

The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024





To the Pride Bands Alliance Board of Directors and the Assembly of Delegates,

It is again my honor to submit “*The Heart of it All*,” Columbus Pride Bands’ bid for the 2024 annual conference.

Preparing and presenting a bid last year at Houston for hosting the 2023 conference was both challenging and rewarding. While we were disappointed to not win, we certainly were not defeated. I, along with my fellow board members and all of us who worked on the 2023 bid, believe in the vision we have for the annual Pride Bands Alliance Conference. The momentum from last year did not die out, and we are inspired to once again bid for 2024. The Columbus Pride Bands are honored and thankful for your consideration of our conference proposal.

All of us from Columbus are excited to welcome you to our community so you can see for yourself how much heart our city, our state and our band has to offer!

Yours in music, visibility, and pride,  
Chris Daniels  
President – Columbus Pride Bands

*Our mission is to create quality musical and social experiences for our members and community through a variety of performances. We provide an open, inclusive, and fun atmosphere, while promoting the joy of music, friendship, and personal growth.*

The Columbus Pride Bands is excited to invite you to join us in Columbus for *The Heart of it All*, our bid for the Pride Bands Alliance 2024 Annual Conference. Scheduled for July 17th – 21st, 2024, *The Heart of It All* will be a conference rich with artistic collaborations, musical performances and vast opportunities to explore our city and events like never before!

## *The History of the Columbus Pride Bands*

In 1999, a lone trumpet player showed up on a dare at the Bat-N-Rouge drag softball game, an annual charity event held during Pride weekend. He assisted the cheerleaders in exhorting the crowd and providing encouragement by blaring out a few familiar trumpet tunes. The following year, the trumpeter and his percussionist friend organized a 13-member pep band that took Bat-N-Rouge by storm. By Pride 2002, the group numbered 25+ and rented a school bus to transport members on a progressive pep rally to five different bars ending with a grand entrance at the softball fields.



*The Heart of it All*  
Columbus 2024



In June 2003, 28 musicians took to the streets of downtown Columbus in what was then The Capital Pride Band of Columbus's first Pride march, becoming our first official event as an ensemble. Since then, the roster has grown to over 100 musicians between our marching and concert contingents. Columbus Pride Bands has marched in every Columbus Pride Festival since 2003, and since 2009 has been at the front and center of the parade.



In Spring of 2005, Columbus Pride Bands expanded beyond parades and pep gigs and held its first concert band performance. Since then, the Columbus Pride Concert Band presents two concerts a year, performing in some of the best professional theatres and concert halls in Columbus to audiences that have reached over 500 attendees. Led by the artistic talents of Robert Davis and Jennifer Olis, the musical backgrounds of our members range from band directors and professional musicians to those who have not touched their instrument since high school. In 2014, we partnered with the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus for a joint concert which featured a commissioned work for concert band and choir. The band's sound, musicianship and participation have continued to grow each year, along with its audience and partnerships.

The Columbus Pride Pep Band is a staple during football season, leading about half a dozen pep rallies and providing half time entertainment at local bars. Columbus Pride Bands held the honor of performing at the opening ceremonies of the 2010 and 2015 Gay Softball World Series. Our pep band has also been hired for private parties and events as well as participating in local events throughout the city.





## Current Columbus Pride Bands Board

### Officers

Chris Daniels  
**President**

T. J. Klopstein  
**Vice President**

Bill Thacker  
**Treasurer**

Kevin Vaselakes  
**Secretary**

### Directors

Robert Davis, Jennifer Olis  
**Artistic Directors**

Stephen Phillips  
**Archives**

Jan Bednarczuk  
**Communications**

Stephen Carpenter  
**Community Liaison**

Tony Killian  
**Marketing**

Christina King  
**Sales**

Erin Stemm  
**Pride Partners**

Christine Swoboda  
**Web**

## Conference Leadership

Tim Yanok  
**Chair**

### Upcoming Leadership Roles

Director of Social Event Management  
Director of Performance Event Management  
Director of Communications & Marketing  
Director of Fundraising & Development  
Director of Membership & Registration  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Assistant to the Artistic Directors

## Our City and our State

Columbus and Central Ohio are home to some of the most amazing cultural experiences in the US. Columbus Pride is the 6th largest in the country, drawing crowds of over 750,000 attendees from Central Ohio and its neighboring regions. As the 14th most populous city in America, Columbus is a unique blend of urban and rural; fine dining, zany public art, top-tier music and entertainment is mirrored by expansive country landscapes and the ever-understated Midwestern hospitality.

