

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY BANDS

Kansas State University
Wind Ensemble

Dr. Frank Tracz, Conductor
Dr. Larry Blocher, Guest Conductor
Rich Ebersole, Graduate Assistant Conductor

&

Wind Symphony

Dr. Alex Wimmer, Conductor
Ben Rajewski, Graduate Assistant Conductor

April 21, 2024
7:30 PM
McCain Auditorium



Wind Symphony
Dr. Alex Wimmer, Conductor

STRIDE for Concert Band (2023).....Kevin Day (b.1996)

Elegy (2009).....Travis Cross (b.1977)
Conducted by Ben Rajewski

Africa: Ceremony, Song and Ritual (1994).....Robert W. Smith (1958–2023)

March Grandioso (1901/2001).....Roger Seitz (1867–1946)
arr. Andrew Glover (b.1961)

Wind Ensemble
Dr. Frank Tracz, Conductor

American Fanfare (1999/2006)..... James Stephenson (b.1969)

Bells Across the Atlantic (2013).....Adam Gorb (b.1958)
Dr. Larry Blocher, Guest Conductor

Little Symphony for Winds (1817-1818/2003).....Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
trans. Verne Reynolds (1926–2011)

Rich Ebersole, Graduate Assistant Conductor

Of Our New Day Begun (2015)..... Omar Thomas (b.1984)

Dope (2022) Katahj Copley (b.1998)

Wind Symphony Program Notes

STRIDE for Concert Band (2023).....Kevin Day (b.1996)

Commissioned by the American Bandmasters Association, *Stride* is derived from the definition meaning to walk in a decisive way to cross and overcome obstacles that may come within our paths. *Stride* is also a reference to the marching band tradition and highlights my experience growing up as a Texas band kid marching on the field. This is an energetic work that features brass and drum grooves that could be felt within duple and triple, while contrasting to a beautiful lyrical section that showcases the woodwind section.

An American whose music has been characterized by "propulsive, syncopated rhythms, colorful orchestration, and instrumental virtuosity," (Robert Kirzinger, Boston Symphony) composer Kevin Day has quickly emerged as one of the leading young voices in the world of music composition today, whose music ranges from powerful introspection to joyous exuberance. Kevin Day is an internationally acclaimed composer, conductor, and pianist, whose music often intersects between the worlds of jazz, minimalism, Latin music, fusion, and contemporary classical idioms. Day serves as the Vice President of the Millennium Composers Initiative, a collective of more than 120 composers from several countries around the world.

A winner of the BMI Student Composer Award, a three-time finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, and considered for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for his *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*, Day has composed over 200 works, and has had numerous performances throughout the United States, Russia, Austria, Australia, Taiwan, South Africa, and Japan. His works have been programmed by the symphonies of Boston, San Francisco, Detroit, Indianapolis, Houston, and more, as well as several top professional and collegiate wind ensembles. His works have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Rachmaninov Hall (Russia), The Midwest Clinic, and other major venues, and recently he had his Carnegie Hall Conducting Debut at the 2022 New York International Music Festival.

Day is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He is pursuing his DMA in Composition from the University of Miami Frost School of Music, where he studies with Charles Norman Mason, Dorothy Hindman, and Lansing McCloskey. He holds a MM in Composition from the University of Georgia, and BM in Performance from Texas Christian University (TCU). He is alumnus of Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America.

Program note from the composer – Kevin Day

Elegy (2009).....Travis Cross (b.1977)

Elegy is a composition that was commissioned by a consortium of high school and university bands, under the leadership of Mark J. Lakmann and Dr. Christopher Werner at Logan and Central high schools, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The premier performance was given by the Logan High School Wind Symphony, under the baton of Dr. Travis Cross on March 9th, 2009. *Elegy* was written shortly after the death of Dr. Cross' maternal grandmother, Juanita Grimes (1922-2008), which happened the summer between his fourth year of residency at Northwestern University, and the start of his first teaching job in Virginia. This piece is one of three that Dr. Cross has written in memory of family, with the first being *Tribute*, written a few years prior for his paternal grandfather, and *Memento*, written a few years later for his paternal grandmother. Dr. Cross' maternal grandmother had a harder end to life than many, and this is reflected in *Elegy*, which the composer notes has more sadness than the other two, as first noticed by it being written in a minor key (D minor). The composer notes in the score that this piece is dedicated with love, gratitude, and affection to the memory of his grandmother.

