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### Symphonic Winds, April 24, 2021

F. Mack Wood conductor

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Illinois State University  
Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts  
School of Music

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# *Symphonic Winds*

F. Mack Wood, *conductor*

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Center for the Performing Arts  
April 24, 2021  
Saturday  
Noon

This is the one-hundred and eighth program of the 2020-2021 season.

# Program

Please silence all electronic devices for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

*Ecstatic Fanfare (2012/2015)*

Steven Bryant  
(born 1972)  
Arranged by Alan Lourens

*Hymn to a Blue Hour (2010/2021)*

John Mackey  
(born 1973)

*Dancing Fire (2016/2020)*

Kevin Day  
(born 1996)  
Arranged by Josh Trentadue

~Intermission~

## Endowed Scholarship Award Presentations

*Menlo Park, 1879 (2020)*

James M. David  
(born 1985)

*Letters from the Traveling Doll*

Nicole Piunno  
(born 1985)

- I. Love and Loss
- II. The Mountains Are Calling
- III. Star Gazing
- IV. Cityscapes
- V. Love Will Return

## Program Notes

Thank you for joining us for today's performance of the Illinois State University Symphonic Winds. We hope that you will enjoy our concert, and that you might consider joining us again for future performances here at the ISU School of Music. Please visit <http://www.bands.illinoisstate.edu> for more information. Thank you for your support!

**Steven Bryant** studied composition with John Corigliano at The Juilliard School, Cindy McTee at the University of North Texas, and William Francis MacBeth at Ouachita University. The son of a professional trumpeter and music educator, he strongly values music education, and his creative output includes a number of works for young and developing musicians.

Bryant offers a varied catalog, including works for wind ensemble, orchestra, electronic and electro-acoustic creations, chamber music, and music for the web. He is particularly known the wind ensemble world for *Ecstatic Waters* and his monumental 2019 work, *The Automatic Earth*. Recent works include a *Concerto for Alto Saxophone* for Joseph Lulloff and the Michigan State University Wind Symphony (winner of the 2014 American Bandmasters Sousa Ostwald Award), and a *Concerto for Trombone* for Joseph Alessi and the Dallas Wind Symphony. Other commissions have come from the Gaudete Brass Quintet (Chicago), cellist Caroline Stinson (Lark Quartet), pianist Pamela Mia Paul, the Amherst Saxophone Quartet (funded by the American Composers Jerome Composers Commissioning Program), the University of Texas – Austin Wind Ensemble, the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America, the Japanese Wind Ensemble Conductors Conference, and the Calgary Stampede Band, as well as many others.

Steven trained for one summer in the mid-1980s as a break-dancer, was the 1987 1/10 scale radio-controlled car racing Arkansas state champion and has a Bacon Number of 1. He was also Distinguished Visiting Professor of Composition at the University of North Carolina Greensboro for the 2014-2015 academic year. He resides in Durham, N.C., with his wife, conductor Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant.

Program notes from the composer:

*Ecstatic Fanfare* is based on music from movement I of my *Ecstatic Waters*. One day in May 2012, I mentioned to my wife that it might be fun to take the soaring, heroic tutti music from the earlier work and turn it into a short fanfare someday. She goaded me into doing it “immediately,” and so in a panicked three-day composing frenzy, I created this new work, which was premiered by Johann Mösenbichler with the Polizeiorchester Bayern just three short weeks later, followed immediately by my wife, Verena, conducting it with the World Youth Wind Orchestra Project in July 2012. This has to be a record time for conception-to-premiere for a large ensemble work.

The work unfolds with a flurry that can best be described as aggressive jubilation that winds down into a quiet, pure, pastoral melody marked by descending fourths in the clarinets. The use of open harmonies and descending fourths provide a sense of innocence and simplicity to this music, giving the listener something familiar to connect with, reminiscent of the music of Aaron Copland. This quiet music is eventually transformed into a powerful statement by the horns, marked “aggressive and celebratory.” This moment of celebration explodes into elation and the work rallies toward an energetic, powerful conclusion.

**John Mackey** (born 1 October 1973, New Philadelphia, Ohio) is an American composer.

Mackey holds a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with John Corigliano and Donald Erb, respectively. Mr. Mackey particularly enjoys writing music for dance and for symphonic winds, and he has focused on those media for the past few years.

