

MUSIC

2026 – 2027

SONOMA
STATE
UNIVERSITY

FALL 2026 PERFORMANCES

All concerts are held at the Green Music Center

SEP 13	12:00 p.m	Saxophone Day	Schroeder Hall
SEP 20	2:00 p.m	Navarro Trio	Schroeder Hall
SEP 25	7:30 p.m.	Symphony Orchestra	Weill Hall
OCT 1	7:30 p.m.	Symphonic Wind Ensemble & USAF Band of the Golden West	Weill Hall
OCT 5	1:00 p.m.	Department Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
OCT 13	7:30 p.m.	SSU Community Concert Band & BD Winds	Weill Hall
OCT 17	2:00 p.m.	Jazz Orchestra	Weill Hall
OCT 18	10:00 a.m.	Day of Strings	Schroeder hall
OCT 20–21	All Day	SSU Choral Festival	Weill Hall & Schroeder Hall
OCT 22	7:30 p.m.	Concert Jazz Ensemble & Latin Band	Schroeder Hall
NOV 7	7:30 p.m.	Concert Choir & SonoVoce	Weill Hall
NOV 9	1:00 p.m.	Department Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
NOV 20	7:30 p.m.	Symphony Orchestra	Weill Lawn
NOV 22	2:00 p.m.	Brass Ensemble	Schroeder Hall
DEC 2	7:30 p.m.	Chamber Ensembles	Schroeder Hall
DEC 3	7:30 p.m.	Symphonic Wind Ensemble 25th Anniversary	Weill Hall
DEC 4	7:30 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 5	2:00 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 5	7:30 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 6	3:00 p.m.	Jazz Orchestra	Weill Hall
DEC 8	7:30 p.m.	Guitar Ensemble	Schroeder Hall
DEC 9	1:00 p.m.	Vocal Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
DEC 10	7:30 p.m.	Concert Jazz Ensemble & Latin Band	Schroeder Hall
DEC 12	7:30 p.m.	Rock Collegium	Schroeder Hall
DEC 15	7:30 p.m.	SSU Community Concert Band & Piner High School	Weill Hall
DEC 16	7:30 p.m.	Noma Winds	Weill Hall

Tickets:

\$20 General

\$8 Students / Youth

\$12 Seniors

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Sonoma State University Department of Music
presents

This is America

Symphonic Wind Ensemble

R. Anderson Collinsworth, conductor

Concert Choir

Jenny Bent, conductor

USAF Band of the Golden West

Capt. Brian M. O'Donnell, conductor

Thursday October 1, 2026

7:30 pm

Joan and Sanford I. Weill Hall

PROGRAM

Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Liberty Fanfare

John Williams (b. 1932)
Transcribed for Band by Paul Lavender

Twenty-One

Giovanni Santos (b. 1980)

Eleanora Beznehar, soprano
Consortium premiere

Suite of Old American Songs

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990)
Transcribed for Band by William H. Silvester

I. The Boatmen's Dance

II. The Little Horses

III. Zion's Walls

IV. At The River

V. Simple Gifts

VI. I Bought Me a Cat

Featuring the SSU Symphonic Chorus, Dr. Jenny Bent, director

Sweet Chariot

Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

Blue Shades

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Sesquicentennial Exposition March

John Philip Sousa (1854 – 1932)

USAF Band of the Golden West

Bright Shadow Fanfare

Nicole Piuunno (b. 1985)

E Pluribus Unum

Fred Jewell (1875 – 1936)

Marimba Concerto

Kevin Puts (b. 1972)
Arranged by MSgt David Dormeus

III. With Energy

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Airman First Class Connor Willits, marimba

Profanation from Jeremiah

Leonard Bernstein (1918 – 1990)
Transcribed for Band by Frank Bencrisciotto

Shenandoah

Arr. Omar Thomas (b. 1984)

Reveille

Ira Hearshen (b. 1948)

Service Song Medley

arr. TSgt Justis McKenzie

The Stars and Stripes Forever

John Philip Sousa (1854 – 1932)

