OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
BRASS BAND

Thursday, September 29, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.
Athens High School Auditorium
Troy, Michigan
The Oakland University Brass Band

Featuring

Guest Artist

Owen Farr, tenor horn soloist

With

Kenneth Kroesche, conductor

Program

A Breathless Alleluia  Philip Wilby

Rhosymedre  Ralph Vaughan Williams
  from *Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes*

arranged by Paul Hindmarsh

Finale from *Cello Concerto*  Franz Joseph Haydn

arranged by Owen Farr

Owen Farr, tenor horn soloist

Rhapsody in Brass  Dean Goffin

I. Allegro giocoso

II. Andante con moto

III. Allegro assai e giocoso

Intemission

Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite  Karl L. King

arranged by Peter Roberts

An Untold Story  Paul Lovatt-Cooper

Owen Farr, tenor horn soloist

Symphonic Suite from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*  John Williams

transcribed by Stephen Bulla
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* denotes principal player  
+ OU music faculty
Program Notes

A Breathless Alleluia  Philip Wilby (b. 1949)

Born in Pontefract, Great Britain in 1949, Philip Wilby studied music at Keble College, Oxford. His interest in composition was awoken by Herbert Howells, whose extra-mural composition classes he attended as a violinist in the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain. Having worked as a professional violinist with the Covent Garden and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, he subsequently took the post of Principal Lecturer, and later Professor of Composition at the University of Leeds. He has since composed extensively for brass bands, and many of his works have been featured as test pieces for major competitions throughout the world, including the British Open, British National and European Brass Band Championships. His 1999 brass band composition ...Dove Descending was featured in the 2007 BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. 

A Breathless Alleluia was composed as a tribute to Nicholas Childs, musical director of the legendary Black Dyke Band.

Rhosymedre  Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Ralph Vaughan Williams based a number of works on Welsh hymn tunes. In 1920 he produced three contrasting preludes for organ, founded on the tunes Bryn Calfaria, Rhosymedre and Hyfrydol. In 1940 he composed another three, this time essays in modal counterpoint following the example of the Elizabethan fantasia, entitled Household Music. The three hymns in this intimate treatment were Crug-y-bar, St. Denio and Aberystwyth. Then in 1955, the 82-year-old composer wrote an eight-minute Prelude on Three Welsh Hymn Tunes for the International Staff Band of the Salvation Army, having been impressed with the sound of that famous ensemble. In this festive work, Vaughan Williams reshaped the organ versions of Calfaria and Hyfrydol, adding the tune Ebenezer at the start.

The hymn tune Rhosymedre is the work of the nineteenth century Anglican priest John David Edwards, who named it after the village of Rhosymedre in North Wales, where he served as the vicar for 43 years until his death in 1885. Vaughan Williams’s organ prelude has been arranged for many different instrumental groups, including orchestra, string quartet and brass quintet, but not until now for brass band. This arrangement was prepared in 2008 to mark the 50th anniversary of the composer’s death and was first performed by the Royal Northern College of Music Brass Band at the 2008 RNCM Festival of Brass, conducted by Christopher Houlding.

Program Note by Paul Hindmarsh

Finale from Cello Concerto  Franz Joseph Haydn

The Cello Concerto in C Major was listed in one of Haydn’s own catalogs but remained unknown for almost 200 years until it was discovered by the Czech musicologist Oldrich Pulkert in 1961. The work was probably written for one of Haydn’s closest friends, Joseph Weigi who played principal cello of the court orchestra of Prince Paul Anton Esterazy. It is thought to have been written for an Esterhazy court concert in Fisenstadt during the early 1760’s shortly after Haydn became Kapellmeister to Esterhazy. Although the work wasn’t
discovered until 1961 at a library in Prague. It has become one of Haydn’s most popular works for the cello. Its first modern day performance was May 19th, 1962 in Prague.

