

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

The University of Memphis
Symphonic Band

Presents

COLOR & LIGHT

Dr. William Plenk, Conductor
Dr. Wilker Augusto, Guest Conductor
Christopher Ha, Graduate Conductor

Tuesday, December 1, 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

Illumination (2013) — **David Maslanka (1943-2017)**

Dr. Wilker Augusto, guest conductor

Starlight (2019) — **Katahj Copley (b.1998)**

Lichtweg/Lightway (2017) — **Jennifer Jolley (b.1981)**

Shenandoah (2019) — **Omar Thomas (b.1984**

Christopher Ha, graduate conductor

Selections from *Carmina Burana* — **Carl Orff (1895-1982) arr. John Krance (1934-1989)**

I. O Fortuna, velut Luna
II. Fortune plango vulnera
III. Ecce gratum
IV. Tanz - Uf dem anger
V. Floret Silva
VI. Were diu werlt alle min
VII. Amor volat undique
IX. In taberna quando sumus
XIII. Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi

Program Notes

Illumination (2013) **David Maslanka (1943-2017)**

“Illumination: Overture for Band” -- lighting up, bringing light. I am especially interested in composing music for young people that allows them a vibrant experience of their own creative energy. A powerful experience of this sort stays in the heart and mind as a channel for creative energy, no matter what the life path. Music shared in community brings this vital force to everyone. ***Illumination*** is an open and cheerful piece in a quick tempo, with a very direct A-B-A song form.

- Program note by composer

Starlight (2019) **Katahj Copley (b. 1998)**

I believe that music is the ultimate source of freedom and imagination and the most freedom I have had as a musician was through composing. Composition is like me opening my heart and showing the world my drive, my passion, and my soul.

When looking up in the sky, the stars are ever so freeing. Filled with wonder and filled with hope, they are the sketches of the universe. With this lyrical piece, a melody is brought and it evolves into something stellar. I've written many pieces about the sky, and this one has a different theme to it this time: what joys and wonders can a star and its light bring to a night sky. The opening clarinet is our first star, and from the opening motif begin to show up until the climax where the sky is at its brightest. After the climax the sky begins to settle in for the end of the night -- the stars begin to fade as the sun appears. This piece is an ode to the colors, the worries, and the joys of wonder. This is ***Starlight.***

- *Program note by composer*

Lichtweg/Lightway (2017) **Jennifer Jolley (b.1981)**

Lichtweg/Lightway is a wind ensemble piece based on Keith Sonnier's light installation in Connecting Level 03 in Terminal 1 at the Munich Airport. Bright fluorescent neon lights line the walls of a typical airport walkway to guide travelers to where they are going and help them cope with the stress of being in transit. In this piece, I musically portray the rhythmic placement of red and blue light emanating from this neon installation by creating a constant eighth-note ostinato that is heard throughout the work. Just as the panes of glass, mirrors and aluminum sheets refract and scatter the colorful neon light, this ostinato is diffused amongst the different colors in the ensemble.

-Program notes by composer

Shenandoah (2019) **Omar Thomas (b.1984)**

“Shenandoah” is one of the most well-known and beloved Americana folk songs. Originally a river song detailing the lives and journeys of fur traders canoeing down the Missouri River, the symbolism of this culturally-significant melody has been expanded to include its geographic namesake – an area of the eastern United States that encompasses West Virginia and a good portion of the western part of Virginia – and various parks, rivers, counties, and academic institutions found within.

Back in May of 2018, after hearing a really lovely duo arrangement of “Shenandoah” while adjudicating a music competition in Minneapolis, I asked myself, after hearing so many versions of this iconic and historic song, how would I set it differently? I thought about it and thought about it and thought about it, and before I realized it, I had composed and assembled just about all of this arrangement in my head by assigning bass notes to the melody and filling in the harmony in my head afterwards. I would intermittently check myself on the piano to make sure what I was imagining worked, and ended up changing almost nothing at all from what I’d heard in my mind’s ear.

This arrangement recalls the beauty of Shenandoah Valley, not bathed in golden sunlight, but blanketed by low-hanging clouds and experiencing intermittent periods of heavy rainfall (created with a combination of percussion textures, generated both on instruments and from the body). There are a few musical moments where the sun attempts to pierce through the clouds, but ultimately the rains win out. This arrangement of “Shenandoah” is at times mysterious, somewhat ominous, constantly introspective, and
deeply soulful.

- Program note by composer

Selections from
Carmina Burana

Carl Orff (1895-1982)
arr. John Krance (1934-1989)

Carmina Burana is a medieval manuscript containing poems and songs dating primarily from the 12th and 13th centuries. The manuscript is one of the largest surviving collections of secular medieval poetry. Of particular note, many of these writings are associated with students and clergy and are often characterized as bawdy, irreverent, and satirical. Selected texts from the collection would be set to music by German composer Carl Orff in 1936 and published as a cantata—a vocal composition with instrumental accompaniment, typically divided into several movements. Translated from Latin, Orff's full title is *Songs of Beuern: Secular Songs for Singers and Choruses to Be Sung Together with Instruments and Magical Images*.

American composer John Krance arranged Orff's orchestral work for wind band in 1967. Although Orff's original score calls for vocal soloists and chorus, Krance's arrangement is entirely instrumental, with the vocal material incorporated into the wind band itself. From the 25 movements of Orff's original setting, Krance selected 13 for his arrangement. In the score's foreword, Krance writes:

"In arranging *Carmina Burana* for concert band I have attempted to retain the spirit, feeling and over-all character of the original score, at the same time modifying its length to a duration suitable for programming purposes. The work begins and ends depicting the crushing anguish of the victims of Fortune's ruthless wheel (*O Fortuna; Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi*); the remaining sections are devoted to the joys of spring and nature, the pleasure of the tavern and the gaming table, the delights of love, the irony of Fate."

—John Krance, score foreword

Selections from Carmina Burana

Carl Orff (1895-1982)
arr. John Krance (1934-1989)

I. O Fortuna, velut Luna
(O Fortune, variable as the Moon)

II. Fortune plango vulnera
(I lament Fortune's blows)

III. Ecce gratum
(Behold the spring)

IV. Tanz - Uf dem anger
(Dance - On the lawn)

V. Floret Silva
(The noble forest)

VI. Were diu werlt alle min
(Were the world all mine)

VII. Amor volat undique
(The God of Love flies everywhere)

IX. In taberna quando sumus
(When we are in the tavern)

XIII. Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi
(Fortune, Empress of the World)

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.

Dr. Wilker Augusto

Dr. Wilker Augusto, originally from João Pessoa, Brazil, brings a wealth of international experience to his role. He completed his bachelor of music in horn performance at the UFPB (Federal University of Paraíba), graduating with the prestigious Laurel of Academic Excellence Award. In Brazil, Dr. Augusto worked as band director for several middle and high schools for 14 years, winning first place during many state and regional championships and himself winning first place in conducting.



He has attended national and international music festivals for horn and conducting and received the "Young Orchestral Conductor" award during the 2012 International Music Festival Eleazar de Carvalho.

Augusto graduated in 2024 with a doctor of musical arts in wind conducting from the University of Memphis under the mentorship of Dr. Albert Nguyen. He has been participating in conducting symposiums around the country and recently received the Reynolds Conducting Institute Fellowship during the Midwest Clinic. Besides his academic life, Augusto is an active horn musician and private teacher who serves as a clinician and guest conductor for honor bands and schools around the Mid-South.

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

Basson:
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