



Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS Symphonic Band

presents,

STORYTELLER

Dr. William Plenk, conductor
Jon Yopp, guest conductor

Dr. David Spencer, trumpet
Dr. Marcin Arendt, violin
Joseph Moore, trumpet

OCTOBER 9, 2025 7:00 PM

PLOUGH CONCERT HALL

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Jacob Allen, Interim Director
College of Communication and Fine Arts
Debra Burns, Dean

PROGRAM

Gandalf Johan de Meij (b. 1953)
from *Symphony no. 1 The Lord of the Rings*

Ye Banks and Braes O'Bonnie Doon Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

Jon Yopp, guest conductor

The Lion and the Mouse Julie Giroux (b. 1961)
from *A Symphony of Fables*

The Storyteller Jim Stephenson (b. 1969)

David Spencer, trumpet
Marcin Arendt, Violin
Joseph Moore, trumpet offstage

The Hare and the Tortoise Julie Giroux (b. 1961)
from *A Symphony of Fables*

The Seal Lullaby Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Hobbits Johan de Meij (b. 1953)
from *Symphony no. 1 The Lord of the Rings*

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Masters of Musical Arts degree in Wind Conducting

PERSONNEL

Flute

Miley Jaimez
Asa Pankewycz
Ellie Pappas*
Jennifer Perez
Natalie Severs

Oboe

Quinn Milne*
Jesus Salazar**

Bassoon

Valeria Ramirez*
Avery Wiggs

Clarinet

Kaden Bailey
David Champlin
Chandler Golden
Onyinye Igboanugo*
Hayden Mitchell
Erin Moore
Jaylon Williams

Alto Saxophone

Alan Blair
(soprano/alto)*
Angel Rubio (alto)
Caleb Hunt (tenor)
Blake Pelayo (bari)

Trumpet

Remi Hicks*
Alise Jordan
Owen Kearney
Logan Pack
Mason Stinson
Jacob Turner

French Horn

Elijah Evans
Juan Garay
Kelsey Pegues*
Rhys Roberts

Trombone

Chandler Chrestman
Bilal Muhaimin
Alexis Perez
Constance Robinson*
Alexis Perez

Euphonium

Marie Bice
Alexander Chan*
Skarlett Wahlquist

Tuba

Christopher Blackston
Alucard Simpson*
Lyle Stephens

Piano

JingYi Bai

Percussion

Willie Castellanos
Will Hankins
Jermal Lewis, Jr.
Mia Perez
Mason Threlkeld
J.T. Ungurait
Jesse Wickman*

Bass

Kaleb Ritchie**

***Principal Player**

****Guest musician**

PROGRAM NOTES

Gandalf

Johan de Mei (b. 1953)

from *Symphony no. 1 The Lord of the Rings*

Johan de Meij's first symphony *The Lord of the Rings* is based on the trilogy of that name by J.R.R. Tolkien. This book has fascinated many millions of readers since its publication in 1955. The symphony consists of five separate movements, each illustrating a personage or an important episode from the book.

Gandalf (The Wizard): The first movement is a musical portrait of the wizard Gandalf, one of the principal characters of the trilogy. His wise and noble personality is expressed by a stately motif which is used in a different form in movements IV and V. The sudden opening of the Allegro vivace is indicative of the unpredictability of the grey wizard, followed by a wild ride on his beautiful horse, Shadowfax.

-Program note by composer

Ye Banks and Braes O'Bonnie Doon

Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

Percy Grainger's folk-song settings are nothing short of legendary. In this work, he succeeds not only in capturing the essence of a song, but also in infusing the work with captivating charm, piquant harmonies, and resplendent sonorities. Only two seventeen-measure strophes in length, this relatively simple setting features a drone background, a tender countermelody, and tempo rubato. Grainger's original musical adventure with this song was penned some 34 years earlier, for "men's chorus and whistlers," but he has surely eclipsed that original version in this work for the wind band, which was for him a "vehicle of deeply emotional expression."

-Program Note by Brian Casey

The Lion and the Mouse
from *A Symphony of Fables*

Julie Giroux (b. 1961)

Julie Giroux's second symphony, *A Symphony of Fables*, was commissioned by The United States Air Force Band of Flight. It is a programmatic work in five movements, each movement being dedicated to telling the story of a fable. These fables she calls "old school" style. They are designed in a way that the movements can be performed in any order, or even on their own as standalone program pieces. The first movement, "The Lion and the Mouse," depicts the famous fable by Aesop:

A Lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her.

