

Northwestern University

HENRY AND LEIGH
BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Northwestern University Symphonic Band
Shawn D. Vondran, *conductor*

PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL
2025-26 SEASON

Northwestern University Symphonic Band

Shawn D. Vondran, *conductor*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025, AT 7:30 P.M.

***Machu Picchu: City in the Sky* (2004)**

Satoshi Yagisawa

“Spiritual” from *From the Delta* (1945)

William Grant Still
(1895–1978)

***George Washington Bridge* (1950)**

William Schuman
(1910–1992)

INTERMISSION

***Sancta Maria from *Sacrae Symphoniae** (1597)**

Giovanni Gabrieli
(c. 1554–1612)
trans. Timothy Higgins

***Angels in the Architecture* (2009)**

Frank Ticheli

Abigail Arnold, *soprano*

SYMPHONIC BAND

Shawn D. Vondran, *conductor*

Imran Amarshi, *doctoral assistant conductor*

Oliver F. Stark, *graduate assistant conductor*

Flute/Piccolo

Olivia Dorer
Jacqui Go
Sean Han
Andy Hanks
Grace Kim
Claire Lee
Ruiqi Liu

Oboe/English Horn

Christopher Axline
Nathan McGough
Carlie Meeker

Clarinet

Jose Aguilar
Chris Cui
David Hilt
Leah Kang
Minjun Kim
Lena Kwon
Erin Lee
Michael Li
Freddie Vine
Larry Zhao

Bassoon

Wilson Aron
Ethan Worthen
Bowie Wu

Saxophone

Seth Alexander
Aryan Avadhanam
Matthew Johnson
Boss Lee
Everest Li

Trumpet

Brendan Breen
Isaac Brown
Kylie Holes
Rachael McKay
Carlee Santel
Tehya Shapiro
Lilie Shlyak

Horn

Caiden Follmer
Ethan McCarter
Elizabeth Smith
Molly Sullivan
Nick Taylor
Isaiah Thomason-Redus

Trombone

Madi Bayaca
Richard Horne
Liam Kantzler
Ian Lilly
Hayden Lovinfosse
Lukas Orozco

Euphonium

Will Claudius
Andy Habib
Rohan Venkatesan

Tuba

Angel Cocone
Leo Kunjan
Avery Li

Percussion

Harrison Buck
Sam Carpenter
Alexandra Davis
Sam Kim
Jonathan Kravchuk
Ellie Lebovich
Zoe Li

Double Bass

Erik Oswald

Piano

Amy Bao

Harp

Kayleen Cho

PROFILE

Shawn D. Vondran is in his twelfth year as the Associate Director of Bands at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music. His responsibilities include conducting the Symphonic Band along with teaching courses in conducting, wind repertoire, orchestral repertoire, and other courses in the music performance and education curricula. During his tenure at Northwestern, the Symphonic Band was selected to perform at the 2020 College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) North Central Division Conference. The ensemble frequently engages with a number of composers and participates in consortia to support the creation and performance of new music for the wind band medium.

Dr. Vondran served on the faculties at Ball State University, Western Illinois University, and Youngstown State University prior to his appointment at Northwestern University. He began his career as a band director at Mentor High School in Ohio, where his ensembles consistently received accolades for their performances.

Recently, Vondran was elected by his peers to the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. He also received the College of Fine Arts Dean's Teaching Award while at Ball State University for excellence in teaching and dedication to his students. Additionally, the Ball State University Symphony Band was selected to perform at the 2012 and 2014 Indiana Music Education Association Conference during his tenure.

Vondran maintains an active schedule with engagements throughout the United States as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. In addition to performance engagements, he is an on-going contributor to the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* series published by GIA and appeared in the *National Band Association Journal*. He has also presented a clinic at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. Dr. Vondran has worked with a number of composers in the preparation, performance, and/or recording of their works for the wind band medium. These artistic collaborations include John Corigliano, Christopher Rouse, David Maslanka, Michael Daugherty, Steven Bryant, Joel Puckett, and Jennifer Higdon. He is a member of the College Band Directors National Association, where he serves as the Illinois state chair, and Pi Kappa Lambda.

