

TEXAS  STATE[®]
SCHOOL OF MUSIC



WIND SYMPHONY

Caroline Beatty, conductor

Chase Failing, graduate conductor

Tess Jones, graduate conductor

Evans Auditorium | Presented Online
Thursday May 6, 2021 | 7:30pm



opera

tangent

PROGRAM

- FANFARE ON MOTIFS OF 'DIE GURRELIEDER'** Arnold Schoenberg Chase Failing, graduate conductor
- MARCH FOR THE SULTAN ABDUL MEDJID** Gioachino Rossini Chase Failing, graduate conductor
- TRAUERMUSIK** Richard Wagner
- COURTLY DANCES FROM 'GLORIANA'** Benjamin Britten [trans. Bach] Tess Jones, graduate conductor
- PING, PANG, PONG** Joel Puckett
- MARCH FROM 'SYMPHONIC METAMORPHOSIS ON THEMES OF CARL MARIA VON WEBER'** Paul Hindemith [trans. Wilson]

NOTES

OPERA-TANGENT

The final Wind Symphony performance of the 2020-21 year includes a captivating collection of wind band works that are connected in some way or another to the world of opera. The concert starts with Schoenberg's fanfare of motifs from a cantata that was heavily influenced by Wagner and Strauss. Then we move to the effervescent Rossini with a march commissioned by an opera-loving Sultan of Turkey. Wagner's stunning funeral tribute to Carl Maria von Weber – through an arrangement of themes from a Weber opera – follows, then we move to a unique set of Renaissance-style dances penned by Benjamin Britten for one of his lesser-known operas. In Joel Puckett's contribution to the concert, we get a new take on the 'overture' as his motivation is to reveal the minor, but knowing, commedia dell'arte characters' perspectives from Puccini's *Turandot*. And we close this extraordinary year with the exuberant conclusion to Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber*.

FANFARE ON MOTIFS FROM 'DIE GURRELIEDER' (1945) Arnold Schoenberg

Arnold Schoenberg's *Fanfare on Motifs of 'Die Gurrelieder'* is a work that reflects two points in Schoenberg's career, neither of which – ironically -- are particularly influenced by serialism, the trait which most listeners associate with the composer. The source material for the fanfare is the cantata *Gurrelieder*, a work massive both in length and orchestration. Schoenberg began composing this tripartite work, influenced strongly by the late operas of Richard Wagner (particularly *Götterdämmerung*), in 1900 and didn't complete the orchestrations until 1911. The score also carries the compositional influence of Richard Strauss who evaluated early sketches at the composer's request, and of Schoenberg's friend and contemporary, Gustav Mahler.

Gurrelieder was a tremendous success -- perhaps more so than any work in Schoenberg's career until that point -- and has remained in the repertoire. It was championed notably by Leopold Stokowski, whose 1932 performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra were issued as recordings on the RCA label. Naturally, in 1945 when Stokowski asked Schoenberg for a fanfare to open a program at the Hollywood Bowl, he returned to *Gurrelieder* as his inspiration and put together a work for brass and percussion based entirely on three motives from Part III of the cantata.

The first two motives emerge from the song *Erwacht, König Waldemars Mannen wert!* in which King Waldemar, condemned to wander the Earth eternally, summons forth his undead vassals and rides as a terror through the night sky. This is a contrast to the final motive, from the concluding *Seht die Sonne*, in which the narrator describes the transfiguration of death into life by the power of nature and the rising sun.

The ambitious project proved too much for the ill Schoenberg, however, and he was unable to complete the work in time for the performances. The score for the fanfare, though eventually nearly completed by Schoenberg (the last several measures were never orchestrated by the composer), disappeared and remained unperformed in his lifetime. It was rediscovered in 1977, in time to be completed and performed for the opening of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute at the University of Southern California.

MARCH FOR THE SULTAN ABDUL MEDJID (1851) Gioachino Rossini

While his catalog of works is replete with instrumental vocal works independent of one another, Gioachino Rossini is arguably most known for his output of thirty-nine operas— notably *The Barber of Seville*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Guillaume Tell*. And his connection to the scene also included the production, direction, and management of opera theaters in both Italy and France.

Through influence from his education in France, the Sultan Abdul Medjid Khan of Turkey became enamored with Western literature and classical music, including opera. This led him to hire Giuseppe Donizetti, brother of renowned opera composer Giuseppe, to be his royal composer. The Sultan's infatuation with European music also influenced him to have the military music of his army revised to be comparable to that to which he had become familiar. For this, Giuseppe Donizetti composed a great deal of music and commissioned two marches: one from his brother and another from Rossini. Douglass Townsend provided this edition of Rossini's contribution using modern American band instrumentation in 1965 after he discovered Rossini's manuscript at the Turkish Institute in Ankara. The use of Janissary – Turkish military – percussion instruments, cymbals and triangle in particular, is prevalent, and the style is delightfully familiar Rossini.

