

THE
ST · OLAF
ORCHESTRA

STEVEN AMUNDSON · CONDUCTOR

WITH SENIOR SOLOISTS:

MELANIE BROOKS, SAXOPHONE
ERI ISOMURA, MARIMBA AND VIBRAPHONE
APRIL KIM, PIANO
STEPHANIE LANGE, SOPRANO
CHRISTOPHER LESLIE, EUPHONIUM
JOSEPH SFERRA, CLARINET
EMILY VOMACKA, PIANO



SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2011
3:30 P.M.
BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Danse Bacchanale
from *Samson et Dalila*, op. 47

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)

In 1867, French Romantic composer Camille Saint-Saëns began working on an oratorio about the biblical story of Samson and Delilah. Thanks to librettist Ferdinand Lemaire, the work quickly turned into an enticing opera based on chapter 16 of the Book of Judges in the Old Testament, which was finally premiered in 1877. Instead of focusing on the well-known physical prowess and astonishing feats of the male protagonist, this dramatic work highlights the struggle Samson must face in choosing between his devoted allegiance to Israel and his lustful desire for the beautiful Dalila.

Throughout the opera, the conniving and manipulative Philistine, Dalila, attempts to seduce the tender heart of Samson with the sole intent to crush this powerful Hebrew leader in an act of loyalty to her gods, thus displaying her hatred for his people. After successfully winning his affection in Act II, the femme fatale calls upon her soldiers to capture and blind Samson. He later offers himself up as a sacrifice, feeling overwhelmed with remorse for acting on behalf of his weak heart. As the Philistines prepare for the penitential death, they celebrate their victory with the drunken and reckless abandon of the Danse Bacchanale.

It opens with a winding chromatic cadenza in the oboe, accentuating the exotic interval of an augmented second that is often associated with Middle Eastern music and Philistine sensuality. The piece builds into a lively, rhythmic dance full of memorable melodic material that is tossed about throughout the orchestra. A contrasting middle section features a passionate, sweeping, lyrical tune in the strings, perhaps hinting at the mournful heartache of the martyr. The exciting opening material returns and is eventually transformed into a chaotic presto that spins out of control in a climactic finish. It seems as though the Philistines have triumphed, but just before they are able to put an end to Samson, he prays to God to restore his strength, and pulls down the pillars of their temple, crushing himself and his enemies in a glorious finale.

Fantasia
for Soprano Saxophone and Chamber Orchestra
I. Animé

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887 – 1959)

Melanie Brooks, soprano saxophone

Heitor Villa-Lobos is considered to be one of the greatest of Brazilian composers. He studied with his father, a gifted amateur musician. He left school at an early age and supported himself by playing the cello and the guitar in the “chôros” (street bands) of Rio de Janeiro. At the age of 18 he conducted intense research on the folk themes of Brazil, which would greatly influence his compositional style. In 1923 he made his first trip to Paris, where he met Ravel, Debussy, and Milhaud. He would make frequent trips to Paris for the rest of his life, and his later compositions fused the musical styles of Brazil and France. Villa-Lobos wrote his *Fantasia* in 1948 in Rio and dedicated it to Marcel Mule. The first movement begins with a multi-rhythmic introduction followed by a delicate tango.

***Première Rhapsodie*
for Clarinet and Orchestra**

Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918)

Joseph Sferra, clarinet

Debussy was an influential composer of the twentieth century, experimenting with orchestration, tone color, and harmony. He composed the *Première Rhapsodie* as a final examination piece for clarinet students of the Paris Conservatoire in 1910. He liked the piece so much that he arranged it for clarinet and orchestra in 1911. The piece is a display of the subtle color changes in a clarinet's tone, all the while exploring the clarinet's joking and virtuosic sides.

**Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)
III. Allegro con fuoco**

April Kim, piano

Peter Tchaikovsky composed his first Piano Concerto between November 1874 and February 1875 and dedicated it to his good friend Nicholas Rubenstein. However, Rubenstein heavily criticized the work, offending Tchaikovsky and causing him to dedicate the piece instead to Hans von Bulow, whom he had never even met but whom he knew to be interested in his work.

