

ATLANTA FREEDOM BANDS PRESENTS

IN CONCERT WITH



**ATLANTA  
FREEDOM BANDS**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2025 • 7PM**

Church at Ponce and Highland  
1085 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Atlanta 30306



**TICKETS \$20**

*\$15 Seniors - \$10 Students*



Tickets and information:  
[www.atlantafreebands.com](http://www.atlantafreebands.com)





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## **Welcome to “In Concert With Hope”**

What comes to mind when you think about hope? Maybe there is an expectation, an anticipation, or a desire along with an outcome that has some degree of uncertainty. We can hope for the nearly impossible like winning the lottery, or the deeply personal like a successful medical treatment, or the something better like a new job, or the greater good like justice and peace in our time. Sometimes, our hopes go unfulfilled, but that makes the times even sweeter when our hopes become real.

We had hoped you would join us for our concert tonight, and we are so happy you are here for our musical journey of hope. We hope you will find something in tonight’s music that will uplift your spirit and stir your soul. The program’s selections are pictures of hope, with many chosen by our members just for this concert. The music depicts heroes reaching their goal, the hope that comes from being your authentic self with pride, the deep faith that carries us through difficult times, and the power of choosing joy even in the tough moments.

Our concert takes place during Pride Month, a time when we celebrate the power we have as individuals and a community when we stand up and be ourselves. Pride celebrations, non-discrimination laws, even organizations like AFB are the fulfilled hopes of many who have gone before us. People like Karl Ulrichs, Harvey Milk, Barbara Gittings, Audre Lorde, Frank Kameny, Marsha P. Johnson, Bayard Rustin, Silvia Rivera, Harry Hay, Buz Carr and more planted seeds of hope for dignity, equality, and acceptance, knowing that they might not see the resulting flowering of their work.

As we conclude the Concert Band’s 20th anniversary season, we send our thanks to our Interim Directors Kurt Wackerly and Jason Jackson. They have led us through wonderful music and three memorable performances with skill and caring. We will look forward to their continued expertise as we transition to our new Artistic Director next season. We hope you will continue enjoying the great music we have planned and continue supporting AFB’s musical mission in the community. As Harvey Milk said, “You gotta give ‘em hope!”

# Special Thanks for Tonight's Concert

🎵 **Church at Ponce and Highland** for tonight's concert venue. We are grateful for the assistance of Jim Wright, Facilities Management Director, and Rev. Mimi Walker, Senior Pastor.

🎵 **Central Congregational United Church of Christ** in North Druid Hills for providing our rehearsal home, Rev. Elizabeth Mitchell Clement, Senior Minister.

🎵 This program is supported in part by the **Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs**. Thank you to the Mayor's Office, the Atlanta City Council, and City of Atlanta residents in the audience.

🎵 Funding for this program is also provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners under the guidance of the **Fulton County Arts Council**. Thank you to the Fulton County Commissioners and Fulton County residents in the audience.

🎵 Members of the **Atlanta Queer Arts Alliance (AQuAA)** for hosting tonight's concert.

🎵 **Dan Lax Media** for concert photography.

🎵 Members of the **Atlanta Trombone Ensemble** for joining our Rebel Alliance for tonight's show.



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## About Atlanta Freedom Bands

Atlanta musician Buz Carr attended the 1993 Pride Parade and noticed there was no marching band. “We can’t have a parade with floats and not have a marching band,” he remarked as he set about recruiting musicians to form the Atlanta Freedom Marching Band. The marching band appeared not only in the Atlanta Pride Parade, but also in neighborhood festivals and events across the city and in Pride events across the Southeast.

Over the years, the organization grew to become Atlanta Freedom Bands. Now thirty-one years later, AFB still represents our city’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community through music. AFB includes the original Marching Band as well as the MetroGnomes Stage Band (2001), the Color Guard (2010) and, of course, the Atlanta Freedom Concert Band (2004) appearing in tonight’s concert. We have also offered a variety of smaller ensembles to meet the musical interests of our members over time, including a brass quintet, a wind quintet, a saxophone ensemble and more.

AFB is a member of Pride Bands Alliance, a network of bands in cities across the United States, Canada, and Australia. Our members joined others for annual conferences as well as historic events such as Inaugurations of Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, Gay Games events in Amsterdam, Sydney, Paris and Chicago, and the Millennium March for Equality. Atlanta Freedom Bands hosted the Alliance’s annual convention in October 2013 with over 250 musicians from 33 different bands in attendance.

We welcome musicians at all levels and all orientations and identities to join in our activities and become part of our band family. All of our ensembles welcome the opportunity to partner with groups in the community to help raise awareness, raise funds or just raise the roof with good music. Atlanta Freedom Bands is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable corporation.



