Northwestern University

HENRY AND LEIGH BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

American Voices

Northwestern University Concert Band
Michael Parker, *conductor*
Maggie Whiteman, *doctoral assistant conductor*

PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL
2026-27 SEASON

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF NORTHWESTERN BANDS

For one hundred years, **Northwestern Bands** has enriched the lives of students through exceptional musical experiences and a shared pursuit of excellence. Since the establishment of the Department of Bands in 1926 under Glenn Cliffe Bainum, students and faculty have built one of the nation's premier collegiate band programs.

A defining feature of Northwestern Bands has been its extraordinary continuity of leadership. Bainum's student, John P. Paynter, led the program for forty-five years, shaping the modern wind band through influential performances, publications, and artistic vision. He was succeeded by his student, Mallory Thompson, whose twenty-eight years at the helm brought international recognition through acclaimed recordings and mentorship of generations of performers and conductors. In 2024, Robert Taylor, a former student of Thompson and Bienen School alumnus, became Northwestern's fourth Director of Bands, continuing a teacher-student legacy spanning four generations.

Today, Northwestern Bands serves students from across the University through the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, and Athletic Bands, including the renowned Wildcat Marching Band, "The Finest Band in the Land." Alumni of these ensembles perform, teach, create, and lead in major musical and educational institutions around the world.

As the program enters its second century, Northwestern Bands continues to evolve through multimedia presentations, interdisciplinary and community-centered collaborations, performances of works by student composers, and appearances by distinguished alumni as soloists and guest artists. These initiatives reflect the same spirit of creativity and exploration that has defined the program since its founding.

This centennial season celebrates not only a remarkable history, but also the people who made it possible: the students, faculty, alumni, families, and friends whose dedication and generosity have sustained Northwestern Bands for a century. As we honor our first hundred years, we look forward to the next century of artistry, innovation, and impact.

Northwestern University Concert Band

Michael Parker, *conductor*

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2026, AT 3:00 P.M.

American Voices

***Esprit de Corps* (1985)** **Robert Jager**

Maggie Whiteman, *doctoral assistant conductor*

***Shenandoah* (2019)** **Omar Thomas**

***Chester* from *New England Triptych* (1778/1956)** **William Schuman**
(1910–1992)

***Pathways (*2021)** **Danielle Fisher**

***E Pluribus Unum* (1917/1989)** **Fred Jewell**
(1875–1936)
ed. John P. Paynter

***Halcyon Hearts: An Overture for Love* (2021)** **Katahj Copley**

CONCERT BAND

Michael Parker, *conductor*
Maggie Whiteman, *doctoral assistant conductor*

Flute/Piccolo
Ruiqi Liu
Maya Rosalez
Lauren Ryoo
Anna Zhao

Oboe
Abby Fiedler
Mina Zhu

Clarinet
Josie InTham
Nicolas Lofgren
Sarah Mersch
Grace Myers
Angel Samano
Alan Shu
David Stephens
Colin Wong

Bass Clarinet
Rudy Amezcua-Shoeman
Gavin Boren
Frankie Demeter

Bassoon
Brian Fadel
Elizabeth Myers

Saxophone
Caleb Dorvilier
Grant Kahler
William Ly
Clayton Michaels
Darren Qiu
Wilson Schaefer
Noah Wilkins
William Xia

Horn
Ryan Blayne
Sarah Gomez
Matthew Li
Clara Paulson

Trumpet
Rachel Garich
Rachael McKay
Lilie Shlyak
Sarah Wichman
Yue Zhang

Trombone
Giuseppe Amato
Anna Gartner
Angel Guerrero Navarrete
Nicholas Lynch

Euphonium
Nicholas Holland
Parth Rana

Tuba
Stephen Heller

Percussion
Makenna Crim
Alex Grinberg
Gaston Klaric
Gary Li
Josh Herman
Nina Hernandez

Piano
Gregory Sisco

PROFILE

Michael Parker is a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator and serves as Director of Athletic Bands at Northwestern University. In his role, he directs the "Wildcat" Marching Band, Basketball Band, Concert Band, and teaches courses in conducting at the Bienen School of Music. Prior to Northwestern, Parker completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in wind conducting at Michigan State University under the tutelage of Dr. Kevin Sedatole. At Michigan State, he assisted with all aspects of the band program, including conducting all university concert bands, arranging music and writing drill for the Spartan Marching Band, directing the Spartan Brass women's basketball and hockey pep bands, and serving as a teaching assistant for conducting and music education courses. His dissertation research focused on the transcription of selected movements from Sarah Kirkland Snider's song cycle *Unremembered* for voice, chamber wind ensemble, and electronics.

