



CRANE

School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

**BRASS
SUMMIT**

SEP 25-27, 2026

PERFORMANCES
EXHIBITORS
PANELS
WORKSHOPS
MASTERCLASSES

CRANE
School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

 **Potsdam**
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

 **CPS** Community Performance Series

Exhibit Room Hours:

Saturday, September 26th – 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Sunday, September 27th – 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM



Food Services available:

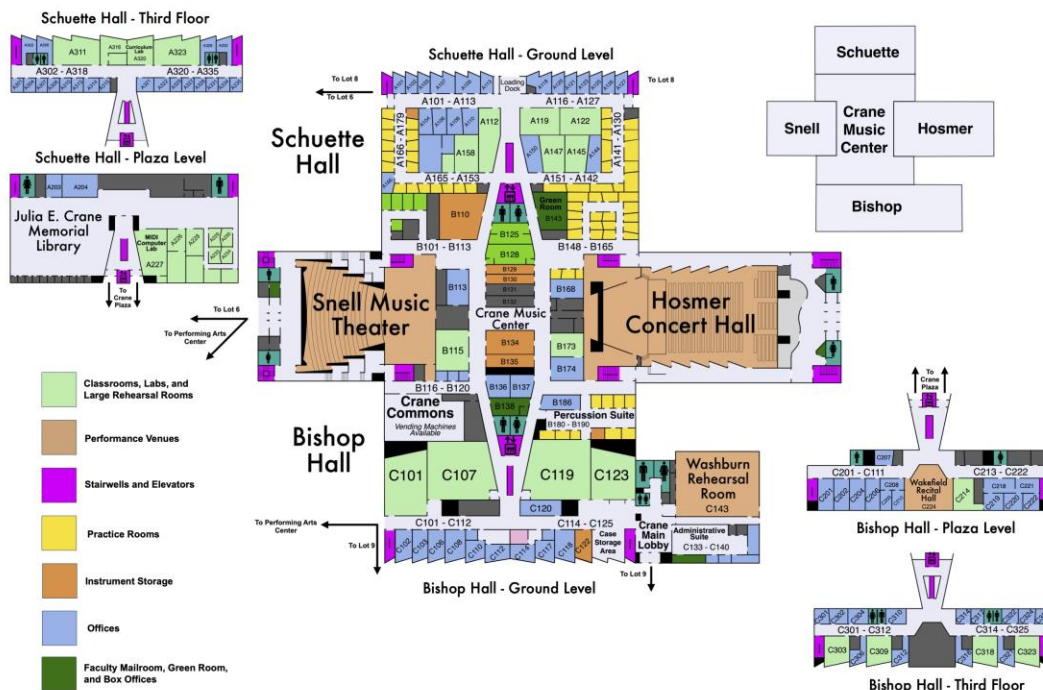
Performance Arts Center (PAC) Cafe

Saturday, September 26th – 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Sunday, September 27th – 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Crane Map:

THE CRANE SCHOOL OF MUSIC





FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25th

Time	Event	Location
7:30pm	Brass Summit Kickoff: Crane Wind Ensemble Concert <i>ft. the Potsdam Brass Quintet & Concerto Competition winner, Liam Yusko, tuba</i>	Hosmer Concert Hall



SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26th

Time	Event	Location
8am	PAC Cafe Open	PAC Cafe
8:30am	Exhibits Open	Washburn (C143)
9am	Warmup classes with Crane Faculty	Trumpet: Joy (C119) Horn: C123 Trombone: Horner (C107) Tuba/Euph: Wustman (C101)
10am	Seraph Brass Masterclasses	Trumpet: Joy (C119) Horn: C123 Trombone: Horner (C107) Tuba/Euph: Wustman (C101)
11am	Seraph Brass Q&A	Wakefield Recital Hall
12pm	Lunch & Listen ft. Crane Brass Ensemble	PAC Cafe
1pm	Crane Alumni Recital	Snell Theater
1pm	PAC Cafe closed	PAC Cafe
2pm	Open coaching session with Seraph Brass & Frackenpohl Honors Brass Quintet	Snell Theater
3pm	Visit Exhibits	Washburn (C143)
4pm	Exhibits Closed	Washburn (C143)
4pm	Making an Entrance: Tilda's Tips for Taking the Stage	Wakefield Recital Hall
7:30pm	Feature Recital: Seraph Brass	Snell Theater
9:30pm	Post-Concert Reception	Snell Lobby



SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27th

Time	Event	Location
8am	PAC Cafe open	PAC Cafe
8:30am	Exhibits open	Washburn (C143)
9am	Beyond Valve Oil: Practical Maintenance Every Brass Player Should Know	Instrument Repair Lab (B173)
9am	Crane Faculty & Alumni Masterclasses	Trumpet: Joy (C119) Horn: C123 Trombone: Horner (C107) Tuba/Euph: Wustman (C101)
10am	Brass Ensemble reading session	Joy (C119)
11am	Alumni Panel Discussion: Life After Crane hosted by Dean Andrew Mast	Snell Theater
12pm	Lunch	PAC Cafe
1pm	Exhibits & PAC Cafe close	Washburn (C143) PAC Cafe
1pm	Potsdam Brass Quintet & Friends Mixed Chamber Recital	Snell Theater
2pm	Post-Concert Reception	Snell Lobby

CRANE

School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

Evening Concert Series

2026 – 2027 Season

Helen M. Hosmer Concert Hall

Friday, September 25th at 7:30 p.m.

The Crane Wind Ensemble

Brian K. Doyle, conductor

Liam Yusko, tuba

Potsdam Brass Quintet

Fanfare pour précéder **La Peri** (1927)

Paul Dukas
(1865-1935)

With the Potsdam Brass Quintet
Luke Spence, Christopher Keach, Lauren Becker,
Christopher Hernacki, Charles Guy

En Mi, Familia (2020)

Ivette Herryman Rodriguez
(b. 1982)

Miniature Set for Band (1957/1964)

Donald White
(1921-2016)

Prelude

Monologue

Interlude

Dialogue

Postlude

Intermission

Shenandoah (2019)

Omar Thomas
(b. 1984)

Concerto for Tuba (1992)
III. Allegro ma non troppo

Alexander Arutiunian
(1920-2012)
Arrangement Johan de Meij

Liam Yusko, tuba
Crane Concerto Competition Winner

Passacaglia, Homage on B-A-C-H (1992)

Ron Nelson
(1929-2023)

Mango Street Mayhem (2026)

Ryan Godfrey
(b. 2005)

World Premiere

Crane Wind Ensemble Personnel

Piccolo

Sol Perez
Zoey Steele

Flute

Maxwell Todack *
Sol Perez *
Aster Jacobsen
Alessandra Macchia-Barba
Christopher Pineda
Zoey Steele

Oboe

Markella Gross
Lucy Attebury

English Horn

Molly Murphy

Bassoon

Maddie Garcia *
Jorge Sisalima *

Contrabassoon

Logan Hazletine

E-flat Clarinet

Jacob White

B-flat Clarinet

Michael Ducorsky *
Lawrence Fiume
Jacob White
Joshua Burrell
Tommy Rock
Emma Marsillo
Hayley Colon
Liliana Rybak
Grace Rabin

Bass Clarinets

Brian Hershberger
Jessica Puleo
Gabi Salcedo

Soprano Saxophone

Chris McCusker

Alto Saxophone

Alex Brown *
Chris McCusker
Ryan Panzarino

Tenor Saxophone

Dylan Sovie

Baritone Saxophone

Gioaco Imburgia

Trumpet

Jonathan Kang *
Edward Karron *
Josh Buessem
Devin Robinson
Alena Wratten
Maddie Piscioti

