

Kansas State University

Wind Ensemble

Dr. Frank Tracz, Conductor
Rich Ebersole, Graduate Assistant Conductor
Ben Rajewski, Graduate Assistant Conductor
Sharyn Worcester, Graduate Assistant Conductor

&

Wind Symphony

Dr. Alex Wimmer, Conductor
Kyle Grimes, Graduate Assistant Conductor

Featuring

Blue Springs High School

Dr. Tim Allshouse, Conductor

March 5, 2025
7:30 PM
McCain Auditorium



Blue Springs High School
Dr. Tim Allshouse, Conductor

The Purple Carnival March (1933/1969).....Harry Alford (1879 – 1939)

Hymn to the Sun - with the Beat of Mother Earth (2006).....Satoshi Yagisawa (b. 1975)

Wind Symphony
Dr. Alex Wimmer, Conductor

Ride (2002).....Samuel Hazo (b. 1966)

Down Longford Way/Shenandoah (1935/ Trans. 1990)..... Percy Grainger (1882 – 1961)

Kyle Grimes, Conductor

Divertimento for Band, Op. 42 (1951)..... Vincent Persichetti (1915 – 1987)

KHAN (2008)..... Julie Giroux (b. 1961)

Wind Ensemble
Dr. Frank Tracz, Conductor

Symphony for Brass and Percussion (1952/1967).....Alfred Reed (1921 – 2005)
Movement I

Ben Rajewski, Conductor

Four Scottish Dances (1957/1978).....Malcolm Arnold (1921 – 2006)
trans. John P. Paynter

Movement IV

Sharyn Worcester, Conductor

Variations on “America” (1891/1968).....Charles Ives (1874 – 1954)
orch. William Schuman

Rich Ebersole, Conductor

Epitaph XIV: Harvest of Sorrow (Ukraine) (2022).....Martin Ellerby (b. 1957)

Deciduous (2023).....Viet Cuong (b. 1990)

Wind Ensemble & Blue Springs High School

Ayo (2022)..... Katahji Copely (b.1998)

Wildcat Victory (1927).....Moffit (b. 1925 – 2008)
arr. Allshouse

Blue Springs High School Program Notes

The Purple Carnival March (1933/1969).....Harry Alford (1879 – 1939)

Alford wrote *The Purple Carnival March* for bandmaster Glenn Cliffe Barnum, conductor of the Northwestern University Band, and his good friend. It premiered in 1933, and its minor tonality and low wind features have solidified it as a staple of the march literature in the decades since.

Program Note by Carlye McGregor

Hymn to the Sun - with the Beat of Mother Earth (2006).....Satoshi Yagisawa (b. 1975)

Commissioned by Tokai City Wind Music Band for their 40th anniversary celebration. They gave the composer a difficult theme, that is: For 40 years we did our activity as if we were a family. We had new experiences, welcoming new members, supporting and helping one another, sometimes having troubles. Through these experiences, the band became our Sun. With the piece, we would like to express our enthusiasm for progress, taking over the early members' will. The composer used to join in a school band, so he strongly agreed with the theme, but composing is another hard thing to do. He decided to drop in on the band almost every time he went to Nagoya, and promoted friendship with them, which led him to compose this piece.

Program Note from publisher

Wind Symphony Program Notes

Ride (2002).....Samuel Hazo (b. 1966)

Ride (2002) was written as a gesture of appreciation for all of the kind things Jack Stamp has done for me, ranging from his unwavering friendship to his heartfelt advice on composition and subjects beyond. During the years 2001 and 2002, some wonderful things began to happen with my compositions that were unparalleled to any professional good fortune I had previously experienced. The common thread in all of these things was Jack Stamp. I began to receive calls from all over the country, inquiring about my music, and when I traced back the steps of how someone so far away could know of my (then) unpublished works, all paths led to either reading sessions Jack had conducted, or recommendations he had made to band directors about new pieces for wind band. The noblest thing about him was that he never let me reciprocate in any way, not even allowing me to buy him dessert after a concert. All he would ever say is, "Just keep sending us the music," which I could only take as the privilege it was, as well as an opportunity to give something back that was truly unique. In late April of 2002, Jack had invited me to take part in a composer's forum he had organized for his students at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I was to present alongside Joseph Wilcox Jenkins, Mark Camphouse, Bruce Yurko and Aldo Forte. This forum was affectionately referred to in my house as "four famous guys and you." It was such a creatively charged event, that everyone who took part was still talking about it months after it happened.