His works have been performed at the Sydney Opera House; the Brooklyn Academy of Music; Carnegie Hall; the Kennedy Center; Weill Recital Hall; Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival; Italy's Spoleto Festival; Alice Tully Hall; the Joyce Theater; Dance Theater Workshop; and throughout Italy, Chile, Japan, Colombia, Austria, Brazil, Germany, England, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

John has received numerous commissions from the Parsons Dance Company, as well as commissions from the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, the Dallas Theater Center, the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, the New York Youth Symphony, Ailey 2,

Concert Artists Guild, Peridance Ensemble, and Jeanne Ruddy Dance, among many others. Recent and upcoming commissions include works for the concert bands of the SEC Athletic Conference, the American Bandmasters Association, and the Dallas Wind Symphony.

As a frequent collaborator, John has worked with a diverse range of artists, from Doug Varone to David Parsons, from Robert Battle to the U.S. Olympic Synchronized Swim Team. (The team won a bronze medal in the 2004 Athens Olympics performing to Mackey's score *Damn*.)

John has been recognized with numerous grants and awards from organizations including ASCAP (Concert Music Awards, 1999 through 2006; Morton Gould Young Composer Award, 2002 and 2003), the American Music Center (Margaret Jory Fairbanks Copying Assistance Grant, 2000, 2002), and the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust (Live Music for Dance commissioning grants, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2005). He was a CalArts/Alpert Award nominee in 2000.

In February 2003, the Brooklyn Philharmonic premiered John's work *Redline Tango* at the BAM Opera House, with Kristjan Jarvi conducting. John made a new version of the work for wind ensemble in 2004 -- Mackey's first work for wind band -- and that version has since received over 100 performances worldwide. The wind version won the 2004 Walter Beeler Memorial Composition Prize, and in 2005, the ABA/Ostwald Award from the American Bandmasters Association, making John the youngest composer to receive the honor.

In 2009, John's work *Aurora Awakes* received both the ABA/Ostwald Award and the NBA William D. Revelli Composition Contest.

John served as a Meet-The-Composer/American Symphony Orchestra League "Music Alive!" Composer In Residence with the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony in 2002-2003, and with the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra in 2004-2005. He was Composer In Residence at the Vail Valley Music Festival in Vail, Colorado, in the summer of 2004, Composer In Residence at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in August 2005. He has held college residencies at Florida State, University of Michigan, Ohio State, Arizona State, University of Southern California, University of Texas, among many others. Mr. Mackey served as Music Director of the Parsons Dance Company from 1999-2003.

Program notes from the composer:

The blue hour is an oft-poeticized moment of the day -- a lingering twilight that halos the sky after sundown but before complete darkness sets in. It is a time of day known for its romantic, spiritual, and ethereal connotations, and this magical moment has frequently inspired artists to attempt to capture its remarkable essence. This is the same essence that inhabits the sonic world of John Mackey's *Hymn to a Blue Hour*.

Programmatic content aside, the title itself contains two strongly suggestive implications -- first, the notion of hymnody, which implies a transcendent and perhaps even sacred tone; and second, the color blue, which has an inexorable tie to American music. Certainly *Hymn to a Blue Hour* is not directly influenced by the blues, per se, but there is frequently throughout the piece a sense of nostalgic remorse and longing -- an overwhelming sadness that is the same as the typically morose jazz form. Blue also has a strong affiliation with nobility, authority, and calmness. All of these notions are woven into the fabric of the piece -- perhaps a result of Mackey using what was, for him, an unconventional compositional method:

*"I almost never write music 'at the piano' because I don't have any piano technique. I can find chords, but I play piano like a bad typist types: badly. If I write the music using an instrument where I can barely get by, the result will be very different than if I sit at the computer and just throw a zillion notes at my sample library, all of which will be executed perfectly and at any dynamic level I ask. We spent the summer at an apartment in New York that had a nice upright piano. I don't have a piano at home in Austin -- only a digital keyboard -- and it was very different to sit and write at a real piano with real pedals and a real action, and to do so in the middle of one of the most exciting and energetic (and loud) cities in America. The result -- partially thanks to my lack of piano technique, and partially, I suspect, from a subconscious need to balance the noise and relentless energy of the city surrounding me at the time -- is much simpler and lyrical music than I typically write."*