Horn

Will Hallenbeck
Sam Hart
Will Kirk
Jo Velez

Trombone

Ethan Keesler *
Clara Hazen
Jose Canas Garcia

Bass Trombone

Bergren Aunkst

Euphonium

Andrew Dahlstrom *
Brandon Rivas

Tuba

Liam Yusko *
Thomas Kerrigan
Matt Smith

Percussion

Peter Smith *
Wyatt Calcote
Jack Carola
Jesse Roth
Noah Davis
John McGrath
Angel Ren

Harp

Harper Foley

Piano

Ryan Godfrey

Librarians

Tal Millas
Victoria Arm

* Principal

PROGRAM NOTES

Fanfare pour précéder LA PERI

Paul Dukas

In 1911, Dukas received a commission from the Ballets Russes for a *Poème dansé en un Tableau* ("dance poem in one scene"). Unfortunately, the Ballets Russes never premiered what was to be Dukas' last work: *La Péri*. It did receive a later premiere on 22 April 1912, as the original *prima ballerina* commissioned Ivan Clustine to choreograph the work.

While less known than his symphonic poem *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *La Péri* displays all the compositional skill of a master at the height of his powers. A brief synopsis of the plot follows:

Longing to rekindle his departed youth, Magi **Iskender** (a Persian mystic) travels throughout Iran in search of the Flower of Immortality. After three years of wandering, he finds a temple to Ormuzd (the Zoroastrian deity symbolizing good), and on its steps is a **Péri** (in Persian mythology, relatives of fallen Angels who must live between heaven and hell and do penance before being granted paradise). The Péri carries the Flower of Immortality – a lotus decorated with emeralds.

While the Péri sleeps, Iskender steals the Flower. When the Peri wakes up, she strikes her hands against each other and lets out a great cry, as the Flower is her key to entering into the presence of the light of Ormuzd.

While in his hand, however, the Flower is transformed by Ormuzd to Iskender's earthly and material desires. The Péri performs a dance, gradually coming closer and closer until she is able wrest the Flower from him. As the Péri slowly disappears in the light and returns to Paradise, Iskender realizes with calmness that he has been stranded and left to die.

En Mi, Familia

Ivette Herryman Rodriguez

A native from Cuba, Ivette Herryman Rodríguez holds a B.M in Music Composition from the Instituto Superior de Artes (Higher Institute of Arts), in Havana, a M.M in Music Composition from Baylor University, and a M.M in Music Theory and D.M.A in Music Composition from Michigan State University. She studied composition with Juan Piñera, Scott McAllister, Ricardo Lorenz, and Zhou Tian.

Currently an Assistant Professor of Theory and Composition at the Crane School of Music, previous positions include the Instituto Superior de Artes, the Opera of El Salvador (OPES), the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Western Illinois University.

The composer writes about her work, *En mi, familia*:

I dedicate this piece to my immediate family: my parents, my brother, my nephews, and my little niece.

In the piece, I include ideas such as my brother's life search, which sometimes hits dead ends, but remains relentless after all; my dad's sensitivity and although subtly, his love

for dancing; and my own version of a melody of a song my mom used to sing every Sunday while doing laundry.

The title of the piece expresses that I believe, although I have become my own person, I am still very much connected to my family. Lots of my past memories and my present are filled with my family. This piece is a loving homage to them.

En mi, familia was commissioned by the Michigan State University Symphony Band and David Thornton, Associate Director of Bands.

Program Note by Ivette Herryman Rodriguez

Miniature Set for Band

Donald White

Donald White studied music education at Temple University in Philadelphia and composition with Vincent Persichetti at the Philadelphia Conservatory of Music (1946) and with Bernard Rogers and Howard Hanson at the Eastman School of Music (1952). In 1947, he joined the faculty of DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, where he was chairman of composition and theory studies (1948–81). He was the director of the school of music at DePauw from 1974 to 1978. He became the chairman of the music department at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington, in 1980.

White composed *Miniature Set for Band* late in 1957 and it received its premiere by the DePaul University concert band in March 1958. During the 10th annual CBDNA (College Band Directors National Association) conference in December of that year, it was voted the most outstanding contribution to band literature in 1958. This work ended up being the first in a series of 14 miniature sets composed by White over the next 20 years.

Miniature Set for Band, eventually published in 1964, consists of five brief movements, each exploring a singular short musical idea. Two slow movements, which include contemplative passages for solo flute and dialogue for solo horn and cornet, are enclosed by miniatures which feature rhythmic movement, exchange of sonorities among different sections, and occasional bi-chordal harmonies. Interestingly enough, the composer utilizes the full band sound for only a total of 16 measures.

Shenandoah

Omar Thomas

Shenandoah is one of the most well-known and beloved Americana folk songs. Originally a river song detailing the lives and journeys of fur traders canoeing down the Missouri River, the symbolism of this culturally-significant melody has been expanded to include its geographic namesake – an area of the eastern United States that encompasses West Virginia and a good portion of the western part of Virginia – and various parks, rivers, counties, and academic institutions found within.

Back in May of 2018, after hearing a really lovely duo arrangement of *Shenandoah* while adjudicating a music competition in Minneapolis, I asked myself, after hearing so many versions of this iconic and historic song, how would I set it differently? I thought about it and thought about it and thought about it, and before I realized it, I had composed and assembled just about all of this arrangement in my head by assigning bass notes to the melody and filling

in the harmony in my head afterwards. I would intermittently check myself on the piano to make sure what I was imagining worked, and ended up changing almost nothing at all from what I'd heard in my mind's ear.

This arrangement recalls the beauty of Shenandoah Valley, not bathed in golden sunlight, but blanketed by low-hanging clouds and experiencing intermittent periods of heavy rainfall (created with a combination of percussion textures, generated both on instruments and from the body). There are a few musical moments where the sun attempts to pierce through the clouds, but ultimately the rains win out. This arrangement of *Shenandoah* is at times mysterious, somewhat ominous, constantly introspective, and deeply soulful.

Program Note by Omar Thomas

Concerto for Tuba

Alexander Arutiunian

Armenian composer Alexander Arutiunian is best known for his celebrated and oft-performed *Trumpet Concerto* of 1950. Originally scored for trumpet and orchestra, Guy M. Duker reorchestrated the accompaniment for wind band in 1990. Two years later, Arutiunian dedicated another brass concerto – for tuba this time – to American tuba virtuoso Roger Bobo. That work was premiered by Finnish tuba soloist Harri Lidsle and the Lahti Symphony Orchestra. In 2000, composer Johan De Meij reorchestrated Arutiunian's accompaniment for winds.

Movement three of the concerto commences with a high-spirited interplay that serves to set up the soloist's theme in a rondo of sorts. The playful character of statement-and-response is a key element of this movement. Even as the tuba plays a contrasting, lyric tune broken up with large leaps up and down, the woodwinds undulate in response. In the dreamy, yet virtuosic cazenda, the tuba takes a moment of musica reflection to ponder its themes before the bubbling rondo music returns to finish out the movement.

