

STANDING OVATION

CENTRAL IOWA WIND ENSEMBLE

Symphonic Band Excellence



DR. CHRISTIAN CARICHNER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026 • 3 p.m.



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The Central Iowa Wind Ensemble (CIWE) is an adult symphonic band with musicians drawn from the greater Des Moines area. Founded in 2003 by a group of central Iowa music educators under the leadership of Dr. Evan Feldman, CIWE has grown from its roots as a primarily educator ensemble into a vibrant group of musicians representing a wide range of backgrounds and professions.

In 2025, CIWE was honored as a **Bravo Greater Des Moines Spotlight Award Winner**, recognizing its artistic excellence and community impact. We are also proud that we are invited to be a featured performer at the 2026 Iowa Bandmasters Conference. Other notable recognitions include performing under the direction of Colonel Jason Fettig, former conductor of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, at the Iowa Bandmasters Association Conference in May 2023, and an invited performance at the Regional Conference of the Association of Concert Bands in Omaha, Nebraska, in April 2024.

Each season, CIWE presents five public concerts along with special events, reaching audiences across Central Iowa. The ensemble is committed to expanding access to high-quality live music by partnering with local human services agencies to engage underserved communities. CIWE also supports the next generation of musicians through its annual high school student solo competition, awarding cash prizes to outstanding young performers. We are also excited to announce our brand new CIWE Youth Band Festival, Celebration in Sound, in April, 2026.

The Central Iowa Wind Ensemble is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization registered as a corporation in the State of Iowa.

MISSION To build lifelong engagement in the arts by providing meaningful and challenging concert band experiences.

VISION The Central Iowa Wind Ensemble will be the Midwest's premier wind ensemble performing conscientious programming to appreciative, loyal, and diverse audiences.

VALUES We believe in the power of music to positively impact people. We believe our performances should be accessible to everyone.

TO LEARN MORE AND CONNECT WITH CIWE:

 www.ciwe.org  [CentralIowaWindEnsemble](https://www.facebook.com/CentralIowaWindEnsemble)  [ciweorg](https://www.instagram.com/ciweorg)

STANDING OVATION 2025-2026

DR. CHRISTIAN CARICHNER

Artistic Director & Conductor



Christian Carichner is a dynamic conductor and artistic leader whose work bridges musical excellence, audience engagement, and large-scale ensemble leadership. He currently serves as Associate Director of Bands and Director of the Cyclone Marching Band at Iowa State University, where he leads one of the nation's most visible and respected collegiate athletic band programs.

Beyond the university setting, Carichner is the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Central Iowa Wind Ensemble, a professional community wind band based in Des Moines, Iowa. His artistic vision emphasizes compelling programming, stylistic authenticity, and performances that connect deeply with both seasoned listeners and new audiences. Under his leadership, the ensemble has been recognized for precision, energy, and expressive clarity across a wide range of repertoire.

Carichner's leadership of the Cyclone Marching Band culminated in the ensemble receiving the Sudler Trophy, the highest honor awarded to a collegiate marching band, recognizing sustained excellence, innovation, and artistic impact. His experience directing large, high-profile ensembles informs a leadership style that is clear, collaborative, and musically driven.

An active guest conductor, clinician, and performer, Carichner has appeared in 47 states and 12 countries and has been featured at The Midwest Clinic, the CBDNA Athletic Band Symposium, and the International Tuba Euphonium Conference. His performance credits include the Arizona Musicfest Orchestra, Tampa Tradewinds, Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes, Conway Symphony, Pinnacle Brass, Rhythm and Brass, Proteus 7, Salt River Brass, and the national tour of the Broadway musical *Chicago*.

Carichner's background in the marching arts includes service as Brass Caption Head for the Phantom Regiment and The Academy Drum and Bugle Corps, as well as Lead Brass Instructor for the Aimachi Marching Band of Nagoya, Japan. Currently he serves on the brass staff with the Blue Stars. He is frequently engaged as a guest conductor, adjudicator, and artistic consultant.

He is the first Marching Brass Artist for Pearl/Adams, where he consults on instrument design and development, and is also an Adams Custom Brass Artist.

