

Northwestern University

HENRY AND LEIGH  
BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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**The Time is Now**

**Northwestern University Concert Band**

Daniel J. Farris, *conductor*

Michael Witt, *graduate assistant conductor*

PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL  
2024–25 SEASON

**Northwestern University Concert Band**  
Daniel J. Farris, *conductor*  
Michael Witt, *graduate assistant conductor*

SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2025, AT 3:00 P.M.

**The Time is Now**

***Tuttarana*** (2014/2024)

**Reena Esmail**

***Our Cast Always*** (2018)

**Julie Giroux**

***Love & Nature*** (2024)

*Flower Power*  
*Star-Crossed*  
*Slow Burn*

**Gala Flagello**

***Smiling After the Rain*** (2020)

**Yukiko Nishimura**

Michael Witt, *graduate assistant conductor*

***Unidad en Ritmo*** (2023)

*Guaguanacó: Serenity in feeling friendship*  
*Son Montuno: Joyful unity in play and dance*  
*Bolero: Through unity and mutual empathy*  
*Afro Cuban: Adversity overcome by perseverance, hope and support*

**Michele Fernández**

***Keepers of the House***

*I. Atmospheric*

**Conni Ellisor**

***On Parade*** (1904)

**Amanda C.E. Aldridge**  
(1866–1956)  
*ed. Kaitlin Bove*

## PROFILE

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**Daniel J. Farris** is in his 25th year as Director of Athletic Bands at Northwestern University where he is responsible for conducting the Wildcat Marching Band and Concert Band, and teaching courses in conducting and music education. He has been the Assistant Conductor of the Northshore Concert Band since 2006. Mr. Farris holds degrees in Music Education from James Madison University and the University of Illinois.

Prior to moving to Northwestern, Farris served as Assistant Director of Bands at Illinois State University and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He was also the Director of the Walt Disney World Collegiate All-Star Band in Orlando, FL, and taught in the public schools of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Bands under his direction have performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, Bands of America Regional and National Championships, the Dublin, Ireland St. Patrick's Day Parade, and numerous bowl games including most recently the 2023 Las Vegas Bowl.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### *Tuttarana*

### **Esmail**

Reena Esmail is an Indian-American composer born in Chicago, IL and raised in Los Angeles, but has always felt connected to her ancestral homeland. Esmail creates her works to bring together the communities of Indian and Western classical music. Her compositions span from orchestral to chamber and choral works. Esmail holds a BM in composition from Julliard, as well as an MM, MMA, and DMA from the Yale School of Music. She is also a Fulbright-Nehru recipient, where she studied Hindustani music in India. Esmail is currently an Artistic Director of Shastra, a non-profit organization that promotes cross-cultural music connecting musical traditions of India and the West.

*Tuttarana* is a piece that celebrates the connection between Indian and Western music, highlighting Esmail's mission. In her own program notes, she states:

The title of this piece is a conglomeration of two words: the Italian word *tutti*, means 'all' or 'everyone', and the term *tarana* designates a specific Hindustani (North Indian) musical form, whose closest western counterpart is the 'scat' in jazz. The *tarana* is a place where musicians can put their greatest virtuosity on display, leaving an audience in

awe. While a *tarana* is a solo form, I wanted to bring that same energy to an ensemble form. This work was originally written for treble chorus, then arranged for brass quintet, and is now in its third iteration for concert band.

Esmail's work highlights how music is for everyone to enjoy, and that everyone should be able to play and perform.

### ***Our Cast Always***

**Giroux**

Julie Giroux is an American-born composer, receiving her education at Louisiana State University and Boston University. Giroux has a robust composition list, spanning from works for symphony orchestra to film works, as well as arranging music for stars Reba McEntyre, Madonna, and Michael Jackson. Giroux is a three-time Emmy Award nominee, and won an Emmy Award in 1992 in the category of Outstanding Individual Achievement in Music Direction. In 1983, Giroux began writing for concert bands, and in 1997 left Los Angeles to compose for concert bands and orchestras full time.