Though not composed as a companion work to his earlier *Aurora Awakes*, *Hymn to a Blue Hour* strikes at many of the same chords, only in a sort of programmatic inversion. While *Aurora Awakes* deals with the emergence of light from darkness, *Hymn to a Blue Hour* is thematically linked to the moments just

after sundown -- perhaps even representing the same moment a half a world away. The opening slow section of *Aurora Awakes* does share some similar harmonic content, and the yearning within the melodic brushstrokes seem to be cast in the same light.

The piece is composed largely from three recurring motives -- first, a cascade of falling thirds; second, a stepwise descent that provides a musical sigh; and third, the descent's reverse: an ascent that imbues hopeful optimism. From the basic framework of these motives stated at the outset of the work, a beautiful duet emerges between horn and euphonium -- creating a texture spun together into a pillowy blanket of sound, reminiscent of similar constructions elicited by great American melodists of the 20th century, such as Samuel Barber. This melody superimposes a sensation of joy over the otherwise "blue" emotive context -- a melodic line that over a long period of time spins the work to a point of catharsis. In this climactic moment, the colors are at their brightest, enveloping their surroundings with an angelic glow. Alas, as is the case with the magical blue hour, the moment cannot last for long, and just as steadily as they arrived, the colors dissipate into the encroaching darkness, eventually succumbing at the work's conclusion with a sense of peaceful repose.

**Kevin Day** (b.1996, Charleston, W. Va.) is a composer, conductor, producer and multi-instrumentalist from Arlington, Texas.

Day's father was a prominent hip-hop producer in the late 1980s, and his mother was a sought-after gospel singer, singing alongside the likes of Mel Torme and Kirk Franklin. Kevin Day plays euphonium and tuba and is a self-taught pianist and composer. He completed his Bachelor of Music degree in euphonium/tuba performance Texas Christian University (TCU), while also studying composition. He studied under Richard Murrow for tuba and euphonium and Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach and Till MacIvor Meyn for composition. In 2019 he began his Master of Music in Music Composition degree at the University of Georgia, studying with composers Peter Van Zandt Lane and Emily Koh, and conductor Cynthia Johnston Turner.

While at TCU, Mr. Day played in the marching band, the tuba/euphonium ensemble, and was the principal player on euphonium and jazz piano. Kevin was the first composer at TCU to receive a band composition premiered in concert his freshman year by the TCU Symphonic Band, and the Wind Symphony his sophomore year. Mr. Day has also received accolades such as his *Fireworks Fanfare* being selected as a winner of the Dallas Winds Fanfare Contest for 2015-2016. He was a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award for his work *String Quartet No. 1*, and the Novus New Music Call for Scores Contest for his concert band piece, *Dancing Fire*, for 2016. Mr. Day had his first ever conference premiere of *Dancing Fire* by the West Salem High School Wind Ensemble under the direction of Todd Zimbelman at the 2016 Western International Band Clinic in Seattle, Washington. He was also selected as the 3rd Prize winner of the 2020 New Classics International Young Composer Contest of the Moscow Conservatory. Kevin was also one of two tubas in the United States to play in the 2016 Disneyland All-American College Band for the summer.

Day, whose music often intersects between the worlds of jazz, minimalism, Latin music, fusion, and contemporary classical idioms, has more than 150 compositions. A winner of the BMI Student Composer Award and other honors, his works have had numerous performances throughout the United States, Russia, Austria, Australia, Taiwan, South Africa, and Japan. His works have been programmed by the Boston Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, and more. Day has collaborated with the likes of Steven Cohen, Jens Lindemann, Demondrae Thurman, and Jeremy Lewis on concertos for their respective instruments, as well as chamber ensembles like Ensemble Dal Niente, The Puerto Rican Trombone Ensemble, The Zenith Saxophone Quartet, ThTesla Quartet, and many more. He has worked with and has been mentored by distinguished composers Gabriela Lena Frank, Frank Ticheli, John Mackey, William Owens, Julie Giroux, Marcos Balter, Anthony Cheung, Matthew Evan Taylor, and Valerie Coleman.