MUSICIANS

Central Iowa Wind Ensemble

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Dr. Christian Carichner

PICCOLO/FLUTE

Sara Danielson

FLUTE

Elysia Crecelius

Elly Hartbecke

Sarah Howell

Joni Kinnan

Rose Kundel*

CLARINET

Lauren Cassaidy

Colin Gaynor

Christopher Goodson

Walter Hyde

Gayle Lundak

Elizabeth Peterson

Bryce Sederburg

Katie Seehusen

Sura Smadi

Kristi Stubblefield

Christina Tait

Dana Thacker

Garrett White

BASS CLARINET

Carrie Siepel

BASS CLARINET/ CONTRA-BASS CLARINET

Tony Pappas-Garton

OBOE

Kristin Rasmussen

Colleen Schulze

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Harbour Buchanan

BASSOON

Emily Castelline

Laura Thieben

Laura Williams Graham

SAXOPHONE

Jacob Lemons – Tenor

Cameron Mitchell – Alto

Joseph Thering* – Alto

Jennifer Williams – Baritone

TRUMPET

Brian Burke

Hans Decker

Dan Giesinger

Rebecca Gomez

Lynn Lange

Eric Layden

Sarah McEntee

Rich Thimmesch

Eliza Van Zee

HORN

Greg Barton

Kristy Carter-Mauss

Cristina Deeds*

Spencer Marsh

Logan TeKolste

TROMBONE

Rick Eichner

James Deeds

Josh Deutmeyer

Fred Lange*

Ryan Rowley

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Sara Reichart

Justin Wells

TUBA

Brian Kinnan*

Leo Salazar

Chad Thompson

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Josh Grant

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David Naylor*

Jeff Norton

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HARP

Kristin Maahs

* Denotes Section Leader

FEAST! Announcer, Guest Conductor and Featured Performers



John Burnett-Larkins, Announcer

John Burnett-Larkins is an accomplished host of musical ensembles and events. He's been the announcer of the Iowa State University Cyclone Football Marching Band since 2000, has been the emcee for Ames Municipal Band concerts for an equal number of years, and is also known as the host of Ames Tubachristmas since that event's premiere there in 2010. John also has a significant background as an announcer for Iowa State University sports events and currently serves in that role for Cyclone gymnastics meets. His full-time job is serving as a communication specialist in Iowa State University's College of Engineering where he works with the Department of Aerospace Engineering and Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering in news and feature writing, website and social media work, publications, photography and more.



Jennifer Williams, Guest Conductor

Jennifer Williams is in her 23rd year of music education and currently serves as the Director of Bands at Ankeny High School. She leads the 11/12 Concert Band, the Marching Hawks, Jazz Lab, and Jazz YTBN, while also serving as the AP Music Theory instructor. A specialist in woodwind pedagogy, Jennifer provides saxophone instruction for grades 6–12 through Ankeny's vertical teaching model. Under her direction, ensembles have consistently earned

high ratings in concert, marching, and jazz idioms, and have served as a clinic band for the Iowa Bandmasters Association (IBA). Committed to continuous artistic growth, Jennifer is a regular attendee of the University of North Texas (UNT) Conductors Collegium. She is a past president of SCIBA and currently serves as the IBA Co-Exhibits Chair. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Music Education (cum laude) from Drake University and a Master of Music Education (with honors) from VanderCook College of Music. When not on the podium, she performs as a baritone saxophonist with the Central Iowa Wind Ensemble.



Chad Sonka, Vocalist Chad Sonka, baritone

Chad Sonka, baritone has established himself as an artist with a diverse array of skills in the world of voice. In a recent notable engagement, he performed the role of Dr. Falke in Cedar Rapids Opera's production of *Die Fledermaus*. He also premiered the role of Robert Schumann in Jodi Goble's *Du, Meine Welt*. He was a featured soloist with the Central Iowa Symphony, performing Ravel's *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*. Previous performing credits include *La bohème* (Marcello) with Opera Quad Cities; *A Royal Feast* by Ching (Alidoro, world premiere) with Savannah OPERA; *Tosca* (Scarpia – cover) with Central City Opera; *Gianni Schicchi* (Marco) with Savannah Music Festival; *Man of La Mancha* (Don Quixote) with Cedar Rapids Opera; *The Mother of Us All* (Virgil T.), *The Rape of Lucretia* (Junius), Elijah (Elijah) with Manhattan School of Music; and *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (King Melchior) with Nevada Opera. Equally versed

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FEAST! Featured Performers

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in concert works, he has performed Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*, as well as Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* as his Carnegie Hall debut with Iowa State University Symphony and choirs. He was the first-place winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions – Iowa District in 2017. Chad's accolades extend beyond his own singing as a director, teacher, and administrator. Since 2017, Chad has served on Iowa State University's faculty, teaching voice and opera in his home state, and is currently the head of the voice division. Recently, he was named the Shakeshaft Master Teacher for 2022–2023 for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.



