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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** It did. All right. And then this one. And then you're all into it. I mean.

[00:00:06] **Speaker 2** This one is on card number two.

[00:00:09] **Speaker 1** All right. And then I'm rolling on. How do I talk to her? All right. Do you have a shower?

[00:00:20] **Speaker 3** It looks nice, right?

[00:00:22] **Speaker 1** Yeah.

[00:00:22] **Speaker 3** If you touch us, your color temperature is way too off. It's. It's at 3200. But what is. Yeah, Go to. There's a white balance button on the top. Right. Those three buttons. And then go to the. You click that and then.

[00:00:35] **Speaker 1** Yeah, I got it.

[00:00:36] **Speaker 3** There should be one that says adjust or something.

[00:00:38] **Speaker 1** Yeah.

[00:00:39] **Speaker 3** But it was a bit. Was it 3200?

[00:00:42] **Speaker 1** No. Yeah. Now it's. Did it look great? Yellow.

[00:00:45] **Speaker 3** Really? I wonder where was it and if he took.

[00:00:48] **Speaker 1** Off on daylight? I can report.

[00:00:50] **Speaker 3** On this one, too. Yeah. Yeah. If you touch his face, that would be the focus now. Okay. Stay out of.

[00:00:55] **Speaker 2** It. It's going to be tricky.

[00:01:00] **Speaker 1** Yeah. You know, there's. I just figured I was just going to shoot it when they're not there. And then. Do a mask. Yeah. I don't know. Yeah. As long as this is not like, intersecting with the chair, you know what I'm saying? Like, if this thing is out, like, not in the way of the leg, then it'll be easier to mask it out. Yeah.

[00:01:23] **Speaker 2** All right. Okay. All cameras are rolling.

[00:01:28] **Speaker 1** Yep. I'm good. Do you want to answer this one? Right. Like.

[00:01:35] **Speaker 3** He was only two. Cary Penn P UW. Let me start there. I mean, I said.

[00:01:43] **Speaker 1** Hang on a second. Let me just I'm hearing a little crack like, where's my. Where is it?

[00:01:51] **Speaker 3** Remember the kid in the black sweater? No one's ever really taken.

[00:01:57] **Speaker 2** Not where you might be it.

[00:02:00] **Speaker 1** Yeah. No, no, no, no. You're good. That was good.

[00:02:03] **Speaker 3** Jane, I may have to start over just because.

[00:02:06] **Speaker 1** Yeah? Because you're on that 30 minute.

[00:02:07] **Speaker 3** I'm going to want those extra little moments. I mean, I'm going to it, but. I just want to make sure I'm maximizing it.

[00:02:22] **Unidentified** All right. On commerce. All right. We're all good.

[00:02:25] **Speaker 3** Now. All right. All right. One more hand clipboard. Of course. Corey Pompey, you know your music. And I said it wrong. It's not funny, man. It's just tbis. We don't laugh around here.

[00:02:44] **Speaker 4** No, the clapper. No, no. You know, of.

[00:02:47] **Speaker 3** Course they would do it. You that. Corey Pompei Music Director, Rates Band Director. Remain Director.

[00:02:55] **Speaker 4** I am one of the bands.

[00:02:58] **Speaker 1** We only got 30 minutes.

[00:02:59] **Speaker 3** I know, man. Corey Punk band director. Welcome to the Focus.

[00:03:04] **Speaker 4** Glad to be here. Thank you for having me.

[00:03:06] **Speaker 3** I appreciate you making time. You and I have chatted a little bit online for one of my graduate school projects, and I just thought, wow, that be a great guy to chat with. Let me start him in music. How do you follow the music?

[00:03:18] **Speaker 4** Well, you know, I always loved it. You know, growing up listening to the radio, when my mother was driving in the car and, you know, music in church and different things like that. So I always liked it and wanted to do it. And because of the public school system that that we had, there was an opportunity to get into it and it just kind of grew from there.

[00:03:46] **Speaker 3** And what is it about it? About music that made you say, Wow, this is something I want to do kind of for the rest of my life? Like, it's a passion, basically.

[00:03:55] **Speaker 4** It is a passion I enjoy. It makes me happy. It makes me feel good. And and, you know, it's mostly fun. Not always fun, but mostly fun. And so over time, I thought, you know, this is something that I would like to do for a living.

[00:04:17] **Speaker 3** Yeah. And as we sit in this beautiful space at the end of the year here, you get any vibes when you walk into a place like this?