Liam Yusko, tuba

Crane Concerto Competition Winner



Liam Yusko is a tubist from Fairport, New York, and is currently pursuing a degree in music education and tuba performance from the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, where he studies with Dr. Charles Guy. Liam graduated from Fairport High School, where his early music training laid a foundation for his continued development as a student and performer. He was a member of the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and studied with Matt Sherrill ('87), Patty Welch, and Craig Sutherland. He has played with Northern Symphonic Winds and will be playing with the Orchestra of Northern New York for their upcoming series. Liam is heavily involved at Crane and has participated in ensembles such as the Crane Wind Ensemble, the Crane Symphony Orchestra, and the Frackenhohl Honors Brass Quintet. Additionally, he has played piano in the Crane Jazz Ensemble and the Giroux Honors Jazz Combo. Liam is also the President of the Crane Student Association. At Crane, Liam has deeply benefitted from the school's rich tradition of brass pedagogy and performance, working closely with Dr. Guy to refine his sound, musicianship, and interpretive approach.

Passacaglia, Homage on B-A-C-H

Ron Nelson

Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H) is a set of continuous variations in modestly slow triple meter built upon an eight-measure melody (basso ostinato) stated in various registers a total of twenty-five times. It is a seamless series of tableaux that move from dark to light. Written in homage of J.S. Bach, it utilizes a counterpoint throughout: the melodic motive represented by his name in German nomenclature – B-flat, A, C and B-natural. Bach introduced this motive in his unfinished *Art of Fugue*, the textures of which are paraphrased (but using the octatonic scale) in the fourth and fifth variations. The seventh variation incorporates Gustave Nottebohm's resolution (altered) of the final fugue in *Art of Fugue*. The famous melody from Bach's *Passacaglia in C Minor* appears once (also altered) in variation nineteen.

This work is the result of a consortium commission by the Eta-Omicron Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, The United States Air Force Band, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in celebration of the 125th Anniversary of CCM's founding.

Program Note by Ron Nelson

Mango Street Mayhem

Ryan Godfrey

Ryan Godfrey is from Washingtonville, NY. He began playing piano at 7 years old and playing trumpet in band programs all throughout high school. He enjoys composing music for soloists and chamber groups but composes primarily for wind ensemble. His works have been commissioned and performed by middle and high school groups throughout New York,

Connecticut, and Massachusetts. He now attends the Crane School of Music, where he has studied music education with a concentration in trumpet, working with Dr. Christopher Keach for two years. When he is not playing or composing music, Ryan enjoys swimming, reading, and spending time with friends.

The composer writes the following about *Mango Street Mayhem*:

Growing up, I found myself often inspired by video games and their accompanying soundtracks. I committed a lot of hours in my youth to fully experiencing these games, as well as sharing them with my siblings and with my friends. As such, revisiting these soundtracks from my younger days fills me with a sense of nostalgia.

This piece, *Mango Street Mayhem*, celebrates such video game soundtracks through rhythmic groove, catchy melodies, and colorful instrumentation. It even features a “vamp” section that gives the performers a chance to make this section their own through the building layers.

It is my hope that this piece brings a sense of joy and nostalgia to performers and listeners alike.

Program Note by Ryan Godfrey

CRANE

School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

Evening Concert Series

2026 – 2027 Season

Saturday, September 26th at 1:00 PM

Crane Alumni Brass Recital

CYPHER (2021)

Kevin Day
(b. 1996)

Samson Flancbaum, Euphonium

Romance

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786 – 1826)

James Dissinger, Trombone
Ling Lo, Piano

Song for a Friend (2014)

Kevin McKee
(b. 1980)

In memory of Julie Miller
Julia Stowell, Trumpet

Euphonium Concerto
II. Quasi Nocturne

Jukka Linkola
(b. 1955)

Will Sutton, Euphonium
Ling Lo, Piano

Variationen, Op. 59/3 (1986)

Jan Koetsier
(1911 – 2006)

Joseph Johnson, Horn

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10th Cania Family Visiting Artist

SERAPH BRASS

September 26, 2026 | 7:30 pm
Snell Music Theater, SUNY Potsdam



 **CPS** Community Performance Series

10th Cania Family Visting Artist
SERAPH BRASS

Raquel Samayoa
Morgen Low
Layan Atieh
Lauren Casey-Clyde
Meredith Fuller

Trumpet
Trumpet
Horn
Trombone
Tuba

PROGRAM

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Holberg Suite, op. 40

I. Prelude
arr. Jeff Luke

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Prelude from Suite Bergamasque
arr. Egil Smedvig

Grigoras Dinicu (1889–1949)

Hora Staccato
arr. Tim Olt

Jeff Scott (b. 1967)

Showcase

Bernice Petkere (1901–2000)

Lullaby of the Leaves
arr. Robyn Black

Franz Liszt (1811–1886)

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2
arr. Jeff Luke

- INTERMISSION -

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Rhapsody in Blue
arr. Joseph Foley

Kevin McKee (b. 1980)

Vuelta Del Fuego

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Selections from West Side Story
arr. Jack Gale

Catherine McMichael (b. 1954)

Asteria
II. Virgo

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Khirkhyaan (Windows): Three
Transformations for Brass Quintet
III. Tuttarana

Seraph Brass: www.seraphbrass.com

Seraph Brass is managed by Reggie Bahl at Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York.
To learn more, please visit www.lyricny.org or call 212.496.9927

View the full program

Scan the QR code to the right or visit:
<https://cpspotdam.org/seraph-brass>



Season Underwriters

CRANE
School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

Community Performance Series

37TH SEASON - FALL 2026

Community Performance Series is a not-for-profit college-community bridge, presenting distinctive and renowned public and school-based performances across a range of genres to the Northern New York region at SUNY Potsdam since 1989.

Vanessa Vaverchak M '27

Director, Arts & Community Performance Series

Meghan Stever

Assistant Director, Arts & Community Performance Series

Student Intern Team

Mallory Allen '27

Communications Associate

Julia Ellison '28

Youth Programs Coordinator/Box Office Lead

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House Manager

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Box Office Associate

Alivia Jackson '27

Hospitality & Youth Programs Associate

Christian Sanchez '29

Box Office Associate

Amanda Sawatis '30

Hospitality Associate

Mia Twyman '28

Communications Associate

Special thanks to:

Generous donors whose gifts make incredible performances like these possible.

The following people whose special efforts supported this event:

Dr. Andrew Mast, Dean, Crane School of Music

Dr. David Heuser, Associate Dean, Crane School of Music

Dr. Matthew Gatti '10, Director of Operations, Crane School of Music & Performing Arts Center

Joshua Barkley '21, Director of Production, Crane School of Music & Performing Arts Center

Crane School of Music Brass Studio, especially Dr. Luke Spence, Assistant Professor of Trumpet

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CRANE

School of Music at SUNY Potsdam

Crane Brass Summit

2026 – 2027 Season

Snell Theater

Sunday, September 27th at 1:00 PM

Potsdam Brass Quintet and Friends

Gravity (2020)

Anthony Barfield
(b. 1983)

Potsdam Brass Quintet

Christopher Keach & Luke Spence, *trumpet*

Lauren Becker, *horn*

Christopher Hernacki, *trombone*

Charles Guy, *tuba*

Vocalise (1995)

Andre Previn
(1929 – 2019)

Luke Spence, *flugelhorn*

Charles Guy, *tuba*

Risa Okina, *piano*

The Last Song (2010)

Clarice Assad
(b. 1978)

Luke Spence, *flugelhorn*

Risa Okina, *piano*

Rise, Resurge, and Rest (2024)

Sofia Galadriel Coyle
(b. 1997)

Christopher Keach, *flugelhorn*

Emma Gierszal, *marimba*

Odyssey for Two Horns and Fixed Media (2022)

James Naigus
(b. 1987)

Lauren Becker & Joseph Johnson, *horn*

Pastorale (1993)

Eric Ewazen
(b. 1954)

Christopher Keach, *trumpet*
Christopher Hernacki, *trombone*
Kathryn Sherman, *piano*

Fire Dance (2004)

Anothny DiLorenzo
(b. 1967)

Potsdam Brass Quintet
Christopher Keach & Luke Spence, *trumpet*
Lauren Becker, *horn*
Christopher Hernacki, *trombone*
Charles Guy, *tuba*

Harlem

By Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Seraph Brass Members:



Morgen Low is a freelance trumpet performer and teacher based in south Florida. Just prior to joining Seraph Brass, she held an appointment as acting Co-Principal Trumpet of the Sarasota orchestra during the 2024-2025 season.

