals with ways to overcome struggles and not succumb to them, many of the songs focus on the positive aspects of growing as a person.

“One Step”

Singer: Kasey Jacques

Dancer: Naomi Latta

- One small choice has the possibility to change your life. In “One Step” we see someone struggling to make that choice, and ultimately the strength they feel when they choose what they want against the pressures of someone else.

“Your Voice”

Singer: Jake Ziman (feat. Chloe Hayes, Kelsey Crotz, Brigid Buckley)

Dancer: Lydia Ent

- We all have moments where our inner voices guide us through difficult times. In “Your Voice” we follow the journey of someone listening to that voice and see where it leads them.

“You Are”

Singers: Brigid Buckley, Steven Klenk

Dancers: Kelsey Baker, Klen Sanchez

- Social Anxiety affects around 25.8% of college students according to recent studies. In “You Are” we see someone struggling with the anxiety of being around others and how they come to accept themselves as they are.

“A Far-Off Land”

Singer: Kelsey Crotz

Dancer: Amanda Dulny

- Everyone has dreamt about escaping to a magical realm where they can escape their current life. In “A Far-Off Land” we follow an individual dreaming of that land, and how they come to find happiness within their current life.

“I Can Be Free”

Singer: Chloe Hayes (feat. Kasey Jacques, Holly Bender)

Dancer: Allison Durham

- “I Can Be Free” follows someone who is drawn in by another individual’s charisma, but soon discovers that this person is not as great as they first appeared to be. This song explores finding independence and what it feels like to be free.

“Trapped”

Singer: Holly Bender

Dancer: Michellina McNaughton

- Panic Attacks are far too common in college students. Nearly everyone has a connection to someone who has experienced a panic attack, whether they know it or not. “Trapped” tells the story of an individual at a social gathering that has a panic attack and how it feels to be trapped in their body.

“Someone”

Singers: Jake Ziman, Steven Klenk, Brigid Buckley, Kelsey Crotz

Dancers: ALL

- Friendship and Support are two things that everyone needs. “Someone” shows four friends growing together and the importance of supporting those around you.

“Breathe It In”

Singers: ALL

- This finale is written to be a moment to breathe for the audience. Given the same name as the entire song cycle, this piece is simplistic and harmonically common. We hope that you will take a couple minutes to close your eyes and breathe in the journeys you have seen throughout the show.

We want to give special thanks to:

Beth Creighton for her input on piano writing, Dr. Steven Weimer for over-seeing the composition process, Will Reynolds and Eric Price for inspiring Kevin’s love for song writing, Angela Miller, Anna Corvera, Megan Dickerson, and Alexis Riley for providing opportunities for Michellina to grow their choreography and dance pedagogy skills.