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Student Ensemble: Symphonic Winds

Stephen K. Steele, Conductor

Jerusha Johnson, Conductor

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*Illinois State University
College of Fine Arts
School of Music*

SYMPHONIC WINDS

Stephen K. Steele and Jerusha Johnson, *Conductors*

**Center for the Performing Arts
Sunday Afternoon
February 26, 2012
3:00 p.m.**

This is the one hundred-second program of the 2011-2012 season

Program

Adam Gorb ***AWAYDAY*** (1996 – rev. 1999)
(born 1958)

Vincent Persichetti ***PAGEANT, OP. 59*** (1953)
(1915-1987)

Vaclav Nelhybel ***TRITTICO*** (1963)
(1919-1996)

Percy Grainger ***HANDEL IN THE STRAND*** (1911/1962)
(1882 - 1961)
Arr. by Richard Goldman

Intermission

Fisher Tull ***SKETCHES ON A TUDOR PSALM*** (1964)
(1934 - 1994)

John Barnes Chance ***SYMPHONY No. 2 FOR WINDS
AND PERCUSSION*** (1972)

I Sussurando & Energico
II Elevato
III Slancio

Program Notes

Adam Gorb, born in Cardiff, Wales, is a British composer and educator who started composing at the age of ten. At fifteen he wrote a set of piano pieces – *A Pianist's Alphabet* – of which a selection was performed on BBC Radio 3. In 1977 he went to Cambridge University to study music, where his teachers included Hugh Wood and Robin Holloway. After graduating in 1980 he divided his time between composition and working as a musician in the theatre. In 1987 he started studying privately with Paul Patterson, and then, studied from 1991 at the Royal Academy of Music where he gained a MMus degree and graduated with the highest honors, including the Principal's Prize in 1993.

Adam Gorb is currently Head of School of Composition and Contemporary Music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

Awayday is a six-minute curtain raiser. My inspiration has come from the great days of the American Musical Comedy. I have tried to express in a brief sonata form movement the exhilaration of 'getting away from it all' for a few short hours on a festive Bank Holiday. Musically the piece is an homage to the great days of the Broadway musical with its irresistible brashness and irrepressible high spirits. If you can envisage George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, Igor Stravinsky and James Bond travelling together at a hundred miles per hour in an open-top sports car, I think you'll get the idea.

- Note by composer

Vincent Persichetti, born in Philadelphia, was one of the most universally admired of twentieth-century American composers. Persichetti began his musical life at the age of five, studying piano, organ, double bass, tuba, theory and composition. By the age of eleven, he was paying for his own musical education, supporting himself by performing professionally as an accompanist and church organist. His earliest works, written at age fourteen, exhibit true mastery of form and style. By age twenty, Persichetti was simultaneously head of the theory and composition departments at the Combs College, a conducting major with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute, and a piano major studying with Olga Samaroff at the Philadelphia Conservatory. He received a Diploma in Conducting from the Curtis Institute and advanced degrees from the Philadelphia Conservatory. In 1941 Persichetti was appointed head of the theory and composition departments at the Philadelphia

Conservatory. In 1947 he joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music where he taught for the next forty years, assuming chairmanship of the composition department in 1963. Persichetti composed for nearly every musical medium, publishing over 120 works. He devoted a significant portion of his creative output to repertoire for winds. From the *Serenade for Ten Wind Instruments, Op. 1* to the *Chorale Prelude: O God Unseen, Op. 160*, Vincent Persichetti provided a wealth of literature of unparalleled excellence.

Pageant, commissioned by the American Bandmasters Association, is Persichetti's fourth work for winds following his *Serenade No. 1 for Ten Wind Instruments* (1929), *Divertimento for Band, Op. 42* (1950), and *Psalm for Band* (1952). The piece was completed in January of 1953 and the first performance took place on March 7, 1953, at the American Bandmasters Association Convention in Miami, Florida. It was performed by the University of Miami Band with the composer conducting. The New York première took place on June 19, 1953, performed by the Goldman band with the composer conducting.

The piece, in two major sections, opens with a pensive French horn solo that establishes the pitch and interval content for the entire work, even to the last chord. The opening slow section develops the initial theme by juxtaposing simple, open instrumentations using small forces, with lush, full chordal sounds involving the entire ensemble. A percussion break bridges the slow section to a fast Allegro section which continues to develop the themes heard previously. This section features a number of contrasts in articulation, instrumentation and style. Themes are heard first one at a time and then on top of one another, and in the final portion of the work, the two principal subjects are developed simultaneously to a lively climax.