"Spare me!" begged the poor Mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you."

The Lion was much amused to think that a Mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the Mouse go.

Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the Lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the Lion was free.

"You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse. "Now you see that even a Mouse can help a Lion."

A kindness is never wasted.

-Aesop

The Storyteller

Jim Stephenson (b. 1969)

I first heard Adolph “Bud” Herseth live at roughly the age of 9 or 10. My parents bought box seats (with chairs that swiveled!) for a concert at Orchestra Hall, Chicago. I’m almost positive that the CSO was playing *Pictures at an Exhibition*, but it might have been *Pines*, or something else with a huge trumpet part. I’d love to tell you – in Hollywood fashion – that I looked up at my parents at concert’s end, with tears in my eyes, and exclaimed, “That’s my instrument! I need a trumpet now!” That wouldn’t be entirely true, but obviously the concert left an indelible impression, because trumpet did become my instrument shortly thereafter.

Bud Herseth died on April 13, 2013. I don’t play trumpet anymore, but I had a chance to do something for Bud, to compose a piece in his memory.

“The Storyteller” comes from an article written about Bud – an article I recall reading while a teenager. It described how Bud didn’t just play the trumpet, he told a story with every note he played. I endeavored, through the course of this piece, to tell the story of Bud the best I could. There are subtle references to many of the famous orchestral trumpet excerpts that I listened to him play the most.

I especially wish to thank Rich and Val Stoelzel along with GVSU, Chris Martin, Barbara Butler, and all else who played a pivotal role in making this piece a possibility, all in an effort to pay tribute to perhaps the best orchestral trumpet player the world has ever known.

-Program note by composer

The Hare and the Tortoise

Julie Giroux (b.1961)

Another movement from Giroux's *A Symphony of Fables*, this work tells the story of another famous fable by Aesop, "The Hare and the Tortoise."

A Hare was making fun of the Tortoise one day for being so slow.

"Do you ever get anywhere?" he asked with a mocking laugh.

"Yes," replied the Tortoise, "and I get there sooner than you think. I'll run you a race and prove it."

The Hare was much amused at the idea of running a race with the Tortoise, but for the fun of the thing he agreed. So the Fox, who had consented to act as judge, marked the distance and started the runners off. The Hare was soon far out of sight, and to make the Tortoise feel very deeply how ridiculous it was for him to try a race with a Hare, he lay down beside the course to take a nap until the Tortoise should catch up.

The Tortoise meanwhile kept going slowly but steadily, and, after a time, passed the place where the Hare was sleeping. But the Hare slept on very peacefully; and when at last he did wake up, the Tortoise was near the goal. The Hare now ran his swiftest, but he could not overtake the Tortoise in time.

The race is not always to the swift.

-Aesop

In the spring of 2004 I was lucky enough to have my show *Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings* presented at the ASCAP Musical Theater Workshop. The workshop is the brain child of legendary composer Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*, *Godspell*), and his insights about the creative process were profoundly helpful. He became a great mentor and friend to the show and, I am honored to say, to me personally. Soon after the workshop I received a call from a major film studio. Stephen had recommended me to them and they wanted to know if I might be interested in writing music for an animated feature. I was incredibly excited, said yes, and took the meeting.

The creative executives with whom I met explained that the studio heads had always wanted to make an epic adventure, a classic animated film based on Kipling's *The White Seal*. I have always loved animation, (the early Disney films; Looney Tunes; everything Pixar makes) and I couldn't believe that I might get a chance to work in that grand tradition on such great material.

The White Seal is a beautiful story, classic Kipling, dark and rich and not at all condescending to kids. Best of all, Kipling begins his tale with the mother seal singing softly to her young pup. (The opening poem is called *The Seal Lullaby*).

*Oh! Hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us,
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.
Where billow meets billow, then soft be thy pillow,
Oh weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas!*

Rudyard Kipling, 1865-1936

***The Seal Lullaby*, program note continued**

I was struck so deeply by those first beautiful words, and a simple, sweet Disney-esque song just came gushing out of me. I wrote it down as quickly as I could, had my wife record it while I accompanied her at the piano, and then dropped it off at the film studio. I didn't hear anything from them for weeks and weeks, and I began to despair. Did they hate it? Was it too melodically complex? Did they even listen to it? Finally, I called them, begging to know the reason that they had rejected my tender little song. "Oh," said the exec, "we decided to make *Kung Fu Panda* instead."