Vondran received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in instrumental conducting, with an emphasis in music education, from the University of Miami (FL). Vondran completed a Master of Music degree in instrumental conducting at Youngstown State University and earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree (magna cum laude) at The Ohio State University.

PROGRAM NOTES

Machu Picchu: City in the Sky

Yagisawa

Satoshi Yagisawa is a graduate of the Musashino Academia Musicae where he studied composition with Kenjiro Urata, Hatoshi Tanaka, and Hidehiko Hagiwara. His compositions have been featured at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles Conference, and the College Band Directors National Association National Conference. Yagisawa currently serves as the Ceremonial Music Director for the National Sports Festival in Japan and remains an active clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor in Asia and the United States.

Commissioned for the thirtieth anniversary of the Liberté Wind Orchestra in Kawaguchi City, Japan, *Machu Picchu: City in the Sky* belongs to series of works by Yagisawa inspired by ancient ruins. Yagisawa pays homage to the awe-inspiring fifteenth-century Incan citadel in the Andes Mountains of Peru. At its central point stands the Intihuatana, a stone column where Incan priests tied the sun during the winter solstice, ensuring its seasonal return. Scholars suggest this sacred shrine may have served as the final Sun Temple for the Incan royal lineage as they retreated from Francisco Pizarro's 16th-century conquest. This single-movement, eleven-minute composition follows a modified arch form and is highly programmatic in nature.

The composer provides the following note on the work:

I wished to musically describe that magnificent citadel and trace some of the mysteries sealed in Machu Picchu's past. Three principal ideas dominate the piece: 1) the shimmering golden city of Cuzco set in the dramatic scenery of the Andes, 2) the destructiveness of violent invasion, and 3) the re-emergence of Incan glory as the City in the Sky again reached for the sun.

“Spiritual” from *From the Delta*

Still

William Grant Still was an American composer and conductor, and the first African American to conduct a professional symphony orchestra in the

United States. Though he composed operas, ballets, and other works during his career, he is perhaps best known for his *Afro-American Symphony* (1931). Born in Mississippi, Still was raised by his mother and grandmother in Little Rock, Arkansas. He studied medicine at Wilberforce University in Ohio before eventually turning to music, studying at the Oberlin Conservatory. In the 1920s, his musical education was diversified when he went to work for the bandleader Paul Whiteman and blues composer W.C. Handy. Still demonstrated great concern with the position of African Americans in U.S. society, and frequently incorporated jazz and African American elements into his classical music. He tended to prefer simple, commercial harmonies and orchestrations, but utilized them with the highest professionalism and seriousness of purpose.

From the Delta was premiered on June 17, 1947, by Richard Franko Goldman and the Goldman Band at the Central Park Mall in New York City. When asked about the work, Still stated, "This is the first time that I have tried to express in music the romance of the Delta country in my native state of Mississippi." The second movement, "Spiritual" is the emotional and somber centerpiece of the work, featuring a singable melody surrounded by rich harmonies.

George Washington Bridge

Schuman

William Schuman, born in New York City in 1910, emerged as one of the most influential American composers, educators and administrators of the twentieth century. After completing studies at the Malkin Conservatory, Teachers College of Columbia University, and the Mozarteum Academy in Salzburg, he joined the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College before becoming president of The Juilliard School. Later, in 1962, he was appointed the first president of the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. His stature as a composer was affirmed in 1943 when he received the first Pulitzer Prize for Music for his secular cantata, *A Free Song*.

Schuman's daily commute along Henry Hudson Parkway provided the inspiration for *George Washington Bridge*. He later recalled that the bridge possessed "an almost human personality," assuming different moods depending on the time of day, the weather and his own state of mind. Rather than a literal depiction of the massive suspension bridge spanning the Hudson, the work reflects the composer's impressions of its grandeur and character. *George Washington Bridge* was premiered by the Michigan All-State Band on

July 30, 1950, at the National Music Camp in Interlochen, Michigan, under the direction of Dale C. Harris.

The composition unfolds in an arch form (A–B–C–B–A), mirroring the bridge’s structural balance. The outer sections are dominated by bold, poly-chordal fanfares. In contrast, the second and fourth sections introduce lively exchanges amongst the woodwinds and brass. At the center of the work lies a lyrical, expansive section that evokes a more distant perspective, as if glimpsed from the river below or from the air above. The result is a composition that is both evocative in its imagery and significant as an artistic contribution to wind band literature.

