



Dr. Christian Wilhjem has been the Conductor and Music Director of the Ridgewood Concert Band (now re-named the New Jersey Wind Symphony) since it's founding in 1983. Under his direction, the RCB has become widely recognized as one of the leading wind orchestras in the nation.

Dr. Wilhjem graduated from the New England Conservatory where he studied with Harry Shapiro of the Boston Symphony. He was the principal hornist with the Conservatory Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Gunther Schuller and the Conservatory Wind Ensemble under the direction of Frank Battisti. While a student, he spent three summers performing in the Fellowship Orchestra at Tanglewood where he had the distinction of being named a Leonard Bernstein Fellow. He received a Master of Music degree from The College of New Jersey and a Doctor of Education degree from Teachers' College, Columbia University. From 2000-2005 Dr. Wilhjem was the Music Director of the legendary Goldman Band in New York. His other conducting appearances include the Allentown Band, the Hanover Wind Symphony, the United States Army Field Band, the Virginia Wind Symphony, the United States Military Academy Band at West Point, the Norwalk Symphony (CT), the Plainfield Symphony (NJ) the Adelphi Chamber Orchestra, In December 2000, the legendary Harvey Phillips appoint-

ed Dr. Wilhjem as the conductor of the annual Tuba Christmas in New York City. This event, which features up to 500 tuba and euphonium players, is one of the longest running holiday events in Rockefeller Center (second only to the annual tree lighting).

Dr. Wilhjem has been an active educator for over four decades. He has been the band director at Pascack Hills High School in Montvale since 1984, and has served on the teaching staffs of Virginia Commonwealth University, The University of Richmond, William Paterson University, Montclair State University, and New York University where he served as the interim Wind Ensemble Director in 2006-2007. In 2014, Dr. Wilhjem joined the staff at Ramapo College in Mahwah, New Jersey as the director of their new concert band.

As a professional musician, Dr. Wilhjem has performed the French horn with the Boston Symphony, the Boston Pops and, as a principal, with the Boston Ballet Orchestra, the Boston Opera Orchestra and the Richmond Symphony. Dr. Wilhjem has performed with many great conductors including Leonard Bernstein, Sir Colin Davis, Arthur Fiedler, William Steinberg, and Seiji Ozawa. He has also performed as a horn player with many leading jazz and popular musicians including: Burt Bacharach, Benny Carter, Art Farmer, Isaac Hayes, Rufus Reid, Sonny Rollins, Henry Mancini and the hornist with the brass quintet in residence at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, NJ. Under Dr. Wilhjem's direction the Ridgewood Concert Band has participated in the commissioning and premier performances of new works by many composers including Steven Bryant, Patrick Burns, Johan de Meij, David Gillingham, John Mackey, Jonathan Newman, Gregory Pascuzzi, David Sampson, Joan Tower, Joseph Turrin, and Michael Valenti. Dr. Wilhjem has also been actively promoting works by great composers long associated with the Goldman Band including Percy Grainger, Erik Leidzen, Robert Russell Bennett, Vincent Persichetti, John Philip Sousa, and Edwin Franko Goldman.

In April 2012, the band was a co-sponsor and featured performer at the Association of Concert Bands national convention in Poughkeepsie NY. With the RCB he has produced two compact discs: "Organic Band" with organist David Fedor, and "Celebrations" featuring the music of composer Michael Valenti. Dr. Wilhjem is currently the New Jersey State Chair for the National Band Association, the state membership chair for the Association of Concert Bands, and member of the selection committee for the Sudler Silver Scroll, the nation's top honor for community bands presented by the John Philip Sousa Foundation.

In April 2014, Dr. Wilhjem was elected to the American Bandmasters Association. This storied organization, founded in 1929 by Edwin Franko Goldman Albert Augustus Harding, and John Philip Sousa, has been the premier association of professional conductors and composers active in the band world for 85 years. Dr. Wilhjem is the first New Jersey high school educator to be invited in the association's history.



