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Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band

Solo Voices

Branden Steinmetz, conductor

Matthew Dockendorf, conductor

Christina Jennings, flute

Tyler Austin, guest conductor

Logan Sorey, guest conductor

Kevin Day, guest composer

7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025

Macky Auditorium

PROGRAM

SYMPHONIC BAND

Chorale and Alleluia (1954) (5:00)

Howard Hanson (1896-1981)

Tyler Austin, guest conductor

On This Bright Morning (2013) (9:15)

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

Contre Qui, Rose (1993/2006) (5:00)

Morton Lauridsen (b. 1942)

trans. H. Robert Reynolds (b. 1934)

Shimmering Sunshine (2019)

Kevin Day

Intermission

WIND SYMPHONY

RE|Member (7:00)

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

trans. Logan Sorey

Logan Sorey, guest conductor

Glimmerglass Concerto (11:00)

Kevin Day (b. 1996)

Mirrors

Echoes

Christina Jennings, flute

Symphony #2 “Voices” (20:00)

James Stephenson (b. 1969)

1. Of Passion
2. Shouts and Murmurs
3. Voices of One

PROGRAM NOTES

RE|Member (7:00)

Reena Esmail (b.1983)

trans. Logan Sorey

In 2020, composer Reena Esmail was selected as the artist-in-residence with the Seattle Symphony for its 2020-21 season. She was commissioned to write a piece welcoming the audience and orchestra back after the summer break. Unfortunately, the premiere was postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of writing a piece to convey the excitement of returning to the concert hall after the summer break, Esmail created a work that reflects not only on the solitude, uncertainty, and diverse experiences that the pandemic created but also the excitement and potential of creating music together in person once again.

Esmail writes, “I wanted this piece to feel like an overture, and my guides were two favorites: Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* and Bernstein’s *Candide*. Each is breathless and energetic, with pockets of intimacy and tenderness. Each contains many parallel universes that unfold quickly. Each has beautiful, memorable melodies that speak and beckon to one another. I strove for all of this in *RE|Member*.”

The title of the piece presents multiple perspectives on the word remember:

“Firstly, the sense that something is being brought back together. The orchestra is re-membering, coalescing again after being apart. The pandemic will have been transformative: the orchestra is made up of individuals who had a wide variety of experiences in this time. And they are bringing those individual experiences back into the collective group. There might be people who committed more deeply to their musical practice, people who were drawn into new artistic facets, people who had to leave their creative practice entirely, people who came to new realizations about their art, career, life. All these new perspectives, all these strands of thought and exploration are being brought back together.”

“And the second meaning of the word: that we don’t want to forget the perspectives which each of these individuals gained during this time, simply because we are back in a familiar situation. I wanted this piece to honor the experience of coming back together, infused with the wisdom of the time apart.” (*Esmail, quoted in the Seattle Symphony premiere notes, retrieved from the composers website*)

An additional “easter egg” in the title, *RE*, is the composer’s initials. The orchestral version, featuring oboist Mary Lynch VanderKolk, was premiered by the Seattle Symphony in September 2021. This work opened the Symphony’s 2021-22 season and was the first piece performed in Benaroya Hall after its 18-month shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The wind ensemble transcription was premiered in February 2025 by the University of Colorado Boulder Wind Symphony, conducted by R. Logan Sorey, the transcriber, and featured oboist Lauren Breen (DMA Candidate).
—Program note from score

Glimmerglass Concerto (11:00)

Kevin Day, composer in residence (b.1996)

Glimmerglass is my ninth concerto collaboration, this one being for solo flute, chamber winds and percussion. The concept for this flute concerto had been in my mind for several months, as I was grasping how to feature this virtuosic and beautiful instrument. In my comparison to my previous concertos, I wanted this one to have a brighter and shimmery texture of sound, one that could match the timbre of the flute.

This led to the naming of this piece *Glimmerglass Concerto*, where the definition of glimmerglass is a “vibrant reflection of sunlight on a watery surface.” Through this naming, the two movements (*Mirrors* and *Echoes*) play with different reflections of sound and lyricism. This is most reflected in the percussion writing, where I wanted to have this shimmery cacophony of sound while the flute can soar above.

This piece was commissioned by the University of Colorado Boulder College of Music for the CU Boulder Wind Symphony and their Professor of Flute, Christina Jennings.

—Program note by composer

Symphony No. 2, “Voices” (20:00)

James Stephenson (b.1969)

James Stephenson’s relationship with the United States Marine Band began in 2011 when the ensemble premiered his multi-oboe concerto *Duels and Dances* at the American Bandmasters Association convention with soloist Alex Klein of the Chicago Symphony. Since that time, the Marine Band has performed five of Stephenson’s works in as many years and presented the world premiere of one of his most substantial contributions to the wind band repertoire to date, his Symphony No. 2, in December 2016.