**Shelby VanNordstrand,
Vocalist**

Shelby VanNordstrand has appeared as a soprano soloist from the continental United States to Indonesia, China, Japan, Hawai'i,

Lithuania, and Oman. She is especially passionate about new art song and opera and loves to be involved in the creation of new works. You can hear her on the album "Storms & Stars, songs for soprano and piano by Jodi Goble", available for streaming on all major platforms. She was awarded an honorable mention in The American Prize, Women in Art Song in 2023. As a teacher, her students have been named winners of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Student Auditions at the state, regional, and national levels and winners of the National Opera Association's Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition. She has presented at the National Collegiate Music

Society Conference, National Opera Association Conference, NATS National Conference and other state and regional conferences. She currently serves as President-Elect with the National Opera Association and serves in regional leadership with the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Shelby joined the faculty of the Department of Music and Theatre at Iowa State University in the fall of 2024. Previously, she served as Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Nebraska Omaha.



**Summer Kinnan,
Flute Soloist
CIWE Aimee Krug
Student Solo
Competition Winner**

Summer Kinnan, a sophomore at Valley High School in West

Des Moines, began her musical journey in 1st grade with piano lessons. In 5th grade, she joined elementary band and started playing the flute. Since 6th grade, she has taken private flute lessons with Dr. Kimberly Helton and also studies piano with Cynthia Giunta. At Valley, Summer participates in Symphony Band and Marching Band. She has performed in several honor bands, including the Iowa All-State Band (2024, 2025), Drake Honor Band Wind Ensemble (2024, 2025), SCIBA Honor Band (2022, 2023), and the All Iowa 8th Grade Honor Band (2024). Summer enjoys solo competitions, winning the 2024 IOWinds Alliance Young Artist Competition for grades 9–10 and placing top in her division at the Perry Band Olympics (2nd place in 2024, 1st place in 2025). She also often accompanies her church choir on the flute. Outside of music, Summer enjoys volleyball and spending time with friends and family.

CONCERT PROGRAM



Program to be selected from:

- Godzilla Eats Las Vegas! Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)
- 'Cakewalk' from *Suite of Old American Dances* Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)
- Make Our Garden Grow Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)
featuring Chad Sonka and Shelby VanNordstrand, vocalists (arr. Joseph Kreines)
- Libiamo Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)
featuring Chad Sonka and Shelby VanNordstrand, vocalists (arr. Juan Jose Peláez Vilanova)
- Concerto for Flute Otar Gordeli (1928–1994)
featuring Summer Kinnan, flute
- Party Potatoes Benjamin Dean Taylor (b. 1983)
featuring Christian Carichner, tuba
- Until the Scars John Mackey (b. 1973)
- This Cruel Moon John Mackey (b. 1973)
- Finé! Larry MacTaggart (b. 1958)

PROGRAM NOTES

FEAST!

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Godzilla Eats Las Vegas!

“It took me seven years to get my bachelor’s degree from UNLV, and by the time I graduated I was ready to eat Las Vegas.”

Tom Leslie asked me to write another piece for the group as I was leaving, and I thought it would be a blast to do something completely ridiculous. The players are called upon to scream in terror, dress like Elvises (Elvi), and play in about thirty different styles from mambo to cheesy lounge music. The audience follows a ‘script’ that I wrote, simulating a campy, over-the-top *Godzilla* movie (is there any other kind?).

I wrote the bulk of the piece while in my first year at Juilliard, and no kidding, I used to act out the script every morning devouring animal crackers, wreaking havoc all over the breakfast table. The ‘script’ was originally twice as long, and had an entire subplot devoted to a young scientist and his love interest. As I started to finish the piece, however, it didn’t seem that funny and that story (along with an extended Elvis tribute) ended up on the cutting room floor.

The idea that this piece is being played all over the world in such serious concert venues is the single funniest thing I have ever heard. It has been played on the steps of the Capitol by the United States Marine Band, by the Scottish National Wind Symphony (they play in kilts, so help me God), and I have a video of a Japanese

audience visibly confused and shaken by the whole experience. Can you imagine? I’m laughing my head off even as I write this!

Godzilla Eats Las Vegas! was commissioned by the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Thomas G. Leslie, conductor, and received its premiere November 28th, 1996.

