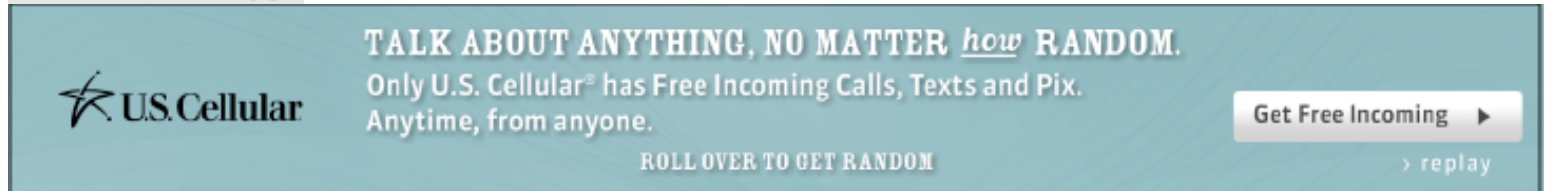


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## Tuba or not tuba

### Octubafest concludes today with a performance by Richard Wright

By: [Chris Shaw](#)

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Tubas are often stereotyped as one-dimensional instruments, but that's just because people haven't seen what the tuba can do.

"Octubafest is not like anything you've ever seen," master's student and tubist Laura Potter said of the weeklong, campus event. "You'll see a lot of different types of music being played because we don't have the biggest repertoire of pieces written, so we borrow a lot and take stuff from other styles."



Media Credit: Casey Hilder

Tuba and euphonium players from The University of Memphis will blow the final notes in Octubafest tonight in the Music Building's Harris Concert Hall. Tonight's event, named Octubaween, will feature Halloween-themed performances by acclaimed tubist Richard White - as well as graduate, undergraduate and faculty musicians - starting at 7:30 p.m.

The performance is free and open to the public.

Assistant music professor Kevin Sanders, one of the event organizers, said he hoped the festival would help eliminate tuba stereotypes while allowing people to enjoy the deep, rich sounds of the instruments.

"One of the reasons we do things like this is to poke fun at ourselves and to show people what these instruments are capable of," Sanders said. "Overall, we want to entertain people with the unique sounds these large instruments can make."

The celebration of tuba started Monday night with a faculty solo recital. Undergraduate students performed solos Wednesday, and a professional tuba and euphonium ensemble followed graduate student solos yesterday.

Following White's performance tonight, the undergraduate and graduate tuba and euphonium ensemble will perform in Halloween costumes, said Potter, who will be performing in the event.

"People look at tuba and euphonium and think that we just play the low parts, but when we take pieces from other instruments and play it well on a tuba then people are like, 'Wow, I didn't know that a tuba could play like that,'" Potter said. "Octubafest is a celebration of what the tuba can do."

Associate professor John Mueller said the music program has done fall festivals in the past, but this is the first music festival dedicated solely to the tuba and euphonium.

"Octubafest was originally started by Indiana University professor Harvey Phillips," Mueller said. "It now takes place on campuses nationwide but not necessarily at the same time."

Sanders said the attendance at Octubafest has been around 60 people a night. He said he is expecting tonight's performance to have the highest attendance because of White.

The Octubafest headliner, who has studied the tuba since he was 12, has performed with numerous music and soundtrack composers. He now teaches at the University of New Mexico where he is a doctoral candidate.

"To have a musician of Richard White's caliber play here says a lot about our music program, and it's a huge honor," Sanders said.

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