

# Cynthia Johnston Turner



Odds were against Cynthia Johnston Turner becoming a musician let alone a professor of music in higher education. Born in a small rural town in Ontario, Canada, no one in her family played an instrument or sang, although there were rumors that her great paternal grandfather was a mean mandolinist. Cynthia asked for a piano for Christmas when she was 8 years old, and because it was all her parents could afford, she received a toy electric keyboard from which she was pretty much inseparable until she started the ukulele in grade school. When she picked up the clarinet and saxophone in middle school, a love affair and career were born.

The first in her family to attend university, Cynthia received her B.Mus and B.Ed from Queen's University then immediately left Canada to teach choral music, computers (in French), and physical education in Switzerland. Upon her return, she taught middle school and high school band before completing her Masters in Music Education and Conducting at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. Touring with her ensembles inspired her master's thesis on the musical and personal transformations that occur on tours, and her D.M.A. thesis at the Eastman School of Music centered on the music of William Kraft, one of this generation's leading composers. At Eastman, Cynthia was the recipient of the teaching award in conducting. She received the National Leadership in Education Award (Canada), the Excellence in Education Award (Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation), and the Marion Drysdale Leadership Award (also from OSSTF). She is also the recipient of the Donald A. Reick Memorial Award for research with wearable technologies and music pedagogy, grants from the UGA Willson Center for Creative Activities, multiple awards from the UGA career center, and the American Prize for innovative programming with wind bands.

Currently, Cynthia is Director of Bands, Professor of Music, and co-Artistic Director of Rote Hund Muzik at the Hodgson School of Music, University of Georgia. Turner conducts the Hodgson Wind Ensemble, leads the MM and DMA programs in conducting, and oversees the entire band program including the 400+ member Redcoat Marching Band. She is sponsored by Conn-Selmer.

Cynthia continues to actively promote commissions by today's leading and emerging composers around the world. While Director of Wind Ensembles at Cornell University, her ensemble was invited to perform at the College Band Directors National Association's Eastern Division Conference in 2007 and 2012, and the Hodgson Wind Ensemble

performed at GMEA in 2015 and CBDNA National in Kansas City in 2017. In 2008, the Merrill Presidential Scholars at Cornell recognized Cynthia as an outstanding educator, and in 2009, she was awarded the Kaplan Family Distinguished Faculty Fellowship. Her performances have been praised by such composers as Steven Stucky,

William Kraft, Steven Bryant, Omar Thomas, Marc Mellits, Melinda Wagner, John Mackey, Peter Lane, Eddie Mora Bermudez, Dana Wilson, Roberto Sierra, and Karel Husa.

From January 2006, Cynthia led the Cornell Wind Ensemble on biennial performing and service tours to Costa Rica that included performances across the country, conducting masterclasses with Costa Rican teachers, instrument master classes for Costa Rican musicians, and the donation of over 250 instruments to music schools across the country. She led the Hodgson Wind Ensemble to Panama in January 2016 to teach, perform, and donate instruments.

Cynthia has guest conducted bands and orchestras at several universities and conservatories as well as state honor bands in the United States and abroad. Cynthia has been invited to present her research with teaching and technology, innovative rehearsal techniques, and service-learning and music performance at numerous conferences nationally and internationally. She is published in such journals as *Interdisciplinary Humanities*, *International Journal of the Humanities*, *Music Educators Journal*, *NAfME "Teaching Music,"* *NewMusicUSA.org*, *Journal of the World Association of Bands and Ensembles*, *Fanfare Magazine*, and *Canadian Winds*, and has recorded CDs with the *Innova* and *Albany* labels.

Cynthia's most recent research involves the intersection of wind ensemble music with hip-hop.

Cynthia has served as a board member with WASBE and is an active member of CBDNA, Conductor's Guild, College Music Society, Humanities Education and Research Association, the National Association for Music Education, the National Band Association, and the American Bandmasters Association. She currently serves on the board of the Western International Band Clinic (WIBC) and faculty at WIBC University. She is an honorary member of Kappa Kappa Psi and a National Arts Associate member of Sigma Alpha Iota.