

Aurora Awakes

McLennan Wind Ensemble

Jon R. M. Conrad, Conductor

Timothy Owner, Trombone

Monday, November 10, 2025 | 7:30 PM
Wilbur A. Ball Performing Arts Center

Repertoire

McLennan Wind Ensemble

Serenade in C minor, K. 388 (1782)

I. Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

ed. Leeson and Zaslaw

Concerto for Bass Trombone (2009)

I. Allegro con fuoco

II. Romance for Nada

III. Moderato

Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945)

Timothy Owner, Bass Trombone

Metal (2013)

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

unBroken (2021)

Randall Standridge (b. 1976)

Aurora Awakes (2009)

John Mackey (b. 1973)

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and streaming of live performances. Please silence all electronic devices.*

Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Serenade in C minor, K. 388

The **Serenade, K.388** is one of Mozart's most puzzling and mysterious works. It is orchestrated for an ensemble that is traditionally employed for light entertainment, yet it is defiantly dark in its character. Musicologists are not even truly certain when it was composed, although watermark research and other evidence have placed the composition at circa 1782.

Another puzzle is its form: In Mozart's day, a serenade would have consisted of a series of loosely-connected movements in dance meters, typically five or more. The c-minor serenade, however, has only four movements, making the work basically a symphony for wind octet. Mozart obviously thought highly of the work: in 1788 he transcribed it for string quintet (K.406). The K.388 is unforgiving in its seriousness, and therefore not suitable for background music at a dinner or a dance; it is not likely to have been played often in Mozart's day. In an ironic twist, despite its somber demeanor throughout, the Serenade ends in a triumphant C Major.

- Program note by Nikk Pilato

Elizabeth Raum: Concerto for Bass Trombone

Raum's **Concerto for Bass Trombone** was written for Douglas Sparkes, bass trombonist of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra since 1974, on the occasion of his birthday in 2008, commissioned by his students and colleagues. The first movement develops its opening fanfare statement in contrast with a recurring winding legato line. The second movement is a rhythmic, legato romance with a whimsically cheerful tune introduced in the middle section. The third movement is characterized by a bold attitude and driving groove. The whimsical tune from the second movement appears once again to contrast the heavier theme of the movement.

- Program Note from Texas Christian University concert program, 2 May 2023

Brian Balmages: Metal

Metal was conceived as an opener or closer inspired by two different types of "metal." The first type manifests itself in the considerable use of metallic sounds in the percussion section. The vast majority of the percussion instrumentation relies on metal instruments, both pitched and non-pitched. The only exceptions are timpani, snare drum, and bass drum.

The second inspiration actually comes from the genre of "heavy metal." I grew up listening to a wide range of music, and I often like to go back to these early influences and explore the idea of setting them in a contemporary framework. While the style does not completely emerge in full form, there are several instances throughout the piece that suggest a strong heavy metal influence.

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Metal was commissioned by the Herndon High School Wind Ensemble and director Kathleen Jacoby to celebrate the school's 100th anniversary. The fusion of styles in the piece reflects the diversity of the school as well as its evolution over the past 100 years. In addition, the piece commemorates the original ideal upon which the school was founded -- that the "Pride of Herndon" is a diverse group of students and teachers who can still come together after 100 years and stand as one.

- Program note by the composer

Randall Standridge: *unBroken*

unBroken begins inside the mind of the individual afflicted with mental illness. Overlapping pitches and pleasant dissonance reflect the workings of a mind in conversation with itself. The “family” motive, a series of five notes articulated in the piano, is first introduced here (representing my parents, myself, and my two brothers). The “mind” theme, a three-note motive that conveys both beauty and peace (D-flat, C, A-flat), is first heard in the tenor voices and is repeated as the thought cloud develops. However, it becomes distorted by a half step (D-flat, C, A), introducing an element of bitterness. Warning signs and cracks begin to become evident as various thoughts and emotions race and compete with each other until the individual cries out to silence them.

A solo flute introduces the next segment, as the individual tries to navigate the world and their life. The melody (Shirley’s Theme) is hopeful, melancholy, and brave. As it continues, it becomes distracted as the inner mind begins to exert more and more influence on the outer life. A twelve-tone matrix is first heard in the piano, as the individual’s ability to cope begins to waver. A dialogue ensues in which the individual tries to assert their hold on the illness, assuring everyone that they are fine. The theme becomes more and more desperate as the individual struggles to keep themselves together; they make one last herculean attempt before the inevitable break occurs.

