



ST. OLAF BAND
TIMOTHY MAHR • CONDUCTOR

September 22, 2021

Dear colleague,

As our season of music making gets underway, we are pleased to invite you and your students to participate in our annual **St. Olaf Festival of Bands**. This year's festival, to be held on **November 13**, promises to be a stimulating day for students and teachers alike. Culminating an exciting and intense day of rehearsals will be performances by the Festival Band, the St. Olaf Band, and the Norseman Band. The Festival of Bands has enjoyed a long, successful history of bringing together outstanding high school musicians to prepare and share a program with nationally known artists.

We are very excited to have conductor/composer **Jayce Ogren** return to campus to lead the Festival of Bands on November 13th, when he will also premiere a commissioned work with the St. Olaf Band. A 2001 graduate from St. Olaf College, he has established himself over the past twenty years as "one of the most innovative and versatile conductors of his generation." We are thrilled to engage a conductor to lead our Festival Band who has made music with many of the world's most prominent orchestras. We're proud, too! Ogren has appeared with the BBC Symphony, Boston Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, the Dallas and San Francisco Symphonies, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Additionally, he led the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Symphony for three years, was appointed director of the New York City Opera, and he's a longtime collaborator with singer/songwriter/composer Rufus Wainwright. Ogren conducted the premiere of Wainwright's opera *Prima Donna* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and led its recording with the BBC Symphony on Deutsche Grammophon in 2016. When Jayce was a senior, he led the St. Olaf Band throughout its annual tour in performances of his *Symphonies of Gaia*. He was offered a contract to publish the work before the tour was over, the composition was featured at The Midwest Clinic, and it's the title track of a Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra CD recording. Band is in his heart. We offer this link to his full bio [here](#), as it is an extensive and impressive listing of his work as an internationally renowned conductor and composer. I encourage you to look it over.

Our new colleague for the year conducting the Norseman Band is Dr. Catharine Bushman, a visiting assistant professor while on her sabbatical leave from St. Cloud State University. We are excited for the impact she will have on our music making and study.

There will be one Festival Band made up of students selected from the nearly 400 nominees. We invite you to nominate up to five students from your band, including your fine players on the oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, euphonium, baritone saxophone, etc. Please rank them in order of excellence from 1 to 5. Briefly state any honors your students have received (All-State memberships, contest participation, seating placement within your ensemble, etc.) and be sure to indicate whether baritone players read treble or bass clef, and list the strengths of your percussionists (timpani, mallets, etc.). **You may submit nominations online at <https://wp.stolaf.edu/music/st-olaf-festival-of-bands/> from now through October 8.**

We issue music ahead of time, which increases the quality of the performance, so please check with your students in advance to be sure that they can attend, if selected, on Saturday, November 13. "No-shows" cause balance problems in the ensemble, deprive other students of the opportunity to participate, and are a librarian's nightmare. Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.





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There is a participation fee of \$12.50 per individual to register for the event, which will include lunch from Stav Hall (ranked in the top-five college cafeterias in the country by *The Princeton Review!*), along with an admissions info session. You and a guest are invited to join us for a complimentary directors' luncheon in Buntrock Commons, where we can share ideas and good fellowship.

We are eager to resume this tradition, and the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors remains our top priority. At this point, we anticipate the participants will be able to rehearse together as a full ensemble (without distancing requirements), while masked. As with everything related to COVID-19, this is subject to change as circumstances change. College policy currently states that all students must be vaccinated prior to returning to campus. In addition to that standard and the above protocols, our ensemble members are required to be vaccinated prior to their first rehearsal. Because of the more significant risk of transmission involved with unvaccinated wind players, **this policy will extend to guest participants of the Festival of Bands**. If you have students with exemptions due to disability, we encourage you to reach out to us ASAP to determine what may be possible.

In accordance with the CDC's recent guidance, face coverings will be required for all indoor events on campus. These safety measures apply to all on-campus guests for all campus events, both vaccinated and unvaccinated. Masking is considered one of the most effective ways to reduce transmission. If you are not masked upon arrival, you will not be allowed entrance to the event. **All participating students must use a face covering that can be worn while playing.** By participating in this event at St. Olaf College, you confirm that you have been vaccinated, will wear a mask when required (including when playing), will comply with all campus standards related to COVID-19 at the time, and voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this policy, and for helping keep our campus and one another safe. First and foremost, we are committed to your safety, that of our conductors, students, faculty and staff, and audience members alike. For future updates to the St. Olaf College policies related to the Festival of Bands, please see our St. Olaf Festival of Bands website at <https://wp.stolaf.edu/music/st-olaf-festival-of-bands/>.

Please [go online](#) to complete the nomination form and luncheon reservation by **Friday, October 8**. Contact Sarah Gingerich (gingeric@stolaf.edu) if you have any questions.

We look forward to seeing you at St. Olaf College. Good luck with the start of your year.

Sincerely,



Dr. Timothy Mahr, Professor
Robert Scholz Endowed Chair in Music
Conductor, St. Olaf Band