Following the first day of the forum, Jack invited all of the composers to his house, where his wife Lori had prepared an incredible gourmet dinner. Since I didn't know how to get to Jack's house (a/d/a Gavorkna House) from the university, he told me to follow him. So he and his passenger, Mark Camphouse, began the fifteen-minute drive with me behind them. The combination of such an invigorating day as well as my trying to follow Jack at the top speed a country road can be driven, is what wrote this piece in my head in the time it took to get from the IUP campus to the Stamp residence. *Ride* was written and titled for that exact moment in my life when Jack Stamp's generosity and lead foot were equal in their inspiration as the beautiful Indiana, Pennsylvania, countryside blurring past my car window.

Mr. Hazo has been a music teacher at every educational grade level from kindergarten through college, including tenure as a high school and university director. Mr. Hazo was twice named "Teacher of Distinction" by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Teachers' Excellence Foundation. Mr. Hazo serves as a guest conductor and is a clinician for Hal Leonard Corporation. He is also sponsored by Sibelius Music Software. Recordings of his compositions appear on Klavier Records and Mark Records.

Program note by Samuel Hazo

Down Longford Way/Shenandoah (1935/ Trans. 1990)..... Percy Grainger (1882 – 1961)

The two Grainger works transcribed here fall into the area of obscurity (*Down Longford Way*) and neglect (*Shenandoah*). *Down Longford Way* was collected by Katherine Parker. In 1912 Grainger met the Parknook, Tasmania-born pianist in London. She was a scholarship winner from the Melbourne Conservatorium and one of only a few of Grainger's students he held any hope for as a performer. She set a collection of native Tasmanian songs from her homeland and the *Down Longford Way* is presumably one of them. Percy orchestrated and reworked the harmonies in 1936. There is evidence that he conducted the setting on some of his concerts. The choral setting of *Shenandoah*, on the other hand, was at one time performed in both England and abroad, although never published in his lifetime.

It is listed in Teresa Balough's *CATALOGUE OF THE WORKS OF PERCY GRAINGER* (*Music Monograph 2, University of Western Australia*) as an unnumbered sea Chanty collected in 1906 from the singing of Charles Rosher and scored in 1907 for solo male voice, unison male chorus, and six accompanying male singers.

George Percy Grainger (8 July 1882, Brighton, Victoria, Australia – 20 February 1961, White Plains, N.Y.) was an Australian-born composer, pianist and champion of the saxophone and the concert band, who worked under the stage name of Percy Aldridge Grainger. Grainger was an innovative musician who anticipated many forms of twentieth century music well before they became established by other composers. As early as 1899 he was working with "beatless music", using metric successions (including such sequences as 2/4, 2½/4, 3/4, 2½/4). In December 1929, Grainger developed a style of orchestration that he called "Elastic Scoring". He outlined this concept in an essay that he called, "To Conductors, and those forming, or in charge of, Amateur Orchestras, High School, College and Music School Orchestras and Chamber-Music Bodies."

Program note by RBC Publications

Wind Symphony Program Notes

Divertimento for Band, Op. 42 (1951)..... Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)

Divertimento for Band, Op. 42 (1951) was Persichetti's first work for concert band. It was premiered by the Goldman Band during the summer of 1950. The piece was originally intended to be for orchestra. Persichetti states, "I'd been composing in a log cabin schoolhouse in El Dorado, KS, during the summer of 1949: working with some lovely woodwind figures, accentuated by choirs of aggressive brass and percussion beating. I soon realized the strings weren't going to enter, and my *Divertimento* began to take shape." *Divertimento* (1951) consists of six movements: Prologue, Song, Dance, Burlesque, Soliloquy, and March. His use of sections as separate and imitative choirs, polytonality, and tactful orchestration creates a unique texture characteristic to all of Persichetti's music. He also states, "I was writing a piece in which the brasses were tossing the woodwinds about while the timpani were commenting." This banter-like conversation between these choirs create a tongue-in-cheek like humor with lyrical nostalgia throughout *Divertimento*.