[00:04:27] **Speaker 4** Yeah. I mean, you know, the, the, the ambiance of the place is. Is just great. And when I walk in here, I know that something good is about to happen.

[00:04:40] **Speaker 3** And it's worth pointing out that we're sitting in, you know, the baby space.

[00:04:44] **Speaker 4** Yes. The recital hall. Yes.

[00:04:46] **Speaker 3** Yeah. And I see we've got a piano set up here. Like you're going to do something where you go.

[00:04:53] **Speaker 4** You don't want to hear Bitcoin ETF? Trust me.

[00:04:56] **Speaker 3** What is your main instrument?

[00:04:57] **Speaker 4** My main issue was the saxophone.

[00:05:00] **Speaker 3** I did too. I play exactly 26.

[00:05:02] **Speaker 4** Okay, Well, also.

[00:05:04] **Speaker 3** And then you still pick it up from notes and you've got to get out there and show those youngsters how well, this is how we do it.

[00:05:09] **Speaker 4** I don't have time, unfortunately.

[00:05:12] **Speaker 3** Of course, you don't have time to get up there in high stepping shoulders.

[00:05:15] **Speaker 4** But get up there, has tempo, enjoy myself.

[00:05:20] **Speaker 3** Now, one of the interesting things I thought that we chatted a little bit about was this was a job that you didn't really plan for. Was it something you saw yourself falling into? How was that?

[00:05:33] **Speaker 4** Well, you know, my predecessor, Michael Mccrone, was here for 52.

[00:05:37] **Speaker 3** Intellectual cronies, even though they know him around here.

[00:05:40] **Speaker 4** Yeah, of course they do. You know.

[00:05:43] **Speaker 3** Interestingly enough.

[00:05:44] **Speaker 4** I saw him the other night. You know, he's done a lot for the band program and a lot for the university. And so me not wanting to be here. Didn't have anything to do with him as a person or anything like that. But just the fact that anytime you're walking into a position where the person before you has been there 50 years at least, I think most normal people want to think twice about about doing that. I mean.

[00:06:22] **Speaker 3** You're you're really talking about the Tom Brady. Of college base.

[00:06:29] **Speaker 4** Absolutely.

[00:06:30] **Speaker 3** I mean, how do you.

[00:06:32] **Speaker 4** How do you follow Tom Brady? Bill Belichick could answer that question, could he? And I was afraid that I might not be able to answer that question. So for those reasons. Did not initially seek out this opportunity.

[00:06:51] **Speaker 3** What made you change your mind?

[00:06:52] **Speaker 4** Well, you know, I got a phone call. And I don't want to make it seem like I was special because I got a phone call. The reality of it is dozens upon dozens of people, if not hundreds of people, that the same phone call that I got, which was, will you consider applying for this position? What I know to be true is if I had not done that phone call, I would not have applied for the position because it's not like I didn't know it was open. You know, as soon as Mike said he was retiring. Word spread like wildfire in the profession. So it's not like I didn't know that it was open. I just wasn't interested in it. And so, you know, that phone call kind of changed everything.

[00:07:47] **Speaker 3** Yeah. And where does a position director at the University of Wisconsin marching band fit in the realm of, you know, marching band types of jobs? Like, why did you want once you kind of start looking more seriously at it? Well.

[00:08:00] **Speaker 4** You know. When I think of the University of Wisconsin. We're talking about a very prestigious university. Both in terms of academics and what it does in terms of athletics. And then I was very familiar with the band program here. Not just the marching band, but the other bands too, and the history of, of, of the band program. So so there's a significant history here that even predates Mike Larcombe when we're talking about the band profession. And then of course, there's, you know, a reputable school of music. And so all of those.

[00:08:52] **Speaker 3** Things.

[00:08:53] **Speaker 4** Played into my decision. And when I got that phone call, I must confess that it was an immediate yes, I will apply it. In fact. When I hung up the phone, I was fairly certain that I was not going to apply. And so then, you know, over time you start to thinking, okay, it is the University of Wisconsin. It's in the Big Ten. And when we're talking about Big Ten and marching bands, collegiate marching bands, this is the conference where it all started. So there's this, you know. Some great. For lack of a better term, prestige associated with being associated with a program like this and having the opportunity to work with a program like this. So over time, you start thinking about all of these things and eventually you get to a place where you say, okay, it would not hurt to apply. And if they don't call me, they don't call me. I've got a job. I was happy I wasn't looking to leave, which is one of the good things. It's always nice when you've got a job and you don't feel like you have to leave that job. So that was the position I was in. I didn't have anything to lose, so. We tried it.

