

November 8th 2009 Music Educator Concert – Program Notes

Concert Winds

Serengeti Dreams **Robert W. Smith**

Robert W. Smith (b.1958) is one of the most popular and prolific composers of concert band and orchestral literature in America today. As a conductor and clinician, Smith has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Europe and Australia. He is the principal conductor of the American Symphonic Winds and the American Festival Philharmonic Orchestra, professional recording ensembles based in Washington D.C. Serengeti National Park, a wildlife refuge in northern Tanzania, East Africa serves as the inspiration for this work, *Serengeti Dreams*. Intended as an introduction to multicultural music for beginning instrumentalists, there are musical representations of the many exotic animal species found in the park. The beginning of *Serengeti Dreams* is very majestic, depicting the hills and grassland ranges. A variety of interesting & exotic sounds in the wind and percussion sections culminates in a spectacular conclusion.



Russian Folk Dance/St Petersburg March **Elena Roussanova Lucas/Johnnie Vinson**

Elena Roussanova Lucas is originally from Moscow, Russia. She began studying piano at the age of three and was accepted into the child prodigy music program at Central Music School in the former U.S.S.R. She later studied at the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire of Music, Moscow, where she received the Red Diploma (Summa Cum Laude) in Composition, Music History, Music Theory, and Instrumentation. Elena's music has been performed by major Russian orchestras including The Tchaikovsky State Orchestra of Moscow, The Radio and TV Orchestra of Moscow, The Dallas Brass, The Russian National Orchestra Brass Quintet, and many others. As a pianist Elena has performed extensively in Moscow, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands and, the U.S.A. She won First Prize in a Russia-wide piano competition sponsored by the Russian Ministry of Culture, the Russian Academy of Music and the Moscow National Institute of Music. Elena currently teaches at Boston University. Russian Folk Dance is a simple piece for wind ensemble constructed in ABA form. The piece utilizes various musical themes from Russian culture and countermelodies that alternate amongst the different sections of the ensemble.



The second part of our little medley is *St Petersburg March*, composed by Johnnie Vinson. With nearly 400 published works, Dr. Johnnie Vinson is a widely recognized arranger/composer of music for wind bands. For thirty-six years, Dr. Vinson was a faculty member serving on the band staff at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama. He retired as Director of Bands and Professor of Music Emeritus in June 2007. Since his retirement, he has devoted much of his time to composing. St. Petersburg is today considered the cultural heart of modern day Russia. This original march from Johnnie Vinson is evocative of this city's rich and exciting history of intrigue, revolution and mystery. Expertly scored, this unique and fresh-sounding work paints a musical picture of frigid winters, magnificent castles and imposing cathedrals.



Wind Symphony

RIDE

Samuel R. Hazo

RIDE was composed by Samuel Hazo (b. 1966) as a gesture of appreciation of composer & friend, Jack Stamp. In late April of 2002, Jack had invited Samuel Hazo to take part in a composer's forum he had organized for his students at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Samuel was to present along side Joseph Wilcox Jenkins, Mark Camphouse, Bruce Yurko and Aldo Forte. This forum was affectionately referred to in Samuel's house as "four famous guys and you." Following the first day of the forum, Jack invited all of the composers to his house, Since Samuel Hazo didn't know how to get to Jack's house from the University, Jack told Samuel to follow him. So he and his passenger, Mark Camphouse, began the fifteen minute drive with Samuel Hazo following behind them. The combination of such an invigorating day as well as Samuel's attempt to follow Jack Stamp at the top speed on back country roads is what inspired this piece, *RIDE*, in Samuel's head in the time it took to get from the IUP campus to the Stamp residence. *RIDE* was written and titled for that exact moment in Samuel's life when Jack Stamp's generosity and lead foot were equal in their inspiration as the beautiful Indiana, Pennsylvania countryside blurring past his car window. Samuel Hazo currently serves as a guest conductor and is a clinician for Hal Leonard Corporation.



Walking Into History (The Clinton 12)

Richard Saucedo

Richard Saucedo is currently Director of Bands and Performing Arts Department Chairman at Carmel High School in Carmel, Indiana. Under his direction, Carmel bands have received numerous state and national honors in the areas of concert, jazz and marching. Richard Saucedo did his undergraduate work at Indiana University in Bloomington and finished his masters degree at Butler University in Indianapolis. He is a freelance arranger and composer, having released numerous marching band arrangements, concert band works and choral compositions. In August 1956, Clinton, Tennessee was the site of one of the most significant events of the American Civil Rights movement as 12 courageous teenagers walked into history becoming the first students to desegregate a state-supported high school in the south. Commissioned by the East Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association, Richard Saucedo captures the mood of this monumental event along with its sense of anger and frustration, but also with feelings of hope and determination as the nation struggles to defeat bigotry and fear.



