

University of Washington  
2001-2002

# School of Music

DATE # 14,039  
CDs # 14,040  
14,041

Presents

THE WIND ENSEMBLE  
Timothy Salzman, *conductor*

THE CONCERT BAND  
David Wayne Waltman, *conductor*

December 4, 2001

7:30 PM

Meany Theater

## 'AMERICA'

CD # 14,040

### PROGRAM

1 Applause

2 STAR SPANGLED BANNER

3 Applause

4 ASPEN JUBILEE ..... (10:45) ..... RON NELSON (B. 1929)  
David Waltman, *conductor* / Jennifer-Leigh Miller, *soprano*

5 COMMENTS - T. SALZMAN

6 MINTON'S PLAYHOUSE (1994) ..... (9:57) ..... JAMES SYLER  
Saxophone Quartet:  
Brad Fitch / Barbara Larson / Scott Tewel / Sarah Cavassa

7 Applause

8 A CORNFIELD IN JULY AND THE RIVER (1991) ..... (9:16) ..... WILLIAM PENN (B. 1943)  
Julian Patrick, *baritone*

9 Applause

10 ARCTIC DREAMS (1991) ..... (22:35) ..... MICHAEL COLGRASS (B. 1932)  
*Inuit Landscape* ..... *In Spring Light: Ice Floating in the Sea*  
*Throat Singing with Laughter* ..... *The Hunt*  
*Whispering Voices of the Spirits who Ride* ..... *Drum Dancer*  
*with the Lights in the Sky*

Kristin Bush / Arianna Phillips / Sarena Hyman / Jeannette Mitchell (Singers)  
Jens Nedrud, Mark Walters

### INTERMISSION

CD # 14,041

### THE CONCERT BAND

1 COMMENTS, D. WALTMAN

2 VICTORY AT SEA ..... (9:42) ..... RICHARD RODGERS (1902-1979)/R. R. BENNETT (ARR.)

3 WHEN JESUS WEPT / CHESTER ..... (11:20) ..... WILLIAM SCHUMAN (1910-1992)  
(performed without pause between pieces)

4 AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL ..... (3:11) ..... SAMUEL AUGUSTUS WARD/CARMEN DRAGON

5 STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER (3:08)

ASPEN JUBILEE was commissioned in 1984 by the Manatee High School Band in Bradenton, Florida. Composer Ron Nelson's thoughts about Aspen Jubilee:

"I was thinking of the stupendous beauty of the Rockies in general, of blinding sunlight of snow-covered peaks; of the frontier spirit of old Aspen with its brash, funny dynamism, its corny ragtag Fourth of July parades and fireworks displays. I was also thinking about indescribably beautiful nights under star filled skies (the middle section is titled 'Nightsong'). There is only a passing nod to the Aspen which has now become a playground for the rich and famous.

"I spent thirteen of the most memorable summers of my life at the Aspen music festival. I was able to immerse myself in music, meet fascinating people, and recharge my batteries. Each year it became progressively more expensive and sophisticated, but I still associate it with wonderful music making."

Ron Nelson wrote his first composition at age six and began studying piano that same year. He taught himself to play string bass in order to play in the Joliet Township High School band. The director, Bruce Houseknecht, encouraged him to compose, so Dr. Nelson wrote a twenty-two minute concerto for piano and symphonic band, which he performed at age seventeen. He studied composition at the Eastman School of Music with Howard Hanson and Bernard Rogers. Dr. Nelson earned his BMus degree in 1952, MMus in 1953, and DMA in 1956, all from Eastman. He went to Paris in 1954 on a Fulbright Grant and studied at the École Normale de Musique and the Paris Conservatory with Tony Aubin. Returning to Eastman, he became involved with film music. Following graduation, he joined the music faculty of Brown University in 1956, served as Chairman of the Music Department from 1963 to 1973, and in 1991 became the first musician to be awarded the Roy Acuff Chair of Excellence in the Creative Arts. Upon his retirement in 1993, he was named professor emeritus. An active composer, conductor, and clinician, Dr. Nelson now resides in Arizona. Some of his other works for band include Rocky Point Holiday (1969), Aspen Jubilee (1984), Resonances I (1991), Morning Alleluias (1991) and Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H) (1992). His entire oeuvre can be accessed at [www.ronnelson.info](http://www.ronnelson.info).

Conductor Leonard Slatkin described Dr. Nelson thusly: "Nelson is the quintessential American composer. He has the ability to move between conservative and newer styles with ease. The fact that he's a little hard to categorize is what makes him interesting."

