



# GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY®

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,  
THEATRE, AND DANCE

## Family Concert

Studio of Dr. Helen Marlais

2:00 P.M. Saturday, December 7, 2024

Sherman van Solkema Recital Hall

Haas Center for Performing Arts

Greetings immediately after performance in the Louis Armstrong Lobby.

## Program

Triana

Timothy Brown  
(b. 1959)

John Foster, Emma Cornish, and Ryan Holley-Mallo

Gargoyles

Lowell Liebermann  
(b. 1961)

III. Allegro moderato

III. Presto feroce

Faith Lee

Concerto in Cool

Kevin Olson  
(b. 1967)

I. With energy

II. Expressively, with motion

III. Fast Rock

Joshua Yin, solo

Mijeong Lee, orchestra

Tarantella (and Neopolitan Folk Song)

Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

Mijeong Lee

~ Five Minute Break ~

**Narrated by:** Dale Schriemer

**Performers:**

#1, 4: Ryan Holley-Mallo

#2,15: Vonnie Ritsema

#3: Rhonda Clarke

#6, 10: Dr. Marlais

#7, 9: John Foster

#11,12: Emma Cornish

#14,18: Kaitlyn Besley

#16,17: Faith Lee

#19,20: Mijeong Lee

**Poster artwork:** Xiaowei Li, age 10 when studying with Dr. Marlais

Commissioned by Ballet Theatre of Toledo, Ohio, Nigel Burgoine Artistic Director

Thank you to Frances Renzi for reviewing and helping prepare this piano performance music, and to Helen Marlais and her students for the 1st premiere performance for piano and narrator.



## The Story

**#1:** Geppetto is in his workshop making toys. He then brings out his most favorite toy, Pinocchio. He lovingly carves and paints this lifelike puppet because Geppetto's dream has always been to have a son. Geppetto falls asleep dreaming that one day his puppet could come to life.

**#2:** A cricket called Jiminy climbs into the workshop and dances among the toys.

**#3:** The Turquoise Fairy enters and has decided to make Pinocchio come to life, but not become human. She sets stipulations with her spell that if Pinocchio tells lies his nose will grow longer, and if he does not go to school, he will become a donkey.

**#4:** When Geppetto wakes up he sees Pinocchio walking like a real child. He is overjoyed

and gets him ready for school.

**#5:** Pinocchio sets off for school and meets up with other children on their way to school. He is very happy to be one of the group.

**#6:** The Fox and the Cat: Pinocchio sees a fox and a cat coming towards him and is concerned as the fox is lame and the cat is blind. They ask him where he is going? He tells them he is on his way to school. They say he will have much more fun if he comes with them to the fairground, as there are many exciting things for him to see. Pinocchio agrees to go with them, but Jiminy tells him he must go to school.

**#7:** The Fox and the Cat take Pinocchio to the Carnival where there is exciting music and games.

**#8:** Suddenly the Fox and Cat grab Pinocchio and tie him to a tree, steal his money, then give him to the fairground owner and puppet master Mangiafuoco (fire eater).

**#9:** Mangiafuoco drags a protesting Pinocchio to the fairground to make him perform in his puppet show.

**#10:** Pinocchio is amazed by all the performers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, clowns, acrobats.

**#11:** Pinocchio is made to dance with the other puppets, which are made of wood.

**#12:** Jiminy finds him and tells him he should have gone to school, but Pinocchio is sad and despondent and does not know what will become of him.

**#13:** Jiminy finds the Turquoise Fairy and anxiously explains Pinocchio's situation and that he wants to go home.

**#14:** The Turquoise Fairy goes to the fairground and finds Pinocchio in a cage huddled in a corner and sobbing. The Turquoise Fairy feels very sorry for him and asks how he got there and why is he not in school? He tells her he wanted to go to school, but he was blown by a very strong wind to the fairground, and he was made to dance as a puppet.

Then, Pinocchio's nose starts to grow, and he covers it with his hands as he is sobbing. The Turquoise Fairy releases Pinocchio and tells him to go back to his father immediately.

**#15:** Pinocchio runs as fast as he can from the fairground. Jiminy is pleased to have his friend with him and they laugh and play together.

**#16:** Pinocchio sees an island in the distance with children playing. He is mesmerized by the fun the children are having, and they seem to be signaling to Pinocchio to join them.

**#17:** "No" shouts Jiminy. "You cannot go over there; you must go home to your father." Pinocchio says, "I will go for a short time and then go back to my father." "No, no" pleads Jiminy. "The island is not what it appears to be. You must not go." Pinocchio ignores Jiminy and sets off to cross the sea to get to the island. As Pinocchio is made of wood, he swims and floats and gets there quickly.

**#18:** Pinocchio can feel donkey ears growing out of his head and a long tail hanging down his back!

**#19:** Jiminy has returned to Geppetto and tells him of the terrible mistake that Pinocchio has made. Geppetto, fraught with anguish, says "I must go and rescue him. I know he has disobeyed me, but he is still my son who I have always wanted, so I must go to him." Jiminy

and Geppetto find a boat and they sail across the sea to the island. When Geppetto sees Pinocchio as a donkey, he runs to Pinocchio and hugs him and tells him he loves him, even though he is now a donkey.

**#20:** An enormous whale then knocks over their boat and as they try to swim away they are swallowed by the whale. Inside the whale Pinocchio protects his father and keeps him alive.

Luckily, the Turquoise Fairy sees the accident and commands the whale to let Pinocchio and his Father go free. As they both tumble out of the whale and stand up and hug each other, Geppetto looks and sees that Pinocchio has become a real human boy!

## About the Composer

**Composer David Jex** received his Doctor of Musical Arts from the Cleveland Institute of Music-Case Western Reserve University. He was Professor of Music at the University of Toledo from 1983 to 2024 and Assistant Professor of Music from 1978 to 1983 at Lycoming College, where he was also a member of the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts. Besides being a published composer of concert music, Jex also enjoys making music in the theater.

His ballet compositions include *The Great Pancake Escape*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Meema the Lemur Becomes a Ballerina*, *Pinocchio*, *The Little Mermaid*, *A Night at the Museum*, and *Beauty and the Beast*, which were commissioned and premiered by the Ballet Theatre of Toledo. He is currently composing a new "Alice in Wonderland" ballet for March 2025.

He collaborated with librettist Christine Child in the creation of the award-winning chamber opera *The Purple Gang*, premiered in 1991 at UT and performed at the Toledo Repertoire Theater in 1993. Jex is also the composer of songs for Gretchen Zyndorf's play *Captain of the Crossing Guards*.

His other theater credits include conducting *Candide* at the University of Toledo, *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Toledo Repertoire Theater, and composing and conducting the music for the Rep's annual holiday production of *A Christmas Carol* [2010-2020]. He has also composed music for the UT Theatre productions *Mother Courage*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Eurydice*.

Dr. Jex has received composition prizes, grants, and awards from prestigious groups such as the Ohio Arts Council, Louisiana State University, the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo, the Virginia Band Directors Association, the Chautauqua Chamber Singers, the Detroit Chamber Winds, and A.S.C.A.P. <https://www.toledoblade.com/a-e/music-theater-dance/2024/05/23/music-professor-composer-retires-from-ut-after-40-years/stories/20240523011>



Members of Dr. Marlais' Studio and MTNA Collegiate Chapter:

Kaitlyn Besley, Morgan Braddock, Rhonda Clarke, Emma Cornish, John Foster, Ryan Holley-Mallo, Faith Lee, Mijeong Lee, and Vonnie Ritsema.