



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Spring 2026 TCU Student Composers' Concert

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

7:00 pm

Ed Landreth Auditorium

Program

Strive for the Highest!

Benjamin Lindley
(b. 2004)

“TCU Symphonic Brass Ensemble”

Alex Cadenhead, Jackson Schneider, Jay Davis, Nicholas Stewart, Dhruv Patel, Trumpets
Christina Diggs, Nicolas Hernandez, Elizabeth Maupin, Kate Mitchell, Nick Spires,

Marina Reyna, Horns

Aaron Roden, Dylan Sims, Trombones

Zarrhias Sanders, Bass Trombone

Juan Najera, Knox Stroman, Euphoniums

Ethan McReynolds, Rufino Medado, Tuba

Bella Evans, Diego Llamas, Percussion

The Lonely Shepherd

Xiaokang Deng
(b. 1995)

Lauren Hanifan, Oboe

Nancy Olivares, Cello

Three Movements for Flute and Clarinet

Christian Maakestad
(b. 2005)

II.

Autumn Bell, Flute

Pablo Albert, Clarinet

If I should die

Matthew Hroch
(b. 2005)

Hannah Chapman, Alto

Skyler Cloyd, Piano

<p>Sonata for Flute and Piano <i>II. Theme and Variations</i></p>	<p>Loida Soriano, Flute Frederic Situmorang, Piano</p>	<p>Frederic Situmorang (b. 2006)</p>
<p>The Chanter</p>	<p>Kyle Felkins, Tenor Chonglin Xu, Piano</p>	<p>Minyu Zhang (b. 1995)</p>
<p>Trinity Reflections <i>Section I. Gentle, yet assertive</i></p>	<p>Kyle Cornelison, Piano</p>	<p>Chase Morrison (b. 2004)</p>
<p>Where No Man Pursueth <i>The Promise</i></p>	<p>Telvin Culberson, Baritone Jace Mankins, Piano</p>	<p>Jace Mankins (b. 1998)</p>
<p><i>Remorse</i></p>	<p>Miguel Pesce, Tenor Jace Mankins, Piano</p>	
<p><i>Postlude</i></p>	<p>Eva Renaudat, Violin I Chase Morrison, Violin II Naiomy Jimenez, Viola Bentley Altman, Cello</p>	

Chase Morrison and Jace Mankins are students of Dr. Blaise Ferrandino.
 Frederic Situmorang and Benjamin Lindley are students of Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach.
 Christian Maakestad and Matthew Hroch are students of Dr. Martin Blessinger.
 Xiaokang Deng and Minyu Zhang are students of Dr. Till Meyn.
 The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.
 Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Program Notes

Strive for the Highest! (Benjamin Lindley)

Strive for the Highest! embodies what the people in my life mean to me. Thematically, it explores rising to be your best self, no matter what life throws at you, and it serves as a testament to the power of people in your life. “Strive for the Highest” is the motto of my fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi, the National Honorary Band Fraternity, and the Neo-Impressionistic harmonies and rising-fifth melodic theme carry deep meaning within the fraternity. The power and openness of the harmonies over the soaring melodies convey the idea that brotherhood can triumph over adversity. The ambiguity in tonality of the introduction represents exploring the road to wisdom and themes of longing in a search for direction and purpose. Only once the ensemble can come together in tutti does the piece begin to groove and find itself. Even under turmoil, the people in your life will always help you triumph and continue to strive for the highest.

This piece is written to honor the perseverance of the Gamma Sigma chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi and as a personal thank you to Professor Bobby Francis, Mr. Brian Youngblood, Dr. Drew Dickey, and all of those who continue to advocate for the chapter and the Texas Christian University Band Program as a whole.

