Northwestern University

HENRY AND LEIGH
BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Foundations

Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Robert Taylor, *conductor*
Oliver F. Stark, *graduate assistant conductor*

PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL
2026–27 SEASON

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF NORTHWESTERN BANDS

For one hundred years, **Northwestern Bands** has enriched the lives of students through exceptional musical experiences and a shared pursuit of excellence. Since the establishment of the Department of Bands in 1926 under Glenn Cliffe Bainum, students and faculty have built one of the nation's premier collegiate band programs.

A defining feature of Northwestern Bands has been its extraordinary continuity of leadership. Bainum's student, John P. Paynter, led the program for forty-five years, shaping the modern wind band through influential performances, publications, and artistic vision. He was succeeded by his student, Mallory Thompson, whose twenty-eight years at the helm brought international recognition through acclaimed recordings and mentorship of generations of performers and conductors. In 2024, Robert Taylor, a former student of Thompson and Bienen School alumnus, became Northwestern's fourth Director of Bands, continuing a teacher-student legacy spanning four generations.

Today, Northwestern Bands serves students from across the University through the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, and Athletic Bands, including the renowned Wildcat Marching Band, "The Finest Band in the Land." Alumni of these ensembles perform, teach, create, and lead in major musical and educational institutions around the world.

As the program enters its second century, Northwestern Bands continues to evolve through multimedia presentations, interdisciplinary and community-centered collaborations, performances of works by student composers, and appearances by distinguished alumni as soloists and guest artists. These initiatives reflect the same spirit of creativity and exploration that has defined the program since its founding.

This centennial season celebrates not only a remarkable history, but also the people who made it possible: the students, faculty, alumni, families, and friends whose dedication and generosity have sustained Northwestern Bands for a century. As we honor our first hundred years, we look forward to the next century of artistry, innovation, and impact.

Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Robert Taylor, *conductor*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026, AT 7:30 P.M.

Foundations

***Wiener Philharmoniker Fanfare* (1924)** — **Richard Strauss** (1864–1949), *ed. Robert Taylor*

Serenade in E-flat, Op. 7 (1881/2020) — *ed. Norbert Gertsch*

***Suite Francaise*, Op. 248 (1944/1957)** — **Darius Milhaud** (1892–1974)
- *Normandie*
- *Bretagne*
- *Île-de-France*
- *Alsace-Lorraine*
- *Provence*

INTERMISSION

***Polka and Fugue* from *Schwanda, the Bagpiper* (1928/1961/2025)** — **Jaromír Weinberger** (1896–1967), *trans. Glenn Cliffe Bainum*, *ed. Devin Otto*

Oliver F. Stark, *graduate assistant conductor*

***Four Scottish Dances* (1957/1978)** — **Malcolm Arnold** (1921–2006), *trans. John P. Paynter*
- *Pesante*
- *Vivace*
- *Allegretto*
- *Con brio*

SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Robert Taylor, *conductor*
Gregory Sisco, *doctoral assistant conductor*
Oliver F. Stark, *graduate assistant conductor*

Flute
Benjamin Hosking
Claire Kim*
Eunice Kim
Grace Kim
Katelyn Lee

Oboe
Sophie Reader
Marty Redymyer*
Alain Shi

Bassoon
Dhruva Balan
Jason Capozucca*
Ethan Worthen

Clarinet
Jose Aguilar
Christopher Cui
Aydin Iqbal
Andrew Kang
Leah Kang
Daniel Sanders
Nathan Soto
Toby Tse*

Saxophone
Miguel Flores-Padilla
Everest Li
Dillon Martin
Hudson O'Reilly*

Trumpet
Brendan Breen
Sam Ferguson
William Lewis*
Rachael McKay
Calvin Pfund
Jonathan Taylor

Horn
Caiden Follmer
Katy Meffert
Claire Marquardt
Jordan Petan
Samantha Strickland*
Baran Zolfaghari

Trombone
AJ Abbey
Kean Adair*
Madi Bayaca
Ian Boggs
Arlo Hollander
Daniel Navarrette

Euphonium
Will Claudius*
Joey Kim

Tuba
Mitch Brady*
Leo Kunjan

Percussion
Harrison Buck
Hila Kuperman
Sam Kim
Ellie Lebovich
Ryan Lee*
Zoe Li

String Bass
Erik Oswald

Organ
Jeremy Lee
Lucy Xu

Harp
Kayleen Cho

PROFILES

Robert Taylor is Professor of Conducting and Director of Bands at Northwestern University, where he holds the Paynter and Anderson Families Professorship in Conducting. As the fourth person in the university's history to hold the Director of Bands position, Taylor conducts the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, teaches graduate and undergraduate conducting, and leads all aspects of the band program. With a career in music education spanning over thirty years, previous appointments include the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC, University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA, and Eureka High School in Northern California, where ensembles under his direction earned recognition by *Downbeat Magazine*, the Selmer Corporation, and Grammy Signature Schools.

