



Belmont High School Wind Ensemble
&
Commonwealth Wind Symphony

Allison Lacasse

Band Director, Belmont High School

Eric M. Laprade, Stephen C. Massey

Conductors, Commonwealth Wind Symphony

Sunday, January 19, 2025

7:30 p.m.

New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL WIND ENSEMBLE

Katahj Copley

(b.1998)

Halcyon Hearts

Arturo Márquez

(b.1950)

Danzon No. 2

trans. Nickel

COMMONWEALTH WIND SYMPHONY

Cindy McTee

(b.1953)

Notezart

Vaughan Williams

(1872-1958)

Rhosymedre

Norman Dello Joio

(1913-2008)

Variants on a Medieval Tune

Omar Thomas

(b. 1984)

Of Our New Day Begun

Susan LaBarr

(b. 1981)

Grace Before Sleep

Alfred Reed

(1921-2005)

Russian Christmas Music

The **Commonwealth Wind Symphony** was born out of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Being a music educator is isolating at the best of times, with most schools employing one or two music teachers. This feeling was exacerbated by the physical distancing we endured during the 2020 - 2021 school year. State safety guidelines for COVID-19 forced musicians ten feet apart, if performing groups were allowed to meet at all.

Feeling the need to reconnect and re-energize our love for making music (what got us into this profession in the first place!) nearly 90 music educators convened on the South Shore Conservatory campus in August of 2021 for a night of music making.

Now in its fifth year, The Commonwealth Wind Ensemble seeks to empower music educators to forge meaningful professional networks, reconnect with their instrument, view themselves as an artist, and model this for their students in performance

PROGRAM NOTES - BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL

*Love does not delight in evil
but rejoices with the truth,
It always protects, always trusts,
always hopes, always perseveres
Love never fails.*

Halcyon Hearts is an ode to love and how it affects us all. Halcyon denotes a time where a person is ideally happy or at peace, so in short Halcyon Hearts is about the moment of peace when one finds their love or passion. The piece centers around major 7th and warm colors to represent the warmth that love brings us. The introduction – which is sudden and colorful – symbolizes the feeling of the unexpected journey it takes to find love. Using the colors and natural energy of the ensemble, we create this sound of ambition and passion throughout the work. No matter what race, gender, religion, nationality or love, we all are united with the common thread of passion from the heart. This piece was written in dedication to those who love no matter which negativity is in the world; do not allow hate and prejudice to guide the way we live our lives. Always choose love and the halcyon days will come.

- Program Note from score

The idea of writing the **Danzón No. 2** originated in 1993 during a trip to Malinalco with the painter Andrés Fonseca and the dancer Irene Martínez, both of whom are experts in salon dances with a special passion for the danzón, which they were able to transmit to me from the beginning, and also during later trips to Veracruz and visits to the Colonia Salon in Mexico City. From these experiences onward, I started to learn the danzón's rhythms, its form, its melodic outline,

and to listen to the old recordings by Acerina and his Danzonera Orchestra. I was fascinated and I started to understand that the apparent lightness of the danzón is only like a visiting card for a type of music full of sensuality and qualitative seriousness, a genre which old Mexican people continue to dance with a touch of nostalgia and a jubilant escape towards their own emotional world; we can fortunately still see this in the embrace between music and dance that occurs in the state of Veracruz and in the dance parlors of Mexico City.

The Danzón No. 2 is a tribute to the environment that nourishes the genre. It endeavors to get as close as possible to the dance, to its nostalgic melodies, to its wild rhythms, and although it violates its intimacy, its form and its harmonic language, it is a very personal way of paying my respects and expressing my emotions towards truly popular music. Danzón No. 2 was written on a commission by the Department of Musical Activities at Mexico's National Autonomous University and is dedicated to my daughter Lily.

- Program Note by composer Arturo Márquez

PROGRAM NOTES - COMMONWEALTH WIND SYMPHONY

Notezart (2017) was originally commissioned by the Brass and Percussion Ensemble of the National Orchestra of Lyon. The wind symphony version is dedicated to Eugene Migliaro Corporon – friend, conductor and devoted champion of new music.

