

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

# **Symphonic Band**

Professor Lauren N. Bobarsky, *conductor*  
Wes Anderson, *graduate conductor*

**Center for the Performing Arts**  
**March 3, 2026**  
**Tuesday Evening**  
**8:00 p.m.**

**This is the one hundred and sixteenth program of the 2025-2026 season**

# Program

Please silence all electronics for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

The Thunderer

John Philip Sousa  
(1854-1932)

Wesley Anderson, *graduate conductor*

Sun Dance

Frank Ticheli  
(born 1958)

Night Light

Cait Nishimura  
(born 1991)

Reckoning

Michael Markowski  
(born 1986)

## Program Notes

### ***The Thunderer***

Duration - 3'

Other than the fact that Sousa's "Thunderer" was undoubtedly a Mason, this identity has never been revealed. The Thunderer march was dedicated to Columbia Commandery No. 2, Knights Templar, of Washington, D.C., and it was composed on the occasion of the Twenty-fourth Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment. The conclave was held in October 1889 and was sponsored by Columbia Commandery No. 2. Sousa had been "knighted" in that organization three years earlier.

*The Thunderer* was Mrs. John Phillip Sousa's favorite march. Their daughter Helen revealed this, who had surmised that *The Thunderer* might have been her father's salute to the London Times, which was known as the "thunderer." It was since then determined that Sousa probably had no association with the newspaper at that time, however. The "thunderer" might have been one of the ones in charge of making arrangements for the 1889 conclave — in particular Myron M. Parker, who worked tirelessly to make the event the spectacular success that it was.

In the second section of the march, Sousa included an adaptation of earlier trumpet and drum piece, Here's to Your Health, Sir!

- Program note from John Philip Sousa: *A Descriptive Catalog of His Works*

### ***Sun Dance***

Duration - 5'

*Sun Dance* was written to evoke a general feeling of bright joy and was later found to present a more specific impression of a sun-drenched town festival, with various groups of townspeople walking, dancing, sitting in small groups, and generally enjoying the day. The work's essentially motivic construction is evident throughout, as the song-like and dance-like characteristics are heard in various instruments — beginning with the solo oboe, responded to by dance rhythms in mellow tones, and continuing through a more lush, lyrical passage at the center of the arch form.

- Program note by Dr. Brian Casey

## ***Night Light***

Duration - 11'

*Night Light* began as a few simple themes that represented my childhood experience of fearing the dark and feeling comforted by the soft glow of *night lights*. These ideas evolved over time into a musical story that depicts the experience of being awake in the night while the surrounding world is at rest -- an experience full of moments of tension and softness, pain and joy, and darkness and light. As an insomniac and anxiety-ridden optimist, I feel that *Night Light* is a musical autobiography of sorts, and the piece will always be incredibly meaningful to me.

- *Program Note by composer*

## ***Reckoning***

Duration - 6.5'

*Reckoning* began as a musical underdog story: an unlikely hero's determination to right certain wrongs that had been brought upon him or her in the past and that hero's ambition to prove that they are "a force to be reckoned with." I often liken it to a David and Goliath type of story: small versus big, poor versus rich. For example, the piece opens in a dark and oppressive world full of despair and anguish, but from within that darkness comes a very beautiful, very fragile, very hopeful oboe solo. However, this hope quickly transforms into a more active, kinetic energy -- a musical uprising. Several families of instruments join the dialogue, voicing their grievances, adding to the collective resistance. By measure 90, the ensemble fully pledges their allegiance as a more majestic and heroic French horn theme ascends to the fore, literally rising quarter note by quarter note above the anxious eighth-note theme. From here, they plot their next move. But will it be enough?

- *Program Note by composer*

## Biographies

**Professor Lauren N. Bobarsky** currently serves as Assistant Director of Bands at Illinois State University where she directs the Symphonic Band, University Band, Pep Band, and assists with the Big Red Marching Machine. Lauren is also the Camp Director for the ISU Junior and Senior High Summer Band Camps.

Prior to her current position, Lauren was the Music Undergraduate Admissions Coordinator at Illinois State University. She worked closely with the admissions process for prospective students auditioning into the School of Music. Lauren was also the Drumline Instructor for the Illinois State University Big Red Marching Machine where she regularly arranged the drumline parts for the organization and oversaw all operational logistics for the drumline.

Lauren was previously a graduate teaching assistant at Illinois State University where she received her master's degree in Wind Conducting and studied with Dr. Anthony C. Marinello, III. While at ISU, Lauren worked extensively with the wind bands, athletic bands, and taught undergraduate conducting. In 2022, Lauren was awarded the CBDNA Mike Moss Conducting Grant.

Before serving in her current position at ISU, Lauren was a 5th through 12th grade band director and drumline instructor at several schools throughout Central Illinois. Her most recent position was serving as Director of Bands at Central Catholic High School in Bloomington, IL. Lauren is an active conductor, clinician, and percussion adjudicator and continues to serve the music education community as the Percussion Coordinator for the Illinois Music Education Conference.

