



COLLEGE *of the* ARTS

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Wind Ensemble

Benjamin Harper, *conductor*

Skye Holmes, *guest conductor*

Whitehead Auditorium

Valdosta State University

October 4, 2023

7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Infinity (2020)

Katahji Copley
(b. 1998)

Skye Holmes, *guest conductor*

Divertimento for Winds and Percussion (1993)

Roger Cichy
(b. 1956)

1. Exaltation
2. Follies
3. Remembrance
4. Salutation

October (2000)

Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

Three Latin Dances (2018)

Jeff Tyzik
(b. 1951)

WIND ENSEMBLE

FLUTE

Izannah Donaldson
Juliette Duits
Rebekah McCord

OBOE

Lindsay Miller

CLARINET

Manuel Barreto
Lauren McGuire
Dennis Savoie, *bass*
Kai Skau
Colton Smith
Ella Stephenson
Christian Windish

SAXOPHONE

Elijah Alford, *bari*
Jaice Lowe, *alto*
Lance Thigpen, *tenor*
Matthew Seebran, *alto*

TRUMPET

Jacob Bady
Johnny Dixon
Braeden Floyd
Brody Johnson
Dustin Kirby
Ricky Weimer

HORN

Theo Horton
Riley Prichard

TROMBONE

Franklin Carmona
Riley Carr
Evan Hurst, *bass*

EUPHONIUM

Jayla Lewis
Jason Norman

TUBA

Christina Cato
William Griffin
Charles Williams

PIANO

Rebeca Sierra

PERCUSSION

Tucker Browning
Jakalin Bryant
Milik Green
Jacob Hadley
Ashley Howard
Colton Roberts
Jacob Walden

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PROGRAM NOTES



Carrollton, GA, native, **KATAHJ COPLEY** premiered his first work, *Spectra*, in 2017 and hasn't stopped composing since. As of 2017, Katahj has written over 100 works, including pieces for chamber ensembles, large ensembles, wind ensembles, and orchestra. His compositions have been performed and commissioned by universities, organizations, and professional

ensembles, including the Cavaliers Brass, Carroll Symphony Orchestra, California Band Director Association, Admiral Launch Duo, and the Atlanta Wind Symphony. Katahj has also received critical acclaim internationally with pieces being performed in Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, and Australia.

Katahj received two Bachelor of Music degrees from the University of West Georgia in Music Education and Composition in 2021. He is currently studying composition with Omar Thomas at the University of Texas at Austin.

Aside from composing, Katahj is an excited educator who teaches young musicians the joy of discovering music and why music is a phenomenal language.

“Music for me has always been this impactful thing in my life. It can soothe, it can enrage, it can quiet, and it can evoke emotions that are beyond me and this world we live in. I believe that music is the ultimate source of freedom and imagination. The most freedom I have had as a musician was through composing. Composition is like me opening my heart

and showing the world my drive, my passion, and my soul.” Shooting stars have symbolized many things throughout our Earth’s history:

a new birth,
good luck,
a change or big event in one’s life,
a brief wonder,
a fleeting moment,
love,
an ending or beginning,
one reaching their ultimate destiny,
and a wish for a better opportunity in one’s life

Throughout our Earth’s history, shooting stars have been one of the most significant prophecies we’ve encountered. This, along with asteroids and the movement of heavenly bodies in the night sky, has always been a fascination of mine. It wasn’t until I decided to dive into the subject of shooting stars that I understood the magic behind the miracle.

With **INFINITY**, I wanted to construct the phenomena of shooting stars flying through an infinite playground- space. As the piece begins, this playground is filled with stars running through the skies. As we transition from dark to light, the stars encounter different scenarios until the end, where they embrace their bright colors and flash across the atmosphere with spectacular grandeur.

—

Ohio-born composer **ROGER CICHY** is a world-class composer known for taking intangible experience and emotions, and turning them into memorable musical works. His compositions



seek to portray things such as the slow growing momentum of daybreak, the chaotic, out-of-control nature of pandemonium, and the graceful, lyrical movement of a sand dune.

