

PROGRAM NOTES
Quincy Symphony Orchestra, Quincy, Illinois
Heroic Vision Concert - February 7, 2026
Madalyn Pridemore

Balmages, Brian - (Up)lified

Brian Balmages began his musical career as an orchestral trumpet player before finding his niche as a composer of educational works for band, orchestra, and chamber group settings. Balmages emphasizes the importance of “writing organically” for each ensemble, creating music that showcases the strengths and capabilities of the performers. *(Up)Lified* layers an array of timbres and textures in an exciting overture-style work as a sonic tribute to the excitement of performing with others following the COVID-19 pandemic. The opening chord crescendos to rapid string patterns, incorporating lush fanfares across the wind and brass sections before reaching the final cadence.

Beethoven - Egmont Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven composed the *Egmont* suite as a commission for the first Viennese staging of the Goethe play of the same name. The play fictionalizes the story of the real Count Egmont of the 16th-century, who led the Flemish resistance against the Spanish rule of the Netherlands. Beethoven’s overture summarizes the story, opening with ominous chords before accelerating into heroic melodies sweeping across the ensemble. A harsh chord and moment of silence signify Count Egmont’s beheading, followed by a celebratory ending, signifying his moral win for the Flemish.

Haydn - Oboe Concerto in C, 1st movement only

Christopher Tu, soloist

Though Joseph Haydn has long been attributed as the composer of the Oboe Concerto, a 2008 discovery of the composer’s worklist and the absence of the piece on this list, raises questions about the creation of the work. Researchers have now reattributed the work to Ignaz Malzat, an Austrian composer and oboist. Malzat worked as a court musician in Salzburg, studying with Michael Haydn (the brother of Joseph). Malzat wrote several instrumental works and served for the Prince-Bishop of Passau. Despite uncertain authorship, the concerto’s diversity of melodies and variety of contrasting moods set it apart in 18th-century woodwind repertoire. Researchers note the scope of musical ideas as being integral to the development of the oboe concerto in its time.

Saint-Saëns - Piano Concerto No. 2, 1st movement only

Arrow Crist, soloist

Camille Saint-Saëns took 17 days in 1868 to compose his Piano Concerto No. 2, the earliest of the composer’s orchestral works to attain a permanent place in performance repertoire. The first movement’s slow pulse features the soloist in quick, quasi-improvisational figuration, much like Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier Preludes*. The opening recalls Saint-Saëns’ successful career as an organist, through thickly-orchestrated chords and delicate motivic passages floating delicately above. Saint-Saëns performed the work for the final time with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1906.

Williams arr. Custer - Summon the Heroes

Summon the Heroes, John Williams’ third score intended for the Olympic games, premiered in July 1996 at the opening ceremony in Atlanta, GA. NBC uses this piece, along with a rerecording of Williams’ 1984 Olympic theme for much of their coverage of the games. John Williams was awarded the Olympic

Order in 2003, the highest individual honor awarded by the International Olympic Committee. In addition to Williams' numerous award-winning film scores and pop culture contributions, his compositions include a variety of more classical genres, including several concertos.

Newman - The Natural

Randy Newman began his career at 17 as a songwriter before releasing his first single, "Golden Gridiron Boy" a year later in 1962. During the 1960s, he primarily worked in songwriting and arranging, releasing his debut album *Randy Newman* in 1968, a critically-acclaimed and widely covered work. Newman's early film scores include *The Natural* and *Ragtime*, both nominated for Academy Awards in music. His work on Disney movies like the *Toy Story* series, *A Bug's Life*, *Monsters, Inc.*, *Cars*, and *The Princess and the Frog* garnered admiration for his soundtrack compositions.

Rabin arr. Booker White - "Titan Spirit" from Remember the Titans

Trevor Rabin wrote "Titan Spirit" for the 2000 film *Remember the Titans*, but the work has accompanied events like the NBC broadcast of Olympic closing ceremonies and Barack Obama's acceptance speech following his 2008 election win. Rabin began his career in the South African rock band *Rabbitt* before moving to London to pursue solo endeavors. In 1983, he joined the English progressive rock band *Yes* as their guitarist, performing with the group through 1995. Rabin's film experience encompasses a variety of genres, spanning from horror in *Exorcist: The Beginning* to action in *National Treasure* and science fiction in *Race to Witch Mountain*.

Vangelis arr. Mancini - Chariots of Fire

Vangelis revolutionized the role of the synthesizer in film soundtracks with *Chariots of Fire* (1981), recording all of the instruments in his London studio. He is best known for his contributions to electronic music, writing 23 studio albums and contributing to 14 film soundtracks. Though his music reached widespread audiences through large, public events like the Olympics and blockbuster films, Vangelis kept his personal life relatively secret, rarely agreeing to interviews. Vangelis's later contributions include pieces in collaboration with NASA which both celebrate and accompany information about their various spacecraft missions.

Pearson, Johnny - Heavy Action (Monday Night Football)

In 1975, ABC acquired the rights to Johnny Pearson's (1925-2011) *Heavy Action*, a work that would become synonymous with sports programming across both the US and UK. ABC's *Monday Night Football* adopted the piece as their main theme during the 1989 NFL season, introducing various remixes and adaptations of the work for various events (including Animal Planet's *PuppyBowl*). Pearson's works often served as TV program themes, including those of *Spider-Man*, *Sesame Street*, and *Superstars*. Pearson's influence extended to popular genres through his work with Cilla Black and George Martin.

Goldsmith - Hoosiers Suite

Jerry Goldsmith contributed to over 200 movie and TV soundtracks throughout his career, scoring major works including *Twilight Zone*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Hoosiers*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Gremlins*, *Rudy*, and *Mulan*. Goldsmith's signature sound arises from his frequent use of non-Western instruments, pre-recorded electronic tracks, and avantgarde approaches to composing. Listeners also may have

encountered his work in the iconic opening fanfares for both Paramount Pictures and Universal Pictures. Goldsmith's works have been nominated for a total of 18 Academy Awards.