Program Note by Owen Farr

**Rhapsody in Brass**

Dean Goffin was born in Wellington, New Zealand and son of Henry Goffin, a Salvation Army officer and composer. At 19 he was appointed Bandmaster of the Wellington South Band and when World War II started, he enlisted in the New Zealand Armed Forces where he became Bandmaster of the 20th Infantry Battalion and later the 4th Brigade Band. During this time he served with them in the Middle East and Europe, he composed and arranged numerous pieces among which *Rhapsody in Brass* and the march *Bel Hamid*, later adapted for Salvation Army use and renamed *Anthem of the Free*. After the war, he completed his Bachelor of Music studies at Otagu University and in 1956 was appointed National Bandmaster in the British Territory.

A work of deep personal musicality written in the crucible of the middle east conflict during the Second World War, Dean Goffin’s *Rhapsody in Brass* is surely one of the most uplifting compositions of its time. Goffin was a 25 year old officer (decorated for his bravery and leadership) at the time, who in 1942 started work on the piece in Syria. Transferred to meet the challenge of Rommel’s forces as they drove towards Egypt, he was able to add to it further while on a week’s leave in Cairo, where the piece received its first performance by the Fourth New Zealand Brigade Band at the city’s ‘Music for All’ Club.

As Eric Ball wrote in the program notes to the 1949 British Open Championship where it was first used as a contest piece; “It is a remarkable complexity of life that a wonderful musical composition should be created amidst desolation, strife and death. Music, the universal language, rears itself far above the destructive elements, and *Rhapsody in Brass* is a shining example of this.” The three contrasting movements of classical poise and proportion are very much in the manner of a divertimento in its use of modal harmony and counterpoint - from the pulsating ‘Allegro giocoso’ opening and emotive ‘Andante con moto’ to the bravura ‘Allegro assai e giocoso’ to close.

Goffin was a huge admirer of the contrapuntal techniques of the greats of Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and Schubert and their elements of structure and expression that seep through his writing. His opening is optimistic, clear and joyful - as it unaware of the horrors of the dusty, parched campaign that were to come, while the central section - almost a homage to a Schubert-like song without words certainly reflects the melancholic sense of loss that must have permeated his mind following the battles against Rommel’s Afrika Corps. In contrast, the eagerness of the finale is almost a release of pent up emotion - a free-wheeling march celebration of life - the perfect music for the soldier on leave in the exotic back alleys of downtown Cairo.

Program Note by Iwan Fox
Symphonic Suite from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*  
John Williams (b. 1932)

John Williams was born in 1932 in Long Island, New York, and later moved with his family to Los Angeles in 1948. He studied composition at UCLA. After serving in the Air Force, Williams returned to New York to study piano at the Juilliard School of Music. He worked as a jazz pianist for a time before moving back to Los Angeles to begin his career in the film studios.

Mr. Williams has composed the music for close to eighty films and has composed some of the most famous themes ever written for cinema. Some of these include Harry Potter, Jaws, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, ET - the Extraterrestrial, Jurassic Park, the Star Wars Pre-episode and Trilogy, the Indiana Jones Trilogy, Home Alone, and Empire of the Sun. Receiving 45 Academy Award nominations, Williams has been awarded with five Oscars, seven British Academy Awards, twenty-one Grammies and four Golden Globes. He also has several gold and platinum recordings. His film score for Schindler’s List earned him an Oscar and a Grammy. With 45 Academy Award nominations, John Williams has the most nominations of any person alive, and is tied for second only after Walt Disney!

The Force Awakens was the seventh installment in the Star Wars saga that was released in December 2015. The symphonic suite is in essence the end credit music from the movie. It draws upon the leitmotifs that represent characters from previous movies along with additional themes which include Rey’s Theme and the March from the Rebellion.
Guest Soloist, Owen Farr
Born in Pontypool, South Wales, Owen has developed from playing tenor horn in his local village band to gaining global recognition as the world’s foremost leading tenor horn virtuoso soloist. Following on from six successful years with the Fairey Band and eleven years with Cory, Owen is now touring the world as a soloist and clinician exposing the tenor horn to a much wider global audience.

