Montclair State University
JOHN J. CALI SCHOOL OF MUSIC
PRESENTS

THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*

in concert with special guests

UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Dr. Heather Buchanan, *conductor*

and soloists

JoAnn Lamolino, *trumpet*
Julie Dombroski-Jones, *trombone*

CALI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2026
7:30PM
ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER

Daniel Gurskis
Dean, College of the Arts

Shea Scruggs
Director
John J. Cali School of Music

John J. Cali
School of Music
MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

PROGRAM

Overture to *Candide* — Leonard Bernstein
arr. Clare Grundman

O Magnum Mysterium — Morten Lauridsen
trans. H. Robert Reynolds

Fandango — Joseph Turrin

JoAnn Lamolino, *trumpet*
Julie Dombroski-Jones, *trombone*

Sunflower Studies — Nicole Piunno

I. *Waiting for the Brightness of Tomorrow*
II. *No Blue Without Yellow*
III. *Interlude*
IV. *Seeking the Golden Light*
V. *Broken Colours*

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*

Short Pause to Re-set Stage

Vincent's Sky — Jake Runestad

UNIVERSITY SINGERS
THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Overture to *Candide*

In true satirical fashion, Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) penned a "Colloquy"— a dialogue between his ego and his id—for *The New York Times* about the writing of the American "Broadway musical," *Candide*, which was based on the text of the same name by one of France's most prolific Enlightenment writers. Bernstein's demonic id asks: "Well then, poor fellow, how come you, of all people, are sitting…writing an American musical comedy based on Voltaire's 'Candide'?" To which his ego cunningly replies: "Voltaire's satire is international… the matters with which it is concerned are as valid for us…in America. Puritanical snobbery, phony moralism, inquisitorial attacks on the individual, brave-new-world optimism, essential superiority—aren't these all charges leveled against American society by our best thinkers?" Penned November 11, 1956, it is a wonder that such issues are still as relevant today as they were 65 years ago.

Thus, Bernstein and writer Lillian Hellman crafted this very American work, which fused the stylizations of the eighteenth-century European novel in a *commedia dell'arte* twentieth-century style, with a pastiche of musical idioms and forms, and mocking lyrics shaded with the diamonds and brilliance of Bernstein's score. The "Overture" to *Candide* heard here tonight, transcribed by Clare Grundman (1913-1996), sparkles like champagne, notably due to the foreshadowing of two of the operetta's songs, the love duet, "Oh Happy We" and the infamous coloratura aria, "Glitter and Be Gay."

O Magnum Mysterium

Hailing from the Pacific Northwest, acclaimed composer and educator, Morten Johannes Lauridsen (b. 1943), worked as a forest service firefighter and manned an isolated lookout tower near Mt. St. Helens. After attending Whitman College in Washington, he moved to California where he studied composition at the USC Thornton School of Music. For over 50 years, Lauridsen taught there until retiring in 2019 as professor emeritus. Notably, from 1994 to 2001, Lauridsen served as the composer-in-residence for the Los Angeles Master Chorale. For his profound contributions to music, Lauridsen was named an American Choral Master by the NEA in 2006 and, in 2007, received the National Medal of Arts. His works are featured on more than 200 CDs, earning five Grammy Award nominations. Lauridsen is best known for his radiant vocal cycles and sacred motets, such as *O Magnum Mysterium*.

Globally celebrated, and written in 1994, *O Magnum Mysterium* presents, according to the composer, "a profound inner joy" to celebrate the Christmas nativity. Beyond the nativity itself, Lauridsen drew inspiration from Francisco de Zurbarán's 1633 painting "Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose," explaining he wanted the piece to evoke what this painting does.Thus,

Lauridsen musically captures a quiet, luminous, and contemplative stillness, a symbolic alter that expresses unadorned simplicity.

Marshall Rutter commissioned the piece to honor his wife, Terry Knowles. Led by conductor Paul Salamunovich in December 1994, The Los Angeles Master Chorale performed the world premiere. The National Endowment for the Arts designated the work an American Choral Masterpiece. Internationally recognized conductor, educator, author, and orchestrator H. Robert Reynolds created tonight's widely performed symphonic wind ensemble arrangement with the composer's full approval. The text comes from a centuries-old responsory for the Christmas Matins in the Roman Catholic liturgy.

Latin: *O magnum mysterium* / *et admirabile sacramentum* / *ut animalia viderent Dominum* / *natum jacetum in praesepio!* / *Beata Virgo, cujus viscera* / *meruerunt portare* / *Dominum Christum. Alleluia!*

English: "O great mystery, and wondrous sacrament, that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in their manger! Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!"

