

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS

A TRICK OR TREAT SPOOKTACULAR WITH  
THE CSU CONCERT ORCHESTRA!

# CABINET

*of Curiosities*

CONDUCTED BY RACHEL WADDELL  
SAM COOPER, ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR AND GTA

— WITH GUEST NARRATION BY —  
CSU PRESIDENT AMY PARSONS

OCTOBER 29, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.  
GRIFFIN CONCERT HALL



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**CONCERT ORCHESTRA**  
**OCTOBER 29, 2025 | 7:30 P.M. | GRIFFEN CONCERT HALL**  
**CABINET OF CURIOSITIES—A TRICK OR TREAT SPOOKTACULAR!**  
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**Program:**

***Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46***

Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907)  
arr. Carrie Lane Gruselle

- I. Morning Mood
- II. Aase's Death
- III. Anitra's Dance
- IV. In the Hall of the Mountain King

***The Raven for String Orchestra and Narrator***

Scott Gendel (b. 1977), Edvard Grieg,  
Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849)

CSU President Amy Parsons, Narrator

***Danse Macabre***

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)  
arr. Percy Hall (1928 – 2019)

Casey Lee, Violin Soloist  
Sam Cooper, Conductor

***House of Untold Horrors for Narration and String Orchestra***

Lauren Bernofsky (b. 1967)  
ed. Soon Hee Newbold (b. 1974)

CSU President Amy Parsons, Narrator  
Sam Cooper, Conductor

***This is Halloween***

Danny Elfman (b. 1953),  
arr. James Kazik (b. 1974)

Audience Sing-Along! Lyrics can be found on the back of the program.  
Sam Cooper, Conductor

## **PERSONNEL:**

**Dr. Rachel Waddell**, Music Director and Conductor  
**Sam Cooper**, Assistant Conductor and GTA

**\*Names are presented in alphabetical order\***

### **VIOLIN 1**

Grace Asiala

David Chen

Sam Cooper, Violin 1 for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

Aaron Graff

Lydia Johnsen, Concertmaster for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

Casey Lee, Concertmaster for *Danse Macabre*

Mia Mendolia

Emily Reed

Andy Romero, Violin 1 for *Danse Macabre*, *House of Untold Horrors*, and *This is Halloween*

Victor Villalpando

Kelsie Wayt, Concertmaster for *House of Untold Horror* and *This is Halloween*

Charlotte Wynkoop

### **VIOLIN 2**

Rachel Johnson-Bothe

Hannah Burke

Josie Maes Farone, Principal for *House of Untold Horror* and *This is Halloween*

Ryan Haussmann

Cheryl Hite

Melissa Kelley, Principal for *Danse Macabre*

Nora Kellmann

Chandler Klotz, Principal for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

Eero Lounsbury

Isabelle Moore

Andy Romero, Violin 2 for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

## **VIOLA**

Kaylee Giese

Madeline Heemstra, Principal for *House of Untold Horror* and *This is Halloween*

Kierra Jewell

Ryan Mendez, Principal for *Danse Macabre*

Bella Penna, Principal for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

Yangchen Rotto

Annabelle Thomas

Cameron Tungent

## **CELLO**

Lucia Baithe

Maxine Bilodeau, Principal for *Danse Macabre*, *House of Untold Horrors*, and *This is Halloween*

Chloe Ellingson

Victoria Haluszczak

Isabel Inman

Amanda Kmetz, Principal for *Peer Gynt* and *The Raven*

## **BASS**

Jojo Boysen

Hunter Dominguez, Principal

Carmylla Powers

Dr. Rachel Waddell, Bass for *Danse Macabre*, *House of Untold Horrors*, and *This is Halloween*

## **Librarians**

Dr. Ethan Urtz, Head Librarian

Sam Cooper, Librarian Liaison

Devon Bignell

Gabriela Greenberg

## THE CSUCO WISHES TO THANK:

Dr. Ethan Urtz

Devon Bignell

Gabriela Greenberg

Mike Solo, Creative Director of the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

Jennifer Clary, Director of Communications for the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

Nicole Darling, Administrative Assistant for the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

Daniel Stein, SMTD Events Manager, and his student staff

Valerie Reed, Assistant Events Manager

Jim Doser, Audio Engineer

Dr. Rose Wollman, Professor of Viola

Dr. Meredith Blecha-Wells, Professor of Cello

Professor Ron Francois, Violin

Professor Cristian Mazo, Double Bass

Axel Gallegos, Cello Performance Graduate Student

Amy Parsons, CSU President

Teddi Tostanoski, Senior Social and Digital Media Strategist for President Parsons

Emily Lewis, Executive Assistant to the President

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## COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY MUSIC APPLIED FACULTY