I very much enjoy finding a way to make various kinds of music live together. So in this piece, you will hear 12-tone passages along with quartal, quintal and triadic harmony. To create unity, I use a steady pulse throughout and a strong reliance on the interval of a perfect 4th that opens the third movement from Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, my inspiration for *Notezart*. My "stolen" music (the work's centerpiece) is cast in a quasi-Renaissance style – with the exception of the duet between trumpet and trombone, more in keeping with an eighteenth-century variation.

- Program Note by composer

In 1920 Ralph Vaughan Williams composed three preludes for organ based on Welsh hymn tunes, a set that quickly established itself in the organ repertoire. Of the three, *Rhosymedre*, sometimes known as "Lovely," has become the most popular. The hymn tune used in this prelude was written by a 19th century Welsh composer, J.D. Edwards, and is a very simple melody made up almost entirely of scale tones and upbeat skips of a fourth. Yet, around this modest tune Vaughan Williams has constructed a piece of grand proportions, with a broad arc that soars with the gradual rise of the tune itself.

The hymn tune in long values is surrounded by a moving bass line and a treble obbligato in faster notes often characterized by descending sixths. Vaughan Williams has joined together hymn tune, bass, and obbligato in such a way as to create an exceedingly fresh

and ingratiating tonal language, which seems all the more remarkable when one discovers from the score that there is scarcely an accidental in the entire piece.

- *Program Note by Walter Beeler*

In dulci jubilo is a melody which has been used by many composers, among them Johann Sebastian Bach, as the subject for a variety of musical works. Norman Dello Joio was inspired by it to compose a set of variations. They consist of a brief introduction, the theme, and five “variants” which send the mediaeval melody through five true metamorphoses, strongly contrasting in tempo and character, and utilizing the possibilities of the band to the highest degree.

Norman Dello Joio not only ranks high as an outstanding symphonic composer but is also keenly interested in music for the schools. He has written a number of choral works that are regularly performed by high school and college choral groups. This, however, is his first original work in the band medium.

Variants on a Mediaeval Tune was commissioned by the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation for the Duke University Band, Paul Bryan, conductor. It was first performed on April 10, 1963.

- *Program Note from score*

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.

This work received its premiere on February 20, 2016, at the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) Conference, held at The Gaillard Center in Charleston, South Carolina. Members of the Mother Emanuel AME congregation were in attendance.

This work was commissioned by a consortium led by Dr. Gary Schallert and Dr. Jeff Bright of Western Kentucky University to honor the nine victims and families of the June 17, 2015, terrorist attack on Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, SC.

- *Program Note by composer*

Composed in 2011, *Grace Before Sleep* was inspired by a poem of thanks written by Sara Teasdale. A quiet opening builds into a gorgeous, resounding climax before coming to a more reflective, thankful close. This wind setting, arranged in 2013 by J. Eric Wilson, Director of Bands at Baylor University, draws upon the warm sonorities of the concert band to reflect LaBarr's musical intent and Teasdale's poetic sentiments.

*How can our minds and bodies be
Grateful enough that we have spent
Here in this generous room, we three,
This evening of content?
Each, one of us has walked through storm
And fled the wolves along the road;
But here the hearth is wide and warm,
And for this shelter and this light
Accept, O Lord, our thanks tonight.*

- Program Note by the Vista Ridge High School Wind Ensemble concert program, 19 December 2014

Reed was commissioned to write **Russian Christmas Music** a mere 14 days before it was scheduled to be performed and broadcast live on NBC. Originally written in November 1944, the work was first performed in December of that year in Denver, Colorado. Two years later, the piece was elaborated and revised, and in that form was one of the three prize-winning work in the 1947 Columbia University contest for new serious music for symphonic band.