Symphonic Wind Ensemble

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Natalia Alvarez Guerrero

Hollister, CA

Theo Hayse

Novato, CA

Jasmine Myers

Fresno, CA

Charlotte Yalch

Stockton, CA

Lizeth Torres-Valencia

Rohnert Park, CA

OBOE

Aidan Williams

Santa Rosa, CA

BASSOON

Maxwell Jorgenson

Oakdale, CA

Kaylee Laird

Santa Rosa, CA

CLARINET

Diego Borges

Woodland, CA

Keoni Dean

Oakdale, CA

Ryan Flores

San Diego, CA

Thomas Gosnell

Santa Rosa, CA

Emma Singhanian

Arbuckle, CA

Nick Xenelis

Santa Rosa, CA

BASS CLARINET

Keoni Dean

Oakdale, CA

Ryan Flores

San Diego, CA

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Diego Altamirano

Petaluma, CA

Evan Zaitz

Danville, CA

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Kai Gilbert

Rohnert Park, CA

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Marcus Danley

Bakersfield, CA

TRUMPET

Miriam Bozman

Newhall, CA

Vicente Dominguez

Ukiah, CA

Gus Juhl

Santa Cruz, CA

Gabriel Martinez

Pittsburg, CA

Joseph Reis

Tracy, CA

Mitchell Thompson

Yuba City, CA

HORN

Kian Hancock

Santa Rosa, CA

Emma Lunsford

Rohnert Park, CA

Carley McVicker

Tracy, CA

TROMBONE

Micah Kakuno

Oakdale, CA

Jose Palacios

Petaluma, CA

BASS TROMBONE

Oscar Bautista

Fresno, CA

Anthony Lam

Dublin, CA

EUPHONIUM

Lillian Guerrero

Redding, CA

Kevin Mills

Rohnert Park, CA

TUBA

Elijah Lopez

Brentwood, CA

Sean Taburazza

Union City, CA

Garrett Whitlock

Tracy, CA

STRING BASS

Olivia Buettner

Folsom, CA

Leif Dering

Sebastopol, CA

PERCUSSION

Ethan Dierauf

Union City, CA

Mario Juarez Osorio

Santa Rosa, CA

Marcus Schluter

Sebastopol, CA.

Julian Scullard

Livermore, CA.

KEYBOARDS

Yvonne Wormer

SSU Staff

USAF BAND OF THE GOLDEN WEST

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Ms. Ashleigh Wallace
TSgt Ronald Glenn

OBOE

SrA Fernando Yanez
TSgt Katherine Salmons

CLARINET

SSgt Clarissa Osborn
SSgt Louis Kim
MSgt Randolph Palada
SMSgt Susan Govier
SSgt Chester Howard

BASSOON

MSgt Daniel Shifren
A1C Graydon Howard

SAXOPHONE

SrA Travis Mills
Dr. Andrew Harrison
Mr. Anthony Seres (USAF ret)
MSgt Matthew Zettlemoyer

TRUMPET

SSgt Alan Matteri
SrA Jonathan Merlitz
SrA Daniel Santos
A1C Tanner Morrison
SSgt Grace Gilpatrick

HORN

MSgt Edwin Ochsner
SSgt Joshua Cote
A1C Grace Clarke

TROMBONE

SrA Theodore Van Winkle
SrA Spencer Banister
Mr. Jose Palacios

BASS TROMBONE

Mr. Samuel Wamhoff

EUPHONIUM

A1C Jared Barry

TUBA

SSgt Andrew Payton
SSgt Jacob Moore

DOUBLE BASS

A1C Gabriel Preusse-Martins

PERCUSSION

A1C Connor Willits
A1C Asa Nero
SSgt Alycia Cancel
SrA Jessica Betando
Mr. Robert Browning
(USAF ret)

PIANO

SrA Earley Jones

AUDIO

SSgt Warren Lynch

PROGRAM NOTES

LIBERTY FANFARE

John Williams (b. 1932)

Transcribed for band by Paul Lavender

Composed 1986/2008 | Duration 4:45

Liberty Fanfare was in 1986 was commissioned by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation for the celebration of the 100th birthday of the Statue of Liberty. The work features a brilliant brass fanfare for the main theme and woodwinds for a recurring, melodious motif.

"As fanfares go, [it] is a humdinger," wrote Anthony Tommasini, chief music critic of the New York Times. "It's got two great tunes: a brassy and boisterous fanfare riff, all roulades and flourishes and forward motion; and a long-lined tune for hushed-up [woodwinds] that sounds like lots of others Williams has composed for Hollywood but still gets you right in the back of the throat." Before the premiere of the piece, Williams commented that he had "tried to create a group of American airs and tunes of my own invention that I hope will give some sense of the event and the occasion."

