NORTHWESTERN STATE

Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony

Douglas Bakenhus, Music Director

featuring
Dr. Oliver Molina performing
Kevin Puts' "Concerto for Marimba"

AMERICAN REFLECTIONS





Tuesday, November 3, 2026
7:30 p.m. | Magale Recital Hall
Northwestern State University

The Dear School of
CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS
CAPA

2026-2027 Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Season

AMERICAN MOSAIC

Tuesday, November 3, 2026, 7:30 pm • Magale Recital Hall
American Reflections
This program will feature NSU professor of percussion, Dr. Oliver Molina performing American Composer Kevin Puts' "Concerto for Marimba." Also, on the program Copland's "John Henry," Gershwin's "An American in Paris Suite," and Charles Ives' "The Camp Meeting" that contains several familiar early American hymns. We will end the program with Beethoven's "Egmont Overture." A story of sacrifice, liberty and triumph over tyranny.

December 2,3,4 • *NSU Christmas Gala* - A.A. Fredericks Auditorium
The NSU School of Creative and Performing Arts' 38th annual Christmas GALA is a must-see! Take a pick for which show you would like to attend but reserve your seat early. These performances are in high demand and often sell out.

Thursday, February 4, 2027, 7:30 pm • Magale Recital Hall
Requiem, Optimism, and A Gift to Be Simple
NSU Alumnus, Maestro Mario Torres returns to campus to conduct Haydn's spirited and optimistic Symphony No. 88. The program also features NSU Professor of Cello Paul Christopher, along with two of his former students and Natchitoches residents, Milovan Paz, and Jorge Rodriguez, in a performance of David Popper's "Requiem for Three Cellos." Opening the concert is the original chamber orchestra version of Aaron Copland's beloved "Appalachian Spring," featuring the timeless American folk song "Simple Gifts."

Saturday, February 6, 2027, 5:30 pm • Magale Recital Hall - *String Day*
High school and middle school students from the region will join the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony for a day of lessons and rehearsals, culminating with a concert at 5:30pm.

Tuesday, March 23, 2027, 7:30 pm • Magale Recital Hall - *Concerto Winners*
This concert will feature NSU's most talented student musicians. In addition, we will have music by American composers Florence Price and Brian Balmages.

Tuesday, April 27, 2027, 7:30 pm • Magale Recital Hall
Angels of Light, with Courage, and Hope
Our final concert of the season culminates with one of the most beloved works in the orchestral repertoire: Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World." Composed in New York, in 1893, while he served as director of the National Conservatory of Music of America. Deeply inspired by the spirituals sung by his African American student, Harry T. Burleigh, Dvořák blends European symphonic tradition with the sounds and spirit of America. The program also features Frank Ticheli's "Angels in the Architecture." Born in Monroe, Louisiana, Ticheli is one of America's most celebrated contemporary composers. This powerful and moving work explores the struggle between darkness and light, ultimately affirming the enduring human ideals of peace, hope, and love. Opening the concert will be Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man."

Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony
In Concert

"American Reflections"

Douglas Bakenhus, Music Director
Andrej Kurti, Assistant Conductor
Alejandro Restrepo Cardozo, Graduate Assistant Conductor
Maira Avellaneda Pabón, Graduate Assistant Conductor
Featuring:
Dr. Oliver Molina, Marimba

Tuesday, November 3, 2026
7:30pm, Magale Recital Hall

Program

An American in Paris Suite — George Gershwin/arr. Whitney (1898-1937)

Lullaby — William Hofeldt (b. 1951)

"John Henry," A Railroad Ballad for Orchestra — Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

(Pause)

Marimba Concerto (1997) — Kevin Puts (b. 1972)
I. Flowing
II. Broad and Deliberate
III. *Presto non troppo*

(Pause)

Symphony No. 3, "The Camp Meeting" — Charles Ives (1874-1954)
I. Old Folks Gatherin' - Andante maestoso
II. Children's Day - Allegro
III. Communion - Largo