Travis J. Cross serves as professor of music at UCLA, where he conducts the Wind Ensemble, directs the graduate wind conducting program, and chairs the music department. He was also associate dean for academic mentoring and opportunity during the initial years of The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. Previous he was the wind ensemble conductor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., Cross for five years. Cross earned doctor and Master of Music degrees in conducting from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and the bachelor of music degree cum laude in vocal and instrumental music education from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. His principal teachers were Mallory Thompson and Timothy Mahr.

Wind Symphony Program Notes

Elegy continued.....

Prior to graduate study, he taught for four years at Edina (Minn.) High School, where he conducted two concert bands and led the marching band program. From 2011–2015, he served two terms as national vice president for professional relations for Kappa Kappa Psi, the national honorary band fraternity. In 2017, Cross taught the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps as brass co-captain head.

Cross contributed a chapter to volume four of *Composers on Composing for Band*, available from GIA Publications. His more than 20 original compositions and arrangements are published by Boosey & Hawkes, Daehn Publications, and Theodore Music. He has appeared as a guest conductor, composer, and clinician in more than 30 states and around the world. Cross is a Yamaha Master Educator.

Program note by Ben Rajweski

Africa: Ceremony, Song and Ritual (1994).....Robert W. Smith (1958–2023)

Africa: Ceremony, Song and Ritual is based on the primitive folk music of Western Africa. Inspired by the recording and research of Mr. Stephen Jay, the work features traditional ceremonial music for dance and entertainment as well as dynamic percussive invocations and historical songs.

African musicians feel that they bring life to their instruments just as God gives life to the musician. As a result, individual instruments are believed to possess consciousness and are treated with the same respect and reverence given to an honored living person. The drum, the featured section of this work, is considered a sacred object as well as a musical instrument. It is believed to be endowed with a mysterious power which has been incomprehensible to the many missionaries and early travelers on the African continent. As one listens, the mind experiences a wide range of emotions including joy, fear, hope, and grief.

Oya "Primitive Fire" recreates man's conquest of fire. In the beginning of time, man discovered that he could create the elusive power by striking two flints together. He gathered his sticks and dry leaves and kindled them. The flames begin to rise very slowly, yet steadily building higher and higher into a large writhing body of energy spreading across the horizon. Suddenly, it begins to fade ... slowly ... losing life ... then the last spark ascends to the heavens and leaves the earth in darkness.

The *Ancient Folk Song* originates from Ghana, situated in the tropical belt of West Africa. It is a land of lush tropical beaches and rocky lagoons. The peaceful tranquility of this beautiful country was first disturbed by European settlers in the 1500s as Ghana became the center for exporting slaves and gold. As a result, the area became known as the Gold Coast. A secondary melody based on the folk song *Marilli* weaves throughout the final statement of the original theme.

With thunder and lightning as his weapon, *Shango*, the God of Thunder, revisits the earth. To herald his return, his devotees chant this invocationary praise. The big and small drums made of hollow trees and the skins of rams resound throughout the night as circles of worshipers dance to a frenzied state. The joyous opening statement returns amid the primal percussion, drawing the work to an exhausting conclusion.

Africa: Ceremony, Song and Ritual was commissioned by and is dedicated to the New Trier High School Band, Winnetka, Illinois, John A. Thomson, Conductor.

Program note by the composer – Robert W. Smith

Robert W. Smith was an American composer, conductor, arranger and educator who passed away this past September.

He attended high school in Daleville, after which he left for Troy University, where he played lead trumpet in the Sound of the South Marching Band. While at Troy, he studied composition with Dr. Paul Yoder. Upon his graduation from Troy with a Bachelor of Music Education degree, Smith pursued his musical career in South Florida, where he earned the master's degree in media writing and production from the University of Miami, while studying with Dr. Alfred Reed.

Wind Symphony Program Notes

Africa Continued.....