Vincent Ludwig Persichetti is regarded as one of the most universal and prolific composers of the twentieth century. By age five, he began studying piano, organ, double bass, tuba, theory, and composition. By the time he was 11, Persichetti was paying for his own music education and performing professionally as an accompanist, radio staff pianist, orchestra member, and church organist. He earned a Bachelor's of Music degree from the Combs College of Music in composition before becoming the head of theory and composition at Combs College from 1935-1941. Persichetti would later receive his diploma in conducting from the Curtis Institute and a masters and doctorate degrees from the Philadelphia Conservatory. In 1941, he became the head of the theory and composition departments at the Philadelphia Conservatory. In 1947, Persichetti became a faculty member at the Julliard School of Music and was appointed chairman of the Composition Department in 1963. At Julliard, he inspired the minds of many including Kenneth Fuchs, Philip Glass, and Robert Witt. Persichetti has composed for nearly every musical medium and is the recipient of numerous awards, grants, honorary music fraternity memberships, and honorary doctorate degrees. Persichetti passed away on August 14, 1987.

Program note by Alex Wimmer

KHAN (2008)..... Julie Giroux (b. 1961)

KHAN (2008) is a programmatic work depicting Genghis Khan and his army on the move. The opening theme "Warlord" represents Genghis Khan which is followed by the "Horseback" theme (comprised of an A and B section). These three musical representations are used throughout the piece creating a musical "campaign" complete with a serene village scene just before it's decimation. Most of the work is at a brisk tempo combined with energetic rhythms and driving percussion which continuously propel the music urgently forward. Extreme dynamic contrasts throughout the piece contribute to the emotional turbulence. Genghis Khan and his army ended the lives of thousands of people and his "Warlord" theme with great force, ends this work.

Genghis Khan (more properly known as Chinggis Khan) was one of history's most brutal, charismatic and successful warlords. He was a strategic genius. With his highly disciplined and effective army, Khan conquered more territory than any other conqueror creating an empire which continued to expand even after his death becoming the largest contiguous empire in history. Though many of his campaigns were in conquest of territory and riches, just as many were often a matter of retaliation. His non-military feats included the introduction of a writing system which is still used in Inner Mongolia today (Uighur script), an empire and society which stressed religious tolerance and the Mongol nation which would not exist today if not for his campaigns.

Emmy Award-winning composer Julie Giroux has made her mark especially in the wind band realm as well in the world of Hollywood. A Massachusetts native who grew up in Arizona and Louisiana, graduating from Louisiana State University with a degree in horn performance. Giroux spent the early part of her career arranging and orchestrating music for film and television, as well as for several pop stars in Los Angeles (Madonna, Celine Dion, and Michael Jackson to name a few). Since about 1997, she has focused her creative energies on original compositions.

Program note by Julie Giroux

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

Symphony for Brass and Percussion (1952/1967).....Alfred Reed (1921 – 2005)
Movement I

The *Symphony for Brass and Percussion*, originally completed in the summer of 1952, received its first performance in December of that year at the College Band Directors National Association convention in Chicago, by members of the Oberlin Symphonic Band under the direction of Donald I. Moore, to whom the work is dedicated. It is the composer's second major work for the Wind-Brass-Percussion ensemble, following *Russian Christmas Music*, and represents an attempt at exploring the possibilities for utilizing brass and percussion sonorities in an extended piece.

The music is in three movements. The first opens with a broad introduction in which most of the thematic material of the movement is exposed. The allegro section takes the form of an intensive hard-driven march, but it is in triple rather than the usual duple time. The basic theme, already presented in the introduction, is treated with alternate quartal and tertial harmonies, although it is built mainly in fourths throughout. A quiet, almost chorale-like middle section follows the dying away of this first part, after which the original march-like theme returns and brings the first movement to an ending of great sonority.