[00:10:36] **Speaker 3** Yeah. So how many strong are you marching these days? How many do you have out there?

[00:10:40] **Speaker 4** We're about to 90.

[00:10:43] **Speaker 3** Okay.

[00:10:44] **Speaker 4** It's about where we are. Give or take a few.

[00:10:47] **Speaker 3** And how do you manage all that musically?

[00:10:50] **Speaker 4** It's tough. It's very tough. But, you know, we try to have systematic rehearsals throughout the week. You know, we during the preseason process, we're working on our warm ups. We're building up our chops and different things like that. So the hope is that you've got a system in place that allows you to be able to learn a large volume of music quickly and hopefully at a high quality.

[00:11:20] **Speaker 3** Now, I read that Dr. Mccrone was notorious for remembering names and the cities where students came from.

[00:11:28] **Speaker 4** Yes.

[00:11:30] **Speaker 3** Corey, is this something that you believe you've taken that on, you know, all the band members by name and where they're from.

[00:11:35] **Speaker 4** That's a dream that I have. And every year I say I'm going to do better than I did the last year. So I know a lot of names. I do not confess that. That I can name every single person. If you if you ask me two faces and good evening. Even in life outside of bad. That's an issue that I have. You know what's funny? Well, I know you would be cool.

[00:12:07] **Speaker 3** If you say.

[00:12:08] **Speaker 4** Smurf. But. But, you know, the thing is, there are people in my life that I have no camera.

[00:12:16] **Speaker 3** One name.

[00:12:19] **Speaker 4** Is James. What was it? What was it?

[00:12:25] **Speaker 3** You couldn't. It was l.

[00:12:27] **Speaker 4** L. Let's start while you're here. Okay, but. But what I'm saying is, you know, there are people that I've known for years and years and years. I know the face. I can tell you everything about them. I can tell you conversations we have. But if you ask me, with me, I'm going to struggle. And then when I'm not doing anything, not thinking about it, all of a sudden it'll come to me.

[00:12:53] **Speaker 3** I don't know what you seem like You have a chip on your shoulder about remembering, you.

[00:12:59] **Speaker 4** Know, Chip. But it it is a gift that Mike had that or has that I wish I had.

[00:13:07] **Speaker 3** Yeah. And does he. Do you. Does he have his hand at all in terms of on things that you're doing musically?

[00:13:13] **Speaker 4** No, he's great. You know, he he he is one of our biggest cheerleaders and supporters. But but but when he stepped aside, he step aside and he's available. If I have questions or or want to know something or or there's something historically that I'm trying to find out. He's great about that. But but unless I ask.

[00:13:41] **Speaker 3** What's the biggest thing that he's giving you as a chip?

[00:13:45] **Speaker 4** You know, it's interesting. When I first got the job. The band directors. Mike And we had breakfast and this was my first time getting to know him and different things like that. And someone leaned over and said, Mike, do you have any advice for Corey? Matt shook his head and said no. So as you can imagine, I'm sitting there thinking. All good as well. What does this mean? And then after a dramatic pause, I would say he said no. Do what you know how to do. And that's been the the best advice that I get from him, because if I tried to be him, I would I would fail and I would fail miserably. So I really appreciated him telling me that you do what you know how to do. And he also mentioned in that breakfast that the previous director or major director, because there was some some transition period. But but the previous major, major figure in the band program did the same for him.

[00:15:18] **Speaker 3** Yeah. I'm curious to know in terms of the work that goes into preparing for a, you know, performance on a halftime in front of 80,000 folks. Just. In person. What kind of work do you guys put in to prepare for just one of those halftime shows?

[00:15:39] **Speaker 4** How much time do I have? You know, we start in the spring. And so pretty soon, within the next few weeks, we're going to send a survey out to the students and the band asking them what music they would like to play. Then we'll get the survey, we'll go through it and we'll find some ideas that.

[00:16:03] **Speaker 3** That matters to you, like you.

[00:16:04] **Speaker 4** Really enjoy it. We do listen to it. Now, that's not to say every single thing that we played came from their ideas. But if I look at the shows that we did in the fall, most of. Were ideas that that students presented. And often what when is really great is when I'm thinking about something or something the staff member thinks about. It's thinking about something. And then you find out several students are also thinking about the same thing. And so we can kind of be on the same the same page in that way. For example, I was really interested in doing a Frank Sinatra show, and a lot of the students were interested in doing the Frank Sinatra. So. So we did Frank Sinatra. So both those surveys are very, very important. And and we we take them seriously. We go through them and and try to find ideas that we think will work again. That's not to say every single suggestion in the mix is way up to the field. And and that's not to say that we play things that were not in that survey, but but there's a healthy mix. So that happens in the spring. And then from there we hear from the athletic department on such and such date. You are going to have this much time for half.

