

**PLU and UPS Symphony Orchestras**  
*Ephemeral and Enduring*

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 7:30pm  
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University  
College of Professional Studies / Department of Music presents

**PLU and the UPS Symphony Orchestras**  
*Ephemeral and Enduring*

University of Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra  
Anna Wittstruck, *conductor*

Pacific Lutheran University Symphony Orchestra  
Jeffrey Bell-Hanson, *conductor*

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 7:30pm  
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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**

Welcome, in person and virtually, to Lagerquist Concert Hall for our first collaborative orchestra concert with the University of Puget Sound. This partnership has been a long-held dream for our conductors. Planning began nearly six years ago – we are pleased to finally bring it to fruition, and especially to share it with you. You may enjoy this program again on Friday, April 14 when it is performed at Schneebeck Concert Hall on the campus of the University of Puget Sound. On that occasion, Dr. Bell-Hanson will conduct the Higdon work and Dr. Wittstruck, the Strauss.

**Blue Cathedral** .....**Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962)**  
*Anna Wittstruck, conductor*

**Tod und Verklärung (Death and Transfiguration), op. 24** .....**Richard Strauss (1864-1949)**  
*I. Largo*  
*II. Allegro molto agitato*  
*III. meno mosso (ma sempre alla breve)*  
*IV. Moderato*

*Sections are played without pause*  
*Jeffrey Bell-Hanson, conductor*

## Program Notes

### *Blue Cathedral* by Jennifer Higdon

Blue...like the sky. Where all possibilities soar. Cathedrals...a place of thought, growth, spiritual expression...serving as a symbolic doorway in to and out of this world. Blue represents all potential and the progression of journeys. Cathedrals represent a place of beginnings, endings, solitude, fellowship, contemplation, knowledge and growth. As I was writing this piece, I found myself imagining a journey through a glass cathedral in the sky. Because the walls would be transparent, I saw the image of clouds and blueness permeating from the outside of this church. In my mind's eye the listener would enter from the back of the sanctuary, floating along the corridor amongst giant crystal pillars, moving in a contemplative stance. The stained glass windows' figures would start moving with song, singing a heavenly music. The listener would float down the aisle, slowly moving upward at first and then progressing at a quicker pace, rising towards an immense ceiling which would open to the sky...as this journey progressed, the speed of the traveler would increase, rushing forward and upward. I wanted to create the sensation of contemplation and quiet peace at the beginning, moving towards the feeling of celebration and ecstatic expansion of the soul, all the while singing along with that heavenly music.

These were my thoughts when The Curtis Institute of Music commissioned me to write a work to commemorate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Curtis is a house of knowledge—a place to reach towards that beautiful expression of the soul which comes through music. I began writing this piece at a unique juncture in my life and found myself pondering the question of what makes a life. The recent loss of my younger brother, Andrew Blue, made me reflect on the amazing journeys that we all make in our lives, crossing paths with so many individuals singularly and collectively, learning and growing each step of the way. This piece represents the expression of the individual and the group...our inner travels and the places our souls carry us, the lessons we learn, and the growth we experience. In tribute to my brother, I feature solos for the clarinet (the instrument he played) and the flute (the instrument I play). Because I am the older sibling, it is the flute that appears first in this dialog. At the end of the work, the two instruments continue their dialogue, but it is the flute that drops out and the clarinet that continues on in the upward progressing journey.

This is a story that commemorates living and passing through places of knowledge and of sharing and of that song called life. This work was commissioned and premiered in 2000 by the Curtis Institute of Music.

– Jennifer Higdon

### *Death and Transfiguration* by Richard Strauss

Richard Strauss was barely in his twenties when he took a position on the conducting staff at the opera house in Munich. He had previously been conducting the orchestra in Meinigen, a post that offered considerable musical independence. By contrast, Munich was a much more regimented culture where he had less freedom to chart his own musical course. Ironically, this was a period in his development when he was casting aside his Brahmsian focus and embracing the “music of the future,” influenced heavily by the work of Wagner and by the symphonic poems of Franz Liszt. His first two ventures into this new genre were *Macbeth* and *Don Juan*, though the former would not be performed until after the composition and premiere of his third tone poem, *Death and Transfiguration*.

Composed in 1888 and 1889, it is based on a story about an artist, like several of the composer's works. This one is old and near the end of his life. In the first of the four sections, we hear an irregular rhythm meant to mimic the protagonist's struggle to draw breath as he lays on his bed contemplating life and death. The second section begins with a stabbing pain that wracks his frail body. A third depicts his memories of happier days. The fourth and final section fully develops the transfiguration theme that we hear earlier in the work. The story is told more fully in a poem written by Strauss's friend, the composer Alexander Ritter. Ritter wrote the poem at Strauss' request after the composition of the music, and Strauss included it in the published score.

