



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

**The University of Memphis
Symphonic Band**

Presents

LEGENDS

Dr. William Plenk, Conductor

Christopher Ha, Graduate Conductor

Trevor Bailey, Graduate Conductor

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2026 7:00 PM

Plough Foundation Performance Hall

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

Jacob Allen, Director

College of Communication and Fine Arts

Deb Burns, Dean

Program

Overture for Winds

Charles Carter (1926-1999)

Christopher Ha, graduate conductor

Selections from Medieval Suite

Ron Nelson (1929-2023)

I. Homage to Leonin

II. Homage to Perotin

English Folk Song Suite

Ralph Vaughn Williams (1872-1958)

I. March: Seventeenth Come Sunday

II. Intermezzo: My Bonny Boy

III. March: Folk Songs from Sommerset

Trevor Bailey, graduate conductor

Brief Intermission

Melodious Thunk

David Biedenbender (b.1984)

Of Sailors and Whales

Francis McBeth (1933-2012)

I. Ishmael

II. Queequeg

III. Father Mapple

IV. Ahab

V. The White Whale

Program Notes

Overture for Winds

Charles Carter (1926-1999)

Charles Carter was an American composer, arranger, and educator. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from Ohio State University and Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music. He later joined the faculty of Florida State University as an assistant to Manley Whitcomb.

Written in 1959 during Carter's time at Florida State University, Overture for Winds remains one of his most popular works. The piece opens with a spirited main theme driven by energetic rhythms and bold wind-band harmonies before shifting to a more lyrical treatment featuring solo voices throughout the ensemble. A euphonium solo introduces a contrasting section filled with expressive melodies and lush, Romantic-era inspired harmonies. The opening theme eventually returns with renewed energy, bringing the work to a grand and triumphant conclusion.

Selections from *Medieval Suite*

Ron Nelson (1929-2023)

From the introduction and expansion of polyphonic writing and multipart harmonies to the formal organization of music, composers Léonin (12th century) and Pérotin (c. 1155–1200) helped define the music of the Medieval period. Considered among the great masters of the Middle Ages, their musical legacies are honored in Ron Nelson's (1929–2023) *Medieval Suite*. Though not composed in the style of the period, Nelson draws upon their music for inspiration. Repetition of rhythmic patterns, modules of sound, Gregorian chant, and long pedal points define the works.

I. *Homage to Leonin* is a “mood piece” that calls upon the ensemble to sing in the style of Gregorian chant. The music continues to grow in intensity and breadth until reaching the climax at the top of its arch. The movement closes with a return to the chant and atmospheric ambience from the winds.

II. *Homage to Perotin* takes inspiration from his *Viderunt omnes* (c. 1198), a landmark work of four-part polyphony known as organum quadruplum. Shortened from “*Viderunt omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostri*”—“All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God”, the movement opens with vibrant textures and rhythms in the woodwinds and keyboard instruments, followed by fanfare-like passages in the brass. The movement closes with a return to the opening theme and an impressive overlapping of voices.

English Folk Song Suite Ralph Vaughn Williams (1872-1958)

Originally published as Folk Song Suite and commissioned by the Royal Military School of Music in 1923, English Folk Song Suite for Military Band by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) has become a cornerstone of the wind band repertoire and remains one of the composer’s best-known works.

Written during the First English Folk Song Revival, the suite reflects a broader movement among Vaughan Williams and his contemporaries to collect and preserve England’s oral folk traditions amid rapid urbanization and cultural change. Drawing upon melodies collected by Vaughan Williams and other prominent folklorists, English Folk Song Suite gives new life to these traditional songs within the English concert-music tradition.

I. *March*: “Seventeen Come Sunday” — “Seventeen Come Sunday,” “Pretty Caroline,” and “Dives and Lazarus”

II. *Intermezzo*: “My Bonny Boy” — “My Bonny Boy” and “Green Bushes”

III. *March*: “Folk Songs from Somerset” — “Blow Away the Morning Dew,” “High Germany,” “Whistle, Daughter, Whistle,” and “John Barleycorn”

Melodious Thunk

David Biedenbender (b.1984)

thunk [thuhngk] noun & verb

1. [n.] an abrupt, flat, hollow sound
(example: The book landed on the floor with a thunk.);
synonym: thud
2. [v.] to produce an abrupt, flat, hollow sound
3. [v.] colloquial past tense and past participle of think.