Summer in Central Ohio is filled with activity! In the heart of downtown Columbus, you will find music and arts festivals, biking and hiking trails that weave through our parks and past our landmarks. Internationally recognized for its dining and its craft beer, Columbus has no shortage of entertainment and nightlife to fit any palate.



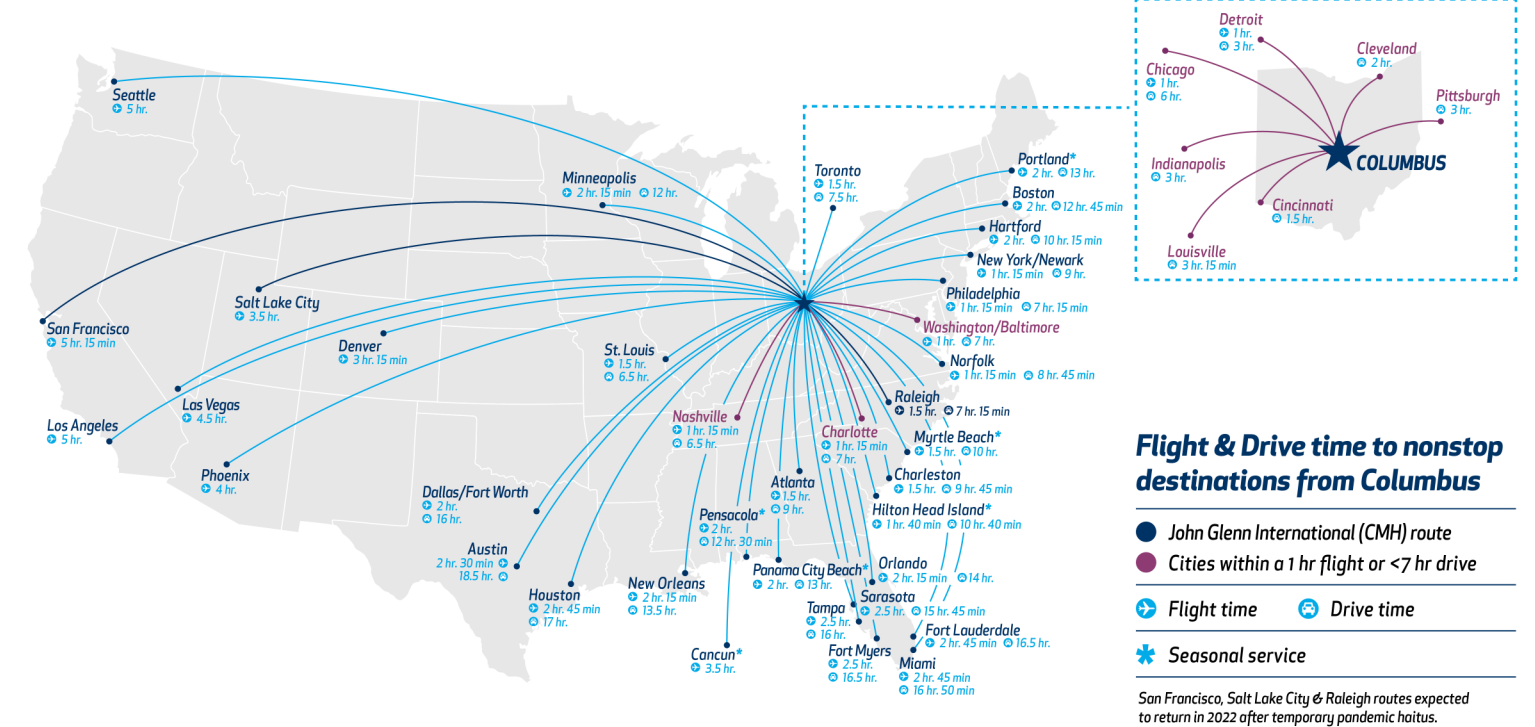


## Our Vision for 2024

The conference title, *The Heart of it All!*, will showcase the diversity and musical richness of Columbus by highlighting music and composers from and about The Buckeye State. We aim to show Pride Bands Alliance how our region truly is at the heart of so much culture. Based in the center of downtown Columbus, our host hotel, social & gala events and our performances are all within one square mile. Museums, fine dining, award-winning breweries and expansive parks and trails are all within the downtown neighborhood.

We are planning a variety of performance opportunities including, concert bands, big band, pep band, color guard performance and opportunities for chamber ensembles. We have already connected

with local businesses, city leaders and friends of the band in securing resources and funding for our conference as well as for hosting and sponsoring our events. One of our goals in hosting is to introduce more of our members to Pride Bands Alliance as a national organization and to inspire them to become involved with not only our band but also our neighboring bands and the national organization. We anticipate 350 registrants for our conference with 75 coming from Columbus Pride Bands and 100 coming from other Ohio pride bands. We cannot wait to show all of our guests our city and introduce our band to all the wonderful people in Pride Bands Alliance!



## So Close to So Much!

Traveling to and from Columbus is easy, whether by plane or driving. Port Columbus International Airport has all of the access and flight availability of larger cities but without all the traffic, congestion and hassle. Getting from our airport to Downtown is fast and affordable!

We want *The Heart of It All* to be more than a few days in Columbus. Our vision is to have our guests arrive early or stay late (or both!) so they can take in all Ohio has to offer.

For those seeking thrills and excitement, Columbus is between two of America's best amusement parks. Cedar Point, which has held the title of America's Best Amusement park for 15 of the past 20 years, is just two hours north, along the shores of Lake Erie. Less than two hours south is Kings Island.

Arrive Early. Stay Late. Experience Columbus & Ohio!



*The Heart of it All*  
Columbus 2024