Sancta Maria from *Sacrae Symphoniae*

Gabrieli

Giovanni Gabrieli was a Venetian composer and organist whose music bridged the gap between the late Renaissance and Baroque eras of music. Although declining in its international political authority, Venice was a bustling capital for music and art in the late Renaissance. St. Mark’s Basilica became the center of musical life in Venice, where secular and sacred music tended to blend together. Giovanni Gabrieli followed his uncle, Andrea Gabrieli, as the organist of St. Mark’s in 1586 and kept the position until his death. It was there that he wrote many of his best and most influential works. St. Mark’s Basilica is known for its grandeur; its richness and decoration were unparalleled in its time. This opulence, combined with the large space in the footprint of a cross, demanded music of the same magnificence to be performed inside. From his 1597 collection, *Sancta Maria* is a polyphonic motet featuring 7 voices. The work invokes the Virgin Mary to aid those that are in need.

Angels in the Architecture

Ticheli

Frank Ticheli’s music has been described as “optimistic and thoughtful” (*Los Angeles Times*), “lean and muscular” (*New York Times*), “brilliantly effective” (*Miami Herald*) and “powerful, deeply felt crafted with impressive flair and an ear for striking instrumental colors” (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*). Ticheli was Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music from 1991-2023 and Composer in Residence with the Pacific Symphony from 1991-1998. In 2018, Ticheli received the University of Michigan Alumni Society’s highest honor, the Hall of Fame Award, in recognition for his career as a composer. He was also awarded national honorary membership to Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, “bestowed to individuals who have significantly contributed to the cause of music in America,” and the

A. Austin Harding Award by the American School Band Directors Association, “given to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the school band movement in America.” At USC, he has received the Virginia Ramo Award for excellence in teaching, and the Dean’s Award for Professional Achievement.

Angels in the Architecture was commissioned by Kingsway International. The premiere performance took place at the Sydney Opera House on July 6, 2008, by a massed band of young musicians from Australia and the United States and was conducted by Matthew George. The work unfolds as a dramatic conflict between the two extremes of human existence - one divine, the other evil. The work’s title is inspired by the Sydney Opera House itself, with its halo-shaped acoustical ornaments hanging directly above the performance stage.

Angels in the Architecture begins with a single voice singing a 19th-century Shaker song:

*I am an angel of Light
I have soared from above
I am cloth'd with Mother's love.
I have come, I have come.
To protect my chosen band
And lead them to the promised land.*

The angel (represented by the singer) frames the work, surrounding it with a protective wall of light and establishing the divine. Three borrowed traditional songs, despite their varied religious origins, represent the more universal human ideals of peace, hope, and love. Appearing twice in the work is an original chorale, representing Ticheli’s own personal expression of these aspirations. In opposition, turbulent, fast-paced music appears as a symbol of darkness, death, and spiritual doubt. Twice during the musical drama, these shadows sneak in almost unnoticeably, slowly obscuring, and eventually obliterating the light altogether. The darkness prevails for long stretches of time, but the light always returns, inextinguishable, more powerful than before. The alternation of these opposing forces creates, in effect, a kind of five-part rondo form: light-darkness-light-darkness-light.

BAND PROGRAM

Director of Bands	Robert Taylor
	<i>John W. Beattie Chair of Music</i>
Associate Director of Bands	Shawn Vondran
Director of Athletic Bands	Daniel Farris
Department Assistant	Emily Roberg
Doctoral Assistants	Imran Amarshi, Maggie Whiteman
Graduate Assistants	Oliver Stark, Rachel Stiles, Michael Witt
Stage Managers	Stewart Bridgeforth, Kolbe Chapman, Andy Hanks, Henry Lazzaro, Cameron Leonardi, Chrisjovan Masso, Raúl Orellana, Toby Tse
Ensemble Librarians	Cameron Leonardi, Sarah Perry, Toby Tse, Maggie Umanetz-Lertprasopsak
AV/Equipment Manager	Micah Northam

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
Piano Technician	Chris Scroggins

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.