University Wind Ensemble

Sunday, November 15, 2026 at 3pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

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

University Wind Ensemble

Ron Gerhardstein, *conductor*

featuring the PLU Lyric Brass Quintet
Zach Lyman and Ed Castro, *trumpets*
Becky Miller, *French horn*
Ryan Wagner, *trombone*
Christopher Seay, *tuba*

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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

El Camino Real ..... **Alfred Reed (1921-2005)**

Lux Aurumque (2005) ..... **Eric Whitacre**

The Moon at the Fortified Pass (2019) ..... **Li Chan**
featuring the PLU Lyric Brass Quintet

INTERMISSION

Gavorkna Fanfare (1991) ..... **Jack Stamp**

John and Jim (2024) ..... **Viet Cuong**

Joan of Arc (2024) ..... **Erin Keeton-Howard**

Love & Nature (2024) ..... **Gala Flagello**
I. Flower Power
II. Star-Crossed
III. Slow Burn

Latinomerica Despierta (2020) ..... **Rubén Darío Gómez**

About the Program

The programming for this afternoon's concert is two short program sets combined to serve different purposes this calendar year, 2026-2027. Neither set is long enough for a full concert on its own, and as such we are delighted to perform both sets this afternoon with a short intermission in-between. Think of it as a two-for-one deal.

The opening three selections are compositions that we will perform again in January for the approximately 325 student attendees at the 2027 PLU Northwest High School Honor Band. Celebrating the 37th year of this amazing event, we are excited to share the performance with the PLU Lyric Brass Quintet. In total, these selections offer a bit of tradition, some beauty, and a touch of cinematic epic grandeur.

The final five selections are a preview of our featured performance set at the 2027 WMEA State Conference in Yakima on Friday, February 12, 2027. We have adopted the title *La Valentia* for this collection which all center on themes of bravery, courage, and valor.

Program Notes

El Camino Real (literally "The Royal Road" or "The King's Highway") was commissioned by, and is dedicated to, the 581st Air Force Band (AFRES) and its Commander, Lt. Col. Ray E. Toler. Composed during the latter half of 1984 and completed in early 1985, it bears the subtitle: "A Latin Fantasy." The music is based on a series of chord progressions common to countless generations of Spanish flamenco (and other) guitarists, whose fiery style and brilliant playing have captivated millions of music lovers throughout the world. These progressions and the resulting key relationships have become practically synonymous with what we feel to be the true Spanish idiom. The first section of the music is based upon the dance form known as the jota, while the second, contrasting section is derived from the fandango, but altered considerably here in both time and tempo from its usual form. Overall, the music follows a traditional three-part pattern: fast-slow-fast.

– program note adapted from the score

Commissioned by the Texas Music Educators Association for their 2005 All-State Band, ***Lux Aurumque*** is a lush and poignant adaptation of one of Eric Whitacre's most popular choral works. Simple triads melt from one chord to the next, creating a slowly evolving wash of aural color. For his chorale setting, Whitacre had the original poem by Edward Esch (b. 1970) translated into Latin by Charles Anthony Silvestri.

> *Light,*
> *warm and heavy as pure gold*
> *and the angels sing softly*
> *to the new-born baby.*

– program note by California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Wind Orchestra

Li Chan, a native of Weifang in Shandong (China), graduated with a major in music composition from the Central Conservatory of Music and currently serves as a composer with the military band of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. Her work, ***The Moon at the Fortified Pass****,* is written for brass quintet with wind band accompaniment. This piece combines authentic Chinese musical idioms and expressive techniques within the western wind band medium. Conceived as a reflection on life, the piece conveys the composer's reverence for faith and nature, as well as her longing for genuine human affection rooted in her identity as a Chinese citizen.

– program note adapted from the composer's score

Jack Stamp's ***Gavorkna Fanfare*** is a short and powerful opener – bold and brave in its own right. Composed in tribute to an icon in the wind band world, Eugene Corporon, the fanfare opens with staccato accents and layering of tonal clusters from lowest to highest sounding instruments. The composition spans a range of musical ideas – tone clusters, changing tonal centers, fugato, angular melodies, and minimalist ostinato.