## **Kurt Wackerly**

### **Interim Artistic Director**

Currently serving in the role of Interim Artistic Director, Kurt Wackerly has been the Associate Director of the Atlanta Freedom Concert Band since 2011. He graduated from Bowling Green State University in Ohio in 1994 with a Bachelors in Music Education, and became a member of the Ohio Music Education Association, the Hancock County Music Teachers Association, and the Findlay Community Band. During his

time in Ohio, he was the band director and choral instructor for grades 5 through 12 in the McComb Local School District near Lima, Ohio.

Mr. Wackerly moved to Atlanta in 2001 to pursue professional opportunities, and that was where he discovered the Atlanta Concert Band. He joined that band as a French horn player and was later appointed as an assistant conductor for his merits from 2007 to 2011. He later discovered the AFB through networking and joined it in 2011, where he played French horn and soon took up the position of Associate Director for the Concert Band that he has held to this day.

During his time in Atlanta, he joined the Atlanta Wind Symphony and the Callanwolde Concert Band. He served as associate conductor of both ensembles when he was a member. As for his business career, he is a licensed manager at FirstService Residential, a professional property management company.



## **Jason Jackson**

### **Interim Associate Director**

Jason Jackson grew up in Aiken, SC. He started piano at age 6 then chose trombone for middle school band. He is an honor graduate of Winthrop University; both in trombone performance in 2000 and a master's in Music Education in 2002. After graduation, he taught middle and high school band in SC before being cast in the Broadway show "Blast!". He performed with "Blast!" in 4 international tours including London and Japan and was the trombone soloist on the 2005-06 US tour before moving to Columbus, OH. He was head band director at Westerville Central High School. Jason joined the Columbus Pride Bands, becoming co-artistic director in 2011. In Ohio, he also worked with touring shows, including Cirque du Soliel's "Corteo".



In 2019, Jason moved back to SC and taught band in his home school district and a private lessons studio at Music and Arts in Augusta, GA. Most recently, he accepted a post as band director at The American School of Bombay in Mumbai, India. There, he taught students from over 30 nations and traveled to the Middle East and South Asia. After completing his contract, Jason returned to the USA, relocating to Atlanta in March of 2024. Though teaching has been his main career, Jason remains an active performing brass musician and plays in several groups in the Atlanta area, including the Atlanta Trombone Ensemble, AFB MetroGnomes and Concert Band.





## Laura Estes Guest Conductor

After 36 years as a middle and high school band director, **Laura Estes** (b. 1959) retired in 2018 from the Cobb County School System (GA) and began composing. Her first piece, “Kvetchers (Surprises in Controversial Time)”, was published in Excelcia Music Publishing’s 2020 catalog. With her piece “Walking on Air”, she was named the winner of the 2021 Women Band Director’s International Composition Competition. Along with original music performed at The Midwest Clinic in

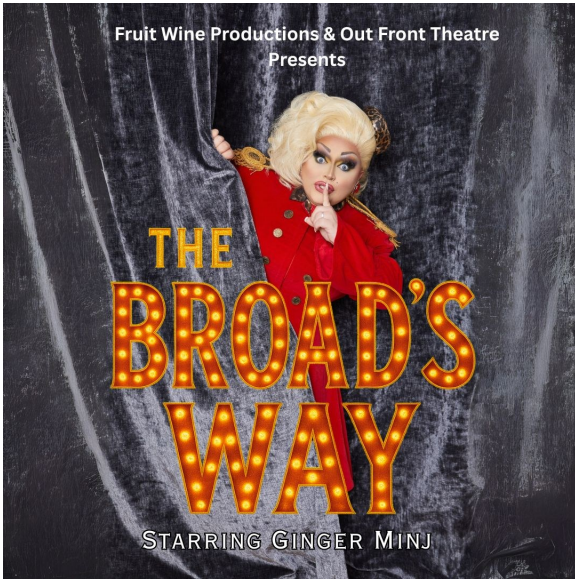
Chicago, Estes’ concert works are frequently featured at state music conventions, All-State events, and regional honor bands throughout the United States. In addition to appearing on state festival and contest lists, several of Estes’ band and orchestra compositions have also been designated as J.W. Pepper Editor’s Choice.

A recipient of the National Band Association’s Citation of Excellence, Estes’ bands consistently earned Superior ratings at performance evaluations throughout her career, and middle and high school bands under her direction were selected as guest performers at clinics and conventions in the Southeast. Estes has also presented at state conventions, on college campuses, and at the Midwest Clinic.

A South Florida native, Estes earned her bachelor’s degree in music education from The Florida State University, and her master’s degree in music education from Georgia State University. In addition to composing, she continues to serve as an adjudicator, guest conductor, clinician, and mentor. Estes and her husband Gil reside in Marietta, GA, and have 5 amazing children, along with a host of equally amazing grandchildren.