Mr. Smith has over 600 publications in print, with the majority composed and arranged through his long association with Warner Bros. Publications and the Belwin catalog. He serves as the Director of Product Development for C. L. Barnhouse and Walking Frog Records.

Mr. Smith's credits include many compositions and productions in all areas of the music field. His original works for winds and percussion have been programmed by countless military, university, high school, and middle school bands throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, South America and Asia. His *Symphony No. 1, "The Divine Comedy"*, *Symphony No. 2, "The Odyssey"* and *Africa: Ceremony, Song and Ritual* have received worldwide critical acclaim. His educational compositions such as *The Tempest*, *Encanto*, and *The Great Locomotive Chase* have become standards for developing bands throughout the world. His numerous works for orchestras of all levels are currently some of the most popular repertoire available today. His music has received extensive airplay on major network television as well as inclusion in multiple motion pictures. From professional ensembles such as the United States Navy Band and the Atlanta Symphony to school bands and orchestras throughout the world, his music speaks to audiences in any concert setting.

As a conductor and clinician, Mr. Smith performed throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Europe and Australia. He was the principal conductor of the American Symphonic Winds and the American Festival Philharmonic Orchestra, professional recording ensembles based in Washington D.C. He also worked on the production of *Symphony No. 3, "Don Quixote"*, the fourth in a series of compact disc recordings of his best-known works for concert band. In addition, he was co-creator of the Expressions Music Curriculum. This comprehensive Pre-K through 12 music program includes Band Expressions, an innovative new approach to teaching music through the band.

Mr. Smith taught in the Music Industry program at Troy University in Troy, Ala. His teaching responsibilities were focused in music composition, production, publishing and business. In addition, he was a managing partner and conductor/producer for American Audio Unlimited, an audio production company specializing in recordings for concert band and orchestra.

Biography by windbandrep.org, edited by Alex Wimmer

March Grandioso (1901/2001).....Roger Seitz (1867–1946)
arr. Andrew Glover (b.1961)

March Grandioso opens with a theme from Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 14* (Allegro Eroico section). Like Huffine's *Them Basses March*, *March Grandioso* has a minimum of important simultaneous melodic lines and can thus be performed with very few instruments. When played at a football half-time show or during a parade by a band with 200 to 300 performers, the powerful unison strains can be heard for a considerable distance.

Roland Forrest Seitz (1867-1946) was the youngest of the eight children of William and Magdalena (Ziegler) Seitz. Beginning in Fissel's School, a one-room building in nearby Glen Rock, he received his early education in the public schools of York County. Although he was interested in studying music as a profession, he became a printer's apprentice with the *Glen Rock Item*, a weekly newspaper, when he was a teenager — his father had died when he was three, and it was necessary that he help with the family income. Fortunately, his early interest in music was encouraged by several of his relatives, including Seitz's older cousin, Levi Z. Seitz, who obtained a flute for Roland and invited him to join the family "band." The other instruments in this unorthodox ensemble consisted of a trombone, some violins, and an organ. Soon another violin and a cornet were added and the group worked its way through Squire's *Album Number One for Beginners*, playing marches, waltzes, medleys, serenades, quadrilles, and schottisches. After a time Roland joined the Glen Rock Band, first as a euphonium player and later as a cornetist. The band had been rejuvenated after the Civil War by another older cousin, Nathaniel Z. Seitz, and was gradually improving.

Although Roland Seitz was reportedly a conscientious and capable printer, he still hoped for a career in music, and by saving every possible penny until he was 27 years of age, he finally succeeded in enrolling at Dana's Musical Institute in Warren, Ohio (now part of Youngstown University). He took his education seriously and by sacrificing all luxuries (and occasionally food), he graduated in 1898. He then returned to Glen Rock where he taught private wind and percussion lessons, played in the Glen Rock Band, and later became a successful leader of that group. Under his direction the band made remarkable progress, and in 1901 it was selected to perform at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, along with many of the best-known bands in the nation, including Sousa's. Seitz also played the pipe organ at Zion Lutheran Church in Glen

Wind Symphony Program Notes

March Grandioso continued.....

Rock, traveled on concert tours, and opened his own publishing business.