In the small, wretched room,  
dimly lit only by a candle stump,  
the sick man lies upon his bed.—  
Even now he has been struggling  
ferociously, despairingly, with death.  
Now he has sunk, exhausted, into sleep,  
and the quiet ticking of the clock

is all that you hear in the room,  
whose dreadful silence  
gives heed to death's approach.  
Upon the sick man's pale features  
plays a melancholy smile.  
At the end of his life, does he dream now  
of childhood's golden time?

\*\*\*\*\*

But death does not grant his victim  
sleep and dreams for long.  
Cruelly he shakes him awake,  
and the battle begins anew.  
The will to live and the power of death!  
What frightful struggling!—  
Neither is victorious,  
and yet again there is silence!  
Battle-weary, sunk back,  
sleepless, as in a delirium,  
the sick man now sees his life,  
successively, scene by scene,  
pass before his inner eye.  
First the morning-red of childhood,  
shining bright in pure innocence!  
Then the impudent play of youth—  
exercising and testing its strength—  
until he ripens to manhood's struggle,  
which to life's highest achievements  
is now kindled with burning passion.—  
What once appeared glorified to him  
now takes clearer shape,  
this alone the lofty impulse  
that leads him through his life.  
Cold and mocking, the world sets  
obstacle after obstacle against his strivings.

Each time he believes himself nearer his goal,  
a "Halt!" thunders against him.  
"Treat each obstacle as another rung,  
climbing ever and always higher!"  
So he presses forward, so climbs higher,  
never desisting from his sacred striving.  
What he has always sought  
with his heart's deepest yearning  
he seeks still in the grip of death,  
he seeks—alas!—yet never finds.  
Whether he grasps it yet more clearly,  
whether it gradually grows upon him,  
still he can never exhaust it,  
it can never, in his spirit, be fulfilled.  
Then the last stroke  
of death's iron hammer resounds,  
breaks the earthly body asunder,  
covers the eye with death's night.

\*\*\*\*\*

But resounding mightily round him  
from the expanse of heaven  
is what he sought here, ever yearning:  
World-redemption, world-transfiguration!

– translation by Marc Mandel

### About the Conductors

**Anna Wittstruck** joined the University of Puget Sound School of Music in 2017 as Assistant Professor, Director of Orchestra. Before that she spent two years at Stanford University as Acting Assistant Professor, serving as Interim Music Director and Conductor of the Stanford Symphony Orchestra and Stanford Philharmonia. In 2019 she was appointed Music Director of the West Seattle Symphony Orchestra. She has also directed the Federal Way Youth Symphonies and served on the faculty of the Sitka Fine Arts Camp in Sitka, Alaska.

Wittstruck has conducted concerts across the United States, in Latin America, Europe and in Asia. She has served as a guest conductor with the Harbin Symphony in China, the Northwest Sinfonietta, the Federal Way Symphony and the Eastern Sierra Symphony. She conducted concerts at Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City and Teatro Nacional de Cuba in Havana, where she performed with Liza Alfonso Dance Cuba and the Chamber Orchestra of Havana. She has conducted concerts at the Rudolfinum in Prague and the Musikzentrum Augarten (home of the Vienna Boys' Choir) in Vienna, as well as concerts in Berlin, Bad Elster, and Teplice.

Wittstruck is also an active orchestral musician whose performances as a cellist span from the Beijing Modern Music Festival to the 2011 YouTube Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. Her string quartet gave a concert tour of Thailand sponsored by the Yonok and American-Thai Foundations, in honor of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's sixtieth birthday celebrations. She won a blind audition at the age of fourteen to become the youngest contracted member of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra, and has participated in orchestra festivals such as Tanglewood, Round Top, and the National Symphony/Kennedy Center Institute. She has appeared as a soloist with the Charlotte and Hendersonville Symphonies, on the Public Radio International show, "From the Top."

She received her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Princeton University with certificates in orchestral conducting and creative writing, and her PhD in musicology from Stanford University. While a graduate student, she conducted the Summer Stanford Symphony Orchestra and directed the Stanford Wind Symphony, the Stanford New Ensemble, and the Stanford Chinese Ensemble. She also helped create the Stanford Youth Orchestra, an international program for advanced

high school students, and taught courses through Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies. At Princeton, she spent two years as assistant conductor of the Princeton University Orchestra and as associate conductor of the Princeton Sinfonia.