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Kurt Wackerly, Interim Artistic Director  
Jason Jackson, Interim Associate Director  
Laura Estes, Guest Conductor  
Saturday, June 21, 2025

**And Hope Led Them Home “A Hero’s Journey” (2012)<sup>JJ</sup>**

Patrick Roszell (b. 1976) and Justin Williams

*Sponsored by Aaron Smith: To AFB... my family and home*

**True Colors (1986)<sup>JJ</sup>**

words & music by Billy Steinberg (b. 1950)

arranged by Michael Brown

& Tom Kelly (b. 1948)

*To my husband, Julio, may our true colors always shine through!*

— Larry Henderlight Gómez

**Selections from *The Greatest Showman* (2017)<sup>JJ</sup>** arranged by Paul Murtha

words & music by Benj Pasek, Justin Paul, and Ryan Lewis

The Greatest Show • A Million Dreams • Never Enough

This is Me • From Now On

*Way to go trumpets! — Bob Hults*

*Dedicating this song to the percussion section. Thank you for letting me be a part of the best percussion group. You all are the most talented musicians.*

—Suzanne Kamm

**Changing Currents (2023)<sup>LE</sup>**

Laura Estes (b. 1959)

arr. Paul Lavender

*To all the pioneers and change makers that  
have gone before and taught us how to navigate  
the constantly changing currents of life. —Kurt Haas*

*In memory of Thomas Benefield, one of the kindest and most incredible  
human beings I have ever known. Big Love. —Molly Steele*

*As we face another challenging wave of opposition, we stand together once again, stronger than ever, in our unwavering support of one another, especially with our trans and non-binary family, to stand firm with arms locked, unbreakable, as we move forward in these changing currents to rise upward and onward once again toward justice and equality. —Joao M. Cleaver*

**Satchmo!** (2001)<sup>JJ</sup> arranged by Ted Ricketts  
Music made famous by Louis Armstrong (1901-1971)  
When the Saints Go Marching In • St. Louis Blues  
What a Wonderful World • Hello Dolly!  
*Dedicated to the entire concert band from the MetroGnomes! We love you!*

## **— Intermission —**

**Main Theme** John Williams (b. 1932)  
from *Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope* (1977)  
*Performed by members of Atlanta Freedom Bands and  
the Atlanta Trombone Ensemble. Directed by Gil Estes*

**Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity**<sup>KW</sup> Gustav Holst (1874-1934)  
from *The Planets* (1914-1917) arranged by James Curnow  
*To my husband, Alex. Thank you for being my happy place. —Cecil Land  
I've had the rare privilege of playing the orchestra version. So this will be  
extra special for me. —Daniel Barker*

**Sòlas Ané** (Yesterday's Joy) (2006)<sup>KW</sup> Samuel R. Hazo (b. 1966)  
*For Mama G - thank you for bringing so many people so much JOY! We love  
you! Hope to play this for you for many years to come. Love, Abby & Mitch*

**The Queen of Soul** (2019)<sup>KW</sup> arranged by Paul Murtha  
Remembering Aretha Franklin (1942-2018)  
Respect (1965) • (You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman (1967)  
Think (1968)

**Blessed Hope** (2024)<sup>KW</sup> Philip Bliss (b. 1838-1876)  
based on "It is Well With my Soul" (1876) setting by Brian Beck  
*With thanks to Kurt Wackerly and Jason Jackson for their leadership and  
inspiration through the Concert Band's 20th anniversary season*

**Choose Joy** (2022)<sup>KW</sup> Randall Standridge (1976)  
*... Always! - Nanette & Susan*

<sup>KW</sup> Conducted by Kurt Wackerly  
<sup>LE</sup> Conducted by Laura Estes

<sup>JJ</sup> Conducted by Jason Jackson

**We kindly ask you to silence your mobile devices for the recording.  
You can relive the concert at Atlanta Freedom Bands'  
YouTube channel. Please tag your concert photos with #AFB32.**

# Tonight's Concert Performers

## Flute

‡ Brandon Gray (13)  
Daisha Davis (25)  
Daniel Funston (24)  
Darius Mackie (23)  
Freddie Powell (24)  
Beth Savoy (19)  
Sara Tonks (25)

## Oboe

‡ Robert Simon (17)  
Brennan Booker (23)

## Bassoon

Darius Gourdine (25)  
Justin Hosten (23)  
Anna Mitchell (25)

## Clarinet

‡ Annette Piepenhagen (13)  
‡ Aaron Smith (23)  
Grace Aspenwall (25)  
Daniel Barker (11)  
Bruce Bythwood (21)  
Ann Cooley (21)  
Teak Hadman (25)  
Emily Victoria Harris (24)  
Suzanne Kamm McHann (23)  
Molly Steele (24)  
Sivani Vyas (25)

## Bass Clarinet

Cecil Land (17)  
Diane Quilter (23)