Concert Orchestra

Radetzky March **Johann Strauss Sr** **Arr. Richard Meyer**



Though historically overshadowed by his son, Johann Strauss, Jr., aka *The Waltz King*, Johann Strauss Sr. was a prolific composer with over 150 waltzes of his own published. In 1834, he was appointed bandmaster of the 1st Vienna militia regiment. *Radetzky March*, *Op. 228* is a march composed by Johann Strauss Sr. in 1848. It was dedicated to the Austrian Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky von Radetz, and became quite a popular march among soldiers. When it was first played, in front of Austrian officers in attendance, they promptly clapped and stomped their feet when they heard the chorus. This tradition is carried over today when the march is played in classical music venues in Vienna, among members of the audience who are familiar with the tradition. It is almost always played as the last piece of music at the Neujahrskonzert, the Vienna New Year concert, broadcast around the world to an estimated audience of one billion people. Despite its military nature, its tone is rather festive than martial, in accordance with its dedicatee's exuberant personality and popularity in the ballroom as well as the battlefield.

Pastoral Symphony **I – Allegro ma na troppo** **Ludwig van Beethoven** **Arr. Richard Meyer**



Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 6 in F major (Op. 68)*, known as the *Pastoral Symphony*, was completed in 1808. The symphony was labeled at its first performance with the title "Recollections of Country Life". There are many things that have been stated about the great composer, Ludwig van Beethoven. People loved to watch and listen as he played his passionate piano compositions. Offstage, however, his fiery personality got him into fights with his landlords and girlfriends. Beethoven wasn't a long-term kind of guy, either in apartments or relationships. It was with nature, not people, that Beethoven felt most at ease. Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827) was a lover of nature who spent a great deal of his time on walks in the country. He frequently left Vienna to work in rural locations. It was only "natural" for Beethoven to include his passion of nature into his work. However he wasn't the first to depict nature symphonically. For example, Joseph Haydn's oratorio, *The Seasons*, premiered in 1802, likewise portraying the loveliness of nature, dancing peasants, a thunderstorm, bird calls, and so on. As Beethoven said about his own work, the Sixth Symphony is "a matter more of feeling than of painting in sounds", and the same point is made in the title he attached to the first movement. The first sketches of this symphony appeared in 1802. The symphony has programmatic titles; Beethoven remarked, "It is left to the listener to find out the situations ... Anyone that has formed any ideal of rural life does not need titles to imagine the composer's intentions." The Pastoral Symphony was composed simultaneously with Beethoven's more famous and more fiery *Fifth Symphony*. It was premiered along with the Fifth in a long and somewhat under rehearsed concert in the Theater an der Wien in Vienna, on December 22, 1808. There was little critical response to the premiere performance, but eventually the work has become one of the central works of the symphonic repertoire. This version of the first movement, arranged by Richard Meyer, retains all of the charm and color of Beethoven's original orchestration.

Sinfonia

L' Arlessiene Suite No. 2

Minuet & Farandole

Georges Bizet



Georges Bizet (25 October 1838 – 3 June 1875) was a French composer and pianist of the Romantic era. He entered the Paris Conservatory of Music on 9 October 1848, a fortnight before his tenth birthday. His teachers there were Pierre Zimmermann (fugue and counterpoint; often assisted by his son-in-law Charles Gounod), Antoine François Marmontel (piano), François Benoist (organ) and, on Zimmermann's death, Fromental Halévy, whose daughter Bizet later married. He won first prizes for organ and fugue in 1855 and at the age of 19, Bizet won first prize for an operetta, *Doctor Miracle*, in 1857. Georges Bizet had several works that were composed at a young age but did not receive their premiers until after his death. His *Symphony in C*, written at the age of 17, as a school assignment, was not performed until 1935; as well as his opera, *Ivan IV*, which was premiered in 1946. The incidental music to Alphonse Daudet's play *L'Arlésienne* (usually translated as 'The Girl from Arles') was composed by Georges Bizet for the first performance of the play in 1872. *L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2*, written for full orchestra, was arranged and published in 1879, four years after Bizet's death, by Ernest Guiraud, using Bizet's original themes (although not all of them were from the *L'Arlésienne* play). The second suite is generally credited to Bizet since he wrote the themes and the basic orchestration. The *Minuet*, which is not from *L'Arlésienne*, but from Bizet's 1866 opera *The Fair Maid of Perth*, features solos by harp, flute, and, later, saxophone (this replacing the vocal parts of the original); it is the most subdued and emotional movement. The finale, the *Farandole*, incorporates the theme of the *March of the Kings*, found earlier in the Allegro deciso; (prelude) of *L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1*. Bizet's work as a composer has overshadowed how fine a pianist he was. He could easily have had a career as a concert pianist had he so wished. On 26 May 1861, at a dinner party at the Halévys at which Franz Liszt was present, Bizet gave a faultless performance of an elaborate work of Liszt's, reading at sight from the unpublished manuscript. Liszt proclaimed that Bizet was one of the three finest pianists in Europe. Bizet's pianistic skill was also praised by Hector Berlioz, his teacher Marmontel, and many others.

