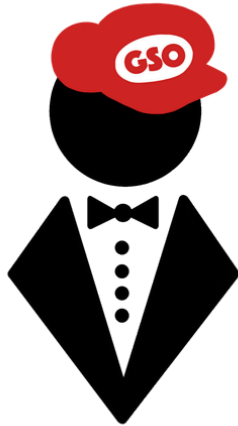


SPRING 2026 BIG BAND CONCERT

THE GAMER SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

at the University of Maryland



Ulrich Recital Hall
Tawes Hall

Saturday May 2nd, 2026
6:30 PM

Robert Morris, Director

umd.gamersymphony.org

About the Gamer Symphony Orchestra

In Fall 2005, student violist Michelle Eng sought to create an orchestral group that played the music of video games. With a half-dozen others who shared a love of video game music, she founded the Gamer Symphony Orchestra to achieve that dream. By the ensemble's first public performance in Spring 2006, its size had quadrupled.

Today, the Gamer Symphony Orchestra provides a musical and social outlet to 100+ members. It is the world's first college-level ensemble to draw its repertoire exclusively from the soundtracks of video games. The ensemble is entirely student-run, which includes conducting and musical arranging.

In addition to semesterly concerts at the University of Maryland campus, the GSO has performed in a number of special concerts throughout the years. In February 2011, the GSO's arrangement of "Korobeiniki" from Tetris was performed in collaboration with Video Games Live and the National Philharmonic to two sold-out houses at the Strathmore in Bethesda, MD. In May 2012 and 2015, as a part of the Art of Video Games Exhibit, the GSO performed at the American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. in the central atrium. Most recently, in March 2018, the GSO performed on the Millennium Stage of the Kennedy Center in a concert titled "From Bits to Brass: A Symphonic Adventure Through Video Game Music," as a part of the Kennedy Center's "Direct Current" event. The concert was played to a packed house, and served as a celebration of musical masterpieces across the video game repertoire for gamers, musicians, and enthusiasts alike.

Aside from its concerts, the GSO also holds the charity gaming tournament "Gaming 4 Life" twice a year. All proceeds from this multi-hour long video game tournament and social event benefit the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

2025-26 Officers

<i>President</i>	Cynthia Xi
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Big Band Members

Flute

Simon Bailey

Clarinet

Norah Vanderpool

Michael Wang

Alto Saxophone

Rhett Brega

Ryan Goldsmith

Tenor Saxophone

Serena Alamina

Lixin Zheng

Baritone Saxophone

Annika Vallurupalli

Trombone

Connor Chaplain

Nicholas Curtis

Peter Mortensen

Quinlan Ngo

Trumpet

Jesse Ehrenreich

Patrick Ford

Ethan Hawkes

Silas Rager

Piano

Brooke Guo

Claire Huang

Spencer Jenkins

Guitar

Shiham Siddiqui

Jack Wethington

Bass

Victor Esan

Adam Martinson

Patrick Torre

Percussion

Ishaan Antani

Stella Garner

Eric Zhang

Strings

Gyuseok Kang

Michael Maroney

Garrett Peters

Jay Rana

Cynthia Xi

Vocals

Max Khatchadourian

Joseph Kleinman

Theresa Menna

Chris Patiag

Nathaniel Unnikumaran

Ella Valentine

Gray Walters

Emeritus Members

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Greg Cox
Conductor, 2006–2009

Peter Fontana
Conductor, 2010–2011

Rob Garner
President, 2008–2011

Chris Apple
Music Director, 2007–2010

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Conductor, 2009–2013

Alexander Ryan
President, 2011–2013

Kyle Jamolin
Choral Director, 2012–2014

Kevin Mok
Conductor, 2013–2015

Joel Guttman
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Jesse Halpern
Treasurer, 2015–2016

Jonathan Hansford
Choral Director, 2015–2017

Marin Chin
Music Director, 2016–2017

Austin Hope
Webmaster, 2015–2018

Suzie DeMeritte
Treasurer, 2016–2018

Michael Mitchell
Conductor, 2016–2018

Leanne Cetorelli
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Alex Yu
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Erin Estes
Webmaster, 2018–2019

Bethany Riege
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Hojin Yoon
President, 2019–2020

