

# Northwestern University

HENRY AND LEIGH  
BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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## Courage

### Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Robert Taylor, *conductor*

Shawn Vondran, *guest conductor*

Imran Amarshi, *doctoral assistant conductor*

PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL  
2024-25 SEASON

### Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Robert Taylor, *conductor*

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2024, AT 7:30 P.M.

## Courage

### Sinfonietta, Op. 60 "Sokol Festival" (1926/1975)

I. *Sokol Fanfare*

**Leoš Janáček**

(1854-1928)

Shawn Vondran, *guest conductor*

### Serenade in D Minor, Op. 44/B. 77 (1878)

I. *Moderato, quasi marcia*

II. *Minuetto*

IV. *Allegro molto*

**Antonín Dvořák**

(1841-1904)

### Bury and Rise (2023)

**Catherine Likhuta**

Imran Amarshi, *doctoral assistant conductor*

INTERMISSION

### Florentiner: Grande Marcia Italiana, Op. 214 (1907/1980)

**Julius Fučík**

(1872-1916)

*arr. M.L. Lake*

*ed. Frederick Fennell*

### Music for Prague 1968 (1968)

*Introduction and Fanfare*

*Aria*

*Interlude*

*Toccata and Chorale*

**Karel Husa**

(1921-2016)

## PROFILES

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**Robert Taylor** is Professor of Conducting and Director of Bands at Northwestern University, where he holds the John W. Beattie Chair of Music. As the fourth person in the university's history to hold the Director of Bands position, Taylor conducts the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, teaches graduate and undergraduate conducting, and leads all aspects of the band program. With a career in music education spanning over thirty years, previous appointments include the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC, University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA, and Eureka High School in Northern California, where ensembles under his direction earned recognition by *Downbeat Magazine*, the Selmer Corporation, and Grammy Signature Schools.

Known for innovative and immersive concert programming, Taylor maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor. Past engagements include performances with the Vancouver Brass Orchestra, U.S. Army Field Band, Pacific Symphonic Wind Ensemble, and Chicago-based contemporary music group, the Maverick Ensemble. Collaborations span a wide range of international artists—from virtuosi performers Barbara Butler (trumpet), Jose Franch-Ballester (clarinet), Larry Knopp (trumpet), Julia Nolan (saxophone), Daniel Perantoni (tuba), Jeff Nelsen (horn), Gail Williams (horn), and Allen Vizzutti (trumpet); to composers Mason Bates, Jodie Blackshaw, Steven Bryant, Raven Chacon, Michael Colgrass, John Corigliano, David Maslanka, Cait Nishimura, Joel Puckett, Alex Shapiro, Frank Ticheli, and Dana Wilson; to jazz, pop, and crossover performers Ingrid Jensen, Shruti Ramani, Manhattan Transfer, Kenny Werner, and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. As a passionate advocate of music in the schools, Dr. Taylor is in high demand as a festival adjudicator, rehearsal clinician, and guest conductor throughout North America and internationally. His frequent appearances with young musicians include serving as principal conductor of the Puget Sound Youth Wind Ensemble and guest conductor of numerous honor groups, such as the Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall, National Youth Band of Canada, AMIS Asia Honor Band, California Orchestra Directors Association Honor Symphony, and many provincial and all-state bands across Australia, Canada, and the United States.

Taylor received the Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees in conducting from Northwestern University, where he studied with Mallory Thompson, and the Bachelor of Arts degree in Trumpet and Music Education

from Humboldt State University. His research on wind literature, rehearsal techniques, integration of cutting-edge technology, and application of Ashtanga Yoga to improve body awareness and injury prevention in the training of nascent conductors and performing musicians, has been featured in presentations at regional, national, and international music conferences, including appearances at the Midwest Clinic, College Band Directors National Association, and on several popular podcasts. Among numerous contributions in leading publications, recent research focuses on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, through contemporary, socially-conscious programming and as co-author of *The Horizon Leans Forward*, a book that amplifies the talent and voices of underrepresented communities in the wind band field.

Dr. Taylor is a Killam Laureate, Jacob K. Javits Fellow, and Thomas A. Davis Teaching Prize Winner, and has served as on the executive boards of the British Columbia Music Educators Association and College Band Directors National Association (Northwest Region). He is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi and Pi Kappa Lambda National Honor Societies, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and National Association for Music Education.

**Shawn D. Vondran** is in his eleventh year as the Associate Director of Bands at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music. His responsibilities include conducting the Symphonic Band along with teaching courses in conducting, wind repertoire, orchestral repertoire, and other courses in the music performance and education curricula. During his tenure at Northwestern, the Symphonic Band was selected to perform at the 2020 College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) North Central Division Conference. The ensemble frequently engages with a number of composers and participates in consortia to support the creation and performance of new music for the wind band medium.

