



Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS Wind Ensemble

presents,

TRAVELER

Dr. Albert Nguyễn, conductor
Erin Duke, guest conductor

Shannon Kathleen Burr, guest soprano

SEPTEMBER 30, 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

In This Broad Earth

Steven Bryant (b. 1972)

Goodnight Moon

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Shannon Kathleen Burr, soprano

Traveler

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

Erin Duke, guest conductor*

INTERMISSION

Molly on the Shore

**Percy Grainger (1882-1961)
ed. R. Mark Rogers**

Sunflower Studies

Nicole Piuñno (b. 1985)

I. Waiting for the Brightness of Tomorrow

II. No Blue Without Yellow

III. Interlude

IV. Seeking the Golden Light

V. Broken Colours

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

PERSONNEL

Flute

Mackenzie Saylor*
Nicole Rodriguez
Catherine Balsamo
Samuel Jesuyemi

Oboe

Isaac Ripple*
Jesus Salazar
Simon Dickerson

Bassoon

Lora Yopp*
Mollie Coates
Caiden Ross

Clarinet

Shihao Zhu*
Joseph Burgos
Evgenii Mikheev
Andrew Hofmann
Emily Ward
Erin Moore
Isis Weaver

Alto Saxophone

Mark Lynch*
Chris Ghaffar

Tenor Saxophone

Eric Fung

Baritone Saxophone

Mateo Navarro

Trumpet

Logan Smoot*
Tyler Scott
Christian Chiasson
Oliver Buckley
Cody Longreen

French Horn

Brittany Cooper*
Samara Salsbury
Tristan Bass
Dean Blish

Trombone

Cassidy Shiflett*
Evan Green
Nathan Hiers

Bass Trombone

Zachary Smart

Euphonium

Sophia Rivera*
Alfred Hernandez

Tuba

Nathan Owen*
Ethan Arnal

Double Bass

Kaleb Ritchie**

Piano

JingYi Bai

Harp

Frances Cobb**

Percussion

Colton Renfrow*
Chris Palmer
Elijah Wynne
Daniel Padron
Paul Hayes
Allison Kiefer
Erin Duke

***Principal Player**

****Guest musician**

PROGRAM NOTES

In This Broad Earth

Steven Bryant (b. 1972)

Written for his wife, Verena, Steven Bryant's *In This Broad Earth* is based on Walt Whitman's "Song of the Universal" from *Leaves of Grass*. He writes about the work:

"In This Broad Earth is a short fanfare written for and dedicated to Kevin Sedatole and the Michigan State University Wind Symphony. Inspired by beauty I witness when hiking in the Austrian Alps with my wife, Verena, the music celebrates the earth, our only home (for now).

The fanfare embodies the numerous threads that have connected my life with Michigan State University over the past decade. Verena was one of Dr. Sedatole's first conducting students at MSU, which coincided with the beginning of our relationship. I spent a great deal of time at Verena's apartment in Spartan Village where I wrote the opening section of my *Concerto for Wind Ensemble* on a makeshift desk (a card table given to her by Director of Bands Emeritus John Whitwell). Over the years since, the MSU bands have performed a great deal of my music, always at the very highest level, and though I was never a student there, I have great affection and loyalty to this extraordinary school on the banks of the Red Cedar."

*COME said the Muse,
Sing me a song no poet yet has chanted,
Sing me the universal.
In this broad earth of ours,
Amid the measureless grossness and the slag,
Enclosed and safe within its central heart,
Nestles the seed perfection.
By every life a share or more or less,
None born but it is born, conceal'd or unconceal'd the seed is
waiting.*

-Excerpt from "Song of the Universal" from *Leaves of Grass*

Goodnight Moon

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Arr. by Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant

Text by Margaret Wise Brown

Over the past few years, I must have read *Goodnight Moon* to my son a thousand times -- maybe more. Somewhere around reading number 500, I began hearing little musical fragments as I read, and over time those fragments began to blossom into a simple, sweet lullaby. I knew it was a long shot, but I asked my manager, Claire Long, to contact HarperCollins and see if they would allow the text to be set to music. To my surprise and delight they agreed -- the first time they had ever allowed *Goodnight Moon* to be used in such a way.

I composed the piece relatively quickly, originally setting the text for harp, string orchestra, and my son's mother, soprano Hila Plitmann. I later arranged *Goodnight Moon* for SATB choir and piano. More recently, my dear friend Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant arranged the piece for wind ensemble and soloist.

The melody of *Goodnight Moon* will forever make me think of those quiet nights, reading my son to sleep.

- Program note by the composer

Goodnight Moon

*In the great green room
There was a telephone
And a red balloon
And a picture of –
The cow jumping over the moon*

*And there were three little bears sitting on chairs
And two little kittens
And a pair of mittens
And a little toy house
And a young mouse
And a comb and a brush and a bowl full of mush
And a quiet old lady who was whispering "hush"*

*Goodnight room
Goodnight moon
Goodnight cow jumping over the moon
Goodnight light
And the red balloon*

*Goodnight bears
Goodnight chairs
Goodnight kittens
And goodnight mittens*

*Goodnight clocks
And goodnight socks
Goodnight little house
And goodnight mouse*

*Goodnight comb
And goodnight brush
Goodnight nobody
Goodnight mush
And goodnight to the old lady whispering "hush"*

*Goodnight stars
Goodnight air
Goodnight noises everywhere*

Traveler

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

Traveler was commissioned in 2003 by the University of Texas at Arlington Band Alumni Association, the Delta Sigma chapter of Kappa Psi and the Gamma Nu chapter of Tau Beta Sigma, in honor of the career contributions of Ray C. Lichtenwalter (b. 1940), retiring director of bands at UT Arlington. Ray has been a close friend and champion of my music for many years, and it was a great pleasure for me to write this piece for his final concert.