John Williams conducted the premiere by the Boston Pops Orchestra on July 4, 1986. He also conducted the premiere of this edition for concert band with the United States Marine Band, July 20, 2008.

TWENTY-ONE

Giovanni Santos (b. 1980)

Composed 2025 | Duration 8:00

Twenty-One is a musical tribute to Roberto Clemente, an athlete whose greatness extended far beyond the baseball field. While his accomplishments as one of the game's most extraordinary right fielders and the first Latin American Hall of Famer are legendary, this work is inspired just as deeply by Clemente's humanity, generosity, and unwavering commitment to justice and service.

The number "21," worn by Clemente throughout his career, has come to symbolize excellence, dignity, and moral courage. In this work, musical themes reflect both the brilliance of his athleticism and the quiet strength of his character. Rhythmic vitality and moments of exuberance evoke the energy and joy he brought to the game, while more reflective passages honor his compassion, humility, and deep sense of responsibility to others.

Sonoma State University was part of the consortium of universities that commissioned this work. Tonight's performance is the third-ever.

Selections from OLD AMERICAN SONGS

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990)

Transcribed for band by William Silvester

Composed 1950-1952 | Duration 15:00

Old American Songs are two sets of songs arranged by Aaron Copland in 1950 and 1952, respectively, after research in the Sheet Music Collection of the Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays, in the John Hay Library at Brown University. Originally scored for voice and piano, they were reworked for baritone (or mezzo-soprano) and orchestra. Tonight's performance features six selections from the two sets.

The Boatmen's Dance

In *The Boatmen's Dance*, a minstrel song with a banjo melody dating back to 1843, Copland used an echo effect before each verse to reflect the Ohio River landscape.

*High row the boatmen row
Floatin' down the river the Ohio*

*The boatmen dance, the boatmen sing
The boatmen up to ev'rything
And when the boatman gets on shore
He spends his cash and works for more*

*High row the boatmen row
Floatin' down the river the Ohio*

*Then dance the boatmen dance
O dance the boatmen dance
O dance all night 'til broad daylight
And go home with the gals in the mornin'*

*High row the boatmen row
Floatin' down the river the Ohio*

*I went on board the other day
To see what the boatmen had to say
There I let my passion loose*

*An' they cram me in the callaboose
O dance the boatmen dance
O dance all night 'til broad daylight
And go home with the gals in the mornin'*

*High row the boatmen row
Floatin' down the river the Ohio*

*The boatman is a thrifty man
There's none can do as the boatman can
I never see a pretty gal in my life
But that she was a boatman's wife
O dance the boatmen dance
O dance all night 'til broad daylight
And go home with the gals in the mornin'*

*High row the boatmen row
Floatin' down the river the Ohio*

The Little Horses

"The Little Horses" is a lullaby from the South that was collected by Alan Lomax in Houston in the 1930's.

*Hush you bye, don't you cry,
Go to sleepy little baby.
When you wake, you shall have,
All the pretty little horses.*

*Blacks and bays, dapples and grays,
Coach and six-a little horses.
Blacks and bays, dapples and grays,
Coach and six-a little horses.*

*Hush you bye, don't you cry,
Go to sleepy little baby.
When you wake, you'll have sweet cake and*

All the pretty little horses.

*A brown and gray and a
black and a bay and a
Coach and six-a little horses.
A black and a bay and a
brown and a gray and a
Coach and six-a little horses.*

*Hush you bye, don't you cry,
Oh you pretty little baby.
Go to sleepy little baby.
Oh you pretty little baby.*

Zion's Walls

"Zion's Walls" is a revivalist tune with words and music by John G. McCurry (1821–1886), a farmer from Georgia who published the song collection, *The Social Harp*. Copland used this song again in his opera, *The Tender Land*..

*Come fathers and mothers,
Come sisters and brothers,
Come join us in singing the praises of Zion.
O fathers, don't you feel determined
To meet within the walls of Zion?
We'll shout and go round
The walls of Zion.*

At the River

"At the River" is a gentle and much-loved hymn dating from 1865 by the Reverend Robert Lowry. Copland begins with a simple accompaniment which gains in strength and intensity beginning with the orchestral interlude before the third verse. "At the River" was used fittingly on memorial concerts for both Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein.

