

# Arizona State University School of Music, Dance and Theatre presents



## Trumpet Ensemble

## Wind Symphony

Jamal Duncan, conductor  
Eric Cole Steele, guest conductor  
Joel Thiesfeldt, guest conductor

## Wind Ensemble

Jason Caslor, conductor  
Grant Knox, guest conductor

Wednesday, October 30, 2024  
ASU Gammage  
7:30 p.m.




# Land Acknowledgement

ASU acknowledges the twenty-three Native Nations that have inhabited our land for centuries. Arizona State University's four campuses are located in the Salt River Valley on ancestral territories of Indigenous peoples, including the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa) Indian Communities, whose care and keeping of these lands allows us to be here today. We recognize the sovereignty of these nations and seek to foster an environment of success and possibility for Native American students, staff, faculty, and patrons.



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# From the Conductors

We are delighted to present this evening's program, Traditions and Innovations, which captures the essence of both the rich history of wind bands and the exciting contemporary movement within our field. Tonight's concert showcases an inspiring selection of music, pairing timeless classics with modern works that reflect the evolving landscape of wind music.



The Wind Symphony will open the evening with three compositions written within the past two years, as well as a piece that has quickly become a new standard in the repertoire. The Wind Ensemble is especially proud to feature William Grant Still's Afro-American Symphony, presented alongside cherished works by Percy Grainger and Igor Stravinsky. Together, these pieces represent the breadth and diversity of the wind band tradition, all brought to life by the extraordinary talent and dedication of our student musicians.

At the heart of our mission is a commitment to nurturing the next generation of musicians, educators, and innovators. We aim to equip our students with the skills and experiences they need to thrive in an ever-evolving musical landscape. Through scholarships, access to quality instruments, collaborations with renowned guest artists, and opportunities to perform on prestigious stages, we strive to offer them every advantage for success.

However, we cannot do this alone. We rely on the generosity of our supporters to continue providing these vital resources. Your donation directly impacts the future of our students, empowering them to pursue their passions—whether it's performing on international stages, shaping the next generation of musicians as educators, or forging new career paths that blend music with other fields.




Please consider making a gift today to support the future of ASU Wind Bands. Your contribution, no matter the size, makes a meaningful difference. You can find the donation link on the last page of this program.

Thank you for being here tonight and for your continued support.

*Jamal Duncan*

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# Program

## Trumpet Ensemble

Concertino Piccolo Op. 101 (1985).....Jan Koetsier  
(1911-2006)  
3.5'

III. Allegro molto vivace

### Brief Pause

## Wind Symphony

Jamal Duncan, conductor

Parhelion (2022).....Roshanne Etezady  
(b. 1973)  
6'

Serenade (2020).....Katahj Copley  
(b. 1998)  
10'

I. Prelude  
II. Song  
III. Waltz  
IV. Dance

Joel Thiesfeldt, conductor

Of Endless Miles and Empty Rafts (2023).....Michele Fernández  
5'

Erin Cole Steele, conductor

Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H) (1993).....Ron Nelson  
(1929-2023)  
11'

### Intermission

# Program

## Wind Ensemble Jason Caslor Conductor

Octet for Wind Instruments (1923/1952).....Igor Stravinsky  
(1882-1971)  
15'

- I. Sinfonia
- II. Tema con variazoni
- III. Finale

Colonial Song (1916-18/1997).....Percy Aldridge Grainger  
(1882-1961)  
Edited by R. Mark Rogers  
6'

Afro-American Symphony (1930/1970).....William Grant Still  
(b. 1973)  
25'  
Arranged by Robert O'Brien

- I. Longing
- II. Sorry
- III. Humor
- IV. Aspiration

Grant Knox, conductor

# Wind Symphony

## Flute

Ania Carranza, *Gilbert*  
\*Benjamin Hernandez, *Rio Rancho, NM*  
Elizabeth Hughes, *Phoenix*  
Leyi Li, *Wuhan, Hubei, China*  
Ryan Mecca, *Dallas, TX*  
Hanna Moon-Earle, *Auburn, WA*

## Oboe/English Horn

Hannah Smith, *Queen Creek*  
Shukun Song, *Qingdao, Shandong, China*  
Heidi White, *Gilbert*  
\*Madison Willacey, *Las Vegas, NV*

## Bassoon/Contrabassoon

Lucas Lyum, *Las Vegas, NV*  
Nicholas Muir, *Phoenix AZ*  
\*Caroline Sanders, *Dallas, TX*  
Aaron Sheppard, *Vail*

## Clarinet

Warrior Bewley, *Owasso, OK*  
Samantha Cali, *Phoenix*  
Trenton Davis, *Wellsville, MO*  
Beckett Gladish, *Queen Creek*  
Mary Haugan, *Gilbert*  
Jamilyn Hawthorne, *Phoenix*  
Kaitlyn Johnson, *Mesa*  
Ethan Kane, *Las Vegas, NV*  
\*Rachel Lomeli, *Glendale*  
Julio C. Moreno, *Phoenix*  
Grady Newsum, *Phoenix*  
\*Ryan Callahan Odgers, *Phoenix*  
Jair Valdivia, *Woodway, TX*  
Adrianna Valenzuela, *Phoenix*  
Belle Zogby, *Lemont IL*

