



UNIVERSITY BANDS

Presents

TCU Concert Band and TCU Symphonic Band

“Celebrations!”

Dr. Drew Dickey, Conductor
Brian Youngblood, Conductor
Brendan Korak, Graduate Conductor

April 15th, 2026

7:00 pm

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

Opening Fanfare

Strive for the Highest Benjamin Lindley (b. 2004)
Benjamin Lindley, Conductor

TCU Concert Band – Dr. Drew Dickey

Joy Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)
Brian Youngblood, Guest Conductor

Three Ayres from Gloucester Hugh Stuart (1917-2006)
1. The Jolly Early of Cholmondeley
2. Ayre for Eventide
3. The Fiefs of Wembley

Air for Band Frank Erickson (1923-1996)

The Machine Awakes Steven Bryant (b. 1972)

Infinity Katahj Copley (b. 1998)

TCU Symphonic Band – Brian Youngblood

Godspeed Stephen Melillo (b. 1957)

Lux Aurumque Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Chester William Schuman (1910-1992)
Brendan Korak, Graduate Conductor

Forward/Still Omar Thomas (b. 1984)
Dr. Drew Dickey, Guest Conductor

Celebrations John Zdechlik (1937-2020)

Brass Fanfare Personnel

Trumpet

Jay Davis
Cole Elmore
Brendan Korak
Druhv Patel
Nicholas Stewart

Horn

Elizabeth Bushey
Aiden Henderson
Elizabeth Maupin
Kate Mitchell
Garrett Nelson
Marina Reyna

Trombone

Gabe Hargis
Aaron Roden
Dylan Sims
Zarrhias Sanders

Euphonium

Juan Najera
Knox Stroman

Tuba

Cameron Clark
Ethan McReynolds

Percussion

Haley Bruns
Hezan Daroona
Bella Evans
Caleb Perkey

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited. Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Texas Christian University Concert Band

Flute

Kate Conti Houston, TX
Larisa Santos Fort Worth, TX
Dominique Mendez Euless, TX
Hazel Sanders Wauwatosa, WI

Clarinet

Sandro Baccherini Keller, TX
Matthew Bailey Highland Village, TX
Junhwi Goo Cornith, TX
Knox Stroman Bedford, TX

Alto Saxophone

Averi Davis Fort Worth, TX
Kaitlyn Hernandez Tracy, CA
Johanna Miles Houston, TX
Jadyn Thompson Grand Prairie, TX

Tenor Saxophone

Tess Belauskas Weatherford, TX

Baritone Saxophone

Sam Scheck Batavia, IL
Elias Young Dallas, TX

Trumpet

Emanuel Arellano Fort Worth, TX
Shana Lackey Fort Worth, TX
Theda Leeka San Antonio, TX
Brian Mata Mata Fort Worth, TX

Trombone

Carissa Dixon Pasadena, TX
Ryan Duncan Temecula, CA
Aaron Roden Lindale, TX
Claire Rodriguez Grapevine, TX

Euphonium

Lynn Steben Fort Worth, TX
Matteo Wood Fort Worth, TX

Tuba

Paul Gauwain Fort Worth, TX
Arturo Santillan Fort Worth, TX
James Winward Las Vegas, NV

Percussion

Janessa Blue Daegu, South Korea
Sadie Burkhead Connersville, IN
Myla Huynh Grand Prairie, TX
Kat Iversen Gambrells, MD
Grace O'Neil Wheeling, WV
Mia Oliver Fort Worth, TX
Jazzmine Sims Kileen, TX

*Dr. Dickey wishes to say a special thank you to graduate conducting assistants Nick Vandebush and Brendan Korak for their help conducting and rehearsing the TCU Concert Band this semester.

Texas Christian University Symphonic Band

Piccolo A

Loida Soriano Fort Worth, TX

Flute A

Milkah Ogega* Arlington, TX
Carissa Dixon Pasadena, TX
Heather Parish Weatherford, TX
Loida Soriano Fort Worth, TX
Lynn Steben Fort Worth, TX
Averi Davis Saginaw, TX
Maddie Purvis Granbury, TX

Piccolo B

Olivia Thomas Frisco, TX

Flute B

Olivia Thomas* Frisco, TX
Ryder Day Lubbock, TX
David Reyna Lewisville, TX
Maddie Purvis Granbury, TX
Avery Caveness Aledo, TX
Loida Soriano Fort Worth, TX