The second movement, by contrast, is in three-part song form, beginning with a long, lyrical line in baritone, horn and tuba colorings, which is later taken up by the trumpets and trombones. The second part begins as a six-part fugato developing over pedal point in the timpani. This reaches a high climax which dies away in preparation for the return of the original theme. This is now heard in tuned percussion colors, finally to be taken up again by the original baritone, horn and tuba grouping, bringing the movement to a quiet close.

The third movement is a rondo built on Latin-American rhythms, with the percussion section augmented by three tom-toms, tuned to low, middle and high pitches. It begins with an undulating rhythmic background over which the tubas state a motive which rises higher and higher in register until it is caught up by full trumpets and trombones. This is developed with rhythmic alterations, then dies away, yielding to the second part, which consists of a long lyrical line in canon between the trumpets, set over an inner pedal point figure in the horns. A basso ostinato is sounded by baritone and tuba in octaves. The horns, first in two and then in four parts, take over this theme in turn, followed by trumpets and trombones returning to the first section and its hard-driving rhythms. A short, broadened version of the first theme forms the coda, bringing the movement, as well as the entire Symphony, to a powerful conclusion.

Program note from score

Four Scottish Dances (1957/1978).....Malcolm Arnold (1921 – 2006)
trans. John P. Paynter

Movement IV

These dances were composed early in 1957, and are dedicated to the BBC Light Music Festival. They are all based on original melodies but one, the melody of which is composed by Robert Burns.

The first dance is in the style of a slow strathspey -- a slow Scottish dance in 4/4 meter -- with many dotted notes, frequently in the inverted arrangement of the "Scottish snap." The name was derived from the strath valley of Spey. The second, a lively reel, begins in the key of E-flat and rises a semi-tone each time it is played until the bassoon plays it, at a greatly reduced speed, in the key of G. The final statement of the dance is at the original speed in the home key of E-flat.

The third dance is in the style of a Hebridean song and attempts to give an impression of the sea and mountain scenery on a calm summer's day in the Hebrides. The last dance is a lively fling, which makes a great deal of use of the open string pitches of the violin (saxophones in the band edition).

Program note from the composer – Malcolm Arnold

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

Variations on "America" (1891/1968).....Charles Ives (1874 – 1954)
orch. William Schuman

Variations on "America" was originally a composition for organ. Composed in 1891 when Ives was seventeen, it is an arrangement of a traditional tune, known as *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*, and was at the time the de facto anthem of the United States. The tune is also widely recognized in Thomas Arne's orchestration as the British National Anthem, *God Save the Queen*, and in the former anthems of Russia, Switzerland, and Germany, as well as being the current national anthem of Liechtenstein and royal anthem of Norway.

The variations are a witty, irreverent piece for organ, probably typical of a "silly" teenage phenom like Ives. According to his biographers, the piece was played by Ives in organ recitals in Danbury and Brewster, New York, during the same year. At the Brewster concert, his father would not let him play the pages which included canons in two or three keys at once, because they were "unsuitable for church performance – They upset the elderly ladies and made the little boys laugh and get noisy!"

This work was transcribed for orchestra in 1964 by William Schuman and for band in 1968 by William Rhodes.

Program note by composer Charles Ives

Epitaph XIV: Harvest of Sorrow (Ukraine) (2022).....Martin Ellerby (b. 1957)

My ongoing series of Epitaphs, begun in 1986, have progressed from being solely concerned with Second World War subjects and moved into a broader theatre of memorial pieces now encompassing any tragedy from the personal to the collective. This is mentioned as number 14 joins the series and might be seen as an allegory on another, later tragedy, in the same nation state, perpetrated by the same aggressor neighbour.