MINTON'S PLAYHOUSE is a composition written as a tribute to the early 1940's nightclub at 210 W. 118th Street in New York City. The weekly jam sessions and after hours experimenting that went on there, and at other area clubs played an important part in the development of bebop, and consequently marks the beginning of modern jazz.

In honor of the 50-year anniversary of this form of jazz this work looks to the past, and at the same time, to the present. Using a sort of hybrid eclecticism, *Minton's Playhouse* is a jazz based concert work employing bebop lines ala Charlie Parker and a jazz ballad of my own writing, in a sort of concerto grosso setting for saxophone quartet and wind ensemble.

The music attempts to express what might have gone through the minds of those great musicians as they played a standard ballad in the last set of the evening. Their thoughts must have been filled with the anticipation of experimenting with new ideas in an attempt to forge out a new music.

The U.S. Air Force Sax Quartet premiered *Minton's Playhouse* in 1995 with the U.S. Navy Band at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia for the 18th International Saxophone Symposium. Lt. Col. Alan Bonner, conductor.

A CORNFIELD IN JULY and THE RIVER is based upon the writings of Hamlin Garland, an American short-story writer and novelist whose most recognized work has been in the area of realistic portraits, dealing with the lives, times and hardships of Northern Midwest farmers at the turn of the century. Tradition has it that he was born in a log cabin in the Midwest in 1860. An educational pursuit prompted his move to Boston in 1884, where he was influenced by the realism of William Dean Howells. He subsequently returned to the Midwest in 1887, where he began to write his first stories based on the lives of the American farmer. The two major collections of short stories that came from this period are *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891) and *Prairie Folk* (1892); a companion volume, *Other Main-Travelled Roads* was published in 1910. During the mid-1980s he toured around the country from New York to the Yukon Valley and in 1899, married Zulime Taft and settled in Chicago. In 1930 he moved to Los Angeles, and lived there until his death in 1940. In 1921, *A Daughter of the Middle Border*, his second of four autobiographical narratives, won a Pulitzer Prize.

The premiere performance of this work took place on November 21, 1991 by Gary Green and the University of Connecticut Wind Ensemble with Robert Maher, baritone soloist, at Storrs, Connecticut.

#### A Cornfield in July -- text

A cornfield in July is a sticky place. The soil is hot and dry; the wind comes across the lazily murmuring leaves laden with a warm sickening smell drawn from the rapidly growing, broad-flung banners of the corn. The sun, nearly vertical, drops a flood of dazzling light and heat upon the field over which the cool shadows run, only to make the heat seem the more intense. The sun's nearly vertical.

During the hot days of summer the river came to be of greater value to those of us toiling in the hot corn rows, and trips for bathing and fishing were looked forward to with keenest longing, and remembered with deepest delight. Many of our sweetest recollections of nature were associated with these swimming excursions. To go from the dusty field of the prairie farms to the wood shadows and to the cool murmuring of water, to strip stark to the caressing winds, and to plunge in the deeps of the dappled pools, was like being born again.

#### The River -- text

It comes from the meadow  
Where cool and deep,  
In the elm's dark shadow,  
In murmur of dream and of sleep,

And I, a bare-legged boy [girl] again,  
Can hear the low, sweet laugh of the river—

See on the water the dapples aquiver,  
Fell on my knees the lipping lap

It drowsily eddied and swirled and curled  
Round the out-thrust knees  
Of the basswood trees.

It was there that the water-snake rippled across  
Through the shimmering supple the leaves cast down,  
While the swamp-bird perched on the spongy moss  
In the shadow-side looked gravely on.  
T'was there the kingfishers swiftly flew,  
In the cool, sweet silence from tree to tree—  
All silence, save when the vagabond jay  
Flashed swiftly by with a sharp "Te-chee,"  
Swaggering by in his elfish way—

Of the sunny ripples, and see the snake  
Slip silently into the sedgy brake,  
And hear the rising pickerel slap  
In a rushing leap  
Where the lilies sleep.

It drowsily eddied and swirled and curled  
Round the out-thrust knees  
Of the basswood trees.

It comes from the meadow  
Where cool and deep,  
In the elm's dark shadow,  
In murmur of dream and of sleep,

Text adapted from Hamlin Garland's "Among the Corn Rows" from *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891) and "The River" from his *Boy's Life on the Prairie* (1899) by William Penn, 1990.

One of the most distinguished and versatile American artists, baritone JULIAN PATRICK has performed worldwide with major opera companies such as Metropolitan Opera, Theatre de Geneva, Vienna Volksoper, Netherlands Opera, Welsh National Opera, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera and Seattle Opera. His operatic repertoire consists of over 90 major roles, ranging from Alberich in Wagner's Ring cycle to Figaro in "Il Barbiere di Siviglia." He is equally at home on the concert stage, having appeared with nearly all the major symphony orchestras in the United States and a number in Europe. Patrick is professor of voice and head of the voice division at the University of Washington School of Music.