Fandango

Composer, conductor, pianist, and Cali School of Music faculty member, Joseph Turrin (b. 1947), studied composition at the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music. Commissioned and performed by leading orchestras, chamber ensembles and soloists, Turrin's work encompasses many varied forms, including film, theater, opera, orchestral, chamber, jazz, electronic, and dance. Several of his films and recording projects have been nominated for Emmy and Grammy Awards. His pieces have been recorded on RCA, EMI, Teldec, Summit, Klavier, Cala, Albany, Crystal, and others. He has received commissions from the New York Philharmonic, the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, and Live from Lincoln Center, and his works have been championed by such noted musicians as Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Erich Leinsdorf, Wynton Marsalis, Beverly Sills, and others. His film and theater compositions include scores for *A New Life, Little Darlings, Weeds, Tough Guys Don't Dance, Verna-USO Girl, Nightmare on Elm Street 3, Kingdom of Shadows, Broken Blossoms* (1919 silent film classic directed by D.W. Griffith, starring Lillian Gish) and for the restoration of the silent film classic *Sadie Thompson.* Turrin scored additional silent film classics such as *Diary of a Lost Girl, Intolerance,* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame.*

Commissioned in 2000 for the University of New Mexico Wind Symphony, the piece heard on tonight's concert, "Fandango," featured soloists Philip Smith (retired Principal Trumpet of the New York Philharmonic) and Joseph Alessi (Principal Trombone of the New York Philharmonic). This lively, six-minute piece explores the vibrant rhythmic, melodic, and syncopated elements

of the traditional Spanish fandango—a spirited dance typically performed in triple time by two dancers.

Structured into distinct sections, the first features a high-energy blend of lively melodic lines and a crisp, articulated interplay and conversation between the solo trumpet, trombone, and wind symphony. The second opens with a stately woodwind chorale. The trombone gradually weaves into the texture, culminating in a brief solo cadenza that transitions directly into the final movement. The third begins with a recap of the opening material, though the soloists now develop the core themes into a canon. A brief, full-ensemble reprisal of the chorale leads into a fast-paced coda that drives the piece to a powerful close by revisiting its main rhythmic motives.

Sunflower Studies

While the Italian Renaissance masters focused on realistic visual representation, Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) introduced a revolutionary dimension to painting with intense, expressive brushwork and vivid colors that, at the time, were criticized by his contemporaries and, before his death, received little attention by art critics. Yet despite bartering paintings in exchange for food and art supplies, modern blockbuster exhibitions—such as the past exhibit at the National Gallery, *Van Gogh: Poets and Lovers*—continue to draw five-star acclaim from modern critics who hailed him as "the first completely rule-breaking modernist." Because van Gogh spent much of his painting life in isolation, whether through voluntary institutionalization or severe depression, much of what we know about his life comes from the 903 letters he wrote to his brother, Theo (820 written by him and 83 addressed to him; from 1872 until his death in 1890). Through his letters, readers are granted an intimate look into the empathic and turbulent genius behind the art. Indeed, to his brother he wrote: "I have nature and art and poetry, and if that is not enough, what is enough?...The sunflower is mine, in a way." The Dutch master viewed painting much like music, employing his medium to express harmonic exchanges and emotional evolutions. Utilizing the phrase a "symphony in blue and yellow" in 1888 to self-categorize his famous sunflower paintings created in Arles, France, van Gogh's canvases feature radiant bouquets of pale lemon, ochre, and orange sunflowers set against striking royal blue, turquoise, or green backgrounds. Each sunflower in a vase shows a different stage, from bright buds to wilting petals, acting as quiet symbols of the passage of time.

In *Sunflower Studies*, composer and trumpeter Nicole Piunno (b. 1985) connects her own love for the heliotropic gem with the artistic and spiritual world of Vincent van Gogh in this tribute to hope. A five-movement symphony for wind ensemble, with a short interlude in the middle, the movements explore both nature and van Gogh's painting styles and methods. Piunno explains some of the musical influences and impact of the work: *"Many different melodies are layered throughout the symphony. One of the melodies I used is the tune* ***Tell Me the Old, Old Story,*** *which was one of Van Gogh's favorite hymns. The hymn has a child-like*

quality to it which displays sincere faith. Van Gogh said he wanted his paintings 'to say something comforting as music is comforting...something of the eternal.' This melody alongside other lullaby-like melodies represent that source of comfort which the sunflower can bring."

Like the painter of various iterations of sunflowers who, too, saw beauty in enigmas, Piunno (b. 1985) creates music to, among other mysteries, explore life's paradoxes by blending a rich sonic palette to hold simultaneous dualisms, namely light and dark, chaos and order, and the spiritual and physical worlds. Piunno holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Michigan State University and degrees from Central Michigan University and Ohio Northern University, having studied under Ricardo Lorenz and David Gillingham. Her acclaimed wind ensemble and chamber works have been performed worldwide by elite groups like "The President's Own" United States Marine Band and featured at major conferences, including the Midwest Clinic and CBDNA. Her music is commercially recorded on labels such as Naxos and Mark Records.

Vincent's Sky

Considered "one of the best of the younger American composers" *(Chicago Tribune)*, Jake Runestad (b. 1986) holds a Master's in Composition from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University where he studied with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts. He has also studied with acclaimed composer Libby Larsen. An award-winning composer of "highly imaginative" *(Baltimore Sun)* and "stirring and uplifting" *(Miami Herald)* musical works, Runestad has received commissions and performances from leading ensembles and organizations such as the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philippine Madrigal Singers, Craig Hella Johnson and Conspirare, and many more.

