

Symphonic Band concert to feature Houghton College conductor

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The Alfred University Symphonic Band, under the direction of Christopher Foster, assistant professor of music and director of bands, will perform its 2012 Winter Concert on Friday, Dec. 7, at 8 p.m. in the Miller Performing Arts Center. Admission is free and open to the public.

The concert program includes “Olympic Fanfare and Theme” by John Williams/Curnow. Williams, an Emmy, Oscar, and Grammy Award recipient, has created the themes for movies including “Star Wars,” “Raiders of the Lost Ark,” “Superman,” and “E.T.” Williams has said that he wanted to capture the “complete dedication and unshakable will to persevere” in creating “Olympic Fanfare and Theme.”

The performance will also include “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” by J.S. Bach. The combination of graceful triplet eighth notes with a slow-moving chorale tune creates the base of this well-known piece. This particular arrangement for winds and percussion was transcribed by Alfred Reed.

In addition, the band will play “English Folk Song Suite” by Ralph Vaughan Williams. This piece will be guest conducted by Dr. Brian Casey of Houghton College and includes three different movements. Williams is one of the most eminent 20th-century composers; he rejected foreign Romantic influences and emanated native material, including Elizabethan and Jacobean music as well as English folk songs.

Other pieces which the band will play include Dana Wilson’s “Footsteps;” “Sleep” by Eric Whitacre; and “Russian Christmas Music” by Reed.

Foster earned a master of music degree in performance from the University of Nevada-Reno and a doctor of musical arts degree in performance from the University of North Texas, Denton. He has performed with many well-known groups, such as the University of North Texas Wind Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra, and Baroque Trumpet Ensemble, the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra, the Gordy Brown Show at Harrah’s Casino, and the Ruby Mountain Symphony, for which he served as principal trumpet and soloist.