



Andy Sledge, bassoon



Credit: Ryan Brandenburg

Andy Sledge (they/them) is Assistant Professor of Bassoon and Music Theory at the West Virginia University School of Music, where they bring a passion for communication and nuance to their work as a performer, teacher, and collaborator. An advocate for contemporary music, they have commissioned and premiered works by composers of their generation including Alexis Lamb, Nicky Sohn, and Max Vinetz, along with works for unaccompanied electric bassoon in collaboration with the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale University. Andy has performed with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony, and Nashville Sinfonietta, as well as the Opera Theater of Connecticut. Their playing has been featured on WPLN Nashville and the soundtrack to critically-acclaimed video game *Destiny 2*. Andy has had the honor of performing alongside such artists as mezzo-soprano Janna Baty, violinist Ani Kavafian, and oboist Stephen Taylor. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Andy produced audio and video performances including Yale's annual Bassoonarama and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival's virtual 2020 season.

Prior to their faculty position at WVU, Andy maintained a small studio of undergraduate bassoonists at Yale and taught woodwind lessons in the New Haven Public Schools as a Teaching Artist with the Music in Schools Initiative. Of particular interest to them is the pedagogy of extended bassoon techniques, both for performers and composers. Beyond the studio, Andy enjoys returning to their home state of North Carolina to assist with high school marching bands, the same ensembles that originally nurtured their love for performance.

Andy was a finalist in the 2020 National Bassoon Meetup Orchestral Excerpts Competition and the 2017 Vanderbilt University Concerto Competition. They have received the Elliott and Ailsa Newman Award for excellence in woodwind playing and Le Domaine Forget's Excellence in Bassoon Award. Andy's summer festival appearances have included the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and New Music Workshop, Le Domaine Forget, and Glickman-Popkin Bassoon Camp. They studied chamber music with members of the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet through the Vanderbilt Music Académie in Aix-en-Provence, France.

Andy is a D.M.A. candidate at the Yale School of Music, where their research centers on the performance of political support and dissent through *The Star-Spangled Banner*. They hold a Master's in Music from Yale and a Bachelor's in Music from Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music, where they received the Founder's Medal for graduating with the highest honors of their class. Their primary teachers include Frank Morelli, Laura Hauser, and Peter Kolkay. When away from the bassoon, Andy enjoys honing their craft in "The Three Cs:" coffee, cocktails, and (vegan) cookies.

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