

Oklahoma City Symphonic Band

Dr. Mark G. Belcik, conductor

presents their annual



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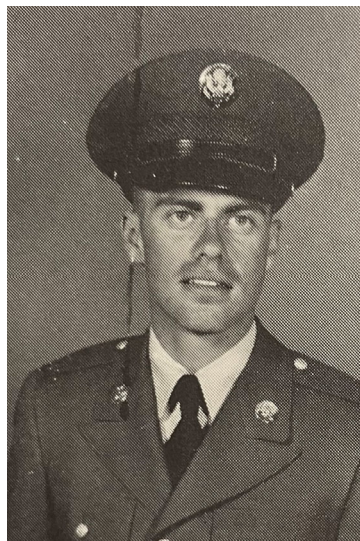
Dr. Mark G. Belcik is the Associate Dean of the Wanda L Bass School of Music at Oklahoma City University, a position he has held since 2001. He holds degrees in Music Education from The University of Michigan, a Master's in Horn Performance from The University of Oklahoma and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Instrumental Conducting from The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Belcik's teaching experiences include appointments at the University of Texas at Austin, where he was the Associate Director of the Longhorn Band, the University of New Mexico, Valdosta State University, Bear Creek High School (CO) and Ardmore High School (OK). His high school bands have earned national recognition and won sweepstakes awards in Oklahoma and Colorado. Dr. Belcik is an active clinician, judge and guest conductor. He has conducted All State and Honor Bands in several states and has presented clinics at State, Regional and National Conventions. He currently serves as the Principal Conductor and Music Director of the Oklahoma City Symphonic Band, and is past President of the Oklahoma Association of Music Schools. He is on the board of the Oklahoma Youth Orchestra and Oklahoma Concert Band Foundation.

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*(The brother of band member,
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**November 22, 1947-
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Oklahoma City Symphonic Band
Dr. Mark G. Belcik, Conductor
Veterans Day Concert
Tuesday, November 11, 2025 at 7:30 pm

Festive Overture Op 96

Dmitri Shostakovich
trans. Donald Hunsberger

American Hymnsong Suite
I. Prelude on "Wonderous Love"
II. Ballad on "Balm in Gilead"
III. Sherzo on "Nettleton"
IV. March on "Wilson"

Dwayne S. Milburn
based on an arrangement by Joe Utterback
based on an arrangement by James Brooks Kuykendall

Fugue on Yankee Doodle

John Philip Sousa
arr. Brion/Schissel

Epilogue: "Lest We Forget"

Robert Jager

Commando March

Samuel Barber
ed. R. Anderson Collinsworth

Armed Forces Salute

arr. Bob Lowden

Band of Brothers

Michael Kamen
arr. Jerry Brubaker

U.S. Field Artillery March

John Philip Sousa
arr. M.L. Lake

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Our Mission

**The Oklahoma City Symphonic Band's mission is to provide a
challenging and enriching musical experience for its members, to
offer quality concerts for the community, and to inspire future
generations of musicians.**

Thank you to our host

**The Oklahoma City Symphonic Band members wish to thank
our host, Oklahoma City University. Thank you for promoting
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**Upcoming
Oklahoma City Symphonic Band Concerts**

**Christmas Concert
Sunday, December 14, 2025
3:00 pm
Oklahoma City University
Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Center
Petree Recital Hall
2501 N Blackwelder Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73106**