Overture to "Egmont," Op. 84 — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Music Director



Dr. Douglas Bakenhus has been music director and conductor of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony at Northwestern State University of Louisiana since 2004, where he also teaches bassoon, aural skills, and advanced conducting. In addition, Bakenhus also serves as music director of the Northeast Texas Symphony since 2003 and was the director of the Austin Philharmonic from 2001-2004. His music degrees are from the University of Texas at Austin (D.M.A., B.M.Ed), Texas A&M University-Commerce (M.M.), and has completed additional graduate courses in conducting and bassoon-performance at the University of Michigan. His conducting teachers include Larry Rachleff, Gustav Meier, Carl St. Clair, Gary W. Hill, and Elizabeth Green. In addition, Dr. Bakenhus studied conducting and baroque/classical performance practice with Ivars Taurin at the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute (2010 and 2015). Throughout his teaching career, Dr. Bakenhus has remained active as a guest conductor and clinician with honor orchestras throughout Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, Furthermore, he has made international conducting appearances with the Comfenalco School Orchestra in Cartegna, Colombia, the *Sinfonietta* Bratislava in Slovakia, and the San Pedro Sula City Chamber Orchestra in Honduras. He also performed abroad as a bassoonist with the NSU Faculty Woodwind Trio in Canada, Slovakia, England, and the Czech Republic. He remains active on the bassoon, playing in several local orchestras including the Shreveport Symphony, The Baroque Artist of Shreveport, Marshall Symphony, South Arkansas Symphony, and Texarkana Symphony. In addition, on his baroque and classical instruments, he regularly performs with period instrument ensembles including, the Austin Baroque Orchestra, *Sonido Barroco* in San Antonio, and has made appearances in Houston with Ars Lyrica, the Houston Bach Society, and the Mercury Baroque Ensemble.

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Assistant Conductor

Andrej Kurti-Đurović



Internationally acclaimed violinist Andrej Kurti-Đurović was born in Belgrade, Serbia, and studied at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory before earning a Doctor of Musical Arts in Violin Performance from the University of Georgia. A prizewinner in numerous international competitions, he was also a finalist in the MTNA National Competition. A recording artist for the Blue Griffin label since 2000, Kurti-Đurovic has released critically acclaimed recordings of Ysaÿe's Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Paganini's 24 Caprices, and Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas, completing one of the most significant trilogies in the solo violin repertoire. His performances have been praised by American Record Guide, Classics Today, and Fanfare Magazine. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2015 and performs regularly as a soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States, Europe, and beyond. Since 2004, Kurti-Đurović has served as Professor of Violin at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, while maintaining an active international concert career.

Graduate Assistant Conductors



Alejandro Restrepo Cardozo is a cellist originally from Cartagena, Colombia. He earned his Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance from Northwestern State University of Louisiana in 2021 and his Master of Music in Cello Performance from The University of Southern Mississippi in 2023. He is currently pursuing a Master of Music with a concentration in Music Education at Northwestern State University, where he studies cello with Paul Christopher. As an orchestral musician, Alejandro has performed professionally with numerous ensembles throughout Louisiana, Alabama, New Jersey, Mississippi, Texas, Florida, and Arkansas. He has also held principal cello positions with the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra and the University of Southern Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. His international and festival experience includes touring in Paris with the Orquesta Binacional Colombo-Francesa, attending the Renova Music Festival in Pennsylvania, the Vienna Music Festival in Florida and participating in the XIII Cartagena International Music Festival, where he had the opportunity to perform alongside internationally renowned artists

Graduate Assistant Conductors

and musicians from the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Santiago Cañón-Valencia, and Alexis Cárdenas. Alejandro's honors include the Best String Jury Award and his selection as the string representative for the McCutcheon Honors Recital in 2019, as well as the String Jury Award for Honorable Achievement from The University of Southern Mississippi in 2022. He graduated cum laude from Northwestern State University in 2021.