Sami Louguit
Member, 2018–2020

Samuel Harley
Conductor, 2018–2020

Matthew Evanusa
Conductor, 2018–2020

Nicole Benner
Social Director, 2018–2020

Austin Starnes
Treasurer, 2018–2020

Nicholas DeGraba
Music Director, 2018–2020

Ciara Donegan
Music Director, 2021–2022

Rachel Wattanarungsikajorn
Conductor, 2020–2022

Quinn Dang
President, 2020–2022

Braidon Saelens
Music Director, 2024–2025

Daniel Xing
Fundraising Director, 2023–2025

Snake Eater

Metal Gear Solid 3

Norihiko Hibono, Cynthia Nixon

8-Bit Big Band Arrangement by Charlie Rosen

Arr. Ella Valentine, Neel Sanghvi

Feat. Theresa Menna (*Vocal*), Ella Valentine (*Vocal*),

Nathaniel Unnikumaran (*Vocal*), Gray Walters (*Vocal*)



Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater took the gaming world by storm in 2004 upon its release. Set in 1964, 31 years before the events of the original *Metal Gear*, the story follows an American intelligence agent by the name of Naked Snake as he attempts to rescue a top Russian rocket scientist from the dastardly Cobra Unit. “Snake Eater” pulls from the aesthetics of the Cold War era spy genre, and “Snake Eater” serves as its very own Bond theme, complete with sultry vocals and sweet, sweet chromatic chord progressions. The GSO Big Band’s version draws inspiration from Tiffany Mann’s cover with the 8-Bit Big Band. Imagine yourself climbing up a ladder in the USSR as Naked Snake does. The music is great, and hey – the view’s not so bad either.

Theme from Mario Kart 8

Mario Kart 8

Ryo Nagamatsu

Arr. JBand

Adpt. for GSO Big Band by Robert Morris

Feat. Shiham Siddiqui (*Guitar*), Jack Wethington (*Guitar*), Adam Martinson

(*Electric Bass*), Ishaan Antani (*Drumkit*)

In 2014, the *Mario Kart* franchise entered a new musical frontier with the introduction of live instrumentation. With this change came a new musical identity for the game, primarily rooted in the genre of jazz-rock fusion, which was showcased immediately in this high-octane title theme. Upon booting up the game, players are met with crisp brass hits, face-melting guitar licks, and a blistering slap-bass line. After a spacey B-section, the listener is met with a reprise of the title theme from the original *Super Mario Kart*, which has been featured in the title theme of every mainline *Mario Kart* since (except for *Mario Kart: Super Circuit* on the Gameboy Advance). Please enjoy the theme from *Mario Kart 8*.



Smitten

Indiana Jones and the Great Circle

Gordy Haab

Arr. Peter Mortensen

Feat. Serena Alamina (*Tenor Sax*), Lixin Zheng (*Tenor Sax*), Ethan Hawkes (*Trumpet*), Nicholas Curtis (*Trombone*), Peter Mortensen (*Trombone*), Adam Martinson (*Piano*)

It's time to don your fedora and lace up your boots! Everyone's favorite archaeologist Indiana Jones returns to the spotlight in the 2024 release of *Indiana Jones and the Great Circle*. You play as Indy, scouring locations in every corner of the globe as you try to unearth the power of the Great Circle, all whilst attempting to evade the clutches of the villainous forces that protect it—and dodging the occasional snake of course. But not everything on this journey has to be so perilous. As you embark on your quest from site to site, another sight to behold catches your eye. All the heart-fluttering, knee-buckling, butterfly-inducing feelings you get when you lay eyes on that special someone are captured in this 30s-inspired chart, through its lively soli and “sing” sections, interspersed with several passionate outbursts in the form of solos. As the excitement builds, the dangers of adventure subside for a moment, leaving you feeling rather “Smitten”.



L.A. Noire

Andrew Hale, Simon Hale

Arr. Quinlan Ngo

Feat. Silas Rager (*Trumpet*)

The streets of Los Angeles aren't safe, but someone still has to walk 'em. In action-adventure game L.A. Noire, you step into the shoes of Cole Phelps, a detective climbing the ranks of the LAPD as corruption coils tighter around the city. Before the interrogations and the crime scenes, though, there's a moment of stillness. The main menu theme drifts in on a lone trumpet, wrapped in smoky harmonies. Take a breath before diving into the mess of mystery and murder, and let the music settle in like cool mist over the city. The calm doesn't last long in a place like this.