The inspiration for the new symphony for wind ensemble is detailed by the composer:

For two years, the program notes further below were what remained public. Recently, as I started feeling personally comfortable with it, I began sharing the original impetus for this symphony, which was:

On April 23, 2016, my mother, Shirley S. Stephenson, passed away at the age of 74. It was the first time anyone that close to me had died, and I honestly didn’t know how to respond. As this new piece—the symphony—was the next major work on my plate, I thought the music would come pouring forth, as one would imagine in the movies, or in a novel. However, the opposite happened, and I was stuck, not knowing how to cope, and not knowing what to write. Eventually, after a month or so, I sat at the piano, and pounded a low E-flat octave, followed by an anguished chord answer. I did this three times, with three new response-chords, essentially recreating how I felt. This became the opening of the symphony, with emphasis on the bass trombone, who gets the loudest low E-flat. I vowed I wouldn’t return to E-flat (major) until the end of the piece, thus setting forth a compositional and emotional

goal all at once: an E-flat to E-flat sustaining of long-term tension, technically speaking, and the final arrival at E-flat major (letter I, 3rd movement) being a cathartic and powerful personal moment, when I finally would come to terms with the loss of my mother. The voice in the piece is that of my mother, an untrained alto, which is why I ask for it without vibrato. In the end, she finally sings once last time, conveying to me that “all will be ok”.

I think it is the most difficult times we endure that force us, inspire us, to dig deeper than we could ever imagine. On the one hand, I am, of course, deeply saddened by the loss of my mother; but on the other, I will always have this piece—which is the most personal to me—to in essence keep her alive in my heart. I always tear up at letter I. Always. But they are tears of joy and treasured memories of 74 years with my mother.

—Program note by composer

Chorale and Alleluia (1954) (5:00)

Howard Hanson (1896-1981)

Chorale and Alleluia was completed in January 1954, and was Hanson’s first work for symphonic band. It premiered on Feb. 26th at the convention of the American Bandmasters Association at West Point with Colonel William Santelmann, leader of the United States Marine Band, conducting.

The composition opens with a fine flowing chorale. Soon the joyous *Alleluia* theme appears and is much in evidence throughout. A bold statement of a new melody makes its appearance in lower brasses in combination with the above themes. The effect is one of cathedral bells, religious exaltation, solemnity, and dignity. The music is impressive, straightforward, and pleasingly non-dissonant, and its resonance and sonority are ideally suited to the medium of the modern symphonic band.

—Program note provided by Carl Fischer Music

On This Bright Morning (2013) (9:15)

David Maslanka (1943-2017)

There are times of stability in life and times of significant transition. Transitions can be upsetting, often provoked or accompanied by physical or emotional troubles. They are times of uncertainty and unknowing, but also the times of greatest creative change. *On This Bright Morning* acknowledges the struggle and the feelings of pain and loss in times of transition, but embodies the pure joy of realizing the bigger life. On this bright morning, life is new, life is possible.

—Program note by Jeff Girard, Midwest Sheet Music

Contre Qui, Rose (1993/2006) (5:00)

Morton Lauridsen (b. 1942)

trans. H. Robert Reynolds (b. 1934)

Contre Qui, Rose is the second movement of my choral cycle *Les Chansons des Roses*, on poems by Rilke, a poet whose texts were also used for my *Nocturnes* and *Chanson Éloignée*. Rilke's poetry is often multilayered and frequently ambiguous, forcing his reader to use his or her own imagination to grasp the text. This wonderful little poem poses a series of questions, and the corresponding musical phrases all end with unresolved harmonies, as the questions remain unanswered. We have all been in situations where we have given affection and not had it returned, where attempts at communication have been unsuccessful, met by resistance or defenses of some kind. A sense of quiet resignation begins the setting as the stark harmony and melodic line, filled with unresolved suspensions and appoggiaturas, gradually build to a nine-part chord on ["on the contrary"] and then the music folds back on itself, ending on a cluster that simply fades away as does the hope of understanding the reasons for the rose's thorny protection.

Against whom, rose,
Have you assumed these thorns?
Is it your too fragile joy that forced you
to become this armed thing?
But from whom does it protect you,
this exaggerated defense?
How many enemies have I lifted from you
who do not fear it at all?
On the contrary, from summer to autumn
you wound the affection that is given you.

In addition to his vast output of German poetry, Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) composed nearly 400 poems in French. His poems on roses struck me as especially charming, filled with gorgeous lyricism, deftly crafted and elegant in their imagery.

—Program note by the composer

Shimmering Sunshine (2019)

Kevin Day

Shimmering Sunshine is a composition that depicts the sun whenever it is positioned at high noon, at its brightest point during the day. Throughout the piece, there are different “shimmers” of bright light that bounce around from instrument to instrument, depicting moments of sunshine both beautiful and, at the same time, powerful.

