SCHOOL OF **MUSIC**

TEXAS TECH

J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts

VOICES

TTU Symphonic Wind Ensemble & University Choir
Sarah McKoin, *conductor*
Alan Zabriskie, *conductor*

Sunday, April 12th, 2026 | 4:00 pm
Hemmle Recital Hall

PROGRAM

The Future of Fire (2001/2008) — Zhou Long (b. 1953)

Vincent's Sky (2025) — Jake Runestad (b. 1986)

I. Olive Trees
II. Wheatfield with Crows
III. Starry Night

Alan Zabriskie, *conductor*

– Intermission –

Passages (2023) — Will Healy (b. 1990)

I. Babbel on
II. Heights
III. Hovering/Fluttering

Brittany Fouché Strine, *soprano*
Kevin Whalen, *trumpet*
Chad Nelson, *emcee*
Dizzy Senze, *emcee*

PROGRAM NOTES

The Future of Fire – Zhou Long

The Future of Fire is a brief but powerful work for SATB or upper voices, and orchestra or wind band. The vibrant scoring creates a feeling of explosive energy from beginning to end with intense bursts from a battery of percussion. The melodic material is taken from a popular and touching love song from Shannxi province in northwestern China, which is coupled with rhythmic motives in both the orchestra/wind band and chorus. Folk melodies from this region use intervals of a minor seventh these angular leaps are suited to the dynamic spirit of this work. The chorus sings a vocalise based on repeated syllables that are found in Chinese folk songs, as well as many folk songs from around the world.

- Program Note from publisher

Vincent's Sky – Jake Runestad

Vincent van Gogh's often-told history includes his "unsuccessfulness" as a painter in his lifetime, how he cut off his ear, and his struggle with mental illness. But what is not often discussed is his beautiful approach to the world and to others; he loved deeply, he was generous to those in need, and sought beauty wherever he looked. Yes, he had major battles with his mental illness (and what many doctors believe was temporal lobe epilepsy), but most importantly: Vincent taught us to see the beauty of the world in a new way.

Walt Whitman, though living and creating an ocean away, shared many similarities with Vincent (and in his letters, Vincent wrote about reading and admiring Whitman). They were both largely self taught and well read, they sought jobs where they could help others, and they saw the world in a way many people did not -- a unique insight that shone through in their art. I imagine that Vincent was deeply inspired by Whitman's words, and I feel this is evident in the scenes that Vincent captured in his paintings.

In *Vincent's Sky*, I attempt to capture Vincent's emotional state surrounding three of his paintings, influenced by the words of Whitman. I used a musical cryptogram, assigning pitches to letters, to spell words that would inform the musical content. For example, "VINCENT" is spelled with the notes A, B, G, C, E, G, F.

Olive Trees: This painting pulsates with yellow rays emanating from the sun over a field of olive trees. Vincent associated yellow with happiness, and Whitman's text for this movement celebrates color and light.

Wheatfield with Crows: While this movement opens with a soaring admiration for the beauty of the earth, Vincent's thoughts are soon overtaken by hallucinations, ghostly voices, and chaos. The dark, stormy sky and presence of crows (a symbol of death) foreshadow difficulties ahead. Vincent wrote in his letters about having hallucinations of the Horla during his psychotic episodes. *The Horla*, a story written by Guy de Maupassant in 1886, depicts the possession of the main character by a supernatural being after he waved to a "superb three-mast ship," and how this being gradually takes over his mind.

The Starry Night: Vincent's most iconic painting of the night sky is adapted from the view from his bedroom window at the Saint-Paul Asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence where he admitted himself after a severe mental health crisis. Vincent's fight against the "silent shadows" of his inner world come to life in the beauty of this night scene, in which the sky swirls with color and the stars shimmer with light. Whitman's words bring us the hopeful twinkling of the stars in the face of life's darkness.

Text (*Whitman texts in regular font, van Gogh texts in italics*.)

I. Olive Trees

Shine!

Pour down your warmth, great sun!

Shot gold, maroon and violet, dazzling silver, emerald, fawn, the earth's whole amplitude consigned to colors; pure luminous color fighting the silent shadows to the last.

Prepare my lengthening shadows, prepare my starry nights.

II. Wheatfield with Crows

The whole of nature is so indescribably beautiful. I never tire of the blue sky. Pure luminous color. This infinite earth, that infinite sky.

My life is under attack at the very root. I have set to work again, although the brush is nearly falling from my hands. I have painted three more large canvases—they are vast stretches of wheat under troubled skies—and I didn't have to try very hard in order to express sadness and extreme loneliness.