## Conference Registration

Conference registration will open during the 2023 Conference. Musician registration will end three weeks prior to our proposed date. Guest registration will be open through the 2024 conference. We will be working with the Pride Bands Alliance Board in securing a registration system and conference website.

### Early Registration

Friday, Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 to Sunday, Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 - \$90

### Late Registration

Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 - Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 - \$120

### Regular Registration

Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 - Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 - \$105

### Guest Registration/Non-performer

Friday, Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 - Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 - \$50

## Covid-19 & Health and Safety Precautions

The Columbus Pride Band is committed to following federal, state and local Covid safety precautions. The dates for our conference would be two years after selection, and in the two years since the pandemic started, we have all seen how quickly data, guidelines and the virus itself can change. Our Covid-19 policy would mirror the policy that will have been established for the 2023 Denver conference as well as modifying it for 2024 based on active safety guidelines.

## Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

In 2019, our organization began the process of rebranding our name and our mission. As part of our ongoing visioning and rebranding, we have and will continue to reaffirm our commitment to uplifting the minoritized and underrepresented voices that make up our community. The Columbus Pride Bands is proud to welcome membership of all backgrounds and experience, and we strive to foster a musical community where our membership can be seen and heard both solo and tutti.

## Marketing & Communications

We have partnered with “Experience Columbus,” our city’s tourism and events bureau, to promote our conference and event throughout Central Ohio. This partnership gives us access to event calendars, social media, program advertising and community bulletins, allowing us extended reach into new media markets.

Email, social media and direct outreach to member bands will be the primary means of promoting registration for The Heart of It All. The music programs and artistic staff will be selected immediately following the 2023 conference, allowing us the time from June 2023 through June 2024 to promote the conference locally, with member bands, and nationally. We have already begun networking with neighboring Pride bands



in Ohio and the surrounding states in an effort to collaborate prior to the 2024 conference. We will capitalize on our existing connections with local news media to promote this event to reach a broader audience.