[00:17:49] **Speaker 3** How much time do you typically it?

[00:17:50] **Speaker 4** Well, it depends. You know, for us, ten minutes is a good number. Sometimes it can be high as 12 or as low as 6 or 7, depending on what they've got going for that week or or the theme that they're needing to push. So once we have an idea of what the repertoire is going to be for the fall, then we, we try to, to slot things in, in various places and then it's just a matter of creating those arrangements and different things like that. And we are doing this through out the entire summer. This is what's happening behind the scenes.

[00:18:35] **Speaker 3** And we know it's called a marching band.

[00:18:38] **Speaker 4** Yes.

[00:18:38] **Speaker 3** So which is more important, the music or the marching band? So even when.

[00:18:45] **Speaker 4** You try to get me in trouble here, I'll answer that question very shortly. But. Just so that people have an idea of how much preparation goes into getting ready. We rehearse nearly ten hours a week for game days. And it takes that much time to get ready. So we've got a one week preparation. We've put in nearly ten hours. If we've got a two week preparation, meaning a one week preparation would be you had a game on Saturday. You come in on Tuesday and you've got another game on Saturday, and that's all the time you get. If you've got a two week preparation, meaning there's a week in between, that takes about 20 hours.

[00:19:36] **Speaker 3** But when you have 290 plus folks playing music like that, can you hear a wrong note from that one chord? Yes.

[00:19:45] **Speaker 4** Yes. Most of the time that I'm not going to confess that I can hear it all the time. But often.

[00:19:54] **Speaker 3** Often it is everything is shut down at that point.

[00:19:56] **Speaker 4** No, doesn't shut down. You know, you you know, they'll hear it and they can correct it on their own. That if you hear it too many times at that point, you have to say, all right, we need to double check this. Now, you asked a question a few months.

[00:20:12] **Speaker 3** Yeah. You started.

[00:20:13] **Speaker 4** That. I yes, I remember now. In an ideal world, the marching and the music will have equal footing and they will be both great.

[00:20:31] **Speaker 3** What do you have that you will agree with your face right now?

[00:20:33] **Speaker 4** Well, you know, I'm also a musician, you know. And so, you know, if you're asking my personal feeling, my personal feeling is that the music is the most important thing. However, not everybody feels that way. Not even within our organization. And so it's it's well.

[00:20:58] **Speaker 3** I hear it. I also read, too, that when Dr. Mccrone was here, when he first took over, he was known for creating this. Band that was more athletic than. Yes. Yes. And that were out there? Yes. What does that involve?

[00:21:13] **Speaker 4** Involves a lot of practice and a lot of.

[00:21:19] **Speaker 3** Doing the high stepping, that kind of stuff. Well, you.

[00:21:21] **Speaker 4** Know, bands were doing the high step. You know, the. Bands were doing the heist it. His innovation. Worse how we do the heist. Because if you look at the HBCU's, they all still come over to Southern University.

[00:21:42] **Speaker 3** Yes. Yes. Let me.

[00:21:43] **Speaker 4** Read you. Yes, the human jukebox. But they don't have step in the same way that we do. And no, no other Big Ten has steps in the same way that we do. So that was his innovation and contribution to the band, which is significant. And we spend a inordinate amount of time perfecting that and making sure that we're able to play the music and execute the step at the same time.

[00:22:20] **Speaker 3** Is it hard to get? Honors the band member here. Do you have?

[00:22:26] **Speaker 4** It's challenging.

[00:22:28] **Speaker 3** In competition.

[00:22:29] **Speaker 4** It really depends on the section. That a student wants to. And for example, in our band. The trumpets and trombones are the largest section. By far there's not even close. And so if I'm a trumpet player and I'm interested in getting in the UW band, that's not as difficult. As someone that is interested in playing clarinet. You know, So, for example, we've got a nearly 200 trumpet players. But clarinets, they're in the low teens. So it's much more difficult to get in the band as a clarinet player than it is to get in the trunk as a trumpet player just because of the sheer numbers. Having said that, you know, we we try to take as many people as we can. And if if someone shows musical aptitude and we have space, we will often train them on another instrument.

[00:23:38] **Speaker 3** How they on scholarships or how does that work?