Outside of the touring season, Morgen has spent summers performing as Co-Principal Trumpet of the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, acting Principal Trumpet of the Britt Festival Orchestra, and as a fellow of the Tanglewood Music Center. She has made guest appearances with the Indianapolis Symphony, Naples Philharmonic, Charleston Symphony, and the Louisville Orchestra among others. In 2022 she competed in and was named the first prize winner of the Next Generation Trumpet Competition.

Morgen holds a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory. Her primary professors during these studies were Roy Poper, Robert Sullivan, Channing Philbrick, David Bilger, Thomas Rolfs, and Michael Sachs. She is also an alumna of the New World Symphony orchestral fellowship program where she performed under the batons of artistic directors Michael Tilson Thomas and Stéphane Denève.

Raquel Samayoa is an accomplished trumpet soloist, chamber musician, orchestral performer, and educator with a diverse and dynamic career. She is currently Associate Professor of Trumpet and co-director of the UNT Brass Band at the University of North Texas College of Music. Dr. Samayoa was previously on faculty at Tennessee Tech University and Northern Kentucky University.

Raquel is principal trumpet with the Richardson Symphony Orchestra (TX) and a Yamaha Performing Artist and a Denis Wick Artist and Clinician. Passionate about chamber music, Raquel is a member of the award-winning Seraph Brass and Lantana Trio, with whom she frequently tours both domestically and internationally. Notably, as a member of Lantana Trio, she performed at the inaugural Festival Internacional de Mujeres Instrumentistas de Metal (FIMIM) in Mexico in 2023, celebrating women in brass.



An advocate for diversity in the arts, Dr. Samayoa is a sought-after clinician, giving masterclasses, recitals, and presentations at leading universities and professional conferences. Her recent engagements include the College Music Society Southern Conference, the Midwest

Clinic, the Historic Brass Society Symposium, the International Women's Brass Conference (IWBC), and the International Trumpet Guild (ITG) Conference. She has also been a guest artist at the Prairie Music Residency (Canada), the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute at Quartz Mountain, the Interlochen Trumpet Intensive, and events at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (Australia) and Moscow Conservatory (Russia). Dr. Samayoa serves on the ITG Board of Directors and has co-hosted the IWBC in 2014 and 2022.

Dr. Samayoa has contributed scholarly articles to *The Instrumentalist*, *Brass Band World*, *The Brass Herald*, and the *ITG Journal*. In January 2020, she published *Dueling Fundamentals for Two Trumpets* with Mountain Peak Music. In 2021, she released her second solo album, *Trumpet Songs*, with Summit Records. As a member of Lantana Trio, Raquel released *Crossing Barriers in the Fall* of 2022 through MSR Classics. This album, featuring works by women and BIPOC composers, includes five new commissions. Dr. Samayoa also contributed to an upcoming album of new compositions for brass quintet with Seraph Brass, set to be released in 2025 by Tower Grove Records.

Dr. Samayoa earned her Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in Trumpet Performance from the University of North Texas, where she studied with the esteemed Keith Johnson. She holds a Master of Arts and Bachelor's degree in Music Education from West Texas A&M University, where she studied trumpet with David Ritter and wind conducting with Gary Garner. For more info: <https://solotromba.com/>



Layan Atieh is a Palestinian-Jordanian-American horn player currently residing in Chicago, Illinois. Layan is a member of Seraph Brass, a world renowned all-women brass quintet, as well as the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. As an active freelancer, Layan has performed with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She is passionate about chamber music and has performed at festivals around the world, including the Hidden Valley Festival of Winds, Domaine Forget, and the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival, as well as orchestra festivals such as the Music Academy of the West. In 2022, Layan completed her undergraduate studies at the Peabody Institute under the tutelage of Robert Rearden, as well as a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Johns Hopkins University. She earned her Master's degree in 2024 at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with Richard King and Nathaniel Silberschlag.

Layan is passionate about community engagement and the intersection of politics and music, and is always finding ways to use music as a vehicle for connection across differences. Her work in Seraph Brass allows her to promote and highlight the artistry of marginalized identities, to bring performances and music education to underserved communities around the United States and across the world, and to open dialogue about the role of artists in society. In 2025, Layan served as the inaugural Arts Administration Fellow at the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, allowing her to

connect with the Chicago community on and off the stage. During her fellowship, she helped organize and perform in youth and educational concerts, as well as collaborative concerts with community partners, such as the Chicago Refugee Coalition. She also conceptualized and produced her own program, titled ‘Thread and Chord: A Dialogue Between Fashion and Music’ - an interdisciplinary performance exploring the relationship between artistic expression and cultural identity. Layan is passionate about music education, and serves on faculty at the Brass Institutes of America, as well as a Teaching Artist at the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra (COYO). In both Cleveland and Chicago, Layan has taught in public schools, deepening her commitment to music education and outreach, and regularly teaches while on tour with Seraph Brass. In 2025, she was honored as a Guest Artist at the International Women’s Brass Conference, furthering her advocacy for representation and innovation in brass performance. Outside of music, Layan enjoys a variety of sports, including martial arts, rock climbing, and, most recently, pickleball.

Lauren Casey-Clyde is an active freelancer, educator, chamber musician and soloist residing in Austin, TX. She has performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Austin Symphony Orchestra, Austin Opera, Temple Symphony Orchestra, Central Texas Philharmonic, Waco Symphony Orchestra, Cambrian Symphony Orchestra and Round Top Festival Orchestra. She recently made her debut performance at SXSW performing with Density 512 as part of the Graham Reynolds Showcase, and has recorded and performed with New-Orleans style Boss Street Brass Band. She will make her Carnegie Hall debut in June of 2024, performing under the baton of Jerry Junkin with the University of Texas Wind Ensemble. Internationally, Lauren was named a finalist for the 2023 International Trombone Association Quartet Competition and the winner of the Emory Remington Trombone Choir Competition. She has performed under many esteemed conductors such as Andris Nelsons, Bernard Haitink, Robert Spano and JoAnn Falletta.



As a soloist, Lauren was selected as an artist to perform at the 2024 International Women's Brass Conference in Japan and was invited as a special guest to perform at the Texas State Capitol for the 2022 International Peace Concert. She was a finalist at the 2023 Big 12 Tenor Trombone Solo Competition, a finalist in the 2022 University of Texas Concerto Competition, and a prize winner in the Susan Slaughter Solo Competition at the 2019 International Women’s Brass Conference. In 2016, she was named the winner of the Northeast Tuba and Euphonium Conference Young Artist Solo, and has since made solo appearances around the country with the University of Texas Concert Band, New England Brass Band, Saratoga High School Wind Ensemble, and Boston University Wind Ensemble.