A passionate advocate for new music, Dr. Parker has commissioned and premiered multiple new works for wind ensemble and chamber winds in his time both as a graduate assistant and as a public school teacher. He has participated in multiple conducting workshops and symposia, including being selected as a Conducting Fellow for the 2023 Reynolds Conducting Institute at the Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference.

During his doctoral studies, Parker served as chair of the dean's Student Advisory Council at Michigan State, organizing and connecting student voice and ideas with administrative initiatives for the betterment of the student body of the College of Music.

Prior to his time at Michigan State, Parker served as director of bands at Ocean Lakes High School in Virginia Beach, VA. Under his direction, the marching and concert ensembles consistently received superior ratings at state marching and concert assessments, earning multiple Virginia Honor Band distinctions and contributing to the school's Blue Ribbon Awards. He served as a contributing author to the book Musicianship: Improvising in Band and Orchestra, edited by David Stringham and H. Christian Bernard and published by GIA Publications.

Parker received his Master's degree in wind conducting from Michigan State University and his Bachelor of Music degree in music education from James Madison University. In 2019, he was selected as the recipient of the JMU Outstanding Early Career Music Educator Award.

PROGRAM NOTES

Esprit de Corps **Jager**

Robert Jager is an American composer, conductor, arranger, and educator. He is a graduate of The University of Michigan, where he studied with Elizabeth Green and William Revell. For four years he served in the United States Navy as the Staff Arranger/Composer at the Armed Forces School of Music. Jager is now retired and is professor emeritus at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee. Jager's credits comprise over 150 published works for band, orchestra, chorus, and various chamber combinations. He has received commissions from some of the finest musical organizations in the world, including the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra,

the Republic of China Band Association, and all five of the Washington-based military bands: Air Force, Army, Army Field, Marines and Navy. Jager has received many honors for his compositions; most notably, he is the only three-time winner of the American Bandmasters Association's "Ostwald Award".

Jager's *Esprit de Corps* is a fantasy on *The Marines' Hymn*, written in tribute to the United States Marine Band and the musical spirit and integrity of its conductor, Colonel John R. Bourgeois, for whom the initial tempo marking, "Tempo di Bourgeois," is named. Full of energy and drama, the composition explores multiple themes, ranging from heroic to lyrical. The many twists and turns are emblematic of the virtuosity and adaptability of the members who serve. The United States Marine Corps further details the significance of *The Marines' Hymn* in the following:

> The song is a musical symbol of the Marine Corps' ethos, and singing the hymn is one of the first traditions a Marine learns at recruit training. The words are a rallying cry and a reminder that each Marine is part of a centuries-old tradition of excellence in service and loyalty in brotherhood. The music of the hymn is believed to have originated in the comic opera Geneviéve de Brabant composed by the French composer Jacques Offenbach. Originally written as a two-act opera in 1859, Offenbach revised the work, expanding it to three acts in 1867. This revised version included the song "Couplets des Deux Hommes d'Armes," which is the musical source of *The Marines' Hymn*.
>
> In 1929 the Commandant of the Marine Corps authorized the first official version of *The Marines' Hymn*, in which the fourth line of the first verse originally read "On the land as on the sea." This was revised to its present version on Nov. 21, 1942, when the Commandant approved changing this line to "In the air, on land and sea," acknowledging the important role of aviation within the Corps. In the decades since, *The Marines' Hymn* has become part of American popular culture. It's been played on the radio, sung on television and used as the soundtrack of classic Hollywood films. Even Bugs Bunny put on a uniform and sang through the hymn in support of the Marines during WW2.

For Marines, singing the hymn is more than just obeying an order. It is an act of respect toward all who came before and a reminder of their duty to all those who come after. *The Marines' Hymn* has helped to unite a country behind these brave "soldiers of the sea." Singing it is an act of pride and reverence that unites those who have worn the Marine Corps uniform and represent the values of honor, courage and commitment.

Shenandoah **Thomas**

Described as "elegant, beautiful, sophisticated, intense, and crystal clear in emotional intent," the music of American composer Omar Thomas is widely regarded for its rich harmonic language and unique blend of genre influences. Born to Guyanese parents, Omar moved to Boston in 2006 to pursue a Master of Music degree in jazz composition at the New England Conservatory of Music. Thomas' music has been performed in concert halls across the country. He has been commissioned to create works in both jazz and classical styles. His work has been performed by such diverse groups as the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble, the San Francisco and Boston Gay Men's Choruses, and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Thomas currently composes and freelances in Paris, France. About *Shenandoah*, Thomas writes:

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

Chester* from *New England Triptych **Schuman**

Born in the Bronx, William Schuman dropped out of business school to pursue composition after hearing the New York Philharmonic for the first time. He became a central figure in New York's cultural institutions, leaving his presidency of the Juilliard School to become the first director of the Lincoln Center in 1961. All the while he was active as a composer. He received the inaugural Pulitzer Prize for music in 1943. He shared a fondness for wind music with his Juilliard contemporaries Vincent Persichetti and Peter Mennin, from which came many classic works for wind band.