Il me semble absurde que les hommes veuillent paraitre autre chose que ce qu'ils sont. (It seems absurd to me that men want to appear something other than what they are.)

Un soleil dans la tete et un orage dans le coeur. (A sun in the head and a storm in the heart.)

Wild, wild the storm, and the sea high running,

Steady the roar of the gale, with incessant undertone muttering, Shouts of demonic laughter fitfully piercing and pealing, Waves, air, midnight, their savagest trinity lashing.

III. The Starry Night

I hear you whispering there, O stars of heaven.

Up through the darkness, the ravening clouds shall not long be victorious.

The stars are immortal, they shall shine out again. They will endure. The vast immortal suns, and long-enduring moons, shall shine again.

And over all, the sky—the sky! far out of reach, breaking out, the eternal stars.

My lengthening shadows...my starry nights.

Excerpts from letters by Vincent van Gogh and poetry by Walt Whitman, adapted by Jake Runestad

- Program Note by composer

Passages – Will Healy

For the past decade I have written pieces for ShoutHouse, a band I direct in New York City, with the goal of creating a collaborative space for hip-hop, jazz, and classical musicians to compose and perform together. It has been a joy to bring the kind of work I do in ShoutHouse to other ensembles and to experiment in the wind ensemble medium through my work on Passages.

When Dr. Carnochan approached me about writing a ShoutHouse-style piece for wind ensemble, I immediately thought about language as a unifying theme for the work. I pictured emcees, a singer, jazz soloists, and dozens of instrumentalists attempting to communicate a single narrative through music and words. That tension and opposition among styles would become a basis for playful structural shifts and dynamic musical conversations. I approached my emcee friends spiritchild and Dizzy Senze, and we proposed different stories and themes that could serve as inspiration for each movement of the piece.

This first section, I. Babel On, centers around the story of the Tower of Babel, from the Book of Genesis. All sung texts in this movement were written by spiritchild and set to music by me. Chad Nelson, the soloist on this performance, wrote all of the rapped lyrics. As with ShoutHouse performances, the emcee lyrics are always written by the emcees, so while the singer's lyrics remain the same among performances, the rapper lyrics will change depending on the featured soloist.

- Program Note by composer

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Will Healy

Will Healy (b. 15 February 1990, Brooklyn, N.Y.) is an American composer, pianist and artistic director. Healy completed his Bachelor of Music degree from Vassar College and received the W.K. Rose Fellowship in Creative Arts and the Jean Slater Edson Prize for his chamber work Hashima. He was the recipient of the Richard Rodgers Scholarship at The Juilliard School, where he studied with John Corigliano, Steven Stucky, and Samuel Adler. He has also studied with Kevin Puts, Harold Meltzer, and Richard Wilson. He studied piano for many years with Dennis Malone at the Crestwood Music School. Noted for his "lushly bluesy" sound and "adroitly blended... textures" (New York Times), he is the artistic director of ShoutHouse, a collective of hip-hop, jazz, and classical musicians. After playing trumpet in an Afrobeat band for a few years, he grew interested in collaborating with performers from many corners of the New York music scene. In addition, he is an accomplished pianist specializing in Bach, with a repertoire that includes the complete Goldberg Variations and Well-Tempered Clavier. Healy's work has appeared at The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, The Apollo, on the NY Philharmonic's Biennial series, on "New Sounds" with John Schaefer (WNYC) and "Making Music" (WBAI), and more. Recent awards include a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, two ASCAP Morton Gould Awards, the W.K. Rose Fellowship, a JFund commission from the American Composers Forum, and prizes in the Juilliard and Kaleidoscope Orchestra Composition Competitions. He was the recipient of the Aaron Copland Prize from the Bogliasco Foundation in 2018, and has been a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, Minnesota Orchestra Composers Institute, and the L.A. Phil's National Composers Intensive.

Brittany Fouché Strine

Brittany Fouché Strine, soprano, is a Florida native. She made her American debut as Gretel in Hansel and Gretel (University of North Florida, 2009) and her European debut as Pamina in Die Zauberflöte (Estates Theatre, Prague, 2010). Brittany is a former Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition Encouragement Award winner, New York Lyric Opera Theatre competition national finalist, and young artist with Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera Saratoga, and St. Petersburg Opera. Praised as "enchanting" (Opera Today) and "an impressive singing actress" (EU Jacksonville), Brittany has appeared in concert and opera with Vancouver Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, First Coast Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, North Czech Philharmonic, Kristin Chenoweth, Florida State Opera, Bold City Opera, the Romanza Festival, Music in the Woods, and the San Marco Chamber Music Society. Notable operatic roles include Susanna (Le nozze di Figaro), Pamina (Die Zauberflöte), Adele (Die Fledermaus), and Josephine (HMS Pinafore). Recently, Brittany recorded the world premiere of Holly Harrison's "And Whether Pigs Have Wings" for soprano and band and performed John Mackey's "Places We Can No Longer Go" for soprano and wind ensemble with UNF's Wind Symphony. Other recent performances have featured works by Mason Bynes, Vally Weigl, Jocelyn Hagen, Jake Heggie, Tom Cipullo, and Henry Mollicone.