Moved by the natural world, as well as the worlds of poetry and the visual arts, Runestad's music frequently weaves various sensibilities into his riveting, emotionally driven compositions. Whether drawing upon the indigenous Mayan poetry of Humberto Ak'abal in *Footprints,* or including immersive lighting in *The Ways of Stars*, Runestad treats inspirational sources as structural partners through his creative processes. An authentic intersection of artistic disciplines becomes integrally realized across several of his multimedia projects.

Case in point is Runestad's *Vincent's Sky*. Written in 2025, the work brings together music, painting, and poetry, showing that artists find muses whenever they open their eyes and hearts. For example, and by way of some background for this work, Vincent van Gogh felt inspired by the poetry of Walt Whitman, particularly in 1889 while conceiving and painting "The Starry Night." In fact, van Gogh read *Leaves of Grass* and the cluster of poems therein titled "From Noon to Starry Night" where the night sky serves as a manifestation of eternity and cosmic interconnections. Across *Vincent's Sky*, the composer invites the listener to an enveloping sensory voyage with evocative mindscapes and landscapes. As such,

Runestad's score tackles both van Gogh's and Whitman's emotional worlds, those fraught with contradictions, extreme sensitivity, profound empathy, and drastic oscillations between luminous joy and crushing despair. Two autodidacts, both felt everything with raw, unfiltered force, they absorbed the suffering of the marginalized, possessed a romantic-cosmic feeling towards the beauty of nature, and experienced the pain of rejection. However, while van Gogh suffered such polarizing magnitudes as alienation and deep personal despair that reflected his tragic struggle with reality, Whitman felt them as an outward-facing, robust persona of public inclusion, exuberance, and psychological resilience.

Crafted in three sections, *Vincent's Sky* opens to the listener the inner and outer worlds of a creative mind and spirit. While the piece musically examines van Gogh's "sky"—an expansive canvas of possibility, vital aliveness, and emotional turbulence—through pathos, Runestad's music helps to celebrate dualisms found within the artist himself and across his paintings: the swirling, roiling brushstrokes through woodwind and percussion murmurings project a powerful sense of inner psychological playfulness and unrest; the heavy, rhythmic loops of ultramarine and cobalt blue paired with glowing yellow stars of the brass and vocals capture a dynamic tension—reconciling the chaos of his mental state with a search for visual and spiritual harmony; the journey to the stars by way of wind chimes and voice, which, as van Gogh stated to his brother Theo in a letter, that just as humans take a train to reach a destination on earth, it "takes death to go to a star."

Runestad sonically paints, juxtaposing the artist's brushstrokes with some of Whitman's iconic verse alongside lines from van Gogh's letters to his brother. Much of the music for the 17-minute work for choir and wind ensemble takes shape from incorporating a musical cryptogram—assigning pitches that spell out "VINCENT"—to help anchor the narrative of the piece, the journey of which explores iconic paintings as guided by words from van Gogh and Whitman.

The first painting, "Olive Trees"— illuminating rows of gnarled, twisted olive trees set against an intense, radiant yellow sky with a glowing central sun; painted in November 1889 while staying at the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, France—vibrantly celebrates sunlight, yellow hues, and joy. As van Gogh looked out his window in the asylum, he found deep spiritual connection and peace in nature, viewing the stark reality of the olive trees as a vital source of personal strength. Because of this, Runestad's music "shines" by pairing the silvery hues of high winds and mallet percussion with the warmer golden shades of the brass, and as the full wind ensemble undulates and flows, the choir pulses with vitality and jewel-filled wonder.

The second, "Wheatfield with Crows"—painted in July 1890 near Auvers-sur-Oise in France—van Gogh filled the canvas with "sadness and extreme loneliness," yet also sought to include the vital, "healthy and fortifying forces" of the countryside. To do this, he used high-impact complementary colors, such as deep blues against blazing yellow-oranges, and electric

greens against earthen reds, to generate visual tension and movement. Given this, the music emotes an almost far-away, ever-reaching appreciation of earth's beauty alongside ever-present chaos, ghostly voices, and unrest.

The third, "The Starry Night"—a day-time memory from a pre-sunrise view painted in June 1889 from his room at the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum—illustrates a dazzling, swirling exploration of inner turmoil and hopeful transcendence. The painting depicts a quiet, orderly town resting in the rolling hills. It features small cottages and a prominent church steeple inspired by Dutch memories rather than an exact French landscape. And while van Gogh's imagery and colorations conjure admiration of nature as well as psychological chaos with motifs of hallucinations, darkness, and symbols of death across his canvases, the music, in the end, evokes Whitman's resilient openness, the hopeful twinkling of stars pushing back against the dark.