An ancient Russian Christmas carol (Carol of the Little Russian Children) is mixed with motives from orthodox liturgical music from the Eastern Orthodox Church. Though set as a single piece, the composer originally subtitled the four easily separated sections Children's Carol, Antiphonal Chant, Village Song, and Cathedral Chorus. Reed also utilized this theme as well as the "Cathedral Chorus" section as source material for Slavonic Folk Suite, a piece written for novice musicians.

- Program Notes excerpted from score and Western Michigan University Symphonic Band concert program, 21 November 2021

Belmont High School Wind Ensemble

Allison Lacasse, *Director*

Flute 1

Luke Lee* (25)

Flute 2

Emilly Zhou (26)

Hanna Kim (26)

Oboe 1

Avery Walsh (26)

Clarinet 1

Su Min Pyo* (25)

Sophia Sun (26)

Qingyin (Angela) Yang
(26)

Clarinet 2

Larry Zhang (25)

Sarah Kisin (26)

Andrew Aloisio (26)

Clarinet 3

Henry Moriarty (25)

Erika Wang (27)

Sarah Yu (25)

Barnabas Kwak (27)

Bass Clarinet

Evan Zhang* (25)

Bassoon 1

Hank Hicks* (26)

Bassoon 2

Eli Coleman (25)

Alto Saxophone 1

Benjamin Hanna* (25)

Max Kats (26)

Kaayna Jain (26)

Matthew Padilla (25)

Christian Edmonds (26)

Alto Saxophone 2

William Sun (27)

Jordan Macarty (25)

Jonathan Peng (25)

Ruben Bucciarelli (26)

Tenor Saxophone

Ken Takayama* (25)

Ali Masoud (26)

Srishti Kar (27)

Malachi Smith (27)

Baritone Saxophone

Patrick Lee* (26)

Horn 1

Bethany Eagar* (25)

Horn 2

Dante Cavalier (25)

Horn 3

Boyana Atanasova (25)

Horn 4

Jocelyn Carr**

Trumpet 1

Ryan Park* (26)

Mark Chumack (25)

Arjun Pai (25)

Trumpet 2

Ian Choi (26)

Derek Huang (25)

Cris Garcia-Urrea (25)

Trumpet 3

Parker Brookins (25)

Brady Chan (26)

Mark Guzelian (25)

Trombone 1

Sophia Bufano* (27)

Ethan Kim (25)

Hibiki Yoshikawa (26)

Trombone 2

Bri Yueh (27)

Ian Qiu (25)

Joe Barry (26)

Trombone 3

Rohan Bhagwati (26)

Laila Lusic (25)

Eli Meretta (25)

Gavin Swanson (27)

Euphonium

Max Abouzeid* (26)

Lili Rigoulot (25)

Libby Zuccarello (26)

Armen Barsoumian (27)

Tuba

Matthew Burrows**

Nolan Zimkus* (26)

String Bass

Luka Rozgic (26)

Percussion

Shon Brown**

Stella Ovcharova* (26)

Niko Moustakas (26)

Sina Rostamnezhad (25)