## Fundraising

We have been in conversations with local stakeholders as part of our 2023 conference bid. Several individual donors, community partners and businesses have been secured for donations should we be awarded the 2024 bid. We have grant applications out to the Ohio Arts Council and Greater Columbus Arts Council. We have contacted local music stores to sponsor events. We have devised fundraising campaigns for our membership to promote. Our goal is to secure about \$25,000 from fundraising and sponsorship efforts prior to June 2024.



The Heart of It All  
Columbus 2024

## Our Conference Host Hotel

The Downtown Renaissance by Marriott will be our host hotel. Fresh from a dramatic \$16 million renovation, this stylish 4-star Columbus hotel is located in the center of downtown Columbus. Luxurious rooms with upscale amenities welcome guests at this convenient hotel in downtown. Enjoy a meal at Latitude 41, serving fresh, natural American cuisine, or a signature cocktail in Bar 41's vibrant atmosphere. The rooftop pool showcasing stunning views of downtown is the perfect way to enjoy the hot times of summer in the city. The Renaissance will make available gender-neutral restrooms on the second and third floors in the vicinity of the ballroom where we will rehearse and the meeting spaces for workshops and meetings.

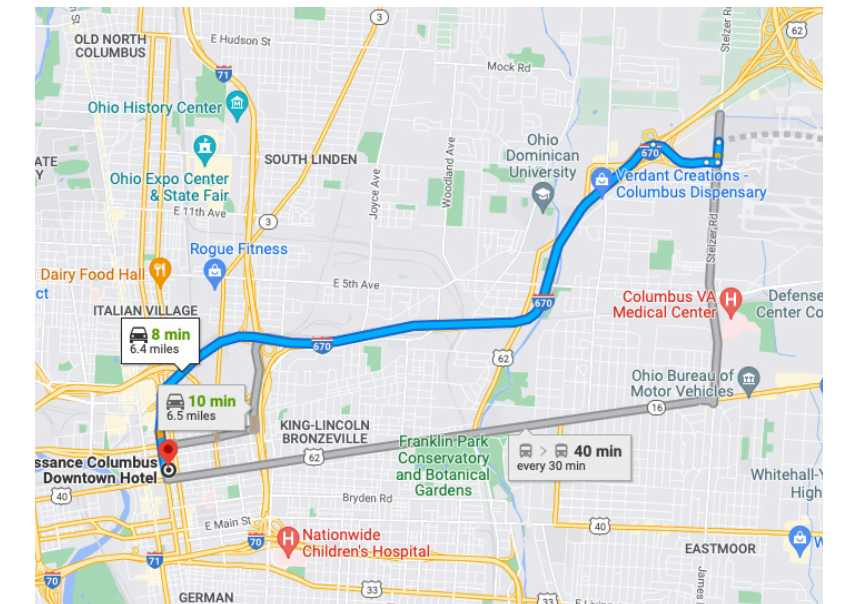
Dozens of local favorite restaurants, cafes and eateries can be found on High Street and Gay Street, just a few steps away from our host hotel. Restaurants within walking distance include Tip Top Kitchen and Cocktails, The Keep Kitchen and Liquor Bar, Cafe Napolitana, Veritas, Elevator Brewery, and Mitchell's Steakhouse.



## Hotel Costs

Room rates for the conference are \$163/night with a room block running from Sunday, 07/14 – Sunday 07/21. Complimentary hi-speed Wi-Fi, business center and fitness center are available. Valet parking is \$28/day, and the hotel is a quick 15 minute drive from John Glenn International Airport.

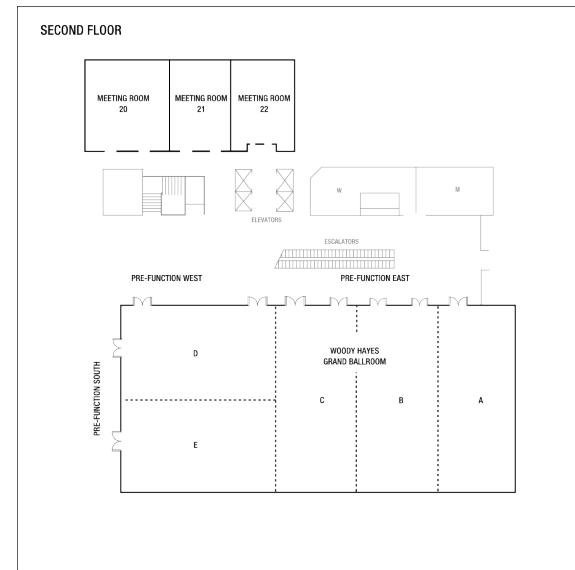
The hotel is also offering complementary shuttles between the hotel and the Davidson Theatre on Friday and Saturday for those that request it.