Lauren graduated from Illinois State University with a Bachelor of Music Education. Lauren holds memberships with The National Band Association, National Association for Music Education, Illinois Music Education Association, Percussive Arts Society, and Pi Kappa Lambda Music Honor Society. In her spare time, Lauren enjoys spending time with her husband Kevin and doggies Pumpkin and Thunder.

**Wesley Anderson** is currently serving as a Graduate Assistant with the Illinois State University Band Department. Wesley also serves as a Sergeant and Musical Performance Team Leader with the 144th Army Band, where he has led over 50 missions, revived the Big Band, and conducted and composed for major civic events, including the Illinois Polish Freedom Day Ceremony. Wesley's military education includes the Army School of Music Advanced Individual Training (earning a Distinguished Honor Graduate award), Basic Leaders Course (earning Commandant's List honors), and Advanced Leaders Course (earning a Distinguished Honor Graduate and Distinguished Leader awards).

An active educator, Wesley earned his master's in teaching from Western Illinois University and served as director of the award-winning music program at ROWVA High School from 2022 to 2025. Wesley doubled student participation in music every school year, secured full program funding to make music free for all students, led ROWVA to its first top-three finish in the IHSA, and founded the district's first Tri-M Music Honor Society. Wesley's ensembles consistently earn superior ratings at contests. Wesley earned the district's Teacher of the Year and the Illinois State Board of Education's Award of Meritorious Service.

A summa cum laude graduate of Berklee College of Music in Film Scoring and Composition, Wesley was awarded the prestigious Wachter Fellowship while in his undergraduate studies. Wesley has recorded on over 50 film and video game projects, performs regularly as a jazz musician, has appeared as a guest conductor with the Knox-Galesburg Symphony, and is an active clinician, composer, arranger, and drill designer. Wesley remains committed to fostering a community of musicians who show up, bring a positive attitude, and have fun making music together.

# Illinois State University Symphonic Band

Professor Lauren N. Bobarsky, *conductor*

## *Flute*

Peyton Cheek, Bonne Terre, MO\*  
Jui-Chien Chou, Taiwan  
Maya Denic, Arlington Heights  
Adele Mau-Bridges, Kankakee  
Viktor Medina, Joliet  
Rylan Oreta, Plainfield  
Madison Ulanowski, New Lenox

## *Oboe*

Elizabeth Abbott, Streator\*  
Marion Casey, Woodridge

## *Bassoon*

Jaz Arguenta, McHenry  
Lexie Spihlmann, Breese  
Justice Tolan, Rantoul\*

## *Clarinet*

Carly Bridgewater, Eureka  
Anna Cagwin, New Lenox  
Hannah Donahue, O'Fallon  
Kaden Filson, O'Fallon  
Pat Griffin, Warrenville  
Audrey Hjerpe, Winfield  
Benito Huizar-Carrillo, Lafayette, IN\*  
Ben Keene, Shorewood  
Kayla Ratermann, Macomb  
Ryan Rubio, Oak Forest  
Will Scudder, Freeport  
Xavier Blanco, bass, Plainfield

## *Saxophone*

Jon Dioneo, Norridge  
Jack Hawkins, Lombard  
Abe Kamm, Villa Park\*  
Kalli Reeves, Villa Park  
Andrew Shadel, Schaumburg

## *Horn*

Levi Antoniak, Bloomington  
Avery Mayoral, Rock Falls  
Ellie Scully, Urbana  
Kai Sheetz, South Elgin  
Sammie Wagner, Granville  
Adelaide Webb, Des Plaines\*  
Julia Windham, Wood Dale

## *Trumpet*

Tyler Belan, East Moline  
Olivia Burgan, St. Charles  
Payton Byers, Macomb  
Payton Dewitt, Sandwich  
December Estes, Danville  
Emily Gleason, Montgomery  
Ryan Kelly, Plainfield  
Jordon Story, Aurora  
Ezra Tirado, Chicago\*  
Matthew Weaver, New Lenox

## *Trombone*

Raymond Churchill, Plainfield  
Sean Creighton, Naperville  
Lily Culp, Franklin, IN  
Riley Hobart, Palos Heights  
Brian Jones, Belleville\*

## *Euphonium*

Philip Johnson Jr., South Holland  
Angel Trader, Litchfield  
Josie Welko, Bolingbrook\*

## *Tuba*

Aidan Hanley, Libertyville  
Jack Fritz, Newburgh\*  
Nathan Klaas, Highland  
Lucas Logacho, Lombard

## *Percussion*

Gavi Benedick, O'Fallon\*  
Casey Judge, Schaumburg  
Cary Lorentz, Joliet  
Emily Mobley, Algonquin  
Harry Plohr, Staunton  
Jayden Rohr, Minooka

## *Piano*

Pat Griffin, Warrenville

\*Denotes Principal or Co-Principal