Maira Avellaneda Pabón (M.A.P.)



Is a graduate student in Music Education at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, where she serves as Paul Christopher's Graduate Assistant and cello student. She is originally from Bogotá, Colombia, where she earned her bachelor's degree in music Pedagogy at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional of Colombia. Throughout her career, she has worked as a music teacher, community artist, and has also conducted research on topics such as the relationship between music and feminism, music education, and cultural studies.

Guest Artist



Dr. Oliver Molina is an Associate Professor of Music where he serves as the Director of Percussion Studies at Northwestern State University of Louisiana. As an active percussion performer, educator, arranger, adjudicator, and clinician, Dr. Molina has presented and performed at various state Day of Percussion events, PASIC, NCPP, Midwest and other music conferences and festivals. Recently, Dr. Molina has been selected as a Fulbright Scholar to teach and research in the Philippines in the spring of 2027. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Percussion Performance and Pedagogy at the University of Iowa under Dr. Dan Moore. Additionally, he is a founding member of the Omojo Percussion Duo and the Ninkasi Percussion Group. Dr. Molina currently serves on the Board of Advisors for the Percussive Arts Society and the National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy. He is a Yamaha Performing Artist and an education endorser of Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets, Remo Drum Heads, Sabian Cymbals, and Black Swamp Percussion. His professional affiliations include the Percussive Arts Society, National Association for Music Education, National Society for Steel Band Educators, and the College Music Society.

Gershwin: An American in Paris (Arr. John Whitney)



An American in Paris was born out of George Gershwin's desire to bridge the gap between American popular jazz and European classical traditions. He traveled to Paris in the spring of 1928 to study with Maurice Ravel who famously remarked that it was better to be a "first-rate Gershwin than a second-rate Ravel," fearing that strict classical training would ruin the composer's natural jazz instincts. Nevertheless, he soaked in the atmosphere of the French capital, famously incorporating street sounds such as taxi horns. He completed the work after returning to New York and it was premiered December 13, 1928. The original Carnegie Hall program notes described the piece as an impression of an American visiting Paris: "imagine, then, an American visiting Paris, swinging down the Champs-Elysées on a mild, sunny morning". Gershwin aimed to portray the tourist as he "listens to various street noises and absorbs the French atmosphere," eventually experiencing a brief "spasm of homesickness" before concluding in a celebratory finale.

The structural and thematic breakdown of this arrangement operates as follows:

1. Walking Theme & Taxi Horns: Sauntering down the avenue swinging a walking stick with carefree confidence.
2. Transition to the Café: A fast development of the walking theme leading us to the café.
3. The Solo Trumpet Blues: After a few glasses of wine, he becomes homesick with a 12-bar blues.
4. The Triumphant Return & Coda: Breaks out of his homesickness realizing how unforgettably awesome is Paris! The walking theme returns and the coda has a brief statement again of the blues but with a brighter feeling reflecting the brightness of the Paris streets.

William Hofeldt: Lullaby

About the Composer



Chicago-born composer William Hofeldt studied music education at the University of Illinois and composition at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. A dedicated educator, he spent 15 years teaching school orchestra in Wisconsin before transitioning into a career as a CPA, though he continues to be heavily commissioned as a prominent voice in string literature.

About the Piece

Originally composed for violin and piano, Hofeldt later expanded *Lullaby* into a lush masterwork for full string orchestra. Imbued with deep personal warmth, the piece features an affectionate dedication to his daughters, Amie and Tifani, capturing the gentle, comforting essence of a bedtime song. The music flows from a quiet, rocking motion into a resonant climax before gently fading into a peaceful, quiet slumber.

Aaron Copland: John Henry



Aaron Copland wrote John Henry in 1940 as a short, descriptive orchestral fantasy for a CBS radio broadcast titled 'School of the Air". The goal was to write something exciting and brief for young audiences.

The Legend: The music depicts the American folk hero John Henry, an African American laborer who raced a steam-powered drill to save workers' jobs. He won the race but died of exhaustion with a hammer in each hand.