The idea for *Traveler* came from the feeling of a big life movement as I contemplated my friend's retirement. *Traveler* begins with an assertive statement of the chorale melody, Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr (Not so sad, not so much). The chorale was not chosen for its title, although in retrospect it seems quite appropriate. The last part of a life need not be sad. It is the accumulation of all that has gone before, and a powerful projection into the future -- the potential for a tremendous gift of life and joy. And so, the music begins with energy and movement, depicting an engaged life in full stride. At the halfway point, a meditative quiet settles in. Life's battles are largely done; the soul is preparing for its next big step.

*In our hearts, our minds, our souls
We travel from life to life to life
In time and eternity.*

- Program note by the composer

Molly on the Shore

Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

In the mid-twentieth century, a surge of nationalism struck Europe, and composers began to use folk songs as the source of compositional vocabulary in their works. The most notable English composers who accomplished this were Cecil Sharp, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Percy Aldridge Grainger. Although Grainger was born in Australia, he spent an equal amount of time in England and later America, where he enlisted in the United States Army. In 1905, Grainger attended a lecture by Lucy Broadwood entitled "On the Collecting of English Folk Song," which was the spark that ignited his love for re-harmonizing folk songs in his own works. Over the course of the following two years, Grainger travelled across England with a notepad and phonograph, collecting over five hundred folk songs from townspeople which he used as source material throughout his career.

Molly on the Shore is an Irish reel based on two Cork tunes published in *The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music*. The standard Irish reel was played to accompany lively country dancing that was known to be extremely fast for both the musician and dancer. The two folk tunes Grainger quotes in this work are *Molly on the Shore* and *Temple Hill*. His first rendition of *Molly on the Shore* was for four strings, and he later re-orchestrated the work to accommodate a wide variety of instruments including pianola (an automatic piano), orchestra, violin and piano, piano four-hands, and his final rendition for the wind band in 1920.

Sunflower Studies

Nicole Piunno (b.1985)

Sunflower Studies, a symphony in five movements for wind ensemble, explores Vincent Van Gogh's love for sunflowers combined with my own love of the sunflower. The titles for movement one and movement four come from the beautiful nature of the sunflower itself, while the titles for movement two and movement five come from Van Gogh's painting style. These movements are connected in the middle by a short interlude.

Many movements incorporate the hymn tune *Tell Me the Old, Old Story*. This was one of Van Gogh's favorite hymns, and the melody and lyrics have grown on me as I have gotten to know it. The hymn has a child-like quality to it which to me represents a sincere faith. Van Gogh said he wanted his paintings "to say something comforting as music is comforting ... something of the eternal." This melody also represents that source of comfort which the sunflower can bring to a person.

I learned a lot about Van Gogh and his work from reading the letters Vincent wrote to his brother. Vincent told his brother he wanted to make a series of paintings of sunflowers that would contain broken yellows against blue backgrounds. He described this series of paintings to his brother, "The whole thing will therefore be a symphony in blue and yellow." His style of combining dark and light elements together on a canvas is similar to my style as a composer and this makes me feel as though I found a kindred spirit in Vincent.

Sunflowers are vibrant, beautiful and sturdy flowers. Sunflowers had great significance for Van Gogh: they represented gratitude. In a similar fashion, for me sunflowers exemplify faith.

--Program note by the composer

MUSIC BIOGRAPHY

DR. ALBERT NGUYỄN, Director

Dr. Albert Nguyễn is the Director of Bands at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, where he also leads the Conducting Area and serves as Executive Director of the Summer at the Scheidt Music Camps. His primary responsibilities include overseeing the University Bands Program, conducting the Wind Ensemble, directing the graduate Wind Conducting Program, and teaching graduate-level courses in wind/band repertoire and rehearsal techniques.

Under Dr. Nguyễn's leadership, the University of Memphis Wind Ensemble has performed at prestigious events including the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) Southern Division Conference, the Tennessee Music Education Association (TNMEA) All-State Conference, and international venues in Austria and Italy. He is a sought-after conductor and clinician, having worked with ensembles across the United States, including All-State Bands in Arkansas, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Texas. His presentations on leadership, conducting, and rehearsal strategies have been featured at the Midwest Clinic and numerous music educator conferences nationwide.

Dr. Nguyễn began his professional career as Director of Bands at Morrilton High School in Morrilton, Arkansas. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Arkansas Tech University and both his Master's and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Wind Conducting from The University of Texas at Austin.

In recognition of his excellence in teaching, creative activity, and service, Dr. Nguyễn has been honored with the Pearl Wales Professorship and the First Tennessee Professorship at the University of Memphis. He is a member of Kappa Kappa Psi, Tau Beta Sigma, Phi Beta Mu, and the American Bandmasters Association, and currently serves on the Diversity Committee for the College Band Directors National Association.