## Saxophone

Thomas Folger, *Mesa*  
Giovanna Gioscia, *Somers, CT*  
\*Jennifer Holstead, *Las Vegas, NV*  
Paige Walker, *Lake Orion, MI*  
Liam Wirth, *San Diego, CA*  
Matthew Yagin, *Wailuku, HI*

## Horn

\*Blake Allen, *Phoenix*  
Daniel Bryce, *Mesa*  
Naomi Carl, *Frankfort, IL*  
Hayden Clark, *Tramonto, AZ*  
Logan Kelley, *Mesa*  
Duncan Kincaid, *Albuquerque, NM*  
Just Wise, *Gilbert*




## Trumpet

Callie Azersky, *Tucson*  
Adam Kesselman, *Scottsdale*  
Elizabeth Kraus, *San Jose, CA*  
Patrick Newman, *Mesa*  
David Torres II, *Peoria*  
Joseph Tyler, *Poway, CA*  
\*Xinyi Qiao, *Zhengzhou, Henan, China*  
Cambria Whitehead, *Gilbert*  
Elian Zuniga, *Casa Grande*



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# Wind Symphony

## Trombone

\*Kristian Bailes, *Glendale*  
Robby Pawloski, *Tucson*  
Vincent Quintana, *Rio Rancho, NM*  
Alexander Skelton, *Flagstaff*  
Carson Webster, *Mesa*

## Bass Trombone

Wendy Ostaszewski, *Yorba Linda, CA*  
\*Rhoadell Sudduth, *Los Angeles, CA*

## Euphonium

Hayden Beausoleil, *Phoenix*  
Asher Hepworth, *Chandler*  
Steven Martin, *Prescott Valley*  
\*Ethan Nolan, *Gilbert*

## Tuba

\*Braden Cearley, *St. Louis, MO*  
Brandon Clark, *Goodyear*  
Brett Page, *Mesa*  
Jayson Rodgers, *Phoenix*

## Percussion

Brandon Berg, *Phoenix*  
Darrin Bia, *Phoenix*  
Bec Cox, *Mesa*  
Cade Keller, *Gilbert*  
Asha Pitti, *Phoenix*  
\*Armando Guadalupe Rocha Rochin,  
*Phoenix*  
Yang Shao, *Shanghai, China*  
Adrianna Vasquez, *El Dorado Hills*

## Bass

Sila Naz Kuvanci, *Eskişehir, Turkey*

## Harp

Charles Lynch, *Mesa*

## Piano

Yumiko Hastings, *Dallas, TX*

## Synthesizer

Sicheng Li, *Yixing, JiangSu, China*




*Listed alphabetically*

*\*denotes principal*



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# Wind Ensemble

## Flutes/Piccolo

Ya-Yun Chiang, *New Taipei City, Taiwan*  
Anika Gray, *Mesa*  
Molly Olsen, *Mesa*  
Samuel Lupe, *Cibecue*  
Danielle Peterson, *Phoenix*  
Yian Shen, *Shanghai, China*  
Dianne Winsor, *Fairfax, CA*

## Oboes/English Horn

Adelaide Martinez, *Gilbert*  
Gabbie Wong, *Hong Kong, China*

## Bassoons/Contrabassoon

Evelyn Andresen-Chen, *Chandler*  
Michelle Fletcher, *Mesa*  
Joseph Florance, *Detroit, MI*  
Ben Kearns, *Palmyra, NY*  
Travis Williams, *Bushkill, PA*

## Clarinets/Bass Clarinet

Lauren Ardelt, *Peoria*  
Trisha Bacalso, *Yuma*  
John Burton, *Gilbert*  
Macey Campobello, *Mesa*  
William Cason, *Carbondale, KS*  
Kelly Chou, *Queen Creek*  
Nate Conell, *Tempe*  
Anthony Ellerman, *Gilbert*  
Aiden Millsap, *Tempe*  
Jacob Muniz, *Prescott*  
d'Art Richard, *Nokesville, VA*  
Stephen White, *New York, NY*  
Rosabelle Zhou, *Beijing, China*

## Saxophones

GianCarlo Lay, *Carrollton, TX*  
Johnathan Lee, *Puyallup, WA*  
Jerick Meagher, *Las Vegas, NV*  
Nathan Valencia, *Phoenix*

## Horns

Brian Alan, *Goodyear*  
Jesse Boyd, *Glendale*  
Isabella de Lima, *Honolulu, Hawai'i*  
Alyssa Herman, *North Potomac, MD*  
Isabella Kolasinski, *Yaphank, NY*

## Trumpets

Davey Aguilera, *Denver, CO*  
Brian Boydston, *Keller, TX*  
Andrea Butler, *Kansas City, MO*  
Andrew Smith, *Glendale*  
Alexander Strawn, *Union, KY*  
Americo Zapata, *Houston, TX*  
Taoyang Zhang, *Beijing, China*

## Trombones

Alyson Johnson, *Madison, SD*  
Garrett Parnaby, *Sierra Vista*  
Ashley Rands, *Clarksville, TN*  
Holden Welch, *Jonesboro, AK*