Oboe

Lincoln Orwosky* Scroggins, TX
Matthew Kotzen Dallas, TX
Tatum Harvey Fort Worth, TX

Bassoon

Landon Peugh* Arlington, TX
Javier Flores Fort Worth, TX

Bb Clarinet

Audrey Hanson* Bullard, TX
Aiden Morris Sachse, TX
Carly Williams Keller, TX
Scott Mason Aledo, TX
Addison Banks Conroe, TX
Kenia Zetino Little Elm, TX

*Denotes Principal

Bass Clarinet

Ana Garcia Arlington, TX

Soprano Saxophone

Sandro Baccherini Keller, TX

Alto Saxophone

Andrew Michael Schaeffer* Corinth, TX
Holt Lee Azle, TX

Tenor Saxophone

Max Bovee Arlington, TX

Baritone Saxophone

Jorge Munoz Haltom City, TX

Trumpet

Jay Davis* Wylie, TX
Robert Lathrop Bedford, TX
Jack Grimm Aledo, TX
Cole Elmore Prosper, TX
Nicholas Stewart Arlington, TX

F Horn A

Travis Beard Arlington, TX
Ethan Hildebrand Euless, TX
Garrett Nelson Southlake, TX
Chris Lopez Bedford, TX
Sebastian Sohn North Richland Hills, TX
Aiden Henderson Hurst, TX
Kate Mitchell Springtown, TX
Christina Diggs Glendale, AZ

F Horn B

Sebastian Sohn North Richland Hills, TX
Travis Beard Arlington, TX
Elizabeth Maupin Huntsville, TX
Nick Spires Burleson, TX
Liz Bushey Euless, TX
Garrett Nelson Southlake, TX
Chris Lopez Bedford, TX
Marco Wilcox Frisco, TX

Trombone

Theda Leeka* San Antonio, TX
 Paul Duhon Hurst, TX
 Aaron Roden Lindale, TX
 Jorge Contreras Mineral Wells, TX

Bass Trombone

Gabriel Hargis Fort Worth, TX

Euphonium

Knox Stroman* Bedford, TX
 Juan Najera Springtown, TX
 Bryan Lopez Fort Worth, TX

Tuba A

Ethan McReynolds* North Richland Hills, TX
 Benne Lindley Brock, TX
 Cameron Clark Whitehouse, TX

Tuba B

Ethan McReynolds* North Richland Hills, TX
 Monica Sanchez Fort Worth, TX
 Elias Young Dallas, TX
 Zoie Pilate Fort Worth, TX

*Denotes Principal

String Bass

Jordan Simmons Cibolo, TX

Harp

Isabella Grace Ebo Denton, TX

Percussion

Elijah Art* Fort Worth, TX
 Robert Allen Pantego, TX
 Nicola Baccherini Fort Worth, TX
 Logan Matamoros Frisco, TX
 Israel Ledezma Palestine, TX
 Noah Bailey Fort Worth, TX
 Amy Herring Aledo, TX
 Connor Self Fort Worth, TX

Program Notes

Strive for the Highest! (2026) – 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.

-Program Note by Composer

Joy (2005) – Frank Ticheli

Above all, Joy is an expression of its namesake: simple, unabashed joy. A boisterous, uninhibited quality is implied in the music, not only at climactic moments, but also by the frequent presence of sudden and dramatic stylistic contrasts.

The main melody and overall mood of the work (and its companion piece, Joy Revisited) were inspired by a signal event: the birth of our first child. The intense feelings that most any father would feel on such a day were, in my case, accompanied by a simple little tune which grabbed hold of me in the hours preceding her birth, and refused to let go throughout the day and many days thereafter. Indeed, until I jotted it down in my sketchbook, it did not release its grip.

Seven years and two children later, I stumbled upon that old sketch and discovered (or rediscovered) that it would serve perfectly as the foundation for a joy-filled concert band overture.

- Program Note by Composer

Three Ayres from Gloucester (1969) – Hugh Stuart

A three-movement suite written in the early English folksong style, this piece came into being as a result of the composer's fascination with an old 10th century couplet:

There's no one quite so comely
As the Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley.

The resulting three compositions, The Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley [pronounced "Chumley"], Ayre for Eventide and The Fiefs of Wembley, are in early English folk song style and are designed to capture the mood of the peasants and their life on the fiefs of Wembley castle.

- Program Note from Score

Air for Band (1956/1966) – Frank Erickson

One of the stronger tendencies of twentieth century music has been a return to certain aspects of music of the Baroque and Classical periods. Compositions falling into this category are referred to as "neo classic." Air for Band is such a piece. The form (binary) was quite common in the Baroque period and the melody and harmonies were strongly influenced by the works of Bach.