Vaclav Nelhybel's early education was under the guidance of the Jesuits in Prague. He studied musicology at Prague University and the University of Fribourg and composition and conducting at the Conservatory of Music in Prague. He began his career as a conductor at Radio Prague and the City Theater of Prague, Czechoslovakia from 1939 to 1942. After World War II, he was named conductor and composer-in-residence at Swiss Radio and lecturer at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland and was the musical director of Radio Free Europe in Munich, Germany from 1950 to 1957. Nelhybel became a U.S. citizen in 1962 working as a composer, conductor and lecturer throughout the United States.

Trittico was composed in 1963 for Dr. William D. Revelli who gave the first performance of the work in the spring of 1964 in Ann Arbor, with the Symphonic Band of the University of Michigan.

The first and third movements are, in several ways, related to one another: their character is brilliantly forward-moving and energetic; the main theme of the first movement reappears in the culmination point of the third movement; and the instrumentation of the movements is identical, with the individual instruments themselves being used quite similarly. The second movement is a strongly contrasting dramatic scene with turbulent recitatives and expressive woodwind solos, punctuated by low brass and percussion. The emphasis is on the woodwinds and the low brass; cornets and trumpets enter only at the very end with an extremely intense phrase to conclude the movement. The dramatic character is underlined by the strong use of percussion which is extended by a second timpani player, piano, and celesta.

Percy Aldridge Grainger was born at Brighton in Melbourne. In 1900 he began his career as a concert pianist with sensational successes in England, Australia, and South Africa. In 1906 his playing impressed Edvard Grieg so much that Grieg invited him to his home in Norway. They spent the summer of 1907 preparing for the premiere of Grieg's *Piano Concerto* which was to be conducted by the composer later that year in Leeds, England. Grieg died before the performance, but Grainger's rendition established him as one of the concerto's great interpreters. Grainger came to America in 1915 winning acclaim for his playing. At the outbreak of World War I, he enlisted as an army bandsman (an oboist and saxophonist) soon being promoted to the Army Music School. He became a United States citizen in 1919 and made many worldwide concert tours playing piano and guest conducting. He died in White Plains, New York on February 20, 1961. Always the innovator, Grainger pioneered in folk music collections at the same time as Bartok, used irregular rhythms before Stravinsky, and predated Varése in experimenting with electronic music.

Handel in the Strand is unusual in Grainger's concert band literature in that it is not based on folk songs but is instead all original material. This rollicking, good-humored piece was originally titled Clog Dance but was retitled after Grainger's friend William Gair Rathrone (to whom the work is dedicated) remarked that the music seemed to reflect both Handel and musical comedy, as if jovial old Handel was careening down the Strand

to the strains of modern English popular music. The Strand was an area of London that was the center of musical comedy. The music was written as variations on Handel's *Harmonious Blacksmith* originally for piano.

Fisher Tull received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in composition at North Texas State University where he studied under Samuel Adler. He joined the faculty of Sam Houston State University in 1957 where he acted as Director of the Department of Music. Among many honors for composition, Tull received the Ostwald prize, sponsored by the American Bandmasters Association, in 1970 for his *Toccata*. In addition to his administrative duties, Tull was a much sought after clinician, conductor and lecturer.

The fact that Ralph Vaughan Williams had so successfully employed Thomas Tallis' setting of the second Psalm in his *Fantasia for String Orchestra* made it a questionable source of material for a new piece; however, Tull felt a strong attraction to the piece and, in 1971, used it as the basis for his *Sketches on a Tudor Psalm*. Tallis' sixteenth-century setting is in the Phrygian mode with the melody in the tenor voice. This hymn is still used in the Anglican Church today.

Sketches on a Tudor Psalm begins with an introduction that emphasizes the Phrygian mode and the inherent juxtaposition of major and minor chords. The theme is first presented by the alto saxophone, French horns, oboe, and clarinets, and grows into a fully harmonized brass version. In the following allegro section, continuous variations on the theme begin, which include a variation where the theme is played in retrograde (backwards) by the clarinets. These rhythmic and melodic variations continue until a magnificent return of the introductory harmonic sequence occurs. The piece concludes with a scherzo coda that builds to a final dramatic major chord.