*Shall we gather by the river,
Where bright angels' feet have trod,
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God.
Yes, we'll gather by the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints by the river
That flows by the throne of God.
Soon we'll reach the shining river,
Soon our pilgrimage will cease,
Soon our happy hearts will quiver
With the melody of peace.*

Simple Gifts

"Simple Gifts" is the most familiar of the tunes that Copland uses for his Old American Songs; it is of course the cornerstone melody of his 1944 ballet, Appalachian Spring. "Simple Gifts" is a Shaker hymn from 1848, the words and melody written by Elder Joseph Brackett, which was later quoted by Edward D. Andrews in his book *The Gift to be Simple: Songs, Dances and Rituals of the American Shakers* (1940). Copland uses a homophonic, chordal style of accompaniment for the uncomplicated melody.

*'Tis the gift to be simple
'Tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down
Where you ought to be
And when we find ourselves in the place just right
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gained
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed
To turn, turn will be our delight
'Till by turning, turning, we come round right.*

I Bought Me a Cat

"I Bought Me a Cat" is a whimsical children's song in the style of "old MacDonald," with a verse repeating and adding a new animal with each iteration (the last "animal" being a wife!). The song affords the soloist the opportunity to impersonate the various animals, and the accompaniment simulates barnyard sounds of the cat, duck, goose, hen, pig, horse and cow.

*I bought me a cat, my cat pleased me.
I fed my cat under yonder tree.
My cat says fiddle eye fee.
I bought me a duck, my duck pleased me.
I fed my duck under yonder tree.
My duck says, Quaa, quaa,
My cat says, fiddle eye fee.
I bought me a goose, my goose pleased me.
I fed my goose under yonder tree.
My goose says, Quaw, quaw,
My duck says, Quaa, quaa,
My cat says fiddle eye fee.
I bought me a hen, my hen pleased me.
I fed my hen under yonder tree.
My hen says, Shimmy shack, shimmy shack,
My goose says...
I bought me a pig, my pig pleased me.
I fed my pig under yonder tree.*

*My pig says, Griffey, Griffey,
My hen says...
I bought me a cow, my cow pleased me.
I fed my cow under yonder tree.
My cow says Moo, moo, my pig says ...
I bought me a horse, my horse pleased me.
I fed my horse under yonder tree.
My horse says, Neigh, neigh,
My cow says...
I bought me a wife, my wife pleased me.
I fed my wife under yonder tree.
My wife says, Honey, honey,
My horse says Neigh, neigh,
My cow says...*

SWEET CHARIOT

Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

Composed 2019 | Duration 6:15

Sweet Chariot was commissioned by a consortium led by Robert Ambrose at Georgia State University. Simon, the son of a minister, wanted to use an African American spiritual as a melodic resource because there is so much depth and meaning ingrained in spirituals. He chose *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* because of its beauty and familiarity, and skillfully weaves it with a Gregorian chant melody from the Latin mass for the dead, *In Paradisum*. Simon notes: *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* is perhaps one of the most well-known African American spirituals. As beautiful and rapturing as its melody is, it should be. However, its beauty and popularity is often overlooked by the song's true meaning about death. I have taken fragments of the melody and combined it with its text as follows: "May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs receive you at your arrival and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem. May choirs of angels receive you and with Lazarus, once (a) poor (man), may you have eternal rest."

BLUE SHADES

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Composed 1996 | Duration 10:30

Blue Shades opens with a quick minor third — a critical interval that appears throughout the work and threads together its various tunes and melodies. After a brief swung moment led by the clarinets, strict time resumes and the listener is taken through a series of melodic episodes. As the music progresses, the minor third appears in countless iterations, from harmonic support in the low winds to persistent ostinatos passed between the woodwind and percussion sections. The first half of the work is laden with colorful techniques and percussion instruments, from fluttering flutes to vibraslaps and a rowdy cowbell.

A slow and quiet middle section recalls the atmosphere of a dark, smokey blues haunt beginning with a series of solos in the flute, oboe, clarinet, and bass clarinet. Additional instruments gradually join in, leading to the section's high point, marked "Dirty" in the score.