The third movement, in 3/4, begins with a strong downbeat in the timpani; from the outset, the energy is clearly apparent. The main theme features a relentless second beat accent, which returns constantly within a series of contrasting sections. The second theme is intensely lyrical, characteristic for Romantic-era Russian composers. Near the end of the development, over a long pedal point on the dominant, the orchestra plays motives from earlier themes, leading directly to an exciting solo cadenza comprised of rapid, heavy octave scales. The orchestra combines with piano on a grand fortissimo statement of the second theme followed by an exciting coda in triumphant B flat major.

INTERMISSION



Piano Concerto No. 1 In B flat Major, Op. 10
I. Allegro brioso

Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)

Emily Vomacka, piano

Sergei Prokofiev's first piano concerto was composed in 1912 while he was still a precocious student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He humorously dedicated the work to "the dreaded Tcherepnin," referring to the ferociously critical Nikolai Tcherepnin who was one of the few conservatory teachers to win Prokofiev's respect. The piece won him first prize at his piano examinations, even if the critics initially panned it; the New York Times reported in 1918 that "there were moments when the piano and orchestra made sounds that evoked not only the downfall of empires, but also of fine crockery, the fragments flying in all directions ... The Concerto will never be played by anyone on Earth."

The work is evidence of Prokofiev's respect for his Russian Romantic heritage, as well as his mischievous urge to push the traditions to absurd degrees of near-parody; the orchestra's lush, more conventional themes are offset by the piano's incisive, often brightly irreverent commentary, which one can imagine being penned by a rebellious young composer.

The movement begins with a unified statement of a soaring, heroic theme, and then is unexpectedly hijacked by a colorful and freewheeling soloistic tangent from the piano. The orchestra is caught up in a lighthearted march that spirals into a grand dash towards the breathless conclusion of the first section. A somber interlude gives way to an anxious, momentum-building climb that culminates in a brilliant Russian finale and triumphant restatement of the opening theme.

Euphonium Concerto
III. Finale Giocoso

Vladimir Cosma (b. 1940)

Chris Leslie, euphonium

Vladimir Cosma is a Romanian-born composer living France who studied composition under Nadia Boulanger in 1963. A prolific film score composer, he has received numerous awards for his nearly three hundred compositions. His *Concerto for Euphonium and Orchestra* was written for the 1997 World Euphonium Competition in Guebwiller, France and premiered by virtuoso soloist Steven Mead. Cosma's penchant for theatricality is ever present in this three-movement tour de force, which has become one of the most popular and most challenging works in the euphonium repertoire. The piece is based on the Phrygian Dominant Scale, also known as the Spanish "Gypsy" Scale, which is commonly used in flamenco music. This gives the work a sense of dramatic Spanish flair, especially in the third movement, *Giocoso*. Descending ground bass, hemiola patterns, and captivating melodies create structure for this furious finale, which begins in a rapid tempo that never diminishes. The last few sections feature extremely demanding violin-like passages (Cosma's primary instrument) for the soloist embedded in an orchestral texture that steadily builds to an electrifying finish.

Concerto for Marimba and Vibraphone
III. Vif

Darius Milhaud (1892 – 1974)

Eri Isomura, marimba and vibraphone

French composer Darius Milhaud's *Concerto for Marimba and Vibraphone* was composed in 1947. It is controversial to this day whether the version for piano and orchestra came first or vice versa. Nevertheless, it is clear that he was interested in learning folk styles not of his own making and incorporating them into his compositions. His musical voice, which developed early in his career, is founded primarily on polytonality. Influences of jazz harmonies can be heard in the work due to his fascination with the Harlem jazz culture he encountered in the 1920s. The Ragtime syncopation in the brilliant melodies and the ever-changing orchestral voicing provide a sense of wholeness to this movement.