Commissioned by a Consortium of which Drs. Buchanan and McCauley of the John J. Cali School of Music were a part, a portion of the proceeds from this commission will be donated to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Program notes by Dr. Marissa Silverman

THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

The Montclair State University Wind Symphony is one of three concert bands in the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University in New Jersey. The ensemble has premiered pieces by composers Michael Daugherty, Bruce Yurko, David Gillingham, Elizabeth Brown, Armando Bayolo, and O'Neal Douglas among others. The Wind Symphony has appeared in concert with, among others, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Arturo Sandoval, Doreen Ketchens, The Imani Winds, the Monarch Brass, Decoda, Eric Whitacre, Daniel Bernard Roumain, the Manhattan Brass Quintet, and Zzyzx Quartet.

Since 2006, the Wind Symphony has appeared at the New Jersey Music Educators Association Conference on several occasions, the 2012 and 2023 CBDNA Eastern Division Conferences, the National Association for Music Education Eastern Division Conference, and the 2015 and 2012 Northeast Regional Tuba-Euphonium Conference. Their appearance at the 2019 CBDNA National Conference in Tempe, Arizona marked the first time that a large ensemble from Montclair State University appeared at a national conference. Most recently, the Montclair State Wind Symphony appeared at the international conference of the prestigious World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE) in Prague, Czech Republic, in July of 2022. Former members of the band program are now teaching in public and private schools throughout the northeast, performing as professional musicians throughout the country, and have gone on to attend some of the most prestigious graduate institutions in the world.

About the conductors…

Thomas McCauley is currently the Director of University Bands in the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University in New Jersey where he conducts the Montclair State University Wind Symphony, the Symphonic Band, and teaches both graduate and undergraduate conducting. He has held similar positions in the states of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, in addition to teaching high school instrumental music in Nevada for nine years. Composers including Karel Husa, David Gillingham, Michael Daugherty, Joseph Turrin, Bruce Yurko, Robert Aldridge, Morten Lauridsen, Armando Bayolo, and O'Neal Douglas have praised his work. Dr. McCauley has appeared as a clinician at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago on three different occasions. Each November, he hosts and co-teaches a symposium at Montclair State University called the *Weekend Wind Conducting Symposium* with special guest clinicians and participants from around the world. Dr. Thomas McCauley is in demand as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator throughout North America. Ensembles under McCauley's direction have appeared at national and regional conventions and conferences, and he has collaborated with artists including Dame Evelyn Glennie, Arturo Sandoval, The Imani Winds, The Manhattan Brass Quintet, Warren Vache', Monarch Brass, and Phil Smith among others. In February of 2019, Dr. McCauley led the Montclair Wind Symphony in concert at the *2019 College Band Directors Association* national conference in Tempe, Arizona. And the appearance of the Montclair State Wind Symphony at the WASBE International Conference in Prague, Czech Republic in July of 2022 was the first in the school's history.

Dr. McCauley's book titled, *Adventures in Band Building (or How to Turn a Less-Than-It-Could-Be into a More-Than-It-Should-Be)* is published by G.I.A. Publications. He has been published in *The Instrumentalist* magazine, several state music magazines, and in the second edition of *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, Vol I* published by G.I.A. publications. In 1995, the Nevada Music Educators Association named Dr. McCauley *Music Educator of the Year* and in 2006, the Indiana Music Educators Association honored Dr. McCauley with an *Outstanding University Music Educator Award.* He currently serves on the Executive Board of the New Jersey Band Association, is the New Jersey State Representative of the College Band Directors National Association and is the former New Jersey State Representative of the National Band Association. He is also an active member of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and the National Association for Music Education, in addition to serving as a Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician. Dr. McCauley earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in Music Education from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and holds a D.M. in conducting from Northwestern University.

Australian-born conductor **Heather J. Buchanan, PhD**, is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Montclair State University (MSU) where she conducts the Chorale (symphonic choir), University Singers, Vocal Accord (chamber choir), and Prima Voce (SSAA). Choirs under her direction have won critical acclaim for their "heartfelt conviction" "grace and precision," "vibrant sound," "eloquence", and for singing with the "crispness and dexterity

of a professional choir." During her tenure, Montclair choirs have collaborated with a variety of renowned national and international performing artists and composers including Jake Runestad, Eric Whitacre, VOCES8, Rhiannon Giddens, Meredith Monk, Neeme Järvi, Jacques Lacombe, Xian Zhang, Nicholas McGegan, Patrick Duprè Quigley, and Richard Alston Dance Company (UK), with Anton Armstrong upcoming in March 2026. Her numerous mainstage orchestral collaborations with the New Jersey Symphony (NJS) include Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony,* Mozart's *Requiem,* Verdi's M*essa da Requiem,* Fauré's *Requiem,* Orff's *Carmina Burana,* Mahler *Symphony No. 3,* Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream, Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses, Harry Potter & The Prisoner of Azbakan,* and Howard Shore's Academy Award winning *The Lord of the Rings Symphony,* with Handel's *Messiah* annually since December 2014. In June 2023, the NJS honored her 20-year relationship with the orchestra at the New Millenium Gala, the culminating event of their Centennial Season. Dr. Buchanan's choirs have also sung on commercially produced recordings with Meredith Monk (*Songs of Ascension)* and the NJS *(Carmina Burana & Verdi Requiem),* and in March 2020 the University Singers released their own professionally recorded CD *I sing because…* which is also available for digital download on Spotify and iTunes.