## Alto Saxophone

‡ Beth Fordyce (09)  
Bradley Beadles (24)  
Audrey Brasuell (23)  
Cristian Perez (23)  
Toni Ralston (23)

## Tenor Saxophone

Drew Johnson (23)  
Sierra Wyble (24)

## Baritone Saxophone

Benjamin Bebe (25)  
Katie Mitchell (23)

## Trumpet

‡ Fitz Dement (23)  
‡ Ethan Messere (22)  
Torsten Behrens (24)  
João M. Cleaver (15)  
Tyler Hodge (24)  
Bob Hults (23)  
Sean Max (25)  
Lillian Piepenhagen (22)  
Andrew Redmon (25)  
William Rohrbach (25)

## French Horn

Landon Bubb (24)  
Michael McFarlin (12)  
John McNamara (21)  
Rachel Scarboro (23)  
Anna Wodny (25)

## Trombone

‡ Hannah Dunn (19)  
‡ Henry Gallagher (24)  
Alex Drake (25)  
Doug Eakin (25)  
Kurt Haas (95)  
Larry Henderlight-Gómez (14)

Beth Herndon (15)  
Nannette King (15)  
Daniel Lucas (25)  
Brittney Pham (25)  
Oliver Spirito (18)

## Euphonium

‡ Edward Ehlers (23)  
Dani Cruz (23)  
Kazuki Koide (24)  
Zakariya Thiam (24)

## Tuba

‡ Cliff Norris (96)  
‡ Will Segó (16)  
Darren Williams (22)  
Dez (14)

## Percussion

‡ Abby Gaskins (06)  
‡ Mitch Cave (13)  
Jenna Galligan (24)  
George Oh (22)  
Mel Raines (24)  
Christopher Segó (16)  
Erin Seligsohn (24)

‡ Section Leader

Year of joining the band in parentheses



# Atlanta Freedom Bands Leadership

## Board of Directors

### Officers

<i>President</i>	Jason Morley
<i>Vice President</i>	Oliver Spirito
<i>Secretary</i>	Charlene Stein
<i>Treasurer</i>	Brennan Booker

### Representatives

<i>Concert Band</i>	Suzanne Kamm McHann
<i>Marching Band</i>	Candace Miller
<i>Color Guard</i>	Christopher Brooks
<i>MetroGnomes</i>	Nanette King

## Artistic Leaders

<i>Interim Artistic Director</i>	Kurt Wackerly
<i>Interim Associate Director</i>	Jason Jackson
<i>MetroGnomes Director</i>	Nic Chambers
<i>Marching Band Director</i>	Fitz Dement
<i>Color Guard Director</i>	Michel Brandon Boddie

## Ensemble Coordinators

<i>Concert Band</i>	Suzanne Kamm McHann
<i>Marching Band</i>	Abby Gaskins
<i>Color Guard</i>	Michel Brandon Boddie
<i>MetroGnomes</i>	Beth Herndon

## Organizational Leaders

<i>Development &amp; Marketing</i>	Cliff Norris
<i>Marching Band Drum Major</i>	Edward Ehlers
<i>Librarian</i>	Brandon Gray
<i>Founder and Guiding Spirit</i>	Walter L. "Buz" Carr, Jr.



## “Simply the Best” Program Notes

*A large-print version is available from your ushers.*



**Patrick Roszell** (b. 1976) received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Jacksonville State University and a Master’s degree from Troy University. Patrick’s arrangements have been performed throughout the country by numerous concert and marching ensembles, including the nationally renowned Jacksonville State University “Marching Southerners,” the Troy University “Sound of the South,” the DCI world finalist “Glassmen” Drum and Bugle Corps of Toledo, OH, and the prestigious United States Marine Band. His professional background includes instrumental editorial work at Warner Bros. Publications in Miami, FL. Mr. Roszell is currently a staff arranger for the

Belwin Division of Alfred Music Publishing in Los Angeles, CA. He also serves on the brass and music staff of the Jacksonville State University “Marching Southerners.”



**Justin Williams** received a Bachelor of Arts degree with special honors in Political Science and a minor in music from Jacksonville State University. He also received the Master of Arts in History from JSU. He serves as arranger and program consultant for over thirty high school band programs across the country. He is also staff arranger for the Jacksonville State University “Marching Southerners” and University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s “Pride of Acadiana” Marching Band. Mr. William’ arrangements have been performed in numerous bowl game halftime productions, as well as the Rose Bowl Parade, Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Lord Mayor’s New Year’s

Day Parade in London, England. When not arranging and composing, he teaches history and political science at Central Alabama Community College in Talladega, Alabama. Justin is currently staff arranger for the Belwin Division of Alfred Music Publishing in Los Angeles, California. He resides with his wife and children in Oxford, Alabama.