- Program Note from Score

The Machine Awakes (2012) – Steven Bryant

In this work for youth and/or community bands with electronics, experience the sounds of something not human waking up for the first time. From the opening swirling textures, one senses the first hesitant sparks of thought, attempting to find form and coherence. The new machine then comes fully awake, possessed of self-determination and unfathomable purpose. The electronics for this work are triggered from a computer via a self-contained program.

- Program Note from Publisher

“After the success of my first large work with electronics, Ecstatic Waters, I wanted to bring this sonic experience to young musicians. Creating music for beginners is a core part of my compositional mission, and with The Machine Awakes, I wanted to demonstrate that “classical” music can have the same visceral immediacy as music they are immersed in during their day-to-day lives, while hopefully providing a sense of the deeper structure and development possible in music beyond simple pop song transcriptions.”

-About the Work by the Composer

Infinity (2020) – Katahj Copley

Shooting stars symbolize good luck, change or big event is coming towards your life, or it can also be a symbol of endings and beginnings. Shooting stars are actually one of the most diverse omens we have throughout our history. Shooting star symbolizes a brief fleeting moment in one's life just like the brief wonder of seeing a shooting star race across the night sky. They can also be a symbol of reaching one's ultimate destiny.

Shooting stars, asteroids, and the movement of the heavenly bodies in the night sky have always fascinated humans. Some cultures have always and strong beliefs and superstitions in the meaning of shooting stars. Traditional shooting stars also meant a new birth and changes in one's life and also a wish for a better life.

With Infinity I wanted to create the sense of shooting stars flying through the infinite playground known as space. As the piece begins, the world of space is filled with stars running through the skies. Throughout the piece, the shooting stars go through many different scenarios both dark and light until finally at the end of the piece the stars – with their bright colors and lights – flash across the sky with spectacular grandeur.

- Program Note by Composer

Godspeed (1997) – Stephen Melillo

Commissioned by The Muncie Central High School Symphonic Band, Mr. Bill Pritchett, Conductor

There is no better way to express the music of this work than to allow you to read a letter sent to me by Mr. Pritchett. His love has inspired this work.

“I haven’t really had a chance to put this into words, but this is what I want to say. Every morning I marvel at how lucky I am to stand in front of the kids I have. It is really a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to conduct a high school band of this quality. I’ve worked with a college band and sure, the group is better, but not necessarily better for me! It’s hard to explain, except to say that I really love the kids at Muncie Central, and that I have loved working with them for the last 17 years. We have the kind of kids that aren’t afraid to roll up their sleeves and get dirty ... sweat ... work. I want them to feel a sense of ownership in this work. The notes they play won’t last nearly as long as this composition will last. All of these kids should feel as if they were a part of something meaningful. Can you help me put this into words?”

Bill... I just did.

And now, let me share something with you, my friends. This is not for the program notes. It’s just between me and all of you. Ever since high school, I’ve signed my many letters, “Godspeed!... Sincerely, Stephen Melillo” People used to laugh at me for signing this way! I still don’t know why. Now, I sign music, my most personal letters, in the same fashion. After today, I shall never write that word again without hearing it as music!

Godspeed was written on 10 May 1998. On that day, Symphony # 1 premiered. Dimitri Tiomkin and Max Steiner were born. I love these souls, composers of great and innocent giving. My offering is small, but it comes to you, hands outstretched, in the same manner implicated by Mr. Pritchett’s beautiful words.

Within its time-compressed boundaries of 5:55, much happens. There is youthful exhilaration, the flight of an inviolable spirit, hectic confusion and innocent zeal. Amidst the flurry and flash comes a reverent prayer and an ode to that which is forever quiet and most still. There is the confident assertion of ideals and an ever-abiding vow to take on Life’s challenges. There is hope and daring, introspection and sorrow. Fun is married to courage, darkness overwhelmed by light. And in its final hour, it is the indomitable will of the forever stalwart that rises in victorious triumph!

While possible to write notation, music is forever left to the uncapturable center of our humanity. That music is for you to find, for you to deliver and enjoy as you offer it to others.

The pseudo-professionals ... whom I sometimes call “the music masters” ... would be fatigued by such a piece, imposed upon by such demands to give! THAT is what Mr. Pritchett means when he says, “I’ve worked with a college band and sure, the group is better, but not necessarily better for me.” He means that you guys have the heart and the soul to make music. For that reason, I am honoured to have been asked to write this piece. It is for you.