Dr. Buchanan holds degrees from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music (Australia), Westminster Choir College of Rider University (U.S.), and the University of New England (Australia). A licensed Body Mapping Educator since 2002, she specializes in the teaching of this neuro-anatomical educational technique that trains musicians to attain freedom of expression through effective movement. A vibrant teacher, dynamic performer, and passionate musicians' health advocate, Dr. Buchanan is in demand as a guest conductor, somatic educator, and choral clinician in the U.S. and abroad. Her 30-day 2023 choral tour hosted by the Australian National Choral Association was a comprehensive educational and artistic undertaking involving dozens of choirs and hundreds of choristers from all ages, amateur to professional, participating in clinics, festival choirs, rehearsals, and workshops across the nation. In January 2026, she returned to Melbourne, Australia for a third return invitation to headline the Australian Choral Conductor's Education and Training summer school, and in March 2025 conducted the Festival Chorus and New York City Chamber Orchestra in the Carnegie Hall premiere performance of Dan Forrest's *the breath of life* for Manhattan Concert Productions' 25th Anniversary Season. She returns to Australia in June 2027 to guest conduct the Australian Combined Schools Music Festival.

About the guests…

JoAnn Lamolino is a Performing Artist and Educator in trumpet and yoga/mindfulness instructor based in the New York City area. She is the newest Adjunct Professor of Trumpet here at Montclair State. Currently, JoAnn performs with orchestras throughout the US. Recent highlights include the New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Pittsburgh, San Diego, New Jersey, Omaha and Phoenix Symphonies. For a decade, JoAnn served as the Associate Principal Trumpet of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, Honolulu Brass Quintet,

performing and teaching throughout the Hawaiian Islands and serving as Lecturer in Trumpet at the University of Hawaii.

An Advocate for diversity in classical music, JoAnn is on the trumpet faculty of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's YOLA National Festival. She is also involved in the mentorship program for the International Women's Brass Conference. A Kundalini Yoga practitioner for 20 years, after earning a yoga teacher certification, JoAnn integrated her passions of music and mindfulness. She founded the Mind.Music.Sanctuary, a yoga/meditation base for musicians to improve performance and practice through a mindfulness lens. JoAnn actively presents classes at conservatory and university music schools around the country.

JoAnn holds an MM and BM from the Manhattan School of Music and Boston University. Teachers include members of the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

Julie Dombroski-Jones is a New York City based musician focused in chamber, commercial, orchestral and broadway music. Known for her innovative spirit and versatile performance, Julie can be heard regularly with the *Maybe Happy Ending Orchestra* (broadway), Riverside Brass Quintet, NOVUS NY and the Washington Heights Chamber Orchestra.

Chamber music is at the heart of Julie's career. She is a founder and leading member of the Riverside Brass Quintet (RBQ), a chamber ensemble combining folk, pop, and contemporary classical music. RBQ has received several awards from the Lower Manhattan Community Council and its album *Impromptu* was funded by Chamber Music America. Julie has also notably performed with TILT Brass, Black Box Ensemble, the Broadway Chamber Players and Ensemble Signal.

As a commercial musician, she has performed with Josh Groban, the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, the Doll-Parts, Brass Queens, Ken O'Rourkestra, Mansour and the Inés Velasco Big Band. These performances have brought her to some of New York's most iconic stages including Madison Square Garden, Dizzy's Club, Rockefeller Plaza and the Queensborough Performing Arts Center. She has recorded with Mariah Lyttle, Reuben Reuel, Anna Paddock and the Inés Velasco Big Band. She has a substantial history performing with local symphonic and opera orchestras throughout the greater NYC area including the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the New Jersey Symphony, MODUS Orchestra, the American Composer's Orchestra, the American Lyric Theater, Pegasus Orchestra, and Teatro Grattecielo. Additional Broadway Orchestra credits include *Merrily We Roll Along* (2023-2024), *Sweeney Todd* (2023) and the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* (2021). Recently, Julie was a part of the Lincoln Center Theater Gala: *Man of La Mancha* (2026) and City Center Encores!: *Love Life* (2025). She has recorded on several GRAMMY-nominated Broadway cast albums, concept albums for *Welcome to the Gun Show*

and *Kalavala: the Musical*, original works by NYC musical theater composer Sam Nasar, and the *Love Life* cast album.

She holds a B.M from Ithaca College and a M.M. from the Manhattan School of Music. Her primary instructors included Colin Williams (New York Philharmonic), Jeffrey Gray (Rochester Philharmonic) and Dr. Hal Reynolds.

THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY CHORAL PROGRAM

The Montclair State University Choral Program is an inclusive and dynamic community built on artistic excellence, humanistic values (INTEGRITY - COMPASSION - RESPECT), and service through music. Under the direction of Dr. Heather J. Buchanan since September 2003, the Montclair State choral program has been recognized for its successful collaborations with world-renowned artists and celebrated professional musicians in national and international venues. Collaborative pianist Gregory A. Stout is the choral accompanist.