*Denotes Principal player

**Denotes Belmont Public

Schools

Faculty/Staff/Student

Teacher

Commonwealth Wind Symphony

Eric M. Laprade, Stephen C. Massey, *Conductors*

<p><i>Piccolo</i> Allison Lacasse⁺ Sally Tucker[‡]</p>	<p><i>Bass Clarinet</i> Eaghan Coote⁺ Matt Sexauer[‡]</p>	<p><i>French Horn, continued</i> Rachel Sousa⁺ Orpheus Tulloch[^]</p>
<p><i>Flute</i> Emma Kucich Allison Lacasse⁺ Alex Martin⁺ Hannah McAlpine[^] Kristyn Morey Amy Pike Sally Tucker[‡]</p>	<p><i>Contrabass Clarinet</i> Mark Thornton</p> <p><i>Bassoon</i> Frank Casados⁺ Rachel Goldstein⁺ Adam Gruschow⁺</p> <p><i>Contrabassoon</i> Frank Casados⁺</p>	<p><i>Trombone</i> Brian Martin⁺ John Mitchell⁺ Artie Thovmasian⁺ Kevin Torres⁺</p> <p><i>Bass Trombone</i> Susan Goodwin-May⁺ Tim May⁺</p>
<p><i>Oboe</i> Erin Hussey⁺ Cameron Samuel⁺ Kate Sexauer[*]</p>	<p><i>Alto Saxophone</i> Lee Burgess⁺ Brendan McWalter⁺ Joshua Wolloff⁺</p>	<p><i>Euphonium</i> Chris Rene Nicole Wright⁺</p>
<p><i>English Horn</i> Kate Sexauer</p>	<p><i>Tenor Saxophone</i> Andrew Loretz⁺</p>	<p><i>Tuba</i> Ian Dorich[^] Austin Glass⁺ Mendon Neyerlin⁺</p>
<p><i>E♭ Clarinet</i> Jennifer Greenleaf Mitchell⁺</p>	<p><i>Baritone Saxophone</i> Mairead Leahy⁺</p>	<p><i>String Bass</i> Craig Chisholm⁺</p>
<p><i>Clarinet</i> Christopher Bush Brandon Chan⁺ John Chisholm[^] Lindsay Crook⁺ Jonathan Decker Sean Donnelly⁺ Nola Gooch⁺ Jennifer Greenleaf Mitchell⁺ Rachel Hertz[‡] Mickey Ireland⁺ Fitz McAlpine[^] Colleen McAuliffe⁺</p>	<p><i>Trumpet</i> Sydney Alfano⁺ Vincent DeStefano⁺ John Fouracre⁺ Matt Harden⁺ Michael Keough⁺ Tim MacDonald⁺ Patrick Marum⁺ Nick Schleyer⁺ Sam Thurston⁺</p>	<p><i>Percussion</i> Daniel Alves⁺ Kristian Labrie⁺ Maxwell Newman Laurie Pepicelli⁺ Shawn Pierce[^] Jonathan Schmidt⁺ Cameron Smith[^]</p>
<p><i>Alto Clarinet</i> Mark Thornton</p>	<p><i>French Horn</i> Hannah Gilmore Finny Keefe[^] Maggie McKenna⁺ Michael Mezzo Molly Milici⁺</p>	<p><i>Piano</i> Michael Wade</p>

+ = Active music educator

^ = Collegiate music

education major

= Retired music educator

* = High school student

Allison Lacasse

Band Director, Belmont High School

Allison Lacasse's passion for music is only matched by her deep commitment to the students she serves. As the Band Director at Belmont High School in Belmont, Massachusetts, she creates a space where students discover the power of connection, creativity, and community. Allison believes wholeheartedly that every student deserves a place to express themselves freely, to grow, and to be seen not only as musicians, but as people. Her classroom is a place where artistry and humanity are equally valued; her students are held to high standards, but are also surrounded by warmth and understanding.

Beyond her work at Belmont High School, Allison is deeply engaged in the music education community. She proudly serves as the Honor Band Chairperson for the Western International Band Clinic (WIBC) in Seattle, Washington, and as part of the operational staff for the American Band College (ABC) in Ashland, Oregon. Her dedication to connecting to the greater Boston community of youth musicians extends to the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, where she serves as Assistant Conductor for the Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble program. Allison joined the faculty as an assistant professor at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee in the Fall of 2024, where she teaches Woodwind Pedagogy. Allison is also an active leader in various professional organizations, including her roles as Chairperson for the Northeastern District of the Massachusetts Music Educators Association and Secretary for the Servant Leadership Association for Music (SLAM). Additionally, she is the founder and Artistic Director of the University of Rhode Island Summer Music Academy, where she brings together young musicians from Southern New England to learn, perform, and grow.

Allison's educational journey reflects her unwavering dedication to both her craft and her students. She earned her Bachelor of Music in Music Education and Performance from the University of Rhode Island, followed by a Master of Music in Music Education from the American Band College of Central Washington University. In recognition of her teaching, she was named a semifinalist for the 2017 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year and was honored with the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Advocacy Award in 2018. In March of 2025, Allison will be presented with the MMEA Lowell Mason Award.