- Program Note by Composer

Lux Aurumque (2005) – Eric Whitacre

Lux Aurumque began its life as an a-capella choral work that I wrote in the fall of 2000. When the Texas Music Educators Association and a consortium of bands commissioned me to adapt it for symphonic winds, I rewrote the climax and included the grand 'Bliss' theme from my opera Paradise Lost. Lux Aurumque received

its premiere at the 2005 conference of the Texas Music Educators Association, and is dedicated with deep admiration for my dear friend Gary Green.

-Program Note from Wind Score

After deciding upon the poem by Edward Esch (I was immediately struck by its genuine, elegant simplicity), I had it translated into the Latin by the celebrated American poet Charles Anthony Silvestri. A simple approach is essential to the success of the work, and if the tight harmonies are carefully tuned and balanced, they will shimmer and glow.

Lux Aurumque
Light,
warm and heavy as pure gold
and the angels sing softly
to the new-born baby.

Lux,
calida gravisque pura velut aurum
et canunt angeli molliter
modo natum.

-Program Note from the Vocal Score

Chester (1778/1956) – William Schuman

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 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 by Composer

Forward/Still (2023) – Omar Thomas

There is an inherent dichotomy built into the title of this work. The first word, “forward,” implying motion while the second word, “still,” implies non-motion. Equally dichotomous is the notion that while we move forward in time, there are conflicts, prejudices, tribalist tendencies, and antiquated, non-inclusive ideas that prevent us from truly moving forward — that hold us still.

The first half of this work presents a hymn -- or a requiem? -- that is saturated with weight and burden, reflecting a level of soul weariness that sleep simply cannot fix. Realizing that the only option we have is hope-made-action, the hymn gives way to a soaring effort, seeking to resume the fight towards progress, safety, and collective humanity. The piece eases into an ending with unsettling echoes of the original hymn and a return to the very first chord which should bring comfort and resolution yet leaves us with a feeling of uncertainty. This uncertainty is analogous to our current moment in time --one that humanity has faced at many inflection points throughout our story. If there is any lesson to be gleaned from our cyclical history of struggle and progress, however, it is that regardless how heavy, burdened, and hopeless we feel, we must move forward, still.

- Program Note by Composer

Celebrations (1988/1991) – John Zdechlik

In 1988, Zdechlik was commissioned to compose a work commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Medalist Concert Band of Bloomington, Minnesota, with Dr. Earl C. Benson conducting. This seventy-member community concert band was awarded the prestigious Sudler Silver Scroll by the John Philip Sousa Foundation in 1996. Celebrations is a dynamic work that alternates between two themes: the first utilizes rapid ascending phrases in the woodwinds against a marked background by the brass and percussion and the second grandiose theme is worked into the composition to provide a chance to reflect on past triumphs. These themes ultimately combine in a final, majestic ending.

- Program Note from United States Marine Band concert program on June 6th, 2019

About the Conductors

Dr. Drew Dickey currently serves as the Director of Athletic Bands and Assistant Director of Bands at Texas Christian University School of Music. He oversees The Pride of TCU Horned Frog Marching Band and the Horned Frog Pep Band, conducts the TCU Concert Band, and teaches academic classes within the TCU School of Music. Dr. Dickey previously taught at the University of Texas at Austin, where he served as Associate Director of the Longhorn Band and as Assistant Director of Bands at the Butler School of Music. In addition to his position at TCU, Dr. Dickey serves as the Brass Arranger Music Design Coordinator with the Pacific Crest Drum and Bugle Corps in Diamond Bar, California and as the brass educational lead with The Bluecoats Drum and Bugle Corps in Canton, Ohio.

Prior to his current appointments, Dr. Dickey held positions at The South Carolina School of the Arts at Anderson University and Southwood Academy of the Arts, spending a number of years as an educator and administrator in the public schools. He holds the degrees of Doctor of Musical Arts in Wind Conducting from the University of Texas at Austin, Master of Music in Music Education from the Ithaca College School of Music, Master of Music in Wind Conducting from Louisiana State University, and Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of South Carolina.