In the years between 1932 and 1933 the Soviet Communist Party put in place a system of dispossession and deportation of millions of Ukrainian peasant farmers and families, abolishing private property and concentrating those remaining into farms under Party control. There then followed an organised famine on these people, with impossible production targets imposed upon them, all other food sources being removed and all outside assistance denied from reaching them. The result was some 3.9 million deaths, more than the total number of lives lost in the First World War. The chief culprit of these purges was the then Soviet leader Josef Stalin. You may well ask why? This was a plot to substitute the Ukraine's farms with state administered collectives and punish any independence-minded nationals posing a challenge to totalitarian authority. A salient feature of this, and other such atrocities, is that history has a habit of repeating itself.

There is a clear parallel with what became known as the Holodomor (a combination of the Ukrainian words for 'starvation' and 'to inflict death') with the recent 2022 Russian military invasion upon this same, but now, Ukrainian democracy. This connection was not lost on the composer and my Harvest of Sorrow epitaph was written in the days following the 21st century Russian assault and completed whilst the citizens of Ukraine's capital city, Kyiv, were bravely holding out against the occupying force's merciless assault, all instigated by the latter day Russian dictator Vladimir Putin along with state managed misinformation relayed to his own captive citizens, emboldened by brazen lies to the free world.

From the musical perspective this particular epitaph is scored for the largest forces to date, effectively a full symphonic wind orchestra or concert band with additional instruments such as harp and piano. It is an emotive reaction to an actual event, reflective rather than graphic whilst, without any text, sounds a musical cri de cour to contemporary events. The work opens in trepidation with a recurring (ritornello) motif that sets a brutal mood. However there follows a series of interludes that represent the more genteel nature of the oppressed people: a folksong verse and chorus with a brass chorale in swift pursuit - these are repeated in enhanced orchestrations throughout the journey, being occasionally interrupted by the ritornello material, reminding us of the surrounding oppression. The concluding coda (apotheosis) transforms all the

Wind Ensemble Program Notes

Epitaph XIV: Harvest of Sorrow (Ukraine) continued...

previous thoughts from rich textures to unison consolidation, the old adage ‘never again’, clearly suspended in the silent, screaming air...

Program note from the composer – Martin Ellerby

Deciduous (2023).....Viet Cuong (b. 1990)

For a long time after my father passed away, I felt like I had “lost my leaves.” In the way that leaves harness light to create energy for trees and plants, I felt like I had so little left to harness creatively. Many days I feared those leaves would never grow back. After struggling for months to write, I finally found some healing while creating *Deciduous*. This involved revisiting chord progressions that brought me solace as a child and activating them in textures that I have enjoyed exploring as an adult. The piece cycles through these chord progressions, building to a moment where it’s stripped of everything and must find a way to renew itself. While I continue to struggle with this loss, I have come to understand that healing is not as much of a linear process as it is a cyclical journey, where, without fail, every leafless winter is following by a spring.

Thank you to the Florida Bandmasters Association for commissioning *Deciduous* in 2023.

Program note by composer Viet Cuong

Wind Ensemble & Blue Springs High School Program Notes

Ayo (2022)..... Katahj Copely (b.1998)

These terms along with countless others have been used to greet people throughout history. However, the term "AYO" is different. Rooted from hip hop and jazz cultures, *AYO* is built in the black language. It's used to tell when something is right, when something is wrong, when something is awesome, and when something is too sweet for words. Its use is seen with your closest people, your family, or people who know you best. It's personal.

In short, "AYO" is a personal embrace that can represent life.

With this piece I wanted build the kind of embrace you would get from this one word while also honoring its beginnings – using hip hop rhythms and colorful harmonies. By the end of the piece, we the listeners go from uncertainty to home; and with the uniqueness of the piece, we in turn celebrate not only a word like AYO but also celebrate life.

Program Note by composer Katahj Copley

Wildcat Victory (1927).....Moffit (b. 1925 – 2008)
arr. Allshouse

Wildcat Victory is the official fight song of Kansas State University. It was originally written, verse and chorus, by music department student Harry Erickson in 1927. Over time it became known to K-State fans with the chorus section on its own. The band presents Wildcat Victory in various forms throughout athletic events, from a short excerpt of the introduction to a full version, complete with singing.

