

Instrumental Music Studies at ATU:

The ATU Department of Music serves approximately 175 undergraduate music majors seeking either the Bachelor of Arts in Music or the Bachelor of Music Education degrees. The Tech Band program was created by Marvin Williamson in 1913, and developed into a nationally recognized tradition of excellence by Emeritus Directors of Bands Gene Witherspoon and Hal D. Cooper. Dr. Christopher Anderson created the Symphonic Wind Ensemble in 2011, and the program currently consists of six ensembles serving hundreds of students per semester. Active in the area of commissioning new music and working closely with world renowned composers since 1950, Tech Bands have enjoyed relationships with Karel Husa, Vincent Persichetti, Francis McBeth, and continue to engage the finest composers to perform established and world premiere manuscripts. The Arkansas Tech University Symphonic Wind Ensemble has toured the country and appeared at state, regional, and national conferences of the CDBNA, ABA, ASBOA, and many others. Alumni of Tech Bands are now teachers, performers, and professionals in and out of the field of music around the globe.

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For information regarding **Instrumental Music Performance Scholarships**, visit our website at www.atu.edu/music



Department of Music

presents

Symphonic Jazz

Symphonic Band
and
Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Jon Nash & Daniel A. Belongia, conductors

Christopher H. Harris, baritone

Cherisse Williams, soprano

Witherspoon Auditorium, 2:30 PM

October 2, 2022

Program

Symphonic Band

Jon Nash, conductor

St. Louis Blues
(1925/2010)

W.C. Handy (1873-1958)
arr. Jerry Nowak

Second Prelude (from “Three Preludes”)
(1926)

George Gershwin (1898-1936)
arr. John Krance

Shenandoah
(2019)

arr. Omar Thomas (b.1984)

Bridges
(2022)

Katahj Copley (b.1998)

Intermission

Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Daniel A. Belongia, conductor

“Porgy and Bess” pre-performance presentation

Phoebe Robertson

Catfish Row
(1935)

George Gershwin (1898-1936)
arr. Donald Hunsberger

I. Introduction

II. Summertime

III. “I Got Plenty O’ Nuttin”

IV. “Bess You Is My Woman”

V. Fugue

VI. “It Ain’t Necessarily So”

VII. Hurricane (St. Michael’s Chimes the Half-Hour)

VIII. “My Man’s Gone Now”

IX. Finale “Children’s Dance”/ “Oh Lawd I’m On My Way

Christopher H. Harris, baritone

Cherisse Williams, soprano

Thank you to our Friends of Music

Conductors circle

Luke Bradshaw
Nita Herrick-Colpitts
Prissy & Roger Wattam

Patrick Casey
Michael Casey
Dr. Rebecca Callaway

Artists

Verlon Abram
Johnny & Julie Morgan
Rex Bell
Kimes Croom

Sue Merritt (In memory of Frank Merritt)
Drs. Jeanine & Matt Myers
Hal Cooper Sr. Joseph

Performer

Arkansas Tire
Deborah Bradley
Shirley Dodd
Honda of Russellville
Carolyn Sparks Lee
Jeremy & Anne-Marie Pifer
Howard & Becky Ritchie

Travis & Debbie Beard
Danny & Linda Davis
Frank Griffin Oil Company
Dr. Ted Honghiran
Dick & Sue Niven
Patricia & Alan Rehberger

Friend

Toni Bachman
Rico & Ginny Belotti
Central Presbyterian Church
Jon & Barbara Clements
Dr. Kandis Croom
Bethany & Jason Geiken
Christina Greenway
Tommy & Michelle Hindsman
Gary Kellam
Mike & Joy Miller
Jerry & Vickie Newman
Meeka S. Smith
Josh & Jennifer Teague
Ricky & Alisha Williams

Dan & Jill Belongia
Jeff & Cindy Bright
Josh & Tiffany Clem
Keith & Gayle Shaver Clutts
Wayne & June Drain
Dr. Mark & Laura Gotcher
Nancy & Scott Halsey
Josh & Kelsey Hulgán
Mollie Ruth McCammon
Judy Murphy
Sherry Polsgrove
Kendall Tabor
Kenneth Vess
Jon Nash

Symphonic Wind Ensemble

*Denotes Principal

Flutes/Piccolos

Diana Nava*	Russellville, AR
Olivia Hopkins	Arlington, TX
Hannah Smith	Greenbrier, AR
Callan Butler	Cabot, AR
Valeria Cordero	Bellville, AR