[00:23:40] **Speaker 4** That is a dream of mine. Another dream that is a dream of mine. No, they're not on scholarship. Wow. And so the students in the band do it because they love it. Now we have a handful of awards or so, but those are scholarships. Those are just a donor, you know, wants to award someone for meritorious service. But it's only a year. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about where if you make the marching band, we're in a position to say you're going to get this much money every year for four years. We don't have that. And that is a dream of mine to be able to do something like that.

[00:24:28] **Speaker 3** I'd love to hear your perspective on what it feels like to be standing on a. Ten foot ladder in front of all those people. You know, controlling all that music. What's that feeling like for you?

[00:24:47] **Speaker 4** I hope you could hear that. But stomachs grow so much, Ted. I hope.

[00:24:52] **Speaker 3** I hope it didn't make you think.

[00:24:59] **Speaker 4** You could hear. No. It is ground. It is going. It's hard to describe. Because. It's what do. And I don't think about it. You know, I enjoy it, you know? You know, when we perform for thousands of thousands of people, it's an enjoyable experience. And I love it when I feel like the band is kicking on all cylinders. And so I'm very proud of the students at that point. But but but I don't know how I would describe it. The media may get.

[00:25:53] **Speaker 3** That that rock star sensation that you always hear people talk about. You know, you feel that the adrenaline is at getting to you.

[00:26:01] **Speaker 4** And kind of I try not to let digital and get it to me. I try as best I can to be even keeled about what we're getting ready to do. That that's not to say that it's safe. I'm not talking about the the the act of leading the music and conducting the music. That's a totally different thing. I'm just talking about, you know, getting ready to go and doing what we do. And then the bands just perform. We're done. And now we've got to go to the next phase. That's kind of what I'm talking about. It's just it's just, you know, what I do. And it's interesting to that that I'm having such a difficult time. Describing that because, you know, I step on the football field every week. And I know that it's a special place. I know that it's a historic place. I know these things. But for me, I'm just stepping on the football field and getting rid of it don't work. But then you see someone that has the opportunity to step on the football field that has never. Been on the football field. In that place, in that time, and it's a totally different experience for that. And so that's kind of what I'm trying to get at when I say it's what I do and I do it every day and I don't think about it. It's probably a much different experience for someone that doesn't do it as regularly and then has the opportunity to stand in front of those people and lead them. That's not to say I'm ungrateful. I'm very, very grateful and very fortunate to be in this position. But but but it's it's a way of life. More so than anything else. It's just. What we did.

[00:28:15] **Speaker 3** And you brought it to ABC News and that band tradition at some of those schools down there and. You know, having gone to one, you know. A lot of times the ban is a bigger deal than the football teams or the basketball teams that they play for. So when I go to games, my friends literally make fun of me because I'm focused on that day. And there's a certain level of tradition that comes with that. But I'm wondering if the UW band is getting that kind of. Reputation for itself. And I know it has been in a certain sense, but is it getting to that level where the bad is sometimes bigger than the sport? Careful with that. Yeah.

[00:29:02] **Speaker 4** Be very careful. I don't dare say that. The band is bigger than the sport. However. I talk to a lot of people every week that for them, the band is bigger than the sport. And now.

[00:29:26] **Speaker 3** I'm trying to.

[00:29:27] **Speaker 4** Decide if I'm going to say what I'm going to say. So I'm going to say. You know. When everybody's winning. Everybody's happy. But when the team loses, the van wins and and people are very appreciative of it.

[00:29:52] **Speaker 3** I think I know what you mean by that, because. You know, we've lost a lot in basketball when I was in college. And we lost a lot of football when I was in college. But man, when that ban came on, we've got all about the losing. Because the music was so good. You know, so. I understand what you're saying.

[00:30:12] **Speaker 4** Well, we you know, we want the ban to be a point of pride for everybody in there. And so we work very hard to be consistent from week to week. Question That's a lie because we don't want to be consistent from week to week. We always want to get better as the week progresses. But the point I'm trying to make is we want to be the best that we can be and we want to put a product that makes people proud. And sometimes when things are not going as well athletically as we all would like it to be, we're fortunate that for a lot of people, they can still point to the band and be proud of it.

[00:30:58] **Speaker 3** Yeah, and we all know that, you know, your band has arms and a lot of different activities. Football, basketball, hockey. Give us a sense of all the different avenues you guys have in terms of how you support some of the different sports around campus.