The *New England Triptych* is a collection of three pieces based on tunes by the colonial-era New England composer William Billings. Schuman wrote the collection in 1956 on a commission from Andre Kostelanetz and the orchestra at the University of Miami. Schuman created his own versions for band later, one movement at a time. *Chester* came first, right on the heels of the original. The orchestration of the two versions is obviously different in important ways, and unlike the other movements, Schuman expands his treatment of *Chester* in the band version. It begins as a chorale before being broken into pieces in an intense development that comprises most of the piece. Schuman describes the work:

> The tune on which this composition is based was born during the very time of the American Revolution, appearing in 1778 in a book of tunes and anthems composed by William Billings called *The Singing Master's Assistant*. This book became known as "Billings' Best" following as it did his first book called *The New England Psalm Singer*, published in 1770. *Chester* was so popular that

it was sung throughout the colonies from Vermont to South Carolina. It became the song of the American Revolution, sung around the campfires of the Continental Army and played by fifers on the march. The music and words, both composed by William Billings, expressed perfectly the burning desire for freedom which sustained the colonists through the difficult years of the Revolution,

Let tyrants shake their iron rod,
And Slav'ry clank her galling chains,
We fear them not, we trust in God,
New England's God forever reigns.

The Foe comes on with haughty Stride;
Our troops advance with martial noise,
Their Vet'rans flee before our Youth,
And Gen'rals yield to beardless Boys.

What grateful Off'ring shall we bring?
What shall we render to the Lord?
Loud Halleluiahs let us Sing,
And praise his name on ev'ry Chord.

–Program note adapted from the score

Pathways **Fisher**

Danielle Fisher is an internationally recognized composer, arranger, and dedicated music educator. She currently lives near Austin, Texas and is the Director of Bands at Dr. Jimmie Don Aycock Middle School. In addition to her work in public schools, Fisher currently serves as Staff Arranger for the Newfound Chamber Winds, and has produced over fifteen original compositions, transcriptions, and arrangements for NCW since 2016. Since 2021, she has consistently accepted commissions for new works and publishes music each year with a focus on writing meaningful pieces for programs with unique and adaptable instrumentation. Her compositions have been performed at The Midwest Clinic, the College Band Directors National Association Conference, Texas Bandmasters Association, the World Association for Symphonic Band & Ensembles conference, and numerous state and national conferences. Through her commitment to writing music that is both artistically rich and accessible, Fisher equips directors with practical solutions while creating impactful musical experiences for students at every level.

Pathways explores themes of introspection, loneliness, and connection, as it flows between sections of noisy overstimulation and solitary reflection. The work incorporates vivid timbral colors of ringing metals in the percussion section, a haunting melody expressed in the soprano and alto saxophones, and sliding trombones that emphasize the flow between states of mind. As the opening motive returns, the music culminates in one final, hopeful swell before dissolving into the inevitability of the unknown future. Written for and dedicated to Dr. Tyler Austin & the Oklahoma State University Concert Band, *Pathways* was inspired by the following text by Rainer Maria Rilke:

> Understand, I'll slip quietly away
> from the noisy crowd
> when I see the pale stars
> rising, blooming, over the oaks.
> I'll pursue solitary pathways
> through the pale
> twilit meadows with only this one dream:
> You come too.

E Pluribus Unum **Jewell**

Frederick Alton Jewell was a remarkable musician whose quiet and reserved nature would not allow him to publicize his own achievements. He expressed what he deemed important through his band scores, his conducting baton, and his euphonium and cornet. Jewell became interested in music at a young age, learning cornet, violin, clarinet, trombone, piano, and calliope. At the age of 16, Jewell ran away from home and joined the Gentry Bros. Dog & Pony Show as a euphonium player. As a performer, Jewell is best remembered as a virtuoso euphonium player. Much of his career was spent playing in or conducting traveling circus bands, including the Gentry Bros. Circus, Ringling Bros. Circus, Sells-Floto Circus, Barnum and Bailey Circus, and Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus.