Oboe/English Horn

Grace Davis*	Cabot, AR
Kelton McGhee	Morrilton, AR
Marybeth Boroughs	Russellville, AR

Bassoons

Logan Anderson	Rogers, AR
James Heffington	Cabot, AR

Bb Clarinets

Tess Butler	Lake Hamilton, AR
Mackenzie Murphy	Bryant, AR
Corrigan Burkett	Springdale, AR
Morgan Bates	Cabot, AR
Mackenzie Epperson	Russellville, AR
Savannah Skaggs	Greenwood, AR
Jacob Stover	Mount Ida, AR

Bass Clarinet

Kaitlyn Rebidue	Cabot, AR
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Contrabass Clarinet

Esai Zesati	Greenwood, AR
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Saxophones

Mya Manes *	Morrilton, AR
Mady Johnson	Dardanelle, AR
Elizabeth Barrett	Midlothian, TX
Ethan Buggar	Benton, AR

Horns

Aaron Mack*	Van Buren, AR
Brad Wills	Dardanelle, AR
Zoe Covey-Smith	Cabot, AR
Hannah Lomax	Russellville, AR
Jacob Skaggs	Gentry, AR

Bb/C Trumpets

Sanders Hilburn*	Cabot, AR
Kendall Pomeroy	Siloam Springs, AR
Kris Campbell	Alma, AR
Hayden Judy	Harrison, AR
Drake Hyche	Cabot, AR
Alex Loudon	Sherrwood, AR
Preston Abbott	Russellville, AR

Trombones

Brendan Frazier*	Denison, TX
Gunner Hodges	Harrison, AR
Dawson Schalk	Dover, AR

Bass Trombones

Carter Johnson	Russellville, AR
Blake Mitchell	Cabot, AR

Euphoniums

Brandon Williams*	Russellville, AR
Preston Keeter	Springdale, AR

Tubas

Sean Perdue*	Cabot, AR
Bennett Ashlock	Clarksville, AR
Lorenzo Castelano	Dardanelle, AR

Percussion

Allison Spears*	Van Buren, AR
Nathan Brady	Cabot, AR
Jessie Hernandez	Berryville, AR
Riley Carpenter	Dover, AR
Brandon Reynolds	Cabot, AR
Jacob Six	Van Buren, AR

String Bass

Tandem Young	Dover, AR
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Piano

Noah Pifer	Cabot, AR
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Harp

Anna Lien	Little Rock, AR
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Program Notes

Saint Louis Blues

Saint Louis Blues is a popular American song composed by W. C. Handy in the blues style and published in September 1914. It was one of the first blues songs to succeed as a pop song and remains a fundamental part of jazz musicians' repertoire. Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Count Basie, Glenn Miller, Guy Lombardo, and the Boston Pops Orchestra are among the artists who have recorded it. The song has been called "the jazzman's Hamlet."

Handy said he had been inspired by a chance meeting with a woman on the streets of St. Louis distraught over her husband's absence, who lamented, "Ma man's got a heart like a rock cast in de sea" - a key line of the song. Handy's autobiography recounts his hearing the tune in St. Louis in 1892: "It had numerous one-line verses and they would sing it all night."

Second Prelude (from "Three Preludes")

Gershwin's **Three Preludes** are short piano pieces, first performed by the composer at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York in 1926. Gershwin originally planned to compose twenty-four preludes, but this number was reduced to five in public performance and further decreased to three when they were first published. In the second prelude, Gershwin invokes his Jewish heritage as an almost Yiddish melody floats over gentle, undulating accompaniment -- a twelve-bar blues form -- whose delicacy recalls the piano music of Chopin. The melody is repeated in a second chorus of the blues form, followed by a bridge in a brighter, major key. The initial theme returns, dissipating as though entering a quiet sleep. Gershwin referred to the piece as "a sort of blues lullaby." This wind arrangement -- published in 1965 -- was arranged by John Krance, who embarked to capture the mood and beauty of the original piano score.

Program Notes

Shenandoah

Shenandoah is one of the most well-known and beloved American 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.