*Our Cast Always* is a work dedicated to rescue animals. In her program notes, Giroux states:

6.5 million companion animals enter animal shelters every year and 2.4 million of these adoptable animals are put down. These numbers do not include the thousands who suffer in silence. Thanks to thousands of caring people, these numbers are steadily decreasing, but we still have a long way to go. This work is dedicated to all those who work hard in the fight to end puppy mills, to rescue suffering pets and to provide care and medical attention to all those rescued. It is dedicated to those companions who get rescued and for those whose rescue never comes.

We are all shepherds. Every living creature is in our care. Hopefully mankind will someday uphold his responsibility and become caretaker of all living things on earth. Maybe someday all humans will be humane and mankind will be kind.

Atop each instrumental part is: "For Those who rescue, Those who get rescued, and especially for Those whose rescue never comes". This composition leans on chordal emotions, leading performers and audience members alike to think of their own pets, and all of those who are waiting for their forever homes.

## *Love & Nature*

**Flagello**

Gala Flagello was born in the United States, and holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition from the Hartt School and a Masters and DMA from University of Michigan. Flagello's works are inspired by a passion for lyricism, rhythmic vitality, meaningful collaboration, and social change. She is the festival director and co-founder of the nonprofit contemporary festival Connecticut Summerfest. Flagello maintains a private studio of composition students at both high school and collegiate levels, as well as being the graduate student instructor for Creative Composition for Non-Majors at the University of Michigan School of Music, and guest lecturer on composition, orchestration, arts administration, and entrepreneurship at universities across the country.

*Love & Nature* is a piece that explores how love exists through lore, myth, and social movements. The work contains heavy percussive elements and wispy woodwind flourishes, calling to the Earthly elements. In her own notes on the work, Flagello states:

Each of the work's three movements connects a different instrumental sound world to the concepts of earth, air, and fire, depicting a blossoming of kindness and hope for the future of our planet. The first movement, *Flower Power*, is inspired by the titular social movement of the 1960s-1970s and sonically critiques the juxtaposition of fragility and strength, beauty and utility, and nonviolence and force. *Flower Power* reflects the ethos of Marc Riboud's iconic photograph *The Ultimate Confrontation: The Flower and the Bayonet* and incorporates a musical Easter egg -- a countermelody for counterculture. The second movement, *Star-Crossed*, summons the hope, whimsy, and longing of its ill-fated protagonists through celestial textures and luminous scoring. The third and final movement, *Slow Burn*, explores both versions of the titular literary trope -- romantic and anger-fueled -- through the arboraceous lens of controlled fire, an originally indigenous practice that mitigates the drought-driven effects of climate change. *Slow Burn* foregrounds bright and wooden sounds to pay homage to our forests and the necessity of ecological restoration.

## *Smiling After the Rain*

**Nishimura**

Yukiko Nishimura is a Japanese composer and pianist. She began learning piano at the age of four and was learning to compose by 7 years old. Nishimura graduated from Tokyo National University of Arts in 1990. In 1991, she started private studies with Dr. Alfred Reed at the University of

Miami, and in 1993, she continued her studies with Dr. Richard Danielpour at Manhattan School of Music. Among her honors, Nishimura received the special mention for her works, *Bright Moon* and *Sparkleberry*, at the 15th and 26th International Competition for Original Composition for Band, respectively, in Corciano, Italy. Outside of music for band, she has composed music for theatrical projects and collaborated with Noh, a Japanese traditional dance-based theater.

Nishimura states: “I wanted to create something that brings happiness and smiles, which we find in small, daily events.” *Smiling After the Rain* explores the feeling of happiness with melodies that range from slow and thoughtful to effervescent and joyous. Nishimura’s harmonies are rich and invokes the style of her teacher, Alfred Reed, through her orchestration. Having been composed at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, this piece offers a reminder to find the small things in life that bring us joy, even when everything else seems so daunting.