Wittstruck has attended the Pierre Monteux School of Conducting in Hancock, Maine, where she studied with Michael Jinbo, and the Conductor's Retreat at Medomak, where she studied with Kenneth Kiesler. Other conducting teachers include Michael Pratt, Ruth Ochs, Stephen Sano, Jindong Cai, and Edwin Outwater.

**Jeffrey Bell-Hanson** is in his twenty-first and final season as Music Director of the Pacific Lutheran University Symphony Orchestra and Professor of Music. He is a familiar presence in the Pacific Northwest as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and orchestral educator. Each year he works with school orchestras at all levels throughout the region and beyond, bringing to them the perspective of his long career as a conductor and scholar. He is a past national president of the College Orchestra Directors Association.

Dr. Bell-Hanson has conducted orchestras and wind ensembles throughout the United States and in Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, including the West Bohemian Symphony Orchestra, the Olympia Symphony, the Marquette Symphony Orchestra, the Vratza Philharmonic, and the Philharmonia Bulgarica. His long career on the podium and as a teacher has also included faculty appointments in Kansas, Louisiana, and Michigan, where he won recognition for excellence in teaching both from Michigan Technological University and the State of Michigan. He has served as music director of both the Hutchinson Symphony Orchestra in Kansas and, for fourteen years, the Keweenaw Symphony Orchestra in Michigan. Dr. Bell-Hanson will retire at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year.

**University of Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra**  
Anna Wittstruck, *conductor*

Flute and piccolo

Jonah Kembel  
Grace Playstead\*  
Julia Vahey  
Alex Westervelt

Oboe

Clara Gibbs\*  
Athena Schaefer

English horn

Mariah Canton

Clarinet

Hailey Matas\*  
Mireia Pujol  
Levi Walsh

Bass clarinet

Mireia Pujol

Bassoon

Alex Kirner  
Sahaj Oliver  
Sara Ponsioen\*

Contrabassoon

Sara Ponsioen

Horn

Rachel Ball\*  
Rosa Dale-Moore\*\*  
Nalin Richardson\*\*

Trumpet

Olivia Fross  
Abbey Hansen\*  
Wyatt Logan  
Alyssa Shane

Trombone

Brock Salatino  
Elias Thiemann\*

Tuba

Ian Dunlap

Timpani

Dylan Petersen\*

Percussion

Katie Hayhurst  
Skyler Hedblom

Piano and celesta

Bennett Baynham

Harp

Ellie Yamanaka\*\*\*

Violin I

Silvana Byram  
Ela Escobar  
Paige Franklin  
Ruby Gunter  
Katie Hayhurst  
Nikki Hindman  
Jackson Jay  
Maura Lake  
Else Mayo  
Jules Tan\*

Violin II

Ethan Chythlook\*  
Ashlyne Collado  
Eli Connolly  
Ashley Garman  
Liv Hauge  
Madison Hening  
Ayli Horvath  
Holland Mueller  
Hailey Yang

Viola

Jadyn Barrio  
Amelia Calderon Henes  
Ryan Chernyavsky  
Kianna Davis  
Keola Tabisola\*

Violoncello

Liam Abbott  
Connor Adams\*  
Mandy Ausman  
Isabella Brady  
Avi Graf  
Seren Hawtrey  
Aiden Higgins  
Liam Kimball  
Angela Ronces-Cortes  
Phoenix Stoker-Graham  
Jordan Verkh-Haskell

Double Bass

Chris East\*

\*Section leader

\*\*Alumnus

\*\*\*Guest artist

Jules Tan, *orchestra manager*

**Pacific Lutheran University Symphony Orchestra**

Jeffrey Bell-Hanson, *conductor*

Flute

Blake Leahy\*  
Eva Reuter-crona  
Katherine Gunter  
Kade Levien

Oboe/English horn

Ainsley Fuerst\*

Clarinet/Bass clarinet

Caitlin Collins\*  
Brooklyn Sudnikovich-Eddy  
Curtis Ganung

Bassoon

Tyler Woo\*  
Rorie Millward  
Adam Johnson

Horn

Ben Birmingham\*  
James Gibson  
Ashley Lopez-Mora  
Aleia Truman

Trumpet

Jess Mason\*  
Jonathan Holder  
Kurtis Sacksteder

Trombone

Sabien Kinchlow-McConnaughey\*  
Cody Nutter

Tuba

Cassidy Stanhope

Timpani

Evan Nakanishi

Percussion

Quinn Rasmussen\*  
Cole Strichertz

Keyboard

Henry Hossner

Harp

Ellie Yamanaka\*\*\*

Violin I

Naomi Southard\*  
Joy Han  
Marley Cochran  
Kirsten Iverson  
Kyla Rivera  
Gabriel Casey-Aguinaga  
Elizabeth Bankowski