## Bass Trombone

Jonah Brabant, *Chillicothe, IL*



# Wind Ensemble

## Euphoniums

Shawn Boomer, *San Diego, CA*  
Rocco DiMillio, *Tucson*  
\*Elijah Ramirez, *Peoria*

## Tubas

Max Godfrey, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
Alex Stanbridge, *Phoenix*

## Percussion

Antonio De La Cruz, *Culver City, CA*  
Maria Petropoulos, *Tarpon Springs, FL*  
\*Matthew Sandridge, *Salem, VA*  
Eric Saroian, *Granger, IN*

## Bass

Sila Naz Kuvanci, *Eskişehir, Turkey*

## Banjo

Isaac Brady, *Mesa*

## Harp

Trevi Thompson, *Gilbert*

## Piano

Hsiao-Hsi Hsieh, *Taipei, Taiwan*

*Musicians are listed alphabetically*  
*\*denotes principal*



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# Program Notes

## Etezady: Parhelion (2022)

As a young musician, Roshanne studied piano and flute, and developed an interest in many different styles of music, from the musicals of Steven Sondheim to the 1980's power ballads and Europop of her teenage years. One fateful evening in 1986, she saw Philip Glass and his ensemble perform as the musical guests on Saturday Night Live. This event marked the beginning of her interest in contemporary classical music, as well as her interest in being a composer herself.

Since then, Etezady's works have been commissioned by the Albany Symphony, Dartmouth Symphony, Eighth Blackbird, Music at the Anthology, and the PRISM Saxophone Quartet. She has been a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and at the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Performers and ensembles including RÃlache, Amadinda Percussion Ensemble, Ensemble De Ereprijs, and the Dogs of Desire have performed Etezady's music throughout the United States and Europe. Roshanne Etezady's music has earned recognition from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Korean Society of 21st Century Music, the Jacob K. Javits Foundation, Meet the Composer, and ASCAP.

An active teacher, Etezady has taught at the Interlochen Arts Camp, Yale University, Saint Mary's College, and the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. She has given masterclasses at Holy Cross College, the Juilliard School, and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival.

Etezady holds academic degrees from Northwestern University and Yale University, and she has worked intensively with numerous composers, including William Bolcom, Martin Bresnick, Michael Daugherty, and Ned Rorem. She completed her doctorate at the University of Michigan in March, 2005.

*Parhelion* was commissioned for the 2019 retirement of Gary W. Hill from his post as director of bands at Arizona State University, by his former students. Etezady's program note describes its inspiration:

A Parhelion, sometimes also called "sun dog," or "whirling rainbow," is an optical illusion caused by sunlight passing through ice crystals in the upper atmosphere, causing bright spots to appear around a "solar halo" that encircles the sun. The phenomenon causes a ring of brilliance to appear around the sun, with gems of light dotting the perimeter of the circle, evoking the

appearance of three suns in the sky. In some folk traditions, parhelia signify a sign of great change or transition on the horizon.

*Parhelion* is dedicated to Gary Hill, whose warmth and brilliance enlighten everyone and everything in his radius. All of us who have worked with him, laughed with him, and learned from him are brighter because of his luminous curiosity and radiant energy. This piece is written in honor of his transition from full-time university professor into the next phase of his life and career.

*Program note by Roshanne Etezady*

## Copley: Serenade (2020)

Carrollton, Georgia native Katahji Copley (he/him/his) premiered his first work, *Spectra*, in 2017 and hasn't stopped composing since. As of 2017, Katahji has written over 100 works, including pieces for chamber ensembles, large ensembles, wind ensembles, and orchestra. His compositions have been performed and commissioned by universities, organizations, and professional ensembles, including the Cavaliers Brass, Carroll Symphony Orchestra, California Band Director's Association, Admiral Launch Duo, and the Atlanta Wind Symphony. Katahji has also received critical acclaim internationally with pieces being performed in Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, and Australia.

Katahji received two Bachelor of Music degrees from the University of West Georgia in Music Education and Composition in 2021. He studied composition with Omar Thomas at the University of Texas at Austin. Copley is currently studying Composition at Michigan State University.

Aside from composing, Katahji is an excited educator who teaches young musicians the joy of discovering music and why music is a phenomenal language.

He writes:

“Music for me has always been this impactful thing in my life. It can soothe, it can enrage, it can quiet, and it can evoke emotions that are beyond me and this world we live in. I believe that music is the ultimate source of freedom and imagination. The most freedom I have had as a musician was through composing. Composition is like me opening my heart and showing the world my drive, my passion, and my soul.”

This is a piece originally seen as an anti-serenade. I wanted to write about the idea of a relationship going bad. However, I took that idea and decided to go a different route. Instead of this being a piece for the love of someone or the breakup of someone...this is the growth of a person from heartache. The first movement is written from the perspective of someone out of a relationship, hence the rather somber beginning; however, the movement shifts into a change of mood for the person- a more hopeful mood. Second movement is a quirky encounter between two people- they are both shy and don't know what the future holds for them. The third movement is a scene for a first date for the couple. The final movement begins with the clarinet and is rather slow however as the movement progresses, it gets faster and louder until the end. This movement represents the pacing of the couple so that they finally admit their love for one another.

