



School of Music
University of Missouri

2026-2027 Series | Large Ensemble

University Symphony Orchestra

Dr. John McKeever, conductor

Amanda Collins, soloist

October 25, 2026 • 3:00PM

Missouri Theatre

Program

Cityscapes (2019) John Christopher Wineglass
(b. 1973)

The Glass Bead Game (1997) James A. Beckel Jr.
(b. 1948)

- I. The Call & Awakening
- II. Father Jacobus
- III. Magister Ludi Coronation & Death

Amanda Collins, french horn

intermission

The "Montgomery Variations" (1964) Margaret Bonds
(1913-1972)

- I. Decision
- II. Prayer Meeting
- III. March
- IV. Dawn in Dixie
- V. One Sunday in the South
- VI. Lament
- VII. Benediction

University Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Flutes

Jillian Conley
Hanna Noh
Haley Parks

Oboes

Sophia Fasone
Molly Johnson
Dan Willett

Clarinets

Haley Carrier
Thomas Rodriguez
Christina Sanchez

Alto Saxophone

Tyler Trickey

Bassoons

Odin Bethune
Dominick DeStefano
Matt Fellows

Horns

Hayden Alley
Alexis Doebelin
Gretchen Haselhorst
Emmett Wright

Trumpets

Zach Beran
Jackson Kenney
Grace Watson

Trombones

Brendan Frazier
Emanuel Guzman
Tyler Martindale

Tuba

Bryce Herin

Percussion

Tristan Alderton
Annika Blackburn
Lex Henderson
Russell Wallace

Harp

Sadie Rinck

Piano

Hanyu Zhang

Violins

Kip Atteberry +
Emma Bangert
Nathan Bronstein
Angelina Casey
Mary Draxler
Matthew Fang
Thomas Goff *
Matthew Kim
Drew Lubiewski
Hadley Miller
Hayden Neally
Abi Richmond
Thomas Robert
Ethan Sanders
Kyle Stawiarski
Aidan Steinkamp
Juliana Vieira
Simon Whitty
Jocelyn Ybarra

Violas

Ella Frank
Madison Gong
Ash Merenbloom
Ava O'Bryan *
Moses Pavon
Aiden Spavale
Malijha Watts

Cellos

Clara Anderson
Broderick Beebe
Rowan Davis
Michael Fang
Auden Henderson
Sophie Hof
Sara Lawson
Daniel Postlethwait
Henry Rao
Rebecca Robuck *
Torsten Taylor

Basses

Bennett Howe
Sydney Hoynacki *
Lucas Reaume

Assistant Conductor

Ellie Chang

+ - Concertmaster

* - Principal String

Names are listed in
alphabetical order, seatings
for the winds and percussion
rotate on each piece.

Biographies

Amanda Collins is a graduate of the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Preparatory (certificate), Pennsylvania State University (BM) and Southern Methodist University (MM). Described as “impressively solid” by the Dallas Morning News, Ms. Collins has quickly become a highly sought after performer and educator across the US and abroad.

In 2017, Ms. Collins was appointed principal horn of the Gateways Festival Orchestra (GFO), an ensemble featuring professional musicians of African descent. She toured with the GFO to Chicago, IL in 2024 and New York, NY in 2024 and 2025, performing in the Chicago Symphony Center and historic Carnegie Hall to nearly sold out crowds.

She routinely performs with several notable ensembles including the Seattle Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Sphinx Symphony, Missouri Symphony, and Alarm Will Sound. Additionally, she has performed with the St. Louis Symphony, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony, Opera Memphis, Chineke! Orchestra (UK, tour 2019, 2020), Monarch Brass, and the Lyric Brass Quintet.

A sought after performer nationally, Ms. Collins performs musical theater, gospel, R&B/soul, hip-hop, rap, pops, and opera. She has performed with award winning composer and conductor, JIMEK, GRAMMY award winning artists including Snoop Dogg, HUNTR/X from K-pop Demon Hunters, Lainey Wilson, Andrea and Matteo Bocelli, Vanessa Williams, Ben Folds, Terence Blanchard, and Take 6. She performed as principal horn for musicals “Mary Poppins” (Hershey Theater, PA), “Titanic” (Signature Theater, Washington, D.C.), various productions with the Soulful Symphony, Opera NOVA, and the Washington Opera Society. A dedicated chamber musician, she is a member of the Missouri Quintet and Luminoso Quartet.

Ms. Collins was a featured artist in 2017 and 2018 on the national radio show, “Performance Today”, hosted by Fred Child, broadcasted by American Public Media, performing Francis Poulenc’s Sextet for Piano and Wind Quintet, FP 100 with members of the Gateways Music Festival. Additionally, she performed with the Gateways Brass Collective on “Backstage Pass” with Julia Figeras on WXXI, NPR in January of 2019 in Rochester, NY.