### **Violin**

Ron Francois

### **Flute**

Ysmael Reyes

Michelle Stanley

### **Trumpet**

Stanley Curtis

### **Harp**

Kathryn Harms

### **Viola**

Rose Wollman

### **Oboe**

Galit Kaunitz

### **Horn**

John McGuire

### **Piano**

Bryan Wallick

Tim Burns

### **Cello**

Meredith Blecha-Wells

### **Clarinet**

Wesley Ferreira

### **Trombone**

Drew Leslie

### **Organ**

Joel Bacon

### **Bass**

Forest Greenough

### **Saxophone**

Peter Sommer

### **Tuba/Euphonium**

Brian Sugrue

### **Voice**

Nicole Asel

### **Guitar**

Jeff Laquatra

### **Bassoon**

Cayla Bellamy

### **Percussion**

Eric Hollenbeck

Shilo Stroman

Tiffany Blake

John Lindsey

## PROGRAM NOTES

### ***Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46***

Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907), arr. Carrie Lane Gruselle

In 1874, Edvard Grieg began a two-year project to compose incidental music to a play by Henrik Ibsen. The production was about Peer Gynt, a Norwegian adventurer. The result was some of the most memorable music to come from Scandinavia.

The following movements make up the first concert suite. *Morning Mood* is arguably the most well-known depiction of dawn in orchestral repertoire. A lilting 6/8 setting showcases Grieg's lyrical melody. The somber, heartfelt *Aase's Death* characterizes Peer's grief at the death of his mother. *Anitra's Dance* comes from Peer's journey to Morocco. *In the Hall of the Mountain King* depicts a congregation of terrifying trolls and Peer's frantic escape from them.

The suite contains a broad range of Grieg's compositional techniques. Movements may be lyrical, chromatic, exotic, heavy, light, calming, or stirring, as well as the range of experiences of the legendary Norwegian peasant boy Peer Gynt.

— Program Note by Carrie Lane Grusell

### ***The Raven for String Orchestra and Narrator***

Scott Gendel (b. 1977), Edvard Grieg, Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849)

"The Raven" was written as underscoring to be played by a live orchestra underneath a dramatic reading of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven." It takes the beautiful, mournful "Aase's Death" from Grieg's *Peer Gynt* as source material, but elaborates on that work, expanding and deepening it. The most obvious addition is a somber 3-note timpani [and double bass] figure that comes back over and over again, echoing the 3-syllable "nevermore" that repeats throughout Poe's poem. The narrator's part is mostly left up to the performer, but in a few key moments, the orchestra and the poetic reading line up to create little serendipitous shivers.

Like the original Grieg work, "The Raven" is a very spare piece of music, left even more spare to throw the audience's focus onto the narrator's reading of the poem. But my expansion of the Grieg takes that empty quality and adds even more ominous foreboding moodiness, creating a gothic, spooky vibe that just can't be shaken off.

— Program Note by Scott Gendel

## ***Danse Macabre***

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921), arr. Percy Hall (1928 – 2019)

*Danse Macabre* (or *Dance of Death*) by the French composer Camille Saint-Saëns is one of the most popular program works of the standard orchestral repertoire. Very few cuts have been made in this adaptation for string orchestra so that both string players and their audience may enjoy this masterwork.

Saint-Saëns copied lines from a poem by Henri Cazalix that he used to develop his story:

“Zig-a-zag-a-zig, Death plays the fiddle at midnight, a fantastic dancing tune. The winter wind blows and the night is dark: wails and moans are heard in the trees. From open graves the skeletons run, leaping and dancing in great white sheets. But suddenly the dance is ended. The dancers push, they run, they fly. The cock has crowed, the dawn has come. The phantoms fade in the light of day.”

— Program Note by Percy Hall

## ***House of Untold Horrors for Narration and String Orchestra***

Lauren Bernofsky (b. 1967), ed. Soon Hee Newbold (b. 1974)

I am not only a composer, but a music mom. At the time I wrote this piece, my son, Nicholas, was seven and studying cello at the Indiana University String Academy. When his teacher Cara Miller asked me to write a piece for the annual cello Halloween concert, I happily agreed—I’m always looking for ways to make music-making fun. Cara and I wanted a piece that the kids would have a great time playing I later arranged the work for string orchestra.

I thought that having an actual story would be a fun basis for the piece. And it’s not really a scary story—well not until the very end, but by then it’s just funny. The story of course justifies the many unusual sounds called for in the piece, which will broaden students’ palette of sounds that they know how to produce on their instruments. And these sound effects, strange as they may be, also have a pedagogical value. Two of the sound effects, the scuttling rats and the gasp, were invented by Nicholas!