*Program note by Katahji Copley*

## **Fernandez: Of Endless Miles and Empty Rafts (2023)**

Michele Fernández is a published composer, active guest clinician, adjudicator and performer. Her Jazz and Symphonic compositions have been premiered at numerous prestigious conferences. She is a member of Phi Beta Mu (Omega Chapter) and an active member of Florida Bandmasters Association, Jazz Education Network (JEN), International Society of Jazz Arrangers and Composers, and Minority Band Directors National Association. She frequently serves as a guest clinician/conductor for All-State groups and Regional Honors Jazz/Symphonic groups. She has appeared as a Midwest Clinic lecturer ('07 / '16), JEN '22, and various State MEA's. She is a sponsored and partner clinician, as well as a freelance guest clinician/conductor for universities and districts across the country.

Michele recently retired from teaching in Miami after 30 years, where (among other teaching positions) her Miami Senior HS ensembles earned top honors and gained international acclaim. Her groups have been selected for Midwest Clinic (Chicago '93 & '98), International Association for Jazz Education (Boston '94 & NYC '97), Montreux Jazz Festival (Switzerland '96), Florida Music Education Association (Tampa '94 & '97) and various national publications. She and her students were the subject of a documentary on "CBS Sunday Morning", a cover story in Band Director's Guide and featured as an outstanding educator in Downbeat Magazine. Before focusing on writing/clinics, she served as an active oboist in the Miami area, as well as a rhythm section player in a busy Afro-Latin /Jazz group.

This authentic grade-3 Afro-Cuban work was written as an homage to the plight and courage of all immigrants throughout history, regardless of origin.

*Program note by Michele Fernández*

## **Nelson: Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H) (1993)**

Ron Nelson was an American composer who began piano lessons at the age of six. At that tender age, he wrote his first composition, entitled *The Sailboat*, finding it more fun to improvise than to practice. He became a church organist at the age of 13. His early efforts rewarded him with the discipline to write down his improvisations and the basic principles of orchestration.

Dr. Nelson received his bachelor of music degree in 1952, the master's degree in 1953, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1956, all from the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. He also studied in France at the Ecole Normale de Musique and at the Paris Conservatory under a Fulbright Grant in 1955. Dr. Nelson joined the Brown University faculty the following year, and taught there until his retirement in 1993.

He composed two operas, a mass, music for films and television, 90 choral works, and over 40 instrumental works. Composing for band became a major focus, and the community has been rewarded with his *Savannah River Holiday*, *Rocky Point Holiday*, and *Chaconne*.

In 1991, Dr. Nelson was awarded the Acuff Chair of Excellence in the Creative Arts, the first musician to hold the chair. In 1993, his *Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H)* made history by winning all three major wind band compositions – the National Association Prize, the American Bandmasters Association Ostwald Prize, and the Sudler International Prize. He was awarded the Medal of Honor of the John Philip Sousa Foundation in Washington, D.C., in 1994. In 2006, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Oklahoma City University.

Dr. Nelson received numerous commissions, including those from the National Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, the U.S. Air Force Band and Chorus, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Aspen Music Festival, Brevard Music Center, Musashino Wind Ensemble, and countless colleges and universities. He also received grants and awards from The Rockefeller Foundation, the Howard Foundation, ASCAP, and several from the National Endowment for the Arts. He also appeared as guest composer/conductor at a large number of colleges and universities, including Illinois, Yale, North Texas State, Western Michigan, Sam Houston, Lawrence, Dartmouth, Southern Maine, CalTech,

MIT, and Princeton. Dr. Nelson passed away on December 24, 2023 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

*Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H)* is a set of continuous variations in moderately slow triple meter built on an eight-measure melody (basso ostinato) which is stated, in various registers, twenty-five times. It is a seamless series of tableaux which move from darkness to light.

Written in homage to Johann Sebastian Bach, it utilizes, as counterpoint throughout, the melodic motive represented by his name in German nomenclature, i.e. B-flat, A, C, and B natural. Bach introduced this motive in his unfinished *The Art of the Fugue*, the textures of which are paraphrased (in an octatonic scale) in the fourth and fifth variations. The seventh variation incorporates Gustave Nottebohm's resolution (altered) of the unfinished final fugue of *The Art of Fugue*. The famous melody from Bach's *Passacaglia in C minor* appears once (also altered) in variation nineteen.

*Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H)* was commissioned by the Eta-Omicron Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, The United States Air Force Band, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Wind Studies Department, in celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the founding of The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

*Program note by Ron Nelson*

## Stravinsky: Octet for Wind Instruments (1923/1952)

Igor Stravinsky's biography reads like the history of Western music from the end of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th. Stravinsky was a Russian composer, later of French (1934) and American (1945) nationality. One of the most widely performed and influential composers of the 20th century, he remains also one of its most multi-faceted. A study of his work automatically touches on almost every important tendency in the century's music, from the neo-nationalism of the early ballets, through the more abrasive, experimental nationalism of the World War I years, the neo-classicism of the period 1920–51 and the studies of old music which underlay the proto-serial works of the 1950s, to the highly personal interpretation of serial method in his final decade. To some extent the mobile geography of his life is reflected in his work, with its complex patterns of influence and allusion. In another sense, however, he never lost contact with his Russian origins and, even after he ceased to compose with recognizably Russian materials or in a perceptibly Slavonic idiom, his music maintained an unbroken continuity of technique and thought.