Violin II

Mya Sullivan\*  
Lydia Downs  
Justin Singh  
Stan Piddubnyy  
Joan Fort  
Violet Albenesius  
Jess Mason

Viola

Noatak Post\*  
Alyson Rake  
Virginia Arthur  
Marilyn Willis  
Taren Massey  
Abbie Foulon\*\*

Violoncello

Madelynn Jones\*  
Elliot Capron  
Nathaniel Bratcher  
Marisa Robbins  
Jeffrey Buetow

Double Bass

Campian Roberts\*  
Lexi Castillo\*  
Madeline Cline  
Taya Lovejoy  
Declan Long

\*Section Principal/Co-principal

\*\*Alumnus

\*\*\*Guest artist

Lexi Castillo, *librarian*

# Spring Events

## at Pacific Lutheran University

ALL MUSIC EVENTS ARE IN MARY BAKER RUSSELL MUSIC CENTER, LAGERQUIST CONCERT HALL AT 8PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

### FEBRUARY

**12 Sunday, 3pm**

Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Dexter Kennedy, Organist  
Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU faculty/staff; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

### MARCH

**14 Tuesday, 7:30pm**

University Symphony Orchestra: Student Showcase

**18 Saturday, 2pm**

Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission

**18 Saturday, 5pm**

Artist Series: Guitar Faculty Recital

**18 Saturday, 7:30pm**

Choral Union. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU faculty/staff; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

**19 Sunday, 3pm**

University Wind Ensemble

**21 Tuesday, 7:30pm**

Aubrey Logan with the Pacific Lutheran University Jazz Ensemble  
Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center

### APRIL

**11 Tuesday, 7:30pm**

PLUSO and the University of Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra

**19 Wednesday, 7:30pm**

Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

**22 Saturday, 7:30pm**

Steel Band, free admission

**23 Sunday, 3pm**

Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Paul Tegels, University Organist. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU faculty/staff; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

**25 Tuesday, 7:30pm**

Choir of the West Tour Homecoming Concert

**27 Thursday, 7:30pm**

University Chorale

**28 Friday, 7:30pm**

Percussion Ensemble, free admission

**30 Sunday, 3pm**

Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission

### MAY

**2 Tuesday, 5:30pm**

Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission

**5 Friday, 3:30pm**

Deanna Breiwick Voice Masterclass. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission

**5 Friday and 6 Saturday, 7:30pm**

Opera Scenes

**7 Sunday, 3pm**

Woodwind Students Recital, free admission

**7 Sunday, 4:30pm**

Brass Students Recital, free admission

**7 Sunday, 7:30pm**

PLUtonic/Gold Rush. MBR Amphitheater, free admission

**12 Friday, 12pm**

Joo Won Kang Voice Masterclass, free admission

**12 Friday, 7:30pm**

PLU Ringers, free admission

**10 Wednesday, 7:30pm**

University Singers & Knights Chorus, free admission

**11 Thursday, 7:30pm**

Keyboard Students Recital, free admission

**13 Saturday, 3pm**

Piano Ensemble, free admission

### MAY, Cont.

**13 Saturday, 7:30pm**

Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission

**14 Sunday, 3pm**

University Wind Ensemble Tour Preview Concert

**16 Tuesday, 7:30pm**

University Concert Band, free admission

**17 Wednesday, 6pm**

Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission

**17 Wednesday, 7:30pm**

String Kaleidoscope, free admission

**18 Thursday, 7:30pm**

University Jazz Ensemble Tour Preview Concert

**21 Sunday, 3pm**

University Symphony Orchestra Reunion Concert

**21 Sunday, 7:30pm**

Composers Forum, free admission

#### To Order Tickets:

On Line: [www.plu.edu/music/tickets](http://www.plu.edu/music/tickets)

At the Concert: Lobby Desk in Mary Baker Russell Music Center

*CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

*All ticket sales are final - no refunds*

MUSIC EVENT TICKET PRICES: \$10 GENERAL; \$5 SENIOR CITIZENS (60+), MILITARY, PLU ALUMNI, & PLU FACULTY/STAFF; FREE TO PLU STUDENTS & 18 AND UNDER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND SOME CONCERTS MAY BE ADDED AFTER PUBLICATION.  
[www.plu.edu/music/calendar](http://www.plu.edu/music/calendar) (updated April 6, 2023)