

the **houston★pride★band** presents

SILK ROAD JOURNEY

highlighting the impact
and influence of Asian
composers and culture



October 4, 2025
8PM • MATCH

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Houston Pride Band's 2025-2026 concert season! Tonight, we'll take you on a mesmerizing journey through a myriad of Asian cultures and communities with our **Silk Road Journey** program. We hope this concert will widen your musical horizons as we feature pieces inspired by the diverse sounds and styles of the most populous continent on earth.

Tonight marks the debut concert for our new Associate Artistic Director **Anthony Morris!** Anthony is a music educator and an accomplished conductor and music advocate. We are so excited to have Anthony joining our Artistic team!

You can look for the Houston Pride Band at performances this fall. Our **Pep Band** will be performing at the **Families with Pride** event at **Discovery Green** on **Saturday, October 18th**. And the band will once again be performing at **The Woodlands Pride Festival** on **Saturday, October 25th**. Be sure to support our band at these events!

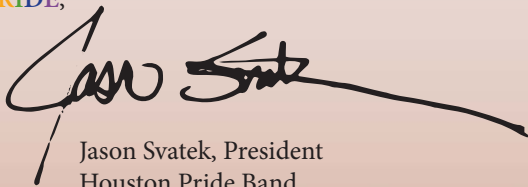
Our MATCH Concert season continues **Saturday, December 6th** as we take the stage to present **"December Evergreens & Icicles,"** our annual holiday concert that you won't want to miss – get your tickets now!

Thanks to our members and loyal audience members like you, we've enjoyed a string of sold-out performances here at MATCH. To allow even more members of our community to attend and enjoy our concerts, we will be making a big move later this season to **Zilkha Hall at the Hobby Center!** This move will help to further elevate the band's performances and the audience's experience. We look forward to having you join us at the Hobby Center in 2026!

If you don't already, be sure to follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** and go to our website to subscribe to email updates to receive information about the band and our upcoming events and performances.

The Houston Pride Band appreciates your generous support. Your contributions help the band bring music and joy to our community throughout the year. Your ticket purchase tonight is just the beginning – be sure to go to **houstonprideband.org/donate** to make additional contributions and check out the other giving and sponsorship opportunities within this program for ways to support our organization.

Yours in **PRIDE**,



Jason Svatek, President
Houston Pride Band



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To learn more about upcoming concerts and events, subscribe to our mailing list. Houston Pride Band will not share your contact information with other organizations. Visit houstonprideband.nationbuilder.com/subscribe.



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SILK ROAD JOURNEY

DEBORAH HIRSCH & ANTHONY MORRIS,
CONDUCTORS

PROGRAM

A Prelude to the Shining Day _____ Yo Goto

Variations on a Korean Folk Song _____ John Barnes Chance

Dawn _____ Miyuko Oda

Tuttarana _____ Reena Esmail

Chingis Khan - The Land of a Great Promise _____ Eiji Suzuki

Spring Festival _____ Chen Yi

- INTERMISSION -

Studio Ghibli's Anime March Medley _____ Joe Hisaishi
arr. Yo Goto

A Jasmine Tree _____ Kevin Charoensri

Rikudim: Four Israeli Folk Dances for Band _____ Jan Van der Roost

Persian Dance no. 2 _____ Amir Moloookpour

Jai Ho from *Slumdog Millionaire* _____ A.R. Rahman
arr. Michael Brown

Aladdin _____ Alan Menken
arr. Paul Jennings

houston pride band

PERFORMING MEMBERS

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Amanda Hager
Donald Hale
Theo Harrison*
Jadie Marshall
Zoë Myers
Huy Nguyen
Hannah Rae Melis
Gabe Rodríguez
Elworth Wilcox III

OBOE

Travis Seamons
Lupe Ybarra-Regan

BASSOON

Fernando Alvarez
Aspen Crouse
David DiCamillo
Becky Schlembach*

CLARINET

Kaylan Charles
Delvin Coleman
Sabrina Dean-Serrano
Kayla DuBrow
Michelle Godwin
Jordan Pachuca
Jordan Raabe
Hannah Robertson
Steven Scott
Josh Wunderlich

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Steve Brown
Nicolas Droger

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Cole Duhon
Brianna Hemeyer-Taylor
Travis Howell*
Jeremy Lewis
RaVon Rhone
Billy Skembos
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Carson Clifton

* Section Leader



ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



**DEBORAH HIRSCH,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Now in her tenth season with the Houston Pride Band, Deborah Hirsch is originally from Baltimore, Maryland.

She graduated from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree in music

therapy and music education and earned a master's degree in music at Texas A&M University-Commerce. She also served in the 312th Army Band in Lawrence, Kansas before moving to Texas.