Seitz was awarded honorary degrees by Dana's Musical Institute in 1903 and 1924. He was a member of two local music associations as well as the Independent Order of Red Men and the Republican Party. Ten years after his death in 1946, in Union, New Jersey, a monument to his memory was erected in Glen Rock, Pennsylvania.

Andrew Glover (b. 13 July 1961, St. Louis, Mo.) is an American composer, arranger, euphoniumist and music publisher. As a sophomore in high school, Mr. Glover's first band arrangement was performed by the school's wind ensemble, and thus began a multi-decade career in composition and arranging. His band works number over 200, many are published by Barnhouse, and have been performed, recorded, and broadcast by bands worldwide.

Mr. Glover graduated from Central Methodist College (now university) in 1983 with a Bachelor of Music Education degree, did graduate work at Southeast Missouri State University. In college, Glover won a position in the Detroit Concert Band, conducted by Leonard B. Smith, and performed for four seasons on euphonium. He participated in numerous recording sessions with the DCB, including ten phonograph records of "Gems of the Concert Band" and a documentary film soundtrack. For many years he also performed as a soloist and guest artist.

After seven years as director of bands at Rosary High School in St. Louis, in 1998, Mr. Glover joined the staff of the C.L. Barnhouse Company in Oskaloosa, Iowa, where he serves as staff composer/arranger, Chief Operating officer, and Secretary-Treasurer. In addition to Glover's original works for band, he has composed numerous instrumental solos and choral pieces. He has arranged or transcribed over 175 works for band.

An enthusiast of, and advocate for classic concert band music and history, Glover is not only involved in new music production at Barnhouse, but also oversees the company's 127+ year archive of publications and historical memorabilia, and is frequently involved in band history research projects. He is a member of ASCAP; Association of Concert Bands, where he serves on the advisory council; is president of the Detroit Concert Band, Inc.; and is conductor of the Windjammers, Unlimited Education Band. In May 2013 he received the Distinguished Alumni award from Central Methodist University.

Program note by windrep.org, edited by Alex Wimmer

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

American Fanfare (1999/2006)..... James Stephenson (b.1969)

American Fanfare was originally written for a church in Naples, Fla., for a celebratory occasion. At the encouragement of Erich Kunzel, it was scored for full orchestra in 1999 and later went on to win the Florida Orchestra fanfare competition that same year. Since that time, it has been performed by several major orchestras, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Detroit Symphony, and Rochester Philharmonic. In 2006, Commander David Alpar (U.S. Air Force) commissioned the concert band version.

Program note from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Bells Across the Atlantic (2013).....Adam Gorb (b.1958)

American Fanfare was originally written for a church in Naples, Fla., for a celebratory occasion. At the encouragement of Erich Kunzel, it was scored for full orchestra in 1999 and later went on to win the Florida Orchestra fanfare competition that same year. Since that time, it has been performed by several major orchestras, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Detroit Symphony, and Rochester Philharmonic. In 2006, Commander David Alpar (U.S. Air Force) commissioned the concert band version.

Program note from *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* and the composer – Adam Gorb

Little Symphony for Winds (1817-1818/2003).....Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
trans. Verne Reynolds (1926 – 2011)

The classic wind octet consisted of pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns. In this Little Symphony, two flutes have been included to provide a wider range and more brilliant top to the ensemble. The first three movements are from the *Fünf Klavierstücke* (1818) and the fourth movement is from the piano four-hand version of the *Overture in Italian Style in C* (1817). The music is gentle, good natured, and rich in the familiar Schubertian qualities of graceful melodic invention and harmonic elegance.

Program note from publisher

Of Our New Day Begun (2015)..... Omar Thomas (b.1984)

“Of Our New Day Begun” was written to honor nine beautiful souls who lost their lives to a callous act of hatred and domestic terrorism on the evening of June 17, 2015 while worshipping in their beloved sanctuary, the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (affectionately referred to as “Mother Emanuel”) in Charleston, South Carolina. My greatest challenge in creating this work was walking the line between reverence for the victims and their families, and honoring my strong, bitter feelings towards both the perpetrator and the segments of our society that continue to create people like him. I realized that the most powerful musical expression I could offer incorporated elements from both sides of that line - embracing my pain and anger while being moved by the displays of grace and forgiveness demonstrated by the victims’ families.

