

the houston pride band presents

# 'Twas the Night

HIGHLIGHTING FAVORITE HOLIDAY STORIES



December 9, 2023  
8PM · MATCH

# From the President

The holidays are in full swing, and the **Houston Pride Band** is thrilled you've joined us for a night of storytelling and festive tunes. Get ready for 'Twas the Night!

Tonight, prepare to be taken on a musical journey through familiar holiday stories, with a few twists along the way. Classic songs like "Auld Lang Syne" and "The Toy Trumpet" will bring nostalgia of Christmases past – and who doesn't love the music of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" But we have some surprises in store – the reimagined melodies in "Minor Alterations" and "Stars and Stripes" plus our special re-telling of The Night Before Christmas – featuring our guest artist Saïd Henry Pressley - will create new memories of your favorite holiday music.

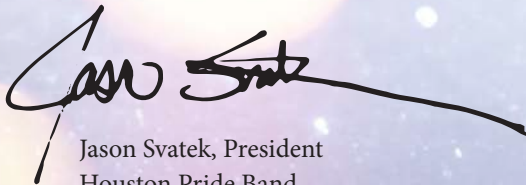
Our 2023-2024 concert season **An Elemental Journey** continues with our next concert "Project Earth: A Musical Exploration of our 'Blue Marble'" where we are very excited to present Julie Giroux's "Symphony No 6: The Blue Marble". This incredible work includes a full multimedia experience that will create an impressive musical exploration of our planet. Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 6, 2024 – you won't want to miss it!

If you don't already, be sure to follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** and go to our website to subscribe to email updates of our upcoming events and performances.

The Houston Pride Band appreciates your generous support. Your contributions help the band bring music and joy to our community throughout the year. Your ticket purchase tonight is just the beginning – be sure to go to [donate.houstonprideband.org](https://donate.houstonprideband.org) to make additional contributions and check out the other giving and sponsorship opportunities within this program for ways to support our organization.

Happy Holidays!

Yours in **PRIDE**,



Jason Svatek, President  
Houston Pride Band



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# 'Twas the Night

DEBORAH HIRSCH & DAVID LEA, CONDUCTORS

## PROGRAM

Holiday Delight	Caleb Hammer
You Better Sleigh!	JaRod Hall
On an Olde English Carol	arr. Randall D. Standridge
A Vaughan Williams Christmas	Ralph Vaughan Williams arr. Douglas E. Wagner
Minor Alterations No. 2, "Carols from the Dark Side"	David Lovrien

## - INTERMISSION -

All I Want for Christmas is You	Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff arr. Larry Kerchner
Another Night Before Christmas	Philip Lane arr. Paul Noble
The Toy Trumpet	Raymond Scott arr. Robert Longfield
Auld Lang Syne	arr. Chip Davis & Robert Longfield
How the Grinch Stole Christmas	Albert Hague & Eugene Poddany arr. Larry Clark
Stars and Stripes for Christmas	John Philip Sousa & Robert E. Foster

# houston ★ pride ★ band

## PERFORMING MEMBERS

### FLUTE/PICCOLO

Violet Garner  
Christi Gell  
Ruben Gómez  
Amanda Hager  
Donald Hale  
Theo Harrison\*  
Teresa Newman  
Runze Shen  
Josh Wunderlich

### OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Michael Moreau-Monier  
Lupe Ybarra-Regan

### BASSOON

David DiCamillo\*  
Jeremy Hasan  
Spencer Salinas  
Becky Schlembach

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Sydney Dean  
Kayla DuBrow  
William Fu\*  
Haylon Haynes  
Alec Macklin  
Em Merrell  
Jordan Pachuca  
Chelsea Rasing  
Hannah Robertson  
Steve Tarry  
James Walker

### BASS CLARINET

Jedd Bingham  
Nicolas Droger

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Anna Harkness  
Travis Howell  
Daniel Stover  
Kevin Taylor\*  
Larry Trout

### TENOR SAXOPHONE

Anthony Fernández

### BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Lisa Mace

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Zachary Alcantara  
Mary Beth Alsdorf  
Jason Fernández  
George Gehring\*  
Adam Jatho  
Rose Kantorczyk  
Jessie Meng  
Jacob Newsome  
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Brian Tighe

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Sharon Prince

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Colleen Callan  
Andrew Christian  
George Gehring  
Deborah Hirsch  
Christian Hopkins  
David Lea  
Sharon Prince\*  
Brooke Yahney

\* Section Leader



# Artistic Directors



## DEBORAH HIRSCH

Now in her 8th season with the Houston Pride Band, Deborah Hirsch is originally from Baltimore, Maryland. She graduated from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree in music therapy and music education and earned a master's degree in music at Texas A&M University-Commerce. She also served in the 312th Army Band in Lawrence, Kansas before moving to Texas.