Known for innovative and immersive concert programming, Taylor maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor. Past engagements include performances with the Vancouver Brass Orchestra, U.S. Army Field Band, Pacific Symphonic Wind Ensemble, and Chicago-based contemporary music group, the Maverick Ensemble. Collaborations span a wide range of international artists—from virtuosi performers Barbara Butler (trumpet), Jose Franch-Ballester (clarinet), Larry Knopp (trumpet), Julia Nolan (saxophone), Daniel Perantoni (tuba), Jeff Nelsen (horn), Gail Williams (horn), and Allen Vizzutti (trumpet); to composers Mason Bates, Jodie Blackshaw, Steven Bryant, Raven Chacon, Michael Colgrass, John Corigliano, David Maslanka, Cait Nishimura, Joel Puckett, Alex Shapiro, Frank Ticheli, and Dana Wilson; to jazz, pop, and crossover performers Ingrid Jensen, Shruti Ramani, Manhattan Transfer, Kenny Werner, and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. As a passionate advocate of music in the schools, Dr. Taylor is in high demand as a festival adjudicator, rehearsal clinician, and guest conductor throughout North America and internationally. His frequent appearances with young musicians include serving as principal conductor of the Puget Sound Youth Wind Ensemble and guest conductor of numerous honor groups, such as the Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall, National Youth Band of Canada, AMIS Asia Honor Band, California Orchestra Directors Association Honor Symphony, and many provincial and all-state bands across Australia, Canada, and the United States.

Taylor received Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees in conducting from Northwestern University, where he studied with Mallory Thompson, and the Bachelor of Arts degree in Trumpet and Music Education from Humboldt State University. His research on wind literature, rehearsal techniques, integration of cutting-edge technology, and application of Ashtanga Yoga to improve body awareness and injury prevention in the training of nascent conductors and performing musicians, has been featured in presentations at regional, national, and international music conferences, including appearances at the Midwest Clinic, College Band Directors National Association, and on several popular podcasts. He has contributed to numerous leading publications and is a co-author of *The Horizon Leans Forward*.

Dr. Taylor is a Killam Laureate, Jacob K. Javits Fellow, and Thomas A. Davis Teaching Prize Winner, and has served as on the executive boards of the British Columbia Music Educators Association and College Band Directors National Association (Northwest Region). He is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi and Pi Kappa Lambda National Honor Societies, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and National Association for Music Education.

PROGRAM NOTES

Richard Strauss stands as the most renowned German composer of his era. He lived through a remarkable period in modern German history: his lifetime encompassed the rise and fall of an empire, the tumult of two world wars, the fluctuations of the Weimar Republic, and the challenges of national socialism, all of which culminated in his death the same year that Germany was split into East and West. Born in an age illuminated by oil lamps, he passed away in a world defined by nuclear power. Throughout this transformative time, Strauss maintained a distinguished career as a prolific composer and an esteemed conductor who collaborated with many of the leading composers, writers, and artists of his generation.

In a career that lasted almost eight decades, he explored a multitude of musical genres, ultimately gaining recognition for his tone poems from the late 19th century and his operas from the early 20th century. Averse to Richard Wagner's metaphysics and Gustav Mahler's philosophical intentions in music, Strauss focused on the paradoxes and complexities of modern life. This innovative approach is vividly illustrated in his opera *Der*

Rosenkavalier, in which the combination of contemporary and deliberately outdated elements showcases a stylistic diversity that foreshadows the experimental trends of the later 20th century.

—Adapted from Bryan Gilliam

Wiener Philharmoniker Fanfare
By 1924, Richard Strauss had established himself as both a conductor and composer. The Wiener Philharmoniker Fanfare was composed for the Vienna Philharmonic's first benefit ball to raise money for their musician's pension fund. A staple in the repertoire, the fanfare is still performed annually at their gala to signal the entrance of the Matron of the Ball.