Lauren serves as the Assistant Professor of Trombone & Euphonium at Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, TX. She also serves as a private teacher in the Austin area to 6-12th grade

students and regularly gives clinics and masterclasses around the area. Her students have consistently won positions at prestigious universities, region bands, all-state ensembles, honor bands, and summer festivals.

Lauren received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Texas at Austin in 2024, where she served as the trombone studio teaching assistant. She also holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin, a Bachelor of Music degree from Boston University, where she received the prestigious Brass Department Award, and studied abroad at the Royal College of Music in London for a semester. Her primary instrument was euphonium until graduate school, and she has a distinct passion for playing bass trumpet and sackbut as well. Lauren's principal teachers include Dr. Nathaniel Brickens and Boston Symphony tubist Mike Roylance. Lauren has been published in the International Tuba Euphonium Association Journal and can be heard on the BBC Symphony Orchestra CD Vaughan Williams: A London Symphony, performing with the Royal College of Music Brass Band.

Meredith Fuller is a tubist and low brass educator based in the Baltimore area. She received her bachelors of music education and masters in tuba performance from Penn State University and is currently finishing her D.M.A. at the Peabody Institute.



Fuller began playing the tuba in fourth grade when she volunteered to make a sound on the instrument at a Music In Our Schools Month demonstration. Her elementary band teacher picked her because she was a girl and she was small. The rest is history. She realizes that not every young student has as much support and opportunities as she did in public school and beyond. While pursuing a high level of performance, she also values educational outreach and advocacy for marginalized groups in the brass and tuba community.

Meredith served as the adjunct tuba and euphonium professor at Penn State University from 2022-2024 and teaches in Baltimore County Public Schools with the OrchKids program. She is an inaugural member of the Chrysalis Orchestra and has performed at the International Women's Brass Conference (IWBC) in Denton, TX. She travels internationally with her quintet, Looking Glass Brass, and performs and teaches with her tuba-euphonium duo, 5'Two.

Potsdam Brass Quintet Members:



Dr. Luke Spence (*he/they*) leads a dynamic career as a performer, recording artist, educator, and arts advocate. He is the Assistant Professor of Trumpet at The Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, where he is also director of the Crane Brass Ensemble, member of the Potsdam Brass Quintet, and co-principal trumpet of the Orchestra of Northern New York. Additionally, he performs with the innovative ensemble Anima Brass and is a sponsored artist for S.E. Shires Co. and Denis Wick Products. Recognized for his expressive playing, Spence has been hailed by *Fanfare Magazine* for his “great artistry,” described as “exquisite” by the

International Trumpet Guild (ITG) Journal, and called “a true expert in phrasing” by the *NACWPI Journal*. His debut solo album *20th Century Art Songs* was named a silver medalist for the 2025 Global Music Awards and a finalist for the 2023 American Prize. His second solo album, *A New Voice*, was awarded the first ever ITG Recording Grant and is slated to be released in January 2027. With Anima Brass, Spence can be heard on *All Life Long*, an album featuring the music of acclaimed post-minimalist composer Kali Malone. Upon its release, *All Life Long* was named *Pitchfork's* "Best New Album," *The Guardian's* "Album of the Week," rose to the #4 spot on *Billboard's* Classical Crossover chart, and received a Swedish Grammy nomination for Classical Album of the Year. In recent years, Spence has performed for sold-out crowds at Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center, toured throughout the U.S., Europe, and China, and performed with groups including the National Philharmonic and South Florida Symphony Orchestra.

A firm believer in music's power to inspire social change, Spence serves as General Manager and founding board member for the International Pride Orchestra (IPO), a nonprofit organization that unites LGBTQIA+ musicians from around the world to present concerts, celebrate community, and raise funds for LGBTQIA+ causes. During WorldPride 2025, IPO presented a landmark concert at Strathmore Concert Hall after being disinvited from the Kennedy Center. Spence also serves as a mentor for the International Women's Brass Conference Mentorship Program. From 2023-2025, Spence served as Co-Chair of the International Trumpet Guild's Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, where he helped establish the Langston J. Fitzgerald III Legacy Scholarship and worked to increase visibility for underrepresented groups at ITG's annual conferences. Dr. Spence holds degrees from the University of Maryland and Oberlin Conservatory.

Dr. Christopher Keach (he/him), a New York-based professional musician, educator, and researcher, is the Lecturer of Trumpet at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. He is a multi-talented performer with experience in classical, jazz, and Afro-Cuban music. Keach has performed with the Syracuse Orchestra, Segal Centre Theatre organization, the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra, the Orchestra of Northern New York, the Northern Symphonic Winds, and in the New Works Recital at the 2023 International Trumpet Guild (ITG) Conference. As a soloist, Keach had the honor to open for the Nakariakov-Kashimoto-Meerovich trio and perform with the McGill Wind Orchestra, Crane Symphonic Band, and Crane Latin Ensemble. He has worked with artists such as Ashley Hall-Tighe, Tony Glausi, Ed Carroll, Sergei Nakariakov, James Thompson, Septura Brass Septet, Fabio Brum, Caleb Hudson, Jim Wilt, Nikki LaBonte, and Anthony Plog. He currently performs as the Co-Principal of the Orchestra of Northern New York, section leader of the Northern Symphonic Winds, and as a member of the Potsdam Brass Quintet.



Along with his teaching and performance experience, Keach has a great interest in research, specifically in the fields of performance science and electronic music. He worked as the research assistant for McGill's Applied Performance Sciences Hub where he explored healthy learning and stress management techniques for musicians. Additionally, his doctoral research focused on the realm of performance science, where he researched different practice techniques and their effect on long-term memory and retention. Keach received the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology (CIRMMT) Student Award to pursue research in electronically augmented trumpet performance.

Keach has received world-renowned recognition for his performances and research. He was awarded second place in the 2022 ITG Wind Band Excerpt Competition and was selected as a finalist for the 2024 McGill Concerto Competition and performed the Pakhmutova Trumpet Concerto with the McGill Wind Orchestra. Additionally, Keach was a finalist in the first Trumpeter's Multi-Track Competition (TMTC) and competed at the 2022/23 National Trumpet Competition Small Ensemble Division with McGill University's trumpet ensemble. Keach was also the recipient of the 2024-2025 Dean's Essay Prize and 2020-2021 International Grant Writing Competition for Music Performance at McGill University.

He completed his DMus and MMus degrees in trumpet performance at McGill University, Schulich School of Music, in the studio of Professor Richard Stoelzel. Keach also holds his B.M. in Trumpet Performance and B.M.E. from The Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, where he studied with Dr. John R. Ellis. Keach is a performance artist for Bob Reeves Brass Mouthpieces and Van Laar Trumpets.



Dr. Lauren Becker is Professor of Horn at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. Active as a freelance musician, she has performed with ensembles throughout the United States and beyond, including the Syracuse Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Albany Symphony Orchestra, Kuala Lumpur International Festival Orchestra, and North Country Chamber Players.

As a member of the American Wild Ensemble, Dr. Becker performed world premieres of newly commissioned works in concert halls, fields, mountain tops, and caves across the United States. The ensemble toured extensively, performing at schools and universities, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, George Eastman Museum, Avaloch Farm Music Institute, and indoors and outdoors at San Juan Island and Saint-Gaudens National Historical Parks and Olympic, Mount Rainier, North Cascades, Shenandoah, Great Smoky Mountains, Mammoth Cave, and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Parks. The American Wild Ensemble's album, *Music in the American Wild*, was released in 2018 and can be found online at Bandcamp. She has appeared on many other recordings, including the Eastman Wind Ensemble's collaboration with the Canadian Brass entitled *Manhattan Music* (Opening Day Entertainment Group) and the Buffalo Philharmonic's recording of selected works of Bartók (Naxos Records).