TRAUERMUSIK Richard Wagner (1844)

Given Richard Wagner's groundbreaking employment of the winds in his extensive operas, it only follows that somewhere in his oeuvre lies music for wind band. Trauermusik was written with a dual purpose, as homage to Carl Maria von Weber and for the ceremony of his re-internment. Weber died in London in 1826 at the young age of 39. On December 14, 1844, eighteen years after his death, his remains were moved to his home country of Germany. Wagner composed Trauermusik for the torch-light procession to Weber's final resting place, the Catholic Cemetery in Friedrichstadt.

For this musical remembrance, Wagner arranged several portions of Weber's opera, Euryanthe – one of Weber's last complete works – for a large wind band of 75 players including 7 oboes, 10 bassoons, 25 clarinets and 14 horns, among others. This wind band was accompanied during the funeral procession by 20 drums. The first part of Trauermusik is an arrangement of music from the overture to Euryanthe which represents the vision of Emma's spirit in the opera. The main section of the work is taken from the cavatina "Hier dicht am Quell," the text of which contains numerous references to death. The coda comes from a passage in Act II that recalls the opening "spirit music." Wagner amassed all of the military bands around Dresden for the occasion, and was gratified by the effect. He remained fond of the work throughout his life and in Mein Leben he wrote, "I had never before achieved anything that corresponded so perfectly to its purpose."

John Boyd and Michael Votta have provided this edition that allows for performance by modern wind band while maintaining a historically appropriate rendition.

COURTLY DANCES FROM 'GLORIANA' Benjamin Britten [trans. Bach]

As one of Great Britain's treasured twentieth-century composers, Benjamin Britten wrote music encompassing a wide range of classical sub-genre including documentary film scores, symphonic works, concerti, and opera. While in the United States from 1939-1942, Britten struck up friendships with Peter Pears and WH Auden which would prove profound in his composing. Among other collaborations, his work with Auden included Britten's initial step into opera, the operetta Paul Bunyon (1941). Britten's compositional output for opera includes five large-scale productions, including the fables Billy Budd and Peter Grimes, and nine others written for smaller entities.

Gloriana, the third of his large-scale operas, was commissioned by Covent Garden to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in June 1953. The libretto was by William Plomer, after "Elizabeth and Essex" by Lytton Strachey. Joan Cross sang the part of Elizabeth, and Peter Pears the Earl of Essex.

Heavily criticized after its first performance, Gloriana never found a permanent niche in any opera house. The criticism was mainly aimed at the opera's scenario, which tended to highlight the Queen's frailties, her personal relationship with the Earl of Essex, and the intrigues and jealousies at Court. It was thought that the persona of Queen Elizabeth I of England should have been portrayed as the monarch of a burgeoning European power. Britten was also criticized for choosing to close the opera with the spoken word, rather than musically.

The Courtly Dances appear in the third scene of Act II. In the Great Room of Whitehall Palace, a ball is being given by the Queen. Accompanied by a stage band, the curtain rises on a stately Pavane, following which the Countess of Essex requests a Galliard. The Queen enters. On catching sight of the Countess, her jealous rival, she commands a La Volta - a vigorous dance during which the ladies are tossed in the air by their partners. It is so vigorous in fact that at its end the Queen further commands that the "Ladies, go change thy linen"! Meanwhile a Morris Dance is performed to entertain those who remain in the room.

PING, PANG, PONG (2004) Joel Puckett

Joel Puckett's music has been described as, "soaringly lyrical" (Minneapolis Star Tribune), "Puccini-esque" (Wall Street Journal), and "containing a density within a clarity, polyphony within the simple and - most importantly - beautiful and seemingly spiritual." (Audiophile Audition). Parterre Box recently proclaimed, "Puckett should be a household name" and the Philadelphia Inquirer's David Patrick Stearns mused, "if the name Joel Puckett isn't etched into your brain, it should be." In 2011, NPR Music listed him as one of the top 100 composers under 40 in the world.

Puckett's music attracts diverse performers and listeners through its emotional energy and commitment. Melding tradition with innovation, his distinctive style grows from his power to create transcendent experiences using charismatic musical language.

The Fix, a grand opera commissioned by Minnesota Opera, premiered in the March 2019 to packed houses, enthusiastic audiences, and largely effusive praise. With a libretto by Academy Award and Tony Award winner, Eric Simonson, the work depicts the rise and fall of the 1919 Chicago White Sox. It is a tragedy ripe with power, romance and redemption, set against the backdrop of America's favorite pastime. Puckett's earlier commissions have been premiered and performed worldwide, to exuberant critical acclaim.

His flute concerto, *The Shadow of Sirius*, premiered in 2010 and has received more than 200 performances and been recorded multiple times, including 2015's Naxos Surround Sound disc, "*Shadow of Sirius*," which received a 2016 Grammy Nomination. Currently the Chair of Music Theory, Ear Training, and Piano Skills at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Puckett presents workshops nationwide and frequently serves as an adjudicator at competitions for rising composers. His music is represented worldwide by Bill Holab Music.

