

Colorado State University UPCOMING EVENTS

Theatre: STEP ON A CRACK by Suzan Zeder, Directed by Laura Jones
10/9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24 • Studio Theatre • 7:30 pm
10/10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 • Studio Theatre • 2:00 pm

CONCERT ORCHESTRA CONCERT: The Lure of London
10/18 • Organ Recital Hall • 7:30 pm • FREE

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES CONCERT
With Steel Band Ensembles Green Pan Band and Ram Pan Band
10/18 • Griffin Concert Hall • 7:30 pm

VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT: The Traditions of the Flute: Bach
With CSU Faculty Michelle Stanley, Flute
10/19 • Organ Recital Hall • 7:30 pm

HALLOWEEN ORGAN EXTRAVAGANZA
10/31 • Organ Recital Hall • 7:00, 9:00, & 11:00 pm

event calendar • e-newsletter registration

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CSU SYMPHONIC BAND CONCERT

MID-CENTURY MASTERPIECES

Dr. Richard Frey, conductor
Dr. Tiffany Blake, soprano
Georgianna Oswald, graduate conductor

Second Suite in F (1911) **Gustav Holst**
I. March
II. Song without words
III. Song of the Blacksmith
IV. Fantasia on the 'Dargason'

Ballad for Band (1946) **Morton Gould**
Georgianna Oswald, graduate conductor

Five Folksongs for Soprano and Band (1966) **Bernard Gilmore**
I. Mrs. McGrath (Irish)
II. All the Pretty Little Horses (American)
III. Yerakina (Greek)
IV. El Burro (Spanish)
V. A Fidler (Yiddish)
Tiffany Blake, soprano

Symphony No. 6, op. 69 (1958) **Vincent Persichetti**
I. Adagio-Allegro
II. Adagio sostenuto
III. Allegretto
IV. Vivace

Thursday, October 15, 2015 • 7:30pm
GRIFFIN CONCERT HALL, UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

PROGRAM NOTES

This evening's concert is titled, "Mid-Century Masterpieces," as a nod to the significant place each of these pieces has in the band repertoire. It also connects them to a style and aesthetic that incorporates modernist elements into popular design, and was influential in architecture and modern design during the same time period.

The concert might just as easily have been called "Songs for Band," as each of the pieces makes a connection with vocal music. Holst's *Second Suite* is a compilation of seven British songs, spread out over the course of four delightful movements. Morton Gould's *Ballad for Band* is the composer's reinterpretation of the American spiritual, using only original melodies. The *Five Folksongs for Soprano and Band* is the first modern piece for soprano and modern wind band, with each of the folksongs coming from a different country and culture. Finally, the second movement from Persichetti's Symphony No. 6 is a transcription and reimagination of the composer's original hymntune, "Round Me Falls the Night."

Second Suite in F (1911)

Gustav Holst

Born: 21 September 1874, Cheltenham, England

Died: 25 May 1934, London, England

When Holst composed his *Second Suite in F* in 1911, the repertoire for the contemporary wind band was still very limited. Composers in France, such as Berlioz and Schmitt, had written a small number of large works for winds and percussion, but it was during the early years of the twentieth-century that many more composers began exploring the possibilities of writing for this medium. From this period comes a host of excellent suites by Holst, Vaughan Williams, Grainger, and Gordon Jacob, of which Holst's *Second Suite* is one of the most well known. These suites, even when using completely original melodies, have a strong folksong influence; *Second Suite* is no different. The March opens with a melody from the Morris dance "Glorishears", the second theme is a variation on the ballad "Swansea Town", and the 6/8 middle section is based on the folk tune "Claudy Banks". Each of the following movements is based on a single tune, "I'll Love my Love", "The Blacksmith", and the "Dargason", respectively, with "Greensleeves" heard over the top of the "Dargason" in the fourth movement. The straightforward form and tunefulness of each movement has made this an immediately accessible work for audiences for over a century.

