

June 4, 2024

Dear friends and family of OSU Concert Bands,

Hello everyone, we are trying something new this year. To better connect with you our friends and family, I am planning on writing a quarterly newsletter to keep everyone up to date about events related to the concert bands here at OSU. As I sit here reflecting on an incredible year of music and experiences with our various concert bands here at Oregon State University, I feel so much gratitude for you: our friends and family. We could not have done all these things without your support, by being in the audience, providing money for scholarships so that students can partake in lessons or concert experiences, or simply just showing up in all the ways that you do! Thank you!



Figure 1. OSU Wind Ensemble with composer Viet Cuong and Eighth Blackbird

This past spring term was a whirlwind of activity. The OSU Wind Ensemble, coming off their successful performance at the Western/ Northwestern College Band Directors National Association Conference in Las Vegas, went straight into rehearsal preparations for our three-day residency with composer Viet Cuong and four-time Grammy Award-winning ensemble Eighth Blackbird at the beginning of May. The residency was a huge success, with our students working closely with the composer Viet Cuong and members of Eighth Blackbird in various large and small ensemble music rehearsals, as well as individual coaching sessions. This culminated in a concert on May 2, where the wind ensemble joined Eighth Blackbird to perform Viet Cuong's concerto for sextet and wind band entitled *Vital Sines*, in our brand-new performing arts center, the Patricia Valian Reser Center for the Creative Arts (PRAx).



Figure 2. OSU Wind Ensemble performing Viet Cuong's *Deciduous*, under the direction of Erik Leung

Right after the concert with Eighth Blackbird, the wind ensemble quickly pivoted gears in preparation for our final concert of the year. This concert featured OSU Wind

Ensemble Concerto Competition winner Aaron Jobe on flute, performing Otar Gordeli's *Concerto for Flute and Wind Ensemble*, various small chamber ensembles, as well as music by Viet Cuong, Omar Thomas, and Leonard Bernstein's "Make our Garden Grow" from *Candide*, featuring antiphonal brass scattered throughout Detrick Hall. The band received a rousing standing ovation for their performance!

Fresh off their concert at the Oregon Music Educators Conference in Eugene this past January where they received a standing ovation, our OSU Wind Symphony under the direction of Olin Hannum was hard at work preparing and practicing for their spring concert. Throughout the term, the group showed tremendous grit, determination, and musicality as they worked together to present Johan de Meij's monumental *Symphony No. 1: Lord of the Rings*. This culminated in a concert that not only featured the entire 45-minute symphony,



Figure 3. Soprano saxophone soloist, Emelyn Keller who portrayed the character of Gollum and Smeagol



Figure 4. The OSU Wind Symphony performing *Sym. No1: Lord of the Rings*, under the direction of Olin Hannum

but also utilized the lighting capabilities within PRAX to coordinate and connect various colors of light to specific reoccurring themes throughout the work. This resulted in a truly immersive concert experience for everyone in the hall. The group received a standing ovation for their efforts!

Our OSU Campus Band was also busy preparing for our annual Pops concert which was inspired by the theme of “Space.” Under the direction of undergraduate conductors Trinity Hunt, Nicole Katsel, Jerence Lyons, Nathan Mason, and Abby Underwood, the 60-plus ensemble worked diligently every Tuesday evening, honing and polishing the music for the outdoor performance. While the noon time concert on May 28 was cancelled due to inclement weather, the rain held out allowing for our 7pm concert to move ahead without a hitch. As is tradition for our annual Pops Concert, the Campus Band was joined by musicians from both the Wind Ensemble and Wind Symphony. With over 160 musicians coming together to make music, it was a wonderful culminating event for our students and community here at OSU.



Figure 5. Members of the Wind Ensemble, Wind Symphony, and Campus Band



Figure 6. OSU Wind Ensemble, Wind Symphony, and Campus Band performing at the annual Pops Concert on the steps of the Memorial Union building

Looking ahead to the 2024-2025 concert season, we have numerous exciting events planned. We will be hosting various residencies with artists like Viet Cuong and Aruna Saxophone Quartet, and we have several exciting premieres planned. Our annual Homecoming Concert will be held October 18, 2024, in the La Sells Stewart Center where we will honor longtime OSU Band Alumni and supporter Robert (Bob) Schapper. We will also be using the Homecoming Concert as a kick-off for a fundraising campaign to help support additional student scholarships in the concert band area. If you would like to donate to the OSU Concert Bands or have any other questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at erik.leung@oregonstate.edu. Your support means so much to our us and our students and allows for the continued success of our program!

Have a safe and restful summer,



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