

Symphonic Band Concert

April 24, 2024

Conductors and Program Notes



Robert Pippin is the Director of Bands and Assistant Professor of Music at Southwestern Oklahoma State University where he directs the Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, “The Pride of the Great Southwest” marching band, and the “Wild Dawgs” pep band. In addition to ensemble directing, he teaches undergraduate and graduate conducting and music education courses.

Dr. Pippin was the Dennis C. Dau Professor of Instrumental Music and Assistant Professor of Low

Brass and Music Education at Northwest Missouri State University and was Director of The Johns Hopkins University Wind Ensemble in Baltimore, Maryland.

Robert completed the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Wind Conducting at the Peabody Conservatory, studying with Harlan Parker. He earned a Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Conducting from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado where he studied conducting with J. Steven Moore, Wilfred Schwartz, Michael Schaff, David Shaner, and Lee Egbert, and studied low brass with Robert Brewer.

Before attending Peabody, Robert was a high school band director in Colorado, where he developed comprehensive curriculums in concert bands, jazz ensembles, athletic bands, and chamber music. In addition to teaching, Robert was an active performer in Colorado and Wyoming, playing trombone as a tenured member of the Fort Collins Symphony, and as a freelance artist regularly performing classical, jazz, pop, and chamber music.

Robert has been a performer, adjudicator, and clinician with bands, orchestras, and jazz ensembles in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Hawai’i, Missouri, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Florida and Idaho, as well as presenting clinics at the College Band Directors National Association Southwest Division Conference, Hawai’i University International Conferences, NACWPI National Convention, College Music Society Great Plains and Rocky Mountain Regional Conference, Missouri, Iowa, and Hawai’i Music Educators Association Inservice/Workshop Conferences, and the Colorado Bandmasters Association Convention.



Graduate Assistant **Sarah Stoffels** is guest conductor for the Southwestern Symphonic Band and is a percussion primary from Anadarko, Oklahoma. She began her Bachelors in Music Education at SWOSU in the Fall of 2018 and expects to complete her Masters of Music Education at SWOSU in the Summer of 2024. Sarah was named a distinguished student in the Spring of 2022 for the SWOSU Music Department. She takes pride in being a part of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and hopes to be a role model for indigenous peoples' within the music world. After receiving her Master's in Music Education,

Sarah will be moving to Eastern Oklahoma to join Morris Public Schools as the Morris High School Assistant Band Director. She will assist High School and teach Middle School 7th and 8th grade bands, team teach 5th and 6th grade band, and will establish a guitar class. During her Master's residency she has been a graduate assistant with The Pride of the Great Southwest Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, Basketball Band, and SWOSU Percussion Ensemble. Sarah has been a member of the Epsilon Epsilon Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity for 5 years. She is also a member of Sigma Alpha Iota and has been recognized as an honorary member of the Gamma Phi Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma. She would like to give a special thank you to Dr. Robert Pippin, Professor Micheal Barnes, Mr. Michael Palmer, and Ms. Jessica Stone for their continuous support, advising, and mentorship for playing major roles in her passion for music education.

Program Notes

Bock Fanfares

Bock Fortress or *Bockfiels* as it is called in the native dialect, has stood since at least 723 A.D. on a rocky promontory overlooking the present-day town of Luxembourg City. Over the centuries, the fortress was the site of many military conflicts as it was one of the most strategic strongholds in Northern Europe. Armies of Burgundy, Hapsburg, Spain, Preussia, and France fought for control of the fortress, resulting in repeated repairs and reinforcements to the fortress. Today, the ruins of Bock Fortress still stand overlooking the historic district of Luxembourg City and its extensive network of passages and galleries are a popular tourist attraction. *Bock Fanfares* was commissioned by Demosthenses Dimitrakoulakos for the Symhonic Band of the International School of Luxembourg in honor of the school's 50th anniversary.

-program note from composer Jess Langston Turner

Courtly Airs and Dances

American composer, **Ron Nelson**, was born on December 14, 1929 in Joliet, Illinois and passed this last year on December 24, 2023 in Scottsdale, Arizona. He began his music career taking piano lessons at the young age of six. Nelson quickly found himself interested in composition and within the same year of beginning piano lessons, composed his first composition titled, *The Sailboat*. Ron Nelson holds his Bachelor of Music (1952), Master of Music (1953), and his Doctor of Musical Arts degree (1956) from the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. Dr. Nelson taught at Brown University from 1956 until he retired in 1993. Nelson was a versatile composer composing two operas, a mass, film and television music, 90 various choral works, and more than 40 instrumental works. Composing for band became a passion of Nelson's and *Airs and Dances*. *Courtly Airs and Dances* written in 1995 is one of his best known pieces. The piece is a suite of Renaissance dances that were popular in France, England, Italy, Spain, and Germany during the 1500s. Nelson found inspiration from composer Claude Gervaise, utilizing characteristics from Claude's compositions and works of the time period within this piece.

-program note by Sarah Stoffels

Hymn to the Fallen

John Williams is most famous for being one of the most prolific film composers in history, having written music for Star Wars Episodes 1-6, Jaws, E.T., Hook, Schindler's List, Superman, Jurassic Park, the Indiana Jones series, Close Encounters of the Third Kind and the first three Harry Potter movies among others. He won five Academy Awards and has been nominated fifty four times, second only to Walt Disney. Apart from film composition, Williams was also conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra from 1980-1993, and has conducted several major orchestras. Williams has been awarded the Kennedy Center Honor, the National Medal of the Arts, and was inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. *Hymn to the Fallen* is from the 1998 Steven Spielberg film *Saving Private Ryan* which opens with a landmark extended scene regarded as one of the most graphic and accurate portrayals of combat depicting the storming of Omaha Beach in the Battle of Normandy on D-Day, June 6th, 1944.

Hands Across the Sea

When played for the first time by Sousa's Band in Philadelphia's Academy of Music on April 21, 1899, "may feet were beating a tattoo." The band was obliged to repeat it three times. *Hands Across the Sea* was off to a good start, and it has since remained a standard in band literature.

The march was addressed to no particular nation, but to all of America's friends abroad. A line by Frere, which was printed on the front cover of the music: "A sudden thought strikes me... Let us swear an eternal friendship."

The line by Frere apparently appeared in a play which Sousa Read. In answering questions sent to him while serving in the navy, he gave this account in the *Great Lakes Recruit* in March 1918:

After the Spanish War there was some feeling in Europe
anent our republic regarding this war. Some of the nations...

thought we were not justified while others gave us credit for the honesty of our purpose. One night I was reading an old play and I came across this line, A sudden thought strikes me... Let us swear an eternal friendship.” This almost immediately suggested the title *Hands Across the Set* for that composition and within a few weeks that now famous march became a living fact.

-Program Note from John Philip Sousa: A Descriptive Catalog of His Works