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## WKU Prism Concert to showcase music department ensembles

By JACKSON FRENCH [jfrench@bgdailynews.com](mailto:jfrench@bgdailynews.com) 20 hrs ago

Western Kentucky University's annual Prism Concert distinguishes itself from other ensemble performances with a setup that allows performers' music to come at the audience from all directions.

Gary Schallert, director of bands at WKU, said the Prism Concert brings together a host of different groups within the school's music department.

"It really showcases all the student ensembles in the Department of Music," he said.

WKU's Jazz Ensemble, University Orchestra, Steel Band, which specializes in Caribbean and Latin American musical styles, Wind Ensemble, two a capella groups and a piano quartet will be among the groups performing at the concert, Schallert said.

Throughout the show, the different groups will play on stage and in other parts of Van Meter Hall, like the balcony, he said.

“One of the things that we feel makes this concert so cool is that ... you might be sitting and watching a band on stage and then the next thing you hear is music coming from two rows behind you,” he said.

The 23rd annual Prism Concert, originally supposed to take place last week, was rescheduled to Friday due to last week’s snowfall. It is set to begin at 8 p.m. at Van Meter Hall.

General admission is \$15 for the public and \$8 for students with a student ID, Schallert said.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or at Royal Music on Fairview Avenue, he said.

During the concert, the bands will silently set up their equipment in parts of Van Meter like the stage and the balcony during other groups’ performances so they’ll be ready to play as soon as the preceding ensemble stops, Schallert said.

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This not only keeps the show, which won’t have an intermission, running smoothly but it also makes for a concert experience that keeps the surprises coming and makes the audience feel closer to the performers, he said.

“It makes the performance a lot more intimate,” he said. “You’re not just 200 feet from the performers. There might be a group right behind you.”

Richard Raaf, a WKU junior who plays trumpet and flugelhorn with the Jazz Ensemble, Wind Ensemble, Trumpet Ensemble and Orchestra, said the concert’s setup makes getting into position an interesting challenge for performers, and attending more fun for the audience.

“As a performer, it’s a little bit more involved than an orchestra concert,” he said. “From an audience standpoint, this is like going to see a play but replacing all the scenes with pieces of music.”

The range of ensemble performances means an exciting mix of musical styles, Raaf said.

“It just gives our department a chance to show the public the best variety of what’s going on within our department,” he said.

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