As the son of a horn player, Strauss' understanding and appreciation for the brass is apparent in many of his works. This fanfare features a large brass contingent and two sets of timpani. Beginning with trumpets in unison, the work expands with figures in trombones and horns. After a flurry of triplets, a unison pronouncement serves as a climax to the end of the first section. The horns, in typical Strauss fashion, take over with a soaring, heroic melody which is then imitated in the other sections. Both melodic ideas occur simultaneously to bring the work to a thrilling close.

Serenade in E-flat, Op. 7
In 1881, forty-three years before the *Wiener Philharmoniker Fanfare* was premiered, a seventeen-year-old Richard Strauss completed his manuscript for the Serenade in E-flat, Op. 7. This piece, although early in his catalogue, shows a precocious Strauss' understanding of melody and harmony as well as his ability to write in and extend upon the classical style of his forebears: Mozart, Beethoven, and Haydn. After a premier in Dresden with noted conductor Franz Wüllner leading the ensemble, Hans van Bülow became aware of the piece and by extension Strauss himself. It was through the support of von Bülow, then the director of the court orchestra at Meiningen, that Strauss began to establish himself publicly as both a composer and eventual conductor.

The Serenade unfolds in a standard sonata form, paying homage to the wind serenades of the classical era. After the initial theme is introduced in oboe and flute, a minor-key fanfare announces the start of a second theme. The second theme repeats with thicker orchestration and a countermelody that eventually grows into a glorious, fully scored climax. This high

point of the exposition is shadowed by a restatement featuring the darkest-sounding instruments in the ensemble: the horns and bassoons. An oboe solo that follows leads into an ever-intensifying development section before finally returning to the initial theme; this time quietly presented by-horns and bassoons. The Serenade closes with restatements of all melodies and themes initially presented before gradually coming to rest with solos from clarinet, bassoon, and finally flute.

***Suite Francaise*, Op. 248** **Milhaud**

Darius Milhaud is known for his inventive use of percussion, polytonality, jazz, and aleatory techniques in his compositions. In the early 20th century, Milhaud was a core member of "Les Six," a collection of French composers known for pushing the boundaries of music at the time. After the German invasion of France, Milhaud moved to the United States to escape the dangers he faced as a prominent Jewish artist. He taught at several universities in American before eventually returning to France in 1947, becoming professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire. Milhaud spent the later part of his life teaching and composing in both the United States and France.

Though known for being adventurous in his writing, Suite Francaise is a relatively traditional work in its melodic and formal construction. The piece retains Milhaud's voice with his use of rich extended harmonies, jazz rhythms, and bitonality.

Milhaud wrote the following:

> For a long time I have had the idea of writing a composition fit for high school purposes, and this was the result. In the bands, orchestras, and choirs of American high schools, colleges and universities where the youth of the nation be found, it is obvious that they need music of their time, not too difficult to perform, but nevertheless keeping the characteristic idiom of the composer.
>
> The five parts of this suite are named after French Provinces, the very ones in which the American and Allied armies fought together with the French underground for the liberation of my country: Normandy, Brittany, Ile-de-France (of which Paris is the center), Alsace-Lorraine, and Provence (my birthplace).

I used some folk tunes of these provinces. I wanted the young American to hear the popular melodies of those parts of France where their fathers and brothers fought to defeat the German invaders, who in less than seventy years have brought war, destruction, cruelty, torture, and murder three times to the peaceful and democratic people of France.

Polka and Fugue* from *Schwanda, the Bagpiper **Weinberger**

Jaromír Weinberger developed an early connection to both music and the folk traditions of his native Bohemia. Time spent at his grandparent's farm exposed him to Czech folk songs, an influence that would remain important throughout his musical life. Weinberger began his formal studies with Jaroslav Křička before entering the Prague Conservatory at fourteen. In 1922, Weinberger moved to the United States, joining Cornell University as an instructor and later serving as professor of composition at the Ithaca Conservatory until 1926.

Weinberger began seriously working on *Schwanda the Bagpiper* in 1924, and the opera was later premiered in Prague on April 27, 1927. A German revival in Breslau in 1928 became a sensation, leading to more than 2,000 performances across Europe between 1927 and 1931, followed by productions around the world, including at New York's Metropolitan Opera in 1931. The *Polka and Fugue* was introduced to American orchestra audiences by conductor Erich Kleiber in 1928, with Northwestern's first director of bands, Glenn Cliffe Bainum, preparing the wind ensemble transcription that very same year.