Day currently serves as the vice president for the Millennium Composers Initiative and is an alumnus of Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America. He is the composer-in-residence for the Mesquite Symphony Orchestra in Mesquite, Texas, for their 2019-2021 seasons.

Program notes from the composer:

When I was writing *Dancing Fire*, I wanted to write a piece for my high school band program and its directors for the great pieces we played, the fun times we had, and the excitement our bands created at

our concerts. The picture I had in my head before I began writing was a group of people surrounding a large bonfire during the night. These people began dancing around the fire, having fun, singing songs, and ultimately, celebrating life.

Once I had that picture in my head, along with the constant repeating motif that eventually became the melody for the entire piece, the rest of the work fit together nicely, and in two weeks it was done. The composition brings this mental picture I had to life in a fun and energetic way with dance-like percussion and a constant groove, as well as its contagious melody, a mysterious soprano sax solo, and a climactic ending.

This was written in dedication to the Arlington High School Band Program in Arlington, TX and to my former band directors, Michael Hejny, Nathan Burum, and Nathan Hervey.

**James M. David** (born 1978) is assistant professor of composition and music theory at Colorado State University. Dr. David graduated with honors from the University of Georgia and completed his doctorate in composition at Florida State University.

His works for wind ensemble have been performed by many prominent professional and university ensembles such as The U. S. Army Band, the Dallas Wind Symphony, the Ohio State University, the University of North Texas, the World Youth Wind Symphony, the University of Alabama, and the University of Washington, among many others.

His music has been hailed as "deserving of inclusion in the standard repertoire" (American Record Guide) and "quietly mesmerizing with joyous melodies" (Downtown Music Guide NYC). Among the distinctions David has earned as a composer are an ASCAP Morton Gould Award, national first-place winner in the MTNA Young Artists Composition Competition, winner of the Dallas Wind Symphony International Fanfare Competition, and national first-place winner in the National Association of Composers (USA) Young Composers Competition. Commissions include projects for Joseph Alessi (New York Philharmonic), John Bruce Yeh (Chicago Symphony Orchestra), the Oasis Quartet, Robert Spring (Arizona State University), Blair Bollinger (Philadelphia Orchestra), The International Saxophone Symposium and Competition, and the Atlantic Coast Conference Band Directors Association.

Dr. David's music is available through Pebblehill Music Publishers, C. Alan Publications, Potenza Music, and Lovebird Music and has been recorded for the Naxos, Albany, Summit, Luminescence, and MSR Classics labels.

Program notes from the composer:

On the evening of December 31, 1879, Thomas Edison unveiled the first practical electric light bulb to the public at his laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey. A train was commissioned to bring the New York press and others from the city to Edison's tiny outpost. Upon arriving, the passengers walked up a small snow-covered hill that was lit by 20 electric lampposts leading to his laboratory filled with the warm glow of incandescent bulbs.

My piece is a tone poem inspired by this special moment in history. The work opens with the gloomy night train, slowly bringing up speed and chattering with the passengers' anticipation for what is to come. This is followed by a lyrical adagio based on a sarabande progression that represents the ascent to the illuminated building on the hilltop. The work concludes with the return journey that describes the excitement and hope for a new electrical age. Ultimately, I hope that this composition will inspire listeners to remember that even in the darkest of times we can always look towards the future.

**Nicole Piunno** (born 1985) is an American composer and trumpeter.

Dr. Piunno holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition and a Master of Music degree in theory pedagogy at Michigan State University, 2014. Her composition teachers were Ricardo Lorenz and Charles Ruggiero. She earned a Master of Music degree in composition at Central Michigan University, studying with David Gillingham. She has also worked with Jason Bahr, David Ludwig, and Tony Zilincik. Nicole earned a Bachelor of Music degree in music education from Ohio Wesleyan University, where her emphasis was on trumpet.

She has performed with the Central Ohio Symphony Orchestra and appeared as a soloist with the Ohio Wesleyan University Chamber Orchestra.