NJ New Jersey W.S. Wind Symphony

Dr. Christian Wilhjem, Music Director
Ron Levy, piano Kristen Plumley, soprano



George Gershwin • Michael Valenti
Howard Hanson • Aaron Copland
Jeffrey Kaufman • John Mackey

John Mackey (b.1973) holds a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with John Corigliano and Donald Erb respectively. Mr. Mackey particularly enjoys writing music for dance and symphonic winds, and has focused on those mediums for the past few years. Mr. Mackey has received numerous commissions for his writing, including works for The American Bandmasters Association, the Dallas Wind Symphony, and a concerto for New York Philharmonic Principal Trombonist Joseph Alessi. The composer best describes his work *Asphalt Cocktail* as: "a five-minute opener designed to shout from the opening measure, "We're here." with biting trombones, blaring trumpets, and percussion dominated by cross-rhythms and back beats. It aims to capture the grit and aggression that I associate with the time I lived in New York City. Picture the scariest NYC taxi ride you can imagine with the cab skidding around turns as trucks beat down from all sides. Serve on the rocks."

Howard Hanson (1896-1981) was an American composer, conductor, educator, music theorist, and champion of classical music. As director for forty years of the Eastman School of Music, he built a high-quality conservatory and provided opportunities for commission and performing American music. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1944 for his Symphony No.4 "*The Requiem*" and numerous other awards. *Chorale and Alleluia* is Howard Hanson's first work for symphonic band and was commissioned in January 1954 where it was given its premiere performance at the convention of the American Bandmaster's Association at West Point. The composition opens with a fine flowing "Chorale." Soon the joyous "Alleluia" theme appears and remains in evidence throughout, while a bold statement of a new melody makes its entrance in the lower brasses. The total effect is one of cathedral bells, religious exaltation, solemnity, and dignity. This wonderful work has become a classic in the repertoire for wind symphony.

Aaron Copland (1900-1990) was born in Brooklyn, New York going on to study piano and composition both home in the United States and in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. He became one of the century's foremost composers with highly influential music that had a distinctive blend of classical, folk and jazz idioms. Some of Copland's most prominent pieces included *Fanfare for the Common Man*, *El Salon Mexico* and *Appalachian Spring*, for which he won the Pulitzer Prize. Copland was also awarded an Oscar for his film score for *The Heiress* in 1940. By the 1970s, he had ceased crafting new works, and focused on teaching and conducting in his final years.

Quiet City was originally intended as incidental music to a short running play by Irwin Shaw. The play focused on two main characters. A young Jewish boy, awestruck by the steely modernity of his city environment, yet still profoundly in touch with his own feelings and heritage; and a poor, dispossessed, and lonely man, for whom the city provides no refuge. The music begins and ends with a depiction of the still night air of the slumbering city invoked by the improvisatory sounds of

the trumpeter, with the English horn portraying the homeless man. While the spaciousness of Copland's musical textures has often been compared to the vastness of the American landscape, *Quiet City* is emblematic of an urban, internalized facet of Americana. (The arrangement heard on this recording was made by Donald Hunsberger).

Jeffrey Kaufman (b.1947) has over a span of 50 years been active as a record producer (over 300 productions), radio producer (NPR music producer), concert producer (including *Absolut Concerto*, a 6 year series for which he commissioned works of John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Aaron Jay Kernis, Michael Torke, Morton Gould and others) and theatrical producer (*An American in Paris*). He attended The Manhattan School of Music and The Juilliard School. He has received grants and awards from: The New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, The Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Alice M. Ditson Fund for Music, Meet the Composer, ASCAP Standard Panel Awards, The Gold Award International Film and TV Festival of New York, and is a three time Grammy award nominee.

