Winds Fall 2026 Concert Remarks

[Play *American Salute*]

Hi everyone, thank you so much for being here today. My name is Jonathan Moore, and I am thrilled to be the new Music Director of the Cascade Winds. This community has been my home for the last decade—as a music educator, a parent, and a fellow musician. I'm honored to share the stage with these talented musicians this afternoon.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the recent tragedy in our area. We are wearing silver and purple ribbons today in honor of and in memory of those impacted by this terrible event. If you would like to show direct support to the affected families, we have QR codes printed in the program that link to a relief fund.

Today, we are celebrating America's **250th anniversary** with a wide array of American music and composers. Our musical through-line is the great heritage of American tunes, both new and old.

We started our program with *American Salute* by Morton Gould. Gould wrote this piece during World War II as a radio broadcast feature meant to boost public morale and offer faith, maybe just the thing we need following a fractious mid-term election cycle. You may have recognized the famous tune "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," on which this piece was built.

We will hear another classic American melody in our next selection. The spiritual "Amazing Grace" was written by John Newton, a slave ship captain who, after years of transporting enslaved people across the Atlantic, underwent a dramatic spiritual conversion and saw the profound evil of his actions. *Amazing Grace*, arranged by Frank Ticheli.

[Play *Amazing Grace*]

Robert Russell Bennett was known as the "Dean of American Arrangers" for his work orchestrating more than 200 Broadway shows, collaborating with legends like Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter, and Richard Rodgers.

Today, however, we will hear one of his original compositions. The *Suite of Old American Dances* was originally titled "Electric Park," referring to an amusement park in Kansas City that Bennett fondly recalled from his childhood. He described the park as: *"A place of magic to us kids. The tricks with big electric signs, the illuminated fountains,*

the big band concerts, the scenic railway, and the big dance hall. One could hear in the dance hall all afternoon and evening the pieces the crowd danced to."

We will perform five of those dances for you: Cakewalk, Schottische, Western One Step, Wallflower Waltz, and Rag.

Enjoy the ride!

[Play *Suite of Old American Dances*]

After this next selection, we will take a brief intermission. We'd like to extend a special thank you to Strictly Organic for providing this afternoon's delicious coffee.

As a reminder, our silent auction is currently underway in the band room next door. I invite you to take a look and place your bids on some truly unique items and experiences, all crafted and designed by our very own Cascade Winds musicians. This auction is an important fundraiser for our program and a wonderful way to show your support. Thank you.

Now, we turn to a work by the Italian-American composer Michael Giacchino from Pixar's wildly popular 2004 animated movie *The Incredibles*. The story follows a family of undercover superheroes forced to hide their powers in a world where public backlash and lawsuits have made vigilantism illegal… and imagine, this was all before Twitter!

[Play *Music from The Incredibles*]

INTERMISSION

[Play *From Maine to Oregon*]

John Philip Sousa was world-famous for his marches, but he also excelled as an equestrian, a marksman, pitched for the Sousa Band's own baseball team, wrote novels, short stories, and a vast amount of music beyond his famous marches. The selection you just heard, *From Maine to Oregon*, was based on musical themes from *The American Maid*, one of 15 operettas he composed.

It's hard to believe that we are already well into fall. The composer Eric Whitacre says of our next selection: *"October is my favorite month. Something about the crisp autumn air and the subtle change in light always makes me a little sentimental, and as I started to sketch I felt that same quiet beauty in the writing. The simple, pastoral melodies and*

subsequent harmonies are inspired by the great English Romantics (Vaughan Williams, Elgar) as I felt that this style was also perfectly suited to capture the natural and pastoral soul of the season."

We now play *October* by Eric Whitacre. Warm cider, fuzzy slippers, and cozy blankets are optional.

[Play *October*]

Joplin was a trailblazing African-American composer and pianist who wrote over 40 rags, a ragtime ballet, and two operas.

A little-known fact: he taught himself how to play the piano on an employer's instrument while his mother worked as a cleaner, later receiving free lessons from a local German music teacher. He was also posthumously awarded an honorary Pulitzer Prize in 1976 during the U.S. Bicentennial for his immense contributions to American music.

Our next selection was ragtime's first massive hit, and I'm sure many of you will recognize it. This is the *Maple Leaf Rag* by Scott Joplin.

[Play *Maple Leaf Rag*]

Leonard Bernstein beautifully embraced the "melting pot" ideal of America in his groundbreaking musical *West Side Story*. He used distinct musical styles to sonically separate the rival groups, representing the American Jets with cool jazz and big-band sounds, and the Puerto Rican Sharks with Afro-Cuban percussion, mambos, and traditional Latin dance rhythms. Iconic numbers like "America" and "Maria" fuse blues harmonies with Latin beats and changing meters to reflect the story's themes of cultural clash and forbidden love. Feel free to sing along!

[Play *West Side Story Selections*]

Our final work today, by David Holsinger, pays tribute to the multifarious qualities and ideals that make up the many "faces" of America. Intended not as a patriotic montage, but rather as a work of diverse themes—both original and borrowed—each moment conveys the composer's impression of American exuberance, pioneering spirit, and underlying faith.

Holsinger includes a secret popular American tune that surfaces right near the middle of this piece. See if you can name it! Thank you again for joining us today. I hope you will join us on March 7th for our next concert exploring great melodies from the UK. We play for you now *American Faces by David Holsinger*

[Play *American Faces*]