Ballad for Band (1946)

Morton Gould

Born: 10 December 1913, Richmond Hill, New York

Died: 21 February 1996, Orlando, Florida

While Gould was growing up during the worst years of the Great Depression, he aided his family by taking jobs as a vaudeville pianist. During his teenage years, Gould was the pianist for the 1932 opening of Radio City Music Hall. A short while after this appointment Gould began writing film music for Hollywood, and was fulfilling a number of commissions for major symphony orchestras.

Gould was actively composing during the 1930s, even despite hard times. However, he had not yet written any works exclusively for wind band. In fact, American composers during this time hardly recognized the medium of the wind band repertoire as a serious genre of legitimate music. It was not until Gould heard the University of Michigan Band under the baton of prominent wind band leader, William Revelli during the premiere of *Cowboy Rhapsody*, that Gould had this realization about the wind band: "realized what a great music-making machine we had."

Ballad for Band was composed in 1946 and was commissioned by the Goldman Band, one of the premiere wind bands of the time. The piece was debuted by the Goldman Band on the 21st of June in 1946. Incorporating stylistic elements of the spiritual, this piece does not actually contain any previously composed melodies; rather it consists of original melodic material from the inspiration Gould found in Spirituals. Gould states: "Spirituals have always been the essence, in many ways, of our musical art, our musical spirit. The spiritual is an emotional, rhythmic expression. The spiritual has a universal feeling; it comes from the soul; from the gut."

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Gould comments further, giving us a deeper perspective of the piece: “Ballad for Band is basically an introverted piece that starts slowly, is linear, and has a quiet lyricism; it is not big band in the sense that there is little razzle-dazzle. A discerning listener who is programmed to appreciate the nuances and subtlety of a contemporary piece would respond favorably to this, but others merely find it from relatively pleasant to slightly boring. Only certain listeners respond to what this piece represents musically.”

- program note by Georgianna Oswald

Five Folksongs for Soprano and Band

Bernard Gilmore

Born: 19 November 1937, Oakland, California

Died: 17 April 2013, Irvine, California

Gilmore’s *Five Folksongs for Soprano and Band* was composed in 1963 for the College Band Directors National Association conference. Though the combination of voice and wind band was common in transcriptions and popular songs with traveling groups like the Sousa Band early in the twentieth-century, Gilmore’s work is considered to be the first serious piece for soprano and band. The movements are not connected by a thematic link, either in the text or musical setting, but each in its own way reflects the folksong tradition from which it came. Gilmore’s orchestration brilliantly highlights the text, whether through literal text-painting (El Burro contains more than one animal noise), setting the scene, or enhancing the comic nature of the final song.

Mrs. McGrath

“Oh, Mrs. McGrath,” the sargeant said,
“Would you like to make a soldier out of your son, Ted
with a scarlet coat and a big cocked hat,
Oh, Mrs. McGrath, wouldn’t you like that?”

Wid yer too-ri-ah, fol-a-diddle-ah,
too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-ah,
wid yer too-ri-ah, fol-a-diddle-ah,
too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-ah.

Now, Mrs. McGrath lived on the shore
for the space of seven long years or more.
Till she saw a ship sailing into the bay
“Here’s my son Ted would ya clear the way?”

(chorus)

“Oh captain dear, where have you been
have you been sailing on the Mediter-e-an.
Oh have you any tidings of my son Ted,
is the poor boy living or is he dead?”

(chorus)

Then up came Ted without any legs
and in their place, he has two wooden pegs.
She kiss’d him a thousand times or more,
saying “Mother of God-it isn’t you.”

(chorus)

“Oh were ye drunk or were ye blind
that ye left your two fine legs behind.
Or was it walking upon the sea
wore your fine legs from the knees away?”

“Oh I wasn’t drunk and I wasn’t blind
but I left my two fine legs behind.
For a cannon ball on the fifth of May
took my two legs from the knees away.”

“All foreign wars I do proclaim
between Don John and the King of Spain.
For I’d rather my Ted as he used to be
than the King of France and his whole navee.”

All the Pretty Little Horses

Hush-a-bye, don't you cry,
go to sleepy little baby.
When you wake you shall have cake
and all the pretty little horses.