Called “stirring” by *The New York Times*, the music of Vietnamese-American composer, Viet Cuong (b. 1990) draws upon sincerity and wonder to create works that resonate emotionally, embrace the unexpected, and celebrate our shared humanity. Grounded in a belief that craft and communication are inseparable, he shapes every phrase in service of expressive clarity. His work has been performed across six continents by ensembles ranging from the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Eighth Blackbird, to the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Dallas Winds. Cuong’s composition ***John and Jim*** is a musical tribute honoring the loving relationship of John Arthur and Jim Obergefell, as well as a bold and powerful musical reference to the U.S. Supreme Court case that bears their name, *Obergefell v. Hodges*. This landmark 2015 Supreme Court ruling granted marriage rights to all same sex couples in the United States. Musically, the work invokes many compositional techniques that the composer frequently incorporates – layering of rhythmic elements in ostinato to create cascading echo effects, layered crescendo and decrescendo patterns that blend tone colors, and a high degree of percussive instruments and articulations. This musical tribute directly uses source material from the iconic traditional wedding music: Johann Pachelbel’s *Canon in D*. While the original is known for its sweet and poignant setting, this interpretation is a powerful testament to this loving couple and the brave, long, and hard-fought history for marriage equality in our country. The work was commissioned by the Pride Bands of Columbus and Cincinnati in honor of the Ohioans that bear its name.

Seattle-based music educator, musician, and composer, Erin Keeton-Howard holds a BS in music education from the University of Missouri and an MA in music education from the University of Washington. A passionate advocate for music education, Erin is particularly interested in writing quality music for younger bands. She currently serves on the faculty at Shoreline Community College and is the co-founder and co-director of the Formation Wind Band, a women’s wind ensemble committed to empowering women to create, collaborate, and build community together. Composed for beginning bands, ***Joan of Arc*** offers creative musical imagery to introduce young musicians to the patron saint of France, honored as a defender of the French nation for her leadership and bravery during the Hundred Years’ War (1337-1453). Keeton-Howard dedicates the composition to all strong young women with big ideas!



Gala Flagello earned her Bachelor of Music in composition from The Hartt School, and her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts in composition from the University of Michigan, where she was awarded the Dorothy Greenwald Graduate Fellowship. ***Love & Nature*** was commissioned by a consortium of wind bands led by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and explores how love prevails through cosmic lore, social movements, and mercurial mythos. Each of the work's three movements connects a different instrumental sound world to the concepts of earth, air, and fire, depicting a blossoming of kindness and hope for the future of our planet. The first movement, *Flower Power*, is inspired by the titular social movement of the 1960-1970s and sonically critiques the juxtaposition of fragility and strength, beauty and utility, and nonviolence and force. *Flower Power* reflects the ethos of Marc Riboud’s iconic photograph *The Ultimate Confrontation: The Flower and the Bayonet* (1967) and incorporates a musical Easter egg – a countermelody for counterculture. The second movement, *Star-Crossed*, summons the hope, whimsy, and longing of its ill-fated protagonists through celestial textures and luminous scoring. The third and final movement, *Slow Burn*, explores both versions of the titular literary trope – romantic and anger-fueled – through the arboraceous lens of controlled fire, an originally indigenous practice that mitigates the drought-driven effects of climate change. *Slow Burn* foregrounds bright and wooden sounds to pay homage to our forests and the necessity of ecological restoration.

– program notes by the composer

Rubén Darío Gómez was born in Zapatoca, Colombia. He obtained his Bachelor of Music from Universidad Industrial de Santander in Bucaramanga, a MM from Middle Tennessee State University, and a DMA in wind band conducting and composition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Gómez currently serves as the Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music at the University of Southern Illinois-Edwardsville. ***Latinomerica Despierta*** (Latin America Awakens) was inspired by social movements originating in several Latin American countries during the middle years of the 20th century. These movements fought against inequality and a lack of opportunities for people in poor communities, along with low-quality education, corruption, political and ideological persecution, and violence suffered by those defending human rights. Social movements in Latin America were an important counterweight to the dominant and abusive power of government and the ruling elite against ordinary people. The composition has three main musical elements. The first alludes to the primitive, to the Earth as the main source of sustenance for the typical Latin American person. The second element refers to the strife and to the oppression of common people and to the unhappiness they feel as a result of abuses of power and exploitation. The third element alludes to the people’s awakening and their decision to

fight against power structures. The three elements are each presented separately and then combine, interact, evolve and transform. Finally, the first element prevails and closes the piece in an energetic, triumphal, and optimistic manner, vindicating the movement for social justice in Latin America over the last decades.

