

Highlights from Ballard High School’s Spring Concerts And New BHS Band Director Named



June 14, 2021 -- Ballard High School Performing Arts closed out the year the past two weeks with three spectacular virtual concerts for bands, orchestras and choirs celebrating our students’ resilience, strength, and commitment. See must-watch highlights below.

The school principal is also pleased to announce the permanent hire of **Director of Bands, Jay Gillespie**, who served as the interim band director this year. A graduate of the University of Washington School of Music, Gillespie played in the Navy band and has performed in jazz combos, jazz bands, wind ensembles, marching bands, rock bands, New Orleans style brass bands and ceremonial bands. Parents,

students, and staff have been inspired by his enthusiasm and creativity.

“When we brought in Mr. Gillespie to be Ballard’s Interim Band Director this year, we were looking for someone who would be dependable and provide consistency for the rest of the school year,” says Ballard High principal Keven Wynkoop. “It quickly became apparent that he was far more than a caretaker for the position and that he had the passion, skill, knowledge, flexibility and interest in students that we were looking for in a permanent Band Director. I am thrilled to officially announce that Mr. Jay Gillespie will be continuing as the permanent Ballard High School Band Director for 21-22 and beyond. I can’t wait to watch the band program flourish and evolve under his leadership!”

Must-watch Highlights of the Spring Performances Include:

[Hope Lingers On, performed by Ballard, Kamiak, Franklin Pierce and Steilacoom High School Choirs](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVni1gG2kLI>



The Choir performances premiered June 3 and included a collaboration with over 200 choral students. The BHS combined choirs joined with choirs from Kamiak, Franklin Pierce, and Steilacoom High Schools to perform *Hope Lingers On*, by Andrea Ramsey.

“This collaboration started last summer, when I was talking with colleagues about how we would approach this online school year,” says Director of Choirs Courtney Rowley. “We were all craving

community and knew that our students would be as well. With music festivals and in-person concerts cancelled, we wanted to find a way to bring our students together and give them some semblance of a music community! The choirs worked virtually with Dr. Angela Kasper from Western Washington University who worked with the directors to introduce the project to the students, delve into the meaning of the text, and provide inspiration to all of us. Written by Lissa Schneckenburger and arranged by Andrea Ramsey, the text for *Hope Lingers On* truly speaks to the moment we are in and is something all of our students could relate to. It was a joy to work with them on this project, and we are so excited to share this song with the wider community!”

Watch the full choir concert, under the direction of Choir Director Courtney Rowley, here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sdaln-IN_w0&list=PL6isQb4_SEgKVZeLM-d7RGApI2ztekbi

***Another's Sorrow*, featuring BHS and multiple school orchestras with guest vocalist Martha Redbone**



<https://youtu.be/0GbAnV3IJEc?t=3164>

Highlights from Orchestra Director Elizabeth Fortune’s virtual concert include a piece that features all BHS orchestras joined by the Franklin High School, Cleveland High School, and Seattle Pacific University orchestras: *Another’s Sorrow*, with guest vocalist and composer Martha Redbone, features poetry by William Blake, and

orchestral arrangement by Renata Bratt and Bob Phillips. The piece is a result of a workshop about the poet William Blake, North American Indigenous culture, and making music education more culturally responsive. The workshop was conducted by Martha Redbone and Brandi Waller-Pace, Director and Founder of Decolonizing the Music Room.

Watch the full orchestra concert here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GbAnV3IJEc>

***This Too Shall Pass*, by OK Go, featuring BHS senior Mercedes Tucker, all bands, teachers, families, and community on vocals**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0QI-lDhsYE>

In a fitting finish to a year of remote learning, Director of Bands Jay Gillespie found a way to capture “audience participation” for this performance through use of the Upbeat music app. Gillespie choreographed and filmed the piece, which hints at the return of great marching band moments to come.

Other band concert highlights include **Jazz 1** playing *Warm Breeze* by Sammy Nestico, featuring Luca Rios, Jarin Synnestvedt, and James Shepard; and **Wind Ensemble** played *Liza Jane*, arranged by Sammy Miller and The Congregation, featuring Casey Griffin, Tarkel Price, Jarin Synnestvedt, James Shepard, and Kat Moen.

Watch the entire band concert here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yxw1f7OXv00>

Recordings of all concerts are available on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BallardPerformingArts/videos>

Visit this Ballard Performing Arts website page for all the concert links, programs, and details.

<https://www.ballardperformingarts.org/spring-concerts>

Ballard Performing Arts

The award-winning Ballard High School Performing Arts Program has gained regional, national, and international acclaim for its dynamic and inspired performances. The Music Department includes three concert bands, three concert choirs, three concert orchestras, percussion ensemble, two jazz bands, one jazz choir, multiple chamber ensembles and a marching band of nearly 200 musicians. The Theatre Department offers classes in Technical Theatre and Theatre I and II while the Ballard Playmakers produce two plays and one musical theatre production each year. More than 450 students—about one fourth of the school—participate in these music and theatre opportunities. Ballard Performing Arts sets a high standard of excellence for all students, ensembles, and productions while developing individual artistry through the study of high-quality repertoire and exceptional performance opportunities. Learn more: ballardperformingarts.org

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