### ***Unidad en Ritmo***

### **Fernández**

Michele Fernández is a published composer, active guest clinician, adjudicator and performer in Miami, Florida. After 30 years of teaching in Miami, Fernández served as an active oboist in the Miami area, as well as serving as a rhythm section player in an Afro-Latin/ Jazz group. Her compositions have been premiered at Midwest, IAJE, and regional honour/ all-state venues. Fernández currently serves on the Education Committee for Jazz Education Network (JEN) and is a sponsored clinician for Hal Leonard Publishing, HAPCO Foundation. She is also a co-founder of “Your Jazz Connection” consulting, providing both in-person and virtual guidance for educators and their students on various topics.

*Unidad en Ritmo* translates to English “united in rhythm”, and the piece is an Afro-Latin tribute to cultural unity. In her own program notes, Fernández states:

Afro-Latin jazz is often described as an infectious blend of European melodies and lush harmonies with a heartbeat rooted in the rhythm treasures of Africa. The collaborations of artists like Dizzy Gillespie and Tito Puente gave way to a worldwide love of an art form with humble, profoundly spiritual, and yes, even oppressive beginnings. The intent of this original composition is not to add African rhythms in their purest form to Spanish-styled melodies reminiscent of my own

ancestral heritage: rather, to pay respect to the result of the organic progression, through time -- of the humble cultures thrown together on a small island, and which contributed to the development of these very specific Afro-Cuban forms into what they are... today. These four iconic styles range from ethereal, to joyful, poignant, and intense. In this work, many authentic patterns are woven into the fabric of the winds as well.

On a personal note, it is important to acknowledge that this artistic (and spiritual) union could not have occurred without the tragic circumstances surrounding the unforgivable transportation of enslaved people to the Caribbean. Thoughts often drifted to this fact while writing, and so some of the emotions stirred at the mere contemplation of their suffering may be felt in the Bolero and Afro-Cuban 6/8 sections. Each brief section represents elements of life that are best experienced (or endured) through unity, mutual support, and appreciation for the trials each of us experiences in our own way. It is also hoped that the exhilaration (in the wish to see others rise above their struggles) is also evident in the ending section, where the initial theme heard during the joyous (*Son Montuno*) returns towards the end of the Afro-Cuban 6/8 to represent the indomitable human spirit transcending the negative events that we may all suffer as a result of life's trials.

Fernández' work allows for the audience to not only enjoy the musical elements of different cultures, but to also think about the cultures that have been given trials for being themselves. In this tribute, we are at once one as well as looking in.

### ***Keepers of the House***

### **Ellisor**

Conni Ellisor is an American composer and violinist, and holds degrees from the Juilliard School and University of Denver Lamont School of Music. Ellisor has an extensive background in performing, including being a member of the Denver Symphony and concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic. Her composition career rose to fame when she was a composer-in-residence at the Nashville Chamber Orchestra in the late 1990's. Ellisor currently serves as top-call studio musician and member of Nashville String Machine, and has had a career in contemporary jazz performance. Ellisor's compositions use her extensive performance background to create works that are accessible, exciting, and inspiring.

*Keepers of the House* was first thought of in 2019, and came to completion in 2022 after the pandemic, which had halted large ensemble playing. The two-movement composition is inspired by Suzanne Simard's book, *The Mother Tree*, which is about how trees are interconnected with each other. In her own program notes, Ellisor says:

I am intrigued by the relatively new data that all trees are interconnected; that indeed they communicate, send energy to each other, and care for each other. The evidence is overwhelming that all of our forests are alive and communicating, that the “magical trees” we dreamed about as children are real. And I wonder what that means for us. I find it unlikely that we are the exception, but more probably we've just lost the innate intuition that we are also part of the vast interwoven web of life.

Through this piece, we can hear how the individual instruments speak to each other, and are in constant communication. Like Ellisor wonders, the work is a web, bringing together every instrumentalist into one moment.