Historically, black Americans have, in great number, turned to the church to find refuge and grounding in the most trying of times. Thus, the musical themes and ideas for “Of Our New Day Begun” are rooted in the Black American church tradition. The piece is anchored by James and John Johnson’s time-honored song, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (known endearingly as the “Negro National Anthem”), and peppered with blues harmonies and melodies. Singing, stomping, and clapping are also prominent features of this work, as they have always been a mainstay of black music traditions, and the inclusion of the tambourine in these sections is a direct nod to black worship services.

“Of Our New Day Begun” begins with a unison statement of a melodic cell from “Lift Every Voice....” before suddenly giving way to ghostly, bluesy chords in the horns and bassoons. This section moves to a dolorous and bitter dirge presentation of the anthem in irregularly shifting 12/8 and 6/8 meter, which grows in intensity as it offers fleeting glimmers of hope and relief answered by cries of blues-inspired licks. A maddening, ostinato-driven section representing a frustration

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

Of Our New Day Begun continued.....

and weariness that words cannot, grows into a group singing of “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” fueled by the stomping and clapping reminiscent of the black church.

In the latter half of the piece the music turns hopeful, settling into 9/8 time and modulating up a step during its ascent to a glorious statement of the final lines of “Lift Every Voice....” in 4/4, honoring the powerful display of humanity set forth by the families of the victims. There is a long and emotional decrescendo that lands on a pensive and cathartic gospel-inspired hymnsong. Returning to 9/8 time, the piece comes to rest on a unison F that grows from a very distant hum to a thunderous roar, driven forward by march-like stomping to represent the ceaseless marching of black Americans towards equality.

The consortium assembled to create this work is led by Dr. Gary Schallert and the Western Kentucky University Wind Ensemble.

Program note by the composer – Omar Thomas

Dope (2022) Katahj Copley (b.1998)

The first semester of my masters- I was in a different headspace. I had finished writing *Where the Sky Has No Stars* and at the moment I felt renewed. I didn't know what else to write, so I began to write music that felt disingenuous to my spirit (music that will never see the light of day)- I was going on autopilot and I had lost my voice. During one of my lessons at UT Austin, my professor Omar Thomas and I began listening to a piece I had mocked up a couple of days before. We both weren't feeling it, and finally I asked him to turn off the piece and I told him it didn't sound like me. I felt lost creatively. He then asked me what music I listen to. I began to name only band music composers. He asked me again, and I told him outside of wind band music I'm in love with Rap, R & B, Jazz and Soul.

Then he asked an important question- “Why do you make a barrier between those ideals?”

I didn't have an answer. It was a wake-up call for me. Why was I compartmentalizing my musical inspirations?

He continued, “If you create something that is a celebration of who you are, the music you grew up with, and the music that inspires you now... then that would be dope...”

And with that this piece was born. With that realization, I began to create a piece that celebrated all the music that had inspired me throughout my life. From *Thundercat* to *Kendrick Lamar*, *Miles Davis* to *Hiatus Kaiyote*, I wanted to bring all of these influences together into one cohesive work...one dope work. DOPE is a gumbo of all the music that inspires and influences me from *Thundercat* to *Kendrick Lamar* to *Miles Davis* to *Hiatus Kaiyote* and more, this piece is in essence a deep look into my musical world.

The piece can be broken up into three parts. Since this work is dedicated to the trail black music has created, inspired and the new horizons it's reaching, each part is named after a part of the black identity.

UNDENIABLY (which is the partial score) is the opening of the piece. It's gritty, intense with moments of color and undeniable energy. It is carried by a bass line heavily influenced by *Thundercat's* playing on *Kendrick Lamar's* *Untitled 05* along with *Miles Davis's* *Nardis*.