The Sounds: The orchestration uses percussion like the anvil, sandpaper, triangle, and snare drum to simulate chugging trains and hammering steel. The piece starts quietly with distant brass and woodwinds. Then builds tension through unique orchestration that simulates the sounds of hammering steel and a moving locomotive. The structure features rolling wheels driven by accelerating rhythmic momentum and piercing dissonant accents that capture the mechanical screeching of train wheel flanges grinding against the iron rails.

Kevin Puts: Marimba Concerto

Marimba Concerto (1997) emerged from my close collaboration with marimbaist Makoto Nakura, for whom I also composed several solo and chamber works in the Nineties while still a graduate student at the Eastman School of Music. In recent years, rising star Ji Su Jung has championed the concerto and eagerly expressed an interest in recording it. Commissioned by Nakura and the Vermont Symphony Orchestra for a tour around the orchestra's home state, the concerto's opening melody was probably inspired by my hearing a pianist warming up on the stage of the Eastman Theater as I passed through it on the way to class. The harmonic progression he played – a series of chords whose bass line descended by step while the upper notes outlined simple triads – struck me as poignant in its simplicity. I have always felt close to the key of E flat, due to its rich qualities and probably also to the many works of Mozart written in this key, in particular two of his piano concertos that served, in many ways, as a model for this concerto. The first movement spins forth from this melody as the marimba embellishes it virtuosically. The second movement, cast in more elegiac hues than the first, employs only the string section of the orchestra, which introduces reflective four-voiced textures that are eventually taken up by the solo marimba. The third movement, an athletic moto perpetuo for the marimbaist, gradually recalls the elements of the first movement's melody, culminating in a reprise of this melody within the context of this final movement's more dance-like nature.

-Keven Puts

Movement Subtitles: Each movement's subtitles are drawn from the poetry of the composer's aunt, Fleda Brown:

I. "...terrific sun on the brink" (Flowing)

II. "...into the quick of losses" (Broad and Deliberate)

III. "...logarithms, exponents, the damnedest of metaphors" (Presto non troppo)

Charles Ives: Symphony No. 3 "The Camp Meeting"



After graduating from Yale in 1898, Ives would pursue two careers simultaneously: one as a musician (church organist and composer) and another as a marketing strategist for a life insurance company.

In 1901, as part of his church duties, Ives composed three organ pieces: a prelude, a postlude and a piece for communion. These pieces have since been lost but they survive in an elaborate and reworked form as the movements of Ives' Symphony No. 3: *The Camp Meeting*.

Childhood Memories and the Inspiration of a "Camp Meeting"

In the nineteenth-century life was difficult in rural America on farms and in small towns. There were no safeguards for farmers. A year of bad weather could be disastrous. "Camp Meetings" were a religious movement to life be more bearable by supporting each other, socializing, and praying to a loving God who would protect them. Rural farmers and townsfolk would gather together at a central location to sing, pray and hear circuit preachers sermonize for several days at camps.

As a four-year-old boy, Charles Ives witnessed one of the last great camp meetings at Redding, Connecticut in 1878. His father, who had been a band master in the Civil War, led the singing of hymns, as Ives later recalled in his memos:

"I remember, when I was a boy—at the outdoor camp meeting services in Redding—all the farmers, their families and field hands, for miles around, would come afoot or in their farm wagons. I remember how the great waves of sound used to come through the trees—when things like Beulah Land, Woodworth, Nearer My God to Thee, The Shining Shore, Nettleton, In the Sweet Bye and Bye and the like were sung by thousands of 'let out' souls….Father, who led the singing, sometimes with his cornet or his voice, sometimes with both voice and arms, and sometimes in the quieter hymns with a French horn or violin, would always encourage the people to sing their own way."

Memories of this early childhood experience was the inspiration for Ives' Third Symphony.