Dr. Becker frequently performs as member of the Potsdam Brass Quintet and has been a presenter and Contributing Artist at many conferences, including the International Horn Society Symposium, International Women's Brass Conference, International Brass Festival, the Northeast Regional Tuba and Euphonium Conference, the Erie County Music Educators Association Western New York Conference Day, NAFME Eastern Division Conference, and NYSSMA Winter Conference. Prior to her appointment at Crane in 2015, Dr. Becker taught horn at Nazareth University, the University of Rochester, and the Eastman Community Music School. She has also been a horn instructor and chamber music coach at Cormont Horn Camp (formerly Kendall Betts Horn Camp), Crane Youth Music, the New York Summer Music Festival, and the Summer Youth Music School at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Becker holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree and Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, where she was awarded the 2013 Teaching Assistant Prize for excellence in collegiate teaching. She received a Master of Music degree from Eastman in Horn Performance and Literature and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the University of New Hampshire.

A native of Los Angeles, **Dr. Christopher Hernacki** is an international award winning freelance musician/educator and has served as the bass trombonist of the San Antonio Symphony, the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Phoenix Symphony, and Symphony Silicon Valley. He has also performed with such notable groups as the San Francisco Symphony, the Bay Brass, the Utah Symphony, the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and the Detroit Jazz Festival Orchestra, among many others. In addition to regularly playing in symphony orchestras, Dr. Hernacki maintains an active performing schedule with various chamber music groups, opera orchestras, musical theater productions, and jazz ensembles worldwide. He currently serves as the principal trombonist of the Orchestra of Northern New York and bass trombonist in the Northern Symphonic Winds.



As a soloist, Dr. Hernacki was the winner of the 2011 International Trombone Festival's Donald Yaxley Solo Competition and has been featured with the Los Angeles Symphonic Winds, the Grace Baptist Church Praise Orchestra, the Idyllwild Arts Summer Music Festival's Wind Ensemble, the Pokorny Low Brass Seminar faculty, and the Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings. He has also appeared with such artists as Christian McBride, Buddy Collette, George Benson, Alfie Boe, Gene Pokorny, Randall Hawes, Sergio Carolino, and the members of Vulfpeck. Dr. Hernacki's most recent solo performance was with the Crane Wind Ensemble in 2022 performing Anthony Barfield's Red Sky.

An avid educator, Dr. Hernacki is on the faculty of the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam, as the Assistant Professor of Trombone. There, he leads a dynamic studio of devoted trombone performers, future educators, and business-minded individuals, who grow and develop to become 21st Century musicians and advocates for the arts in their communities. Dr. Hernacki also serves on the faculty at Idyllwild Arts as a summer low brass instructor - a position he has held since 2012. Prior to his appointment at SUNY Potsdam in 2020, he held positions at Eastern Michigan University, as a lecturer in music education, and the New World School of the Arts, as the low brass instructor. In 2018, Dr. Hernacki co-founded and served as the artistic director and conductor of the Michigan Youth Trombone Ensemble, an Ann Arbor-based trombone ensemble for high school students.

Dr. Hernacki gathers inspiration from many different genres of music, spanning everything from 60's fusion to French electro swing, modern pop to Swedish space folk, heavy metal to the world of black midi. Chief among these is video game music; as a huge nerd of video game music, he works to cultivate an artistic and academic appreciation of the genre that has similarly already developed for the film industry. Influenced by this music, he writes, performs, and records various musical arrangements, some of which can be viewed on his YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/christoflur>.

An advocate for the arts, Dr. Hernacki strives to be an agent of change in helping aspiring performers and educators realize their utmost potential, creating connections between audiences

of musicians and non-musicians alike, and elevating the music field so that it will always have a place to thrive for generations to come. Dr. Hernacki earned his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan, a Master of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, a Professional Studies Certificate from the Colburn School, a fellowship with the New World Symphony, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan.



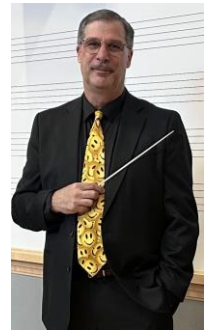
Dr. Charles Guy is Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam. He performs with the Potsdam Brass Quintet, Orchestra of Northern New York, and the Northern Symphonic Winds. Prior to his current appointment, Charles held a similar position at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music and performed with the Lawrence Brass, the Oshkosh Symphony and the Green Bay Symphony Orchestra. As a soloist, he has performed recitals at several International Tuba and Euphonium Association conferences and in 1999 he won the prestigious Leonard Falcone Festival artist division solo tuba competition. He has also presented numerous master classes and clinics for music educators and tuba-euphonium students at conventions and in schools. His orchestral experience includes performances with the Syracuse Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Midland Symphony Orchestras. He has published articles and reviews in the International Tuba and Euphonium Association Journal and has been recorded on the Mark and Bernel Labels. In the summers, he taught tuba and euphonium at the Interlochen Arts Camp for over ten years. He earned both the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from Michigan State University and a Bachelor of Music Performance degree from the University of Akron. When not teaching or performing, he enjoys time with his wife, Lorie, and two boys, Ethan and Miles.

Crane Alumni:



Dr. Julia Stowell ('22) is Assistant Professor of Trumpet at Mississippi State University. As an international soloist, she has performed with the Mantzaros Philharmonic in Corfu, Greece, at the International Women's Brass Conference, and at the International Trumpet Guild (ITG) Conference. Upcoming international appearances include performances at the Conservatorio di Brescia (Brescia, Italy), the Benedetto Marcello Conservatorio di Musica (Venice, Italy), and a research presentation at the Altenburg International Trumpet Competition in Bad Säckingen, Germany in November, 2026. She is also a founding Co-Chair of the ITG Podcast Committee, and serves as a Sheet Music Reviewer for the ITG Journal. She holds degrees from the University of Kentucky, University of Illinois, and the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam. You can find more information on Dr. Stowell's upcoming events and listen to her recordings at juliastowell.com.

Glenn Roberts ('96) is director of bands at Lisbon Central School and serves as an adjunct instructor of brass at St. Lawrence University. As a trumpet player, Mr. Roberts is an active member of the Northern Symphonic Winds and performs occasionally with The Orchestra of Northern New York. Additionally, Mr. Roberts performs for area school musicals and is a founding member of the Riverside Brass Quartet. Mr. Roberts has been published in both the International Trumpet Guild Youth column and the New York State Band Director's Association publication, The Bandstand. Glenn Roberts maintains active membership in both the ITG and NYSBDA. Mr. Roberts is a graduate of the Crane School of Music, where he earned both his BM in Music Education and MM in trumpet performance with Dr. John Ellis



Joseph Johnson ('21) is a musician and educator originally from Long Island, NY. He recently received his Doctorate of Music in Horn Performance from the University of Georgia where he held a performance graduate assistantship. Outside of working in the horn studio, he was also a member of the wind conducting studio.

He is currently principal of the Lawrencville Symphony and has performed with the Montgomery Symphony, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra TDP program, Gainesville Symphony, Valdosta Symphony and North Shore Symphony Orchestras, the Northern Symphonic Winds, and a multitude of chamber ensembles as well as the UGA and UF British Brass Bands. Johnson

also served on staff at the prestigious Cormont Horn Camp (formerly Kendall Betts Horn Camp), where he mentored students, facilitated day to day operations, and performed in the faculty/staff ensemble.