UNAPOLOGETICALLY (the middle section) is a world building vibe and examines just how beautiful the music can be. I explore the colors and stretch them to their limits, but in doing so found new hues within myself and my writings. With this act, I gained heavy inspiration from *John Coltrane*, *Robert Glasper*, *Kamasi Washington* and *Hiatus Kaiyote* (to name a few)

UNDISPUTEDLY (the finale) is an intense, groove filled statement. Every color explored is here and is in its full potential. It's bold and- like undeniably and unapologetically- is undisputedly black. Guided by my love for *Tyler, the Creator's* *Hot Wind Blows*, *Marvin Gaye's* *I Want You* (due to *Kendrick's* *The Heart* series), and *Kamasi Washington's* *Street Fighter* Mas along with *Askem*.

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

Dope Continued.....

I hope that "DOPE" will serve as a tribute to the black musicians who have paved the way and inspired me to create music that is authentic to who I am. I also hope that this piece will inspire others to break down the barriers between their musical influences and create something truly unique and personal.

Program note from the composer – Katahj Copley

Kansas State University Wind Symphony

Spring 2024

Listed Alphabetically

FLUTE

Josephine Benson
Tabitha Ellwood*
Melissa Fierro (Pic)
Alexander Mueller
Tegan Stratton

CLARINET

Payten Mayfield
Anna Ridgway
Alexis Sutton*
Alexis White
Havely Wolff
John Woods

BASS CLARINET

Caleb Kissoon
Isabelle Mullinax*
Andrew Otto

OBOE

Alli Gladfelder*

BASSOON

Kiri Baker-Davies*

ALTO SAX

Cooper Carlson
Abby Vetter*
Brenden Vining
Addie Warnes

TENOR SAX

Max Contreras

BARITONE SAX

Chase Burman

TRUMPET

Max Black
Owen Genereux
Tristian Lewis
Emily Reed
Evelyn Peat
Nathan Proctor
Jae Seefeldt*

HORN

Devlyn Jochum
Kendan Powers*
Maddie Renner
Kayla Schinkel

TROMBONES

Claire Albright
Zach Elliott*
Shardae Sanders
Aidan Torkelson

EUPHONIUM

Sydney Smith*
Michael Thompson
Kaden Williams

TUBA

Olivia Franco*
Andru Gnuthake

PERCUSSION

Grey Fluke*
Chase Ivey
Nathan Koupal
Jasper Vallad
Chris Wells
Jessie Whelan
Ryan Woodruff

***Principal/Section Leader**

Kansas State University Wind Ensemble

Spring 2024

Listed Alphabetically

FLUTE

Sienna DelBorell
Ella Greenup*
Cristine Rosales
Courtney Settey
Grace Woydziak

OBOE

Ali Gladfelder
Lucas Reed*

CLARINET

Angel Amaro
Chloe Crooks
Erin Flax*
Maddie Murnahan
Abbigail Rakes
Theresa Wood

BASS CLARINET

Rich Ebersole*
Bre Ledbertter

BASSOON

Ethan Karnes*
Kela Schnelle

ALTO SAX

Keith Carter
Mason Ringer*
Sara Schieferecke
Jordan Somers

TENOR SAX

Craig Brinkman

BARITONE SAX

Katie Anderson

TRUMPET

Kiersten Glass
Shelton Lauderbaugh*
Caden Roark
Paige Roberts
April Teoh
Brett Wyckoff

HORN

Josie Anderson*
Andrew Dearing
Nathan Dembski
Braden Jones
Justin Stratton
Aspen Tallent

TROMBONE

Reece Beckman
Blake Davis
Logan Herring*

BASS TROMBONE

Corbin Wood

EUPHONIUM

Austin Perr
Drake Thompson*

TUBA

Lloyd Dodson*
Chase Keesling
Chase Wassom

ELECTRIC BASS

Russell Clark

PERCUSSION

Devon Autry
Noah Dial
Houston Fleischman*
Jacob Morgan
Nathan Smith
Jessi Solorzano
Jake Wall
Ryan Woodruff

PIANO

August Siefkes

***Principal/Section Leader**

Graduating Seniors

Tyler Lee ~ Teaching and Learning Certification ~ Tulsa, OK

Austin Perr ~ Music Education ~ Lenexa, KS

Nathaniel Smith ~ Music Performance ~ Topeka, KS

Corbin Wood ~ Music Education ~ Overland Park, KS

Wind Ensemble Conductor

DR. FRANK TRACZ is Professor of Music and Director of Bands at Kansas State University. He earned his B.M.E. from The Ohio State University, M.M. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Ph.D. from the Ohio State University. He has public school teaching experience in Wisconsin and Ohio and has also served as Assistant Director of bands at Syracuse University and Director of bands at Morehead State University. Dr. Tracz has served as an adjudicator, clinician, speaker in various schools and conferences and has conducted All-State and Honor bands across the United States as well as in Canada, Singapore, South Africa, Fiji, Australia, and New Zealand.