## Meeting Space

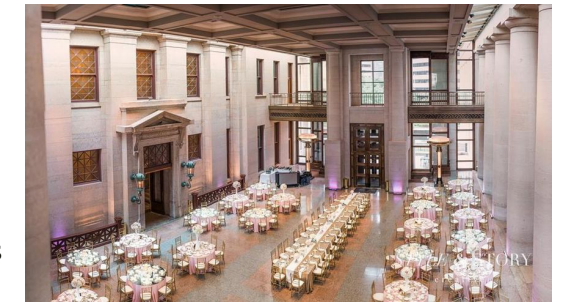
Workshops and rehearsals will be held on the second floor breakout rooms and ballroom, while board meetings and the assembly of delegates will be held in the first floor conference rooms. Gender-neutral restrooms will be available on the same floor as our meeting spaces.



## Planned Social Events



The site of our Welcome Gala is the historic Ohio Statehouse, across the street from our theatre and a stone's throw from the hotel. The resplendent Statehouse Atrium will be the grounds for both the reception as well as the venue for our chamber ensemble and color guard performances. Complimentary guided tours through the historic halls will be ongoing through the evening.



The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024



The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024





Slammers will be hosting and sponsoring our social concert after party. Opened in 1993, it is Ohio's oldest gay bar and is still owned by founder Marcia Riley. As one of approximately twenty remaining Lesbian bars in the country and the only one in Ohio, Slammers was supported by the Lesbian Bar Project to help it survive the COVID-19 pandemic. They serve appetizers, pizza, subs, cocktails, and local draft beers.

## Artistic Staff



**Robert Davis** has served as Lead Artistic Director of Columbus Pride Bands since spring of 2017, having previously served as Assistant Artistic Director. Robert moved to Columbus and joined Columbus Pride Bands in the summer of 2015 after completing a Master of Music degree in Instrumental Conducting at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he studied with Dr. John Climer. At UWM he co-directed the Panther Pep Band, guest conducted with the Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, and the University Band, and assisted with the administration of the band program. He previously completed a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education at Ohio University. Robert currently teaches high school band in suburban Columbus where he has the opportunity to work with an inspiring bunch of students each and every day.



A focal point for gay nightlife in the city, Union Cafe, along with Axis Nightclub just across the street, is known for hosting Ohio's premier drag performances.

Saturday Drag Brunch and Sunday Night showtunes are especially popular. Brunch is one of the best dining experiences in the city, served buffet-style; brunch includes an omelet bar, waffle bar and build-your-own Bloody Mary's, and all the people watching you could ask for.

**Jennifer Olis** has served as Assistant Artistic Director of Columbus Pride Bands since the spring of 2019. She earned her Bachelor of Music Education and Trombone Performance degrees from Ohio University and Master of Music degree in Wind Conducting from The Ohio State University, where she studied with Dr. Russel Mikkelson. She currently is the Director of Bands in the Logan-Hocking School District in southeastern Ohio. At Logan, Jennifer co-teaches the high school concert band, marching band, and jazz band, eighth grade band, seventh grade band, and serves as the primary fifth and sixth grade saxophone and low brass teacher. She also assists with chamber ensembles, the musical pit orchestra, and the pep band program. Prior to coming to Logan, Jennifer was a Co-Director of Bands at Muskego High School in southeastern Wisconsin.