Dr. Vondran served on the faculties at Ball State University, Western Illinois University, and Youngstown State University prior to his appointment at Northwestern University. He began his career as a band director at Mentor High School in Ohio, where his ensembles consistently received accolades for their performances.

Recently, Vondran was elected by his peers to the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. He also received the College of Fine Arts Dean's

Teaching Award while at Ball State University for excellence in teaching and dedication to his students. Additionally, the Ball State University Symphony Band was selected to perform at the 2012 and 2014 Indiana Music Education Association Conference during his tenure.

Vondran maintains an active schedule with engagements throughout the United States as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. In addition to performance engagements, he is an on-going contributor to the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* series published by GIA and appeared in the *National Band Association Journal*. He has also presented a clinic at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. Dr. Vondran has worked with a number of composers in the preparation, performance, and/or recording of their works for the wind band medium. These artistic collaborations include John Corigliano, Christopher Rouse, David Maslanka, Michael Daugherty, Steven Bryant, Joel Puckett, and Jennifer Higdon. He is a member of the College Band Directors National Association, where he serves as the Illinois state chair, and Pi Kappa Lambda.

Vondran received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in instrumental conducting, with an emphasis in music education, from the University of Miami (FL). Vondran completed a Master of Music degree in instrumental conducting at Youngstown State University and earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree (magna cum laude) at The Ohio State University.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### **Sinfonietta, Op. 60 “Sokol Festival”**

**Janáček**

Leoš Janáček was a Czech composer, teacher, and music theorist who founded music schools and conservatories in his homeland, particularly in Brno. Throughout his career, Janáček was inspired by folk songs and tales from his home. Additionally, he studied the circumstances in which “speech melodies” impact the psychology and temperament of speakers and the coherence within speech. This created a unique style of composition that utilizes short motifs, unique structures, and modality. While his early works were not widely accepted, some of his most fruitful years were from the age of seventy onward.

*Sokol Fanfare* was originally one of several fanfares that Janáček composed for a “Sokol Slet” (Falcon Festival), a gymnastic event in Prague. Founded in 1862, and still active today, the Sokol movement is an all-age gymnastics organization based upon the principle of “a strong mind in a sound body.”

Eventually, this movement spread across Eastern Europe and contributed to the Czech identity and nationalism. Beyond Europe, the Sokol movement also influenced various organizations, such as the Boy Scouts. Composed for brass and percussion in 1926, *Sokol Fanfare* was first performed in 1926 in Prague’s Old Town Square for a Sokol rally attended by 80,000 people, and later became the opening movement of Janáček’s *Sinfonietta* for full orchestra. This fanfare was inspired by military bands he heard in his youth and invokes the sense of pride and connection he felt at these festivals.

### **Serenade in D Minor, Op. 44/B. 77**

**Dvořák**

One of the most prominent Czech composers, Antonín Dvořák, grew up and started his musical career in Prague. With the support of notable composers like Johannes Brahms, Dvořák quickly gained international success with his style that built on past traditions while incorporating them with Czech, Moravian, and Slavic folk music. In 1892, Dvořák became the director of the National Conservatory of American Music in New York City. While he only lived in the United States for a short time, Dvořák wrote some of his most famous pieces there, while exploring ways to represent America through music. Eventually, Dvořák returned and died in Prague where he is honored by the annual Dvořák Prague International Music Festival.

Composed within two weeks in 1878, *Serenade in D Minor, Op. 44* showcases Dvořák’s interest in other musical voices and his use of folk songs. The opening movement is an almost satirical nod to the serenades of Mozart and central European wind-band music style, *Harmoniemusik*. Meanwhile, both the second movement and the finale utilize multiple Czech folk dances including a “furiant,” which is a quick dance in triple meter with frequently shifting accents. Altogether, it follows in the footsteps of history while exemplifying the qualities brought forth by Dvořák’s style and connection to Czech music.

### **Bury and Rise**

**Likhuta**

Catherine Likhuta is a Ukrainian-Australian composer, pianist and recording artist. Her music exhibits high emotional charge, programmatic nature, rhythmic complexity, and Ukrainian folk elements. Likhuta’s pieces have been played extensively around the world, including in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Glyndebourne Opera House, and Meyerson Symphony Center.

Her works have been commissioned and performed by prominent symphony orchestras, chamber ensembles (such as Chicago Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet, Atlantic Brass Quintet, and U.S. Army Field Band Horns) and soloists. She is a two-time winner of the International Horn Society Composition Contest (virtuoso division) and a recipient of several awards, including two grants from the Australia Council for the Arts.

Likhuta holds a bachelor's degree in jazz piano from Kyiv Glière Music College, a five-year post-graduate degree in composition from the National Music Academy of Ukraine (Kyiv Conservatory) and a Ph.D. in composition from the University of Queensland. She is a recipient of the Vice-Chancellor's Alumni Excellence Award from the University of Queensland.