### ***On Parade***

### **Aldridge**

Amanda Aldridge was a British opera singer, teacher, and composer under the pseudonym Montague Ring. She attended the Royal College of Music in London, studying voice as well as harmony and counterpoint. Following her education, Aldridge worked as a concert singer, piano accompanist and voice teacher until a throat condition ended her concert career. Afterwards, she turned to teaching and composing, publishing thirty songs between 1907 and 1925 in various styles and genres. Many of her works contained settings of African poems and literature, allowing for her to pay homage to her culture.

Aldridge, or Montague Ring, is more well-known for her vocal and piano works. In a 1910 manuscript, *On Parade* is listed as the only march in her composition list. This piece is unusually original due to a secondary trio section, having the piece modulate to three tonal areas instead of the typical two. This English “quick step” march has been edited to resolve practical and stylistic issues, as well as to modernize the instrumentation.

–Lex Burson and Michael Witt



## CONCERT BAND

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Daniel J. Farris, *conductor*

Michael Witt, *graduate assistant conductor*

### *Flute*

Hina Kazama  
Katherine Li  
Andrea Luna  
Maya Rosalez  
Lexi Stott  
Maggie Umanetz-  
Lertprasopsak  
Anthony Xie  
Anna Zhao

### *Oboe*

Ella Higginson  
Cadence Hornsby

### *Clarinet*

Lex Burson  
Kaleah Estep  
Zoey Hall  
Josie InTham  
Michael Jenz  
Steven Johnson  
Sarah Mersch  
Anna Murray  
Zia Robbins  
Alan Sun  
Maya Vuchic  
Colin Wong

### *Bass Clarinet*

Gavin Boren

### *Bassoon*

Colin Kurtz  
Elizabeth Meyers

### *Saxophone*

Aryan Avadhanam  
Timothy Bachman Jr.  
Grant Kahler  
Peter Kim  
Caden Lee  
Darren Qiu  
Barkot Simegn  
Frank Wang

### *Horn*

Sarah Carley  
Patricia Liu  
Nathan Pruyne  
Connor Zamborsky

### *Trumpet*

Creighton Cantrell  
Jacob Emmons  
Rachel Garich  
Rachel Gringorten  
Jason Latz  
Marina McCreary  
Xander Senechal  
Brandon Steiert  
Noah Tannas

### *Trombone*

Kevin Acuña  
David Aguilar  
Tim George  
Lola Stevenson

### *Euphonium*

Chris Carrigg  
Parth Rana

### *Tuba*

Pedro Rodríguez  
Michael Witt  
Nat Zeleke

### *Percussion*

Katie Chen  
David Drinko  
MJ Gudino  
Mark Li  
Matthew Li  
Benjamin Lin  
Joshua Lin  
Vivian Perez-Leyva  
Ryan Wilkov  
Jimmy Zhang

### *Piano*

Jasmine Meyer

### *String Bass*

Evan Diethrich

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## BAND PROGRAM

Director of Bands

Robert Taylor

*John W. Beattie Chair of Music*

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, Sarah Perry

Ensemble Librarians

Maggie Umanetz-Lertprasopsak, Kevin Acuña

Equipment Managers

Brian Kachur, Micah Northam

AV Manager & Outreach Coordinator

Oliver Stark

## **CONCERT MANAGEMENT OFFICE STAFF**

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Director of Concert Management	Jerry Tietz
Concert Operations Manager	Kait Samuels
Ticketing Manager	Maxwell A. Johnson
Marketing Manager	Laura Nielsen
Marketing Coordinator	Elizabeth Avery
Technical Services Manager	Bill Milgram
Technical Services Manager	Zachary Lovitch
Concert Business Manager	Meg Lindsey
Supporting Staff	150 Northwestern Students
Dean, Bienen School of Music	Jonathan Bailey Holland

## **KEYBOARD MAINTENANCE**

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Supervisor of Keyboard Maintenance	Wesley Owen
Piano Technician	Chris 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.