The title *Court and Jester* was originally titled the rather austere *Statements for Piano and 23 Winds*. As per the composer: "It was only many weeks after finishing the work that I recognized its programmatic aspects. How I could have missed not hearing the obvious: the opening noble magisterial entrance followed by the piano's jesting theme, and where did that strange circus band come from? The trickster takes a bravura solo before the court only to reveal his romantic heart. The court and jester banter back and forth with the work coming to a big dramatic happy ending. *Statements for Piano and 23 Winds* or *Court and Jester* what's in a name? As Stravinsky had so famously stated "music can express nothing but itself". So, is there a court and a jester here? I surely can't say; YOU'LL HAVE TO BE THE JUDGE". In this recording, the final *cadenza* was created by the performer Ron Levy.

Michael Valenti (b.1942) is an American composer and conductor. His many awards include an Emmy for the score of the television series "*A Walk Through the 20th Century*" and a Peabody Award for the "*Newsmark*" music for CBS Radio. *Blood Red Roses* was written for the Broadway theater production of the same name presented in 1970. The musical was presented in two acts and was subtitled "A Play with Songs." The production was an anti-war creation written to portray an example of the "triumph of futility and brutalization" in war. Though the Broadway production was short-lived, Mr. Valenti's songs resurfaced a few years later with a variety of performers in Off Broadway revues. The overture presented here provides a listener's stroll through some of the original play's melodies.

I Could Have Danced All Night is a song from the show *My Fair Lady*, with music by Fredrick Loewe and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, published in 1956. The song is sung by the musical's heroine, Eliza Doolittle, expressing her exhilaration and excitement after an impromptu dance with her tutor, Henry Higgins.

Kiss Me Again is a song featured in the 1905 two act operetta *Mlle. Modiste* by Victor Herbert. After the original production, the piece returned to Broadway at the Knickerbocker briefly in 1906, and in between national tours, at both the original Academy of Music and the Knickerbocker in 1907, at the Globe Theatre in 1913 and at Jolson's 59th Street Theatre in 1929, among many other revivals and tours through the early 20th century.

Embraceable You is a song with music by George Gershwin with lyrics by Ira Gershwin. The song was originally written in an unpublished operetta named *East Is West*. It was eventually published and included in the musical *Girl Crazy*. It was performed by Ginger Rogers as a song and dance routine choreographed by Fred Astaire. Billy Holiday's 1944 recording was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2005.

George Gershwin (1898-1932) is perhaps one of the best-known but most misunderstood of all composers. His association with the world of popular music has led many to underestimate his genius as a composer. This statement could not prove more illustrative than in the case of one of his most neglected scores, the *Second Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*. This is a remarkable work, containing at its center one of Gershwin's most haunting themes. Yet, few concert goers are familiar with the work as its appearance in the concert hall is very rare indeed. Perhaps the Second Rhapsody's neglect was aided by the deliberately low key title which Gershwin chose for the work when compared with his previous concert work titles *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris*. To add to its troubles, the Second Rhapsody was revised many years after the composer's death by music editors who were more interested in their own self glory than preserving the masterpiece of a genius. As a result, Gershwin's own masterly orchestration has rarely, if at all, been heard by audiences in modern times. This orchestration heard on this recording has been masterfully placed into the "symphonic wind genre" by James C. Ripley, which will surely bring this Gershwin jewel to the ears of more concert audiences.

Kristen Plumley, Lauded as "sensationally note-perfect" (St. Petersburg Times), "a roguish comedienne" (The Middletown, CT Press) and "Met-worthy" (The Dallas Morning News). Ms. Plumley has portrayed Adina (L'Elisir d'Amore) and Gilda (Rigoletto) with the Greensboro Opera Company, Musetta (La bohème) with Amarillo Opera, Norina (Don Pasquale) and Zerlina (Don Giovanni)