**Dr. Jon Noworyta** is Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Bands, Instrumental Activities, and Outreach at the University of Indianapolis, where he administers all aspects of the instrumental area, conducts the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Pep Band, and teaches courses in conducting and music education. A versatile conductor equally comfortable with orchestras as well as wind and brass groups, he is the Artistic Director of the Queen City Freedom Band of Cincinnati, Assistant Conductor of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, and Director of the Crossroads Brassband of Franklin, Indiana; ensembles he works with in addition to his duties at UIndy. A Western New York native, Noworyta holds degrees from Baldwin-Wallace College (BME), Northwestern University (MM), and the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati (DMA). Additional study as a participant in conducting workshops at the Eastman School of Music, the New England Conservatory, and the Juilliard School, has given Noworyta the opportunity to work with the major conducting pedagogues in the field today.



**Megan Banks** is a music educator and percussion specialist. Megan received her Bachelors in Music Education from the University of Toledo in 2015, with a specialization in Instrumental Music. She studied percussion under Dr. Olman Piedra, and has training in both classical and jazz idioms. Megan works for Columbus City Schools as a middle school band teacher; her educational philosophy focuses on giving students a contemporary and relevant music education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Megan's day to day teaching includes a mixture of traditional music education principles, modern experiences such as audio production, and the infusion of current popular styles of music. Megan remains immersed in the music community on a local and national level. She has performed with the Columbus Pride Bands since 2016 as a band member and section leader. She currently performs at venues all over Ohio with her indie-pop band Made of the Mist and is also working on an upcoming funk project called Dankkopolis. Megan is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity, and the Ohio Music Education Association. Megan currently resides in Grove City, OH with her wife and 2 cats, and spends her free time hiking, songwriting, and playing video games.

## *Call for Assistant Artistic Directors*

Columbus Pride Bands will issue a call for Assistant Concert Artistic Directors to join our local Directors on the podium. We are committed to selecting candidates from within the Pride Bands Alliance with an emphasis on getting first-time conductors in front of our massed concert bands. Our selection process will be led by our Artistic Team and will follow similar selection processes seen in the 2018 Kansas City and 2020 Portland selection process. Calls for Assistant Artistic Directors will be issued in late 2022.

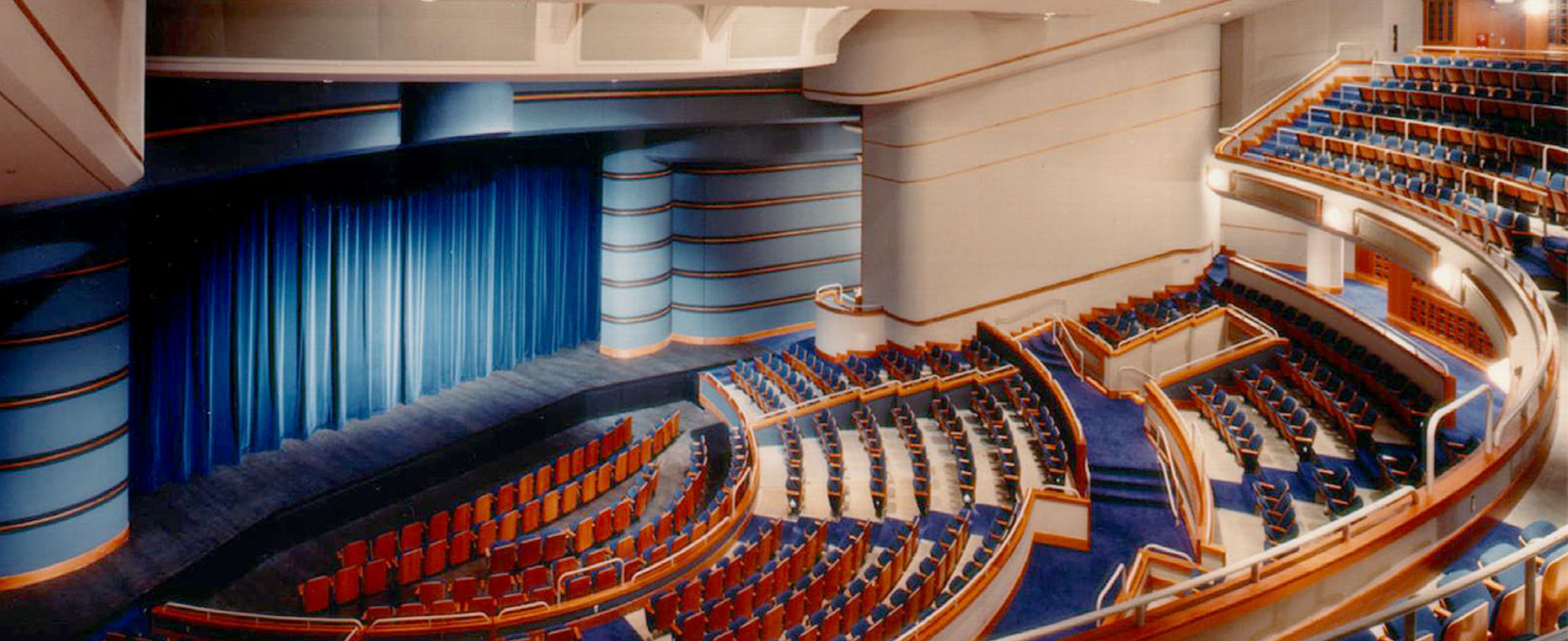
In addition to concert Assistant Artistic Directors, we will also be issuing a call for Color Guard Artistic Directors and Big Band Artistic Directors and would be following a similar process.