Retiring after 37 years as a band director in Pasadena, Texas, Deborah enjoyed a successful career in public education. Ms. Hirsch was named "Teacher of the Year" in 2014.

As a participant the Colorado University Conducting Symposium in June 2016 Ms. Hirsch studied under Steve Davis, Dr. Donald McKinney, Dr. Matt Roeder and Dr. Matthew Dockendorf. In June 2019, she attended the Conn-Selmer Institute where she was able to study, consult and collaborate with many of her band idols—Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, Dr. Paula A. Crider, Frank Troyka, Michael Sweeney and Richard Saucedo. In the 2019, Deborah was honored to direct the Association of Private Lutheran Schools Honor Band and the Texas Region 19 Class CC Band. In November 2021, she was the guest clinician for the Texas Region 19 CCC Band and shared the podium at the Bigger and Brighter Conference of the Pride Bands Alliance.

Deborah is an active clinician, judge, and consultant across the state and is a member of Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, Women Band Directors International, and Texas Music Adjudicators Association.

Ms. Hirsch is also a member of the chancel choir and bell choir at Bering Memorial United Church of Christ and a long time member of Pasadena Little Theater.



**ANTHONY MORRIS,
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Anthony Morris is a conductor, educator, and advocate. He is the Associate Artistic Director of the Houston Pride Band and the Assistant Director of Bands at Null Middle School in Houston, Texas.

Before joining HPB and NMS, he was a Master's Conducting Associate at the University of Georgia, where he assisted in teaching beginning and advanced conducting courses, conducted the five performing ensembles, and served as a teaching assistant for the Redcoat Marching Band. He has received the opportunity to conduct the United States Air Force Band as a United States Air Force Conducting Fellow. He has also appeared as a guest conductor with the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" and was named a Conducting Fellow for the H. Robert Reynolds Conducting Institute at the 76th Annual Midwest Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.

His passion for music education has led him to create the Relative Pitch Podcast, which discusses modern issues regarding music education and helps pave the way for much-needed change to make a more diverse, enriching, and equitable music community. Through his advocacy efforts, he has presented sessions at the Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic, the College Band Directors National Association Conference, the Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference, and the Florida Music Education Association Conference.



PROGRAM NOTES

COMPILED BY THEO HARRISON

ALADDIN

Disney's *Aladdin* has delighted audiences since its release in 1992, with its vibrant characters, heartfelt story, and unforgettable music by composer Alan Menken, featuring lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice. This arrangement by Paul Jennings brings the magic of the film to the concert stage, capturing its playful energy, romance, and adventure.

Featuring "Arabian Nights," "Friend Like Me," "Prince Ali," and "A Whole New World," Jennings skillfully adapts these beloved tunes for band, allowing performers and audiences alike to relive the charm and excitement of this timeless Disney classic.

CHINGIS KHAN - THE LAND OF A GREAT PROMISE

Eiji Suzuki's *Chingis Khan - The Land of a Great Promise* offers a sweeping musical journey inspired by the life and legend of Chingis (Genghis) Khan. The piece opens with a solo flute, foreshadowing the intensity of the brass fanfare soon to follow and immediately setting the stage for power and grandeur. This bold opening evokes the vast Mongolian steppes and the rise of a great leader.

The composer writes: "I have tried to merge two musical topics: Mongolian folk song *Urtyn duu* (meaning a long song) and Western four-voice music, imagining Chingis Khan, conqueror of the great Eurasian continent. Therefore, this is not a program music depicting the life of Chingis Khan, but an attempt of a musical encounter. The Mongolian folk song is *Urtyn duu Guuji Nan Aga* (piccolo melody in the middle section) and the rhythm of the accompanying snare drum is derived from a musical work that depicts conquest and invasion."

Suzuki's composition balances lyricism and intensity, offering audiences a vivid and dramatic soundscape that reflects both history and legend.

DAWN

Miyuko Oda's *Dawn* evokes the moment between night and day — a threshold of light, anticipation, and quiet transformation. Written for symphonic band, the piece captures both stillness and movement, giving voice to the slow awakening of a new day.

Oda begins with soft textures — gentle winds, subtle harmonies — suggesting the lingering peace of night. From that calm, hints of melody emerge, delicate and introspective, building gradually. As the light grows, rhythmic pulses take shape, propelling the music forward. These rhythms suggest the quickening heartbeat of morning: the first birdsong, the first stirring in the world.

Midway, *Dawn* rises to a luminous high point. Brass and woodwinds join in richer harmonies; percussion adds color

and momentum. In this section, one senses warmth, energy, and revelation, as the darkness lifts. After this peak, the music transitions back into a more reflective mood — now with a glow, infused with the memory of night but transformed by the light.