At Kansas State, he directs the Wind Ensemble and the Marching Band, teaches graduate conducting, acts as an advisor to the Band Ambassadors, and administers and guides all aspects of a large BIG XII comprehensive band program. Ensembles under his direction have been invited to perform at numerous State conferences, MENC, two CBDNA regional conferences, The Larry Sutherland Wind band Festival at Fresno State, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, and the American Bandmasters Association Conference. The marching band was awarded the prestigious Sudler Trophy in 2015. The Wind Ensemble has also performed at the International Convention of the American Bandmasters Association in 2019 in Loveland, CO.

Dr. Tracz is on the faculty of the Conn-Selmer Institute, on the adjunct faculty of the American Band College, is a past member of the Music Education Journal Editorial Board, is a contributor to the Teaching Music Through Performance In Band series, and is past Chair of the Sudler Trophy Project of the John Philip Sousa Foundation. His honors include the Stamey Award for outstanding teaching, Kansas Bandmasters Outstanding Director award, Wildcat Pride Alumni Association award, the Tau Beta Sigma Paula Crider Outstanding Band Director award, being named a Lowell Mason Fellow, and membership in the Phi Kappa Phi Honorary Fraternity. He has also received the Conn- Selmer Institute Hall of Fame award, the Kansas State Professorial Performance award, and was elected to the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. Dr. Tracz was awarded an honorary doctorate from Doane University in May 2021. Dr. Tracz also led a very successful fundraising campaign raising over five million dollars for a new hall for the athletics band program. The “Tracz Family Band Hall” was dedicated in September of 2023, and is in full operational mode!

Dr. Tracz is married to Geralyn, and has three daughters, Jessica Tracz Kelly, Kelley Tracz, and Carly Tracz Morris, and one grandson, Caden Tracz Kelly!

Wind Symphony Conductor

DR. ALEX WIMMER is currently serving as the Associate Director of Bands at Kansas State University. His duties include directing the Wind Symphony, Cat Band (basketball pep band), Volleyball Band, Pub Crawl Band, Assistant Marching Band Director for the Pride of Wildcat Land (KSUMB), arranger and drill designer for the KSUMB, and instructor of undergraduate and graduate courses in conducting, arranging, and marching band techniques. He also serves as the faculty sponsor for Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma. During the summer he coordinates the K-State Summer Music Camp and K-State Leadership and Auxiliary Camp, and serves as one of the Assistant Directors of the Manhattan Municipal Band. Prior to his appointment at Kansas State University, Dr. Wimmer was a Graduate Teaching Assistant for the Kansas State University Bands. He assisted with all concert and athletic ensembles, undergraduate conducting courses, and Percussion Ensembles. His research interests include undergraduates conducting with expressivity and qualitative research.

Originally from Gretna, Nebraska, Dr. Wimmer received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, his Master of Music degree in Education with an emphasis in Wind Conducting from Kansas State University, and his Doctorate in Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction from Kansas State University. Dr. Wimmer was the Director of Bands at Gretna High School and the Assistant Director of Bands at Gretna Middle School. He was a recipient of the Jack R. Snider Young Band Director Award in 2011 and served on the Nebraska Music Educators Association Leadership Academy from 2011-2012.

Dr. Wimmer is in demand as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator as well as a percussion specialist. His professional affiliations include the Kansas Music Educators Association, the Kansas Bandmasters Association, the National Association for Music Education, the College Band Directors National Association, the Percussive Arts Society, Kappa Kappa Psi, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Phi Kappa Lambda. He is currently the president of the Kansas Bandmasters Association, as well a co-chair of the New Band Director Bootcamp during the Kansas Bandmasters Association's summer convention.