- Omar Thomas

Symphonic Band

*Denotes Principal

Flutes/Piccolos

Callan Butler*	<i>Cabot, AR</i>
Lydia Logston	<i>Spiro, OK</i>
Alyssa Ellis	<i>Van Buren, AR</i>
Alex Perez	<i>Clarksville, AR</i>

Bassoons

Kristen Shirley	<i>Cabot, AR</i>
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Bb Clarinets

Cadence Graves*	<i>Greenwood, AR</i>
Jordan Clark	<i>Benton, AR</i>
Becca Davis	<i>Cabot, AR</i>
Martha Smith-Gomez	<i>Decatur, AR</i>
Ashley Muller	<i>Cabot, AR</i>
Aryana Robison	<i>Charleston, AR</i>
Holten Friend	<i>Deltona, AR</i>
Carter Jones	<i>Searcy, AR</i>
Ximena Chavez	<i>Clarksville, AR</i>

Saxophones

Samuel Spann*	<i>East End, AR</i>
Sherlyn Escobar	<i>Russelville, AR</i>
Bodhi Lovely	<i>Russelville, AR</i>
Dylan Owen	<i>Lavaca, AR</i>
Luke Sande	<i>Bentonville, AR</i>
Cadence Barnes	<i>Mena, AR</i>
Kendal Escobar	<i>Russelville, AR</i>
Chandler Ramsey	<i>Jessieville, AR</i>

Horns

Eliza Smith*	<i>Cabot, AR</i>
Osvaldo Ramirez	<i>Booneville, AR</i>
Rachel Estep	<i>Springdale, AR</i>
Dalton McPherson	<i>Sheridan, AR</i>
Andrew Pinkerton	<i>Sheridan, AR</i>
Josie Ward	<i>Van Buren, AR</i>

Bb Trumpets

Colton Guill*	<i>Hot Springs, AR</i>
Gabriel Avila	<i>Dardanelle, AR</i>
Kelton McGhee	<i>Morrilton, AR</i>
Evelyn Leding	<i>Ozark, AR</i>
Caleb Hopkins	<i>Fort Smith, AR</i>
Adalyn Barnes	<i>Greenwood, AR</i>
Austin White	<i>Gurdon, AR</i>
Trace Watkins	<i>Fort Smith, AR</i>

Trombones

John-Carl Laidler*	<i>Vancouver, B.C.</i>
Taylor Jacobs	<i>Mount Ida, AR</i>
Macy Jamell	<i>Pottsville, AR</i>
Justin LaBreck	<i>Austin, AR</i>

Bass Trombone

Donald McBride	<i>Van Buren, AR</i>
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Euphoniums

Jackson Utz*	<i>Fort Smith, AR</i>
Amy Look	<i>Lake Village, AR</i>
Joshua Carman	<i>Greenwood, AR</i>
Ashlyn Watson	<i>Clinton, AR</i>

Tubas

Jake Castle*	<i>Greenwood, AR</i>
Alex Maddan	<i>Prairie Grove, AR</i>
Caleb Mauk	<i>Rogers, AR</i>

Percussion

Marlon King*	<i>Pangburn, AR</i>
Keevon Moore	<i>Morrilton, AR</i>
Peyton Stephens	<i>Springdale, AR</i>
Hunter Huffman	<i>Atkins, AR</i>
Aaron Mack	<i>Van Buren, AR</i>

Christopher H. Harris, baritone

Dr. Christopher H. Harris, native of Fort Worth, Texas, is a music educator, conductor, performer, and choral composer. In August 2017 he joined the faculty at Arkansas Tech University as Director of Choral Studies and Instructor of Music. He received his PhD in Choral Music Education from Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL, his Master's in Choral Conducting from Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY, and his Bachelor's in Music Education from Texas Southern University in Houston, TX. Prior to entering graduate school, Harris enjoyed several years of successful public school teaching in Houston, Texas. His choirs received numerous sweepstakes awards at state UIL competition as well as honors to perform with the Bay Area Chorus and an invitation to perform as a demonstration group at the Texas Choral Directors Association Convention.

Dr. Harris is the founder of the Houston Master Singers and has served as the Assistant Director for the Houston Ebony Opera Guild. He is a published composer with several accolades including winner of both the Eastern and National Divisions of the 2013 National Association for Music Education Composition Competition, and the Grand Prize Winner of the 2016 Ithaca College Choral Composition Competition. His music has been performed internationally by mixed, men's, and treble choirs of varied ages and abilities. Most recently Harris was honored through the selection of his music for performance by the 2018 Texas All-State Mixed Choir, the 2018 Southwest American Choral Directors Association Honor's Men's Choir, and the 2018 Arkansas Intercollegiate Choir

As a performer Christopher has performed as guest soloist for concerts with the Texas Southern University Choir, the Houston Ebony Opera Guild, the Houston Symphony Chorus, the 2013 Owego School District's Production of Faure's *Requiem*, with choirs from Florida State University, and the Tallahassee Community Chorus. Harris will be a guest soloist with the ATU Symphonic Wind Ensemble for their performance at the Southwestern Division of the College Band Directors National Association Convention in Houston, Texas in March 2018.