Dawn offers audiences an opportunity to experience a musical meditation on possibility: how each new day carries with it hope, a promise, and the subtle beauty of change.

JAI HO

A.R. Rahman's *Jai Ho* gained international fame as the triumphant closing number of the Academy Award-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008). The title translates to "Let there be victory," and the music captures that spirit with its infectious energy, rhythmic drive, and celebratory character.

Michael Brown's concert band arrangement brings Rahman's electrifying sound to the stage, highlighting the piece's pulsating rhythms, colorful harmonies, and uplifting melodies. Featuring a blend of traditional Indian musical elements with contemporary pop and film-score style, this arrangement invites both performers and audiences to experience the joy and vitality that made *Jai Ho* a global sensation.

Exuberant, dynamic, and inspiring, *Jai Ho* is a musical celebration of triumph over adversity and the power of hope.

A JASMINE TREE

Kevin Charoensri's *A Jasmine Tree* is a lyrical and evocative single-movement work that reflects his bi-cultural identity — rooted both in Thai/Asian musical traditions and American influences. Growing up between these worlds, Charoensri sought with this piece to meld the melodies of his early childhood in Thailand with harmonic and stylistic elements drawn from jazz, film scores, and Western band literature.

The music begins in a meditative, contrapuntal style. Individual voices enter gradually, weaving pentatonic-flavored melodic lines that evoke the contemplative, delicate beauty of early dawn or the gentle unfolding of petals. As these threads develop, harmonic support deepens with richer chords and textures drawn from jazz harmony.

Midway through the piece, there is a build in energy: percussion and winds swell, more instruments join the melodic interplay, and the music moves from introspective floral imagery toward a more radiant, expressive bloom. Here, the jazz influence becomes more audible, not only in harmony but in rhythmic drive and interplay among the ensemble. Following this peak, the music descends back toward calm, reminding us of the origin — the jasmine tree quietly rooted in soil, its blossoms opening, then resting.

PERSIAN DANCE NO. 2

Amir Molookpour's *Persian Dance No. 2* is a vibrant and engaging work that blends traditional Persian musical elements with Western compositional techniques. Commissioned by Louis Martinus, this piece is part of a series that explores the rich tapestry of Iranian folk music through the lens of contemporary wind band instrumentation.

The composition is based on a traditional Persian scale, which includes three minor seconds, a pair of minor thirds, and a single major second. This unique scale provides a foundation for melodies that are both intimate and powerful, reflecting the emotional depth characteristic of Persian music. The dance unfolds with rhythmic complexity and dynamic contrasts, capturing the essence of Persian folk dance while utilizing the expressive capabilities of the concert band.

A PRELUDE TO THE SHINING DAY

Yo Goto's *A Prelude to the Shining Day* was composed in 1992 for the Noda Junior High School Concert Band in Kawagoe, Japan, celebrating the 10th anniversary of their foundation.

The composition is divided into three sections. It begins with a bold fanfare motif, establishing a sense of anticipation and grandeur. This is followed by a lyrical middle section, introducing a contrasting melodic theme that adds depth and emotional resonance. The final section combines elements from both the opening and middle sections, bringing the piece to a cohesive and triumphant conclusion.

A distinctive feature of this work is its use of antiphonal brass. Three trumpets and three trombones are positioned on a balcony, creating an antiphonal effect with the instruments on stage. This spatial arrangement enhances the fanfare's impact, enveloping the audience in sound from multiple directions.

RIKUDIM

Rikudim (from Hebrew rikud, meaning "dance," with the plural -im) is a four-movement suite that evokes the spirit of Jewish dance and folk song—not by arranging existing folk tunes, but by composing original "stylized dances" in the folk style.

Rikudim offers audiences a journey through imagined folk dances — music that feels rooted in tradition without being bound by it — combining mood, melody, and rhythm in a work that is both richly expressive and engagingly energetic.

SPRING FESTIVAL

Spring Festival by Chen Yi is a vibrant celebration of the Chinese New Year, capturing the festive spirit and rich traditions of this important cultural event. Commissioned by the American Composers Forum, the piece draws inspiration from the southern Chinese folk ensemble piece "Lion Playing

Ball," infusing it with the energy and joy characteristic of the New Year festivities.

The composition is structured around the Golden Ratio, a mathematical concept often associated with aesthetically pleasing proportions. This approach not only gives the piece a balanced and harmonious form but also reflects the careful planning and anticipation that precede the celebratory climax of the festival.

STUDIO GHIBLI'S ANIME MARCH MEDLEY

Studio Ghibli has long been celebrated for its enchanting animated films, memorable characters, and unforgettable music. This medley brings together some of the most beloved themes from Ghibli's repertoire, arranged in a lively march format that captures both the whimsy and energy of the studio's work.