Meine Lippen, Sie küssen so heiß
(My Lips, They Kiss With Such Fire)
from *Giuditta*

Franz Lehár (1870 – 1948)

Stephanie Lange, soprano

Giuditta was commissioned by the Vienna State Opera and premiered on January 20, 1934 with Franz Lehár conducting. This five-scene operetta resembles the storyline of Bizet's *Carmen*. The leading lady, Giuditta, is unhappily married to a carpenter, Manuele. When an army captain, Octavio, passes by and notices her dull marriage, he immediately becomes intrigued by her beauty. He convinces her to leave Manuele and join him on a military campaign. The two move to a villa in North Africa and are happily living together until Octavio learns he must leave to rejoin his troops. Giuditta finds him in a desert camp and pleads him to stay with her, but he insists on leaving with his regiment. She breaks down in desperation and decides to follow in her mother's path of becoming a night club dancer in "Alcazar," a North African city. She performs this well-known aria, "Meine Lippen, Sie Küssen so heiß" in the nightclub, using her irresistible ability to charm every customer. Meanwhile, Octavio shows up to win her back, only to realize what she has become and leaves the scene without her ever noticing him. Years later, the two meet again by chance. Giuditta remembers how special their love once was and begs him to come back to her, but Octavio is now a broken man and cannot bring himself to accept her.

Meine Lippen, Sie küssen so heiß

—Paul Knepler and Fritz Löhner

Ich weiß es selber nicht,
Warum man gleich von Liebe spricht,
Wenn man in meiner Nähe ist,
In meine Augen schaut und meine Hände
küsst.

Ich weiß es selber nicht,
Warum man von dem Zauber spricht,
Dem keiner widersteht,
Wenn er mich sieht, wenn er an mir
vorüber geht.

Doch wenn das rote Licht erglüht,
Zur mitternächtgen Stund
Und alle lauschen meinem Lied,
Dann wird mir klar der Grund:

Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiß,
Meine Glieder sind schmiegsam und
weiß.

In den Sternen, da steht es geschrieben,
Du sollst küssen, du sollst lieben.
Meine Füße, sie schweben dahin,
Meine Augen sie locken und glühen.
Und ich tanz' wie im Rausch, denn ich
wieß,
Mein Lippen, sie küssen so heiß.

In meinen Adern drinn
Da rollt das Blut der Tänzerin,
Denn meine schöne Mutter war
Des Tanzes Königen im goldnen Alcazar.
Sie war so wunderschön,
Ich hab sie oft im Traum gesehn.
Schlug sie das Tambourin zu wild im
Tanz,
Da sah man alle Augen glühen.
Sie ist in mir aufs Neu erwacht,
Ich hab das gleiche Los.
Ich tanz wie sie um Mitternacht
Und fühl das Eine bloß:

Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiß...

My Lips, They Kiss With Such Fire

*I myself do not know
Why people speak of love
As soon as they come near me
And look into my eyes and kiss my hands.*

*I myself do not know
Why they speak of sorcery
Which no one can resist
When they see me and walk past me.*

*But when the red light glows
At the midnight hour
And everyone listens to my song,
Then the reason becomes clear to me:*

*My lips, they kiss with such fire,
My limbs are soft and white.*

*It is written in the stars
That you should kiss, you should love.
My feet float along,
My eyes tempt and glow.
And I dance as in ecstasy, for I know that*

My lips, they kiss with such fire.

*Through my veins runs
A dancer's blood
For my beautiful mother was
Queen of the Dance in golden Alcázar.
She was so wondrously fair,
I often saw her in my dreams.
When she struck the tambourine so
Wildly while dancing,
All eyes were seen to flash with fire.
She has been reawoken in me,
We share the same fate.
Like her, I dance at midnight
And feel one thing alone:*

My lips, they kiss with such fire...

Pini di Roma (The Pines of Rome)

Ottorino Respighi (1879 – 1936)

IV. I pini della Via Appia (The Pines of the Appian Way)

Musicians often cite nature and poetry as sources of inspiration for their work, and Italian composer Ottorino Respighi was no exception to this tendency. His best known compositions belong to the orchestral *Roman Trilogy* (*The Fountains of Rome*, *The Pines of Rome*, and *Roman Festivals*), three tone poems influenced by the contemporary Italian poetry of Gabriele D'Annunzio. The selection presented today is the final movement from *The Pines of Rome*, which depicts the various pine trees of the city, each at a different time of day. Through his characteristically dense yet brilliant orchestration, Respighi brings new life to the poetic imagery of D'Annunzio. What begins as a somber and eerie dirge blossoms into a marvelous fanfare with gorgeous mixtures of timbre and an array of lush colors. In the original score, Respighi provided the following description to annotate his portrayal of the scenery:

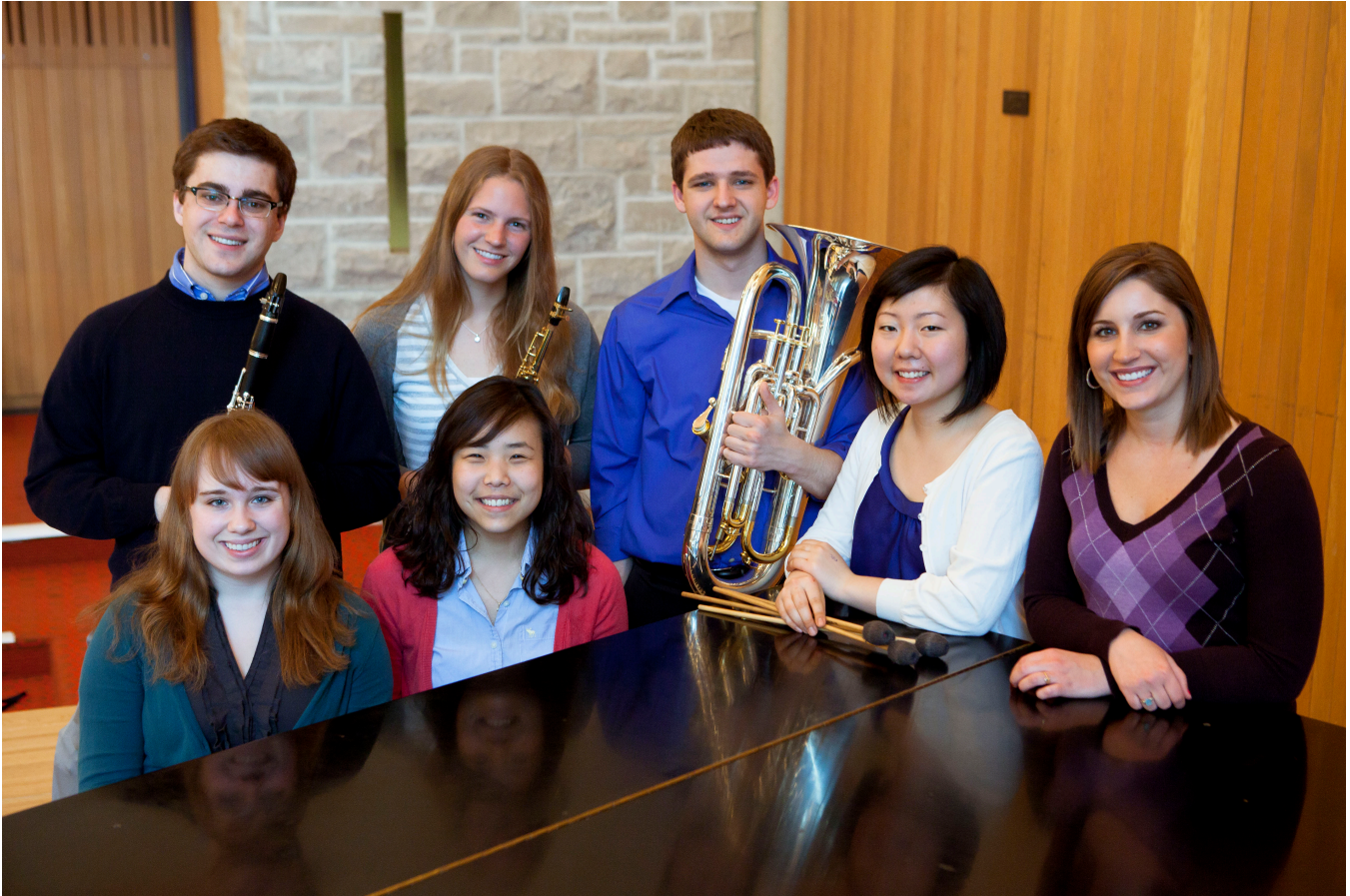
The Pine Trees of the Appian Way

Misty dawn on the Appian Way: solitary pine trees guarding the magic landscape; the muffled, ceaseless rhythm of unending footsteps. The poet has a fantastic vision of bygone glories; trumpets sound and, in the brilliance of the newly-risen sun, a consular army bursts forth towards the Sacred Way, mounting in triumph to the Capitol.