In a convoluted plot involving love triangles, deals with the devil, and bagpipes, Schwanda is spurred on by an unexpected companion (a thief called Babinsky) to seek a life of adventure, abandoning his role as a humble yet musically gifted farmer. This journey leads Schwanda to a queen, who he impresses with his bagpiping abilities (*Polka*). After lying to his wife Dorota about his feelings for the queen, Schwanda finds himself trapped in the underworld. Babinsky rescues him by winning him back from the Devil in a game of cards. Before leaving, Schwanda plays on his bagpipe for the servants of the underworld (*Fugue*). The opera concludes in both a triumphant and celebratory manner, as Schwanda and Babinsky return to Earth to live out their days peacefully.

The fantastical plot aside, Weinberger's music is well written and highly sophisticated. The *Polka* presents an incredibly exuberant opening with a distinctive bagpipe-like motif split between both the clarinets and horns. Weinberger transitions into a lively, infectious polka. Its folk-derived melodies are enriched by unexpected chromatic harmonies, giving the music a distinctively nostalgic yet whimsical character. A decisive close to the *Polka* immediately transitions into a lightly styled *Fugue*. As the subject is passed and developed between instrumental voices episodically, the music steadily gathers momentum and intensity. The movement ultimately builds toward a powerful climax, portraying Schwanda's escape from the underworld with both the *Polka* and *Fugue* combined in grandiose fashion.

Four Scottish Dances **Arnold**

British composer Malcolm Arnold began private composition lessons as a child and won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music at age sixteen. There he studied trumpet with Ernest Hall and composition with Gordon Jacob, winning trumpet positions with the London Philharmonic and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Arnold received a Mendelssohn Scholarship in 1948 from the Royal Academy of Music, which enabled him to study music in Italy and to focus solely on composition. Over his career, Arnold wrote nine symphonies, more than twenty concerti, and more than 120 film scores, including *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, which he composed in only ten days and which earned an Academy Award for Best Music (Scoring). Failing health forced Arnold to retire from composition in the mid-1980s, after which he received numerous awards, and a knighthood in 1993. Concerts and festivals around the world marked his 80th birthday in 2001, including a performance of his entire cycle of symphonies by the BBC Philharmonic. About *Four Scottish Dances*, Arnold provides the following note:

> They are all based on original melodies but one, the melody of which was 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 "Scotch 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 semitone 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).

Originally written for orchestra, *Four Scottish Dances* was composed for the BBC Light Music Festival. The second Northwestern University Director of Bands and founder of the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, John P. Paynter, subsequently arranged the work for wind band. Paynter was an advocate of Arnold's music and transcribed and arranged five of Arnold's orchestral works, including *Little Suite for Brass*; *Four Scottish Dances*; *Prelude, Siciliano, and Rondo*; *Tam O'Shanter Overture*; and *Sarabande and Polka*. While Arnold approved of Paynter's transcriptions for band, particularly *Four Scottish Dances*, he often railed against bands playing his music and once threatened to forbid these performances. About his wind band arrangements of Arnold's music, Paynter stated, "I feel no absence of the strings in the band versions. Arnold didn't give the strings a primary role in the orchestral versions; they were always treated as background. Perhaps with his experience as a trumpet player, he was more comfortable writing for winds." John P. Paynter recorded *Four Scottish Dances* with the Symphonic Wind Ensembleon the CD 'Paynter Conducts Arnold', released in 1996.

BAND PROGRAM

Director of Bands	Robert Taylor *Paynter and Anderson Families Professor in Conducting*
Associate Director of Bands	Shawn Vondran
Director of Athletic Bands	Michael Parker
Department Assistant	Emily Whittaker
Doctoral Assistants	Gregory Sisco, Maggie Whiteman
Graduate Assistants	Alexander Gray, Mickaela Pasch, Oliver F. Stark
Stage Managers	Neil Advant, Sadie Brecht, Brian Cao, Anna Li, Constantino Lopez, Katy Meffert, Declan Messner, Daniel Navarrette
Ensemble Librarians	Ally Donnelly, Boss Lee, Toby Tse
AV Managers	Mitchell Brady, Cole Zelman
Equipment Manager	Benjmain Hosking