— *Program note by the composer*

Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)

‘Cakewalk’

from *Suite of Old American Dances*

Suite of Old American Dances was inspired after the composer heard a performance by the Goldman Band in 1948. The original title was Electric Park, an amusement park Bennett went to while growing up in Kansas City. Each movement of the work is based on a dance from the beginning of the 20th century.

The *Cakewalk* dance originated on the Southern plantations, where slaves often imitated their plantation owners. The dance of “strut” was danced to jig-like banjo/fiddle music, usually done by a couple who, with a backward sway, strutted in a medium high step or low kicking fashion. Plantation owners would encourage their workers by presenting prizes for the best couples. The prize was often a cake, usually shared with the other participants. The men would often dress in long coats with high collars and the women in frilly gowns, to mimic their owners.

PROGRAM NOTES

FEAST!

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Make Our Garden Grow

arr. Joseph Kreines

From Leonard Bernstein's 1956 operetta *Candide*, the remarkably beautiful closing number has gone on to become a beloved and familiar classic, taking on a life all its own. Near the end of the operetta, *Candide* and his love Cunegonde sing *Make Our Garden Grow*, in which *Candide* realizes that the only purpose of living is to cultivate the earth and to create a garden.

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

Libiamo

arr. Juan Jose Peláez Vilanova

*Featuring Chad Sonka and
Shelby VanNordstrand, vocalists*

The aria *Libiamo ne' lieti calici*, often referred to as *The Drinking Song*, appears in the first act during a lively gathering at Violetta's house. Sung as a duet between Violetta and Alfredo, it celebrates the joys of life and the fleeting pleasures of love. With its lively waltz-like rhythm and sparkling melodies, the aria sets a jubilant and festive tone, contrasting sharply with the opera's eventual tragic trajectory.

Otar Gordeli (1928–1994)

Concerto for Flute

Featuring Summer Kinnan, flute

The *Flute Concerto* by the Soviet Georgian composer, Otar Gordeli is a delightful

example of melodic virtuoso writing — one might be tempted to call it the modern Slavic counterpart to the Chaminade Concertino, with a touch of Gershwin. The Gordeli Concerto first became known in the United States through a recording by the Russian flutist Alexander Korneyev and has achieved great popularity. The concerto is in one continuous movement with contrasting slower lyric sections somewhat reminiscent of Gershwin. CIWE is thrilled to feature our Aimee Krug Student Solo Competition Winner Summer Kinnan on this captivating work.

Benjamin Dean Taylor (b. 1983)

Party Potatoes

Featuring Christian Carichner, tuba

Potatoes are by far America's favorite party vegetable. There is no way to serve a potato that we don't like; loaded baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, chips, French fries, cheesy potato casseroles, tater tots, hash browns — yum, yum! So why a tuba concerto based on potatoes?

Some of you probably know that a potato is known as a "tuber" because it grows underground. Get it? Tuba and tuber? Smiley face. But the connection between the tuber and the tuba in this case goes far beyond the difference of one or two letters in spelling. Matt Moore, the commissioner of this concerto is professor of tuba at Brigham Young University — Idaho, and as we all

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PROGRAM NOTES

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know, Idaho is the capital of potatoes. Not only that, but I feel like potatoes are a near perfect metaphoric vegetable for your typical tuba player. The people who choose to play tuba are usually the quiet, shy type, perhaps a little socially awkward, and are most comfortable hiding in the back of the band.

If you were to personify a potato, wouldn't that be accurate? Oh, and one more thing. I find both potatoes and tubas inherently funny — have you seen any of the potato memes? And doesn't the sight of a tuba player marching in a parade with that colossally sized instrument always make you smile?

Thus, *Party Potatoes* is a lighthearted, groovy piece that celebrates the tuba and the tuber. It is like the perfect mashup (no pun intended) of Youngblood Brass Band, Tower of Power, pep band and sprinkle on a little jazz big band and you're all set. The tuber, I mean tuba, is here so let's party!

— *Program note by the composer*

John Mackey (b. 1973)

Until the Scars

Until the Scars is an adaptation of the first movement of *Wine-Dark Sea: Symphony for Band*, a work based on the ancient story of *The Odyssey* by Homer.

After ten years of bloody siege, the Trojan War was won because of Odysseus' gambit:

A horse full of soldiers, disguised as an offering. The people of Troy took it in as a trophy and were slaughtered. Odysseus gave the Greeks victory, and they left the alien shores for home. But Odysseus' journey would take as long as the war itself. Homer called the ocean on which Odysseus sailed a wine-dark sea, and for the Greek king it was as murky and disorienting as its name; he would not find his way across it without first losing himself.