Unlike his First and Second Symphonies, Ives' Third, flips the traditional structures that had predominated since Haydn and Mozart of exposition of themes then development. Instead, he starts by developing the themes then states them at the end. And instead of four movements, we have three; Old Folks Gatherin', Children's Day and Communion. Each depicting various scenes from the meeting, unfolding organically according to its own, unique pattern. And, in place of the large post-Romantic orchestras of Mahler and Strauss, we have a smaller, quieter chamber orchestra in which the strings prevail, often assuming the role of a singing congregation:

Nearly all of the melodic material in the symphony is derived from traditional protestant hymns, such as *Azmon* ("O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"), *Woodworth* ("Just as I Am"), and *Erie* ("What a Friend We Have in Jesus"). These melodies are not presented straight, or entirely until the very end. Instead, they are fragmented, nostalgic memories that Ives creates with techniques of musical development used by composers from Bach to Brahms.

Many of the symphony's other unusual qualities may also have been inspired by the sounds Ives heard at the camp meeting in Redding. The expressive chromatic harmonies may sound reminiscent of contemporary German composers like Strauss and Reger, but it is unlikely that Ives knew their music as it was still rarely performed in America at this time. In addition to being the products of his own musical imagination, Ives' chromatic harmonies may also be artistic renderings of the way untrained singers often change key in the middle of a song.

Of particular interest are Ives' "shadow passages," usually short phrases played by a flute, oboe, or solo violin that clash with the rest of the orchestra. These "shadow passages" may reflect lone voices in the congregation that "sing their own way." One extended shadow passage occurs at the end of the first movement, played by a solo violin. Perhaps the most magical moment in the score is the ending, in which church bells sound off-stage in a distant key.

While Ives' contemporaries, in 1904, would have regarded many of the sounds as mistakes, but Ives asks us to take them as they are. For him, the sound of the untrained voices at the camp meeting possessed an authenticity and spiritual expression that could not be matched by more 'correct' music. Describing the singers at the camp meetings, Ives said, "Most of them knew the words and music (theirs) by heart and sang it that way. If they threw the poet or composer around a bit, so much the better for the poetry and the music. There was power and exaltation in these great conclaves of sound from humanity.

When Ives played through his symphony on the piano for friends and acquaintances, it met with universal incomprehension.

Misunderstood and an artist way ahead of his time, Symphony No. 3 would not be premiered until 1946 by Lou Harrison and the New York Little Symphony. It took the Great Depression, World War II and far more dissonant examples of modern music for the musical community to finally understand Ives' nostalgic vision, and the symphony was awarded the 1947 Pulitzer Prize for music.

Movement Structure

1. Old Folks Gatherin' (*Andante maestoso*): This movement portrays weary, folks; farmers, families, farm hands, and townsfolk arriving at camp afoot or by wagon. Untrained voices singing from their hearts, various hymns like Azmon ("O For a Thousand Tongues We Sing"), Erie ("What a Friend We Have in Jesus"), and Woodworth ("Just As I Am").

2. II. Children's Day (*Allegro*): An exuberant, playful, and fast-paced scherzo. We hear the pitter patter of little feet, running and skipping. There are bouncy fragments of simple tunes like "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood", "The Happy Land", and "Father I Stretch My Hands to Thee" tossed about back and forth like a ballgame. We hear games of hide-and-seek and chase that build to a tiring climax before winding down slower and slower, becoming drowsy, there is one last attempt to stay awake before drifting off to sleep.

3. III. Communion (*Largo*): The most contemplative and serene movement depicts the most

sacred and holy of rituals in the Christian Faith. Using developed fragments of "Just As I Am" in counterpoint as if several voices are singing it their own way. It bows it's head reverently at the end with the final phrase of "Just As I Am", hints of "Silent Night" fragments, and distant church bells.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Overture to Egmont



Beethoven was a passionate supporter of the ideals of the French Revolution and, quite possibly, the American Revolution as well. His music often reflects his deep belief in freedom, human dignity, and resistance to tyranny.