Brian Youngblood is the Associate Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music at TCU. He received his Bachelor of Music Education degree from Abilene Christian University and his Master of Percussion Performance degree from East Texas State University. Before coming to TCU, he taught in the public schools for twelve years. He began teaching in 1987 and spent his first ten years teaching at L.D. Bell High School in Hurst Texas and followed with two years as Director of Bands and Fine Arts Director at Brewer High School in White Settlement. In 1999 Mr. Youngblood joined the faculty at TCU. During his time at TCU, he was Director of the TCU Horned Frog Marching Band for two decades. The Horned Frog Marching Band, under his direction, was recognized by the CBDNA as a “top five” university marching band. The impact of his work in the field of marching band design has been recognized for the last 35 years. His drill designs and program coordination work have placed in the top at many regional and state contests as well as a national first place at the Bands of America National Championship in 2007. He co-authored a software program for drill design and co-authored a marching band methods book titled “Marching Band Methods: A Practical Approach to Techniques and Design” that was published through Arranger’s Publishing.

Mr. Youngblood primarily teaches in the area of Wind Band Performance at TCU. He led the TCU Symphonic Band to the group’s first selection and performance at a regional CBDNA Conference. His ensemble responsibilities at TCU include the TCU Symphonic Band, and assistance with the TCU Concert Ensembles and TCU Athletic Bands. In addition to his work with the bands, he also teaches music education classes and music technology classes. In 2020 he shifted focus from marching band design and began to pursue more conducting opportunities. He accepted a position

with the newly formed Fort Worth Youth Orchestra Wind Ensemble in 2021 and was honored with a national second place in the American Prize conducting contest for his work with the group. The FWYO Wind Ensemble was also honored with the Co-Champion National first place American Prize award for their Ensemble performance at Bass Hall the same year.

Mr. Youngblood is an active member of the Texas Music Educators Association, The Texas Bandmasters Association and the College Band Directors National Association. He is a member of the Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society and the Alpha Chapter of the Phi Beta Mu International School Bandmaster Fraternity.

Mr. Youngblood is a product of public-school music education in the state of Texas. Before playing in the L.D. Bell High School Band under the direction of Roger Winslow, he was in the junior high bands of Marion West, Earnest Repass and Danny Prado. His undergraduate studies with John Whitwell and Gary Lewis, then at Abilene Christian University, furthered his training in Music Education. His percussion training began with Jim McGahey and Warren Dewey and continued with Allen Teal at Abilene Christian University. His percussion professors at East Texas State University were Robert Houston and Jimmy Finney.

Mr. Youngblood is a frequent clinician and adjudicator in Texas and the Southwest. He enjoys working as a clinician with bands from every age level.

Brendan Korak is in his first year pursuing a Master of Music degree in Wind Conducting at Texas Christian University, where he serves as a Graduate Assistant with the TCU Bands. A native of Edwardsville, Illinois, Mr. Korak earned his Bachelor of Music Education degree from Illinois State University in 2021. While at ISU, he studied trumpet with Dr. Amy Gilreath and Dr. Anne McNamara, performing in the Wind Symphony, Symphony Orchestra, and the Big Red Marching Machine.

Prior to graduate study, Mr. Korak taught and lived in O'Fallon, Illinois, serving as Music Director at Shiloh Village School District #85 from 2022–2025, where he directed Band and Choir and taught K–7 General Music. He also served on the instructional staff at O'Fallon Township High School, where he completed his student teaching in Fall 2021. During his time with the Marching Panthers, the ensemble performed in the 2022 Rose Bowl Parade, 2023 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and earned national recognition through Bands of America.

As a performer, Mr. Korak was a member of the Blue Stars Drum and Bugle Corps from 2016–2021. He later taught with Music City Drum and Bugle Corps as a visual staff member from 2023–2024. In addition, he maintains a private trumpet studio, working with students from beginner through high school.

Beyond music, Mr. Korak resides in Fort Worth, Texas, with his girlfriend, Kaitlin, and their two cats, Milo and Kiwi.

Upcoming TCU Band Events

April 18, 2026: TCU Clarinet Festival

Boschini Music Center

April 26, 2026: TCU Percussion Orchestra

7:00pm, Van Cliburn Concert Hall at the Boschini Music Center

April 27, 2026: TCU Jazz Ensembles

7:00pm, Van Cliburn Concert Hall at the Boschini Music Center

April 29, 2026: Nick Vandenburg Graduate Conducting Recital

7:00pm, Van Cliburn Concert Hall at the Boschini Music Center

June 12-13, 2026: Middle School Music Experience Band Camp

Register at [TCU Band Camp Registration](#)

June 15-18, 2026: High School Music and Leadership Experience Band Camp

Register at [TCU Band Camp Registration](#)