Guest Conductor

DR. LARRY BLOCHER is Professor Emeritus at Troy University in Troy, Alabama. He recently retired from combined appointments as Dean of the College of Communication and Fine Arts, Director of the John M. Long School of Music, and Professor of Music at Troy University following 17 years of service (2005-2022). In addition to his administrative responsibilities, Dr. Blocher served as an associate conductor with the university bands and taught undergraduate and graduate music education classes.

Prior to his arrival at Troy University, Dr. Blocher served as Associate Director of Bands, Director of Music Education, and Professor of Music at Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas for 10 years. Additionally, he was Assistant Director of Bands, Coordinator of Music Education, and Associate Professor of Music at Morehead State University, Director of Music Education and Assistant Professor in the School of Music and College of Education at Syracuse University, and Director of Jazz Studies and Saxophone and Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Dayton. He received his BME and MM (music education and performance) degrees from Morehead State University in Kentucky and his Ph.D. in Music Education from The Florida State University.

Dr. Blocher is currently an Educational Consultant for *Worldstrides* where he serves as a clinician/music designer and arranger for the ReliaQuest, Pop Tarts, and Alamo Bowls. He is a member of the NAFME *Teaching Music* Advisory. He has served on the editorial boards of the *Music Educators Journal*, *the Journal of Band Research* and the *Advisory Board* to the *Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic*. Dr. Blocher has presented invited clinic sessions at the *Midwest* on 5 separate occasions, educational sessions at *Music for All*, and research sessions at the *World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles* (WASBE) in Spain, Japan, and Austria. His research has been published in the *Journal of Research in Music Education*. His original compositions for band are published by *Excelcia Music Publishing*. Dr. Blocher has been a guest clinician/conductor/adjudicator in 34 states and 11 countries.

He is a past president of the Kansas Bandmasters Association and received both the *Outstanding Bandmaster* and *Outstanding Contributor to Music Awards* from the Kansas Bandmasters Association. He is a past recipient of the *Mortar Board Outstanding Educator Award* and the *University Leadership in the Advancement of Teaching Award* (Wichita State). He is a recipient of the of the *Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Commissioning Award*.

Dr. Blocher was named a *Lowell Mason Fellow* by The National Association for Music Education (NAfME). He is a co-principal author of the *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* series (GIA).

Graduate Assistant Conductor

RICH EBERSOLE a native of Pennsylvania, Rich is a graduate of Temple University in Philadelphia PA, where he majored in Music Education and Jazz Studies. Upon graduating, Rich moved to Arizona to begin his teaching career. Over his ten years of teaching in public schools, he has worked with all levels of students. He taught elementary band, strings and general music for two years before moving to the high school level. He experienced great success in building the band program at Dysart High School, from 11 students to 65 in four years. From there Rich moved to Liberty High School in Peoria AZ, where he again grew the band program from 60 students to just over 120 total students between Marching, Concert and Jazz Bands. Rich is married to Melissa, has a two-year-old son Elliot, and a two-month-old daughter Addison. Rich is currently working with the band program while pursuing his Master's Degree with an Emphasis in Conducting.

BEN RAJEWSKI is currently a first-year graduate student pursuing his Master's in Music Degree with an emphasis in Instrumental Conducting. He received his Bachelors in Music Education from Kansas State University in 2020. Ben taught for three years in Winfield, KS, where he was the Director of Bands at Winfield High School and the Assistant Director of Bands at Winfield Middle School. Ben enjoys spending his free time with his dog Peanut Butter, being outdoors, and exercising.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 22, 2024
Concert Band & University Band Concert
McCain Auditorium
7:30 pm

May 4, 2024
Drumline Mini Camp
Tracz Family Band Hall
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

May 18, 2024
Drumline Auditions
Tracz Family Band Hall
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

June 9-13, 2024
K-State Music Camp
McCain Auditorium

July 14-17, 2024
K-State Leadership & Auxiliary Camp
McCain Auditorium

July 27, 2024
2024 K-State Marching Pride Classic Golf Tournament
Colbert Hills Golf Course
9:00 am

For more information on all of these events visit the K-State Bands website at <https://www.k-state.edu/band/> or email Courtney Grecu at cljensen@ksu.edu