– program note adapted from the score

About the Conductor

Ron Gerhardstein is the Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music at Pacific Lutheran University. Dr. Gerhardstein has enjoyed a long career as a music educator in public school and collegiate settings. At PLU, he directs the Wind Ensemble and he teaches coursework in the music education curriculum, including: Band Repertoire and Rehearsal, Woodwind Labs I/II, Instrumental Conducting, and PLUS 100: Transitions to PLU. Dr. Gerhardstein also serves as the manager and director of the PLU-NW High School Honor Bands and the PLU Band Invitational.

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 of Music Education and a Masters of Music (saxophone performance) studying with Robert Miller.

Dr. Gerhardstein is a frequent workshop clinician, guest conductor, and festival adjudicator. Prior to his appointment at 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, having served a term as the WMEA President from 2022-2024. His scholarly work has been published in the *Voice of WMEA*, *Teaching Music*, *The Instrumentalist*, and the series *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*. In April of 2026, he presented research on the Pacific Northwest Performance Tours of the Sousa Band (1896-1927) at the Sousa Research Symposium at South Dakota State University.

Dr. Gerhardstein makes his home in Tacoma with his wife, Jerilyn, an elementary teacher librarian in the Bethel School District.

About the PLU Lyric Brass Quintet

The **Lyric Brass Quintet** is the resident faculty brass ensemble at PLU. Its members teach private lessons at PLU and are all active solo, chamber, and orchestral performers throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The players enjoy performing a wide range of repertoire from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century, including several works that have been commissioned for them. In 2012, The Lyric Brass released a CD, *American Music for Brass Quintet*, which includes works by Gwyneth Walker, Charles Ives, David Snow, and a new work written for the group by Sy Brandon. Their second CD, *Luther 501*, featuring the world-premiere recording of a large-scale work by PLU emeritus faculty member Dr. Jerry Kracht, was released in October, 2018. The members of the Lyric Brass get along surprisingly well with each other given the potentially volatile combination of Red Sox, Yankees, and Mariners fans.

2026-2027 Pacific Lutheran University Wind Ensemble

Flute
Heta Honanie*
Iris Lee
Mande Mejia
Aniella Mutton
Annalise Sackreiter*

Oboe/English Horn
Gabrielle Guerrero
Jayden White*

Bassoon
Aliah Bragg
Syd Thayer-O'Brien*
Rameses Unat-Almanza

Clarinet
Meaghan Austin*
Madeleine Day
Cayman Huff
B Juarez
Alena Kwon
Angel Rodriguez Gil

Bass Clarinet
Abi Caprye

Alto Sax
Conor Beach*
Lucas Chabaud

Tenor Sax
Lawrence Balajadia

Baritone Sax
Steven Blankenship

Horn
Jaysen Frias Moreno
Cameron Holden
Micaiah Tinkler*
Ella Wagner

Trumpet
Dani Ballard
Allison Howes
Logan Johnson
Justin Mendoza*
Ellie Norris
Elizabeth Williams

Trombone
Max Minjares*
Xander Pitruzzella
Jaden Pulido-Hughes
Dylan Ryan

Euphonium
Olivia Ardon
Josh Green*

Tuba
Preston Hill
Casey Westendorf

Percussion
Ben Hegge*
Logan Keogh
Wu-Yin Lu
Ethan Ocken
Joey Perez
Ronin Schoolcraft

Guitar
**Elizabeth C.D. Brown

Piano
Iris Lee

* Section Leader
** PLU Faculty