Owen is proud of his continued dedication to the profession of teaching acknowledged through his long-standing roles as Tenor Horn tutor at the Royal Northern College of Music, Birmingham Conservatoire, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and as the International Tutor at Salford University. He is also a tutor for the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, National Children’s Brass Band, Fermanagh/Tyrone Summer School and the International Brass Band Summer School.

Owen frequently travels internationally for performances and is currently principal horn with the world-famous Band of Battle Creek (USA) in addition to playing principal horn for the highly acclaimed Tubular Brass (UK). He strongly endorses Besson Musical Instrument products traveling to their manufacturing factory in Germany to test and quality control all tenor horns before sale. Owen performs on a Besson Prestige 2050G together with an Owen Farr Alliance 2 mouthpiece.

The Oakland University Brass Band
The Oakland University Brass Band, formed in September of 2009, enjoys the distinction of being one of the few collegiate brass bands in the country. The members of the group come from across the state of Michigan, as well as the United States and Canada. In October, the band was featured in an article for Brass Band World which is an internationally distributed magazine about brass bands. This past March, the band was named the University Section winners of the 2021 Kapitol Cory Online Brass Band Championships. In addition, they were the winners of the Best Cornet Section Award.

They are the 2019 and 2018 Dublin (OH) Festival of Brass Champions where they consistently swept all three categories of Best March, Best Slow Melody and Best Major Work. In 2018, adjudicator Steven Mead commented that “it was wonderful to hear such an authentic ‘English’ sound to the ensemble - rich, textured and homogeneous and the performance of ‘Essence of Time’ in particular was a joy.” In 2015 they accepted an invitation to travel to England to perform in the Butlin’s National Mineworkers Open Brass Band Festival & Competition. While there, the band was awarded 2nd place in their division and now holds the distinction of being the highest placing American band in the history of the competition. This invitation was extended as a result of having won the First Section of the North American Brass Band Association Championships in 2014 in Grand Rapids, MI. In June of 2015, the band performed at the Great American Brass Band Festival in Danville, Kentucky where they gave three featured concerts. The festival is known for being the largest brass band event of its kind in North America, with audiences in the tens of thousands in attendance each summer. In May of that same year, they were the featured band at Mid-West Tuba Euphonium Conference at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, where they accompanied the conference’s headline soloists.
The band is comprised primarily of undergraduate and graduate music majors and non-majors. Graduates of the school’s brass and percussion programs have gone on to receive scholarships to attend the country’s leading graduate music programs, as well as perform in major professional ensembles.

Oakland University Brass Band - YouTube
Oakland University Brass Band | Facebook

Kenneth Kroesche
Kenneth Kroesche is the Professor of Trombone, Euphonium and Tuba at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. He holds a master’s and doctorate of musical arts degree in performance from the University of Michigan, in addition to a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Texas State University.

He has appeared as a euphonium soloist with a number of notable ensembles, ranging from the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to the U.S. Army Band at the West Point Military Academy. The Washington Post described him as “an expert on the instrument.” As an orchestral musician, he is the principal trombonist of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra and the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra. He is a frequent guest musician with the area’s leading ensembles which include the Detroit Symphony, Grand Rapids Symphony, Flint Symphony and Detroit Chamber Winds. In addition, each summer he performs as an euphoniumist with the Toledo Symphony Concert Band.

In 2009, he formed the Oakland University Brass Band which since its inception has gone on to receive national and international recognition. From 2008-2011, he served as the conductor of the award winning Capital City Brass Band of Lansing, Michigan. In addition, he has served as the music director of the Smoky Mountain Brass Band, and as a regular guest conductor of the Michigan Chamber Brass, the Round Top Music Festival Institute, among others.