The work takes on a sinister, playful character as the individual enters a manic state. The clarinet introduces a new melody which is built on the distorted mind motive and leads the listener through a series of short episodes as the individual’s mood and character change violently. Thoughts rush, leading nowhere, and in a whirl of turmoil and noise, the individual sees the world and themselves through a distorted lens. The atonal matrix and distorted mind motives are combined into a cacophony of rage and destruction as the individual loses control of their life. In the silence that follows, a lone clarinet sounds, bravely pulling itself from the wreckage. The individual begins the difficult process of acknowledging the illness and beginning to face it. Its strength and its confidence build until it emerges into a fanfare that is simultaneously triumphant and melancholy, able to cope with its problems but aware of the challenges that lie ahead in living with this burden. The main theme returns as the individual

Program Notes

resumes their life, unbroken and whole, but changed. The work ends as it began, inside the mind of the individual. There is still dissonance, but the dissonance is pleasant and peaceful. The final crescendo sounds as the individual looks towards the future with hope.

- Program note by the composer

John Mackey: *Aurora Awakes*

Aurora – the Roman goddess of the dawn – is a mythological figure frequently associated with beauty and light. Also known as Eos (her Greek analogue), Aurora would rise each morning and stream across the sky, heralding the coming of her brother Sol, the sun. Though she is herself among the lesser deities of Roman and Greek mythologies, her cultural influence has persevered, most notably in the naming of the vibrant flashes of light that occur in Arctic and Antarctic regions – the Aurora Borealis and Aurora Australis.

Mackey's ***Aurora Awakes*** is, thus, a piece about the heralding of the coming of light. Built in two substantial sections, the piece moves over the course of eleven minutes from a place of remarkable stillness to an unbridled explosion of energy – from darkness to light, placid grey to startling rainbows of color. The work is almost entirely in the key of E-flat major (a choice made to create a unique effect at the work's conclusion, as mentioned below), although it journeys through G-flat and F as the work progresses. Despite the harmonic shifts, however, the piece always maintains a – pun intended – bright optimism.

Though Mackey is known to use stylistic imitation, it is less common for him to utilize outright quotation. As such, the presence of two more-or-less direct quotations of other musical compositions is particularly noteworthy in *Aurora Awakes*. The first, which appears at the beginning of the second section, is an ostinato based on the familiar guitar introduction to U2's *Where The Streets Have No Name*. Though the strains of the Edge's guitar have been metamorphosed into the insistent repetitions of keyboard percussion, the aesthetic is similar – a distant proclamation that grows steadily in fervor. The difference between U2's presentation and Mackey's, however, is that the guitar riff disappears for the majority of the song, while in *Aurora Awakes*, the motive persists for nearly the entirety of the remainder of the piece: "When I heard that song on the radio last winter, I thought it was kind of a shame that he only uses that little motive almost as a throwaway bookend. That's my favorite part of the song, so why not try to write an entire piece that uses that little hint of minimalism as its basis?"

The other quotation is a sly reference to Gustav Holst's *First Suite in E-flat for Military Band*. The brilliant E-flat chord that closes the *Chaconne* of that work is orchestrated (nearly) identically as the final sonority of *Aurora Awakes* – producing an unmistakably vibrant timbre that won't be missed by aficionados of the repertoire.

- Note by Jacob Wallace

Guest Artist



Appointed as Assistant Professor of Trombone at the University of North Texas in 2025, Timothy Owner grew up in Canberra, Australia, and moved to the United States in the fall of 2004. Whilst completing his Master's degree at Northwestern University, he became a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. After two seasons with Civic, he was appointed to the second trombone position with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra in 2007. Since leaving the VSO in 2009, Timothy has built a reputation as a performer on bass trumpet as well as euphonium, alto, tenor and bass trombones both in the U.S.A. and Australia, performing with the orchestras of Chicago, Cincinnati, Baltimore, National, Detroit, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, Colorado and Perth, West Australia as well as the Los Angeles Opera and Chicago's Music of the Baroque. In 2013 he joined the San Francisco Symphony at first as acting Utility Trombone and then as acting Associate Principal Trombone (2014-2016). He has played in instrumental ensembles and orchestras under the direction of such notable musicians as Herbert Blomstedt, Semyon Bychkov, Michael Tilson Thomas, Jaap van Zweden, JoAnn Falletta, Andrew Litton, James Conlon, Myung-Whung Chung, Sir Richard Bonynge, Ivan Fischer, Hans Graf, Kent Nagano, Marin Alsop and David Staff. During the summers, Timothy has performed as Principal Trombone with the Southern Illinois Music Festival since 2006 where he has given recitals, masterclasses and performed with the SIMF brass quintet. He has joined the Sun Valley Summer Symphony as guest Bass Trumpet and Trombone. Timothy has appeared as a recitalist at Baylor University (TX), Southern Illinois University (IL), Olivet Nazarene University (IL), McLennan Community College (TX) and the University of Texas at Arlington (TX), has led masterclasses at the University of Central Florida (FL), the San Francisco Conservatory (CA) and UTA, and has been an adjunct member of the faculties at Olivet Nazarene University and Christopher Newport University (VA) as well as an instructor of trombone at the University of California, Berkeley (CA).