*House of Untold Horrors* was premiered on October 27, 2007, at Indiana University by the String Academy cello ensemble, directed by Cara Miller. Our wonderfully “horrible” narrator was Dr. Joss Marsh, Professor of English at Indiana University, whom I would also like to thank for her help in editing the text of the story. Through a stroke of luck, we were able to arrange for Joss to narrate on the FJH recording as well.

— Program Note by Lauren Bernofsky

***This is Halloween***

Danny Elfman (b. 1953), arr. James Kazik (b. 1974)

Few pieces capture the mischievous thrill of October quite like Danny Elfman’s “This Is Halloween.” Written for Tim Burton’s 1993 stop-motion classic *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, the song introduces the residents of Halloween Town, a delightfully macabre community that celebrates fright as an art form. Elfman’s distinctive blend of eerie whimsy and rhythmic drive sets the tone for the film’s playful exploration of what it means to belong. Whether you know the tune from childhood memories or hear it anew, “This Is Halloween” is both a celebration and a wink, a musical costume party that invites listeners to enjoy the strange, the spooky, and the spectacular.

— Program Note by Sam Cooper

## BIOS:



### **Rachel Waddell, Director of Orchestras**

Rachel Waddell shapes orchestras as interconnected forces, bridging the professional and educational to transform vision into action. With a proven record of growth, artistry, and impact across the United States and beyond, she positions ensemble artistry as a catalyst for community. Orchestras, under her leadership, pulse as civic and cultural heartbeats, rooted in the enduring complexity, beauty, and relevance of today's orchestral music.

Whether coaching youth ensembles or collaborating with international soloists, Rachel approaches the podium with grit, imagination, and humor. She currently serves as Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University and the Music Director of the Longmont Youth Symphony. Rachel is a sought-after guest conductor, recently leading the TMEA All-State Orchestra Sinfonietta (2025) and the AA Montana Festival Orchestra (2024). Her past work with the University of Rochester Orchestras earned national acclaim for innovative programming, winning the American Prize's Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award in 2019 and 2020. In recognition of her ongoing commitment to education and mentorship, Rachel was named a Quarterfinalist for the 2025 Music Educator Award through the Grammys.

Rachel's professional engagements span the *Orchestre Métropolitain*, Rochester, Las Vegas, and Denver Philharmonics, the Greater Bridgeport Symphony, and Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra, among others. She is currently a Music Director finalist for the Mid-Columbia Symphony in Washington. As Associate Conductor of the Canton Symphony Orchestra, she led over 80 concerts of classical, pops, and education programming. She has attended numerous conducting programs including the Dallas Opera's prestigious Hart Institute for Women Conductors, and Mark Shapiro's Conducting Intensive at Juilliard. In August 2022, she made her Vienna debut conducting *Così fan tutte* as part of the Vienna Opera Academy. In July 2023, she made her Canadian debut with the *Orchestre Métropolitain*, after being selected to conduct by Yannick Nézet-Séguin at *Le Domaine Forget de Charlevoix*.

Driven to reshape the narrative of American orchestras, Rachel co-founded *Conductors for Change*, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit empowering artistic leaders to build inclusive, future-forward institutions. Her research explores how 21st-century orchestras can engage through liberal arts education, civic dialogue, and interdisciplinary storytelling to cultivate cultural transformation.

Rachel holds degrees from the Hartt School (BM, Composition) and University of Nevada, Las Vegas (DMA, Conducting), and earned a certificate in Music Industry Essentials from NYU's Clive Davis Institute and Yellowbrick. She is a member of the Recording Academy.

From podium to program, Rachel continues to advance orchestras as interconnected, community-driven, and artistically alive. To learn more about Rachel Waddell please visit [www.rachelwaddellconductor.com](http://www.rachelwaddellconductor.com) or follow her on Instagram @rachel\_waddell\_conductor .



### **Sam Cooper, Assistant Conductor of Orchestras**

Sam Cooper is currently pursuing his master's in instrumental conducting at Colorado State University under the mentorship of Dr. Rachel L. Waddell. He serves as the Assistant Conductor of Orchestras at CSU and the Assistant Conductor for the Health and Wellness Community Orchestra, a Fort Collins-based ensemble that fosters a welcoming and engaging environment where musicians of all backgrounds can enjoy playing together. Sam was honored to serve as Assistant Conductor for the Loveland Opera Theatre's production of *The Sound of Music* in October of 2025. He also served as pit director for the Empire Lyric Players' July 2025 production of *The Mikado...in Space*—a contemporary reimagining of Gilbert and Sullivan's classic operetta that infused the original with fresh humor and a modern perspective

Sam studied violin with Dr. Philip Ficsor and Dr. Emily Ondracek-Peterson at MSU Denver, where he earned degrees in music performance and music education in December 2023. He has played violin with various musical groups, including the Aurora Symphony and Empire Lyric Players, and held the roles of concertmaster and assistant conductor with the MSU Denver Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Brandon Stephen Matthews. As a co-founder and violinist of the Apollo String Quartet, Sam remains actively engaged in chamber music.