[00:31:15] **Speaker 4** Yeah, it's it's it's quite tough. We perform for six sports. Football being the Bitcoin. And then you've got men and women's basketball. Get women's volleyball. Then men and women's hockey. And so we try to do as much as we can for all of those sports and occasionally. Well, not occasionally. Often we're not able to do as much as we would like to do or as much as people would like to see us do. And that's mainly because, you know, there are students and there's a finite. Amount of things that that that we can do. And so we really have to be careful that we're not over extending the students.

[00:32:17] **Speaker 3** How do you balance the playlist for those different sports? How does that differ?

[00:32:21] **Speaker 4** That's a good question. And so we have. A fairly lengthy list in terms of our repertoire. And so whoever is on deck for a particular sport, meaning whoever's leading, for example, I do a lot of men's basketball. And so when I'm looking at the set list for men's basketball, I'm looking at at will. Wonder what might people enjoy listening to. And then I'm also looking at tried and true UW tunes. And how do we mix that with newer repertoire that people might enjoy? Because if I'm not careful, I could play an entire list of just tried and true UW tunes, which people appreciate. But we also like to play some other things too. And so, you know, did we play it at the last game? If we did, maybe we don't play it at this game. So it's it's different things like that that that go into it. But but basically for all of us meaning the instructional staff and that when we when we go to an athletic event we try to create a very list now for some of our sports. There are some things you've got to play no matter what. If we're playing a men's hockey game, they've got to have the theme from what they get to have. Jump in at the Woodside and things like that. Because if they're not there, then it's not a men's hockey game or at least not from the standpoint of the band. And so there are things we have to do the balance that of, you know, we have a football game and we do the fifth core and we don't do Swing Town or something like that. You know. We're going to hear.

[00:34:33] **Speaker 1** Let me pause here. You think that like just.

[00:34:37] **Speaker 3** Some of you know, time. I forget that. Absolutely. Count me down. We're we're about 20.

[00:34:45] **Speaker 1** That's a good question. You get curious.

[00:34:46] **Speaker 2** If you check on that one. What's the time for?

[00:34:55] **Speaker 1** Reverse camera. Shut off or any song.

[00:35:00] **Speaker 3** Well, I mean, we have. You can't be at 30 already. Maybe call me.

[00:35:07] **Speaker 4** Whatever you want. I'm good. You just.

[00:35:09] **Speaker 3** You started again. James?

[00:35:11] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Yeah, that makes me worried. Does your shirt's 30 and not 15?

[00:35:17] **Speaker 3** No, it's definitely 30. Okay. It could be because it's been a very. Natural conversation was.

[00:35:23] **Speaker 1** Definitely from Sadhguru. And now I've got this all the way.

[00:35:27] **Speaker 3** That's fine. I'm okay there too. If we if we've hit our mark there, that's better because all that filibuster is to.

[00:35:39] **Speaker 2** Use the.

[00:35:40] **Speaker 1** Filibuster. All right. We're going to.

[00:35:48] **Speaker 3** You bring up a good point in talking about some of the traditions that take place with the music here at the University of Wisconsin. How do you balance the tradition? And also balance style and creating styles of music. Because I know you have the certain songs, varsity and things like that you have to play to get the to blend. And I remember being a kid of going to basketball games and just, you know, seeing, you know, the drum kits and things like that inside the arena, which we didn't. You don't see that when you're at a. At a football game. But how do you balance the tradition with the style when it comes to playing the music?

[00:36:24] **Speaker 4** I think you just do the best that you can, which I know is not a good answer. But, but. But, you know, as long as. The traditions are honored. There is space to introduce new things. And so it's much more difficult if you just throw all the tradition out and come in with all the new stuff that that that doesn't work. And so, you know, as long as everything's being honored, then there is latitude to be able to, to do some new things. I think that's the best way I can describe it.

[00:37:10] **Speaker 3** Really? Yeah. You know, go back to something else referencing Dr. Mccrone. When he came on board, one of the things he said he wanted to do was to create an Ed Sullivan type of show experience in terms of how he created music. Any thoughts on what you're creating and what your legacy will be?

[00:37:28] **Speaker 4** You know, interestingly enough. I don't think a whole lot about legacy. I certainly hope that that when my time is done here, that people will be proud of the work that has taken place, that they will recognize the UAW ban as being the UAW ban. In other words, yes, there's a different director now, but the band that they know and love is still playing music at a high level is marching at a high level. And so those are the kinds of things that I think about. I know there are things that I would like to do, for example, and mentioned, yes, I would like to see our students get some kind of scholarship for for everything that they do. But I don't consider that as part of the legacy that I left necessarily. That's just something I would like the students to be able to have. It's something that I think the students deserve. Now, unfortunately, I'm not a billionaire because if I was and just make it happen. But, you know, I hold out hope that at some point in the future, something like that will happen. And so, you know, I'll I'll leave the legacy to other people. But my hope is that we've done good work that people can be proud of.