Timothy received a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of North Texas in 2023 where he was a Teaching with Prof. Steven Menard from 2019 - 2022. He is an Alumnus of the Australian National University's Canberra School of Music, Newcastle Conservatorium and Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music where he studied under Michael Mulcahy, Randall Hawes, Royce Landon, and Charles Vernon. He won the Distinguished Instrumentalist prize at ANU's Collaborative Piano Competition in 2000, Newcastle Conservatorium's Concerto Competition in 2002 and was also a founding member of the CT3 trombone quartet at Northwestern University, with whom he won first prize at the annual International Trombone Festival's 2005 Trombone Quartet Competition. Outside of the trombone, Timothy enjoys golf, grilling and spending time with his wife Alisha and their daughters Phoebe and Chloe. Timothy is a proud member of the roster of artists at Conn-Selmer playing Vincent Bach trombones. He performs exclusively on Karl Hammond mouthpieces and uses number 1 pencils.

Ensemble Personnel

McLennan Wind Ensemble

Jon R. M. Conrad, Conductor

Flutes

Victor Jaquez Medina
Bethany Jordan
Galilea Olguin ⁺
Jessica Sandoval
Erick Zepeda

Piccolo

Bethany Jordan

Oboes

Kayla Butler
Eliza Hall ⁺

Bassoons

Tristen Collinsworth [♦]
Reynie Gibbs
Eli Ruby ⁺

Clarinets

Ramiro Alvarez, Jr.
Giovanni Bouye
Ethan Clark
Ariyah Jamison
Bryson Leal
Miriari Marroquin
Mackayla Montgomery ^{*}
Kayla Mundy
Sonia Perez
Antonio Rodriguez
Jasmin Romero
Kiana Vazquez

Bass Clarinets

Rachel Holden ⁺
Justin Packebush
Joe Saucedo

Saxophones

Elijah Ackbar
Brandon Dominguez
Jasmin Garcia
Archie Hatten V
Jonathan Mitchell
Justin Packebush
Amanda Roessler
Xavier Shubert ⁺

Horns

Riley Malloy ⁺
Hannah Marcum
Carolina McNeill
Gabriel Valdivia ⁺

Trumpets

Rosa Castillo
Thomas Doyle
Agustin Jaimes
Elia Salas ⁺
Aidan Vazquez-Olguin ⁺

Trombones

Jose Luis Chaparro
Jansen Flores ⁺
Braden Jaynes
Caleb Kroll
Ainsley McDaniel
Mauricio Rivera ⁺

Euphoniums

River Nanninga ⁺
Brian Thomas
Luciano Perez

Tubas

Jade Goodman
Noah Grmela
Aidan O'Shields ⁺

Percussion

Tre'jon Andrews
Jared Eben [♦]
Noah Grmela
Jace Kirkpatrick
Jonathan Kutz [♦]
Brian Thomas
Jude Turner

Bass

Edgar Carrillo

Piano

Daneida Hernandez

Student Assistants

Ramiro Alvarez, Jr.
Giovanni Bouye
Toan Lam
Carolina McNeill

^{*} *Concertmaster*

⁺ *Section Principal*

[♦] *MCC Faculty*

McLennan Community College Music Faculty & Staff

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Jonathan Kutz, Music Industry Careers Program Director
Meghan Wilfong, Senior Administrative Assistant
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Jon Conrad, *bands*
Jenna McLean, *choirs*
Clark Nauert, *jazz*
Peter Olson, *orchestra*
Edgar Sierra, *opera*

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Brian Konzelman
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Maddison Livingston
Patrick McKee
Clark Nauert

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Jonathan Kutz

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Vanessa Davis, clarinet
Matthew Fowler, trombone
Clay Garrett, euphonium/tuba
Kim Hagelstein, horn
Masha Popova, flute
Mark Schubert, trumpet
Matthew Singletary, saxophone

STRINGS

Ben Cantrell, violin/viola
Kate Cockle, harp
Peter Olson, bass

PIANO

Jared Eben
Ping-Ting Lan
James Pitts

VOICE

Jenna McLean
Mandy Morrison
Edgar Sierra

MUSICOLOGY & THEORY

Kate Cockle
Jared Eben
Kim Hagelstein
Jenna McLean
Mandy Morrison
Peter Olson
James Pitts
Matthew Singletary

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