Symphony Orchestra

Prince Igor: Polovtsian Dances

Alexander Borodin

Arr. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887) was a Russian composer as well as a professor of chemistry. He was a member of the group of composers called "The Mighty Handful", who were dedicated to producing a specifically Russian kind of art music. The individual fingers of the hand were Mily Balakirev (1837-1910), who was the originator of the group; Cesar Cui (1835-1918); Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) and Alexander Borodin. All of them were decent musicians, but only one (Balakirev) had originally entered music as a profession. Borodin was a chemist, Mussorgsky was a civil servant and Rimsky-Korsakov was a naval officer. You might say that they were the original Village People. Borodin is a wonderful example of the connection between music and higher education. In his chemical profession Borodin gained great respect, being particularly noted for his work on aldehydes (an organic compound). Between 1859 – 1862 Borodin held a post doctorate in Heidelberg. He worked in a laboratory, working on benzene derivatives. He also spent time in Pisa, working on organic halogens. One experiment published in 1862 described the first nucleophilic displacement of chlorine by fluorine in



benzoyl chloride. A related reaction known to the west as the Hunsdiecker reaction published in 1939 by the Hunsdieckers was promoted by the Soviet Union as the *Borodin reaction*. Borodin published his last full article in 1875 on reactions of amides and his last publication concerned a method for the identification of urea in animal urine. Life wasn't all about work for Borodin. The *Polovtsian Dances* are perhaps the best known selections from Alexander Borodin's opera *Prince Igor* (1890). They are often played as a stand-alone concert piece as one of the best known works in the classical repertoire. In the opera the dances are performed with chorus, but concert performances often omit the choral parts, such as tonight. The first dance is No. 8 entitled *Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens*. The second dance is No. 17 simply called *Polovtsian Dances*. As an orchestral showpiece by an important nineteenth-century Russian composer, this work makes a spectacular impression. Notable instrumental solos include the clarinet, oboe and English horn. The opera, *Prince Igor*, was left unfinished upon Borodin's death in 1887 and was edited and completed by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov. It was first performed in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre.

The Firebird Suite (1919)
Berceuse & Finale
Igor Stravinsky



Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) was unknown as a composer outside of Russia. Even at home in St. Petersburg, he was only known as a talented student of the famous composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Things changed in the winter of 1909, when the Russian producer, Serge Diaghilev, invited Stravinsky to join his new ballet company. Diaghilev had hired another composer to write the music for a ballet based on a Russian legend, *The Firebird*. When that didn't work out, Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to take over at the end of the summer in 1909. Stravinsky completed the work in April of the following year. He made a few changes to the final score, dated May 18, 1910, and dedicated it to his former teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov. The *Firebird* ballet premiered at the Paris Opera on June 25, 1910, and is considered one of his most popular works. Stravinsky later took excerpts from *The Firebird* and turned them into different suites. The first, published in 1911, uses the large orchestra and brilliant colors of the original score. The second suite, published in 1919, uses a much smaller orchestra. *Berceuse and Finale* are taken from the 1919 version of orchestral work known as *The Firebird Suite*. Stravinsky's ballet centers on the journey of its hero, Prince Ivan. Ivan enters the magical realm of Kashchei the Immortal; all of the magical objects and creatures of Kashchei are herein represented by a chromatic descending motif, usually in the strings. While wandering in the gardens, he sees and chases the Firebird. The Firebird, once caught by Ivan, begs for its life and ultimately agrees to assist Ivan in exchange for eventual freedom. Next, Prince Ivan sees thirteen princesses, with one of whom he falls in love. The next day, Ivan chooses to confront Kashchei to ask to marry one of the princesses; the two talk and eventually begin quarreling. When Kashchei sends his magical creatures after Ivan, the Firebird, true to its pledge, intervenes; bewitching the creatures and making them dance an elaborate, energetic dance (the "Infernal Dance"). The creatures and Kashchei then fall asleep; however, Kashchei awakens and is then sent into another dance by the Firebird. While Kashchei is bewitched by the Firebird she tells Ivan the secret to Kashchei's immortality and Ivan destroys it killing Kashchei. With Kashchei gone and his magic broken, the magical creatures and the palace all disappear, and all of the "real" beings (including the princesses) awaken and, with one final fleeting appearance from the Firebird, celebrate their victory.