CONCERT MANAGEMENT OFFICE STAFF

Director of Concert Management	Jerry Tietz
Concert Operations Manager	Kait Samuels
Ticketing Manager	Maxwell A. Johnson
Marketing Manager	Laura Nielsen
Marketing Coordinator	Elizabeth Avery
Technical Services Manager	Bill Milgram
Technical Services Manager	Zachary Lovitch
Concert Business Manager	Meg Lindsey
Supporting Staff	150 Northwestern Students
Dean, Bienen School of Music	Jonathan Bailey Holland

KEYBOARD MAINTENANCE

Supervisor of Keyboard Maintenance	Wesley Owen

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the house manager. In consideration of the artists and other members of the audience, patrons who must leave before the end of the concert are asked to do so between pieces.
- Photography and audio/video recording of performances is strictly prohibited without prior written consent of the Concert Management Office.
- A limited number of assisted listening devices are available for the hearing impaired. Inquire at the box office.
- Smoking is prohibited by law in all Bienen School of Music performance venues.
- Every patron who will be occupying a seat must have a ticket in order to be admitted into the concert.
- The presenter reserves the right to ask any patron who is disrupting the event in any way to leave the concert hall.
- In the event of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher.
- When joining us for upcoming concerts, please leave the Concert Management Office phone number (847-491-5441) with anyone who might need to reach you in case of emergency.

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FALL 2026 CONCERTS



Symphonic Band
Everything Old Is New Again

Sunday, October 25, 3 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $6/4

Shawn Vondran, conductor
Stromboli Brass Quintet

Looking back through music history, the band performs two Bach-inspired works and Bach's Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C Major, as well as works by Peter Mennin and Leonard Bernstein.

Concert Band
American Voices

Sunday, November 15, 3 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $6/4

Michael Parker, conductor

Michael Parker's inaugural performance as Concert Band conductor features a range of music by American composers both honoring the past and savoring the present.

Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Constellations

Friday, November 20, 7:30 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $8/5

Robert Taylor, conductor

Featuring commissioned works, the program showcases music by Reena Esmail, Joel Puckett, and David Maslanka, whose distinctive voices continue to shape the evolution of the wind ensemble repertory.

Symphonic Band
"Whatsoever Things..."

Friday, December 4, 7:30 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $6/4

Shawn Vondran, conductor
Liam Kantzler, bass trombone (Northwestern Concerto Competition Winner)

Liam Kantzler joins the band for Robert Spillman's Concerto for Bass Trombone. Also featured are Zhou Tian's colorful new work *Vivo* and Mark Camphouse's *Whatsoever Things*, in memory of John Paynter.



Robert Taylor
Director of Bands



Shawn D. Vondran
Associate Director of Bands



Michael Parker
Director of Athletic Bands

Graduate Conductors

Alexander Gray, Mickaela Pasch, Gregory Sisco, Oliver Stark, Maggie Whiteman

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NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

October 29, 7:30 p.m. | Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, $6/4

An all-Beethoven program featuring faculty pianist Christopher Guzman.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

October 31, 7:30 p.m. | Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, $8/5

A nod to Halloween with pieces inspired by a costume party, the Mass of the Dead, and a witches' sabbath.

BAROQUE MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Nomveber 8, 7:30 p.m. | Galvin Recital Hall, $6/4

Sparkling concertos by Corelli, Vivaldi, and Telemann, and vocal arias by Handel.

PHILHARMONIA

November 22, 3 p.m. | Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, $6/4

Verdi's overture to Nabucco, *Sibelius's* En saga, *and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major.*

BIENEN CONTEMPORARY/EARLY VOCAL ENSEMBLE & NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

December 3, 7:30 p.m. | Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, $8/5

Choir and orchestra unite to sing peaceful works by Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Fauré, and Britten.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

December 5, 7:30 p.m. | Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, $8/5

Corigliano's inventive Promenade Overture, *an Elgar concerto with competition winner Wanxinyi Huang, and a Brahms symphony.*

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CONCERTS@BIENEN

MEDTNER AND FRIENDS

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT



Saturday, November 14, 7:30 p.m.

Galvin Recital Hall, $8/5

Jinjoo Cho & Chihiro Kakishima, violin

James Kang, viola

Luiz Fernando Venturelli, cello

Sasha Kasman Laude, piano

A chamber recital devoted to the music of Nikolai Medtner and his contemporaries. Program highlights include Medtner's Violin Sonata No. 2 in G Major, Op. 44 ("Spring Sonata"), Rachmaninoff's *Trio élégiaque* No. 1 in G Minor, and Medtner's magnus opus Piano Quintet in C Major.

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