[00:39:09] **Speaker 3** I'm pretty sure that if we were able to pull that off while you're here, that 60 years from now, people would be like, you know, school kids would have gotten so scholarships.

[00:39:23] **Speaker 4** Well, I'd love to be able to do that if if we can.

[00:39:28] **Speaker 3** Now, I know you guys got the big spring conference building up. What's this? What's the significance of the spring concert? How big of a deal is it?

[00:39:35] **Speaker 4** The spring concert is a very, very big deal. For one thing, we've been doing it for nearly 50 years. And this is an event that has just grown over time. And I don't know of any other major band program that does an event quite like the way we do it now. There are a lot of band programs that have indoor concerts. But the way we do it and do it, I'd say that is unique to us. And that's what makes it special because, you know, when we're at a football game. You know, our goal is to entertain the crowd. But on some level, we'll take that back. Will there in service of the football team and the athletic program? You know, we're we're in the stands. We're being supportive. No matter what the score is, our job is to bring the energy, keep the energy. Now, when we go to halftime and different things like that. Our goal is to perform the perform for the people and show them a good time. But at the end of the day, they're there for a football game. When we're at the spring concert. All of those people are there because they love the band and they're there to support the band. And so everything that we are doing for that particular event is only in service of the music. And it gives people an opportunity to hear the band in a different way, because when we're out on the field with a we're in terms of the acoustic, we're outside outdoors and it's very difficult to fill up the stadium the way that we want to. There's not much subtlety, you know, we can't play very soft. People don't want it won't won't be able to hear us. But we get indoors, you know, that gives our palette. Increases. And there are things that we're able to do musically that as much as I wish we could do them at the football games. As much as I insist that we do do them at football games, there's a practicality to it, if that makes sense, what I'm saying. And so in that event, in that particular environment, you have a chance to hear the music in a different way. And we also have the opportunity to bring in these other production elements to enhance what we're doing musically. And so to me, that's what it's, that's what's really special, that that people are spending their hard earned dollars to come to this show that we're putting on in the call center. They're coming to see us and and and that that really means a lot.

[00:43:09] **Speaker 3** What happens to all these musicians once they're done here at the University of Wisconsin? Do we have anybody that's ever gone on to become a rock star or big in music? What happens to their musical career? Jeffords?

[00:43:19] **Speaker 4** Well, it depends on what they like to do. You know, most of the students in the band are not music majors. In fact, very few of the students are music majors. So most of them are not going to go into careers. Most of them going into professional music careers is what I'm saying. And so most of our students will go on to lead productive lives. They're going to be professionals and contributors to their community. But for a lot of our students that leave, they still maintain this connection to the band. A lot of our students still play recreational. You know, we've got an alumni band. They have events that they play for. They come back every year to perform at football games. There's a group, there's a jazz group outside the Milwaukee area. Most of those people were in the UW band. They just get together, play because they enjoy playing and they they perform publicly. And different things like that. We've got former members of the band that perform for the Green Bay Packers on a weekly basis. So they go out and do a lot of things, but mostly not in music. But one of the things that I do hear about from time to time from the students is how significant the experience of being in the band was and how those experience experiences transfer or applicable to what they they are doing professionally.

[00:45:24] **Speaker 3** And I'd be curious to know what keeps a band director up at night.

[00:45:34] **Speaker 4** Boy. It it. Well, all of it can keep one up at night. You know, if if if, you know, we talked about the one week preparation. One week preparation. And we've had our Friday rehearsal. And you think to yourself. I don't think we're as prepared as we'd like to be. That can keep you up at night. Or we're in Tampa for the bowl game. And we're staying on the beach. And I hope everybody gets back in one piece. You know, we don't want to be the band that had someone, you know. Go out into Tampa Bay and the water I'm talking about specifically have something happen. Those are the kinds of things that that keep me up at night. So sometimes they're related to the quality of the performance that we're getting ready to do. And sometimes this just one of them to be safe and and make good decisions. So it's it's. There are a lot of things that can keep one that one up at night, but I'm grateful to be able to say those situations are few and. Far between.

[00:47:15] **Speaker 3** Well. Question. Where do you take this band from here?