Jewell's first composition was published in 1897; he eventually started his own publishing company and, in total composed over 100 marches, along with several overtures, waltzes, novelties, and other works. Returning to Indiana in 1923, he led the Murat Temple Shrine Band of Indianapolis, traveled to Tampa to lead its municipal band for a brief period, and spent the balance of his career leading bands in Indiana and composing music. Lacking an academic background, he attended Indiana State Teachers

College in the 1930's to keep his teaching accreditation. Fortunately, the faculty members respected his knowledge in composition, and he received the necessary credits by correcting and arranging his professors' musical works. Highly esteemed by his peers, Jewell was elected to membership in the American Bandmasters Association. Jewell wrote several marches with patriotic titles. *E Pluribus Unum* was composed in 1917 during World War I. The title, the motto of the United States of America, refers to one government created from many states. The motto was selected by a Continental Congress committee appointed in 1776 comprised of Benjamin Franklin, John Quincy Adams, and Thomas Jefferson.

Halcyon Hearts: An Overture for Love **Copley**

Katahj Copley is an American saxophonist, composer and educator. Dr. Copley holds a bachelor's degree in music education and composition from the University of West Georgia and a master's in music composition from the University of Texas at Austin. He received a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Michigan State University in 2026. Dr. Copley is one of eight founding members of the Nu Black Vanguard, a composers collective dedicated to the promotion and advancement of Black composers. He has written over sixty pieces for ensembles including brass choirs, saxophone ensembles, instrumental chamber ensembles, concert choirs, wind ensembles, and jazz ensembles. His compositions have been performed and commissioned by colleges, organizations, universities and professional ensembles in various settings, including state and national music conferences. About *Halcyon Hearts*, Dr. Copley writes:

> Love does not delight in evil
> but rejoices with the truth,
> It always protects, always trusts,
> always hopes, always perseveres
> Love never fails.
>
> *Halcyon Hearts* is an ode to love and how it affects us all. Halcyon denotes a time where a person is ideally happy or at peace, so in short *Halcyon Hearts* is about the moment of peace when one finds their love or passion.
>
> The piece centers around major 7th and warm colors to represent the warmth that love bring us. The introduction, sudden and colorful, symbolizes the feeling of the unexpected journey it takes to find

love. Using the colors and natural energy of the ensemble, we create this sound of ambition and passion throughout the work. No matter what race, gender, religion, nationality or love, we all are united with the common thread of passion from the heart. This piece was written in dedication to those who love no matter which negativity is in the world; do not allow hate and prejudice to guide the way we live our lives. Always choose love and the halcyon days will come.

BAND PROGRAM

Director of Bands	Robert Taylor *Paynter and Anderson Families Professor in Conducting*
Associate Director of Bands	Shawn Vondran
Director of Athletic Bands	Michael Parker
Department Assistant	Emily Whittaker
Doctoral Assistants	Gregory Sisco, Maggie Whiteman
Graduate Assistants	Alexander Gray, Mickaela Pasch, Oliver F. Stark
Stage Managers	Neil Advant, Sadie Becht, Brian Cao, Anna Li, Constantino Lopez, Katy Meffert, Declan Messner, Daniel Navarrette
Ensemble Librarians	Ally Donnelly, Boss Lee, Toby Tse
AV Managers	Mitchell Brady, Cole Zelman
Equipment Manager	Benjmain Hosking

CONCERT MANAGEMENT OFFICE STAFF

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

Supervisor of Keyboard Maintenance	Wesley Owen

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- 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.

100 years | Northwestern BANDS

FALL 2026 CONCERTS

Concert Band
American Voices

Sunday, November 15, 3 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $6/4

Michael Parker, conductor

Michael Parker's inaugural performance as Concert Band conductor features a range of music by American composers both honoring the past and savoring the present.

Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Constellations

Friday, November 20, 7:30 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall $8/5

Robert Taylor, conductor

Featuring commissioned works, the program showcases music by Reena Esmail, Joel Puckett, and David Maslanka, whose distinctive voices continue to shape the evolution of the wind ensemble repertory.

Symphonic Band
"Whatsoever Things..."

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

Shawn Vondran, conductor
Liam Kantzler, bass trombone (Northwestern Concerto Competition Winner)

Liam Kantzler joins the band for Robert Spillman's Concerto for Bass Trombone. Also featured are Zhou Tian's colorful new work *Vivo* and Mark Camphouse's *Whatsoever Things*, in memory of John Paynter.