Ms. Collins is a passionate educator and is currently Assistant Professor of French Horn at the University of Missouri. Formerly, she was Adjunct Professor of French Horn at Montgomery College and the University of the District of Columbia. She also served as Instructor of French Horn at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Preparatory and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. In addition to private instruction,

Ms. Collins has taught classes in music theory, chamber music, and ensemble playing.

A strong supporter of diversity and inclusion in the arts, many of Ms. Collins' students hail from under-served and underrepresented communities. She is the founder of the MU School of Music Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Collective (MU SOM IDE Collective), a group of students and faculty in support of issues surrounding IDE on and off campus. Additionally, Ms. Collins founded the MU School of Music IDE Committee and serves as chair. Ms. Collins served on faculty at the Prizm International Chamber Music Festival (2018) and the Oklahoma State Arts Institute (2024), where she worked with students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Ms. Collins has commissioned, premiered, and recorded several new works featuring horn. In 2024, she collaborated with Diversify the Stand, a non-profit focused on diversity in class music and the University of Missouri, Ms. Collins commissioned, premiered, and recorded "Winds of Change", 12 progressive solos for horn and piano by under-served and underrepresented composers (album coming summer 2026).

In addition to performing and teaching, Ms. Collins regularly attends events and conferences, performing and teaching the French horn, promoting and creating a network of diverse musicians, artists and instructors, and administrative networking and conversations. In 2017 and 2018, she was selected to be a fellow at the Sphinx Connect conference in Detroit, MI. In 2019, Ms. Collins was interviewed on "Backstage with Lee Thomas" on Detroit Public Television during the 2019 Sphinx Competition, discussing IDE issues in classical music. Ms. Collins is routinely a guest speaker at symposiums and events, discussing a wide range of topics including diversity and inclusion in the arts, college auditioning technique, college career management and entrepreneurship for college students and graduates. She was an invited speaker in 2021 at the Indiana Jacobs School of Music, in 2023 at the Sphinx Connects conference, and in 2024 at the Midwest Clinic.

Ms. Collins is a proud Stephens Custom Horn Performing Artist and currently plays a Series I model double horn with B1 and D3S bell flares, and Laskey 75G gold-plated mouthpiece.

John McKeever is the Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Missouri in Columbia, MO. In addition to his role at the University, Dr. McKeever is the co-founder and musical director for the Light Opera Lab in New York City. Light Opera Lab (LOL) is committed to the creation and performance of new comedic operas. 2026 marked Light Opera Lab's first season. The company performed contemporary comedic operas and workshopped scenes from two newly written comedic operas that are now being fully

fleshed out for complete productions in 2027. Here in Columbia, Dr. McKeever is also the Artistic Director of the Columbia Civic Orchestra. The CCO is a volunteer ensemble dedicated to providing a continued enjoyment of orchestral music to its members and audiences.

Highly sought after as an educator, Dr. McKeever has led clinics, honors ensembles, and masterclasses across the United States. In October of 2025, he was a guest teacher at the Universidad Nacional de Música in Lima, Peru, where he taught conducting master classes and led rehearsals with the Symphony Orchestra. In 2022/23 Dr. McKeever was the Assistant Conductor for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, Dr. McKeever also worked as the Assistant Conductor for Piedmont Opera, where he conducted their 2023 production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. Dr. McKeever earned a Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Colorado Boulder, graduating in 2021. As a graduate teaching assistant, he served as the director of the CU Boulder Campus Orchestra. He also served as an Assistant and Cover Conductor for the Boulder Philharmonic.

Born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska, Dr. McKeever began his studies on the piano. While continuing on the piano, he switched his focus to the double bass in elementary school. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Double Bass Performance at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where he studied with Paul Sharpe. While a student at UNCSA, Dr. McKeever developed an interest in conducting and began to work as an assistant conductor for the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute, Piedmont Opera, and several UNCSA musicals. Dr. McKeever continued his studies at UNCSA, earning a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting in 2015.

From 2012-2018, Dr. McKeever served as the Assistant Conductor for Piedmont Opera in Winston-Salem, NC. In 2018 he made his conducting debut with the company in Piedmont Opera's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. In 2016, Dr. McKeever shadowed the American Ballet Theatre's spring season at the Metropolitan Opera at the invitation of the company's principal conductor, Charles Barker.

Dr. McKeever's teachers include James Allbritten, David Amado, Charles Barker, Michael Jinbo, Christopher James Lees, Gary Lewis, Jonathan Schiffman, and Kevin Stites.

For more information, please visit johnmckeeverconductor.com.