Johnson studied horn at the University of Georgia with Dr. James Naigus and Dr. Jean Martin-Williams and conducting with Dr. Nicholas E. Williams. He received his Masters in Horn Performance from the University of Florida studying with Dr. Paul Basler and received his Bachelor's degree in Music Education with a Performance Certificate from the Crane School of Music where he studied with Dr. Lauren Becker. During his time at Crane he also studied organ under Dr. Michelle Martin-Atwood.



Dr. James Dissinger ('06) is an accomplished trombonist and educator whose career spans international Broadway tours, military service, and orchestral performance. Currently an Adjunct Professor at Five Towns College, he teaches applied trombone lesson and courses in brass methods. His pedagogical approach is further informed by an instructor qualification earned at the United States Naval School of Music.

His professional performance credits are exceptionally diverse, featuring international and national tours of *Shrek: The Musical* and *Hairspray*. James served in the United States Navy with Navy Band Northeast, where he was a featured soloist, and has performed with the Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass. His orchestral experience includes work with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Sinfonia Gulf Coast, and the Orchestra of Northern New York.

Beyond the traditional stage, James has spent significant time at sea as a trombonist for Royal Caribbean, Princess Cruises, and Azamara Cruises. His versatility has led him to share the stage with jazz icon Jon Faddis, and open for Dianne Reeves at the Caribbean Music Festival. He can be heard on various Calypso/Soca commercial recordings available on all streaming platforms.

Dr. Dissinger earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Performance from Stony Brook University. He also holds a Master of Music from The Florida State University and a Bachelor of Music from The Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam.

Andrew Crecco ('12), a native of Western New York, is currently the 4th-6th Grade Band Director and 5th Grade General Music Teacher for Potsdam Central Schools. Andrew graduated from The Crane School of Music (2012) with a Bachelor's Degree in both Music Education and Performance in Trombone. Andrew also earned a Minor in Jazz Studies and Concentration in Music in Special Education. During his time at Crane, Andrew worked with Trombone Professor Mark Hartman and performed in a multitude of ensembles including Crane Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, Latin Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, and Trombone Ensemble.



After leaving Crane, Andrew earned a Master's Degree in Special Education from SUNY Buffalo State University and worked primarily general music positions before returning to Potsdam. Since returning, Andrew has played in a variety of community led ensembles, school musicals, and most recently, with Northern Symphonic Winds. Andrew enjoys instilling a life long love for music in his students and giving back to the community musically to the region who helped foster his love of teaching and making music.

Dr. Will Sutton ('13) is Assistant Professor of Music at North Dakota State University, where he teaches trombone, conducts ensembles, and contributes to the music theory curriculum. He previously served on the faculty at Northwest Missouri State University and teaches each summer at the New England Music Camp in Maine.

An active and versatile performer, Dr. Sutton has appeared with regional and national organizations, including the Kansas City Symphony, Kansas City Ballet, Grand Rapids Symphony, Lansing Symphony, Minot Symphony, Fargo-Moorhead Symphony, and Fargo-Moorhead Opera. As a soloist, he was recently featured with the NDSU Wind Symphony, and his playing can be heard on the Kendor Music Label.



Dr. Sutton frequently presents and adjudicates nationally. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Leonard Falcone International Euphonium and Tuba Festival, where he has appeared as a performer and adjudicator. Dr. Sutton is an Eastman/Willson/Shires artist and clinician.



Samson Flancbaum ('13) is an instrument repair technician joining the faculty in 2025. At Crane he manages the inventory of over 1200 tech and professional instruments for the school working to maintain and repair them. Samson holds dual Bachelor of Music degrees in Euphonium Performance and Music Theory from The Crane School of Music, graduating in 2013. He went on to earn his Master of Music in Euphonium Performance, with a focus in Music Theory, from the University of North Texas in 2015.

During his academic training, Samson developed a strong interest in instrument repair, learning directly from skilled technicians at both Crane and UNT. This passion led him to pursue a formal apprenticeship at a respected repair shop in Aledo, Texas, following the completion of his graduate studies. He remained with the shop as a full-time technician, eventually serving as Repair Foreman from 2019 to 2022, where he managed daily operations and oversaw complex restorations.

In addition to his repair work, Samson spent three years working in 911 emergency services as a telecommunicator, while continuing to perform repairs part-time. He returned to The Crane School of Music to join the faculty as an Instrument Repair Technician, bringing with him a wealth of hands-on experience and deep technical knowledge.

Samson is a certified Muramatsu and Straubinger technician and is highly proficient in all aspects of band and orchestral instrument repair. He specializes in the maintenance and restoration of vintage and high-end instruments, combining meticulous craftsmanship with a performer's insight.

As a musician Samson performs on both Euphonium and Trombone and is an active arranger and orchestrator of Klezmer music for all instrumentations. Additionally, outside of work Samson enjoys tabletop gaming, resin work, leather crafting, and spending time with his family.

Additional Artists:

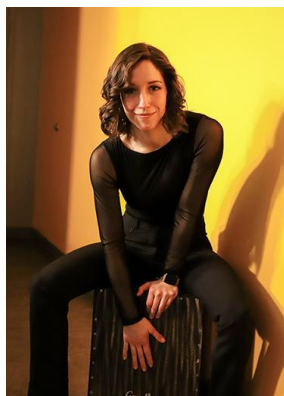


Risa Okina is a theorist and collaborative pianist who has performed throughout the United States and Japan. Before moving to upstate New York, she was a much-sought-after collaborative pianist in the Philadelphia Area and regularly performed with students and local musicians. She has also collaborated with many local opera and theater groups, including the Philadelphia-based opera company, ENAensemble. She was a member of the Toradze Piano Studio, where she studied with the world-renowned pianist Alexander Toradze. She performed regularly at the Toradze Studio Recital series during her master's program.

Risa received her Ph.D. in Music Theory from Temple University, where she has taught both written and aural music theory. Her dissertation "Brahms and The Uncanny" explores the musical uncanny in the piano chamber music of Johannes Brahms, utilizing the notion of the uncanny from the perspective of the German philosophers Ernest Jentsch and Sigmund Freud. Her primary argument is that the musical uncanny acts as a hermeneutic window to reach a deeper musical meaning, which can open us up to unique interpretations.

Her research interests include Sonata Theory, Musical Semiotics, Musical Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Schenkerian Analysis, and Hermeneutic Analysis of the music of Johannes Brahms and other 19th-century composers. Her work has been presented in both national and international conferences, including the International Brahms Conference in Irvine, CA (2019), Music Theory Midwest Annual Conference and the Society for Music Theory Annual Meeting (2020). She was also invited as a guest scholar for the Performance and Analysis Graduate Seminar at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, where she performed Brahms's Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 108 and discussed how our analysis and hauntological reading of the piece could shape our interpretations and performance. This past summer, she presented at two international conferences: The 29th European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) Conference, Belgrade, Serbia, and the 15th International Congress on Musical Signification, Barcelona, Spain.

She holds a MM in music theory from Temple University, a MM in piano performance at Indiana University South Bend, and a baccalaureate degree from the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Japan. She has served as an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Temple University, a pianist for the Villanova Singers and the Main Line Singers, as well as Rowan University, and West Chester University, and an organist for Trinity Reformed UCC in Collegeville, PA, and Emanuel UCC in Philadelphia, PA.