In this section of the story, Odysseus, having filled his ship with the spoils of war, leaves for home, but he carried another, more dangerous, cargo: pride. This movement opens with his triumphal march and continues as he and his crew maraud through every port of call on their way home.

John Mackey (b. 1973)

This Cruel Moon

This Cruel Moon is the second movement from *Wine-Dark Sea* — is the song of the beautiful and immortal nymph Kalypso, who finds Odysseus near death, washed up on the shore of the island where she lives all alone. She nurses him back to health and sings as she moves back and forth with a golden shuttle at her loom. Odysseus shares her bed; seven years pass. The tapestry she began when she nursed him becomes a record of their love.

But one day Odysseus remembers his home. He tells Kalypso he wants to leave her, to

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return to his wife and son. He scoffs at all she has given him. Kalypso is heartbroken.

And yet, that night, Kalypso again paces at her loom. She unravels her tapestry and weaves it into a sail for Odysseus. In the morning, she shows Odysseus a raft, equipped with the sail she has made and stocked with bread and wine, and calls up a gentle and steady wind to carry him home. Shattered, she watches him go; he does not look back.

Larry MacTaggart (b. 1958)

Finé!

Finé! is a music-lovers tribute to “the ending”... a non-stop tour de force through over 25 orchestral and wind-band endings. Highlighting well-known works such as Elsa’s Procession to the *Cathedral*, *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *Lincolnshire Posy*, and Holst’s *The Planets*, this show stopping work is the perfect dessert buffet for our *FEAST!*

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Tuba

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Percussion

Don Manley

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Chair Underwriters are a select group of individuals who believe in the mission and vision of the Central Iowa Wind Ensemble and its values of the power of music to positively impact people and that their concerts should be accessible to everyone. Donors who contribute \$500 or more have the option of choosing a musician's chair and receiving recognition as that chair's underwriter for the concert season.

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For more information, contact Rich Thimmesch at 515-991-8653 or via email at executivedirector@ciwe.org.

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Please consult with your tax advisor or financial planner to determine the best giving strategy for your personal situation.

How to Give:

- Donate securely online by credit card at ciwe.org or scan the QR Code.



- Mail a check to:
Central Iowa Wind Ensemble
1510 NE Stoneridge Ct.
Ankeny, IA 50021
- Work with us to specify your wishes through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

ENDOWMENT GIFTS – A LASTING LEGACY

Endowment Gifts are invested in perpetuity, providing a reliable source of annual funding that sustains CIWE's mission for generations to come.

Key Features:

- The principal remains permanently invested.
- Up to 4% of the fund's value is distributed annually to support our programs.
- Creates sustainable, long-term impact and honors your legacy of support.
- CIWE's Endowment Fund is held at the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. Through the Engage Iowa program, donors may qualify for a 25% state tax credit on eligible endowment gifts.

Examples of Major Gifts:

- Cash gifts directed to the CIWE Endowment Fund.
- Bequests in a will or trust.
- Beneficiary designations from retirement plans or life insurance policies.
- Gifts of stock or real estate designated for the endowment.

As with all charitable contributions, we encourage donors to consult with their tax advisor or financial planner to explore the best options for achieving their philanthropic and financial goals.

How to Give:

- Donate to the CIWE Endowment Fund.
- Include CIWE in your estate or planned giving arrangements.
- Consult with your financial or legal advisor to explore new tax-advantaged giving strategies.

Drake University

presents

THEATRE

Little Women (the musical)

Apr. 2-5, 2026 • Performing Arts Hall

The Shape of Things

Apr. 30-May 3, 2026 • Coleman Studio Theatre

MUSIC

Turner Center Jazz Orchestra Presents:

All We Need Is... The Beatles

Mar. 26, 2026, 7:30 p.m. • Patty and Fred Turner Jazz Center

Drake Opera Theatre presents Bizet's Carmen with the Drake Symphony Orchestra dir. Héctor Agüero

Feb. 27 & 28, 2026, 7:30pm and Mar. 1, 2026, 2:30pm
Performing Arts Hall

ANDERSON GALLERY

Transformative Impressions:

Richard Black International Juried Print Exhibition

Opening Reception Feb. 5, 2026, 5-7pm
on view through March 13, 2026

55th Annual Juried Student Exhibition

Opening Reception Mar. 29, 2026, 1-3pm
On view through Apr. 19, 2026



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is easy and rewarding. Become a
Friend by making a gift today!



DONATE NOW

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