Dr. Piunno views music as a vehicle for seeing and experiencing the realities of life. Her music often reflects the paradoxes in life and how these seemingly opposites are connected as they weave together. Her harmonic language and use of counterpoint mirror the complexity of our world by acknowledging lightness and darkness, past and present, beauty and brokenness, confinement and freedom, spiritual and physical, life and death.

Her music has recently been performed by the Principal Brass Quintet of the New York Philharmonic, Athena Brass Band, University of Akron Faculty Brass Quintet, and the Michigan State University Symphony Band.

Dr. Piunno was the winner of the 2018 Female Composer Competition, Beta Omicron Chapter, Kappa Kappa Psi. She teaches in the city schools of Dublin, Ohio.

Program notes from the composer:

The idea for *Letters from the Traveling Doll* came to mind after I came across a story about the writer Franz Kafka and a heartbroken girl he encountered in the park. The young girl was crying because she lost her beloved doll. When Kafka realized they would not be able to locate her doll he told her that the doll had gone away on a journey and not to worry because her doll gave him a letter. Kafka composed a letter from the doll to explain her disappearance. The next day Kafka gave the girl this letter “written” by the doll that explained her disappearance and desire for an adventure. This was the beginning of many letters that explained these adventures. Kafka and the girl met many times to share these letters as they brought comfort to the child’s grieving heart.

I enjoy thinking about this story because it shows how healing can take place and how we can use our imagination to bring this healing. The story speaks about both grief and compassion. Grief is a response to the loss of something we love. Perhaps part of the healing process involves discovering how love can return in a transformed way. In this story, the letters and time given to the grieving child were gifts of love that helped her heal from the loss of her beloved doll.

This story is so beautiful and charming to me and I wanted to give it a soundtrack. The opening movement and final movement deal with the real-life experience between the author and the young girl. The middle movements relate to the letters from the doll. Since we do not have these letters, I decided to imagine the types of adventures the doll might have experienced.

## Biographies

**Prof. F. Mack Wood** serves as the Associate Director of Bands at Illinois State University where he is the conductor of the Symphonic Winds. In addition to his conducting responsibilities, he is the director of the Big Red Marching Machine and teaches undergraduate courses in instrumental conducting and marching band techniques. Prof. Wood joined the faculty at Illinois State University in the fall of 2020. Prior to his appointment at Illinois State University, Prof. Wood was a doctoral student at the University of Miami, Frost School of Music.

Prof. Wood taught high school in the Dallas area for eleven years before moving on to pursue graduate education. He is an active clinician, guest conductor and drill designer. He holds the Bachelor of Music and Human Learning from The University of Texas at Austin, a Master of Music Degree in Instrumental Conducting from Louisiana State University and will complete his Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from The University of Miami this spring.



# Illinois State University Symphonic Winds

F. Mack Wood, *conductor*

## Flute

Christopher Bulding  
Maddie Hubbard  
Isaac Rutledge  
Grace Suglich  
\*Kirsten Townander  
\*Andy Trower

## Oboe

\*Tyler Bloomfield  
Sara Walsh

## Clarinet

Jessica Benjamin  
Erin Brown  
Freda Hogan  
\*Kara Kirkus  
Grace Reuter  
Benjamin Sanetra  
Lauren Schaff

## Bassoon

\*Veronica Ervin  
Nicholas Filano

## Saxophone

Caleb Gibson  
\*Brianna Morin  
Mikey Schelinski  
Sam Simmons

## Horn

Ryan Burns  
Alicia Cruz  
\*Cassidy Fairchild  
Joanna Sieczka

## Trumpet

Austin Caraher  
Jackson Crater  
\*Collin Halihan  
Milo Johnson  
Alexandra Karafotias  
Christian McLaughlin  
Ryan Valdivia

## Trombone

Patrick Grogan  
Josh Gumina  
Brett Harris  
\*Matthew Helferich  
Ethan Machamer  
Julian Rodriguez (bass)

## Euphonium

\*Dylan Gray  
Jack O'Mahoney

## Tuba

Kaitlin Dobbeck  
\*Angel Lopez

## Percussion

Braeden Forman  
William Lawton  
Joe Mehalek  
Jake Okrzesik  
Aiden Perrault  
\*Chuck Willard

## Piano

Wenqing Zhang

\*Denotes Section Leader

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