Sugarland Shimmy

Cuphead

Christopher Maddigan

Feat. Norah Vanderpool (*Clarinet*), Michael Wang (*Clarinet*), Ryan Goldsmith (*Alto Sax*), Annika Vallurupalli (*Baritone Sax*), Shiham Siddiqui (*Guitar*), Claire Huang (*Piano*), Eric Zhang (*Drumkit*)

In order to fulfill their deal they made with the Devil, Cuphead and Mugman must travel to a kingdom of sugar and sweets to take on the eccentric Baroness Von Bon Bon, in aims to obtain her Soul Contract. Before they take on the Baroness, however, they have to get through a couple of her minions. Will they have to face Lord Gob Packer, Weasely Waffle, or perhaps even Muffsky Chernikov? It seems like the only way to find out is to get in there and fight. Once Cuphead and Mugman are finished with the minions, they'll have to face off against the Baroness herself and...her castle? Gadzooks! Well, it looks like Cuphead and Mugman (and the GSO Big Band wind players) are in a real pickle this time. We hope this performance of "Sugarland Shimmy" leaves a sweet taste in your mouth.



Can't Say Goodbye to Yesterday

Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty

Rika Muranaka

Arr. Ella Valentine, Robert Morris

Feat. Ella Valentine (*Vocal*), Rhett Brega (*Soprano Sax*), Ryan Goldsmith (*Alto Sax*), Lixin Zheng (*Tenor Sax*), Eric Zhang (*Piano*)

"Can't Say Goodbye to Yesterday" from *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty* is a piece that captures the game's (and to some extent, the series') themes of loss, memory, and reflection amidst a world of intrigue and cold war. This arrangement aims to capture the spirit of Rika Muranaka's original, with its lounge feel and sultry vocals by Carla White. Much in the spirit of the game, "Can't Say Goodbye to Yesterday" invites the listener to sit with the tension between moving on and holding on. It's less about resolution and more about acknowledgment; acceptance, rather than escape, is where peace begins.

Dummy!

Undertale

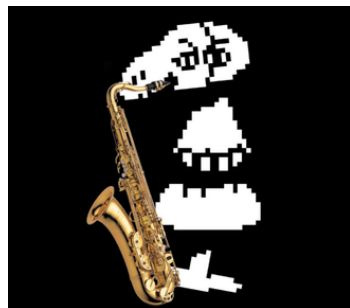
Toby Fox

Arr. Jeffrey Zhou

Adpt. for GSO Big Band by Robert Morris

Feat. Ryan Goldsmith (*Alto Sax*), Brooke Guo (*Piano*)

Undertale (2015) is considered one of the greatest RPGs of all time. A human child falls into the underground world of monsters, encounters said monsters, and can either free the monsters from their prison or eradicate the world in its entirety depending on the player's choices. In the midst of this journey, the player encounters a dummy residing in a garbage dump in Waterfall. The dummy then turns into the Mad Dummy and picks a fight with you, the player/human! But why? You see, you had actually met Mad Dummy's cousin during the game's tutorial battle with a dummy in the Ruins. Regardless of if you choose to fight, spare, or flee from the Ruins dummy, Mad Dummy is enraged by your interaction with their cousin and attacks you with a barrage of dummies and a singular knife. Please enjoy this rendition of Mad Dummy's battle theme, "Dummy!"



Want You Gone

Portal 2

Jonathan Coulton

Arr. Charlie Rosen of the 8-Bit Big Band

Feat. Max Khatchadourian (*Vocal*), Joseph Kleinman (*Vocal*),
Chris Patiag (*Vocal*), Ethan Hawkes (*Trumpet*)



One of the most influential games of the millennium in terms of both mechanics and pop culture, *Portal 2* remains a classic due to its immersive level design, unique aesthetics, and iconic characters. As you work your way through test chambers of dubious OSHA standards, you are tormented by GLaDOS, a rogue AI with a snarky personality and lust for your blood to match. At the end of the game, she lets you go, or more specifically, kicks you out, singing this song after you've left the facility. While not originally a jazz piece, it was arranged in the style of classic Frank Sinatra zingers by the 8 Bit Big Band back in the largely uneventful year of 2020, and the arrangement has since become nearly as iconic as the original itself, with its swings and iconic vocals. So as we wait for the inevitable third Portal game (please Gabe), prepare to dive into some scientific enrichment with the swingin' sounds of "Want You Gone" from *Portal 2*.