Montclair State's flagship choir, UNIVERSITY SINGERS is a mixed-voice elective ensemble comprising undergraduate and graduate students who are experienced musicians. Students from all schools/colleges in good academic standing may audition. The University Singers perform a wide variety of sacred and secular repertoire encompassing genres from the Renaissance to the 21st Century, with special interest in contemporary composers. Under Dr. Heather J. Buchanan's leadership, the choir has enjoyed numerous collaborations with Internationally renowned musicians, including composers Meredith Monk, Morten Lauridsen, Chen Yi, Tarick O'Regan, Sarah Hopkins, Kamala Sankaram, Eric Whitacre, Jake Runestad, and Jocelyn Hagen; and NJS conductors Xian Zhang, Jacques Lacombe, George Manahan, Patrick Dupré Quigley, Roderick Cox, Nicholas McGegan, and Jeannette Sorrell.

Previous season highlights include Carnegie Hall performances as guest artists for Manhattan Concert Productions, Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall appearances for the New York Choral Festival Showcase Concerts, and conference performances for ACDA Eastern Division, NAfME All-Eastern, and NJMEA. The choir has toured the Mid-Atlantic region of the USA as well as Central Europe and Russia with performances in Prague, Budapest, Bratislava, Debrecen, Moscow, Pushkin, and St. Petersburg. An important ensemble in the NJ arts community, the University Singers perform regularly with the NJS, presenting Handel's *Messiah* annually since 2014. They have also performed Mozart's *Requiem* under Jacques Lacombe (2013) and Xian Zhang (2018), and in October 2018 they gave the US Premiere performance of *Speak Out!* by Kate Whitley (UK), an inspiring work based on texts by Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala, for the NJS's 2018-19 season opening.

The choir's relationship with renowned composer-artist Meredith Monk began with their historic collaboration in December 2006 and continued with the critically acclaimed March 2009

performances of *Ascension Variations* at the Guggenheim Museum, NYC. They recorded the CD *Songs of Ascension* with Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble on the prestigious European label ECM Records under the legendary producer Manfred Eicher, released May 2011. This collaboration was included in the Producer of the Year section of the 2012 Grammy nominations. The choir's first solo CD recording, *I Sing Because…* was released in March 2020 and is also available for digital download on Spotify and iTunes.

During 2020-21, and in the face of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, the University Singers continued to function in the vanguard of best choral practices, with socially distanced outdoor rehearsals and innovative recording projects. The choir's activities received widespread regional and national media attention, including TV appearances on *The Today Show, NBC Nightly News, The Kelly Clarkson Show,* and *News 12 NJ* in addition to print and digital media stories. Post-pandemic the choir has enjoyed collaborations with the internationally acclaimed UK-based vocal ensemble VOCES8 (Merkin Hall and Our Lady of the Lake, Verona); performing the NY metropolitan premier of the new social justice piece *Weather* (Rollo Dilworth) in collaboration with the Montclair Wind Symphony (Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*), singing the World Premiere of *Les Colombes* by composition student/baritone Ian Kearney ('25), and collaborating with international choral icons Eric Whitacre (April 2024) and Jake Runestad (April 2025). Upcoming season highlights include performances of *Vincent's Sky* (Runestad) in collaboration with the MSU Wind Symphony and the world premiere of their Runestad commission in March 2027. The University Singers' performances are broadcast on Cali Live and the Cali YouTube Channel.

Accompanist

An active collaborative artist in the tri-state area, **Gregory Stout** joined the Cali School of Music this season in the role of choral accompanist. He previously served as a staff accompanist at Westminster Choir College of Rider University (2018 - 2025), playing for the Westminster Choir, Westminster Symphonic Choir, Westminster Williamson Voices, Chapel Choir, and Schola Cantorum, and also for Scene Study classes in the Musical Theatre department. Since 2020 he has also served as a solo vocal, instrumental, and choral accompanist at Ramapo College of New Jersey. Gregory can be heard on the Westminster Choir album *A Serenity of Soul*, the Westminster Williamson Voices album *A Scattered Light in Winter,* and on the The Same Stream recording *A Time for Healing: The Music of Roger Ames*. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education (choral emphasis) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, studying piano with George Kiorpes. He pursued further studies at Westminster Choir College in piano accompanying and vocal coaching as a student of James Goldsworthy and J.J. Penna. An active church musician, Gregory has served as director of music at Flemington United Methodist Church in Flemington, NJ since 2017.