Roger's background as a music educator plays a big role in his creations. He holds a Bachelor of Music and Master of Arts in Music Education degree from The Ohio State University and has directed college bands at Iowa State University and the University of Rhode Island.

Cichy's music has been recorded by premier ensembles such as the North Texas Wind Symphony, the United States Air Force Band, Rutgers Wind Ensemble and the University of Georgia Wind Symphony. His music is continually being performed throughout the United States and abroad including Japan, England, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Australia, Russia, Italy, Portugal, China, Czech Republic, Spain and Mexico. In 2007, Cichy was the commissioned composer for The Premiering Sydney Music Festival held at the Sydney Opera House in Sydney, Australia.

Today, Roger is a widely sought after composer for commissions writing for professional orchestras, high school, university and professional bands, choruses and film. He frequently appears as a composer-in-residence and guest conductor.

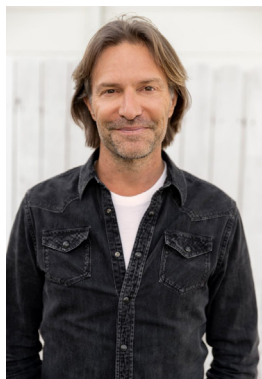
Divertimento for Strings, Winds, and Percussion was commissioned by the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra and composed in the summer of 1993. The piece, in four movements, is a tribute to three American composers, Aaron

Copland, Leonard Bernstein, and George Gershwin who were all intrigued by jazz and incorporated elements of the idiom into their music. The use of the musical notes c (Copland), b (Bernstein), and g (Gershwin) form the nucleus for much of the thematic as well as harmonic material. The composition uses jazz elements as the basis for a classical composition. Extensive use is made of the flatted third, fifth, and seventh from the blues scale both in thematic and harmonic structures. Written meters are often altered by grouping notes in a manner that displaces normal agogic accents. The interval of the seventh derived from the C-B note relationship is a prominent unifying element in each movement. The third movement, *Remembrance*, strays from extensive use of the blues scale, idiomatic jazz rhythms, and extensive use of the c, b, and g note combinations. Here, the intention is to contrast the other three movements (movement three is in the key of G, all others are in C) but continue the use of idiomatic jazz elements in the form of a jazz ballad.

The *Divertimento for Strings, Winds, and Percussion* was later transcribed by the composer in December of 1993, retitled **DIVERTIMENTO FOR WINDS AND PERCUSSION** and performed by the Iowa State University Wind Ensemble at the College Band Directors National Association North Central Convention in Omaha. The work immediately drew national attention and selected to be used at the prestigious Cincinnati College Conservatory Conducting Symposium during the summer of 1994.

—

Grammy Award-winning composer and conductor, **ERIC WHITACRE**, is among today's most popular musicians. His works are programmed worldwide and his ground-breaking



Virtual Choirs have united 100,000 singers from more than 145 countries. Born in Nevada in 1970, Eric is a graduate of The Juilliard School. He is currently Visiting Composer at Pembroke College, Cambridge University (UK) and is an Ambassador for the Royal College of Music (London). He recently completed two terms as Artist in Residence with the Los Angeles Master Chorale. In the 2022-2023 season, the Cincinnati Pops and the National Symphony Orchestra premiered a new commission: *Prelude in C*.

His composition for symphony orchestra and chorus, *Deep Field*, was inspired by the achievements of the Hubble Space Telescope and became the foundation for a collaboration with NASA, the Space Telescope Science Institute and 59 Productions. The film was premiered at Kennedy Space Center (Cape Canaveral, Florida), has been seen at arts and science festivals across the world. *Deep Field* has been performed in concert on several continents, and with simultaneous film projection by the New World Symphony, New World Center (Miami), Brussels Philharmonic, Flagey (Brussels), Bergen Philharmonic, Grieghallen (Bergen) among other orchestras.