**Winter Concert
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
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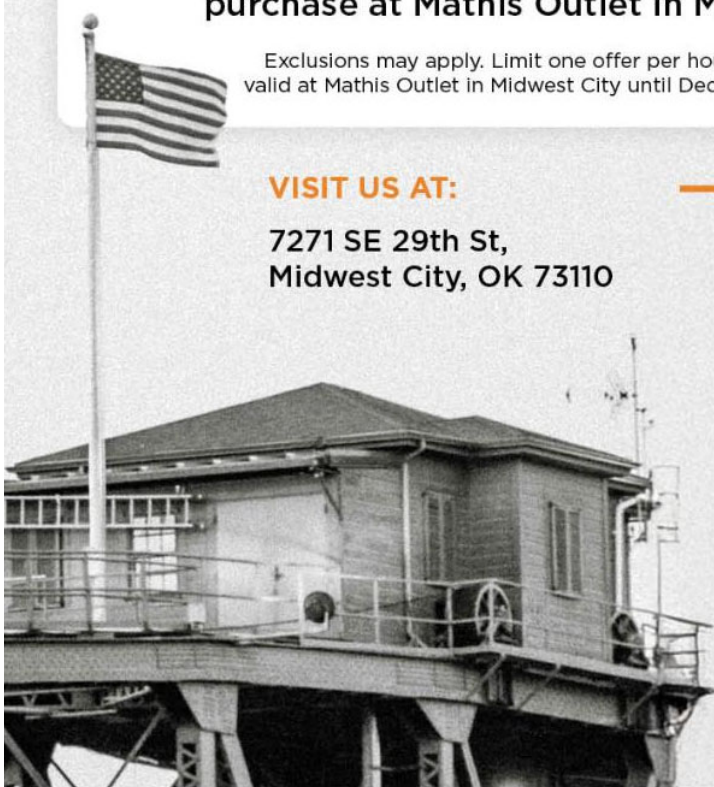
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— In addition to furniture, our Midwest City location is proud to serve as a gathering place for the community—Now home to The Fried Taco, a local favorite we're excited to share with our neighbors.



Festive Overture, Opus 96 (1954) Dimitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was one of the foremost 20th-century Russian composers. Although he showed no interest in music until starting piano lessons with his mother at the age of 9, he was playing simple classics within a month. Entering the Petrograd Conservatory in 1919, he studied piano with Leonid Nikolnaev and composition with Maximilian Steinberg. The 1926 premiere of his First Symphony and its success abroad labeled him as the leading young composer in Russia after the 1917 Revolution. Shostakovich wrote the "Festive Overture" in November 1954 and it was performed that same month. The piece begins with a grand brass fanfare. The tempo abruptly changes to Presto for the main theme voiced by the clarinets and carried through variations. The 2nd theme for horn is more flowing and romantic, while the accompanying figure continues the sense of urgency. The original Presto returns and combines with the 2nd theme in the brasses. After a short transition, the fanfare returns in the finale. Donald Hunsberger's bright transcription has become a staple of the wind band repertoire. (www.windliterature.org/festiveoverture)

American Hymnsong Suite, Dwayne S. Milburn

Major Dwayne S. Milburn (b. 1963) is an American composer, conductor and military officer.

In 1986, Dr. Milburn graduated from UCLA with a BFA in music and received a Master's of Music in orchestral conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1992. He received his Ph.D. in music from UCLA in 2009.

During his undergraduate career, Maj. Milburn was an arranger for the UCLA band and choral programs, as well as the Special Projects Division of ABC-TV. Upon graduation, he became the director of cadet music for the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, serving as the conductor for the internationally renowned West Point Glee Club. During graduate studies in Cleveland, he contributed several arrangements to the Cleveland Orchestra.

Prior to his Ph.D. studies, Maj. Milburn served as one of 24 commissioned officer conductors in the United States Army Band Program. His assignments included duties as the associate bandmaster for the U.S. Continental Army Band, Fort Monroe, Virginia; The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own," Washington, DC; and the U.S. Army Europe Band and Chorus, Heidelberg, Germany. He also commanded the Army Ground Forces Band in Atlanta, Georgia. Since he completed his Ph.D. studies, he resumed his military service and currently serves as the commander and conductor of the U.S. Army Europe Band and Chorus in Heidelberg. Among his military honors are the President Benjamin Harrison Award, the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the NATO Medal.

American Hymnsong Suite is firmly rooted in my family history as church musicians. I grew up singing and playing many different hymns, including the four tunes featured in this work. The final impetus to compose this particular treatment came during the course of an organ concert in Atlanta, Georgia. One section of the program featured innovative settings of three hymns. With the gracious consent of composers Joe Utterback and Brooks Kukendall, I adapted their settings to act as the inner movements of the suite, bracketed with my own original treatments of favorite hymns.