“I conducted the first performance of the Octet myself, and I was extremely nervous about doing it,” Igor Stravinsky once confessed. The premiere on October 18, 1923, at the Paris Opera house occurred at the beginning of his conducting career. In addition, the neoclassical style which Stravinsky had recently adopted greatly disappointed his contemporaries. According to Jean Cocteau, the Octet was received with a scandal du silence.

The 22-year-old Aaron Copland witnessed the first performance and described the “general feeling of mystification that followed the initial hearing. Everyone was asking why Stravinsky should have exchanged his Russian heritage, and a neoprimitive style all his own, for what looked very much like a mess of 18th-century mannerisms. The whole thing gained Stravinsky the unanimous disapproval of the press. No one could have possibly foreseen, first, that Stravinsky was to persist in this new manner of his, or, second, that the Octet was destined to influence composers all over the world in bringing the latent objectivity of modern music to full consciousness by frankly adopting the ideals, forms, and textures of the pre-Romantic era.”

The unusual scoring of the Octet, which combines four woodwind and four brass instruments, was inspired by a dream Stravinsky had one night in Biarritz in late 1922. He began to compose the work immediately and finished it in Paris the following May. The result was an emotionally restrained score based on traditional forms, filled with lively wit and elegant counterpoint. The opening Sinfonia marks the composer’s rediscovery of sonata form. Stravinsky liked to compare its slow pastoral preamble to the introductions which prefaced late Haydn symphonies. The sonata-allegro proper in E-flat features a spiky march-inspired theme and a metronomic free-for-all for winds.

The second movement represents Stravinsky’s first musical essay in variation form. The waltz episode was composed first. Stravinsky then derived the 14-bar theme at the beginning of the movement from the waltz because, as he said, “I recognized it as an ideal theme for variations. I then wrote the rubans des gammes (ribbons of scales) variation as a prelude introduction to each of the other variations.” Stravinsky considered the final fugato variation in 5/8 time the most interesting episode in the entire Octet and noted, “The point of the fugato is that the theme is played in rotation by the instrumental pairs (flute-clarinet, bassoons, trumpets, trombones) which is the combination idea at the root of the Octet.” To create his fugato subject, Stravinsky inverted the intervals of his theme.

The rondo-esque finale grows out of a flute cadenza at the end of the fugato. Its clean staccato lines were inspired by the clarity and economy of J.S. Bach’s

Two-Part Inventions for keyboard. In the end, the movement abandons its crackling energy and impertinent attitude to conclude with the languorous syncopations of what sounds like an exotic Latin dance.

*Program note by Kathy Henkel and Stephen Walsh*

## **Grainger: Colonial Song (1916-18/1997)**

Born George Percy Grainger in Brighton, Victoria, on 8 July 1882, Percy Grainger made his concert debut in 1894 at age 12, departing for Europe soon after to study piano and composition at the Hoch Conservatorium in Frankfurt. He moved to London in 1901. It was here that he began performing at major concert venues and festivals, as well as writing the first of his own very popular compositions. Grainger's fame continued to grow with his move to America in 1914 where he toured and performed extensively. Percy Grainger died in White Plains, New York in 1961.

Grainger wrote:

No traditional tunes of any kind are made use of in this piece, in which I have wished to express feelings aroused by thoughts of the scenery and people of my native land, (Australia), and also to voice a certain kind of emotion that seems to me not untypical of native-born Colonials in general.

Perhaps it is not unnatural that people living more or less lonely in vast virgin countries and struggling against natural and climatic hardships (rather than against the more actively and dramatically exciting counter wills of their fellow men, as in more thickly populated lands) should run largely to that patiently yearning, inactive sentimental wistfulness that we find so touchingly expressed in much American art; for instance in Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, and in Stephen C. Foster's adorable songs My Old Kentucky Home, Old Folks at Home, etc.




I have also noticed curious, almost Italian-like, musical tendencies in brass band performances and ways of singing in Australia (such as a preference for richness and intensity of tone and soulful breadth of

phrasing over more subtly and sensitively varied delicacies of expression), which are also reflected here.

*Program note by Percy Grainger*

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## Still: Afro-American Symphony (1930/1970)

William Grant Still (1895-1978) was undoubtedly one of the most influential African-American composers of the early 20th century. He started his musical career playing oboe in the pit orchestra of an All-Black musical, *Shuffle Along*, in 1921. His composition career started when he was awarded a scholarship to study at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in the era of Jim Crow segregation, when Oberlin was one of the few major conservatories that admitted black students. The premiere of Still's *Afro-American Symphony* in 1931 signaled one of the earliest works by an African-American composer to gain a place in the orchestral canon, and it has held up well over time. In the work's title, Still identified his race with pride, inspired by the cultural activism of the Harlem Renaissance. Prior to studying music at Oberlin, Still studied medicine at Wilberforce University and served in the Navy during World War I. Later, he moved to New York and studied composition with George Chadwick and Edgard Varèse. He then traveled to Los Angeles, where he spent his final years and died on December 3, 1978.