Kevin Whalen

Kevin Whalen is Associate Professor of Trumpet and Jazz Studies at Texas Tech University. A versatile musician, Dr. Whalen has appeared on more than 25 commercially released albums across jazz and classical genres and has performed in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, the Netherlands, Romania, the United Kingdom, and all 48 contiguous U.S. states. He has toured extensively, holding jazz trumpet chairs with both the Glenn Miller Orchestra and the Grammy-nominated University of North Texas One O'Clock Lab Band. His recent recordings include Road to Nowhere (2023, OA2/Origin Records) with Texas Tech colleagues Stephen Jones and Ben Haugland, and Sojourn (2024, Mark Records) with the Palisade Trumpet Collective, a professional ensemble dedicated to performing innovative new music domestically and abroad. Sojourn was named a Silver Medal Winner in the 2024 Global Music Awards and a National Finalist for the 2025 American Prize in Chamber Music Performance. As a dedicated educator and scholar, Dr. Whalen has presented at numerous national and international conferences, including the Jazz Education Network Annual Conference, the International Trumpet Guild Conference, the International Conference on the Blues, the International Music by Women Festival, the Conference on the Harlem Renaissance, and various music education conferences across multiple states. His masterclasses have been hosted by institutions around the world, such as the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp (Belgium), Codarts University for the Arts (The Netherlands), Escuela Superior de Música–National Center for the Arts (Mexico), the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (Hungary), and leading universities across the United States, including Baylor University, the Eastman School of Music, Florida State University, Ithaca College, the University of Kentucky, the University of Tennessee, and Virginia Tech, among others.

Dr. Whalen has served as chair of the adjudication panel for both the final and semi-final rounds of the Jazz Division at the National Trumpet Competition. His students have gone on to win positions with elite ensembles such as the Disney All-American Band, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, the Eastman Jazz Ensemble, the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own," the UNT One O'Clock Lab Band, and have earned accolades at the National Trumpet Competition and the Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition. In 2024, the Texas Tech University Trumpet Ensemble earned first place in the Large College Ensemble Division at the National Trumpet Competition. Prior to his appointment at Texas Tech, Dr. Whalen served as Director of Jazz Studies and Associate Professor of Jazz Studies at the Columbus State University Schwob School of Music, Instructor of Jazz Trumpet at the University of Northern Colorado, Managing Producer of the UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival, and Teaching Fellow at the University of North Texas. Dr. Whalen holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Trumpet Performance from the University of North Texas, a Master of Music in Jazz Studies from the University of Northern Colorado, and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Colorado State University. His principal teachers include Robert Murray, Keith Johnson, David Shaner, Kent Erickson, and Bruce Dalby.

Dr. Kevin Whalen is a Conn-Selmer Endorsing Artist and plays Bach Stradivarius trumpets.

Chad Nelson
Chad Nelson is a New Jersey raised, Florida based artist and songwriter who has been recording and performing over the last 10 years. His rap and hip-hop roots have translated across a variety of genres offering a unique blend of spoken word and lyrical exercise inspired by life experiences. Chad graduated with a B.A. in Music Business and Entertainment Industries from the University of Miami and has been actively involved in promoting healthy expression for youth programs across South Florida.

Dizzy Senze
Dizzy Senze is a freestyle rapper, songwriter, Emcee and multimedia artist hailing from The Bronx, NY. Dizzy has worked across multiple arts industries, sound engineering for powerhouse corporations (Nickelodeon, Interscope Records), photographing top-tier artists and companies (KRS-One, Sesame Street), and sharing the stage with legendary artists (Kendrick Lamar, Talib Kweli). She is also a repeat champion of New York's various freestyle competitions, where she is known as a lyrical assassin who can drop clever and poignant bars on any beat she's given. Most-recently, Dizzy joined a nationwide tour as a regular performer with Lin Manuel Miranda's Tony Award-winning Broadway show "Freestyle Love Supreme", and she also won the 2023 End of the Weak Emcee Challenge World Championship and the Snipes' 2023 Battle Champs freestyle competition live in Times Square for Hip-Hop's 50th Anniversary in front of a crowd of 90,000 people, making Dizzy one of the best live Emcees not only in New York City, but in the world.

SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Sarah McKoin, *conductor*

FLUTE
Maria Tere Calzada
Isabelle Dees
Emily Hodge*
Emma Jones
Laisha Lozano, piccolo

OBOE
Caitlyn Jones*
Annant Odell
Seth Leaton

BASSOON
Andrew Bell
Austin Perry
Jacob Prentice*
Sabrina Stovall

CLARINET
Cameron Dawes
Ethan Do, Eb
Reilly Ledbetter*
Quinn O'Hagan Lopez
Anson Holder
Anthony Horne
Ellie Wolfe
Rose McAllister Ou, bass
Sadie Sebastian, bass

SAXOPHONE
Daniel Kravetz, alto
Matthew Rendon, alto
Natalie Wilson,* alto
Nestor Olguin, tenor
Solomon Caraway, bari

TRUMPET
Jacob Garcia*
Angelika Moreland
Josue Ramirez
Luke Reyna
Andrew Reynolds
Thomas Rupsis

HORN
Ashley Beyer
Palmer Biggers
Esteban Chavez
Caleb Dent
Quentin Fisher*
Joshua Graves

TROMBONE
Harrison Biggers
Jacob Moore
Alex Ortiz*
Scott O'Brien, bass
John McWilliams, bass

EUPHONIUM
David Hewitt*
Elijah Jones
Jared Sherman

TUBA
Lathen Barr
Miles Bintz*
Jake Dossing

PERCUSSION
Jared Boothe
Kyle Buentello
Ari Castorena
Angel Gallegos
Tyler Harrison
Cody Otis*
Caleb Poppenger
Grant Potts
Meliza Reyes-Carrasco
Jack Vongsamphanh

HARP
Rachel Mazzuco (faculty)

PIANO
Andrey Guerrero

DOUBLE BASS
Ricardo Flores Cruz

UNIVERSITY CHOIR

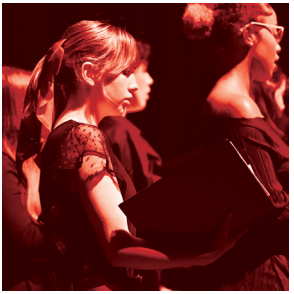
Alan Zabriskie, *conductor*

SOPRANO
Starlika Bauskar
Stephanie Burton
Audrey Calzoncinth
Ashlyn Henson
Sophia Hernandez
Emma Porter
Kaitlyn Reeves
Alyssa Wilson
Abby York

ALTO
Landrie Almquist
Kendra Burton
Audra Dobson
Joy Geria
Nadia Korfe
Lizzie Lambert
Josephine Mendoza
Amanda Nguyen
Kate Smith
Lauren Ziegenhorn

TENOR
Jacob Briggs
Simon Carter
Aidan Chapleau
Logan Drum
Zach Franklin
Preston Hitt
Mark Huffines
Jeff Hunt
Ryken Tucker

BASS
Mark Bailey
Trayce Boudreaux
Alex Davila
Skyler Devore
Joseph Gonzalez
Jakob Hardy
Jack Hays
Jake Hemmle
Naehyeog Kang
Chris Markgraf
Alex Neal
Orlando Williams



UPCOMING EVENTS

Contemporary Music Ensemble
8:00 PM, Sunday, April 12th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Balkan Ensemble
8:00 PM, Monday, April 13th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Texas Tech Music Theatre and Opera Theatre Collaboration: Sweeney Todd
7:30 PM, Thursday, April 16th
Maedgen Theatre

Clarinet Ensembles Concert
8:00 PM, Thursday, April 16th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Eva Browning Artist Series: Alessio Bax and Lucille Chung, piano duo
6:00 PM, Friday, April 17th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Texas Tech Music Theatre and Opera Theatre Collaboration: Sweeney Todd
7:30 PM, Friday, April 17th
Maedgen Theatre

Texas Tech Music Theatre and Opera Theatre Collaboration: Sweeney Todd
7:30 PM, Saturday, April 18th
Maedgen Theatre

Sinfonietta
2:00 PM, Sunday, April 19th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Percussion Ensembles, Steel Drum Band, & Samba Ensemble
8:00 PM, Monday, April 20th
Hemmle Recital Hall

Trombone Ensembles
8:00 PM, Wednesday, April 22nd
Hemmle Recital Hall