The music then regains its momentum, accelerating into a driving walking bass in the marimba — derived from a melody heard much earlier in the piece — which accompanies an extended clarinet solo reminiscent of Benny Goodman's iconic playing style. The work's final section recapitulates many of themes heard earlier in the work, layering in wailing chords in the brass, horn rips, and virtuosic runs in the upper woodwinds. The piece ends with a serene chord played by the flute and piccolo, humorously interrupted by the splash of a cymbal.

SESQUICENTENNIAL EXPOSITION MARCH

John Philip Sousa (1854 – 1932)

Composed 1926 | Duration 3:30

The Sesquicentennial Exposition of 1926 was held in Philadelphia, the occasion being the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of American independence. Sousa composed this march at the request of exposition officials and dedicated it to the mayor of Philadelphia, W. Freeland Kendrick.

BRIGHT SHADOW FANFARE

Nicole Piunno (b. 1985)

Composed 2021 | Duration 2:30

The intense contrast in Bright Shadow Fanfare refers to two possible meanings. It could mean bringing our darkness into the light in order to integrate it with our true self. It could also mean revealing our positive traits and gifts that we may not allow ourselves to show or give to others.

E PLURIBUS UNUM

Fred Jewell (1875 – 1936)

Composed 1917 | Duration 3:20

Jewell wrote a number of marches with patriotic titles. E Pluribus Unum March was composed in 1917 during the dark days of World War I. The Latin title, motto of the United States, refers to one government created from many states. It was suggested by a Continental Congress committee appointed in 1776 composed of Benjamin Franklin, John Quincy Adams, and Thomas Jefferson.

“With Energy” from MARIMBA CONCERTO

Kevin Puts (b. 1972)

Composed 1997 | Duration 5:15

Kevin Puts composed his Marimba Concerto in 1997 while he was a graduate student at the Eastman School of Music. Dedicated to marimba virtuoso Ji Su Jung, the work reflects Puts' admiration of Mozart's piano concertos. The third movement is an athletic moto perpetuo for the marimbaist, culminating in a reprise of a melody from the first movement within the context of this final movement's more dance-like nature.

PROFANATION from SYMPHONY NO. 1 “JEREMIAH”

Leonard Bernstein (1918 – 1990)

Transcribed for band by Frank Bencrisutto

Composed 1942/1952 | Duration 7:05

Jeremiah, Bernstein's first symphony, was premiered in 1944, with the composer conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony and Jennie Tourel as mezzo-soprano soloist. Although this early work failed to win a 1942 contest sponsored by the New England Conservatory, it did win the Music Critics Circle of New York Award in 1944. The text of the Jeremiah Symphony is from the book of Lamentations. Prophecy, the first movement, aims to parallel in feeling the intensity of the prophet's plea for his people. Lamentations, the third movement, observes the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Profanation, the scherzo second movement, is based on the traditional Hebrew “Haftarah”, a biblical selection from the Books of the Prophets read after the parashah in the Jewish synagogue service. The music depicts a general sense of destruction and chaos brought on by pagan corruption in ancient Jerusalem. The score is dedicated to Bernstein's father.

SHENANDOAH

Omar Thomas (b. 1984)

Composed 2019 | Duration 7:45

Shenandoah is one of the most well-known and beloved Americana folk songs. Originally a river song detailing the lives and journeys of fur traders canoeing down the Missouri River, the symbolism of this culturally significant melody has been expanded to include its geographic namesake -- an area of the eastern United States that encompasses West Virginia and a good portion of the western part of Virginia -- and various parks, rivers, counties, and academic institutions found within. This arrangement recalls the beauty of Shenandoah Valley, not bathed in golden sunlight, but blanketed by low-hanging clouds and experiencing intermittent periods of heavy rainfall (created with a combination of percussion textures, generated both on instruments and from the body). There are a few musical moments where the sun attempts to pierce through the clouds, but ultimately the rains win out. This arrangement of Shenandoah is at times mysterious, somewhat ominous, constantly introspective, and deeply soulful.