Egmont was originally a 1787 play by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. It tells the story of Count Egmont, a nobleman who defies a despotic ruler and stands against oppression. Egmont is eventually arrested, falsely accused of treason, and sentenced to death.

On the night before his execution, Egmont has a vision of a woman who represents freedom—often understood as an image of Lady Liberty. She tells him that although he will die, his death will inspire others to rise up against tyranny.

In his final speech, Egmont calls upon his fellow countrymen: "Friends, take heart. Behind are your parents, your wives, your children. Guard your sacred heritage and defend all you hold most dear. Fall gladly, as I do now!"

Egmont's death is therefore not presented as a defeat. His sacrifice becomes the catalyst for liberation. With his death, the people are inspired to rise, the bonds of tyranny are broken, and freedom triumphs.

Roster

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Sofiko Tchetchelashvili, Instructor
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Andrej Balaž, concertmaster*
Ana Katrina Garcia Borjas
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Leonardo Lagos
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Jose Mario Villeda
Chloe Hanchett
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Jose Ramon Morel Guerrero, principal
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Rafael Melgar

Keyboard
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Shengzhi Gao, principal *
Allison Currie Ahl *
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Jarrett Thomisee, principal
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Anibal Moises Aguilar Diaz, principal
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Fredy Hernandez, principal
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Jorge Bravo, principal
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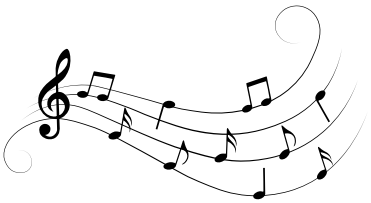
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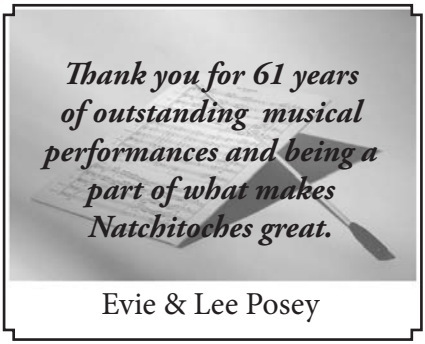
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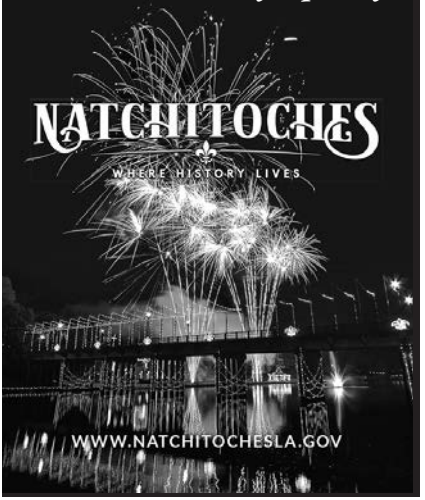
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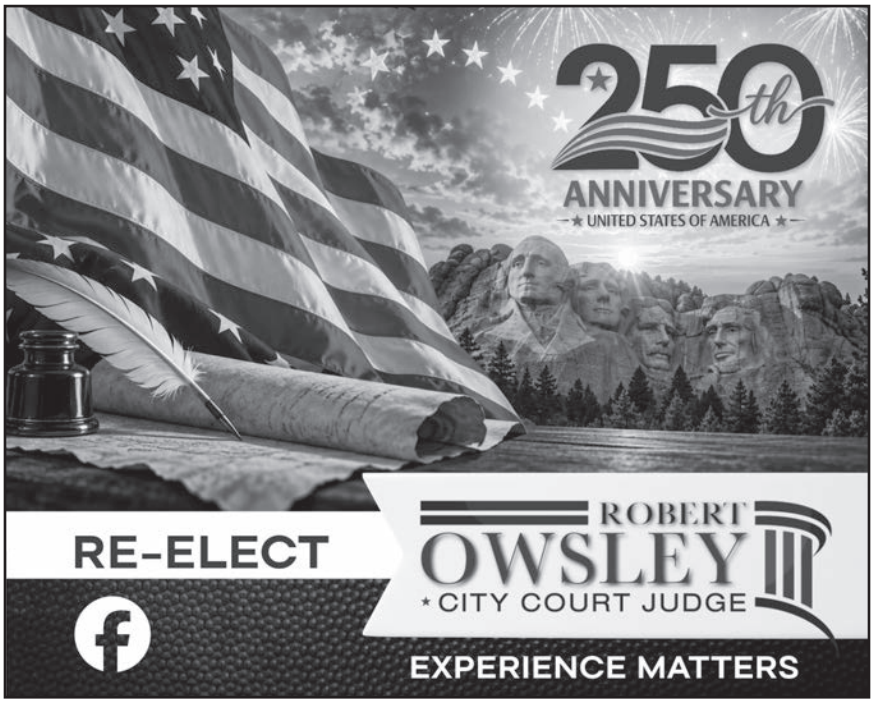
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Notes

The Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Society

What began 61 years ago has evolved into a strong organization providing scholarships for orchestral musicians attending Northwestern State University. In 1966 the symphony society was formed as a college/community collaboration to promote music and the arts in the Natchitoches community. It has grown from just a few scholarships in the early years to over 29 students receiving symphony society scholarships for the 2025-2026 school year.

Creation of the non-profit organization was led by NSU music instructor/conductor Dr. Joseph B. Carlucci, Martha Roberson and Jim Bob Key. Local attorney, Arthur C. Watson, drew up the articles of incorporation and bylaws for the 19 member Board of Directors. The first Board of Directors included President Martha Roberson, Vice President Jim Bob Key, Secretary Edwina Friedman, Treasurer Arthur Watson; also serving as board members were Margaret Adkins, Dr. Archie Breazeale Jr., Ruth Cunningham, Hertzog DeBlieux, Norman Fletcher, Senator Sylvan Friedman, Harold Kaffie, Ed Pierson, Virginia Pierson, Mayor W. Ray Scott, Dr. Paul Torgrimson, Dorothy Townsend, and, of course, Dr. Carlucci.

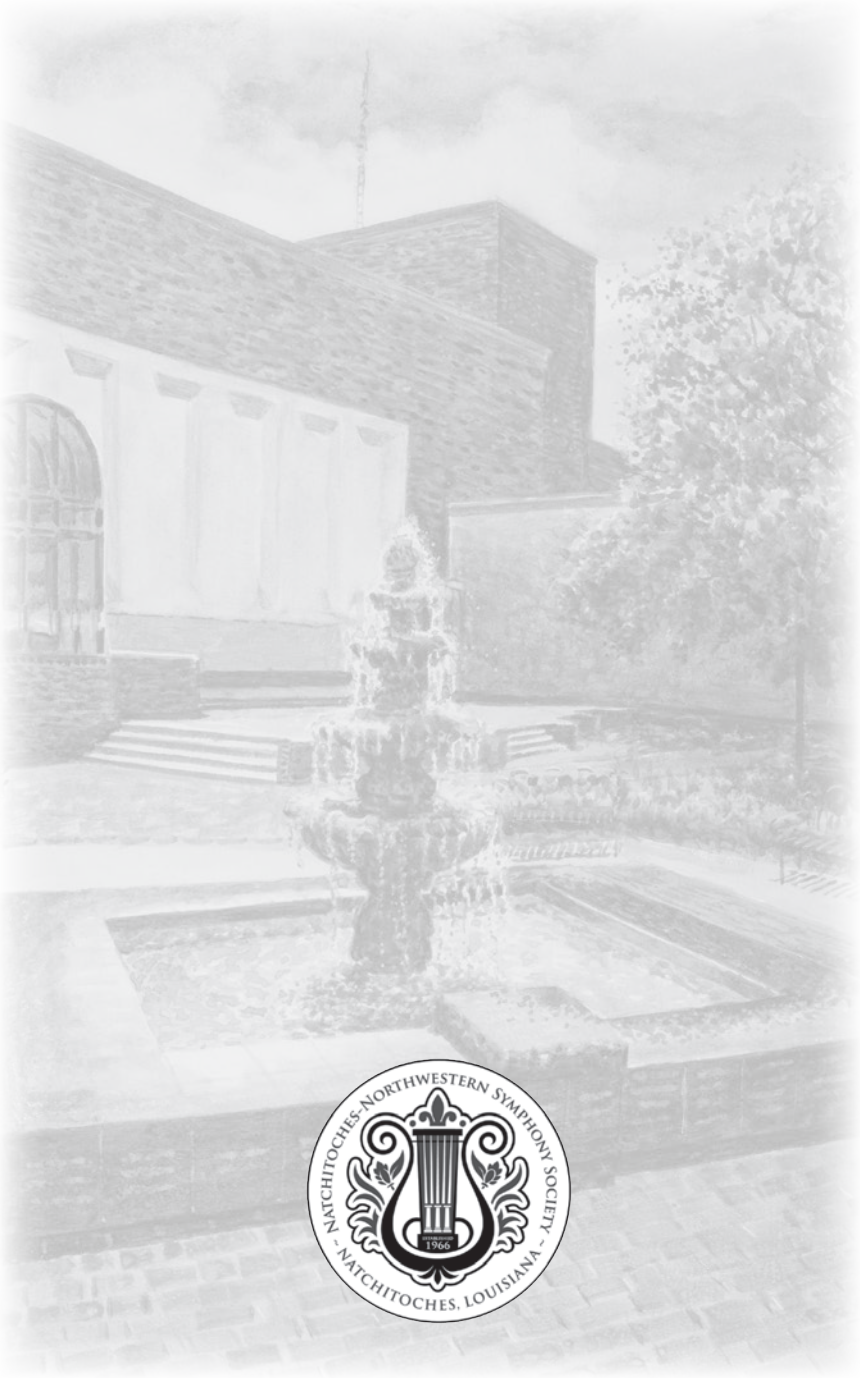
Early concerts were performed in A.A. Fredericks Auditorium with the orchestra composed of students, faculty members and professional musicians hired from other orchestras. There were fewer concerts with the first concert performed in December, a formal affair with a Symphony Ball afterward at the local country club (no longer in existence). Over the years the orchestra became all student musicians and the symphony society became focused on providing scholarships for these students. With the creation of Magale Recital Hall, concerts became more welcoming to all with less formal environment and better sound quality.