We all have heroes — those who inspire us, those who motivate us, those who blaze trails before us, enabling us to be all we can dream to be. **“And Hope Led Them Home: A Hero’s Journey”** is a musical portrait of the plight of a hero. Traveling the spectrum of emotions, the piece is a soundtrack of the journey the hero takes in leading us to new horizons, and ultimately, back home. The piece has six musical scenes:

“A New Adventure” is a powerful and festive fanfare opening. Soaring woodwinds and biting brass herald the excitement that lies ahead!

“Dawn of a New Day” is the tranquil, reflective first morning of the hero’s journey. Stately and purposed, the music paints a solemn picture of the plight that awaits our hero.

“Long Day’s Journey” presents the wonder and fury that our hero encounters along the way. Playful, yet complex, we cross an expansive musical landscape before soaring above the clouds!

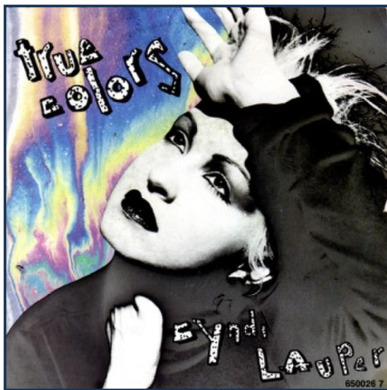
“Atonement” signifies the hero’s sacrifice. Our heroes, time and time again, selflessly give us more than we can ever repay, leaving us sobered and eternally grateful.

“The Final Sunset” is one last moment of reflection before the journey home begins. The mission is accomplished.

“Triumphant Return” is the victorious return of our hero. Passionate and strong, the music leads us on the way the hero prepared, reminding us that no matter how far away we roam, there is always hope. And that hope will always lead us home.

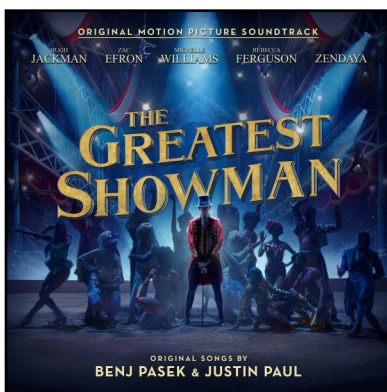
**William Endfield Steinberg** and **Tom Kelly** are American songwriters who co-wrote a string of chart-topping songs for popular music artists, including five number one singles on the Billboard Hot 100. Their hits include “Like a Virgin” by Madonna (1984), “True Colors” by Cyndi Lauper (1986), “Eternal Flame” by the Bangles (1989), “So Emotional” by Whitney Houston (1987), and “Alone” (covered by Heart in 1987). They also wrote or co-wrote the hit songs “I Drove All Night” (initially recorded by Roy Orbison), “I Touch Myself” by Divinyls (1990), and “I’ll Stand by You” by The Pretenders (1994).

Steinberg grew up in Fresno, California and moved to Palm Springs, California when he was 12 where he worked in his father’s table grape operation. He attended Cate School in California, and Bard College in New York. Originally from Indiana, Kelly attended Eastern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and Purdue University, but dropped out of college to pursue his music career. He played bass guitar and sang in several bands throughout Illinois and Indiana in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1974, he moved to Los Angeles to play in Dan Fogelberg’s backup band and became a prominent session singer. Steinberg and Kelly were inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2011.



“True Colors” was the title track and first single released from Cyndi Lauper’s 1986 album of the same name. The song spent two weeks at the top of the US Billboard Hot 100 chart. Lauper received a Grammy nomination for the song. Billy Steinberg originally wrote “True Colors” about his own mother, but the song has become a popular anthem in the LGBTQ+ community thanks to its call live with authenticity. Lauper co-founded the True Colors fund, a non-profit dedicated to eradicating LGBTQ+ youth homelessness. On December 13, 2022, Lauper performed

the song at the ceremony where President Joe Biden signed the Respect for Marriage Act into law.



*The Greatest Showman* is a 2017 musical film that depicts a fictionalized version of the life of P.T. Barnum, a nineteenth century showman and entertainer who created the Barnum & Bailey Circus and its attractions. The film starred Hugh Jackman as Barnum along with Zac Efron, Michelle Williams, and Zendaya. While critics didn’t warm to the overall plot, they raved over the music. A stage musical adaptation is planned to open in 2026.

Benj Pasek and Justin Paul wrote all the songs appearing in the film. The soundtrack album became a global success, topping the

charts in several countries, including the US. The music won a Golden Globe for Best Original Song for “This is Me”, A Grammy for Best Compilation Soundtrack, and a Billboard Music Award for Top Soundtrack, and was nominated for Best Original Song at the 90th Academy Awards.

Tonight, we feature Paul Murtha’s medley of songs from the film, including “The Greatest Show”, “A Million Dreams”, “Never Enough”, “This is Me”, and “From Now On”.

