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Photo credit: Owen Zhou.

Wind Symphony

A Child's Garden of Dreams

Shanti Simon, director

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Macky Auditorium

PROGRAM

Tower Ascending for Wind Ensemble

Wayne Oquin (b. 1977)

Three Scenes for Antiphonal Trumpet Choir and Wind Ensemble

Anthony Plog (b. 1947)

World Premiere

Featured Trumpet Choir:

*Keegan Arnsmeier, William Bryant, Toshi Chun, Erik Horne,
Connor Johnson, John Laszakovits, Henry Lesser, Amy Millesen,
Justin Sokolowski, and Leilani Spurlock*

A Child's Garden of Dreams

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

- I. There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.
- II. A drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.
- III. A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.
- IV. A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.
- V. An ascent into heaven where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell where angels are doing good deeds.

Make Our Garden Grow

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

arr. Clare Grundman

PROGRAM NOTES

Tower Ascending for Wind Ensemble

Wayne Oquin (b. 1977)

For centuries, cultures the world over have measured their significance in part by the height of their architecture. The Parthenon in Athens, the Colosseum in Rome, Egyptian pyramids, French cathedrals and Chinese pagodas are only a few instances of civilizations reaching to the skies.

For the 22 years I've lived in Manhattan, I have witnessed the steel scaffolding of a high-rise construction somewhere in the city almost daily. This process—gradual, continuous, at times loud and clangorous—and the symbolism of human upward aspiration were both in my mind in 2008 when John Lynch, then director of bands at The University of Georgia commissioned me to write a new concert band piece on an urban theme. *Tower Ascending* would become one of my most frequently performed works.

The opening trumpet solo, solemn and stately, is constructed of just four notes. Though other pitches are gradually added, this four-note collection becomes the harmonic and melodic foundation of the work, slowly leading the listener into new tonal areas, eventually into highly dissonant regions without a key center. But even in climactic moments of intense chromaticism, every chord reflects the original four-note motive.

The work can be heard as one long crescendo. As a skyscraper is built beam upon beam, floor upon floor, so, too, is this music cumulative, layering successive measures and phrases, rising in register and intensity, accelerating in tempo and harmonic rhythm,

gradually growing in dissonance. The eight-minute piece is divided evenly into two parts, slow and fast, each culminating in an extended clarinet solo.

I would be hard pressed to name only one particular high rise I had in mind during my composing. The historic rivalry between the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building, both constructed in the late 1920s, each vying to be then the world's tallest, is a story that has always fascinated me. Certainly the Freedom Tower and all it represents for New York continues to inspire. But more than the style and features of any one particular structure, it is a symbolic strength, a drive for achievement, that I most want to convey.

In June 1930, shortly after the completion of his monumental art deco building at 42nd and Lexington, Walter Chrysler wrote: “Our present skyscrapers may be torn down, as others have been before them. But the spirit of men working together that they represent will build new ones. In terms of size or height they may be greater, or they may be lesser. But what skyscrapers represent, and what has brought them into being, is a growing thing. And just as the skyscrapers of today are more impressive and adequate than those of yesterday, so surely will those of tomorrow be superior in some important ways. They will be better ones.”

I've attempted to use symphonic winds to their fullest—from quiet whisper to deafening roar—to create a sound relentless in optimism, pushing forward until the final chord. The wind band version is dedicated to my college band director, John Stansberry. I owe him much.

—Program note by the composer

Three Scenes for Antiphonal Trumpet Choir and Wind Ensemble

Anthony Plog (b. 1947)

The University of Colorado Boulder has the privilege of performing *Three Scenes for Antiphonal Trumpet Choir and Wind Ensemble* as a world premiere as part of a consortium.

Anthony Plog has had a rich and varied international career in music—as a composer of operas, symphonic music and chamber works; as an orchestral musician, soloist and recording artist; and as a brass teacher and coach at some of the great music conservatories internationally and now online to students around the world.

The music of Anthony Plog has been performed in more than 30 countries, and he has been the recipient of numerous grants and commissions. After beginning his career writing extensively for brass, he now works in many different musical forms. He has composed three children's operas, the first of which (*How the Trumpet Got Its Toot*) was premiered by the Utah Opera and Symphony. He completed a major tragic opera (*Spirits*) based on a Holocaust theme and recently finished a new opera about a drone operator suffering a nervous breakdown (*The Sacrifice*). Other new works include an oratorio about the first major environmental battle in the United States (*God's First Temples*), in versions for orchestra, symphonic band, and soprano song cycle; and a cantata using the stories of women who have recovered from sex trafficking, prostitution and drug abuse (*Magdalene*).

A Child's Garden of Dreams

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

A Child's Garden of Dreams was commissioned by John and Marietta Paynter for the Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble. It was composed in the summer of 1981 and premiered by Northwestern in 1982.

