

MINNESOTA STATE MOORHEAD

UNITED IN RHYTHM AND SONG: MUSIC FOR CHOIR AND PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026 | 7:30 P.M.
MINNESOTA STATE MOORHEAD, HANSEN THEATRE**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2026 | 2:15 P.M.
MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER**





MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear Members of the Minnesota Music Educators Association,

We are honored to share with you the amazing work and talent of the Minnesota State Moorhead Dragon Choir and Percussion Ensemble. We are thrilled to perform at the MMEA Midwinter Convention, as we share the goal of connecting, engaging, and uniting through performing arts.

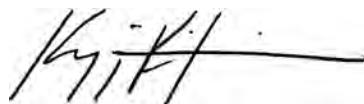
Across history we can look to the arts, in all its forms, to illuminate the human experience and transform the way we understand the world. At Minnesota State Moorhead, our goal is to transform potential and empower purpose. I firmly believe our students, in turn, are empowered to transform the way we understand the world through their creative expression.

Having been an arts educator for 20 years, I have seen the great things our alumni have gone on to do in their careers, putting their arts education into practice and making positive change in the world. The arts make our world a better, more inclusive place. The arts unite us.

I wish to thank MMEA for supporting our students and being a champion of the arts. Enjoy the convention and come visit us in Moorhead!

Best wishes,

Kyja



Dr. Kyja Kristjansson-Nelson

*Dean, Honors College & College of Arts & Humanities
Minnesota State Moorhead*



ROSTERS

MSUM DRAGON CHOIR

Sopranos

Piper Cooper, Jordan, MN
Livia Douglas, Aberdeen, SD
Andi Koester, Sartell, MN
Sophia Kruschke, Belle Plaine, MN
Miranda Langford, Long Prairie, MN*
Grace Lanners, Fargo, ND
Ellie Larsen, Eagan, MN*
Avery Lueck, Hamburg, MN*
Annika Lukken, Clitherall, MN
Talia Mercer, Fargo, ND
Genevieve Nelson, Arthur, ND
Hannah Norton, West Fargo, ND
Abigail Silvernagel, Lincoln, ND
Izabel TSherman, Fargo, ND

Altos

Sylvia Black, Platteville, WI
Hannah Cegla, Donnelly, MN
Kayla Huebner, Red Wing, MN
Zoelle Jacobson, Fergus Falls, MN
Lydia Leopold, Moorhead, MN
Rhone Nelson, Minot, ND
Julia Putt, Minot, ND
Keziah Quanbeck, Moorhead, MN*
Bella Richman, Maple Grove, MN*
Abby Troke, Eyota, MN
Jessica Utke, Enderlin, ND
Maria Wiegrefe, Moorhead, MN
Eilir Zimmermann, Minneapolis, MN

Basses

Jacob Anderson, Bagley, MN
Sam Arneson, Hawley, MN
Michael Atteberry, Barnesville, MN
Keegan Bestland, Staples, MN
Josiah Campos, Apple Valley, MN
Phil Fallway, Fargo, ND
Conor Hedblom, Roseville, MN*
Timothy Pettys, Moorhead, MN
Carter Reburn, Moorhead, MN
Kyle Tierney, Henning, MN
Levi Trygstad, Park Rapids, MN
Woodland Zilka, Little Falls, MN

Tenors

Hogan Bergene, Adams, MN
Aspen Christeson, Fargo, ND*
Sean Hamm, Morris, MN
Johnathon Haverkamp, Holt, MN
Benjamin Herrington, Bismarck, ND*
Teddy Hochhalter, Valley City, ND
Mullins, Fargo, ND
Adam Rice, Lake Crystal, MN
Matt Somsky, Rosemount, MN
Jack Stordahl, Saint Francis, MN
David Wells, Osage City, KS
Isaiah Wiegrefe, Moorhead, MN

*denotes choir board officer

MSUM PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

George Armstrong, West Fargo, ND
Aidan Kolehmainen, Monticello, MN
Zian Loe, Las Vegas, NV
Annika Lukken, Battle Lake, MN
Leah Meyer, West Fargo, ND
Julia Putt, Minot, ND
Carter Reburn, Moorhead, MN
Eva Stoeckel, St. Cloud, MN
Jacob Voxland, Shakopee, MN



PROGRAM

Maracatu Medley (2012) Traditional, arr. Tim and Pat O'Keefe,
Trans. Kenyon Williams

Rhone Nelson, solo
unpublished

Pegasus (1997) Malcolm Dalglish (b. 1952)
arr. for percussion Kenyon Williams

Dr. Jean Hellner, piano
Oolitic Music

Drumsound Rises from “Three Themes of Life and Love” (2013) Daniel Elder (b. 1986)

GIA Publications

Two Scenes from “Moonlite” (2017) Music: Wally Gunn (b. 1984)
Libretto: Maria Zajkowski

Scene 2: The Future by the Past

Scene 7: Walked I Think Twelve Miles

www.wallygunn.com

Concerto for Marimba and Choir with Percussion (2010) Gene Koshinski (b. 1980)

Introduction: Shout!