The biographical details for composer **Laura Estes** appear earlier in the program. The composer writes about “**Changing Currents**”:

“Changing Currents” is dedicated to the four children of my maternal grandparents, Frank and Rose Sokolow. Here is the story.

In the early 1900s, Frank and Rose emigrated separately from modern day Ukraine and Russia to the United States. They met and married in New Jersey, eventually settling in Miami to raise their four children: Arthur, Jerry, Barbara, and Lois. Life was not easy for the family, but perseverance and

determination helped the children find creative ways to attend and finish college. Arthur was a veteran of both the US and Israeli armies, becoming a businessman in Manila, Phillipines. Jerry was also an army veteran who became a CPA specializing in financial forensics, Barbara was an accountant and controller, and after a career in journalism and public relations, Lois became a renowned South Florida abstract artist. After living long, healthy lives, Barbara, Lois, and a Jerry all died within eight months of each other (Arthur died in 2010).

“Changing Currents” features several subsections, or “currents,” which are reminiscent of the rapidly changing lives of the Sokolow children. With a majestic beginning, the music’s constantly shifting currents demonstrate how the siblings approached their lives: sweetly, seriously, playfully, boldly, brilliantly. Always with forward motion, brightly facing the future. And, with death closing in, they began to transform, to intensify, remaining fierce to the end.

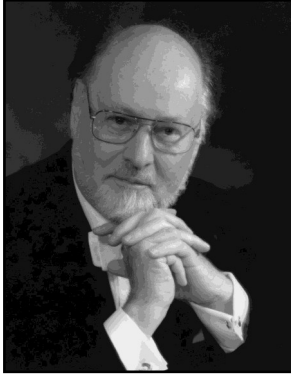
Although all instrument sections are featured in some fashion, a special nod to Barbara and Lois can be found in the trombone and flute parts. Additionally, the idea for the title came from Lois’s painting titled “Changing Current.”

With his instantly recognizable, rich, gravelly voice, **Louis Daniel Armstrong** was one of the most influential figures in jazz. Armstrong was born and raised in New Orleans, getting his start in brass bands that performed on riverboats. He rose to prominence in the 1920s as an inventive trumpeter. Armstrong made a huge impact on the formative years of jazz during the Harlem Renaissance, also influencing writer Langston Hughes. His foundational influence on jazz stretched through five decades, bringing him success as a performer; recording artist; and radio, film and television star. He became an international musical icon while maintaining a playful, warm connection with his audiences. He was one of the first popular African-American entertainers to enjoy wide popularity with white and international audiences. He posthumously received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1972. His nickname “Satchmo” is short for “Satchelmouth”. It is possible that it refers to Armstrong as a child scooping coins off the street and hiding them in his mouth to keep them from the other children.



Tonight’s **“Satchmo!”** medley by arranger Ted Ricketts features three of his most popular songs. Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra’s 1938 recording of the spiritual “When the Saints Go Marching In” became one of the most famous jazz recordings. “Saint Louis Blues”, composed in 1914 by W. C. Handy, was one of the first blues songs to become a popular song. Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra made a definitive recording in 1929. In 1967,

Armstrong recorded “What a Wonderful World”, written by Bob Thiele specifically for Armstrong. The slow, simple song was meant to provide a counter to the social strife and turmoil of the time. The song became a long-lasting cultural touchstone, and Armstrong’s recording entered the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999. The song “Hello Dolly!”, from the musical of the same name, was written by Jerry Herman. Louis Armstrong’s 1964 recording became the most successful of his career, winning him the Song of the Year and Male Vocal Performance Grammy Awards. Armstrong also performed it in the 1969 film adaptation.



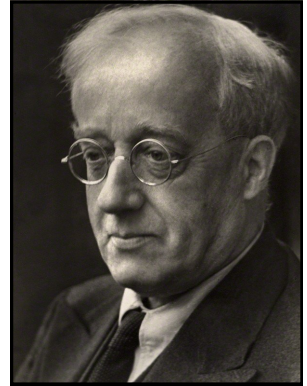
Winner of five Academy Awards, 17 Grammys, three Golden Globes, two Emmys, and five BAFTA Awards, **John Williams** is one of the most popular American composers and conductors of our time. Born in New York in 1932, Williams’ family moved to Los Angeles in 1948. He studied composition at UCLA, served a tour in the Air Force, then returned to New York to study at the Julliard School, working as a jazz pianist on the side. He returned to Los Angeles to begin a career in the film industry, working with noted film composers of the time and writing music for television programs in the 1960’s (including the original theme from *Lost in Space*).