*The Heart of it All*  
Columbus 2024



*The Heart of it All*  
Columbus 2024



We will be using a split-band model concert band for our concert performances. Our proposed concert venue is the Jo Ann Davidson Theatre, part of the Verne Riffe Center for Government and the Arts. This state-of-the-art, 903-seat facility hosts many comedy, music, dance, theatre, family entertainment, and cultural programs each year. In addition, BalletMet, The Columbus Gay Men's Chorus, the Columbus Symphony Youth Orchestra, and The Ohio State University Department of Dance all perform regularly at the Davidson Theatre. Formerly known as the Capitol Theatre, the venue was renamed in 2016 in honor of Speaker Jo Ann Davidson, the first female speaker of Ohio's House of

Representatives. The theatre is located a half mile from The Renaissance Columbus Downtown Hotel.

Our plan is to cap each concert band at 175 musicians. Band assignments will be made based on part assignment and instrumentation, but further selections will be randomly generated to decide how sections are divided between bands. Those interested in volunteering as a section leader may complete an application alongside their regular conference registration. Section Leaders will be chosen by the full Artistic team and will be based on previous national and local leadership experience.

We will not be placing caps on any section until registration reaches 75% capacity. At that point, capacity for each section will be based on registrations and scoring of pieces performed. We will notify the Pride Bands Alliance once capacity reaches 65% and inform them of which sections could be capped. One exception to this would be percussion, and we intend to work closely with percussion section leaders as soon as event registration opens.

### Music Selection

The Concert Band Artistic Leaders have worked collaboratively to produce diverse programs of robust musical selections that players will enjoy and appreciate, which will challenge them musically, intellectually, and socially. While we will not limit ourselves, our goal is to highlight a broad array of identities, genders, and ethnic backgrounds/heritages within the kaleidoscope of composers chosen for our event; including those that are Ohio-born or Ohio-based – because we're *The Heart of It All*.

### Our Commission

In 2015, the US Supreme Court ruled in support of marriage equality in *Obergefell vs Hodges*. Originating in Ohio in 2013 as *Obergefell vs (Gov.) Kasich*, this landmark case and ruling declared across the country that two people of the same gender could marry. In celebration of such monumental queer, American and Ohio history, we are commissioning an original piece of music dedicated to the couple at the center of this case, Jim Obergefell and his late partner John Arthur.

We have commissioned composer Viet Cuong to write this piece for the conference. Called “alluring” and “wildly inventive” by *The New York Times*, his music has been performed on six continents by musicians and ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic Atlanta Symphony, and Dallas Winds, among many others. Viet’s music has been featured in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center, and his works for wind ensemble have amassed hundreds of performances worldwide. His recent works thus include a snare drum solo, percussion quartet concerto, and, most recently, a double oboe concerto. He is currently the California Symphony’s Young American Composer-in-Residence, and recently served as the Early Career Musician-in-Residence at the Dumbarton Oaks. Viet holds degrees from Princeton University (MFA/PhD), the Curtis Institute of Music (AD), and Peabody Conservatory (BM/MM).