Whether she's in the classroom, conducting a rehearsal, or leading a professional committee, Allison Lacasse brings her heart to everything she does, always with a singular focus: to inspire the next generation of musicians to find their voice, both in music and in life.

Eric M. Laprade

Conductor, Commonwealth Wind Symphony

Eric M. Laprade is Director of Bands and assistant professor at The College of New Jersey, where he conducts the wind ensemble and teaches courses in conducting, rehearsal techniques, and literature. He also serves as Managing Director and Artistic Partner of South Shore Conservatory's Summer Music Festival. Laprade has served as the Visiting Director of Wind Ensembles at The University of Utah and as Music Department Chairperson and Instrumental Music Teacher for the Randolph, MA Public Schools. He holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in conducting from the Eastman School of Music, a Master of Music in conducting from the University of Michigan, and a Bachelor of Music in music education and tuba performance from the Eastman School of Music. His primary teachers include Mark Davis Scatterday, Michael Haithcock, and Malcolm W. Rowell, Jr.

Stephen C. Massey

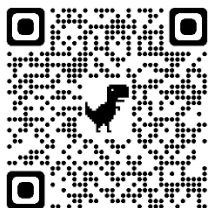
Conductor, Commonwealth Wind Symphony

Stephen C. Massey is the recently retired chairman of the music department in the Foxboro Public Schools in Foxboro, MA. Previously he served for 9 years as the Director of Bands in the Millis Public Schools in Millis, MA. His ensembles consistently received state, regional and international recognition, and performed concerts and workshops at numerous Music Education Conferences and many university music schools in the Northeast. The Foxboro Music Department commissioned over 25 new works during his tenure. As a result of gold medal performances at the MICCA State Festival, Mr. Massey's ensembles have performed at Symphony Hall over 15 times. The Foxboro Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensemble consistently were awarded gold medals and superior ratings at various Festivals of Music in the US and Canada for over 30 years. In both 1992 and 2000, the Foxboro Jazz Ensemble toured England and Scotland, and in 1995 the Jazz Ensemble performed at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland. The 1997 Jazz Ensemble won the Essentially Ellington Festival at Jazz at Lincoln Center in NYC, and the Jazz Ensemble has been selected for the Ellington Finals 17 more times under his leadership. In 2008, the FHS Jazz Ensemble performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. as part of Jazz at Lincoln Center's "Let Freedom Swing" performance prior to the Obama Presidential Inauguration. That same year, Mr. Massey was invited by Wynton Marsalis to teach at the White House as part of a one-day tribute to Jazz Education hosted by Michelle Obama. The 1999 Foxboro High School Wind Ensemble was one of only 16 ensembles nationwide to be selected via audition to the prestigious Band of America Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis. Mr. Massey directed the Boston Conservatory Jazz Ensemble for two years, and also taught at summer music programs at University of New Hampshire (SYMS), Hartt School of Music in Connecticut, and South Shore Conservatory. He is the founder and director for 37 years of the Foxboro Summer Jazz Improvisation Camp. He has guest conducted numerous district and all-state concert bands and jazz bands throughout the Northeast, and also conducted the All Northwest Jazz Band in Portland, Oregon in 1998. From

2012-2017, Mr. Massey has enjoyed an ongoing collaboration with the Hale School from Perth, Australia including a week long residency in Perth in 2013. The Massachusetts Music Educators Association presented Mr. Massey with the Lowell Mason Award in 1997 and the Massachusetts Instrumental Conductors Association honored him with the Conductor of the Year award in 1994. The Massachusetts Unit of the International Association of Jazz Educators recognized Mr. Massey with a lifetime achievement award in 2005. During his 47 year teaching career, Mr. Massey mentored over 30 student teachers from a variety of universities and conservatories. He has vast experience as a guest conductor, clinician, consultant, and adjudicator. Since his retirement from the Foxboro Public Schools in 2017, Mr. Massey has continued teaching on a part time basis including: consulting, guest conducting, festival adjudication, and professional development in music education and leadership.

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