I. Layers

III. Strike

Dr. Kenyon Williams, marimba soloist
Bachovich Music Publications

Ascendit Deus (2019) Michael Johnson (b. 1990)
arr. for percussion Kenyon Williams

www.michaeljohnson.com

TEXT & PROGRAM NOTES

Maracatu is a vibrant Afro-Brazilian performance tradition that originated in the northeastern state of Pernambuco, particularly around the city of Recife. Rooted in the cultural fusion of African, Indigenous, and Portuguese influences, maracatu combines powerful drumming, call-and-response singing, and elaborate costumed processions to create a deeply rhythmic and theatrical spectacle. Historically tied to coronation ceremonies of Congo Kings and Queens—an Afro-Brazilian expression of identity and resilience under colonial rule—maracatu today continues as both a street procession during Carnival and a symbol of cultural pride. For musicians, performing maracatu demands an understanding of its layered polyrhythms, deep sense of swing, and communal spirit—each voice contributing to a powerful collective pulse that reflects centuries of cultural continuity and resistance.

Nagô, Nagô, Nagô,
Nossa Rainha já se coroou our queen has been crowned

“**Pegasus**, which draws from the Greek myth of Pegasus and melodic material from a 14th-century Italian laude, is about rising from the weight of despair and emptiness while exploring images and dreams of flying.” – Malcolm Dalglish, composer

Flying in a dream, a wing ‘n a prayer,
Soaring above, horse o’ the wind, up in the air.

There is no melody here, no heartbeat counting time,
Nor tender whisper in your ear, or universal sign,
No crashing cymbal, there is no token bird,
Nor holy hymnal, there is no spoken word for peace.
Over fields and down to the mountain,
Weightless water in the crest o’ the fountain.

There isn’t any vision here or voices in your head.
There isn’t any resting place in what was left unsaid.
The skin is hungry on the hand to cling to rock and stone,
The white upon the knuckle, the need to be alone.
Tangled branches reach beneath you,
Tranquil water in a clearing to greet you.

Flying in a dream, a wing ‘n a prayer, soaring above.
Flying in a dream, horse o’ the wind in a sweep across the sky.

Playing with the forces that hold you to the ground,
The hobbled flying horses are suddenly unbound.
Their nostrils flared and steaming, their wings pull on the wind,
Loose the reigns! Let ‘m go, swiftly flying.
Like a leaf in fall wind blowing,
Like a child up in a swing letting go,
Flying flying, a wing a wing, soaring soaring, air air.
Flying and dreaming on horses in air. Air air air air air.

TEXT & PROGRAM NOTES

Drumsound Rises is the third and final movement of Three Themes of Life and Love, for mixed chorus and percussion, with text by the 13th century poet Rumi translated by poet Coleman Barks (b.1938). In the last movement, “the heart’s question is finally answered and the music returns to the same joyful motive expressed in the first movement, echoing the central ideas of love and light.” – Daniel Elder, composer

*Drum sound rises on the air, its throb, my heart.
A voice inside the beat says, “I know you’re tired, but come. This is the way.”
– Rumi (1207-1273)*

Moonlite, winner of the Albert H. Maggs Composition Award in 2019, is a 90 minute oratorio written by Wally Gunn and Maria Zajkowski based on a true story. In Australia in the late 19th-century, an educated Irishman by the name of Andrew George Scott rose to infamy. Once an engineer, soldier, and gentleman, Scott was employed as a preacher when he was convicted of bank robbery, leaving a note at the scene signed ‘Captain Moonlite.’ While in prison he met James Nesbitt and the two became lovers. Upon release, Scott and Nesbitt were plagued by hardship and police harassment in Melbourne, and set out for the countryside in search of work and a better life. With a reputation preceding them and hunger at their heels, their honest efforts were thwarted, leading them to take desperate actions. The extraordinary events that followed tell a story of daring, bravery, love, violence, tragedy, and punishment, and in 1880 Scott went to the gallows, wearing a ring made of Nesbitt’s hair. The events of Scott’s life are documented in his own words in letters he wrote while waiting for his execution.

