

Mike Fansler is Professor of Music and Director of Bands at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, where he leads its comprehensive band program. He serves as conductor of the university wind ensemble and chamber players and teaches graduate and undergraduate conducting. He has served Western Illinois University since 2001.

Dr. Fansler has accepted performance invitations and delivered conducting seminars and workshops on five continents. He regularly conducts honor bands throughout the United States including 2024 engagements in Hong Kong, Australia, Iowa Bandmasters Association, Pennsylvania Music Education Association, and the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts.

He has twice presented at the Midwest Clinic: first on the events leading to the composition of composer Percy Grainger's *Lincolnshire Posy* and second, performing James M. Stephenson's *The Devil's Tale*, a sequel to Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* (available on Ravello Records) and *Octet*, also a Stravinsky's sequel (Klavier Records, 2021) with the WIU Studio Faculty Chamber Players.

Under his leadership the Western Illinois Wind Ensemble maintains a demanding performance schedule presenting a range of repertoire from historically significant masterworks to exciting world premieres. Upcoming Concerts include the Midwest Clinic in December, 2024 performing for Excelcia Music, LLC Publishing Company and in May, 2025, performing in New York City's famous Carnegie Hall. In the recent past, the group has engaged audiences at multiple Illinois Music Education Conferences, the College Band Directors National Association's North Central Conference, twice at the prestigious Armour Stage in Chicago's Orchestra Hall and internationally on a 10-day tour of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Dr. Fansler and the Wind Ensemble recently released *The River of Time* (Navona Records) featuring David Maslanka's *O Earth, O Stars* and *Symphony No. 10*, both of which were commissioned in part by WIU. Critics have written: *An extremely timeless listen, this is a highly meticulous outing that's executed sublimely and will have the listener hanging on every thoughtful note. – Take Effect; As a conductor, Mike Fansler seems to have a knack for shaping lines and creating shimmering, transparent textures. – James V. Maiello, Fanfare Magazine; All*

I can say is that the music is otherworldly...and of such indescribable beauty it gave me chills. Conductor Mike Fansler holds his players in thrall and has this listener spellbound. – Jerry Dubins, Fanfare Magazine.

The WIU Studio Faculty and student ensemble, "Chamber Players" can be heard on the newly released album *as the fireflies watched; The Chamber Music of James M. Stephenson* (Klavier Records). They also own the premiere transcription recording of Brahms' *Variation and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*, Op. 24, which was dedicated to Dr. Fansler by the transcriber, Joseph Kreines.

His main musical influences are James F. Keene, Jon Dugle, Daniel J. Schmidt, Larry Clark, Ronald Caravan, Gunnar Mossblad, Merry Fitz-Randolph, and William Meckley. His education is from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Syracuse University, James Madison University, and Schenectady County Community College. Dr. Fansler remains actively engaged in the Macomb community as conductor of the Macomb Municipal Band (est. 1852) and saxophonist in the American Legion's Post 6 Big Band. His professional memberships include the prestigious American Bandmasters Association (2012), National Association for Music Education, Illinois Music Educators Association, Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He resides in Avon, Illinois, with his wife, Abby, and they remain busy chasing the countless activities of three talented kids - Jordan, Jessica, and Juliet.