Widely considered to be the pioneer of Virtual Choirs, Eric created his first project as an experiment in social media and digital technology. *Virtual Choir 6: Sing Gently* – written for the Virtual Choir during the global pandemic that shook the world, COVID-19 – featured 17,562 singers from 129 countries. Previous Virtual Choir projects include *Glow* written for the Winter Dreams holiday show at Disneyland Adventure Park, California, and the Virtual Youth Choir, a major fundraiser for UNICEF. To date, the Virtual Choirs have registered over 60

million views and have been seen on global TV.

From the composer:

OCTOBER began at a restaurant in Chicago, when I was first introduced to Brian Anderson. Brian, a high school band director from Fremont, Nebraska, knew my work and wanted to commission me, but couldn't find the finances. If I remember correctly I didn't immediately hear back from him, and I just assumed the gig would never materialize.

About a year later I get this phone call from him and he says that he has put together a commissioning consortium of 30 high school bands from Nebraska. 30 bands! I've dealt with institutional bureaucracy for a while now and I can't possibly imagine how he brought all of those people together, let alone get them to agree on a commission.

Writing a 'grade three' work was an entirely different challenge. It's easy to write your way out of a difficult corner with flashy, virtuosic material, but with 'easier' music your solutions must be simple, elegant, and functional. I worked hard to create a piece that could be successfully performed by all of the high schools in the consortium, yet never compromised its musical integrity. Frankly, writing 'easy' music is one of the hardest things I've ever done.

October is my favorite month. Something about the crisp autumn air and the subtle change in light always makes me a little sentimental, and as I started to sketch I felt that same quiet beauty in the writing. The simple, pastoral melodies and subsequent harmonies are inspired by the great English Romantics (Vaughn Williams, Elgar) as I felt that this style was also perfectly suited to capture the natural and pastoral soul of

the season.

I'm quite happy with the end result, especially because I feel there just isn't enough lush, beautiful music written for winds. *October* was premiered on May 14th, 2000, and is dedicated to Brian Anderson, the man who brought it all together.

—



Grammy Award winner **JEFF TYZIK** is recognized for his brilliant arrangements, original programming and engaging rapport with audiences of all ages. Tyzik holds The Dot and Paul Mason Principal Pops Conductor's Podium at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and serves as Principal Pops Conductor of the Detroit Symphony, the Oregon Symphony and The Florida Orchestra. This season, Tyzik will celebrate his 23rd season as Principal Pops Conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

As an accomplished composer and arranger, Tyzik has had his compositions recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra, Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vancouver Symphony and Doc Severinsen with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London. He has also produced and composed theme music for many of the major television networks, including ABC, NBC, HBO, and Cinemax, and released six of his own albums on Capitol, Polygram and Amherst Records.

Tyzik worked closely with Doc Severinsen on many projects including orchestrating many of the great band leader's

symphony orchestra programs. He produced a GRAMMY Award winning album, The Tonight Show Band with Doc Severinsen, Vol. 1. Tyzik's subsequent recordings with Severinsen garnered three more GRAMMY nominations.

In his twenty-two years with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Tyzik has written over 200 arrangements, orchestrations and compositions for orchestra. He has also been commissioned to compose original works for orchestra, including a Trombone Concerto, which was funded by a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts and subsequently performed at Carnegie Hall.

THREE LATIN DANCES was composed for the Eastman Wind Ensemble at the request of in September of 2018. In this short suite, I used three different popular Latin dance forms. The first dance section is based on the Danzón, a Cuban dance that is slow, formal and elegant. The Danzón transitions into a Cha Cha, another Cuban dance that is a medium tempo rhythmic dance. After a brief recap of the Danzón another transition evolves into a Malambo, an Argentine dance that is exciting, up tempo and whose roots can be traced back to the 1600s.



