

Orchestral Celebration

NISO NOTES



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Spring Concert Preview: A Majestic Performance

Allison Wordes, NISO writer

This year marks the anniversary of Dordt’s majestic Casavant organ, installed in the B. J. Haan Auditorium in 1979. NISO’s spring concert celebrates this wonderful instrument.

Like a composition that has three movements, the spring concert has three parts. The first piece on the program is titled *Lauda* and was commissioned by NISO for this occasion. Written by Dordt music instructor, composer, and musician Daniel Baldwin, it is his first composition for organ. Drawing on the well-known Latin word for “praise,” *Lauda* incorporates hints from the theme of the hymn “Praise to the Lord the Almighty.” It is a tribute to this pipe organ, whose purpose has always been to give glory to God. The words inscribed above the organ from Psalm 150 proclaim “Praise ye the Lord in his sanctuary with the sound of trumpet, psaltery, harp, stringed instruments and organs.”



MaryLou Wielenga
Organ

“It’s a fun piece!” said MaryLou Wielenga, Dordt music instructor and organist. Wielenga has been teaching at Dordt for 40 years and remembers well the dedication of the organ by Joan Ringerwole. In this performance, she will sit at the console of the organ as part of the NISO ensemble.

The second part of the concert pulls back from the brightness of the first section. In *Concerto* by Handel, the organ will join a smaller portion of the orchestra. According to Dr. Karen DeMol, it feels more “intimate” when compared with the grander scale of the bookending pieces.

According to Wielenga, one of the unique features of the piece is its moving pedal line. Although this is not common for concertos, Handel’s German upbringing made him proficient with his feet and he highlights that in this piece. The piece also calls for improvisation: some sections say “ad libitum,” suggesting that the organist add to what is written. It is also based on a chaconne, which is a movement with a strong repeating pattern in the lower range with a variation singing above it.

“There’s a lot of dialogue between the orchestra and the organ,” said Wielenga. For an organist playing organ with the orchestra, following the conductor can be a challenge. However, Wielenga is accustomed to working with ensembles and is used to performing in the space.

The final piece on the program is by French Romantic composer Camille Saint-Saens. *Symphony No. 3 in C Minor* is a popular organ symphony that includes instruments not commonly used in the orchestra—the pipe organ, the English horn (which is of the oboe family), and the contrabassoon. NISO will bring in players of these instruments specifically for this concert..

“It’s glorious—it represents the power of God,” said Wielenga. “I’ve always wanted to play it.” Wielenga will be pulling out (almost) all the stops to attain full volume for such a grand finale. “I think it will be an absolutely stunning concert,” said De Mol.

Come to Dordt’s B.J. Haan auditorium on Tuesday, April 2, to hear NISO pull out all the stops! Tickets may be purchased at the door the evening of the concert. For more NISO information, visit niso.dordt.edu.

Guest Concert: Gaudete Brass Quintet

Allison Wordes – Staff Writer



Every year, NISO invites a guest ensemble to perform as part of its concert series. This year, we invite the Gaudete (pronounced gow-day-tay) Brass Quintet. The group has been performing around the country since 2004, from Texas to Illinois, and on April 13 will be in Sioux Center.

The quintet will arrive a day early, on Friday, April 12, to participate in Dordt’s High School Band Festival held on campus every other year. The group will lead students in something they do best—conducting brass sectionals.

Gaudete consists, obviously, of five members: Charles Roberts on trumpet, Joanna Schulz on horn, Bill Baxtresser on trumpet, Scott Tegge on tuba, and Paul Von Hoff on trombone. Their goal is to create excellent music, commissioned and original, that shows appreciation for the artfulness of Renaissance brass chamber music. Each member has been involved with prominent symphonies in North America. Schulz also spent a year and a half as associate principal of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in New Zealand before returning to Canada. Baxtresser teaches at the Music Institute of Chicago. Roberts enjoys cooking. Tegge has traveled with Carthage College Wind Ensemble on a tour to Japan. And last but not least, Von Hoff is the founder and the glue that holds the group together.

(cont.)

Spring Concert
April 2
7:30 PM

(cont. "Guest Concert: Gaudete Brass")

"My students were enchanted by this wonderful ensemble that brought diverse music combined with imaginative presentation, said Sharon Van Der Kolk, a second-grade teacher from Evanston, Illinois, "In the high-tech, high speed world we live in, I did not think my students could sit for over an hour. It was beautiful to watch them just listen and let their inner worlds be touched by such skillful playing and profound experience."

Gaudete Brass has performed live at places such as Merkin Hall and Symphony Space in New York City and Millennium Park in Chicago. Besides playing on the big stage, they have presented educational programs and concerts at a variety of schools, including Arizona State University, and Eastman School of Music and Juilliard School in New York.

The Gaudete Brass has recorded several albums: *Brass Outings* (2006), *Conversations in Time* featuring organist R. Benjamin Dobey (2011); and *Chicago Moves* (2012). Gaudete Brass has also appeared on radio stations such as WFMT in Chicago and Nashville Public Radio.

For those who don't know Latin, Gaudete means "Joy!" Come to Dordt's B.J. Haan auditorium on Saturday, April 13 to experience a joyous performance! Tickets may be purchased at the door the evening of the concert. For more NISO information, visit niso.dordt.edu.



Gaudete Brass
April 13
7:30 PM

Profiling the Principal Players: Damon Lamberty

Allison Wordes – Staff Writer

One of the three new members to join NISO this year is percussionist Damon Lamberty.

"I've loved music since a very, very young age," said Lamberty. His mother was a school band director and, as soon as he was old enough, he joined the band. He started with drums, especially the snare, in fourth grade and has been very aware of the place of percussion in an ensemble ever since.

In college and graduate school, he picked up the marimba, which has become his preferred percussion instrument. Presently, Lamberty is working on dual master of music degree in percussion performance and in conducting.



Damon Lamberty

"I loved music since a very, very young age."

-Damon Lamberty

How did Lamberty come to NISO? Last year, one of his professors "put a bug in my ear that a position was open." He auditioned, was offered a position, and gladly accepted.

Lamberty enjoys learning from other musical ensembles. He especially likes listening

to recordings by Nexus, a percussion ensemble. Nexus is made up of four talented musicians who perform entirely improvised concerts and have received multiple awards for their recordings.

"It inspires me to be a better musician," said Lamberty. He notes that while percussionists may have to practice a bit less than other musicians, it does not mean they need any less skill. Lamberty describes how important is it for percussionists to feel what is happening in the orchestra—tempo changes, loudness, softness, and touch.

"You have to have a great deal of sensitivity," said Lamberty. "It may just seem like we're just sitting back here, but it takes more technique and discipline than most people realize." With NISO, Lamberty has primarily performed on the timpani, but he also plays other percussion instruments.

In his free time, which is scarce in the midst of his intense university education, he enjoys reading Sci-Fi and fantasy books and, as a hobby, playing on his drum set. He lives in Vermillion, South Dakota, but is happy to make the hour's drive to Sioux Center and NISO.

THANK YOU

to EVERYONE who contributed to this year's NISO Celebrity Conductor Contest!

And the winner is... TJ Speer!

A special thanks to all of the 2019 Celebrity Conductor Candidates Steve Grond, Nancy Landegent, and Katricia Meendering.

These celebrities raised over \$6,000 for NISO!

NISO Scholarship Recipients 2018-19



Josh Beltman
Unity Christian



Joya Schreurs
Unity Christian



Anna Van Holland
MOC-FV HS



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Selling Pre-Season Tickets for 2019-20