REVEILLE

Ira Hearshen (b. 1948)

Composed 2017 | Duration 7:50

One of the lessons I've learned in having a successful career in the music business is to make sure the audience is entertained. If the audience does not respond to what they hear, that means I've not done my job. In researching Army music for some extant material that would be familiar to tonight's audience, it occurred to me that there was music that anyone stationed on a U.S. military base hears every day and that every American knows -- bugle calls. As the basis of this piece, I chose probably the best-known call, the morning wake-up call Reveille. This work consists of different episodic treatments of the Reveille theme. Even the soft chorale that begins the second half of the piece is a four-part arrangement of the consequent phrase of the bugle call. The tempos are bright, the harmonies positive, and the rhythms and orchestral colors exciting. It is my hope that anybody who hears this music winds up smiling.



R. Anderson “Andy” Collinsworth is the Director of Bands at Sonoma State University, where he leads the university Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Concert Band. Dr. Collinsworth brings a wealth of knowledge and experience gained over 37 years of experience to the ensembles he leads and the courses he teaches in conducting pedagogy and music education.

Dr. Collinsworth is currently serving in his sixth year as Chair of the Department of Music at SSU, overseeing all aspects of the curriculum and departmental activities. He maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor, adjudicator and rehearsal clinician for school ensembles, music organizations and honor bands throughout the country.

He sponsors the annual Sonoma Summer Wind Band Conducting Symposium, a training ground for music educators in the art of conducting. He also hosts the Sonoma Invitational Wind Band and Orchestra Festival—a signature three-day event that brings over 2,000 high school students to campus each year.

Dr. Collinsworth was elected to membership in the American Bandmasters Association. He has a long history of leadership in several professional organizations, including the College Band Directors National Association (national board member and Western Division President, 2014-2020); the California Band Directors Association (Vice President, 2004-2008); the California Music Educators Association (Bay Section President, 2012-2014); the Northern California Band and Choral Directors Association (President, 1998-2000).

Andy Collinsworth earned his Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA, 2008) degree in Conducting at Arizona State University, where he was a student of Gary W. Hill. He holds a Master of Music degree (MM, 1989) in Saxophone Performance and a Bachelor of Music Education degree (BME, 1987) from the University of Nevada at Reno.

BIOS



Captain Brian M. O'Donnell is the Commander and Conductor of the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West, located at Travis Air Force Base, California. The 60-member unit, comprised of ten musical ensembles, performs more than 350 missions as ambassadors of the United States Air Force and Air Mobility Command. The unit's mission is to honor our nation and its military, inspire patriotism while invigorating the resiliency of Airmen and their families, and connect with both the American public and vital regional and national partners to build trust and advocate for our nation's strategic defense priorities. Captain O'Donnell qualified as a band officer in 2017 and entered the

Air Force in 2018. He has since held the position of Flight Commander and conductor of the United States Air Force Academy Band in Colorado Springs, CO, and has completed two deployments to U.S. Central Command as the Officer in Charge of the Air Forces Central Band, located at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar.

Prior to joining the Air Force, Captain O'Donnell earned his Bachelor of Music in French Horn Performance and Bachelor of Arts in Music Composition from University of California Santa Barbara, where he studied horn with Dr. Stephen Gross, and music composition with Dr. Leslie Hogan and Dr. Jeremy Haladyna. He then earned his Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from California State University Sacramento with Leo Eylar. Concurrent with his studies in Sacramento, he worked as a freelance conductor and French horn player throughout Northern California, conducting and performing with ensembles of the professional, university, and community levels.

Captain O'Donnell received his commission in March of 2018 from Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama.



Airman 1st Class Connor Willits A1C Connor Willits is a percussionist with the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West, Travis AFB, CA. Originally from Naples, FL, his Air Force career began in 2025.

A1C Willits earned a Master of Music in Percussion Performance from the New England Conservatory and a Bachelor of Music in Percussion Performance from Florida State University. His primary teachers include Will Hudgins, Dan Bauch, Tim Genis and Dr. John Parks. A1C Willits has performed with groups such as the Boston Philharmonic,

Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra and Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. He was the winner of the Orchestral Mock Audition at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in 2023, and attended the Spoleto Festival USA, Texas Music Festival and Eastern Music Festival.

FACULTY

Jenny Bent

Director of Choral Activities
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Jill Rachuary Brindel

Cello

Eric Cabalo

Classical Guitar,
Guitar Ensemble,

Ian Carey

Jazz Trumpet

Andy Collinsworth

Department Chair
Director of Bands

Ken Cook

Jazz Piano

Jeff Denson

Jazz Bass

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Jazz Saxophone

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Jeff Robinson

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Tuba, Euphonium

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