This work was written in conjunction with the M.O.T.I.F triptych consortium, including *Across a Golden Sky* by Quinn Mason and *Midnight Skyline* by Josh Trentadue.

—Program note by composer

PERSONNEL

Matthew Dockendorf, conductor

Branden Steinmetz, conductor

Logan Sorey, guest conductor

Christina Jennings, flute

Tyler Austin, guest conductor

Tyler Austin serves as director of bands and assistant professor of music at the F. Ludwig Diehn School of Music at Old Dominion University. Austin conducts the ODU Wind Ensemble, teaches classroom conducting at the undergraduate level, leads an applied studio of graduate conducting students and coordinates the applied woodwind area. Austin serves as artistic director and conductor of Maryland Chamber Winds (MCW), an international ensemble of performers who come together to present an annual concert series and educational outreach program. MCW is the ensemble-in-residence for the Maryland Wind Festival, a two-week festival of wind chamber music and outreach based in Frederick and Hagerstown, Maryland, and their surrounding communities.

A committed advocate of new music, Austin has commissioned and premiered more than 30 works for winds. He founded the annual MCW Composer Commission Project in the Summer of 2016 to produce original works for chamber winds and has funded ambitious recording projects to provide composers with professional recordings of their works. Austin studied orchestration with Zhou Tian at Michigan State University and was mentored by David Biedenbender and Adam Schoenberg.

Austin has maintained an active career in academia; he previously served as assistant director of bands and as interim associate director of bands at Oklahoma State University. While at Oklahoma State, he conducted the OSU Symphonic Band, Concert Band and FRONTIERS New Music Ensemble. He served as both assistant director and then director of Cowboy Marching Band, and directed the “Spirit” Basketball Band. He taught classroom courses in the music education area and held an additional appointment as instructor of bassoon from 2019-to 2021.

Austin completed a DMA in wind conducting at Michigan State University in the studio of Kevin Sedatole. Prior to his study at Michigan State, he served as director of bands at St. John's Catholic Prep in Frederick, Maryland, and actively freelanced as a bassoonist with wind bands and orchestras throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Austin holds an MM in bassoon performance from the University of North Texas, where he studied with Kathleen Reynolds, and a BM in music education from Susquehanna University.

Kevin Day, composer-in-residence

Kevin Day (b. 1996) is an award-winning, multidisciplinary composer, jazz pianist and conductor. Internationally acclaimed as one of the world's leading musical voices, Day's work is known as a vibrant exploration of diverse musical traditions from contemporary classical, jazz, R&B, soul and more. A unique voice in the world of classical music, Day takes inspiration from a broad range of sources including romanticism, late 20th century music, jazz fusion and gospel. Across all areas, his work explores the complex interplay of rhythm, texture and melody across genres.

In addition to his work as a composer, Day enjoys an active career as a jazz pianist. Passionate about collaborations that reimagine and advance the future of jazz as an art form, he brings his extensive musical background to the stage and studio as improviser and collaborator. He's currently working on a debut solo album. His music has been featured on numerous high profile releases including albums by Thomas Mesa and Michelle Cann, The Alias Chamber Ensemble, Jeremy Wilson, Jarrett McCourt and Nicki Roman.

A native of Arlington, Texas, Day currently resides in San Diego. He holds degrees from Texas Christian University, the University of Georgia and the University of Miami. He has studied composition with Dorothy Hindman, Charles Norman Mason, Peter Van Zandt Lane, Emily Koh, Gabriela Lena Frank and Neil Anderson-Himmelspach. Day currently works as lecturer of music theory and musicianship at the UC San Diego Department of Music.

Symphonic Band

Flute

Tim Scott
Natalie Highfield
Andrew Stein
Louise Larsen
Lily Arndt

Oboe

Riley Stone
Thomas Goodwin

Bassoon

Dean Weatherbie
Grace Moon
Rylan Denby
Carl Gustafson
Alacias Boaz

Clarinet

Timothy Aguilar
Kayla Hall
Liam Kiernan
Sophia Eyl
Seth Ferrin
Luke Kneller
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Horn

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Trumpet

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Trombone

Alex Weeks
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Euphonium

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Flute

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Corva Graham
Santiago Reveiz

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Lauren Breen
Laura Lambrech
Luka Vezmar

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Harold Gomez-Montoya
Kevin Halsey
Steele Jackson
Karena Pruitt
Ben Rathje
Justin Slaman
Juan Tovar
Jade Vens

Bassoon

Sam Macken
Daniela Garzón Guerra
Raleigh Eversole
David Guy

Saxophone

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Ian Gunnarschja
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Gavin Martellotti
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Catherine Ryan

Horn

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Jordan Spivack
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Lilli Vincent

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Justin Sokolowski

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Sterling
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