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*

Flute

Sofia Scamurra, *Multiple Woodwinds, Minneapolis, MN*
Milo Berntsen, *Composition, Staten Island, NY*
Jules Zeajoya, Music Education, Linden, NJ
Julianna Taveras-Garcia, *Music Performance, Bronx, NY*
Samantha Price, *Music Education, Bayonne, NJ*

Oboe

Iva Verba, *Music Performance, Odesa, Ukraine*
David Reinstein, *Music Education, New Milford, NJ*
Bailey Coon, *Multiple Woodwinds, Macedonia, OH*

Bassoon

Jonathan Hart, *Multiple Woodwinds, Miller Place, NY*
Darren Butler, *Music Performance, Jackson, NJ*
JoAnne Murray, *Music Education, West Harrison, NY*

Clarinet

Emily O'Brien, *Multiple Woodwinds, Prosper, TX*
Quinton Benner, *Music Performance, Canton, GA*
Hailey Guerra, *Multiple Woodwinds, Apex, NC*
Amanda Haussmann, *Multiple Woodwinds, Center Valley, PA*
Nick Derderian, *Multiple Woodwinds, Boise, ID*
Hunter McDonald, *Multiple Woodwinds, Germantown, MD*
Lilly ChablaCortes, *Music Education, West Orange, NJ*
Emmett Miller, *Music Performance, New York, NY*
Bianca Avalos, *Music Performance, Brooklyn, NY*
Basil Blasa, *Music Education, Bayonne, NJ*
Maria Taveras-Garcia, *Music Performance, Bronx, NY*

Bass Clarinet

Naji Abdeldayem, *Music Education, Staten Island, NY*
Nicholas Thomas Chin, *Music Education, New York, NY*

Alto Saxophone

Noah Barr, *Multiple Woodwinds, Redmond, WA*
Frank DiBari, *Music Performance, Middletown, NJ*

Tenor Saxophone

Katie Sorrentino, *Music Education, Bayonne, NJ*

Baritone Saxophone

Ariana Giammanco, *Music Education, Wyckoff, NJ*

Trumpet

Mario Correa, *Music Performance, Bloomfield, NJ*
Christopher Bailey-Robinson, *Music Performance, Buffalo, NY*
Gianna Ciaburri, *Music Performance, Staten Island, NY*
Aiden Carr, *Music Education, Bayonne, NJ*
Monika Buczek, *Biology, Tobyhanna, PA*

French Horn

Shayla McPhee, *Music Education, West Milford, NJ*
Jose Zapata, *Music Performance, Sparta, NJ*
Ellyn Eivers, *Music Performance, Farmingdale, NY*
Faith Santana, *Music Education, Rutherford, NJ*

Trombone

David Laird, *Music Education, Millville, NJ*
Calvin Harper, *Music Performance, Ridgewood, NJ*
Marin Cowell, *Music Performance, Clinton, NJ*
Hairo Cesar, *Jazz Education, Queens, NY*

Euphonium

James Quinn, *Composition, Staten Island, NY*
Tina Salomone, *Music: School and Community Settings, Staten Island, NY*

Tuba

Isaac Galang, *Music Education, North Bergen, NJ*
Carlos Chuqui-Minchala, *Music Education, Hackensack, NJ*

String Bass

Sydni Fields, *Music Performance, Franklin Township, NJ*

Percussion

Hannah D'Elia, *Music Education, Bridgewater, NJ*
Fenglin Zhang, *Music Education, Xiamen, China*
Alexandros Pothos, *Music Education, Bridgewater, NJ*
Metehan Karaaslan, *Music Education, Fairfield, NJ*
Elena Cuesta, *MAT P-12 Music, Allenhurst, NJ*
Logan Mather, *Music Education, Teaneck, NJ*
Daniel Giermanski, *Music Education, Pequannock, NJ*
Owen Lenger, *Music Performance, Woodcliff Lake, NJ*

UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Dr. Heather J. Buchanan, *conductor*
Gregory A. Stout, *accompanist*

Soprano

Makayla Albert *(Music Education – Voice)*
Emily Cugini *(Music Education – Voice)*
Megan Huber *(General Education)*
Helen Makus *(Child Advocacy)*
Crystal Maoga *(Music Education – Voice)*
Olivia Meyer *(Journalism)*
Mckenzie Miller *(Music Therapy – Voice)*
Hailey Morin *(Music Therapy – Voice)*
Negin Saidian *(Music Education – Voice)*
Ava Tirri *(Music Education – Voice)*

Alto I

Elinet Brito *(Music Education – Voice)*
Melanie Gilbert *(Music Education – Voice)*
Emily Gramley *(MM Music Composition)*
Karina Kilbashian *(Music Education – Voice)*
Léah Laguerre *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Lara Miranda *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Kathryn Radcliffe * *(Music Education – Voice)*
Jasmin Ramos *(Music Education – Voice)*
Sephora Santiago *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Leah Schwing-Krompholz *(Marine Biology)*
Olivia Willms *(Psychology)*

Tenor I

Milo Berntsen *(Music Composition)*
Eddie Morel *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Xavier Pesante *(Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies)*
Samuel Sanchez *(Music Composition)*
Charlie Valdez *(Music Education – Voice)*
Jamie Yermish *(Jurisprudence, Law, and Society)*

High Baritone

Brian Corona *(Music Education – Voice)*
Raymond Del Gaudio *(Music Therapy – Voice)*
Luis Grados *(Recording Arts + Production)*
Mason Insana *(Music Education – Voice)*
Greyson Lobb *(Music Education – Voice)*
Jackson Miller *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Yadiel Rivera-Colon *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Dean Tarriff * *(Music Education – Voice)*
Christopher Vasquez *(Music Performance – Jazz Voice)*