So I didn't do anything with it; just sang it to my baby son every night to get him to go to sleep. (Success rate: less than 50%.) A few years later the Towne Singers commissioned the choral arrangement of it, and in 2011, I transcribed the piece for concert band. I'm grateful to them for giving it a new life, and to the schools, colleges and directors listed who have believed in this new transcription. And I'm especially grateful to Stephen Schwartz, to whom the piece is dedicated. His friendship and invaluable tutelage has meant more to me than I could ever tell him.

-Program note by composer

Hobbits

Johan de Meij (b.1953)

from *Symphony no. 1 The Lord of the Rings*

Hobbits, the final movement of *Symphony No. 1 The Lord of the Rings*, expresses the carefree and optimistic character of the Hobbits in a happy folk dance; the hymn that follows emanates the determination and noblesse of the Hobbit folk. The symphony does not end on an exuberant note, but is concluded peacefully and resigned, in keeping with the symbolic mood of the last chapter, *The Grey Havens*, in which Frodo and Gandalf sail away in a white ship and disappear slowly beyond the horizon.

-Program note by composer

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

DR. WILLIAM PLENK, Director

Dr. William Plenk is Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands for the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis. In this role, he oversees the UofM Marching Band and Pep Band, conducts the Symphonic Band, and teaches music education courses.

Outside of the University, Dr. Plenk is active as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He has worked with concert bands, marching bands, and drum corps from across the United States, Singapore, and Japan, including a three-season tenure with the Tenrikyo Aimachi Marching Band from Nagoya, Japan. Dr. Plenk has presented or conducted at the CBDNA Western/Northwestern and Southern Division Conferences, as well as the CBDNA National Athletic Band Symposium.

Before arriving in Memphis, Dr. Plenk served 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.

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

DR. DAVID SPENCER, Trumpet

David Spencer, Associate Professor (B.M. - Florida State University; M.M., D.M.A. - University of North Texas), enjoys a diverse professional career in orchestral, chamber music, and jazz/commercial idioms worldwide. Dr. Spencer has appeared on numerous classical, film, and popular music recordings in Korea, Japan, and the United States. He has served as principal trumpet with the Seoul Philharmonic, the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, and the Sinfonica de Asturias in Spain, which included concert and television performances with tenor Luciano Pavarotti. As a jazz musician, Dr. Spencer has performed with numerous jazz artists, including Freddie Hubbard, Michael Brecker, James Moody, and Marvin Stamm. While at the University of North Texas, he was a member of the Grammy-winning One O'clock Lab Band. Equally active as a clinician, he has presented master classes in New York, Dallas, Cleveland, Istanbul, Scotland, Italy, and Asia. In addition to trumpet performance, Dr. Spencer also specializes in conducting and repertoire, having studied with Eugene Corporon, Jack Stamp, Dennis Fischer, and Eddie Smith. David Spencer serves on the board of directors for the Memphis chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and was recently named Employment Editor for the International Trumpet Guild. He joined the faculty of the University of Memphis in 1993.

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

DR. MARCIN ARENDT, Violin

Dr. Marcin Arendt is a violinist, chamber musician, soloist, and educator, serving as Professor of Violin at the University of Memphis's Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music. He maintains a vibrant studio of undergraduate and graduate students while performing with his string-faculty colleagues in the Ceruti String Quartet. An active performer, Dr. Arendt is a core member of the Iris Collective, collaborating closely with colleagues in both concert performances and innovative community engagement projects. He also performs regularly with the Arizona Music Festival in Scottsdale, AZ, and the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, OH.

An active performer, Dr. Arendt is a core member of the Iris Collective, collaborating closely with colleagues in both concert performances and innovative community engagement projects. He also performs regularly with the Arizona Music Festival in Scottsdale, AZ, and the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, OH.

Through his work with Iris Collective, Dr. Arendt engages in initiatives that bring music into spaces where it can foster connection, healing, and inspiration. These projects often incorporate storytelling, using music to share and honor people's experiences and to create moments of genuine human connection. They frequently reach audiences outside traditional concert settings, ensuring that music remains accessible and meaningful to people from a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences.