Our commission will be in two movements, allowing each band to perform the original work. One movement will be dedicated to Jim and one dedicated to John.

## Pep Band Performance

Downtown Columbus has several public outdoor performance venues perfect for a large pep group. Hundreds of people from all over the city enjoy their lunches or leisure time in these parks, and what better surprise than some live entertainment. Our friends at Experience Columbus will partner with us in hosting our free-to-the-public performance. Music will be made up of pop hits and Columbus favorites. We will have no limit on number of participants or instruments, and we plan to program about 30 minutes of music.

## Color Guard Performance

Our Color Guard performance will kickoff the Thursday evening welcome reception. Performing routines on the steps and lawn of the Ohio Statehouse, the Color Guard will function as an independent group and not supplemental to a massed band. Our Color Guard Director will collaborate directly with members of the Color Guard to determine style, length and



The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024

complexity of routines. We will not have a cap on registration for Color Guard.

## Big Band Performance

We reserved a ballroom, so why not throw a ball? Or even better, a swing dance complete with an 18-piece Big Band?! Columbus Pride Bands is excited to partner with Swing Columbus! in hosting a classic swing dance event in the ballroom at the Renaissance Downtown Columbus. We are programming big band and swing standards alongside salsa and contemporary jazz to better incorporate the incredible musical, dance and cultural diversity big bands can provide. We are planning for two 45-minute sets of music performed by our Big Band with music by a DJ provided by Swing Columbus! during the break. Instructors from Swing Columbus! will be on hand to teach basic steps in Jitterbug and Rumba so that everyone in the Pride Bands family can get out on the dance floor.

Auditions for participation in the Big Band will be submitted via video. The conference Artistic Team will adjudicate auditions and make member selections. For those selected to perform in the Big Band who also want to perform in the concert band, these musicians will be placed in Concert Band A to avoid scheduling conflicts.

## Chamber Ensemble Performance and Call for Compositions

We will have an open call for chamber ensembles to perform during our gala reception at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium. Any soloist or ensemble will be welcome to perform without application or audition, and each ensemble may perform up to 15 minutes of music. From brass quintets to woodwind trios and the ever-popular Pride Band Sax Choir, we want to provide a venue for a facet of the unique art of community band music that doesn't always get performed. As in conferences past, these will be self-rehearsed and performed. Given the size of the venue and the scope of the gala event, we could have two ensembles performing at the same time should we have an enthusiastic turnout for participating.

The Artistic Staff will review all requests to perform at the chamber recital and will be responsible for scheduling. While we do not anticipate a need to cap performances, we will have plans in place should time and space not allow for every interested group.

We also wanted to use the chamber ensemble as an opportunity to showcase the many talented composers from the Pride Bands family. Composers within the Pride Bands Alliance are welcomed and encouraged to have their pieces performed during the Chamber Recital, and we will establish groups on our conference website and social media for composers to canvas for musicians.

## Workshops and Outreach

We are honored to be networking with the faculty of The Ohio State University School of Music to facilitate our workshops. Conductors and instrumental faculty will be lead hands-on, clinic-style workshops on a wide range of topics based on individual areas of expertise. The faculty will also be present during the Artistic Director meetup to allow for more direct networking opportunities.

We are also presenting a workshop and discussion on a highly requested topic: membership recruitment and retention. We will be bringing professional recruiters and marketing experts to discuss ways to attract musicians and engage with new members. We will also survey member bands prior to the conference with their questions and challenges in recruiting and retention.

Workshops will be conducted during full concert rehearsals. Each workshop will be presented twice, once during Band A's rehearsals and once during Band B's rehearsals, to allow participants more flexibility in their conference schedules.



The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024

See you in 2024!



The Heart of it All  
Columbus 2024