Blue Springs High School Wind Symphony

Spring 2025

PICCOLO

Tandoe Saquee

FLUTE

Brady Seyer*
Tandoe Saquee
Joseph Nguyen
Abbie Cabe
Heidi Esser
Ray Crisler
Aubrey Morgan
Ava Neidholdt

BASSOON

Jenna Wong*
Grace Hacker

CLARINET

Lilly Sanford**
Emily Caton**
Fredrick Thompson
David Scheerer
Day Sellens
Brooke Horstman
Abe Moennig
Julia Wong
Chloe Magers

BASS CLARINET

Ashton Elledge*
Jeremy Smith

ALTO SAX

Owen Pirsch*
Jacob Asmelash
Shay Carrender
Finn Helmer
Megan Myers

TENOR SAX

Rowan Axton
Duncan Stults

BARITONE SAX

Jenn Martens

TRUMPET

Colin Robinson*
Warren Bledsoe
Alberto Salgado-Sanchez
Connor DeHardt
Sydney Roskop
Kevin Kannas
Keagan Brokaw
Jayden Morris
Ashtyn Nusbaum

FRENCH HORN

Alex Reed*
Jackson Mowers
Lillian McCoy
Katie Bain
Carson Mullins
Kylie Page
Cameron Liggett

TROMBONE

Ryan Wolfram*
Will Moore
Gabby Sperling
Conor Santos
Carson Wasmer

BASS TROMBONE

Jacob Scheerer*
Jonathan Mitchell

EUPHONIUM

Jack Connaughty*
Ryan Gillespie
David Gorden

TUBA

Oliver Kellermeyer**
Zander Zuber**
Mason Booheister
Maxwell Gorden
Ruby Hays

PERCUSSION

Gabriel Bryant
Kya Cease
Brady Dean
Elijah Droke
Jenna Flax
Michael Moore
Issac Montgomery
Norah Kannas
Hannah Richardson

Blue Springs High School Staff

Tim Allshouse
Elizabeth Puyear
Joe DeSantis
Matt Chang
Karen Walls

Director of Bands
Assistant Director of Bands
Assistant Director of Bands/Percussion
Assistant Director of Bands/Percussion
Administrative Assistant

Kansas State University Wind Symphony

Spring 2025

Listed Alphabetically

FLUTE

Josephine Benson
Paige Cannon
Melissa Fierro
Ella Greenup (Pic)*
Allison Reid
Cristine Rosales

CLARINET

Jessica Boyle
Jackie Cook
Payten Mayfield
Anna Ridgeway
Laine Schmalzried
Havely Wolff*
John Woods

BASS CLARINET

Caleb Kissoon
Bre Ledbetter*

OBOE

Natalie Myers*

BASSOON

Ryan Katzer
Kate Marten
Kela Schnelle*

ALTO SAX

Chase Burman
Merrick Figueroa*
Chris Gutierrez
Jarrett Peabody

TENOR SAX

Isaac Chase

BARITONE SAX

Cooper Carlson

TRUMPET

Karson Griffin
Tristan Lewis
Nathan Proctor
Cameron Sadler
Jae Seefeldt*
Mark Thompson

FRENCH HORN

Elijah Cunningham
Devlyn Jochum
Maddie Renner*
Kayla Schinkel

TROMBONES

Jacob Daley*
Gabby Day
Zach Elliot
Noah Gray
Shardae Sanders

EUPHONIUM

Miles Kehoe
Sydney Smith*

TUBA

Dillan Emch
Olivia Franco*
AJ Hoffman
Asmodeus Hull

PERCUSSION

Dayton Hawkins
Mark McKinley
Cole Parsons
Brenden Scaglione
Jasper Vallad
Noah Vogel
Jessie Whelan*
Ryan Woodruff