Williams won his first Academy Award for his 1967 score to *Valley of the Dolls*. His fame grew with his scores to the disaster movies *The Poseidon Adventure*, *Earthquake*, and *The Towering Inferno*. In 1974, he began a long collaboration with Stephen Spielberg, resulting in scores for *Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, *Empire of the Sun*, *Schindler’s List*, and *Saving Private Ryan*. Williams is also the composer for George Lucas’s *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* franchises, the original *Superman* franchise, and the first three of Warner Brothers’ *Harry Potter* films.

In 1980, he took the baton of the Boston Pops Orchestra, serving as its conductor for 14 years. He has also appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras all over the world. In addition to his film scores, Williams has composed a number of concert pieces.

Williams served as composer and music director for nearly eighty films. While his film music spans a wide variety of settings, his style could be summarized as neoromanticism, inspired by the large scale orchestral music of composers like Tchaikovsky and Wagner. Especially notable in William’s scores is his use of *leitmotif*, or short, recurring musical phrases associated with a characters or places in the films. The ominous bass notes of *Jaws*, the heroic opening notes of *Superman*, and the strident tones of the “Imperial March” from *Star Wars* are examples everyone can recognize.

**Gustav Theodore Holst** (1874-1934) was an English composer, arranger and teacher. Best known for his orchestral suite *The Planets*, he composed a large number of other works across a range of genres, although none achieved comparable success. His distinctive compositional style had many influences, including Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss. The subsequent inspiration of the English folksong revival of the early 20th century, and the example of such rising modern composers as Maurice Ravel, led Holst to develop and refine an individual style.



He hoped to become a pianist, but after developing neuritis in his right arm, he pursued a career as a composer, studying at the Royal College of Music in London. Unable to support himself by his compositions, he played the trombone professionally and later became a teacher. He also had a long friendship with Ralph Vaughan Williams. Holst's works were played frequently in the early years of the 20th century, but it was not until the international success of *The Planets* in the years immediately after the First World War that he became a well-known figure. A shy man, he did not welcome this fame, and preferred to be left in peace to compose and teach. Apart from *The Planets* and a handful of other works, his music was generally neglected until the 1980s when recordings of much of his output



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have been more readily available.

*The Planets* is a seven-movement orchestral work, written by Holst between 1914 and 1917. Holst was deeply interested in astrology and horoscopes, and each movement describes an astrological attribute associated with a planet known at the time. Holst described *The Planets* as “a series of mood pictures”, acting as “foils to one another”, with “very little contrast in any one of them.”

Tonight, we present a setting of the fourth movement, “**Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity**”. Holst embraces several facets of joy to set the musical scene. The movement’s effervescent opening turns into a sprightly danse expressing happiness and elation. The central portion of the movement brings a soaring, majestic chorale, the music of which was used for the British hymn “I Vow to Thee My Country” that often appears at patriotic events. Holst reflects a deeper, more transcendent joy that accompanies us through the difficult times of life. The sprightly dance theme returns, making an exciting closure to the piece.



In 2003, **Samuel R. Hazo** (b. 1966) became the first composer in history to be awarded the winner of both composition contests sponsored by the National Band Association. He has composed for the professional, university and public school levels in addition to writing original scores for television, radio and the stage. Mr. Hazo’s compositions have been performed and recorded world-wide, including performances by the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra (national tour), the Birmingham Symphonic Winds (UK) and the Klavier Wind Project’s recordings with Eugene Migliaro Corporon. He has served as composer-in-residence at Craig Kirchoff’s University of

Minnesota Conducting Symposium and has also lectured on music and music education at universities and high schools internationally. In 2004, Mr. Hazo’s compositions were listed in a published national survey of the “Top Twenty Compositions of All Time” for wind band.

Mr. Hazo has been a music teacher at every educational grade level from kindergarten through college, including tenure as a high school and university director. Mr. Hazo was twice named “Teacher of Distinction” by the southwestern Pennsylvania Teachers’ Excellence Foundation. He received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Duquesne University where he served on the Board of Governors and was awarded as Duquesne’s Outstanding Graduate in Music Education. Mr. Hazo currently resides in Pittsburgh, PA with his wife and children.

The composer writes: “All the themes in ‘**Sòlas Ané**’ are original. Their creation was during one of the few times I sat down at the piano and actually came away with ideas. Following the first two appearances of the theme

in a chorale setting, the piece breaks into a jig in the middle section, introduced by the upper woodwinds. Following a bridge, the main theme is brought back with an alternate ending that concludes the piece.

“Sòlas’ and ‘Ané’ are Gaelic words meaning ‘Joy’ and ‘Yesterday/Yesterday’ (respectively). It was named for the absolute pleasure Margene Pappas had spending every day living the music with her students. Margene is the epitome of the phrase, “Winners aren’t in it for the race. They just love to run.’ Turning on the band room lights every morning for 37 years was Margene Pappas’ passion.”