Program Notes

Bridges

While looking for more inspiration for this piece, there was this quote from Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis I stumbled upon:

"True teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own."

And from there the title BRIDGES came to me. Bridges pays tribute to the teachers that have influenced and inspired us. This piece is dedicated to the passion and commitment of Dr. Terry Flowers and his work with the St. Philip's School and Community Center. For nearly 40 years, Dr. Flowers' work with St. Philip's has influenced and inspired hundreds of students to be more than what the world sees them as. Using the styles of some of his favorite artists: Aretha Franklin and Patti LaBelle while honoring his upbringings within the Gospel world, I wanted to tell the story of the "superhero" Dr. Terry Flowers. I also wanted to highlight how teachers are not only superheroes but they're also our bridges to a brighter future.

The piece also has a section in which younger musicians take the spotlight and shine along with the ensemble, thereby building this bridge of sound and connecting the present with the future of music.

- Katahj Copley

Program Notes

Catfish Row (Symphonic Suite from “Porgy and Bess”)

George Gershwin (b. September 26, 1898/d. July 11, 1936) created American classical orchestral and vocal works during the first three decades of the twentieth century as well as many delightful Broadway musicals.

His most famous works include Rhapsody in Blue (1924), Concerto in F for Piano and Orchestra (1925), An American in Paris (1928), The Second Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra (1931), and finally the opera Porgy and Bess in 1935.

Porgy and Bess is an opera set in Catfish Row, which is described in the original publication as “a former mansion of the aristocracy, but now a Negro tenement on the waterfront of Charleston, South Carolina.” Based on the play Porgy by American authors DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, the musical version was set to a libretto by DuBose Heyward with lyrics by he and Ira Gershwin, the older brother of George Gershwin. Many consider the opera to be one of the finest American works of its genre.

In 1936, Gershwin decided to create an orchestral suite based on the famous arias and scenes from the opera to perform on a five-city tour, where he was also set to perform the Concerto in F for Piano and Orchestra. Such works included “Summertime”, “I Got Plenty o’Nuttin,” “My Man’s Gone Now,” and “It Ain’t Necessarily So,” an exciting fugue from Act III, scene 2, and finally the music from the hurricane scene in Act II. He titled this collection Catfish Row, and it sadly became his final orchestral effort, following his discovery of a brain tumor when he returned to Hollywood after the tour in 1936. After his death, Catfish Row slipped into obscurity until the 1950s, when his brother Ira resurrected the score and returned it immediately to the concert stage. Today’s wind band transcription was created by Dr. Donald Hunsberger, conductor of the famed Eastman Wind Ensemble in the year 2000.

Cherisse Williams, soprano

Brooklyn, New York native soprano **Cherisse Williams** is a Doctor of Musical Arts student at the University of North Texas under the tutelage of Dr. Carol Wilson. In performance with UNT Opera, she will perform the role of Micaëla (*Carmen*) this Spring. Last season she sung the role Adina in *L’elisir d’amore* with UNT Opera. Ms. Williams has played the role of Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* and Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) with Once Upon an Opera, Nannetta in the Midwest Institute of Opera’s production of *Falstaff*. Her Manhattan School of Music credits include the Princess in their mainstage production of *L’enfant et les Sortilèges* and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* for their opera scenes titled "A World Made Real: Five Stories of Women in Pursuit of Dreams." Her Ithaca College credits include the title role of Sally Hemings in the world premiere of Dana Wilson's *The Wolf by the Ears*, Beth (cover) in *Little Women* and Mademoiselle Silberklang in *The Impresario* with the Ithaca Hidden Gems Project. Her other credits include The Princeton Festival’s production of *Porgy and Bess* (ensemble) and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Peaseblossom) at Westminster Choir College Opera Theatre. Ms. Williams was a first-prize winner at the NATS-CNYFL competition. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Voice Performance from Westminster Choir College, a Master of Music from Ithaca College, and a Professional Studies Certificate in opera from The Manhattan School of Music. She is a volunteer artist for Sing for Hope, a proud sister of Sigma Alpha Iota, and one of the owners of the Sparkle Twins. In addition to singing, Ms. Williams is a professional commercial and print model, and a former preschool teacher. She most recently starred in the national Verizon Holiday commercial along with her identical twin sister, which received over 2 million views worldwide.