The composer provides the following note about the piece:

In February 2022, the world was shocked by Russia's barbaric invasion of Ukraine. My 60-year-old disabled mother lived in Kyiv at the time and did not survive the attack on the city. Later, I was approached by Jerry Junkin and the Dallas Winds with a commission request for a piece which would celebrate the stoic heroism of the Ukrainian resistance. I quickly realized that my brain has repressed many of the most traumatic memories of these past few months. The start of the full-scale war and many of the subsequent developments felt absolutely surreal. Perhaps, it is only through music that I can express what I need to say about these events. There are no words to describe how important this commission is to me.

The piece will feature the key elements of Ukrainian folk music and its gutsy, almost tribal yet wonderfully optimistic spirit. The capabilities of wind band fit perfectly with Ukrainian musical traditions - from the band's angular rhythms to its brilliant runs on woodwinds going up against heroic brass and colourful percussion. Furthermore, there are numerous possibilities to imitate traditional Ukrainian instruments with the core band arsenal: piccolo and flute can sound just like sopilka, horn makes an excellent trembita, and harp is a great substitute for bandura.

The title of the piece, *Bury and Rise*, is a loose translation of a line from the iconic poem *Zapovit* ("Testament", 1861) by Taras Shevchenko, arguably the most important artist for the Ukrainian identity.

Shevchenko asks to bury him when he passes and then rise to defend the homeland. That is exactly what Ukrainians have done. *Bury and Rise* celebrates the spirit of the Ukrainian people, their never-ending optimism against all odds, and—as a news reporter recently put it—their stamina as the fastest renewable energy source.

### ***Florentiner: Grande Marcia Italiana, Op. 214***

**Fučík**

Julius Fučík was born in Prague, in what is now the Czech Republic. Showing exceptional music talent at a young age, Fučík entered the Prague Conservatory at the age of twelve. He became a professional bassoonist and simultaneously explored his interest in composition, which led to studies with Antonín Dvořák. Fučík graduated from the conservatory at nineteen and began a long association with the military bands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He spent sixteen years as a military band conductor, and during his brilliant career as bandmaster to the 86th Hungarian Infantry Regiment at Budapest, he developed his own wide-ranging style of writing marches. Fučík was a prolific composer with over 400 works to his credit.

Fučík's *Florentiner* was originally titled, *La Rosa di Toscana* ("The Rose of Tuscany"). This tribute to the capital city of Florence is a jewel among Fučík's various marches and contains elements that are considered symphonic and even operatic in nature. Due to its lively characters and dramatic shifts—that are indicative of both Fučík's style and the very popular genre of his time—*Florentiner* gained international popularity.

### ***Music for Prague 1968***

**Husa**

It was late August 1968 when I decided to write a composition dedicated to the city in which I was born. I thought about writing for Prague for some time because the longer I was away from the city, the more I remembered the beauty of it. During the tragic and dark moments for Czechoslovakia in August 1968, I suddenly felt the necessity to write this piece so long meditated. As I watched day and night, I was thinking about that beautiful city where I grew up, and all that it means to me. I was concerned for my sister and family who still lived in Prague. I decided then to write a piece for Prague and what the city has stood for throughout history.

Three main ideas bind the composition together. The first and most important is an old Hussite war song from the 15th century, *Ye Warriors of God and His Law*, a symbol of resistance and hope for hundreds of years, whenever fate lay heavy on the Czech nation (it has also been utilized by many

Czech composers, included Smetana in *My Country*). The beginning of this religious song is announced very softly in the first movement by the timpani and concludes in a strong unison (*Chorale*). The song is never heard in its entirety. The second idea is the sound of bells throughout; Prague, named also “The City of Hundreds of Towers,” has used its magnificently sounding church bells as calls of distress as well as of victory. The last idea is a motif of three chords first appearing very softly under the piccolo solo at the beginning of the piece, in flutes, clarinets, and horns. Later it reappears at extremely strong dynamic levels, for example, in the middle of the *Aria*. Different techniques of composing as well as orchestrating have been used in *Music for Prague 1968* and some new sounds explored, such as the percussion section in the Interlude and the ending of the word, etc. Much symbolism also appears: in addition to the distress calls in the first movement (*Fanfare*), the unbroken hope of the Hussite song, sound of bells, or the tragedy (*Aria*), there is also the bird call at the beginning (piccolo solo), a symbol of the liberty which the city of Prague has seen only for moments during its thousand years of existence.