ARCTIC DREAMS (1991) is a tone poem for symphonic wind ensemble inspired by the Arctic and by the lives and legends of the Inuit who live there. The composer lived for a short time with an Inuit family in Pangnirtung, Baffin Island, just north of the Arctic Circle, and was fascinated by their way of life, their humor, and their sense of mystery and wonder at the awesome nature around them. Mr. Colgrass says of his experience and this music "the Arctic is like a great unconscious. Therefore, the title of Barry Lopez's wonderful book *Arctic Dreams* seemed also an apt description of this music." The composer describes the work as follows:

"In the opening section, *Inuit Landscape*, a solo trombone represents a lone human being calling out over a vast space

amidst the sound of wind and storm. In *Throat Singing with Laughter* we hear the indomitable spirit of the Inuit through their sense of humor. Throat singing is a unique form of Inuit music, created by the rapid in- and out-takes of breath on fast rhythms, which incites almost continual laughter in the singers and onlookers alike. In *Whispering Voices of the Spirits Who Ride With the Lights in the Sky*, we hear mysterious mutterings that make a gradual transformation into "gossamer curtains of light that seem to undulate across the Arctic skies," (Lopez' description of the aurora borealis). The next section, *Polar Night*, is a montage of Arctic sounds (ghosts, wind, wolves), through which we hear the voices of Norwegian sailors whose boat is frozen in the ice for the winter.

"In *Spring Light: Ice Floating in the Sun*, the winter ends and the thaw begins with the light increasing to an almost unbearable brightness. This leads directly into the next-to-last section, called *The Hunt*. To the Inuit, spring is literally the resurrection of life. The ominous four-month winter darkness ends and brings back the caribou, their primary source of food. Following the hunt is a joyous celebration, led by the *Drum Dancer*. The sculptures of Karoo Ashevak, several of which are called *Drum Dancer*, were my inspiration for this section.

"I did a lot of reading and lived there [Pangnirtung, Baffin Island] for about one month with [an Inuit] family. Barry Lopez' book, *Arctic Dreams*, was a particularly beautiful book. This is a book to read whether you are interested in the arctic or not. He is a wonderful writer. He had a lot of interesting stuff about the arctic, but it is also a philosophical book. He uses the arctic as a metaphor for life. It is quite a compelling book—some aspects were informative to me about the piece and I liked the title so I used that. But, I was perhaps most influenced by a book called *People of the Deer* by Farley Mowat. It is a really interesting book about his adventure up in the arctic and it is partly fiction; partly non-fiction. He was asked by the government to investigate what happened to a certain tribe of Inuit people called the Ilhamniat from north of Winnipeg. He went up there with a couple of Eskimo guys and they trekked through and finally found a lot of skeletons of people who died of small pox. He writes the book almost like a novel and it is so mysterious and interesting—it is evocative and magical and it gave a kind of aura to the Arctic that I had not [gotten] from a lot of the other books that were more factual. So, all that stuff came together when I lived up there for a while. I got a feeling just being there, stuff you can't get without being there. For example, the wind is always blowing, even when its not blowing it is blowing, even when its not a windy day it is always going on and that turns up in the piece. There are several movements that the winds come in and out and you hear ice cracking. It sounds kind of like distant explosions, a quiet or subtle explosion, and those sounds made their way into the piece—gently hitting the inside of the piano with a bass drum beater sounds like ice shifting. The other aspect is the playfulness of the Inuit people. You don't quite pick that up unless you're there. They are always kidding around. They are like children in that way; they like to kid and play tricks on you. They like to laugh; maybe it is because they are so close to death all the time. The Arctic is a very dangerous place. I mean to say, death is a way of life there. They don't live in igloos any more. They live in little framed Quonset-type huts. You can, in winter, go walking out from your house and get caught in a white out; the wind is blowing and it is snowing and you can't see the ground or the horizon

or anything. Everything is white. I have never experienced anything quite like it. It is like an overexposed film. You can't see the ground, the sky or the horizon and you can't see a foot in front of you. You lose your balance and it is disorienting physically. You don't realize how much you use things around you to orient your equilibrium. So when all that is taken away from you, you teeter...you certainly lose your sense of direction. So you can walk out 25 feet from your house and get caught in a white out...you may walk in the wrong direction and they will find your body in the morning, or they may find your body 10 feet from the front door; it is possible, it happens all the time. But, the arctic is like this and so they have a high respect for nature. Unlike us, thinking we can control the world with our technology, they know they don't control nature. This is my analysis as to why they have a good sense of humor. Because they just more or less say, well God, you take it and you are more or less in control and we are just lucky to be here so let's have a good time. They are healthy people. Except they have a morbid side to them if they drink, [so] it is illegal to drink there because of that."