with Virginia Opera, Barbarina (Le Nozze di Figaro) with New York City Opera, Norina (Don Pasquale) and Zerlina (Don Giovanni) with Virginia Opera, Nannetta (Falstaff) and Amor (Orfeo ed Euridice) with Opera Festival of New Jersey, Sophie (Werther) with Chautauqua Opera, Adele (Die Fledermaus) with Boheme Opera (NJ) and Opera Theatre of Connecticut, Despina (Cosi fan Tutte) with Lyric Opera of Cleveland, the Sultan of Egypt (Glück's Les Pelerins de la Mecque) with L'Opéra Français de New York, Yum-Yum (The Mikado) with Opera Memphis and Josephine (H.M.S. Pinafore) with Nevada Opera. Other roles to her credit include Juliette (Roméo et Juliette), Lauretta (Gianni Schicchi), and Kathy (Student Prince), and musical theater favorites Maria (West Side Story), Carrie (Carousel), Fiona (Brigadoon) and Laurey (Oklahoma!).

On the concert stage, Kristen Plumley has performed a broad spectrum of works, including Mozart's Coronation Mass and Requiem, Haydn's Mass in Time of War with the New England Symphonic Ensemble at Carnegie Hall., she has sung Mozart's Mass in C minor, Elgar's For the Fallen, Bach's Coffee Cantata and Respighi's Laud to the Nativity. Ms. Plumley received an Artist Diploma in opera from the Hartt School of Music and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and music from Holy Cross College. Twice a winner in the Connecticut Opera Guild Scholarship Competition, she is also a recipient of the Richard F. Gold Career Grant (Shoshana Foundation).

Ron Levy, internationally acclaimed pianist, has been called "first-class" by the New York Times. He regularly appears in major venues, both as a soloist, and in partnership with many of the world's leading singers and instrumentalists. A graduate of Oberlin, Mr. Levy has been pianist and harpsichordist of the Oberlin Orchestra, the Westchester Symphony, and the Albany Symphony, among others. Presently, he is the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood Music Director and the pianist of the Orpheus Men's Chorus and the award-winning Palisades Virtuosi of which he is a founding member. For over 20 years, Mr. Levy was associated with the Manchester (VT) Music Festival, of which he was a faculty and Board member. While living in Vermont, he was Music Director & Conductor of the Opera Theatre in Weston, and impresario of the "Third Saturday" chamber music series at the historic Equinox Hotel, as well as the "Music on the Hill" music series at the Southern Vermont Art Center. Mr. Levy has taught at numerous colleges and is currently an instructor at Montclair State University; he maintains an active and on-going affiliation with the Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard, and NJ PAC. A two-term President of the Professional Music Teachers' Guild of NJ, he is a contributing editor to BIM Music Publications, Switzerland. In the Spring of 2011 Mr. Levy made his debut at the Academy of the Arts and the University in Oahu, Hawaii. Recordings by Mr. Levy are available on the Albany, Centaur, Eroica, Koch International, MMF, and High Point labels.

Dr. Chris Wilhjem, community leaders, and musicians founded the Ridgewood Concert Band (RCB) in 1983 with the idea of providing high quality performing venues for the many accomplished wind and percussion players living in the New York Metropolitan area. On July 1, 2017, the Ridgewood Concert Band formally changed its name to the New Jersey Wind Symphony to better reflect the identity of the organization.

Through the years, consistently high level performances have led to the production of two commercially released CDs, performances on the East coast, and peer recognition through the awarding of the be edited John Philip Sousa Foundation's coveted Sudler Silver Scroll Award in 1996.

The NJWS performs an annual series of concerts presenting the very finest in wind band literature for capacity audiences. Ranging from light classics and famous marches, to cutting edge compositions by today's brilliant composers, the band's programming has drawn critical attention for its variety and depth. Originally launched as the Ridgewood Community Concert Band, an early review praising the band's fine performance proclaimed this is no "Community" band. The Board of Directors decided to incorporate as The Ridgewood Concert Band.

The members of the New Jersey Wind Symphony come from all walks of life. The musicians and board members are drawn together by a common dedication to the study, performance, and support of great music.