Soprano II

Ava DeFebbo *(Film + TV)*
Jenna Ferrera * *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Drew Hinz *(Music Education – Flute)*
Anna Kodak + *(Music Education – Voice)*
Deborah Myhren *(Music Education – Voice)*
Camille Pajonas *(Music Education – Voice)*
Olivia Pellizzon *(Music Education – Voice)*
Brooks Seibold *(Music Education – Voice)*
Aizhan Soltanova *(Music Performance – Piano)*
Taryn Spoto *(Music Education – Voice)*

Alto II

Alexandra Amiths *(Music Education – Voice)*
Anamika Bachoo *(Music Education – Voice)*
Gabrielle Cintrón ^ *(MM Choral Conducting)*
Elena Cuesta^^ *(MAT Music Education)*
Jelena Diaz *(MM Music Therapy – Voice)*
Taylor Kitzman *(Music Education - Voice)*
Emily Piccola *(Anthropology + Sec. Education)*
Layla Santos *(Undecided)*

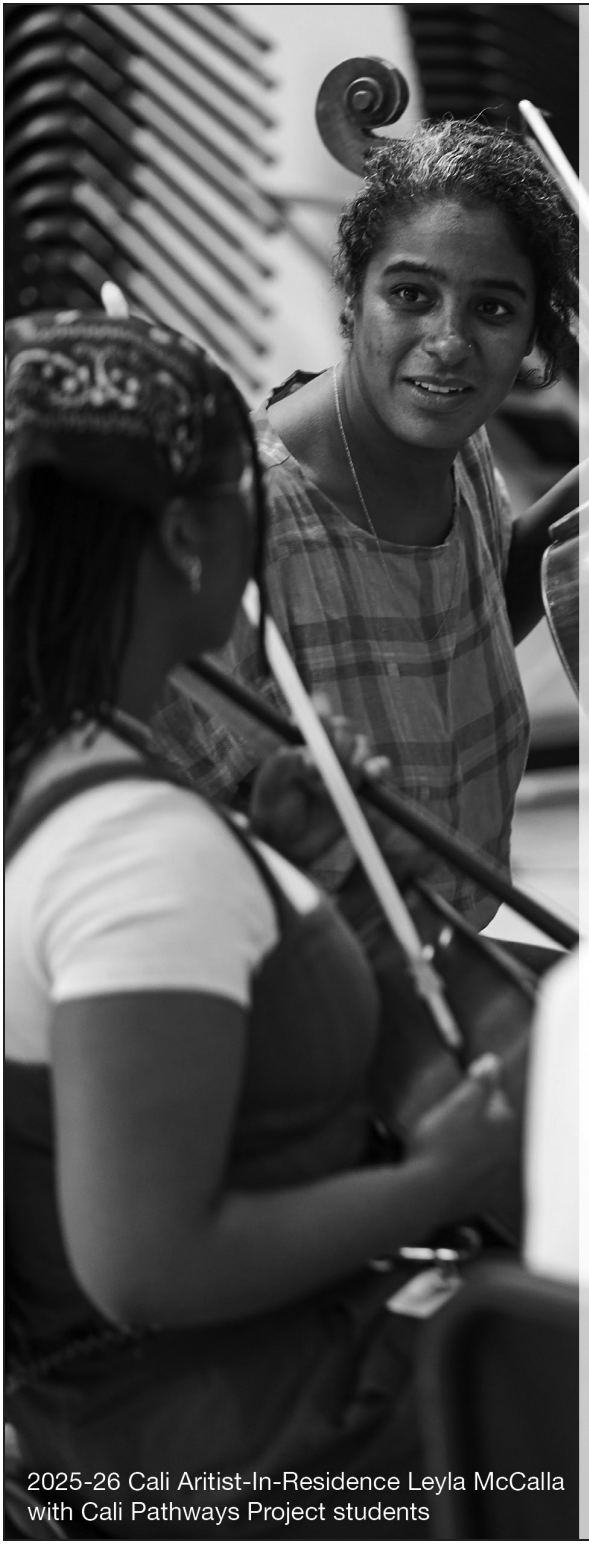
Tenor II

Donnie Chenel *(Music Education – Piano)*
Damon Dellanno *(Music Education – Voice)*
Felipe Espinosa *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Atlas Planas-Borgstrom *(Music Therapy – Voice)*
Gordon Rowan *(MS Mathematics)*
Benjamin Silvesti * *(Music Education – Voice)*

Bass –Baritone

Ryan Avallone *(MS Mathematics)*
Matteo Barahona *(Music Education – Voice)*
Darren Butler *(Music Performance – Bassoon)*
Jake McCreery (*Theater Studies)*
Amir Nassar *(Music Performance – Jazz Bass)*
Alan Pinzon *(Music Performance – Voice)*
Ezra Snyder *(Music Therapy – Guitar)*
Michael Vespignani (Music Education – Voice)

^ - Graduate Assistant ^^ - Teaching Assistant
*** - Section Leader + - Manager**



2025-26 Cali Aritist-In-Residence Leyla McCalla with Cali Pathways Project students

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