Still's *Symphony No. 1 "Afro-American"* met with great controversy among the press when it was first played by a major symphony. Some felt that the piece belonged with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra, a jazz group that Still often played with, and others who felt that the melding of classical elements with African-American Culture was brilliant. Still wanted to "portray not the higher type of colored American, but the sons of the soil, who still retain so many of the traits peculiar to their African forebears and who have not responded completely to the transforming effect of progress."

The symphony has four movements, each of which has two different sets of titles, signaling the cultural bifurcation that defined Still's career. One version is thoroughly European: "Moderato assai," "Adagio," "Animato," and "Lento, con risoluzione," while the other, as found in one of Still's notebooks, refers to African-American history: "Longing," "Sorrow," "Humor," and "Aspiration." In the end, because Still wanted to be taken seriously as a symphony composer, he published the work with the traditional European movement titles.

Still was studying with Edgard Varèse when he wrote the first symphony. He kept detailed notebooks with hundreds of themes, each labeled with the theme's effect. He used terms such as voodoo, lament, and spiritual. Reading these notebooks, one gets a sense that he was assimilating two cultures to come up with a symphony that made a larger than life statement.

Each movement has a separate character and the original titles – "Longing," "Sorrow," "Humor," and "Aspiration" – tell the story. The first movement opens

with a haunting English horn blues solo that is then echoed in several other instruments throughout the movement. The second movement has an F major tonal center with many chromatic alternations that maintain the blues feeling. The movement works to avoid Western European music's drive to a cadence; the absence of cadences leaves the listener with a sense of ambiguity. The third movement uses essentially two minstrel themes, with small variations that depict a joyous, hallelujah feeling. The use of the tenor banjo adds to the magic and down-home feel of the movement. It is the only movement that uses the traditional Western European drive toward cadence, so this accounts for the completeness that the listener enjoys. The final movement is full of hope. Its themes, tempo variations, and harmonies give the listener a sense of desire, expectation, and dreams.

Still selected poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906), which serve as four epigraphs in the context of longer quotations. The poems used as epigraphs for the first two movements refer to the dreams and sorrows of the former slaves. The opening stanza of "Twell de Night Is Pas'," prefacing the opening movement with its blues theme, reads:

*All de night long twell de moon goes down,  
Lovin' I set at huh feet,  
Den fu' de long jou'ney back f'om de town,  
Ha'd, but de dreams mek it sweet.  
Still quotes the close:  
"All my life long twell de night has pas'  
Let de wo'k come ez it will,  
So dat I fin' you, my honey, at last,*

*Somewhah des ovah de hill."*

The first stanza of "W'en I Gits Home" is attached to the slow second movement, with its spiritual-like melody:

*It's moughty tiahsome layin' 'roun'  
Dis sorrer-laden erfly groun',  
An' oftentimes I thinks, thinks I,  
'T would be a sweet t'ing des to die,*

*An go 'long home.*

The upbeat third movement poem shows how effectively Still used the "minstrel mask" to reflect his sense of racial doubleness:

*We is gathahed hyeah, my brothahs,  
In dis howlin' wildaness,  
Fu' to speak some words of comfo't  
To each othah in distress.*

*So you see de Lawd's intention,  
Evah sence de worl' began,  
Was dat His almighty freedom  
Should belong to evah man,*

*But when Moses wif his powah  
Comes an' sets us chillun free,  
We will praise de gracious Mastah  
Dat has gin us liberty;  
An' we'll shout ouah halleluyahs,  
On dat mighty reck'nin' day,  
When we'se reco'nised ez citiz'—*

*Hun un! Chillun, let us pray!*

The final movement, with its hymn-like, modal opening, was first assigned the final stanza from Dunbar's "Ode to Ethiopia":

*Go on and up! Our souls and eyes  
Shall follow thy continuous rise;  
Our ears shall list thy story  
From bards who from thy root shall spring,  
And proudly tune their lyres to sing*

*Of Ethiopia's Glory.*

All printed editions of the score bear this rather better-known stanza from the same poem:

*Be proud, my Race, in mind and soul,  
Thy name is writ on Glory's scroll  
In characters of fire.  
High 'mid the clouds of Fame's bright sky,  
Thy banner's blazoned folds now fly,  
And truth shall lift them higher.*

*Program note by Gerard Morris*

# Guest Conductor

## Erin Cole Steele

Erin Cole Steele is the Director of the Division of Education and Senior Educational Clinician for Conn Selmer Inc. Erin also serves as a Clinical Assistant Professor at Arizona State University's School of Music. Previously, Erin was the Director of Bands at Tapp Middle School in Cobb County, Georgia (1995-2017), where she was named Teacher of the Year. Under her leadership, the Tapp Band received numerous accolades, including performing at the 58th annual Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. During her tenure at Tapp, she commissioned four pieces of music, including Robert W. Smith's "The Great Locomotive Chase," Frank Ticheli's "Simple Gifts-Four Shaker Songs," Samuel R. Hazo's "Ascend," and was part of consortium commissioning Eric Whitacre's "The Seal Lullaby."