Robert Taylor
Director of Bands



Shawn D. Vondran
Associate Director of Bands



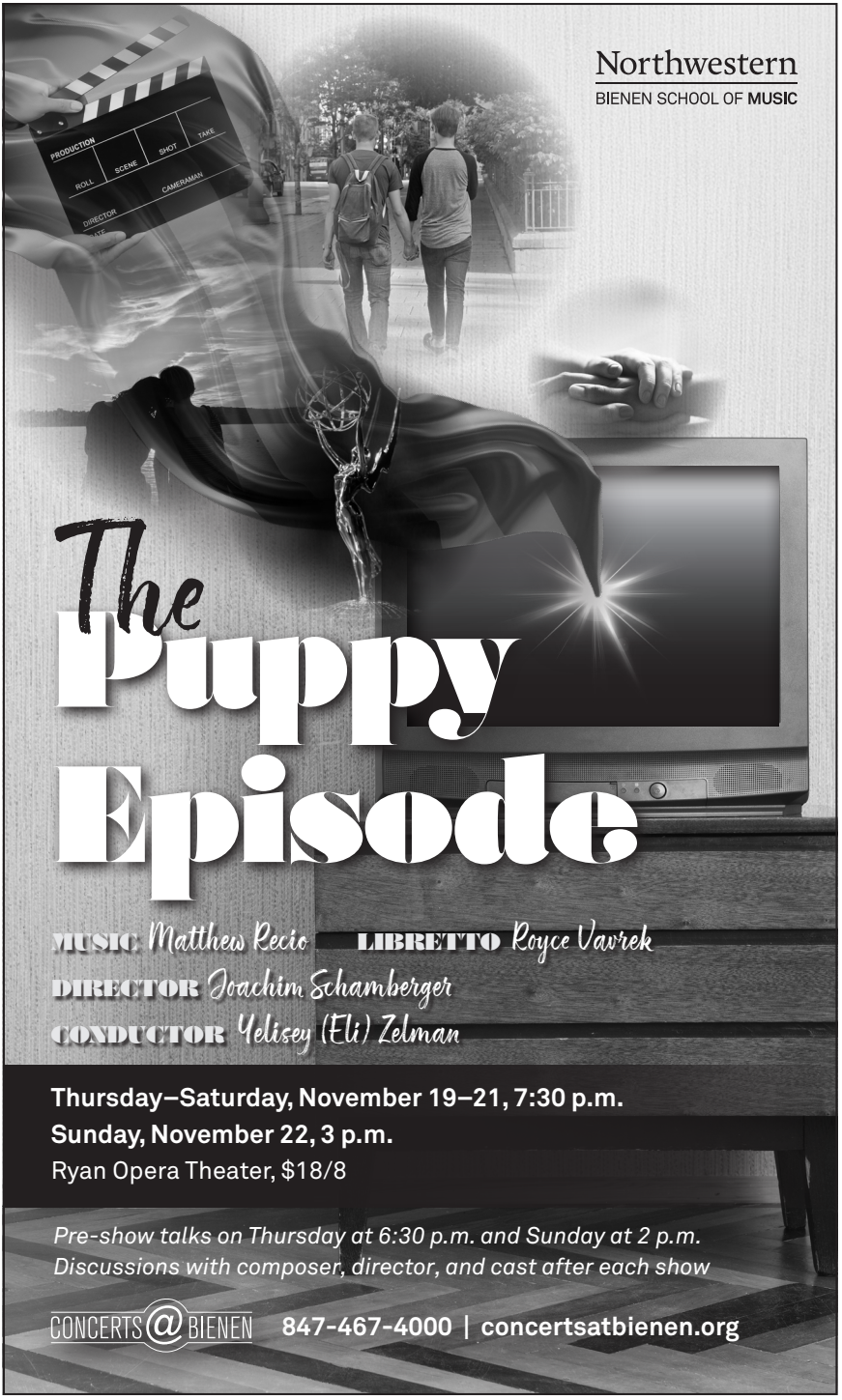
Michael Parker
Director of Athletic Bands

Graduate Conductors
Alexander Gray, Mickaela Pasch, Gregory Sisco, Oliver Stark, Maggie Whiteman

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Northwestern
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PRODUCTION
ROLL
SCENE
SHOT
TAKE
DIRECTOR
CAMERAMAN
The Puppy Episode
MUSIC Matthew Recio
LIBRETTO Royce Vavrek
DIRECTOR Joachim Schamberger
CONDUCTOR Yelisey (Eli) Zelman
Thursday–Saturday, November 19–21, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, November 22, 3 p.m.
Ryan Opera Theater, $18/8
Pre-show talks on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.
Discussions with composer, director, and cast after each show
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Celebrating the Centennial of
NORTHWESTERN BANDS

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