In January 2025, Sam was selected to participate in a conducting workshop with Carl Topilow and the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. In June 2025, he took part in another workshop led by Diane Wittry and Dr. Silas Huff in New York City with the Collegium Musicum New York.

Sam encourages you to follow his conducting journey on Instagram: @cooper\_conducts



## **Amy Parsons, President of CSU**

Amy Parsons is the 16th President of Colorado State University. Prior to being named CSU President in 2023, Parsons served for 17 years in various senior executive leadership roles at CSU and the CSU System. She combines her higher education background with private sector experience, as well as a background in law.

Parsons currently serves in leadership positions for local, state, and national organizations that span business, cultural, and athletics interests. This includes service on the NCAA Committee on Infractions, the U.S. Committee for Economic Development Board of Trustees, the Salazar Center for North American Conservation External Advisory Board, the Denver Sports Commission, the Alpine Bank Board of Directors, the Colorado Business Roundtable Board of Directors, the Mountain West Board of Directors, the Pac-12 Board of Directors, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Board of Trustees.

Parsons was executive vice chancellor of the CSU System from 2015-2020; vice president for university operations at CSU from 2009-2015; deputy general counsel and associate legal counsel at CSU Fort Collins from 2004-2009. As vice president of operations at CSU, she helped navigate through the fiscal challenges of the Great Recession, supported the first comprehensive salary equity survey to uncover and remedy gender-based inequities, and oversaw an historic physical transformation that included construction and renovation of state-of-the-art classroom buildings, parking structures, research facilities, and an on-campus stadium. She worked as a litigation attorney for Denver-firm Brownstein, Hyatt, & Farber (now Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, Schreck) from 1999-2004.

During the 2024-2025 year, Parsons received the CU Law Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, was named Zeta Tau Alpha National Alumna of the Year, and was inducted into CSU's Inaugural Class Circle of Legends.

Parsons holds a bachelor's degree in political science from CSU and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Colorado. She was born in Colorado and grew up in Wyoming.

## **Lyrics for Abridged “This is Halloween” Sing-Along!**

Lyrics by Danny Elfman, arr. by Sam Cooper based on arrangement by James Kazik

### **Verse #1**

Boys and girls of every age,  
Wouldn't you like to see something strange?  
Come with us and you will see,  
This our town of Halloween

### **Chorus #1**

This is Halloween, this is Halloween  
Pumpkins scream in the dead of night!  
This is Halloween, everybody make a scene.  
Trick or treat 'til the neighbors gonna die of fright  
It's our town, everybody scream!  
In this town of Halloween.

### **Creature Under the Bed:**

I am the one hiding under your bed  
Teeth ground sharp and eyes glowing red

### **Man Under the Stairs:**

I am the one hiding under your stairs  
Fingers like snakes and spiders in my hair

### **Chorus #2**

This is Halloween, this is Halloween  
Halloween, Halloween, Halloween, Halloween!

### **Verse #2**

In this town, we call home  
Everyone, hail to the pumpkin song.  
In this town, don't we love it now?  
Everybody's waiting for the next surprise!  
Round that corner, man hiding in the trash can,  
Something's waiting now to pounce, and how you'll scream!

### **Chorus #3**

This is Halloween, this is Halloween  
Halloween, Halloween, Halloween, Halloween, Halloween, Halloween!

### **Verse #3**

Tender lumpings everywhere,  
Life's no fun without a good scare!  
That's our job, but we're not mean.  
In our town of Halloween.

### **Verse #4**

In this town,  
Don't we love it now?  
Everyone's waiting for the next surprise!  
Skeleton Jack might catch you in the back and  
Scream like a banshee make you jump out of your skin.

### **Verse #5**

This is Halloween, everybody scream  
Please make way for a very special guy!  
Our man Jack is king of the pumpkin patch.  
Everyone, hail to the Pumpkin King now!

### **Chorus #4**

This is Halloween, this is Halloween.  
Halloween, Halloween, Halloween, Halloween!

### **Finish Chorus:**

In this town we call home,  
Everyone, hail to the pumpkin song!

### **Outro:**

La-la-la, la-la  
La-la-la, la-la  
La-la-la, la-la  
La, la-la, la, la

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