

University Concert Band

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
The College of Professional Studies and School of Music, Theatre & Dance present

University Concert Band

Ron Gerhardstein, *director*
Brandon Liukkonen, *student conductor*

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Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

- Choose Joy Randall Standridge (b. 1976)
- Diamond Tide Viet Cuong (b. 1990)
 I.
 II.
- Our Cast Aways Julie Giroux (b. 1961)
 Brandon Liukkonen, *student conductor*
- Chorale and Shaker Dance..... John Zdechlik (1937-2020)
- Starlight Katahj Copley (b. 1998)
- Inchon..... Robert W. Smith (1958-2023)
- Pigeons Carina Collier (b. 1998)
 World Premiere

Program Notes

Choose Joy is part of Randall Standridge's Unbroken Project, drawing awareness to mental health resiliency in our society. The work is inspired by a high school student who found happy moments even in the face of cancer with energetic rhythmic elements and thematic material taken from Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*.

Diamond Tide, by Vietnamese American composer Viet Cuong, has quickly become part of the standard repertoire for developing bands. The composition is a musical tribute to the scientific possibility of diamonds melting when enough pressure and heat are present. A 2010 article published in *Nature Physics* explains this phenomenon which is possible on the planets of Neptune and Uranus. The composer imagines a river of melted diamonds with floating shards of solid diamonds in the liquid mixture similar to icebergs in our oceans. Metallic percussion sounds are heard throughout both movements as are trombone glissandi and the rise and fall of chromatic triplet and eighth note passages.

Our Cast Aways is a tribute to our beloved pets, especially those rescued from shelters and adopted into caring and loving homes. Composer Julie Giroux is an animal lover and champion for animal rights. She dedicates this touching composition for "those who rescue, those who get rescued, and especially for those whose rescue never comes." Thanks to all those in our audience who have rescued and adopted pets that may have otherwise been put down.

Chorale and Shaker Dance, by John Zdechlik, is a theme and variations based on the well-known Shaker hymn *Simple Gifts*. The work features solos for several instruments including alto saxophone, flute, and trumpet together with interesting harmonies, tempo and meter changes, and extensive percussive elements from all sections of the ensemble.

In *Starlight*, composer Katahji Copley makes parallels between the freedom and creativity in musical composition and performance with the myriad ways that the stars light up the night sky and the imaginations of human beings around the world.

In September of 2023, the band world suddenly lost composer Robert W. Smith, renowned for his works for school bands. Nearly all collegiate band students have grown up playing at least one of Robert W. Smith's works and *Inchon* is a personal favorite. The composition was written as a tribute to the composer's father, a veteran of the Korean War.

Pigeons is a clever and creative nod to the funny physical features and means of motion of these seemingly social birds. Composer Carina Collier is a PLU senior graduating with a performance degree in music composition next week. It is our pleasure to offer this world premiere performance in what we hope is the first of many original band works to come.

About the Student Conductor

Brandon Liukkonen is a third-year music education student from Lacey, Washington where his family has made their home for more than a decade. Raised in a military family, he was born at Camp Pendleton near Oceanside, California. Brandon is a 2021 graduate of Timberline High School. He has played the trumpet for eleven years and he is also a percussionist and singer. While at PLU, he has participated in the Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, Knights Chorus, and jazz combos. Brandon has also been involved in PLU's CWMEA chapter and the PLU Pep Band. This year he served as the CWMEA treasurer and as the Director of the PLU Pep Band. Brandon will complete his student teaching during the fall semester of 2025. His future plans include teaching music in the public schools before returning to school for a Master's degree.

About the Director

Ron Gerhardstein is the Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music Education at Pacific Lutheran University. Dr. Gerhardstein has enjoyed a long career as a music educator in public school and collegiate settings. He currently directs the Wind Ensemble and the University Concert Band and he teaches coursework in the music education curriculum, including: Band Repertoire and Rehearsal, Woodwind Labs I/II, Percussion Lab, Music and Culture, PLUS 100: Transitions to PLU, and he assists with the supervision of student teachers. Dr. Gerhardstein earned a Ph.D. in music education from Temple University where he studied with Edwin Gordon and Beth Bolton. He also attended the University

of Idaho, earning a Bachelor's degree in music education, and a Master's of Music in saxophone performance, studying with Robert Miller. Dr. Gerhardstein is a frequent workshop clinician, guest conductor, and festival adjudicator. Prior to coming to PLU in 2014, he was the band director at West Valley High School in Yakima where his band program had a reputation for excellence in all areas (concert band, jazz band, and marching band). He has proudly served as an honor band conductor on several occasions, most notably the 2019 APAC Honor Band in Kobe, Japan, and the 2017 WMEA Junior All-State "Rainier" Band. A passionate advocate for music education, Ron is an active member of WMEA, currently serving a two-year term as WMEA President. In addition, he serves on the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) as the honorary board member for the Fine Arts. Dr. Gerhardstein makes his home in Tacoma with his wife, Jerilyn, an elementary teacher librarian in the Bethel School District.

About the Ensemble

The **PLU University Concert Band** is a non-auditioned ensemble open to students and community members. Many of our members are non-music majors representing every department and school that our thriving liberal arts community at PLU has to offer. The musicians join our ensemble primarily for the opportunity to continue performing and engaging with music for personal, social, and intellectual enjoyment. The band performs once per semester and rehearses on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in the MBR center on the PLU campus. Students who would like to join the ensemble for the Fall semester 2024 are encouraged to register for the class and join the band!

University Concert Band Personnel

Flute

Ashton Allen
Vicky Bratcher
Kera Buckmaster
Kaitlynn Koehn
Iris Lee
Rachel Mower
Isis Romero-Chavez
Caleb Waldbauer

Oboe/English Horn

McKenna Perry+

Bassoon

Lydia Cannon+
Owen Johnson+

Clarinet

Miguel Bautista-Buys
Abigail Caprye
Katelyn Hight+
Bethani Juarez
Xavier McMains+
Sophia Owens+
Calli Voss

Bass Clarinet

Abigail Caprye

Alto Saxophone

Steven Blankenship
Eli Lockhart
Piero Ramirez

Tenor Saxophone

Lucy Ordway+
Cadence Philbeck+

Baritone Saxophone

Joe Alvarez

French Horn

Kaila Harris
Meghan Moor+
Elizabeth Oie
Kai Stirret-Jones+

Trumpet

Ben Early+
Brandon Liukkonen
Justin Mendoza Rodriguez+
Levi Read+
Jorge Torres-Santillanes+

Trombone

Jasper Bragg
Dylan Liebner+
Max Lopez-Garibaldi
Jaden Pulido-Hughes+

Euphonium

Jevon Ignacio
Jenea Staples

Tuba

David Hobson+
Tyler Kim+
Lillian Woolery+

Percussion

Royce Fernandez+
Ben Giertz
Rory Lacy
Brandon Liukkonen
Alan Ross+
Joseph Wilcher
Jenna Woods+

Piano

Iris Lee

+ Community member