Black and bays, dapples and greys,
coach and six o' little horses.
Blacks and bays, dapples and greys,
all the pretty little horses.

Yerakina

Yerakina went out to get water,
to get cold water.
Druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.
Her bracelets rattle, her bracelets rattle.
Druga, druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.

And she fell into the water well,
and she gave a big yell!
Druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.
Her bracelets rattle, her bracelets rattle.
Druga, druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.

El Burro

The donkey that used to carry the vinegar just died,
and the Lord has taken him from his miserable life.
Que tu ru ru ru ru...

He was valiant, and he was black,
he was the comfort of all the village.
Que tu ru ru ru ru...

He straightens his little hoofs, and opened his wide mouth,
and with his tail firmly behind him, he said "goodbye" to
everyone.
Que tu ru ru ru ru...

A Fidler

So as the father from Yaridl,
I have bought a new fiddle.
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si,
I now play didl, di, di, di.

Hold the head down,
and let your eyes shine.
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si,
I now play didl, di, di, di.

Hush-a-bye, don't you cry,
go to sleepy little baby.
Your pa's away, gone astray,
gone and left you little lambie

Daddy's eye is runnin' dry,
he can't cry for you like mammy.
Daddy's eye is runnin' dry,
gone and left you little lambie.

Yerakina, I shall pull you out,
and I shall take you as my wife.
Druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.
Her bracelets rattle, her bracelets rattle.
Druga, druga, druna, drun, drun, drun.

All the neighbors went to the funeral,
and aunt Maria played the cattle-bell.
Que tu ru ru ru ru...

The donkey that used to carry the vinegar just died,
and the Lord has taken him from his miserable life.
Que tu ru ru ru ru...

Right foot forward a little,
Tap the floor with the little foot.
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si,
I now play didl, di, di, di.

Mother is chortled and filled with wonder,
Jascha Heifetz grows by me!
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si,
I now play didl, di, di, di.

Symphony No. 6 (1958)

Vincent Persichetti

Born: 6 June 1915

Died: 14 August 1987

Persichetti's *Symphony No. 6* is one of several significant symphonies composed for wind band in the 1950's, including those by Morton Gould, Vittovia Giannini, and Paul Hindemith.

Persichetti described his own compositional personality as alternating between graceful and gritty, a juxtaposition made clear both within, and between, the four movements of the symphony. The first movement begins slowly with a three-note horn call and immediate answer in the low reeds and brass. Instead of following the form of a typical classical symphony first movement, Persichetti creates a series of themes based on these two themes. These themes are musically varied, but typically fall into his "gritty" style. The next section contains various themes that are generated from the opening horn call, and each of these tends toward the "graceful" side of Persichetti's musical personality. The entire movement is defined by the alternation of these theme groups, eventually leading to a polytonal chord that is the only beat of the entire movement on which every ensemble member is playing. The music then tapers away, with familiar melodic elements echoing through the percussion section.

The second movement is based on Persichetti's own hymntune: "Round Me Falls the Night." The hymn is set in an ABA form, which Persichetti projects onto a larger scale in this movement. The initial section is a setting of the entire hymn for the woodwind choir. The second section is full of fragments from the hymn, connected by solo lines in various brass voices. The final section is a restatement of the hymntune in its entirety, but now with the solo voices overlaying the woodwind chorale.

The third tune is light and jovial in character, with two large themes set against each other. The first is a lilting 6/8 tune, and the second is a contrasting 2/4 march tune. These elements interact and become enmeshed until, by the unexpected end of the short movement, they are alternating with each other every other bar.

The final movement is difficult to define in traditional formal terms, but resembles the opening movement in its frequent shifting of colors and textures, with each new theme seeming familiar because of its association with music that has appeared previously. The movement most resembles a rondo, with a recurring theme that first appears at the beginning of the movement, and themes from other movements making cameo appearances throughout, connecting all of the movements together. When the horns, now forcefully and as a section, restate the opening horn call a final time, it is a signal that the symphony is reaching its conclusion: a joyfully noisy chord with melodic elements again restated by the timpani.

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