Listeners will recognize melodies from iconic films such as *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, and *Howl's Moving Castle*. The arrangement features playful interactions between sections, spirited rhythms, and dynamic contrasts, reflecting the adventurous spirit, charm, and heart that are hallmarks of Studio Ghibli's music.

TUTTARANA

Reena Esmail's *Tuttarana* is a vibrant and dynamic work that fuses elements of Western and Hindustani (North Indian) music. The title is a blend of the Italian word tutti, meaning 'all' or 'everyone', and tarana, a specific Hindustani musical form characterized by rhythmic syllables and virtuosic display. In this piece, Esmail brings the tarana into an ensemble setting, showcasing the collective agility and dexterity of the performers.

VARIATIONS ON A KOREAN FOLK SONG

John Barnes Chance's *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* is a seminal work in the wind band repertoire, renowned for its inventive treatment of the traditional Korean folk tune "Arirang." Composed in 1965, the piece reflects Chance's deep appreciation for Korean culture, inspired by his time serving in Seoul with the Eighth U.S. Army Band during the late 1950s. "Arirang," often considered Korea's unofficial national anthem, symbolizes themes of love, longing, and separation, resonating with the Korean people's enduring spirit. The composition unfolds through five distinct variations, each presenting a unique musical perspective on the folk theme.

Chance's masterful use of Western tonal structures, such as triadic harmony and pentatonic melodies, alongside traditional Korean instruments like gongs, temple blocks, and cymbals, bridges Eastern and Western musical traditions. This fusion not only showcases Chance's compositional prowess but also honors the cultural significance of the folk song.

GUEST ARTIST



LUIS CHEN,
EMCEE

Born in Taiwan, Luis spent his teenage years in Paraguay and Brazil, where he picked up Spanish and Portuguese before moving to the U.S. After serving in the U.S. Army, he built a career in corporate America, most recently at Comcast, where he was an active member of various employee resource groups, including the LGBTQ and Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) networks.

As the current president of the Asian Pacific American Heritage Association (APAHA), Luis is dedicated to promoting AAPI culture through education and celebration year-round. His commitment extends to his work in Houston's Chinatown, where he curates the popular Chinatown Crawl foodie events and manages the online restaurant directory, visit.chinatownhtx.com, to support local restaurants and shops.



Asian Pacific American Heritage Association

Mission Statement:

To recognize and promote the accomplishments of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and our heritage through education and celebration.

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bringing so much joy to this stage of my life!

THANK YOU!

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HOUSTONPRIDEBAND.ORG

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our story

Serving as a community band in Houston's LGBTQ+ community, the Houston Pride Band has several groups that perform at local events throughout the year as well as concerts and parades. We also provide a fun social experience for musicians.

The Houston Pride Band has a proud history spanning over four decades. Originally known as the Montrose Marching Band, the organization was formed by a small group of musicians in 1978 as a way to make new friends and to provide entertainment for Houston's gay and lesbian community.

The Houston Pride Band is a member of the Pride Bands Alliance, a national musical organization made up of over thirty bands across the nation and around the world. With Pride Bands Alliance, members of the Houston Pride Band have been able to participate at every Gay Games, several Presidential Inaugurations, and conferences throughout the world.

mission

The mission of the Houston Pride Band is:

1. To provide a welcoming, comfortable and safe musical outlet for LGBTQ+ and allied musicians to participate in a community band setting.
2. To encourage interest in public and private music education through concerts and events that uplift and inspire musical interest in people of all ages.
3. To use musical performances to support local community organizations and events.
4. To host and participate in local, state, national, and international conferences that foster the continuing participation of all individuals in community musical programs.

membership & rehearsals

The Houston Pride Band is open to all brass, woodwind, and percussion players of all skill levels. The band rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 PM. For additional details, please visit our website at houstonprideband.org or email info@houstonprideband.org.

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PROUD MEMBER OF THE PRIDE BANDS ALLIANCE

Formerly the Lesbian and Gay Band Association, the Pride Bands Alliance is a membership organization comprised of concert and marching bands from cities across the United States and the world.

Great performances are the most visible manifestation of the lesbian and gay band movement. Member bands across the country appear in hundreds of concerts, parades, and community events every year. For more information, visit www.pridebands.org.

AND THE ASSOCIATION OF CONCERT BANDS

The Houston Pride Band is also a member of the Association of Concert Bands. The mission of the Association of Concert Bands is to foster excellence in Concert Band music through performance, education, and advocacy. ACB has formed Blanket Performance Licensing Agreements with both BMI and ACSAP for performance rights for its members.

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