PIANO

Tabitha Ellwood

Kansas State University Wind Ensemble

Spring 2025

Listed Alphabetically

FLUTE

Laura Bogner
Sienna DelBorrell
Anna Peery
Tegan Stratton*
Grace Woydziak*

CLARINET

Angel Amaro*
Chloe Crooks
Erin Flax
Maddie Murnahan
Kamryn Myrick
Abbigail Rakes
Alexis Sutton
Theresa Wood

BASS CLARINET

Jordan Culton*
Isabelle Mullinax

OBOE

Kelsey Farr
Natalie Myers*
Lucas Reed

BASSOON

Simon Kirkeby
Tom Stark*

ALTO SAX

Mason Ringer*
Sara Schieferecke
Jordan Somers
Diego Umaña Conejo

TENOR SAX

Keith Carter

BARITONE SAX

Craig Brinkman

TRUMPET

Owen Genereux
Kiersten Glass
Kyle Grimes
Caden Roark*
Bryce Schreiber
Brett Wyckoff

FRENCH HORN

Josie Anderson*
Andrew Dearing
Nathan Dembski
Kendan Powers
Aspen Tallent

TROMBONE

Mason Burnett
Jared Eck
Ben Rajewski*
Aidan Torkelson

EUPHONIUM

Joseph Horne*
Drake Thompson

TUBA

Lloyd Dodson*
Chase Keesling
Chase Wassom

PERCUSSION

Devon Autry
Noah Dial
Houston Fleischmann*
Grey Fluke
Jacob Morgan
August Siefkes
Jessi Solorzano
Jake Wall

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! Recently Dr. Tracz was appointed at the state coordinator and conductor of the Heartland Musicians Abroad Ensemble that will tour Europe in the summer of 2026.

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.

Graduate Assistant Conductors

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 second-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.

SHARYN WORCESTER has a diverse and extensive career in music education, performance, and adjudication throughout Kansas. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Master of Music Education in Instrumental Conducting from Kansas State University where she studied under the direction of Dr. Frank Tracz, Director of Bands, and Dr. Jacqueline Fassler-Kerstetter, Associate Professor of Horn. Prior to continuing her studies, Sharyn served as the Lead Academic Advisor for the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance at K-State. In this role, she facilitated the academic progress for all undergraduate majors and minors in these degree tracks. As part of this work, in 2019, she presented "Music Beyond High School," at the Kansas Music Educator's Association In-Service Workshop to provide resources for educators to prepare their students for college music programs or careers. Additional duties included membership in the Music Course and Curriculum Committee and the Music Recruitment Committee, as well as advising Sigma Alpha Iota, the International Music Fraternity for Women.

Prior to her appointment at K-State, Sharyn served nine years as Instrumental Music Director at Junction City High School where her teaching duties included marching band, concert band, wind ensemble, music theory, music appreciation, and piano classes. Her bands have performed across Kansas and the United States including the Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., the Fiesta Bowl Parade in Tempe, Arizona, and the Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tennessee.

KYLE GRIMES is from Saint George, Kansas, a small town east of Manhattan, and has earned a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Kansas State University. Kyle is currently a first-year graduate student pursuing his Master's in Music Degree with an emphasis in Instrumental Conducting. During his time as an undergraduate, Kyle performed with the Wind Ensemble, Symphony Orchestra, Trumpet Ensemble, 8-Ball Brass Quintet, and University Band. He also marched with the "Pride of Wildcat Land" Marching Band and served as the Music Instructor of the trumpet section for two years. Kyle is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Kappa Kappa Psi.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 27, 2025

Wind Ensemble & Wind Symphony Concert
McCain Auditorium
7:30 pm

April 28, 2025

Concert Band and University Band Concert
McCain Auditorium
7:30 pm

May 10, 2025

Drumline Mini Camp
Tracz Family Band Hall
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

May 24, 2025

Drumline Auditions
Tracz Family Band Hall
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

June 8-12, 2025

K-State Music Camp
McCain Auditorium

June 28, 2025

2025 K-State Marching Pride Classic Golf Tournament
Colbert Hills Golf Course
9:00 am

July 13-16, 2025

K-State Leadership & Auxiliary Camp
McCain Auditorium

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