Intermission!

Together Till Infinity

Infinity Nikki

Moeki Harada, Jessie J

Arr. Theresa Menna, Braidon Saelens, Jack Wethington

Feat. Brooke Guo (*Vocal*), Theresa Menna (*Vocal*), Chris Patiag (*Vocal*), Ella Valentine (*Vocal*), Gray Walters (*Vocal*), Rhett Brega (*Alto Sax*)

Infinity Nikki is not your average dress up game. In this expansive open world adventure, Nikki finds herself mysteriously transported to the unfamiliar and fantastical world of Miraland, where wishes are a source of powerful magic. Nikki learns that she must find and stop the dark forces at work in Miraland who would seek to corrupt it. Thankfully, there are talented stylists all across the colorful world of Miraland to help Nikki on her quest! The outfits Nikki crafts grant her magical abilities. As you explore the world, *Infinity Nikki* is just as much about adventure as it is about slowing down, feeling the sunshine, and meeting all the colorful and quirky inhabitants of Miraland along your way.



Fanart credited to 'Xiaojiaju'

Graze the Roof

Plants vs. Zombies

Laura Shigihara

Arr. Ruscel Torres

Feat. Simon Bailey (*Flute*), Lixin Zheng (*Tenor Sax*), Brooke Guo (*Piano*), Eric Zhang (*Drumkit*)

After battling your way out of your foggy backyard, the final area in Adventure Mode of *Plants vs. Zombies* is the roof. Armed with catapulting plants and flower pots, you must deal with huge waves of new zombies while carefully managing your plant placement. This track by Laura Shigihara consists of a catchy beat along with ominous bells to foreshadow the arrival of the zombies. Released almost 20 years ago, it has since been adapted into a catchy jazz arrangement by Ruscel Torres. Please enjoy, "Graze the Roof"!



Guilty

L.A. Noire

Claudia Brücken

Arr. Robert Morris

Feat. Theresa Menna (*Vocal*), Nathaniel Unnikumaran (*Vocal*), Connor Chaplain (*Trombone*)

"Do you think you can stop people from needing drugs, Detective?" - Elsa Lichtmann

In 1947 Los Angeles, these streets will have you wishing you were anywhere but there. The entire *L.A. Noire* soundtrack is filled to the brim with 40's jazz and blues music, often with a melancholic feel meant to evoke the dark, damp, and dirty streets where many find themselves after a night on the town. "Guilty" is a track that was originally written for the game by Claudia Brücken and featuring the The Real Tuesday Night Weld band; and one of the featured songs performed by Elsa Lichtmann, a blues club singer who fled to the United States following her parents execution at the hands of the early Nazi party. "Guilty" as a track can be interpreted two ways: through the idea of love being an allegory to drugs (which is certainly the interpretation most faithful to the game) or with genuine hope as she seeks new companionship following her dark past. This arrangement focuses on the latter idea, maintaining the vibes of the original early on before developing into an up-beat tune that'll be sure to get your fingers waggin'.

"If love's the crime, I'm doing time, and I don't look like I'll ever get free." - Elsa Lichtmann

Driftveil City

Pokémon: Black and White

Hitomi Sato

Arr. Colin Eng

Feat. Rhet Brega (*Alto Sax*), Ethan Hawkes (*Trumpet*)

In the *Pokémon* region of Unova, inspired by the United States, jazz music fills the game as the player traverses skyscraper cities, deserts, and oceans. In this game filled with incredible, jazz inspired music, Driftveil City's theme stands above the rest. An ex-cargo ship port, turned into a city, the funky theme suits the slightly grungy look. This tune was also recently made famous from the popular internet "Dancing Toothless" meme a few years back. This arrangement takes the style from the original theme and expands it into a full jazz band! It includes some screamer trumpet parts as well as a full ensemble shout section with NO rhythm section.