Regarding his first major wind band composition *Ping, Pang, Pong*, Dr. Puckett remarks:

I've always loved opera overtures. They tend to be fast paced, exciting, and made up from a variety of melodic material. My first experience with these overtures actually came via my father's LPs from the 1950s of the University of Michigan Symphony Band under the baton of William D. Revelli. Revelli was fond of performing these overtures in arrangements, or transcriptions, for his large wind symphony. I remember many a time when my father would comment on how much better the overtures were "without all those darn strings!" In *Ping, Pang, Pong*, I have captured the essence of these opera overture transcriptions while maintaining a contemporary perspective - in a way, bridging the gap between the past and the present. The title is inspired by the three frustrated Chinese ministers from Puccini's opera *Turandot*. They have always been some of my favorite characters in all of opera. Their frustration, lamenting, and excitement are some of the best moments in Puccini's masterpiece and seemed to me to be the perfect inspiration for my modern overture.

MARCH FROM 'SYMPHONIC METAMORPHOSIS ON THEMES OF CARL MARIA VON WEBER' (1945) Paul Hindemith [trans. Wilson]

Due to his unique musical voice and contributions to music theory, German composer Paul Hindemith is often cited for his significance in 20th century music. His modernist tendencies made him, however, *persona non grata* with the rise of the Third Reich. This motivated a move to the United States where he began an influential tenure as a music professor at Yale University. Shortly after Hindemith's arrival in the U.S., he was approached by the choreographer Leonid Massine, for whom he had previously composed the ballet *Nobilissima visione*, who proposed a new ballet set to arrangements of music written in the early 19th century by Carl Maria von Weber. Within two weeks Hindemith completed two movements and sent them to Massine. He said, "The Weber ballet has gone down the drain," Hindemith wrote to his wife, and continued: I wrote two nice numbers for it, coloring the music lightly and making it a bit sharper.... It seems the music is too complicated for them and that they simply wanted an exact orchestral arrangement of the original Weber. I am not just an orchestrator and furthermore I had already told them what I was going to do. One really cannot work seriously with Massine." It has also been said that the sets were to be designed by Salvador Dali, of which Hindemith was not fond.

Three years later, Hindemith returned to the project, literally "metamorphosing" Weber's originals into a virtuosic, four-movement concert work that the *New York Times* called "diverting and delightful music — one of the most entertaining scores Hindemith has ever given us." The second movement reimagines a theme from Weber's opera, *Turandot*. With that reference, performing the final movement of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, "March", not only provides our final tangent to opera, but also connects to two pieces heard prior: *Trauermusik* (for the re-internment of Weber), and *Ping, Pang, Pong* (the reimagination of perspective from Puccini's *Turandot*). The world premiere of the *Symphonic Metamorphosis* was given by the New York Philharmonic in 1944 and the wind band transcription, which has become a staple of the repertoire, was completed at Hindemith's request by his Yale University colleague, Keith Wilson. The 'March' is of particular popularity and provides a rousing, familiar, comforting finish to this year of uncertainty.

WIND SYMPHONY

Caroline Beatty, conductor

Tess Jones & Chase Failing, graduate student conductors

FLUTE

Maryssa Chartier
Tess Jones
Kaitlin McGallicher
Caroline Reedy

SAXOPHONE

Edgar Blandon
Erik Gamez
Brian Holtshouser
Nicole Soler

TENOR TROMBONE

Adam Conlan
Scott Duncan
Eli Meece
Zach Shoepe

OBOE/ENGLISH

HORN

Robert Harris
Nathan Vuong

TRUMPET

Kelly Cohorst
Brandon Colmark
Jorge Rivera Guzman
Jenny Mountz
Thomas Shafer
Jose Vela

BASS TROMBONE

Daniel Rodriguez

BASSOON

Nick Fitch
Dustin Regalado
Lilian Vo

EUPHONIUM

David Garcia
Julian Gomez

CLARINET

Mark DeLeon
Amy Gravell
Steven Gres
Taylor Hussey
Zachary MacDonald
Hugh Pauwels
Christopher Vazquez

HORN

Rueben Brown
Taylor Lovato-Cruz
Samantha Hernandez
Jackeline Martinez

TUBA

Jorge Madariaga-Santos

PERCUSSION

Andrew Avery
Trystyn Cook
Jordan Davis
Lauren Gonzalez
Kyle Huddleston
Veronica Lizarraga
Oscar Rodriguez

Due to the rotation of parts, members are listed alphabetically



Band Faculty

Dr. Caroline Beatty
Dr. Kyle Glaser
Mr. Matthew Holzner

Graduate Assistants

Ms. Tess Jones
Mr. Chase Failing

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