Dr. Emma Gierszal (she/her) is the Assistant Professor of Percussion at the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam. She has earned her DMA and MM in Percussion Performance and Literature and an Arts Leadership Certificate from the Eastman School of Music. Her BM degree in Music Education is from Furman University.

Emma is a versatile musician dedicated to sharing new musical experiences with others. As a co-founding musician of the trio 3D Percussion, she leads ambitious commissioning projects, curates creative concerts, and records new repertoire for percussion. 3D Percussion has toured several universities and innovative venues with the music and light show REFRACT, and is currently presenting a full program of six newly commissioned works titled IMPRINTS. Emma is also a member of the John Psathas Percussion Project, which began with recording Dr. Omar Carmenates' arrangements of Psathas' chamber works and has evolved into an ongoing collaboration with soloist Fabian Ziegler after performing for PASIC 2024. Emma also performs as co-principal percussionist of the Orchestra of Northern New York and the Northern Symphonic Winds and as an extra percussionist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra. Some of her notable performances include playing with the 2025 International Pride Orchestra in Washington DC, performing Viet Cuong's quartet concerto "Re(new)al" with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, and premiering Austin Keck's "Evanescence" with the Eastman Percussion Ensemble at the IPEA International Percussion Competition in Shanghai.

As an educator, she has presented at conferences including the New York State Music Educators Association, the New York State Band Directors Association, and the American Musicological Society. She has also served as faculty for the Chautauqua Summer Music Festival, the Arts Engaging Life Percussion Residency, and the Crane Youth Music Camp. Before her position at Crane, where she instructs a studio of 25 and directs the percussion ensemble, she lectured at Furman University in spring 2024. While in Rochester, NY, she taught percussion at the Hochstein School of Music and served as an adjunct percussion lecturer at Nazareth University. Taking an interest in Rochester's local music scene, she served as President of the Board for the chamber ensemble fivebyfive and published an Eastman Case Study about the ROCmusic Collaborative.

Emma has participated in competitive orchestral and contemporary music festivals, including the Lucerne Festival Academy in 2023, Grafenegg Academy in 2021 and 2022, the National Repertory Orchestra in 2021 (where she had the privilege of performing in front of the orchestra), and the Chautauqua Summer Music Festival in 2019. In 2018, she received the Mary Ann Starring Memorial Award and performed at Sigma Alpha Iota's national convention. Emma is a proud Mallettech Artist.



Dr. Kathryn Sherman, Professor of Piano Pedagogy, directs the undergraduate and graduate programs in piano pedagogy and teaches keyboard skills courses at The Crane School of Music SUNY Potsdam. A Nationally Certified Teacher of Music through the Music Teachers National Association, she also serves as Co-Director of the biennial Crane Piano Pedagogy Conference. Dr. Sherman frequently adjudicates for local festivals and auditions, and her teacher workshops have been presented throughout the United States. In addition to teaching, she regularly performs with Crane colleagues and guest artists.

Dr. Sherman earned a DMA in piano performance with an emphasis in piano pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma, where she was awarded a prestigious campus-wide Graduate Teaching Award through the Office of the Provost. She also holds an MM from the University of Kansas and BM and BA degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She previously served on the faculty of Oklahoma City University, teaching collegiate class piano, applied piano, and piano pedagogy.

Dr. Ling Lo is a pianist and educator committed to creating connection—through music, teaching, and shared artistic experiences. She is currently Teaching Assistant Professor of Collaborative Piano at the University of North Dakota, where she mentors young musicians and actively engages in performance and outreach. Ling holds two Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Piano Performance and Collaborative Piano from Michigan State University. Each summer, she shares her passion for chamber music and education as a faculty member at the New England Music Camp.



A passionate chamber musician, Ling is the co-founder of LoW Duo, an ensemble that explores the intimate, expressive possibilities of collaborative performance. She has performed across the United States, and her commitment to accessibility and inclusion led her to create the UND Sensory Family Concert Series, a program designed to welcome neurodiverse audiences into the concert experience with openness, care, and creativity. Whether performing, teaching, or dreaming up new ways to connect with the community, Ling's work is rooted in the belief that music is most powerful when it brings people together.



Tilda Watersclear is a trombonist drag queen with a vintage flair. Imagine Judy Garland or Maria Callas fiercely breaking into a trombone solo, and that's her-- always bringing camp, live music, and a lot of love to her local drag community. Tilda holds a trombone degrees from UCLA and Boston University, and she has played with the International Pride Orchestra and New World Symphony, and has played sold out shows at some of Boston's largest venues.

Student Performers:

Frackenpohl Honors Brass Quintet

Maddie Piscioti & Edward Karron, *trumpets*

McKenzie Sweeney, *horn*

Victor Mainetti, *trombone*

Liam Yusko, *tuba*

Crane Brass Ensemble

Trumpet

Julia Avdoulos

Josh Buessem

Edward Karron

Jonathan Kang

Daniel Maldonado

Devin Robinson

Horn

Kaela Briggs

Will Hallenback

Mackenzie Sweeney

Jo Velez

Trombone

Leah Hasselbring

Ethan Keesler

Brayden Manning

Bass Trombone

Berg Aunkst

Victor Mainetti

Euphonium

Sam Anderson

Andrew Dahlstrom

Tuba

Thomas Kerrigan

Matt Smith

Percussion

Brodie Ainsworth

Magnus Gros

Jaliyah Hamilton

Soren Staecker

A Note of Thanks

The inaugural Crane Brass Summit would not have been possible without the generosity, hard work, and collaboration of so many people. I am deeply grateful to everyone who helped bring this weekend together and to everyone who joined us to celebrate brass playing, teaching, and community at the Crane School of Music.

A heartfelt thanks is extended to Vanessa Vaverchak, Meghan Stever, and the Community Performance Series; Brass faculty Dr. Christopher Keach, Dr. Lauren Becker, Dr. Chris Hernacki, and Dr. Charles Guy; Mona Vroman and the Potsdam Alumni Association; Crane School of Music Dean Andrew Mast; Karen Miller, Matthew Gatti, and Douglas McKinnie; and PACES Dining Services for their invaluable support.

I am also grateful to our vendors, Miles DeCastro (North Country Winds), Matthew Davis (Yamaha), Nelson Miranda (S.E. Shires Co.), and Adrianna Korey (Conn Selmer), for being part of our exhibits and helping make the Summit a place for musicians to connect with the broader brass community. A special thank you as well to our event sponsor, Bob Reeves Brass Mouthpieces, for their generous support.

Thank you to our wonderful student volunteers, whose work behind the scenes helped everything run smoothly throughout the weekend. And finally, thank you to all of the performers, clinicians, alumni, students, faculty, teachers, parents, and attendees who made the first Crane Brass Summit such a vibrant and welcoming gathering. We look forward to more Crane Brass Summits in the future!

Sincerely,

Dr. Luke Spence
Brass Area Coordinator

We acknowledge with respect the Mohawk Nation, the Indigenous people on whose ancestral lands SUNY Potsdam now stands. We are reminded by our presence here that we have the duty to live in harmony with one another and with all of creation. We are deeply grateful to the families and communities who care for this beautiful place. Beginning with colonization and continuing for centuries the Haudenosaunee Peoples have been dispossessed of most of their ancestral lands by the actions of individuals and institutions. We acknowledge our responsibility to understand and respond to those actions and to commit to working together to honor our past and build our future with truth.