The Lonely Sheperd (Xiaokang Deng)

"The Lonely Shepherd" recounts the legend of Su Wu, envoy of the Han Dynasty, who was cast into exile among the Xiongnu for refusing to betray his sovereign. Banished to the desolate steppe, he wandered beneath endless skies, a lone figure among wind and silence, sustained only by faith and memory. Seasons turned, empires shifted, yet his resolve did not waver. For nineteen years, he guarded his honor as one guards a sacred flame. At last, he returned — unbroken, unbowed — his name carried through history as a testament to loyalty, dignity, and the quiet, unyielding strength of the human spirit.

Three Movements for Flute and Clarinet, II. (Christian Maakestad)

Three Movements for Flute and Clarinet is an in-progress piece of mine that has proved very challenging to write and yet endlessly beneficial to pursue. This performance will be of the second movement, which stands now as the only section to be completed thus far.

If I Should Die (Matthew Hroch)

If I should die is a poem written by Emily Elizabeth Dickinson about death. While mortality can be a grim topic for many, Dickinson looks at it from a different perspective. The poem aims to bring peace to the reader, that after their death, the world and its processes will continue on. Just because one passes away, doesn't mean the beautiful, bustling world will stop. The music set to the poem invites the listener to reflect on this and come to their own conclusion on this difficult topic.

Sonata for Flute and Piano, II. Theme and Variations (Frederic Situmorang)

The *Sonata for Flute and Piano* is a large 3-movement work for flute and piano lasting about 18 minutes. Each movement represents different stages of my composition journey, from the first movement written in a French impressionist style, to the completely atonal third movement. The second movement acts as a sort of bridge between the outer movements, at times dipping its toes into both styles. It's structured as five variations on a simple theme in E minor. The flute and piano are treated as equal partners, each having their own challenges. Most importantly, however, the movement (and the sonata as a whole) contains many jokes, including a parody of the famous 18th variation from Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* where the theme is inverted. It also features musical cadences that don't make sense, sudden contrasts, and even references to modern-day memes. As such, it can be quite an unserious piece, and performers shouldn't take it too seriously.

The Chanter (Minyu Zhang)

This work draws its melodic language from both Mongolian long-song techniques and the sonic character of Buddhist chanting. The vocal writing is entirely syllabic, incorporating the Mongolian long-song practice of using a few words with extended melodic lines, as well as subtle ornaments on weak beats. At the same time, it also borrows from the blurred, shifting, and indistinct quality of pronunciation found in Buddhist recitation. By replacing specific words with rapid syllabic chanting, the piece creates a vocal state that lies between singing and recitation. The work evokes the image of a monk traveling across the vast grasslands of Inner Mongolia and, within that boundless landscape, sensing a deep and endless sorrow.

Trinity Reflections, Section I. Gentle, yet assertive (Chase Morrison)

The Trinity River is a massive 710-mile-long river that begins in North Texas, traverses southward throughout the state, and empties into the Texas Gulf Coast. Having grown up and lived in the Dallas-Fort Worth area for over two decades, this river has been a prominent factor in my life, with its many forks, tributaries, and watersheds being a source of countless adventures, musical inspirations, and childhood wonder. Nearly every stream, pond, and lake in my home area can be traced to this magnificent river, and this work, *Trinity Reflections*, seeks to honor the somewhat invisible grandeur the Trinity River has had over my life. Through quiet prairies, thick woods, and busy city centers, this river certainly captures the spirit of my homeland, a spirit I choose to fully honor through the various sections of this work.

Where No Man Pursueth (Jace Mankins)

In Jim Crow East Texas, a Black handyman named Dock Baxter is accused of murder. A young white man, Ray Elliot, sets out to capture him, only to be confronted with a claim of innocence. As the threat of mob violence closes in, Dock asks Ray for an impossible promise: if he cannot secure a fair trial, Ray must grant him a merciful death rather than allow him to be lynched. *Where No Man Pursueth* is a three-act opera that follows a man with good intentions struggling to enact justice within a system he cannot fully understand, and the lifelong consequences of taking that justice into his own hands.