The quality of NJWS performances has attracted world class soloists from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, radio and television personalities and other nationally renowned performers and conductors. The New Jersey Wind Symphony has also been active in the commission and performance of new works.

The New Jersey Wind Symphony is actively engaged with area schools, offering opportunities for talented school musicians to perform with the band. In 2006, the band launched a scholarship program that reaches a large network of high schools in the region, inviting musicians who plan to seek a career in music to compete for scholarship funds. Winners showcase their talent as a featured soloist with the band. The competition and concert is one of the highlights of each season.

Each year the NJWS performs a subscription series of concerts at their performance home in West Side Presbyterian Church in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

The NJWS has also obtained world-wide recognition through international touring:

- 1998 - Central Europe: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria
- 2003 - Southern France: The Riviera Reeds Festival, La Croix Valmer; Le Pradet
- 2008 - China: Shanghai, Hangzhou, Xian, Beijing
- 2009 - Brazil: Sao Paulo, Santos, Novo Friburgo, Rio de Janeiro, Ouro Preto
- 2010 - Germany, Austrian, Italy: Garmish, Munich, Salzburg, Schladming Festival, Venice
- 2018 - (France) La Croix Valmer; Arles; (Spain) Barcelona; Valencia

PICCOLO

Max Taylor

FLUTES

Chrysten Angderon
Kristin Bacchiocchi-Stewart *
Patricia Barlow
Lisandra Hernandez
Annette Lieb
Tomomi Takamoto
Max Taylor
Jennifer Wise

OBOES

Mark J Donellan *
Drew Greis
Molly Raum

ENGLISH HORN

Molly Raum

BASSOONS

Jessica Frane
Christy Luberger *

CONTRA BASSOON

Robert Gray

E♭ CLARINET

Jeff Bittner

CLARINETS

Jeff Bittner
Suzanne Coletta
Naomi Freshwater
Joe Mariany
Leigh Myers
Marcie Phelan
Jean Roughgarden
Rachel Schulman
Beth Seavers
Neil Sheehan
Karen Summers
Richard Summers *
Sabrina Tempesta

BASS CLARINETS

Brendan Hughes
Joel Kolk *

SAXOPHONES

Lois Hicks-Wozniak * - Sop/Alto
Ryan Mantell - Sop/Alto
Jacqueline Sarracco - Alto
Thomas Wise - Tenor
Michael DePompeo - Baritone

CORNETS/TRUMPETS

Mike Connor
Dave Hurd
Dave Luquette
Tamara McLaughlin
Richard Roberts
Michael Russo
Thomas Siebenhuhner
Ann Sirinides
Tony Spinuzzi
Joseph Stella
Roger Widicus *

FRENCH HORNS

Ben Fine
Joshua Jenkins
Carolyn Kirby *
Colette Mather
Brian McLaughlin
Deloss Schertz

TROMBONES

Thomas Abbate *
Stephanie Dutcher
Ryan Halliwell
Paul Kirby
Keith Marson
Rob Paustian
Nate Rensink
Kristen Siebenhuhner
Robert Tiedemann

EUPHONIUMS

Robyn Keyes
John Palatucci *
Don Van Teyens

TUBAS

Michael Gould
Bob Sacchi *

STRING BASSES

David Marks
Charlie Nolet

PERCUSSION

Nick Dekens
Greg Landes
Yuto Takamoto
Chris Tarantino
John Wagner *
Derek Wohl
Mark Zettler

HARP

Irene Bressler
PIANO
Don Dean

*** PRINCIPAL PLAYERS**

ASSOCIATE CONDUCTORS

John Palatucci
Richard Summers

LIBRARIAN

Dave Bychek

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Richard Summers

STAGE MANAGER

Tony Spinuzzi

BOX OFFICE

Marilyn Wagner

PARKING DIRECTOR

John Hahn

WEB ADMINISTRATOR

Deloss Schertz

PROGRAM DESIGN

Joseph Stella