Program notes for the soloists' selections were written by each of the senior soloists. Notes for the selections by Saint-Saëns and Respighi were written by Stephen Sokolouski, '10.

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THE SOLOISTS:



Top row: Joe Sferra, Melanie Brooks, Christopher Leslie
Bottom row: Emily Vomacka, April Kim, Eri Isomura, Stephanie Lange

BIOGRAPHIES:

Melanie Brooks, from the studio of Kurt Claussen, is an instrumental music education major from Waseca, Minnesota. During her four years on the hill, she has played alto and soprano saxophones in the St. Olaf Band, jazz bands, St. Olaf Orchestra, Philharmonia, jazz combo, and the Kaze Saxophone Quartet. She has also spent four years playing first base for the St. Olaf fast-pitch softball team and one year on the basketball team. She combined her interests in sports and music by directing the St. Olaf pep band this year. After graduation, Melanie will travel to Finland to study their music education system. In the fall she will student teach in Eden Prairie and Apple Valley. She is incredibly grateful for all of the support her family, friends, and the faculty at St. Olaf have given her. Thanks for a wonderful four years!

Eri Isomura, from the studio of Dr. Dave Hagedorn, is a percussion performance major from Lauderdale, Minnesota. Her time here – playing percussion, piano and drumset, changing majors a few times, performing in top-notch undergrad ensembles with amazing, big-hearted musicians – was like none other. This year, Eri decided to prioritize and cherish the events unique to her time here and let next year worry for itself. Her parents have graciously agreed to hear her practice on bass drum, anvils, flexatone, and tam-tam for a year or two as she starts to search for a graduate school program in percussion performance.

April Ryun Kim is a piano performance with collaborative emphasis major from Eden Prairie, Minnesota. April was a member of the Manitou Singers for one year and the Chapel Choir for three years. She also served as the Student Collaborative Pianist and Manager for the Collegiate Chorale. She was fortunate to place in the Thursday Musical and Schubert Club Competition and be chosen as the alternate for the MTNA competition in the Young Artists Division. Performing on two piano tours with other student pianists ranks among her St. Olaf highlights. This fall, April will attend the Cleveland Institute of Music to pursue her Masters Degree in piano performance. She would like to thank her friends and family for their support, the St. Olaf music department, and especially Professor McWilliams for teaching his piano tricks and secrets!

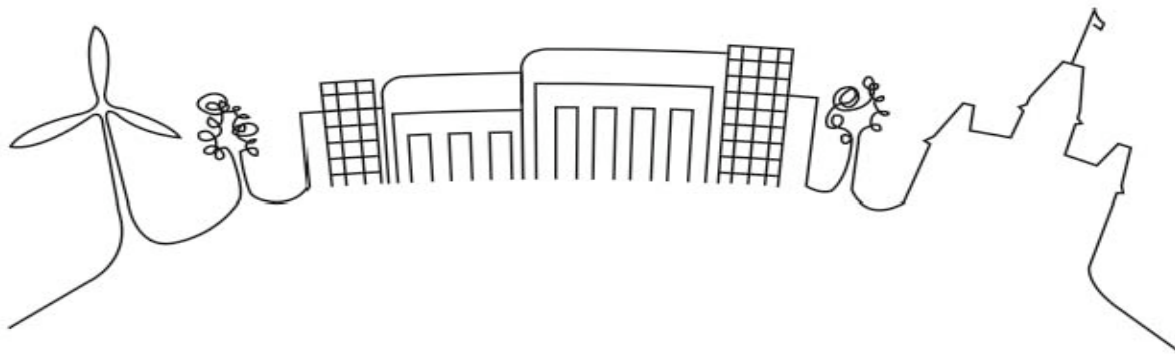
Stephanie Lange is a bachelor of music in vocal performance major from Topeka, Kansas. She has had the distinct pleasure of studying under Margaret Eaves-Smith for the last four years and singing with the St. Olaf Chapel Choir under Dr. Aspaas for the past three. In the fall of 2009, she spent the semester studying music abroad in Vienna, Austria, where she practically lived at the Vienna State Opera house. Upon graduation, she will move to Austin, Texas to be a live-in nanny for the summer and then begin her master's degree at the University of Texas – Austin in the fall, studying under Darlene Wiley. She eagerly awaits the warm weather and Division I sports. She would like to thank her extremely supportive parents and siblings for putting up with her non-stop singing around the house, her first voice teacher, Pam Rector, and the entire St. Olaf music department, especially Margaret Eaves-Smith, Christopher Aspaas, Robert Smith, Janis Hardy and Jim McKeel who have given such treasured support and wisdom.