Retiring after 37 years as a band director in Pasadena, Texas, Deborah enjoyed a successful career in public education. Ms. Hirsch was named "Teacher of the Year" in 2014.

As a participant the Colorado University Conducting Symposium in June 2016 Ms. Hirsch studied under Steve Davis, Dr. Donald McKinney, Dr. Matt Roeder and Dr. Matthew Dockendorf. In June 2019, she attended the Conn-Selmer Institute where she was able to study, consult and collaborate with many of her band idols—Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, Dr. Paula A. Crider, Frank Troyka, Michael Sweeney and Richard Saucedo. In the 2019, Deborah was honored to direct the Association of Private Lutheran Schools Honor Band and the Texas Region 19 Class CC Band. In November 2021, she was the guest clinician for the Texas Region 19 CCC Band and shared the podium at the Bigger and Brighter Conference of the Pride Bands Alliance.

Deborah is an active clinician, judge, and consultant across the state and is a member of Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, Women Band Directors International, and Texas Music Adjudicators Association.

Ms. Hirsch is also a member of the chancel choir and bell choir at Bering Memorial United Church of Christ and a long time member of Pasadena Little Theater.



## DAVID LEA

David Lea is in his eighth season as a member of the Houston Pride Band, and has served as Co-Artistic Director since 2018. Since joining the artistic team, David has conducted the Houston Pride Band at the Women Band Directors International conference in 2022 as a featured concert and clinic ensemble, and served on the Artistic Team for the Pride Bands Alliance national conference in 2021. He has also represented HPB as a guest conductor for the Houston Chamber Music Society Wind Project. After bringing two world premiere performances to the HPB Audience in 2023, David is excited to be working with composer JaRod Hall to commission a new work to culminate the band's 45th season.

David is also a founding member of BrassTax, the Houston Pride Band Brass Quintet. BrassTax has performed throughout Houston as a musical ambassador for HPB's outreach initiatives, and will be featured as a guest collaborator this season with Pride Chorus Houston. Outside of BrassTax, David also plays trumpet for the NFL Houston Texans' Deep Steel Thunder.

David currently serves as the Head Band Director and fine arts department chair at Null Middle School in Sheldon ISD. His bands have enjoyed successes at UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Evaluations, and local and regional festivals. As a private trumpet teacher, his students have made Michigan All-state, earned first divisions at regional and state solo & ensemble contests, and had the honor of participating in the Michigan Youth Arts Festival.

David earned bachelor's degrees from Texas A&M and Michigan State University in Psychology and Music Education, respectively. He earned his Master of Music Education from the University of North Texas. His professional memberships include Texas Music Educators and Texas Bandmasters Associations.

# Program Notes

COMPILED BY CHRIS FOSTER

## ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU

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Written and recorded by Mariah Carey in 1994, the uptempo modern classic **All I Want for Christmas is You** has gone on to become a staple of the holiday season. The song was a success when first released, reaching number six on the Billboard Hot Adult Contemporary chart. The advent of music streaming has led to renewed success for the single, which now annually re-enters charts worldwide in the weeks before Christmas and has reached number one for four consecutive years. The single has broken the record for the longest gap between release and reaching number one, 25 years apart. The song has sold 16 million copies worldwide, making it the number 11 best-selling digital singles of all time.

## ANOTHER NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

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**Another Night Before Christmas** is a parody on the original poem by the UK's Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy, a Scottish poet and professor of contemporary poetry at the Manchester Metropolitan University. The story is about a little girl who wants to see Santa Claus to prove to herself that he is real, but falls asleep at a critical moment. The music's composer Philip Lane is an English composer and musicologist. He first composed an orchestral setting of the original poem *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* in 2007, which was recorded by actor Stephen Fry and the BBC Concert Orchestra to wide acclaim. He followed in 2009 this composition to complement Professor Duffy's *Another Night Before Christmas*, which was similarly recorded by actor Simon Callow and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

## AULD LANG SYNE

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As we look toward a new year in 2024, it seems appropriate to include **Auld Lang Syne** as part of this year's program. Based on a Scots poem written by Robert Burns, it is one of the best-known melodies in English-speaking countries, the title may be translated into English idiomatically as "long ago" or "old times." Tonight's performance is an adaptation of the version performed by the world-famous instrumental ensemble Mannheim Steamroller created by Chip Davis.

## HOLIDAY DELIGHT

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Holiday Delight offers a fantastic new take on "O Holy Night" and other classic tunes. Composer Caleb Hammer (b. 1995) hails from Kalamazoo, Michigan and currently resides in Austin, Texas. He has studied composition at Western Michigan University. Of this piece, the composer said:

In my mind, there is no more enjoyable time of the year than the holiday season. I love the colors, joy, the family, and, of course, the food. My favorite song from this season is "O Holy Night". Although arranging is not the focus of my composition career, I love this tune and I wanted to create a brand new work around the thematic ideas of this song (with a couple thematic calls to other classic holiday tunes).

## HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS

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Of all the Dr. Seuss stories, possibly none is more delightfully charming than **How the Grinch Stole Christmas**, the tale on that mean old man who disliked Christmas so much that he stole all the presents, the toys and the Christmas trees. As should befall any villain, he is transformed and his heart "grew three times its size." This medley includes music from the 1966 animated special, including two songs with lyrics by Dr. Seuss: "Welcome Christmas" and "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch."

## MINOR ALTERATIONS NO. 2

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**Minor Alterations No 2: Carols from the Dark Side** is a sequel to the popular *Minor Alterations: Through the Looking Glass* by Dallas-based composer David Lovrien (performed by Houston Pride Band in 2016). The composer boasted that this second installment is "31% more twisted", featuring even more favorite Christmas tunes reimagined in the minor mode while also being mashed up with classical orchestra music. While there are too many twisted variations to list, just listen for the wicked mashup of "O Holy Night" and Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries!*

## ON AN OLDE ENGLISH CAROL

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The "Coventry Carol" is one of those rare Christmas carols that is not full of light and hope. It is a dark lullabye, mourning the loss of the children who were put to death as King Herod attempted to find and kill the prophesied King of Israel. **On an Olde English Carol** is a setting of this beautiful, melancholy melody. The work begins with the voices of the mourners singing the souls of their children to sleep ("Lully, Lullah, Lully, Lullay"). Regarding his composition, composer Randall Standrige said, "I wanted to create a christmas work that used very reserved orchestration to allow beautiful instrumental colors to shine through and to create a sense of isolation and tension." The grief of the parents culminates in a powerful statement at the climax of their work, before returning to a quiet whisper, though the work ends on a slight ray of hope that crescendos to the final release.

## STARS AND STRIPES FOR CHRISTMAS

For those who love both traditional band marches and Christmas Carols, **Stars and Stripes for Christmas** is perfect for you. In this hilarious mashup, arranger Robert Foster has intertwined beloved holiday songs such as “Jingle Bells”, “Hallelujah Chorus”, “We Wish You A Merry Christmas and “Angels We Have Heard On High” into John Philips Sousa’s march *The Stars And Stripes Forever*.

## THE TOY TRUMPET

Composer Raymond Scott is known for a prolific career composing film music in the middle of the 20th century. While he didn’t specifically compose for animation, many of his works were adapted for the classic Looney Tunes cartoons. One of his signature tunes, **The Toy Trumpet**, was famously sung by Shirley Temple in the 1938 film “Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm”, and versions by The Boston Pops and Al Hirt have become classics of instrumental holiday music.

## A VAUGHAN WILLIAMS CHRISTMAS

In addition to his contributions to both orchestra and band literature, prolific English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams was also one of the foremost researchers/collectors of traditional

folk songs, and also collected many traditional carols as well. The medley **A Vaughan Williams Christmas** features three such carols that Vaughan Williams adapted and harmonized: “Forest Green (O Little Town of Bethlehem)”, “Wassail Song”, and “Sussex Carol”.

## YOU BETTER SLEIGH!

The idea for **You Better Sleigh!** came when composer JaRod Hall was approached by a Houston-area band director to see if he would compose “a sassy, jazzy, holiday piece.” You Better Sleigh! plays on two terms: a “sleigh”-which is inarguably very winter-themed here in the States-and “slay”-which has evolved to encompass many definitions, mostly centered on the theme of doing something extremely well. The latter definition pays homage to both the LGBTQIA+ and Black communities-popularized by drag culture. The style of the piece is funk, an entire genre of music pioneered and popularized in 1960s America by Black musicians, most notably James Brown. What makes funk really dance is the bass line and percussion grooves, typically complex in nature. Mr. Hall has slipped in snippets of various holiday tunes hidden throughout the piece - try to listen for them all.

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# Guest Artists



**NANCY FORD**  
**GUEST EMCEE**

Nancy Ford was bitten by the show-biz bug when she was three years old, appearing on “Rumpus Room”, a cheesy little television variety show out of Youngstown, Ohio. She played the “Adorable Child Sitting on Santa’s Lap.” Since then she has performed in comedy clubs, theaters, galleries, churches, and dives throughout the United States.

LGBTQ+ media has published Nancy’s work since 1988, including her award-winning column, WHAT A WORLD. As an interviewer, she has engaged high-profile personalities including Bette Midler, Diane Keaton, Betty Buckley, Harvey Fierstein, Bea Arthur, Judy Collins, Melissa Etheridge, and countless others. She continues to write for diverse clients including the Montrose Star, an internationally distributed energy magazine, a men’s underpants designer, and more.