SKYE HOLMES is Assistant Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands at Valdosta State University. She directs the Blazin' Brigade Marching Band, Concert Band, Pep Band, and teaches undergraduate courses in arranging. She also teaches graduate level courses in marching band techniques, conducting and instrumental music curriculum for the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Holmes is actively involved in clinics across the state of Georgia and North Florida as well as directing Honor Bands throughout the state. She also acts as the current Supervisor for Clinical Practice MAT Students.

Previously, Holmes spent several years teaching high school band in Iowa instructing marching, concert, pep band and jazz ensembles. Holmes graduated from Drake University with a Bachelor of Music Education, earned a Master of Music in Wind Conducting at Messiah College, and completed her Doctor of Musical Arts in Wind Conducting degree at Texas Tech University. She is an active member of the College Band Directors National Association, College Music Society and regional instrumental music organizations.

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BENJAMIN HARPER is Director of Bands and Assistant Professor of Music at Valdosta State University, where he conducts the Wind Ensemble, directs the graduate program in wind conducting, and guides all aspects of the university band program.



The Valdosta State University Wind Ensemble is the premiere wind band at VSU, primarily composed of undergraduate music majors and graduate students in performance. Their performances regularly include standard band music alongside music by contemporary composers. VSU faculty are regularly featured as guest artists and previous performances

have featured conductor Ret. Col. Timothy Holtan, composer Quincy Hilliard, and Barry Green, retired principal bassist for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and author of *The Inner Game of Music*.

A champion of accessible music for students and audiences, Harper's performances regularly include standard band music side-by-side with music by contemporary composers Kevin Walczyk, Joni Greene, and Aaron Perrine. Valdosta State University has been consortium member commissioning composers of diverse backgrounds, including Australian composer Holly Harrison, American-Vietnamese composer Viet Cuong, Chinese composer Shuying Li, Pulitzer Prize winner Julia Wolfe, and Mexican composer Juan Pablo Contreras.

Harper is in demand across the country as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He holds a variety of leadership roles, including as President of the Valdosta State University Faculty Senate and Assistant Department Head of the Department of Music. Prior to his appointment as Director of Bands, Harper served Director of Athletic Bands at VSU and spent seven years as a high school band director in Iowa. He holds degrees from Iowa State University, The University of Kansas, and Texas Tech University.



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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

The Department of Music at Valdosta State University is a fully accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music, with a faculty of 32 artist teachers and over 170 music majors and minors. The Department of Music presents over 150 musical performances for the public each year. In addition, several of the major performing ensembles of the department travel throughout Georgia, the Southeast, and abroad, performing for schools, civic groups, and as part of community concert series.

The faculty of the Department of Music are active performers, scholars, conductors, clinicians, and adjudicators throughout the region. The department offers a full range of instrumental and vocal performing ensembles, including the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. Membership in ensembles is open to all VSU students.

The Department of Music provides a comprehensive and rigorous academic program consistent with the mission of Valdosta State University and that of the University System of Georgia. The mission of the Department of Music is to:

- Uphold high levels of excellence in instruction, performance, service, and scholarship;
- Provide thorough training in professional programs and the liberal arts that prepares individuals to excel in their chosen fields;
- Offer a diverse selection of music courses and experiences to all University students that will engage them in music and emphasize the vital place of music in our global society;
- Enhance individual achievement by fostering life-long learning, critical thinking skills, ethical practices, and support for and involvement in the arts and arts institutions;
- Serve as a cultural center for South Georgia and provide the community with artistic experiences of lasting value.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with special thanks that we acknowledge Department of Music faculty and College of the Arts staff for their assistance in the preparation of this performance and generous support of our students:

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Rebecca Skelton, music department secretary
Skye Holmes, assistant director of bands
Lindsay Sparks, flute
Susan Eischeid, oboe
Sherwood Wise, bassoon
Peter Geldrich, clarinet
Wilson Poffenberger, saxophone
Javian Brabham, trumpet
Kelly Langenberg, horn
Doug Farwell, trombone
Ryan Sorenson, euphonium/tuba
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