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, **Chris Leslie** will graduate with his bachelor of music in instrumental music education. He recently took first place in the college and graduate winds division of both the Thursday Musical and Schubert Club young artist competition and gave a premiere performance of Libby Larsen's *Cri de Coeur* with the St. Olaf Band, of which he is a four-year member. Some of his favorite memories from St. Olaf include student teaching in Rosemount, singing with the Chapel Choir, and serving as assistant conductor of the Viking Chorus. Next year, he will begin work on his master of music in euphonium performance at Indiana University and hopes to someday become a studio

professor. He would like to thank his teachers and mentors Larry Zimmerman, Martin Hodel, Timothy Mahr, Christopher Aspaas, and Robert Smith for all their support and guidance. He would especially like to thank his father, Ken, who first introduced him to the joy of playing a musical instrument.

Joe Sferra, from the studio of Jun Qian, is a bachelor of arts music theory and composition major from Toledo, Ohio. He is a four-year member of the St. Olaf Band and a two-year member of the St. Olaf Orchestra. His most memorable rehearsals at St. Olaf, though, were those as a member of the Panda Express Clarinet Quartet. His musical tastes range from The Beach Boys to Stockhausen. When he's not in the music library or practicing his keytar, he's desperately trying to make his friends laugh with off-color jokes and parody songs. He will be attending The Ohio State University in the fall to pursue a master's degree in composition. He dedicates this performance to his grandmothers, Pat Stevick and Mary Sferra.

Emily Vomacka, from the studio of Kathryn Ananda-Owens, is a music theory and composition major from Kandiyohi, Minnesota. She has spent the last four years composing music for anyone willing to play it, performing as a solo and collaborative pianist and percussionist, exploring a few too many academic disciplines, and writing counterpoint in Paris with the EAMA Summer Composition Program. A proud member of the St. Olaf Band's percussion section, she plans to take a leaf from David Maslanka's book after graduation and write some music in the mountains while working at Holden Village. She will be applying to graduate school in music composition.



THE ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA

STEVEN AMUNDSON, *CONDUCTOR* ~ TERRA WIDDIFIELD, *MANAGER*

VIOLIN

Taryn Arbeiter, *Rapid City, S.D.*
Jenny Asparro, *Lake Oswego, Ore.*
Greta Bauer, *Minneapolis, Minn.*
Lars Berggren, *Lindsborg, Kan.*
Madeline Brumback, *Blacksburg, Va.*
Ellen Hartford, *Stow, Mass.*
Lindsie Katz, *Boulder, Colo.*
Olivia Krueger, *Omaha, Neb.*
Lauren Kurtz, *Mankato, Minn.*
[Laurel Lynch, *Fairbanks, Alaska*
Emily Mullaney, *Gilbert, Iowa*
Graham Ransom, *Edina, Minn.*
Katarina Schmitt, *Naperville, Ill.*
Amanda Secor, *Fort Dodge, Iowa*
Arthur Sletten, *Osceola Wis.*
†† Ean Ulrich, *Owatonna, Minn.*

VIOLIN II

Sarah Aune, *Middleton, Wis.*
**Green Bouzard, *Waverly, Iowa*
Jared Brown, *Oak Park, Calif.*
~*Janelle East, *Spicer, Minn.*
Elizabeth Fairfield, *DeKalb, Ill.*
McKinley Green, *Butler, Ohio*
Becca Hanson, *Minnetonka, Minn.*
Stephen Lee, *Delran, N.J.*
Sarah Marti, *Prior Lake, Minn.*
Catherine Monson, *Austin, Minn.*
Megan Peterson, *Grand Forks N.D.*
Colleen Schaeffle, *Anoka Minn.*
Hannah Sorrells, *Weatherville, N.C.*
Sonja Wermager, *Northfield, Minn.*
Katherine Wilhelm, *Barrington, R.I.*