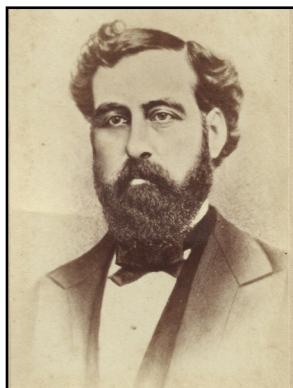
One of the world’s most accomplished and influential vocalists, **Aretha Louise Franklin** was born in Memphis and grew up in Detroit. She grew up singing in the church where her father was pastor. At age 14, she recorded her first album, *The Gospel Sound of Aretha Franklin*. She combined the religious grounding of her singing with the sounds of contemporary secular singers to create a unique voice. After switching to Atlantic Records in 1966, she had a string of hits that defined the soul sound of the late 1960s, including “I Never Loved a Man”, “Respect”, “Think”, “Chain of Fools”, “I Say a Little Prayer”, and “A Natural Woman”.



Success continued in the following decades as she continued to produce million-selling songs, more than any woman in recording history. Later hits included “Freeway of Love” and “I Knew You Were Waiting (for Me)”. She received an array of honors, including being the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1987), performing at President Clinton’s 1993 Inauguration, and earning 18 Grammy Awards and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. Franklin was an active participant in the civil rights, women’s equality and Native rights movements, providing financial support and performing benefit concerts. She was awarded the National Medal of Arts and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She has had 112 singles on the *Billboard* charts, selling over 75 million records.

**Philip Paul Bliss** was an American composer, conductor, hymn writer, and gospel singer in the nineteenth century. He was born in 1838 in a log cabin in Hollywood, Pennsylvania. His parents encouraged his passion for singing. At 17, he finished his teaching requirements and became a schoolmaster. He received voice training and became an itinerant music teacher and composer.

After moving to Chicago in 1864 and briefly serving in the Union Army during the Civil War, he took a job



at a musical publishing company. In addition to composing hymns, he conducted musical conventions, singing schools, and concerts. He also was an outspoken abolitionist. Sadly, Bliss and his wife Grandma Allen were killed in 1876 when a bridge collapsed beneath the train they were riding on.

“Blessed Hope” is a setting of Bliss’s music for the hymn “It Is Well With My Soul”, written by Horatio Spafford. The hymn was written following the many tragedies that Spafford suffered in life. He was financially ruined by the Great Chicago Fire in 1871 and the financial panic of 1873. So he could attend to business matters, he sent his wife Anna and four daughters ahead of him on a transatlantic voyage to England. The ship collided with another vessel, killing all the children. Spafford wrote the hymn as his ship passed the spot where his daughters had died. Spafford and Anna had three more children, one of which died from scarlet fever. The Spafford family along with others eventually moved to Jerusalem to establish the American Colony, which engaged in philanthropic work for people regardless of religious affiliation.



**Randall Standridge** (b. 1976) received his Bachelor’s of Music Education and Master’s in Music Composition from Arkansas State University. After serving as Director of Bands at Harrisburg High School in Arkansas, he left in 2013 to pursue a full-time career as a composer and marching band editor for Grand Mesa Music Publishers. His music is performed internationally and has been featured as “Editor’s Choice” from the sheet music company J. W. Pepper. He is a prolific composer, even creating “one-week works” where he molds student’s ideas into complete pieces over just a seven-day span. Last month, he announced the formation of his own music publishing company, Randall Standridge Music. In addition to his career as a composer, Mr. Standridge is active as a clinician, drill designer, music arranger, and color guard designer. His hobbies include photography and writing. He lives in Jonesboro, Arkansas, with his husband.

The composer writes about “**Choose Joy**”:

In May 2021, I was approached by Joe Glass of Salyards Middle School about a commission. Joe asked if I would be interested in a new commission, but that the circumstances were somewhat unusual. He told me about Nicole Crandall, a recent graduate from the high school that Joe’s program feeds and a former student. Nicole had been battling Level 4 Glioblastoma, a very aggressive form of brain cancer. She was then 20 years old and had been moved into hospice care. To celebrate her, they have asked that I create work in her honor. Illness is the thief of time.

In spite of this, Nicole and her family had created a motto that they used to navigate this difficult time. “Choose Joy”. I was very moved by this, as I feel too many people waste their time (and their lives) choosing hate, choosing anger, choosing misery. Choose Joy. I like that. To Nicole and her family, thank you for reminding us that happiness can be a choice, even in the face of incredible adversity.

“**Choose Joy**” uses elements of Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” along with a five note motif representing the five family members of Nicole’s immediate family. A trio is heard near the beginning, representing Nicole and her siblings; the parts have been written for the instruments they played in band (flute, clarinet, saxophone). The work alternates between an rhythmic and joyful intensity and a more nostalgic and bittersweet lyrical moment in the middle. There are moments of happiness, humor, worry, pain, and determination. I hope this work serves as a fitting tribute to all those who choose joy in times of darkness.

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