**SAÏD HENRY PRESSLEY**  
**NARRATOR**

Saïd Henry Pressley previously appeared with Houston Grand Opera as a Jailer in *Tosca*, Hyde in *Prince of Players*, Voice of Sweeney Todd in *Sweeney Todd*, Ned in *Its a Wonderful Life* and The Messenger in *La Traviata*. He also appeared in the company world premiere of *The Pastry Prince*, and *Cinderella in Spain*. Other notable roles include Presto in *Les mamelles de Tirésias*, Simone/Maestro Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Wu Tianshi in the American premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies’s *Kommilitonen!* Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Sebastian in the world premiere recording of Lee Hoiby’s *The Tempest* (Albany Records), Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* with Purchase Opera. Pressley performed in *Unsung Activist* by Steve Wallace with Opera in the Heights and has appeared with The Dacameron Opera Coalition. With Houston’s Transitory Sound and Movement Collective, he has performed at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art and MATCH Houston. He won first prize in the Tony and Sally Amato Opera Competition (2010); second prize in the Harlem Opera Theater Competition (2013); and was named a semi-finalist in Dallas Opera Guild’s Annual Vocal Competition (2014) and Best Vocalist at the Sid Wright Accompanying Competition (2018). A graduate of Purchase College Conservatory and The Juilliard School, he is pursuing a doctorate degree at the Butler School of Music.

The Houston Pride Band is honored to be voted as **Favorite Houston LGBT Performing Arts Organization** in the annual Gayest & Greatest awards from OutSmart Magazine!





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Consider making a tax deductible donation - or better yet, become a **monthly sponsor** of the band by making a recurring donation throughout the year. Just go to <http://houstonprideband.org/donate> and click on the "Donate" button. From here, you can make a one time donation, or open the "Donate" menu, and select "Donate Monthly" to become a monthly sponsor. Thank you for your support!

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THE CHILDREN WERE NESTLED ALL SNUG IN THEIR BEDS,  
WHILE VISIONS OF NEW BEDROOMS DANCED IN THEIR HEADS.  
AND MAMMA IN HER 'KERCHIEF AND I IN MY CAP.  
HAD JUST SETTLED DOWN IN OUR NON-ENSUITE BEDROOM FOR A LONG WINTER'S NAP.

WHEN, WHAT TO MY WONDERING EYES SHOULD APPEAR,  
BUT CRAWFORD HOWELL IN A SLEIGH, AND EIGHT TINY REINDEER.

WITH A JOLLY OLD REALTOR, SO LIVELY AND QUICK,  
I KNEW IN A MOMENT IT COULD NOT BE ST NICK.  
MORE RAPID THAN EAGLES THE PROPERTIES THEY CAME.  
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# houston★pride★band

## our story

Serving as a community band in Houston's LGBTQ+ community, the Houston Pride Band has several groups that perform at local events throughout the year as well as concerts and parades. We also provide a fun social experience for musicians.

The Houston Pride Band has a proud history spanning four decades. Originally known as the Montrose Marching Band, the organization was formed by a small group of musicians in 1978 as a way to make new friends and to provide entertainment for Houston's gay and lesbian community.

The Houston Pride Band is a member of the Pride Bands Alliance, a national musical organization made up of over thirty bands across the nation and around the world. With Pride Bands Alliance, members of the Houston Pride Band have been able to participate at every Gay Games, several Presidential Inaugurations, and conferences throughout the world.

## mission

The mission of the Houston Pride Band is:

1. To provide a welcoming, comfortable and safe musical outlet for LGBTQ+ and allied musicians to participate in a community band setting.
2. To encourage interest in public and private music education through concerts and events that uplift and inspire musical interest in people of all ages.
3. To use musical performances to support local community organizations and events.
4. To host and participate in local, state, national, and international conferences that foster the continuing participation of all individuals in community musical programs.

## membership & rehearsals

The Houston Pride Band is open to all brass, woodwind, and percussion players of all skill levels. The band rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 PM. For additional details, please visit our website at [houstonprideband.org](http://houstonprideband.org) or email [info@houstonprideband.org](mailto:info@houstonprideband.org).

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Formerly the Lesbian and Gay Band Association, the Pride Bands Alliance is a membership organization comprised of concert and marching bands from cities across the United States and the world.

Great performances are the most visible manifestation of the lesbian and gay band movement. Member bands across the country appear in hundreds of concerts, parades, and community events every year. For more information, visit [www.pridebands.org](http://www.pridebands.org).

## AND THE ASSOCIATION OF CONCERT BANDS

The Houston Pride Band is also a member of the Association of Concert Bands. The mission of the Association of Concert Bands is to foster excellence in Concert Band music through performance, education, and advocacy. ACB has formed Blanket Performance Licensing Agreements with both BMI and ACSAP for performance rights for its members.

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