Today, after 23 years under the direction of Dr. Douglas Bakenhus, the NSU world-class orchestra performs five concerts throughout the year plus participating in the NSU School of Creative and Performing Arts Christmas Gala show. Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, written by attorney and board member Jeff Thomas, were adopted May 2, 2019. Amended in 2025, the Mission Statement's primary goal is "providing scholarships for orchestra musicians who attend Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana." The NNSS Board of Directors, 21 voting members, serve on a volunteer basis.

The orchestra is an amazing education and cultural asset to both the university and community. It is an essential recruiting tool for Dr. Bakenhus. Community support is vital to helping the symphony society continue to provide scholarships for these talented musicians. The Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Society is grateful and thanks you, the Friends of the Symphony, for your continued support.

Celebrating 61 Years of Music

NNSS History by Pat Thomas, Past President, with revisions 2026


NATCHITOCHES-NORTHWESTERN SYMPHONY SOCIETY
1966
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Northwestern State University is located in beautiful, historic Natchitoches, Louisiana, the oldest (1714) settlement in the Louisiana Purchase. Northwestern State was founded in 1884 as Louisiana Normal School for the education of teachers. In 1921 the school's name was changed to Louisiana State Normal College, then designated as Northwestern State College of Louisiana in 1944. Its current title, an indication of Northwestern State's diversity of programs and services, became official in 1970.

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