*Arctic Dreams* was commissioned by James Keene for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the University of Illinois Symphonic and Concert Bands, and to honor the retirement of my friend Jack McKenzie, dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts. I want to express my appreciation to the Canada Council for the Senior Arts Grant that enabled me to travel to the Arctic, and do research and development for this work. *Arctic Dreams* is respectfully dedicated to Rosie Okpik and E nukie Akulukjuk of Pangnirtung.

#### WHEN JESUS WEPT / CHESTER

*When Jesus wept the falling tear  
In mercy flowed beyond all bound;  
When Jesus groaned, a trembling fear  
Seized all the guilty world around.*

The setting of the above text is in the form of a round by the American composer William Billings and is used in its original form. This early composer wrote simple sturdy tunes that were popular with the colonists, reflecting the ruggedness, deep religiosity, and patriotic fervor often associated with the Revolutionary period. This work was transcribed for band by William Schuman from his New England Triptych and forms the central work between Chester (interpreted from Billings' hymn and marching song of the same name) and Be Glad Then America. The composition calls for controlled, sensitive, legato playing from the ensemble and virtuosic solo parts for the euphonium and trumpet.

One of his more popular compositions, the New England Triptych of 1956, was written in homage of the eighteenth-century Boston composer William Billings, who is often cited in the history books as being America's first important native composer of concert music. Written on commission from the conductor André Kostelanetz, the Triptych received its premiere in Miami in October 1956. The composer has written the following note in the printed score of the piece:

"William Billings (1746-1800) is a major figure in the history of American music. The works of this dynamic composer capture the spirit of sinewy ruggedness, deep religiosity, and patriotic fervor that we associate with the Revolutionary period. Despite the undeniable crudities and technical shortcomings of

his music, its appeal, even today, is forceful and moving. I am not alone among American composers who feel an identity with Billings, and it is this sense of identity which accounts for my use of his music as a point of departure. These pieces do not constitute a 'fantasy' on themes of Billings, nor 'variations' on his themes, but rather a fusion of styles and musical language."

William Schuman's childhood was filled with baseball, rather than music. He won the first Pulitzer Prize awarded in music in 1943, he was the recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships, and held honorary doctorate degrees from twenty American colleges and universities. Schuman has a list of works including ten symphonies, numerous orchestral and chamber pieces, seven works for band, cantatas, an opera, ballet music, piano pieces, and music for film. Schuman was named president emeritus of the Juilliard School in 1962 and of Lincoln Center in 1969. He was an active composer, consultant, and lecturer until his death in 1992. His other original works for band are Newsreel (1941), George Washington Bridge (1950), Chester (1957), The Band Song (1964), Be Glad Then, America (1975), and American Hymn: Variations on an Original Melody (1981).

The premiere of the 26-part television documentary, VICTORY AT SEA, was Sunday afternoon, 3-3:30 pm, October 26, 1952. It was conceived and produced by Henry Salomon who had worked as a research assistant for Samuel Eliot Morison who was in the process of writing a 15-volume history of the Navy in World War II. Morison helped Salomon get Navy approval for the documentary, and that persuaded NBC chairman David Sarnoff, father of Salomon's Harvard classmate Robert Sarnoff, to finance the \$500,000 cost of production. NBC recovered its cost later from sponsors, although in its first run NBC allowed no ads to be inserted in middle of the program, only at the beginning and end. The Navy would use the films for recruitment and training. NBC set up a special production unit in January 1951 and scoured 10 countries for motion picture film. Most of the film would come from Navy archives. "The first thing we had to do was set up an index system of 60,000 cards just to be able to figure out what film we could throw away. We had to eliminate 99.9% of the 60 million feet at our disposal" said Salomon. Each half hour show ended up with 2377 feet of actual film used. "The problem has not been to patch up film clips and run them through a projector. Our job has been to select and edit the film in such a way that the essence of various events is captured." Salomon emphasized feeling rather than fact. "*Victory at Sea* is an emotional understanding of what the war was all about in terms of Navy men who fought the battles" said director Clay Adams. It was a battle-centered history that focused on human drama. The basic formula for each episode was the drama of preparation, tense waiting, battle, loss, victory. Composer Richard Rodgers said of his work in creating the score: "It was something new for me since not words were involved in the music. I had to express a mood and even a picture with music. In this way the job has been challenging." This arrangement is a transcription for winds of the Symphonic Suite from *Victory at Sea* arranged by Robert Russell Bennett.