[00:47:19] **Speaker 4** Where do we take it from here? Well. We always want to march well. We always want to play well. And I feel like. We've been able to do that for the most part. So where would I like to take the bed? We're doing well for ourselves. The band is doing very, very well and this in the grand scheme of things. But. There are some bands. They have an endowment of nearly $30 billion. Which means. They are in a position to not only do the things that they need to do. But they're in a position to do things that they want to do and then some. Now, again, that's not to say we're not in a good position. We are. But wouldn't it be nice to have a $30 million endowment? So that you know. And this and this might fall under the category of first world problems. But you know, if if new uniforms, if we want to say we want to get new enough new uniforms. Well, I can already tell you that new uniforms are going to cost nearly a half million dollars. Well, if I've got a $30 million endowment, I can just say we're get new uniforms and that's it. Well, if we want new uniforms, I got to plan a little bit. We can get them. I got to play it a little bit. So at love to be able to see us get at that level and then all the 2 or 3 bands at that level. But that's where I'd like to see us see us go. So in terms of performing, yes, we love to keep the stuff at the top. But but we'd love to to do more pictures and different things like that. And and we're always trying to improve what we're able to do technically in terms of how we perform. Ms..

[00:50:11] **Speaker 3** I think it's safe to say the best is yet to come.

[00:50:15] **Speaker 4** Frank Sinatra. If people come to our spring show, they might hear a little bit of the best is yet to come.

[00:50:23] **Speaker 3** Corey Fontaine, band director, thanks for joining us on In Focus.

[00:50:26] **Speaker 4** Thank you so much, Merv. It's been a pleasure.

[00:50:30] **Speaker 3** Nice job, guys.

[00:50:31] **Speaker 1** All right, cool. So I'm going to keep rolling. So just stay where you guys are just for a.

[00:50:34] **Speaker 3** Little while and stuff it.

[00:50:35] **Speaker 1** So you kind of bring it to your.

[00:50:38] **Speaker 3** Attention with this.

[00:50:39] **Speaker 4** And I just hope I didn't get into trouble with it. If I will. You will find out what we do.

[00:50:49] **Speaker 3** What I'm. Yeah, I think you're planning on hearing this one. I think the trial coincided with the spring concerts. Always wonderful. What is that? That's the next month.

[00:50:59] **Speaker 4** That is next month, 19th and 20th of April.

[00:51:03] **Speaker 3** Yeah. I think they're talking about bringing this one out around that time.

[00:51:06] **Speaker 4** Wonderful.

[00:51:07] **Speaker 3** I'll let you know.

[00:51:07] **Speaker 4** Sure. Let me.

[00:51:08] **Speaker 3** It should be in its entirety. Okay. Even your filibustering crickets or something.

[00:51:19] **Speaker 4** People would love that, Richard. That would be so funny.

[00:51:23] **Speaker 1** All right, we're going to get room tone.

[00:51:25] **Speaker 3** Okay, so I just going to be sitting.

[00:51:27] **Speaker 1** Up for a second. That's probably good. And then could I get you guys and you guys can take your mikes off and just kind of stand up, but just leave the chairs where they are because I'm going to try and get a shot of just the empty chair so I can frame out these chords on the file. Yeah. There you go. Yeah, perfect. All right, cool.

[00:51:59] **Speaker 3** I mean, just having still. Yeah.

[00:52:02] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Yeah, that's cool. I mean, I got some while you were shooting. Yeah. Unless you guys want. Unless you want to just be like you two looking at the camera.

[00:52:10] **Speaker 3** Yeah, yeah, yeah. From my own archives. Yeah.

[00:52:12] **Speaker 1** Yeah.

[00:52:13] **Speaker 3** This guy's got to be Quincy Jones. Well, in my dreams, like. Yeah, like, you know, Koi pond, baby.

[00:52:21] **Speaker 2** Yeah.

[00:52:23] **Speaker 3** I don't even have to call you Cary Bombay back in the day, right? Somebody had to.

[00:52:29] **Speaker 4** They do. I don't remember.

[00:52:31] **Speaker 3** I just think, well, there's dating myself. It's not funny.

[00:52:38] **Speaker 1** When there's this reference from 50.

[00:52:40] **Speaker 3** Doctor, but as my friend said, you march Dr. King. And I'm not even that old. But I'll give you Bewitched. Dr. Bombay. There was Dr. Bombay. There was Samantha's doctor.

[00:52:55] **Speaker 4** Okay.

[00:52:57] **Speaker 3** But yes, was fine. Poppy.

[00:52:59] **Speaker 1** Bombay. Yeah, that would be enough to cover.

[00:53:03] **Speaker 3** For this kind of.