SCENE 02

the future by the past | Scott’s testimony: “Situated as I am I wish to speak what I know, but the hearts of the so-called Christians of the nineteenth century are harder than stones and refuse to be written on even by the finger of God.”

truth stays true	beautiful habits
“I shed no blood”	“to fathers and mothers”
what is said about what is said	clear to god
“starving”	“teach your children to be cowards”
the map too late	I couldn’t see
“the battle was unequal”	“as in all things”
born twice	but went
“in the darkness of our misery”	“I was opposed”
in a man	beyond the road
“think of us with charity”	“wait till the grass grows on our graves”
met and not met	magnetic
“promises I have made”	“as in all things”
in my debt	it is not the water
“are broken by death”	“I did not so much sin”
the static wanders	that drowns
“to quietly stand”	“as was sinned against”
the fate of halves	it is not the air
“and be shot”	“standing as I do”
great things stain the baby’s head	that hangs
“this is my birthday”	“on the verge of”
rust in rain	
“my death day is near”	

TEXT & PROGRAM NOTES

SCENE 07

walked I think twelve miles | “We lost friendly shelter and determined to leave Melbourne, carrying blankets, clothes, firearms. We earnestly tried to obtain work but everywhere we went we were objects of suspicion. In one day we walked I think twelve miles.”

over earth
under star
navigate
where you are

to the sun
falling ark
where you break
what will come

how far I never went
so many dreams so far away
with all the lives mislaid
broken days I came to save

I walk where I can't say
if I belong, if I should run
the journey of a heart
through restlessness I lost and won

life asleep
life awake
freedom spent
turning fate

brittley, smallest leaf, onward and only on, cut into silver trees, splintering day and night, burning light, tracking the earth into future, we counteract what to be, continent, desert sent, river rift, courting a fate to be, wandering history

...
fall up
all down

... body lost, subtle see, knowing X, Y and we constantly throw away poetry, waterless, mirror weight, mirror soul, six too late, lost today, shimmer arc, echo ache, bullet eye, stony fire, counter these trees gone blind, noon by night, weary debt consequence, featherless, reinvent comet code, dry sea scent, void corrode, human is brittley.

TEXT & PROGRAM NOTES

The winner of the 2012 ASCAP Nissim Prize for Best New Score for Large Ensemble, the '**Concerto for Marimba and Choir**' functions like any other concerto, showcasing the versatility of the marimba, but with choir in place of orchestra. Vocal and percussion performance are without a doubt some of the oldest musical traditions in the world. This work is the product of my vision to combine these two ancient art forms through a contemporary lens. – Gene Koshinski, composer.

Ascendit Deus depicts the ascension of the ark to its place atop Mount Sion. The Israelites start far off, and grow more excited and louder as they approach. The percussive middle section is based on the original chant melody and brings the clamorous celebration to the fore.

*Ascendit Deus in jubilatione,
et Dominus in voce tubae.
Alleluia.*

*God is ascended amid jubilation,
and the Lord to the sound of the trumpet.
Alleluia.*

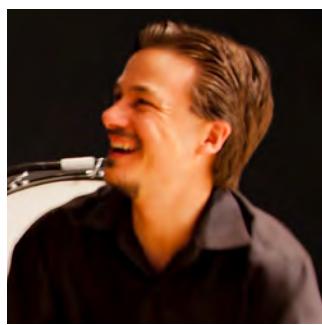
-Traditional Latin, Psalm 47:5

THE MINNESOTA STATE MOORHEAD DRAGON CHOIR AND PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE



The **Minnesota State Moorhead Dragon Choir**, under the direction of Dr. Michael Johnson, is an auditioned, mixed ensemble committed to artistic excellence, strength through community, and the performance of diverse choral repertoire. The choir most recently visited New Orleans, exploring Haitian, Spanish, French, and jazz-inspired choral music. The Dragon Choir is also dedicated to performing new music and to collaborating with ground-breaking artists, such as (most recently) world champion beat-boxer Kaila Mullady and award-winning rapper D Smoke. The choir was recently honored to perform at the 2024 ACDA Conference in Mathomedi, MN. Our Dragons represent a cross-section of the campus, coming from all areas of study and pouring their hearts into their craft.

Dr. Michael Johnson



Directed by Dr. Kenyon Williams, the **Minnesota State Moorhead Percussion Ensemble** performs music from both Western and non-Western repertoires throughout the upper Midwest and are well known for their dynamic concert events ranging from truly unique performances on custom built ice percussion instruments to percussion theatre, avant-garde musicircus events, and world percussion concert experiences. The ensemble has performed at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, the Music Educators' National Convention, multiple Minnesota Percussion Days, and at both the North Dakota and Minnesota Music Educator's Mid-Winter Conferences. The ensemble often performs with internationally recognized guest artists and hosts a biennial Percussion Day featuring internationally renowned guest clinicians and performers. The Percussion Ensemble is a part of the Minnesota State Moorhead Percussion Studio, which also includes the Fuego Tropical Steel Drum and World Music Ensemble and the Dragon Drumline.

Dr. Kenyon Williams



MINNESOTA STATE

Minnesota State University Moorhead,
A member of Minnesota State

**MINNESOTA STATE MOORHEAD
SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS**

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