The following is from *Man and His Symbols* by Carl Jung:

“A very important case came to me from a man who was himself a psychiatrist. One day he brought me a handwritten booklet he had received as a Christmas present from his 10-year-old daughter. It contained a whole series of dreams she had had when she was 8. They made up the weirdest series of dreams I have ever seen, and I could well understand why her father was more than just puzzled by them. Though childlike, they were uncanny, and they contained images whose origin was wholly incomprehensible to the father ... In the unabridged German original, each dream begins with the words of the old fairy tale: ‘Once upon a time.’ By these words the little dreamer suggests that she feels as if each dream were a sort of fairy tale, which she wants to tell her father as a Christmas present.

The father tried to explain the dreams in terms of their context. But he could not do so because there appeared to be no personal associations to them ... The little girl died of an infectious disease about a year after that Christmas ... The dreams were a preparation for death, expressed through short stories, like the tales told at primitive initiations ... The little girl was approaching puberty, and at the same time, the end of her life. Little or nothing in the symbolism of her dreams points to the beginning of a normal adult life. When I first read her dreams, I had the uncanny feeling that they suggested impending disaster.

These dreams open up a new and rather terrifying aspect of life and death. One would expect to find such images in an aging person who looks back on life, rather than to be given them by a child. Their atmosphere recalls the old Roman saying, ‘Life is a short dream,’ rather than the joy and exuberance of its springtime. Experience shows that the unknown approach of death casts an ‘adumbratio’ (an anticipatory shadow) over the life and dreams of the victim. Even the altar in Christian churches represents, on one hand, a tomb and, on the other, a place of resurrection—the transformation of death into eternal life.”

I selected five of the twelve dreams as motifs for the movements of this composition:

- I. There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.
- II. A Drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.
- III. A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.
- IV. A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.
- V. An ascent into heaven, where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell, where angels are doing good deeds.

—Program note by the composer

Make Our Garden Grow

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

arr. Clare Grundman

Candide was Leonard Bernstein's third Broadway musical, following *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town*. Adapted by Lillian Hellman from Voltaire's 18th-century satire on blind optimism, Bernstein's *Candide* is an operetta set in the castle of the Baron Thunder-ten-Tronckh in the mythical European land of Westphalia. Within these walls live the Baron and Baroness; Cunégonde, their beautiful and innocent virgin daughter; Maximilian, their handsome son; Candide, their handsome bastard nephew; and Paquette, the Baroness' buxom serving maid. They are taught by Dr. Pangloss, who preaches the philosophy that all is for the best in "The Best of All Possible Worlds."

Candide and Cunégonde kiss, and Candide is banned from Westphalia. As he leaves, Bulgarians invade, kidnap him and slaughter everyone except for Cunégonde, who they prostitute out to a rich Jew and the Grand Inquisitor. Candide escapes and begins an optimistic, satirical journey, taking with him his sweetheart Cunégonde and Pangloss. Candide journeys to Lisbon, Paris, Buenos Aires and even the legendary El Dorado, only to discover reality in the forms of crime, atrocity, and suffering. He returns to Venice with Cunégonde, stripped of his idealism. His ultimate emotional maturation concludes in the finale with "You've been a fool, and so have I, But come and be my wife, And let us try before we die, To make good sense of life. We're neither pure nor wise nor good; We'll do the best we know; We'll build our house, and chop our wood, And make our garden grow."

Opening on Broadway on Dec. 1, 1956, *Candide* was perhaps a bit too intellectually weighty for its first audiences and closed after just 73 performances. Bernstein was less concerned over the money lost than the failure of a work he cared about deeply. The critics had rightly noted a marvelous score, and Bernstein and others kept tinkering with the show over the years. With each revival, *Candide* won bigger audiences. In 1989, the already seriously ill Bernstein spent his last ounces of vital energy recording a new concert version of the work. “There’s more of me in that piece than anything else I’ve done,” he said.

—Program note by the publisher

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Harold Gomez Montoya

Co-Principal

John Petefish

Caden Craig

Ben Rathje

Paige Scott

Steele Jackson

Kevin Halsey

Jade Vens

Saxophone

Spencer Cox

Principal

Catherine Ryan

Gavin Martellotti

Dylan King

Catherine Oles

Jack Beatenhead

Elise Luzietti

Eli Ward

Trumpet

William Bryant

Connor Johnson

Principal

Keegan Arnsmeier

Erik Horne

Justin Sokolowski

Amy Millesen

Henry Lesser

John Laszakovits

Horn

Sophie Steger
Stacey DeGarmo
Daniel Skib
Lillianne Vincent
Jordan Spivack

Trombone

Madison Joy
Sam McDiarmid-Sterling
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Jackson Franco (bass)

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Tuba

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*The Drowsy Chaperone (2023).
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