The Fragrance of Dark Coffee

Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney - Trials and Tribulations

Noriyuki Iwadare

Arr. Annika Vallurupalli

Feat. Serena Alamina (*Tenor Sax*), Lixin Zheng (*Tenor Sax*), Jack Wethington (*Guitar*), Brooke Guo (*Piano*)

The highlights of the *Ace Attorney* trilogy are often the prosecutors you play against while fighting for justice in the courtroom. These prosecutors act as foils to Phoenix, contrasting arrogance with humility and aggression with kindness (more like violence with normalness lol). In *Trials and Tribulations*, your prosecutor is Godot, a mysterious masked man introduced with smooth jazz and a cup of coffee in hand. His personality is almost aggressively calm and relaxed, with his theme being inspired by the chill jazz you'd hear in a coffee shop. He always seems to be in complete control of the courtroom whether he wins or loses, compared to Phoenix who is usually flying by the seat of his pants. But as you learn more about him, you start to see the depth behind that exaggerated persona, and start to hear the sadness in that slightly wistful saxophone that he's always accompanied by.



Casino Night Zone

Sonic the Hedgehog 2/Sonic Generations

Masato Nakamura

Arr. Ryan Goldsmith

Feat. Ryan Goldsmith (*Alto Sax*), Quinlan Ngo (*Trombone*)

Picture this: Massive buildings standing tall in the sky with bright neon lights on every wall, bumpers and springs prepared to send you flying through the starlit sky, and massive roulette machines just begging you to take a spin; welcome to Casino Night Zone.

Originally composed by Masato Nakamura for *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*, Casino Night Zone is one of the many levels that Sonic and his new pal Tails have to traverse on their way to defeat the evil Dr. Robotnik, but even heroes sometimes have to have some fun, and who knows? You might even hit the Jackpot! Casino Night Zone would later return in *Sonic Generations*,

remastered by Jun Senoue and Atushi Kosugi, featuring a jazzy feel to tap your toes to while you try your luck at the slots. So come take a trip with the GSO Big Band to this grungy casino and let's see if we can win big.



Jump Up, Super Star

Super Mario Odyssey

Naoto Kubo

Feat. Theresa Menna (*Vocal*), Gray Walters (*Vocal*)

In the hit modern-classic *Super Mario Odyssey*, Mario's grand journey around the world takes him to NYC-inspired New Donk City in the Metro Kingdom, where he is reunited with an old friend.

Alongside serving as the mayor of New Donk, Pauline has a side gig as a singer. In fact, she's rebuilding her band just in time for a performance at the New Donk City Festival! Under a sky full of fireworks just after sunset, the world is met with the upbeat groove of a big band ensemble and the suave tones of Pauline's vocals in "Jump Up Super Star!", the first song in the Mario franchise to feature lyrics.

Without further ado, it's time to jump up in the air and do the odyssey!



The Credits Roll

Super Mario 3D World

Mahito Yokota, Toru Minegishi, Yasuaka Iwata, Koji Kondo

Arr. Robert Morris

Feat. Lixin Zheng (*Tenor Sax*), Annika Vallurupalli (*Baritone Sax*), Connor Chaplain (*Trombone*)

As a final sendoff for the evening, we harken back to the GSO Big Band of old (well not so old, only Spring 2025 after all). From simple beginnings as a group that played *Cuphead* music, to the group that performed live *Mario Kart* tracks along with the gameplay, and finally to the group you witnessed on stage today, it is amazing to see just how far this group has come in just my short time here. I founded this official group with nothing but some written words and a spark in my eye and I cannot believe that over just one semester they've managed to become a full ensemble with over 40 members! I think that's worth a celebration. Let's go out with a proper sendoff and do this one more time. Here's to the GSO Big Band, and although the future looks bright, for now let's roll those credits!

- Robert Morris, GSO Big Band Founder and Director

And a special thank-you to...

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The Memorial Chapel
The UMD Student Government Association
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Ken Rubin
Jesse Halpern
Hiroshi Amano
Prof. Derek Richardson
Dr. Laura Schnitker
Prof. Marybeth Shea

and finally...

YOU!