VIOLA

Julie Asparro, *Lake Oswego, Ore.*
Abi Enockson, *Fargo, N.D.*
*Katie Fitzgerald, *Monument, Colo.*
Claire Folts, *Hershey Penn.*
Dayna Jondal, *Austin, Minn.*
Brittany Letcher, *West Lafayette, Ind.*
**Laura Menard, *Lexington, Ky.*
Anna Nelson, *Waukesha, Wis.*
Julia Ortner, *Bloomington, Minn.*
Hannah Stallkamp, *Gilbert, Ariz.*
Kyle Svingen, *Omaha Neb.*

CELLO

Ben Arbeiter, *Rapid City S.D.*
Lydia Bundy, *Azusa, Calif.*
Sara Cattanach, *Lake Elmo, Minn.*
Amy Chatelaine, *Owatonna, Minn.*
**Sarah Gingerich, *Conway, Ark.*
Beau Gray, *Fargo, N.D.*
Alexandra Mastny, *Stillwater, Minn.*
Jacqueline Scott, *Plymouth, Minn.*

Audrey Slote, *Meadville, Pa.*
Stephen Sokolouski, *Maplewood, Minn.*
Laura Zimmermann, *Racine, Wis.*

BASS

Evan Anderson, *Golden Colo.*
**Bayard Carlson, *Sioux Falls, S.D.*
Jonah Hacker, *Madison, Wis.*
Daniel Meyers, *Waverly, Iowa*
Andy Nail, *Bloomington, Minn.*
Kara Lynn Sajeske, *Elmhurst Ill.*

FLUTE

Sonia Funkenbusch, *Hudson, Wis.*
**Megan Makeever, *Bozeman, Mont.*
Molly Schull, *Hayward, Wis.*

PICCOLO

Molly Schull, *Hawyard, Wis.*

OBOE

◇ Megan Dvorak, *Hayward, Wis.*
Ashley Enke, *Omaha, Neb.*
**Lauren Seidel, *Minneapolis, Minn.*

CLARINET

**Aaron Harcus, *Minneapolis, Minn.*
Joe Sferra, *Toledo, Ohio*

BASS CLARINET

Christopher Sherwood-Gabrielson,
Scandia, Minn.

BASSOON

Anne Daily, *Anamosa, Iowa,*
**Josh John, *Beaverton, Ore.*
Conor Mackey, *St. Charles, Ill.*

HORN

Amy Glasow, *Shoreview, Minn.*
Jordan Kling, *Ashland, Ore.*
Ellan Krubsack, *Maple Grove, Minn.*
**Melanie Paulsen, *Monticello, Iowa*
Kira Seidel, *Minneapolis, Minn.*
Andrew Watt, *St. Paul, Minn.*

TRUMPET

Joshua Castillo, *Lakeville, Minn.*
Greg Dean, *Mound, Texas*
Neil Hulbert, *Tacoma, Wash.*
Kevin Huseh, *Plymouth, Minn.*
**Garrett Klein, *Port Orchard, Wash.*
Timothy McCarthy, *Brush Prairie,
Wash.*
Jaclyn Melander, *Mounds View, Minn.*

TROMBONE

Jesse Brault, *Viroqua, Wis.*
Zach Gingerich, *Conway, Ark.*
**Benjamin Sink, *Manchester, N.H.*
Katie Truax, *Waukesha, Wis.*

BASS TROMBONE

Robinson Schulze, *Santa Monica,
Calif.*

TUBA

Wesley Olson, *Minnetonka, Minn.*

ORGAN

Andrew Schaeffer, *Chicago, Ill.*

PIANO

Ellen Hartford, *Stow, Mass.*
Madeline Giordana, *Hudson, Wis.*

PERCUSSION

Andrew Belsaas, *Rapid City S.D.*
Madeline Giordana, *Hudson, Wis.*
Neil Gleason, *Buffalo, Minn.*
**Eri Isomura, *Lauderdale, Minn.*
Alex Van Rysselberghe, *Lake Oswego,
Ore.*

HARP

Joy Gunderson, *Phoenix, Ariz.*
Anna Hagens, *Madison, Wis*

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