As a soloist, Dr. Arendt has appeared with ensembles including the Iris Collective under Michael Stern and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra under Robert Moody. He is the artistic director of the Memphis in Poland Festival, an initiative that shares Memphis's musical, artistic, and cultural contributions on an international stage.

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

DR. MARCIN ARENDT, continued

Beyond the classical realm, he co-founded Memphis Mix, a blues-inspired crossover ensemble featured internationally, and has served as a member and regular concertmaster of The Sphere Ensemble as well as the featured violinist with the nationally touring crossover-fusion group FEAST. His recordings range across genres, including a Naxos Records release of chamber works by Jacques Castérède, collaborations on several commercial and popular music albums, and the piano trio “Reaching” on Mark Nowakowski’s album *Metanoia* on the DUX label.

A prizewinner in several national and international competitions, Dr. Arendt has performed alongside renowned artists such as Itzhak Perlman, Gil Shaham, Yo-Yo Ma, Martin Short, Joshua Bell, Nate Smith, Don Bryant, Harry Connick, Jr., and Jon Batiste.

Polish-born, Dr. Arendt draws on a wide range of pedagogical traditions in his teaching, reflecting his own studies with Aaron Krosnick, Isaac Malkin, Henryk Kowalski, Krystyna Jurecka, Routa Kroumovitch, Alvaro Gomez, and Oswald Lehnert. His teaching philosophy emphasizes helping students cultivate a personal connection with their music and technique, guided by three central questions: What is my purpose in playing? What are my goals? What steps am I taking to reach them? By tailoring his approach to each student’s individuality and involving them in the learning process, he fosters an environment for thoughtful artistry and technical excellence.

Dr. Arendt holds a Bachelor of Music (B.M.) in Performance and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Philosophy from Stetson University, a Master of Music (M.M.) and Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and a post-graduate performance certificate from the Stanisław Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdańsk, Poland.

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

JOSEPH MOORE, Trumpet

Joseph Moore enjoys an active career as a performer and educator. He is a member of the Jackson Symphony Orchestra and serves on adjunct faculty at Union University in the Department of Music, where he coaches chamber music and ensemble sectionals. He earned a Bachelor of Music at Union University, where he studied trumpet performance with Tom Grant and Dennis Smith, and music composition with the late Dr. Daniel Musselman. He went on to earn a Master of Music in Trumpet Performance from McGill University in Montréal, Canada, where he studied with internationally-acclaimed trumpet soloist Richard Stoelzel.

In May 2020, he was selected as one of sixteen participants to participate in a Summer Intensive for Trumpet at the Cleveland Institute of Music where he studied with Michael Sachs and Michael Miller of the Cleveland Orchestra. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Trumpet Performance with a cognate in Wind Conducting at the University of Memphis, studying with Dr. David Spencer and Dr. Albert Nguyen.

As an orchestral musician, he has performed with orchestras in North America and Europe, including the Jackson Symphony, South Florida Symphony, Palm Beach Opera, Musicians' Philharmonic of Montreal, the Balmoral Chamber Orchestra, the Taneycomo Festival Orchestra in Branson, Missouri, and the Crescendo Summer Institute Opera Orchestra in Sarastopak, Hungary. He has also been featured as soloist with high school and collegiate ensembles, including the Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra, the Union University Symphony Orchestra, and the Union University Symphonic Band. In April 2018, he was featured in recital as a Guest Artist at the Tennessee Technological University School of Music.

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

JOSEPH MOORE, continued

As a chamber musician, he has performed with the Jackson Symphony Brass Quintet as part of the Jackson Symphony's "Symphony On the Move" series, and has served in the Symphony's "Music and Healing" Program, with the ensemble performing in memory and long-term care facilities across Jackson and West TN.

In 2017, he presented with the McGill University Trumpet Ensemble at the 2017 International Trumpet Guild conference in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and in 2018 was selected to perform Francis Poulenc's *Le Bal Masque* as part of McGill University's Musical Chairs! Chamber Music Festival at Le Chapelle Historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montréal.

An advocate for excellence in music education, he teaches individual and group lessons to students throughout West Tennessee. His students have consistently won top prizes in the West Tennessee Solo and Ensemble Festival, as well as other State and Regional competitions.