–Karel Husa

## BAND PROGRAM

Director of Bands	Robert Taylor
	<i>John W. Beattie Chair of Music</i>
Associate Director of Bands	Shawn Vondran
Director of Athletic Bands	Daniel Farris
Department Assistant	Maggie Whiteman
Doctoral Assistants	Imran Amarshi, Sheldon Frazier
Graduate Assistants	Rachel Stiles, Michael Witt
Stage Managers	Troy Archer, Stewart Bridgeforth, Chris Carrigg, Arlo Hollander, Zachary Hommel, Raúl Orellana
Ensemble Librarians	Maggie Umanetz-Lertprasopsak, Kevin Acuña
Equipment Managers	Brian Kachur, Micah Northam
AV Manager & Outreach Coordinator	Oliver Stark

## SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Robert Taylor, *conductor*

Shawn Vondran, *guest conductor*

Imran Amarshi, *doctoral assistant conductor*

### Flute

Claire Kim  
Mary Miklos  
Alice Oh  
Hanna Oyasu  
Maya Ravi\*  
Holly Venkitaswaran

### Oboe & English Horn

Christopher Axline  
Carlie Meeker  
Timothy Zhang\*

### Bassoon

Jason Capozucca\*  
Miranda Jiang  
Elizabeth Myers

### Clarinet

Tyler Baillie  
Gavin Boudreau  
Jason Chen  
Wei-Huai Chen\*  
Cameron Leonardi  
Minghao Liu  
Connor Myers\*  
Leo Shen  
Nathan Soto  
Daniel Spielman

### Saxophone

Antonio Jarvey  
Haven Kahn\*  
Hudson O'Reilly\*  
Christopher Unumb  
Yi Carson Zhong

### Trumpet

Brendan Breen  
Isaac Brown  
Jalen Dobson  
Sam Ferguson  
Stefan Filip  
Zachary Hommel\*  
Braxton Leek  
William Lewis\*  
Tehya Shapiro

### Horn

Emi Brady  
Kyle Cho  
Dena Levy\*  
Jonathan Mandrell  
Jack Moeser  
Samantha Strickland  
  
Trombone  
Ellie Abbott\*  
Wesley Connor  
Liam Kantzler  
Liam Melvin  
Angel Salinas  
Lola Stevenson

### Euphonium

Chris Carrigg\*  
Oliver Stark

### Tuba

Evan DeRicco\*  
Nolan Fallon  
Sam Russ

### Percussion

Samuel Kim  
Danel Kinney  
Simeon Lee  
Blake Parker  
Jacob Scheidt  
Stephen Symank\*

### Cello

Miquel Fuentes

### String Bass

Alexander Wallack

### Piano/Synth

Cameron Akioka  
Sunmin Shin

### Harp

Lynn Koschnitzke

\*Section leader

## CONCERT MANAGEMENT OFFICE STAFF

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Director of Concert Management  
Concert Operations Manager  
Ticketing Manager  
Marketing Manager  
Marketing Coordinator  
Technical Services Manager  
Technical Services Manager  
Concert Business Manager  
Supporting Staff  
Dean, Bienen School of Music

Jerry Tietz  
Kait Samuels  
Maxwell A. Johnson  
Laura Nielsen  
Elizabeth Avery  
Bill Milgram  
Zachary Lovitch  
Meg Lindsey  
150 Northwestern Students  
Jonathan Bailey Holland

## KEYBOARD MAINTENANCE

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Supervisor of Keyboard Maintenance  
Piano Technician

Wesley Owen  
Christina Scroggins

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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- Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the house manager. In consideration of the artists and other members of the audience, patrons who must leave before the end of the concert are asked to do so between pieces.
- Photography and audio/video recording of performances is strictly prohibited without prior written consent of the Concert Management Office.
- A limited number of assisted listening devices are available for the hearing impaired. Inquire at the box office.
- Smoking is prohibited by law in all Bienen School of Music performance venues.
- Every patron who will be occupying a seat must have a ticket in order to be admitted into the concert.
- The presenter reserves the right to ask any patron who is disrupting the event in any way to leave the concert hall.
- In the event of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher.
- When joining us for upcoming concerts, please leave the Concert Management Office phone number (847-491-5441) with anyone who might need to reach you in case of emergency.

# Band Concerts FALL 2024

## Song and Dance

Sunday, November 17, 3 p.m.  
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, \$6/4  
Concert Band

*Daniel J. Farris, conductor*

Works by Frank Ticheli, Hugh Stuart, James Curnow, and Ralph Vaughan Williams

## Courage

Friday, November 22, 7:30 p.m.  
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, \$8/5  
Symphonic Wind Ensemble

*Robert Taylor, conductor*

Works by Leoš Janáček, Antonín Dvořák,  
Catherine Likhuta, and Karel Husa

## Sunflower Studies

Friday, December 6, 7:30 p.m.  
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, \$6/4  
Symphonic Band

*Shawn Vondran, conductor*

Works by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Joel Love,  
Darius Milhaud, and Nicole Piunno

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