The Prelude on *Wondrous Love* ("What Wondrous Love is This") opens with a chant-like statement of this Southern tune before proceeding to a more kinetic retelling. *Ballad on "Balm in Gilead"* features a rich jazz harmonization of this familiar spiritual. The *Scherzo on "Nettleton"* ("Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing") contains all the rhythmic playfulness inherent in the best orchestral third movements, and the *March on "Wilson"* ("When We All Get to Heaven") calls to mind the wildest marching band ever heard.

While audience members will certainly make various connections to this piece, the ongoing goal is to introduce all listeners to the richness of our American musical heritage.

- Program Note by composer, Wind Repertory Project

Fugue on Yankee Doodle, arranged by Keith Brion and Loras Schissel (1996) “An absolutely electric composition created by combining sections from several of Sousa’s arrangements of the American favorite Yankee Doodle. The main section fugue is taken from his “International Congress March.” While every note was written by Sousa, Keith Brion and Loras Schissel have combined them into one piece that has become one of Sousa’s biggest hits.”

Keith Brion has arranged and published 30 editions for band, including music of Percy Grainger, Charles Ives, and Sousa. He is the music director of his own New Sousa Band, established in 1986 and maintains an active career as guest conductor with major symphonies and wind bands. Brion is currently recording the complete wind band music of John Philip Sousa with London’s Royal Artillery Band for Naxos records. Loras Schissel is a conductor, composer, and orchestrator who has created an extensive catalog of over 500 works for orchestra, symphonic wind band, and jazz ensembles. He studied brass instruments and conducting under Frederick Fennell and John Paynter. Schissel currently is music director of both the Virginia Grand Military Band and the Cleveland Orchestra’s Blossom Festival Band. His is senior musicologist at the Library of Congress as well. [Wind Repertory Project](#)

Epilogue: “Lest We Forget”, Robert Jager

Robert Jager (b.1939) is an award-winning composer, conductor, and lecturer. A graduate of the University of Michigan, he served for four years as Staff Arranger at the Armed Forces School of Music. He was professor of composition at Tennessee Technological University from 1971 until he retired in 2001. Mr. Jager is the only three-time winner of the Ostwald Award given by the American Bandmasters Association.

Epilogue: “Lest We Forget”, is not a work of celebration. It is, rather music to commemorate the decent people who suffered through the agony of World War II, and to those who gave their lives for peace and freedom. It is not funeral music, but rather a solemn hymn to the indomitable spirit of those who were touched by tyranny, and who were able to rise above it—both in life and in death. It is these people that we remember. The work was commissioned by the United States Army Field Band and premiered on February 6, 1992.

(Program note adapted from notes provided in the score, Neil A. Kjos Music Company)

Commando March, Samuel Barber

Samuel Barber (1910-1981) was one of the titans of twentieth-century American Music. He was a popular musical figure during his lifetime whose lyric and harmonious compositional style resonated with audiences. Having eschewed many of the experimental practices propagated by other composers during his lifetime, his biographer, Nathan Broder, referred to him as “primarily a lyric poet”. Throughout much of his career, Barber enjoyed critical successes. He was a two-time recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for composition (1958 and 1962).

Samuel Barber was inducted into the Army in September 1942. *Commando March* was not only Barber’s first for wind band, but his first work subsequent to entering the Army. There is no extant documentation regarding a formal commission or a direct military order; rather it appears Barber was inspired to compose for the military bands he must have come in contact with during his basic training. *Commando March* was completed in February 1943, with a premiere performance by the Army Air Forces Technical Command Training Band. Following its premiere, Barber himself led the Goldman Band in several performances in July of 1943. The work proved to be so popular that at the request of Serge Koussevitzky, he adapted the work for orchestra and that version was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in October of 1943 with Maestro Koussevitzky conducting.