Program Notes

John Christopher Wineglass (b. 1973): *Cityscapes* (2019)

Cityscapes is a one movement symphonic work in essentially two programmatic tableaux. The first entitled, "Morning Dawn" is a serene description in the classical music sensibility while in contrast, the second entitled, "City People, City Lights" gives a sonorous vibrancy to the exact thematic material in a fast-paced jazz score to synergistic lights and action of city life essentially applicable to any city in American today.

Program note by John Wineglass

James A. Beckel Jr. (b. 1948): *The Glass Bead Game* (1997)

"The Glass Bead Game" is a Horn Concerto loosely based on the Herman Hesse novel of the same title. In the first movement, two main themes dominate. The work opens with a bi-tonal motif based in Eb Major and A Major. This musical idea is meant to represent Herman Hesse's existential philosophy about life which is reflected in his novel. Simply put, Hesse believed that man exists as an individual in a purposeless universe that is basically hostile. This conflict between man and his environment is represented by the juxtaposition of the two keys. His main character of this novel in fact succumbs to the cold waters of a glacier-fed lake at the end of this book. The other main theme is a leitmotif representing the main character, Joseph Knecht; and is first stated by the Solo Horn in the first movement. The dialogue of this theme between horn and Flute and Piccolo was inspired by the introduction of the Music Master in this novel. Joseph Knecht meets the Music Master, who accepts our main character into the intellectual society of the elite Castalia.

The second movement is dedicated to Father Jacobus. While the first movement leitmotif for Joseph Knecht was based on 5ths going up; Father Jacobus' leitmotif is based on 5ths going down. The second movement makes much use of sounds sustained into each other as you would hear in a Great Cathedral. The movement is meant to reflect the peace that Joseph Knecht felt with the introduction of history and religion.

The final movement is the most programmatic. This movement begins with the opening celebration of Joseph Knecht's coronation to the post of Magister Ludi. The celebration is heard at first from a great distance. Since Joseph Knecht is reticent about his promotion to this high post, the horn soloist, representing our main character, never plays the Celebration March Melody. The Solo Horn instead answers the melody with protest. This opening section of the final movement grows to a frenzy introducing us finally to the Presto Theme featuring the Solo Horn. The theme from the second movement is briefly

referenced as Joseph Knecht, now burdened with the responsibilities of the Magister Ludi, reflects on his more tranquil past at the monastery with Father Jacobus. At the close of this movement, the drowning sequence is loosely reflected in the music when the opening themes of the third movement return as our main character drowns.

Opening thematic material to the second movement is used as a transition to return us to the original Joseph Knecht leitmotif in this final movement. Programmatically this is referencing the end of this great novel where Joseph Knecht's student, Tito, is now sitting on the lake's shore in shock over the death of his teacher, Joseph Knecht. But our main character lives on in Tito's mind as a wonderful teacher and mentor.

Program note by James Beckel

Margaret Bonds (1913–1972): *The “Montgomery Variations”* (1964)

“The Montgomery Variations” is a group of freestyle variations based on the Negro Spiritual theme, “I want Jesus to Walk with Me.” The treatment suggests the manner in which Bach constructed his partitas—a bold statement of the theme, followed by variations of the theme in the same key—major and minor. Because of the personal meanings of the Negro spiritual themes, Margaret Bonds always avoids over-developments of the melodies.

“The Montgomery Variations” were written after the composer’s visit to Montgomery, Alabama, and the surrounding area in 1963 (on tour with Eugene Brice and the Manhattan Melodaires.)

In December 1960, “The Ballad of the Brown King” was dedicated to Martin Luther King, Jr., and presented at Clark Center, YWCA in New York, by the Church of the Master and Clark Center as a benefit to Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Langston Hughes, the author of the text, was present on this occasion.

The Montgomery Variations

I. Decision

Under the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr and SCLC, Negroes in Montgomery decided to boycott the bus company and to fight for their rights as citizens.

II. Prayer Meeting

True to custom prayer meetings precede their action. Prayer meetings start quietly with humble petitions to God. During the course of the meeting, members seized with religious fervor shout and dance. Oblivious to their fellow worshippers they

exhibit their love of God and their Faith in Deliverance by gesticulation, clapping and beating their feet.

III. March

The Spirit of the Nazarene marching with them, the Negroes of Montgomery walked to their work rather than be segregated on the buses. The entire world, symbolically with them, marches.

IV. Dawn in Dixie

Dixie, the home of the Camelias known as “pink perfection,” magnolias, jasmine and Spanish moss, awakened to the fact that something new was happening in the South.

V. One Sunday in the South

Children were in Sunday School learning about Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Southern “die-hards” planted a bomb and several children were killed.

VI. Lament

The world was shaken by the cruelty of the Sunday School bombing. Negroes, as usual, leaned on their Jesus to carry through this crisis of grief and humiliation.

VII. Benediction

A benign God, Father and Mother to all people, pours forth Love to His children—the good and the bad alike.

Program note by Margaret Bonds