

music & dance



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WINDS OF FATE BLOW CLARINETIST BACK TO HER BUCKEYE ROOTS

BY BILL MAYR | FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH



Caroline Hartig has come full circle during her career.

After teaching and performing worldwide, Hartig, a native of central Ohio, has returned to teach at her alma mater, Ohio State University.

And the clarinetist has returned in time to perform with the university Wind Ensemble in preparation for a concert at a storied venue.

“Converging Cultures” will feature the School of Music’s Wind Symphony and new faculty member Hartig.

Such projects make her glad she returned.

“As far as a land-grant institution, it is the best in the country,” she said. “This is a public institution, and it is amazing how well it does. I’m impressed with the quality of the faculty and the quality of the students.”

“Every day it is confirmed to me — wow, what a great decision to come here,” she said.

The Wind Symphony will use the concert to help prepare for a Feb. 12 performance in Severance Hall, home to the Cleveland Symphony and one of the best-known venues in the Midwest.

Hartig will perform in *Concerto for Clarinet*, a 2011 composition by Frank Ticheli, a California composer.

The ensemble will also play selections by Benjamin Britten, Aaron Copland and George Gershwin.

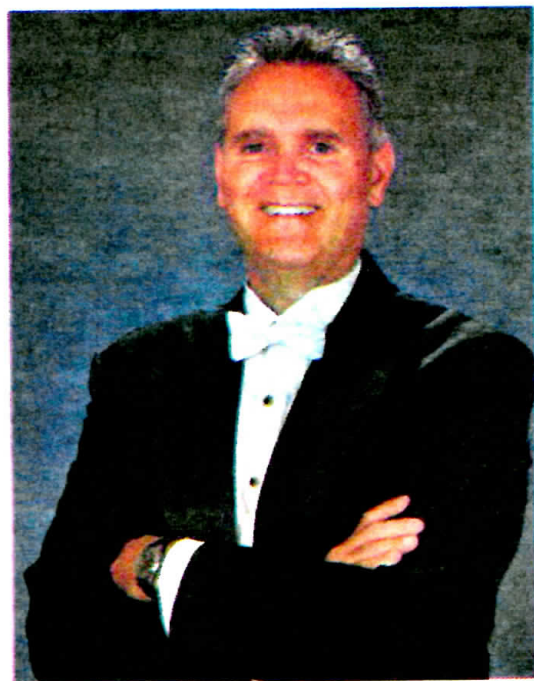
“This is a concert that is really constructed from the *Concerto for Clarinet*. I built the program around that piece,” said Russel C. Mikkelson, director of university bands and Wind Symphony conductor.

In turn, the concerto will



Clarinetist Caroline Hartig

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



KEVIN FITZSIMONS

Wind Symphony conductor Russel C. Mikkelson

at a glance

Ohio State Wind Symphony

WEIGEL HALL, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, 1866 COLLEGE RD. (614-292-2295, WWW.MUSIC.OSU.EDU)

SHOWTIME » 8 tonight
TICKETS » \$10, or \$5 for senior citizens, alumni association members, students and children; free for OSU students, faculty and staff members

showcase the talent of Hartig, a clarinetist described by Mikkelson as “just stunning,

both for beauty of tone and mastery of technique,” with a “beautifully lyric quality of sound.”

After a collegiate teaching career that has taken her around the Midwest and a global performing life, Hartig has returned to her roots.

In the late 1970s, Hartig recalled, her high-school band director at Grove City High School — James Swearingen, now a professor at the Capital University’s Conservatory of Music — “used to bring me to concerts at Ohio State; he’d always introduce me to the clarinet professors.”

Hartig graduated from Ohio State in 1983 in music education; she earned her doctorate at

State University of New York at Stony Brook.

She had been teaching at Michigan State University before returning to Columbus.

“I loved Michigan State and all the places I’ve been. I’ve toured the world (as a performer). But always in the back of my head, I was thinking about Ohio State if a job opened up,” she said.

“My family is here, (my) parents and three sisters are here.” Hartig has recording projects in Germany and the United States; in December she will serve as a juror in an international clarinet competition in Israel.

But she is focused on the

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Ticheli concerto. Its three movements are tributes to American composing greats Copland, Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein.

Hartig and the Wind Symphony will perform the concerto, along with pieces by the three composers it honors, in the Severance Hall concert.

"That was something I floated to our administration and they were supportive, but it costs us a lot of money to rent (Severance Hall) and all of that," Mikkelson said. "We had a donor come forth who was from Cleveland who now lives in Chicago.

"To play in that hall, that will be phenomenal," he said.

"We are inviting high-school students from all over that area; we are providing



OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Ohio State University Wind Symphony

discounted tickets. More than anything, we want to play great music in a great hall to a full house."

The performance is the

major part of a Wind Symphony goodwill tour to Cleveland, which includes performances at several area high schools.

So Hartig can come home again?

"I guess so," she said. "And it's a good feeling."
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