(Program note adapted from notes provided in the score, G. Schirmer, Inc.)

Armed Forces Salute is an impressive tribute honoring our men and women of the Armed Forces. Includes: *The Caisson Song*; *Semper Paratus*; *The Marines' Hymn*; *The U.S. Air Force* and *Anchors Aweigh*. In this performance, the OKC Symphonic Band will also include *Semper Supra*, a tribute to the Space Force.—Program note adapted from publisher (sourced from the [Wind Repertory Project](#)) **Robert William Lowden** (23 July 1920, Camden, N.J. – 30 October 1998, Medford, N.J.) was an American composer and arranger. Mr. Lowden attended Temple University as a music education student and later became a trombonist and arranger with the U.S. Army Band. He also did arranging for Claude Thornhill and Oscar Dumont. He taught instrumental music in the public schools of Camden, New Jersey (1958-1968). He left this position to devote full time to composing and arranging music for school bands, stage bands, orchestras, and small ensembles. He is best known for his band arrangements of current popular and show music.—Biography sourced from the [Wind Repertory Project](#)

Band of Brothers (2001) is a Symphonic Suite from the original soundtrack of the HBO hit mini-series written by American composer Michael Kamen (1948-2003). Arranger Jerry Brubaker has captured the essence of Kamen's score in this diverse medley of soaring ballads to the driving intense splashes of sound. All Music Review claimed: "Kamen was a master at capturing nostalgia especially when the age in question is the bittersweet "tie a yellow ribbon" landscape of WWII. The piece is a raw, patriotic and wistfully elegiac tome of swelling chorus, Salvation Army brass band, and melodious woodwinds that compliment the series balance depiction of the horrors of war and unpredictable sweetness of humanity." Kamen said, "Music has a great capability to heal and a responsibility to heal....it's to celebrate our ability to live in peace and harmony." He was a prolific film score composer, arranger, and conductor known for collaborating with big name pop artists—from Pink Floyd to Eric Clapton—often playing oboe or piano in recording sessions. He has scored numerous TV tracks and movies—some of his greatest are: "Mr. Holland's Opus," "The Three Musketeers," and "101 Dalmatians." (www.allmusic.com)

The U.S. Field Artillery March (1917)

John Philip Sousa, Lt,USNRF (1854-1932)

The Field Artillery branch of the U.S. Army was founded in 1775 by the Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War. One of the three Army combat arms, it has been in continuous service and is based at Fort Sill, Oklahoma presently.

This march has an unusual history: About half of its music is an adaptation of a 1908 song written by Edmund Gruber, a Brigadier General in the U.S. Army and a relative of Franz Gruber, composer of the Christmas favorite "Silent Night." Edmund Gruber's effort was titled "The Caisson Song" and soon became popular among the six regiments of the U.S. Field Artillery during World War I. Sou-sa, who had joined the Naval Reserve in 1917, at the age of 62, was then asked to make an adaptation of Gruber's song for band. In 1952, H.W. Arberg arranged the original song as "The Army Goes Rolling Along", that thereafter became the U.S. Army's official song. The march opens with an original theme by Sousa, a lively, jaunty creation, festive and ebullient, quite the colorful stuff of parades and patriotic celebrations in the biggest Sousa style. Gruber's famous theme is initially heard about midway through, first in a subdued, mellow manner, then growing bigger and more celebratory. The work ends gloriously, the whole obviously intended, more than most other Sousa marches, as a grand call for patriotic celebration. (from a review by Robert Cummings, Rovi)

The man who would become known as "The March King" was born in Washington, DC. in 1854. John Philip Sousa began his career in the U.S. Marine Band, serving as an apprentice "boy." He became leader of the Marine Band in 1880 and served in that position until 1892, when he resigned to organize a band of his own. Before his death at the age of 78, Sousa had composed 136 marches, 15 operettas, 70 songs, 11 waltzes, and wide variety of incidental works. His most famous work "The Star and Stripes Forever" was designated as the official march of the United States in 1987. [Wind Repertory Project](#)