Melodious Thunk was inspired by the famous jazz pianist Thelonious Monk. Monk's wife, Nellie Smith, nicknamed him "Melodious Thunk" because of his clunky, awkward, and brilliant(!) piano playing, and his somewhat scatterbrained and disoriented nature. "I really liked the idea of playing around with Monk's name, first, because I personally really enjoy goofing around with "spoonerisms" (silly, ridiculous, mix-and-match letter games, which often happen by accident: for example, slip of the tongue becomes tip of the slung), and, second, because this nickname actually provided great musical inspiration. Melodious: well, that's fairly obvious; and thunk (which is a great onomatopoeia!) became the starting points for the piece. Big, fat thunks are interspersed with pointy, clunky, bluesy blips, which are then transformed into a long, smooth, laid-back melody accompanied by a funky bass line ... I hope you'll hear some similarities between this piece and Monk's iconic musical style and quirky attitude."

- Program Note by composer

Of Sailors and Whales (Five Scenes from Melville)

Francis McBeth (1933-2012)

Of Sailors and Whales (Five Scenes from Melville) by [Arkansas composer and educator, Francis McBeth (1933-2012)] is a five-movement work based on scenes from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. It was commissioned by and is dedicated to the California Band Directors Association, Inc., and was premiered in February 1990 by the California All-State Band, conducted by the composer. The work is sub-dedicated to Robert Lanon White, Commander USN (Ret.), who went to sea as a simple sailor.

I. *Ishmael* — "I go to sea as a simple sailor."

II. *Queequeg* — "It was quite plain that he must be some abominable savage, but Queequeg was a creature in the transitory state -- neither caterpillar nor butterfly."

III. *Father Mapple* — "This ended, in prolonged solemn tones, like the continual tolling of a bell in a ship that is foundering at sea in a fog -- in such tones he commenced reading the following hymn; but changing his manner towards the concluding stanzas, burst forth with a pealing exultation and joy."

see next page for lyrics

**Of Sailers and Whales
(Five Scenes from Melville)**

Francis McBeth (1933-2012)

*The ribs and terrors in the whale arched over me a dismal
gloom
While all God's sunlit waves rolled by, and lift me lower down
to doom
In black distress I called my God when I could scared believe
Him mine,
He bowed His ear to my complaint, no more the whale did
me confine.
My songs forever shall record that terrible, that joyful hour,
I give the glory to my God, His all the mercy and power.*

IV. *Ahab* – "So powerfully did the whole grim aspect of Ahab affect me that for the first few moments I hardly noted the barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood."

V. *The White Whale* – "Moby Dick seemed combinedly possessed by all the angels that fell from heaven. The birds! - the birds! They mark the spot ... The whale, the whale! Up helm, up helm! Oh, all ye sweet powers of air, now hug me close ... He turns to meet us ... My God, stand by me now!"

-Program notes from Score

Dr. William Plenk



William Plenk has been on the faculty of the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis since Fall 2017. Serving as Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands, Dr. Plenk oversees the Mighty Sound of the South, University of Memphis Pep Band, Symphonic Band, and teaches other courses within the School of Music.

Outside of the University of Memphis, Dr. Plenk is active as a clinician and adjudicator. He has worked with concert bands and marching bands from across the United States, Singapore, and Japan, including a three-season tenure with the Tenrikyo Aimachi Marching Band from Nagoya, Japan, the eight-time All Japan National Champion. He has served on the staff of several drum and bugle corps including The Academy, The Cadets, Boston Crusaders, and Phantom Regiment.

Dr. Plenk previously served for six years as Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Nevada, Reno, developing the athletic band program into one of the most respected in the region. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was Conductor of the UCLA Symphonic Band, Associate Conductor of the UCLA Wind Ensemble, and Associate Conductor of the UCLA Brass Ensemble. He also received a Master of Music degree in tuba performance from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Music degree in tuba performance from Ithaca College.

Personnel

Flute:

Miley Jaimez**
Jennifer Perez
Tiffany Vasquez
Jacobo
Asa Pankewycz
Madison
Cunningham
Ben Sawyer

Clarinet:

Erin Moore**
Hayden Mitchell
Kaden Bailey
William Capooth
Chandler Golden
David Champlin

Horn:

Rhys Roberts**
Nicholas
Cacolyris
Joshua Motley
Tason Toulson
Chisom
Onwuemenyi

Oboe:

Quinn Milne**

Saxophone:

Aiden Gentry **
Jay Dobosz
Kory Worrell
Dani Watson

Trombone:

Preston Rice**
Bilal Muhaimin
Thomas Butler
Xavier Haynes
William Hardwick

Tuba:

Christopher
Blackston**
Jacob Cosper
Lyle Stephens
Aaron Harris
Vox Carratt

Bassoon:

Ryan Walker**
Valeria Ramirez
Avery Wiggs

Trumpet:

Bejamin
Vanderbijl**
Tylan Walker
Jacob Turner
Mason Stinson
Fausto Mejia

Euphonium:

Alexander Chan**
Kaleb Johnson
Skarlett
Wahlquist

Percussion:

Lillian Whatley**
Jonathan Bentley
JT Ungurait
Benjamin Gravatt

**Denotes Principal Player