

On the Air
program notes

On the Air was written in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Northwest Public Broadcasting. The piece is dedicated to Anjuli Dodhia, NWPB Radio Music Director, and was written mainly in March of 2022, although themes for the work were developed beginning in October of 2021. In addition to the complete orchestral work, short versions of themes were orchestrated for solo piano and chamber ensembles and were recorded by School of Music piano professor Fabio Menchetti, the Palouse Trio, Solstice Quintet, Jazz Northwest and a faculty/student brass quintet for radio broadcast. The complete work was written for the Washington State University Symphony Orchestra, Danh Pham, Director, and is scored for flute, piccolo, oboe, bassoon, saxophones, horns, trumpets, trombones, tuba, piano, timpani, percussion and strings. A video of the premiere is being made for broadcast on NWPB television.

On the Air begins with a heroic statement in the brass, which expresses the noble importance of NWPB and its enhancement of the quality of life in our region through the broadcast of music, news and cultural programming. Following is a lively theme first played by the violins which rises melodically. This rising melody reflects the rising radio and television waves as they share the programs of NWPB throughout the Pacific Northwest. This is followed by a slow section which features a lyric theme, first presented in the flute, which gives listeners the opportunity to reflect on the profound contributions made by NWPB over 100 years. This leads to an upbeat, jazzy section featuring saxophones and improvisation with rhythms inspired by the Caribbean and world music. This reflects the many changes at NWPB over 100 years including the broadening of musical offerings to include jazz and the internationalization of NWPB programming.

—GWY, Pullman, WA