Erin is a contributing editor for Hal Leonard's Essential Elements for Band. She has written chapters for three editions of the GIA publication series *Teaching Music Through Performance* and most recently wrote a chapter for the book "Rehearsing the Middle School Band." Erin is an active guest conductor and speaker. She has presented sessions at the Midwest Clinic on several occasions as well as state and international conferences. She has been the guest conductor for numerous All-State and regional honor bands, appearing in over 30 states. She served as the conductor for Youth Bands of Atlanta from 2011-2017 and a conductor for the "Encore" Music Camp for several years. She was the founder and administrator of the Cobb County Summer Band Camp in Georgia. Erin has served as a clinician for the Music for All Summer Symposium and is currently on the teaching faculty and executive director for The Conn Selmer Institute.

Erin Cole Steele earned her bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Georgia in 1995. While at the University of Georgia, she played cello, flute, and piccolo in the University Symphony Orchestra, chamber groups, Symphonic and Concert Bands, and the Redcoat Marching Band.

Erin's professional affiliations include Phi Beta Mu, Sigma Alpha Iota, and the National Band Association, for which she was awarded the Citation of Excellence three times (2015, 2008, and 2003).

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As a passionate supporter of school music programs, she continues to remain active in instrumental classrooms throughout the country and enjoys traveling for guest conducting and speaking engagements. Erin now resides in Scottsdale, Arizona where she and her husband Andrew enjoy hiking and biking on the weekends.



# Associate Director of Bands

## Jamal Duncan

Jamal Duncan joined the faculty of Arizona State University in the Fall of 2020 as associate director of bands and assistant professor of instrumental conducting. His primary responsibilities are conducting the Wind Symphony and teaching classes in conducting. Duncan also serves as assistant director of undergraduate music studies. Prior to his appointment at ASU, Duncan served as the assistant director of bands at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.



Duncan's research interests include conducting pedagogy, wind literature, and re-defining the traditional concert experience. He has presented on these topics at various state and international conferences including the Midwest Clinic, The World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and the College Band Directors National Association.

Duncan is a passionate advocate for expanding the repertoire of wind bands and chamber ensembles, actively commissioning new works from both established and emerging composers. His commitment extends to programming music that reflects the rich tapestry of different cultures, with a deliberate focus on highlighting the voices of diverse composers who bring these stories to life.




In 2024 the ASU Wind Symphony gave a featured performance at the College Band Directors National Association Western/Northwestern division conference. In addition, Duncan and ensembles under his leadership have worked with composers Steven Bryant, Viet Cuong, and Kevin Day.

A winner of the American Prize in Band/Wind Ensemble conducting, Duncan has also been a fellow at the Reynolds Conducting Institute held in conjunction with the Midwest Clinic. Duncan has conducted and adjudicated ensembles of all levels throughout the United States and internationally.

Duncan taught in the public schools of Lansing, Michigan for seven years where he was director of bands at C.W. Otto Middle School then director of bands at Dwight Rich Middle School. For eleven seasons, Duncan was the

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music director and conductor of the Flint Youth Wind Ensemble, one of several youth ensembles in the Flint School of Performing Arts.

Proudly hailing from Flint, Michigan, Duncan received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Wind Conducting and a Master of Music degree in Wind Conducting from Michigan State University, where he studied with Dr. Kevin L. Sedatole. Duncan received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan with a dual emphasis in Clarinet Performance and Music Education.

He is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, The National Association for Music Education, The World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and the College Band Directors National Association. He holds honorary memberships in Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma.

Upcoming events include guest conducting appearances with the 2025 Michigan All-State Middle School Band and the 2026 All-Virginia Concert Band

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# Director of Bands

## Jason Caslor

Jason Caslor was born and raised in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada. Caslor is currently an Associate Professor of Music and the Director of Bands at Arizona State University (ASU). In addition to directing the Wind Ensemble, he also mentors graduate conducting students and teaches conducting courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Recent highlights include first commercial recordings of Kevin Day's Concerto for Wind Ensemble, Nicole Piunno's Sunflower Studies, and Carter Pann's Double Concerto "Baroque" with the ASU Wind Ensemble.






From 2015-2019, Caslor was an Assistant Professor and the Associate Director of Bands and Orchestras at ASU. Highlights of that time include founding the now firmly established ASU Philharmonia and being nominated for ASU's Outstanding Master's Mentor Award. From 2010-2015, Caslor was an Assistant Professor of Instrumental Conducting at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada where he conducted the wind ensemble and oversaw the undergraduate and graduate instrumental conducting programs. Before that, he spent three seasons as resident conductor with the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra (TBSO). During his tenure with the TBSO, he conducted more than 75 concerts (including a CBC Radio national broadcast) and recorded a full-length, internationally distributed CD with Canadian blues artist Rita Chiarelli.

A Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician, Caslor has guest conducted or adjudicated in every province in Canada and throughout the United States. In addition to numerous regional engagements, Caslor has conducted the United States Army Field Band, the National Youth Band of Canada, the South Dakota All-State Band, the South Dakota Intercollegiate Band, and the Alberta Wind Symphony.

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A fiercely proud Canadian currently living amongst cacti, Caslor’s co-founding and leadership over the Canadian Band Association’s (CBA) Howard Cable Memorial Prize in Composition lead to him being the recipient of the CBA’s 2022 International Band Award. The award recognizes those individuals who have embraced the ideals of the CBA and have contributed to the promotion, growth and development of the musical, educational and cultural values of Canadian band outside of Canada.

As a researcher, he has presented his work at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, the WASBE International Conference, the CBDNA National Conference, the IGEB International Conference on Wind Music, the International Society for Music Education World Conference, and the Riksförbundet Unga Musikanter Wind Band Symposium (Sweden).

Caslor completed his doctorate in conducting at Arizona State University. Prior to earning a master’s in conducting from the University of Manitoba, he earned dual bachelor’s in music and education from the University of Saskatchewan, Canada.



# Graduate Teaching Assistant

## Grant Knox

Grant Knox (he/him) is an Arizona-based music educator, conductor, and musicologist. Originally from Lexington, KY, Grant holds degrees in music education and musicology from Murray State University (BM '18) and the University of Arizona (MM '20). With over five years of teaching K-12 music in Kentucky and Arizona, Grant most recently served as the Director of Instrumental Music at Cienega High School in Vail, AZ, instructing all aspects of the string orchestra, concert, jazz, and athletic bands.



During his graduate studies, Grant has entertained a diverse array of scholarly topics. Participating in multiple national and international academic conferences and substantial research projects, Grant has presented research on Chicago hip-hop, in addition to exploring all facets of identity in the music of Ulysses Kay and William Grant Still. Grant continues to be passionate about amplifying the wind band works of composers from underrepresented backgrounds.

As a music educator, Grant is an advocate for healthy practices of inclusion, representation, and diversity in the music classroom/ensemble, and enjoys interdisciplinary studies of musicology, music theory, and popular music in the wind band idiom. Grant is an alumni brother of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, and an honorary member of Tau Beta Sigma National Honorary Band Sorority. He also holds active memberships in the International Society for Research and Promotion of Wind Music (IGEB), College Band Director's National Association (CBDNA), American Musicological Society (AMS), and the Society for American Music (SAM).

# Graduate Teaching Assistant

## Joel Thiesfeldt

Joel Thiesfeldt is currently pursuing a master's in wind band conducting from Arizona State University. His career in music began in 2003 when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, initially serving as a trumpet player with Navy Band Southwest in California. Over the years, his military service took him across the country to Navy Band Northwest in Washington, Navy Band Great Lakes in Illinois, and the Naval School of Music in Virginia.



Thiesfeldt is a graduate of the Naval School of Music's unit leader and senior musician courses, where he was named Honor Graduate and awarded the Commander Philip H. Field Award for "excellence in leadership and music" in 2015. Following his studies, he stayed on as an arranging instructor.




In 2017, he received his commission as a naval officer, stepping into leadership roles that included department head at Navy Band in Washington, D.C., assistant director at Fleet Forces Band in Virginia, and director of Navy Band Northwest, a position he held until July 2024.

He holds a bachelor's degree in music from Thomas Edison State University and studied trumpet with Jim Knapp, Vern Sielert, and Allen Vizzutti at Cornish College of the Arts and the University of Washington in Seattle. Originally from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, he married his wife, Bethany, in 2014. Together, they have two sons, Oliver and Edison.

Throughout his career, he has been recognized with several military awards, including the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (three awards), the Meritorious Unit Commendation (two awards) and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (four awards).

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# ASU Wind and Percussion Faculty

## Woodwinds

Elizabeth Buck, Flute  
Martin Schuring, Oboe  
Jeff Anderle, Clarinet  
Joshua Gardner, Clarinet  
Albie Micklich, Bassoon  
Christopher Creviston, Saxophone

## Brass

John Ericson, Horn  
Josef Burgstaller, Trumpet  
Bradley Edwards, Trombone  
Deanna Swoboda, Euphonium and Tuba

## Percussion

Robert Carrillo  
Michael Compitello  
Simone Mancuso  
Matthew Prendergast

# ASU Wind Bands Faculty and Support Staff

Jason Caslor, Director of Bands  
Jamal Duncan, Associate Director of Bands  
James G. Hudson, Director of Athletic Bands

Grant Knox, Doctoral Teaching Assistant  
Joel Thiesfeldt, Masters Teaching Assistant

Laura Roosen, Ensembles Office Specialist




Macey Campobello, Head Band Librarian  
d'Art Richard, Assistant Librarian

Set-Up Assistants  
Anthony Ellerman    Giovanna Gioscia  
Taoyang Zhang      Belle Zogby

Heather Landes, Director, School of Music, Dance and Theatre

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Please visit the [ASU Foundation](#) to donate to ASU Wind Bands. For any questions about helping the ASU Wind Bands, please contact Director of Bands Jason Caslor at [jcaslor@asu.edu](mailto:jcaslor@asu.edu).

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