John Barnes Chance, born in Beaumont, Texas, began studying composition at the age of fifteen, and continued his studies at the University of Texas under the tutelage of Clifton Williams, Kent Kennan, and Paul Pisk. Professionally, Chance worked as an arranger for the Fourth and Eighth United States Army Bands, performed as a timpanist for the Austin Symphony, and was appointed Composer in Residence in Greensboro, North Carolina from 1960 to 1962 as part of the Ford Foundation Young Composers Project. In 1966 Chance joined the University of Kentucky faculty; by 1971 Chance was named head of

Theory and Composition. Unfortunately, Chance's life was cut short due to a tragic accident in 1972. The University of Kentucky and Chance's publisher, Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., established the John Barnes Chance Memorial Scholarship Fund in his honor

While Chance was in Greensboro, he and Clifton Williams agreed that each would write a work on the four-note motif C#-D-F-E. In February 1962 Chance finished part of the work and sent a tape to Williams. When Williams heard the composition, he gave up on the idea. At that time the first movement (*"Sussurando" – whispered & Energico*) and second movement (*Elevato – noble*) were only outlined. Ten years later, while Chance was in Lexington, Kentucky, the Northwest Music Center in North Dakota commissioned him to write a work dedicated to the Minot State College Wind Ensemble. Chance added a slow section and coda to the original work and followed his original outline (including movement III, *Slancio – rush*) to complete the commission. Unfortunately, he never heard *Symphony No. 2* before his accidental death.

Spring Illinois State University Band Events

<i>Wind Symphony</i>	Sunday, March 4	3:00 p.m.	CPA
<i>Symphonic Band</i>	Thursday, March 8	8:00 p.m.	CPA
<i>State of Illinois Invitational Junior High School Concert Band Festival</i>			
	Saturday, April 21	All Day	CPA
<i>Symphonic Winds</i>	Sunday, April 22	3:00 p.m.	CPA
<i>Symphonic Band and University Band</i>	Wednesday, April 25	8:00 p.m.	CPA
<i>State of Illinois Invitational High School Concert Band Festival</i>			
	Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28	All Day	CPA
<i>Wind Symphony</i>	Sunday, April 29	3:00 p.m.	CPA

Symphonic Winds Personnel

Flute

Erica Collins, *Chicago Heights*
Miranda DeBretto, *Negaunee, MI*
Casey Sukel, *Huntley*
Sara Reis, *Frankfort*

Oboe/English Horn

Jaimie Connelly, *Lemont*
Kate Donnell, *Aurora*
Jenna Blayney, *Geneva*

E-Flat Clarinet

Josh Wunderlick, *Alton*

Clarinet

Alberto Mantovano, *Crystal Lake*
Sara Curcio, *Vernon Hills*
Kara Hale, *Joliet*
Jennifer Dudlak, *Park Ridge*
Sam Hord, *Winnetka*

Bass Clarinet

Brenda Dratnol, *Carol Stream*
Paul White, *Plainfield*

Bassoon

Samantha DeCarlo, *Carol Stream*
Aston Karner, *Itasca*

Alto Saxophone

Michael Basile, *Chicago Heights*
Trenell Wherry-Smith, *Lockport*
Teresa Finegan, *Palatine*

Tenor Saxophone

Patrick Kelly, *Park Ridge*

Bari Saxophone

Zachary Hilligoss, *Paxton*

Horn

Jerusha Johnson, *Kaysville, UT*
Joey Fontanetta, *Joliet*
Amanda Muscato, *Oswego*
Sarah Williams, *Washington*
Emily Mullin, *Oswego*

Trumpet

Charlie Mueller, *Park Ridge*
Philip Carter, *Collinsville*
Matt Foster, *Morton*
Mary Cate Hansen, *Monticello*
Eli Denecke, *Macomb*
Kris Bence, *Arden, NC*

Trombone

Jeremy Sims, *Northbrook*
Nathaniel Geiger, *Champaign*
Jordon Harris, *Farmer City*
Tom Flynn, *Vernon Hills*

Bass Trombone

Grant Unnerstall, *Columbia*

Euphonium

Jeff Byrnes, *Hickory Hills*
Sam Stauffer, *Dunlap*
Nathan Seals, *Normal*

Tuba

Trevor Peterson, *Macomb*
Kevin Kallas, *Aurora*
Tim Schachtshneider, *Minooka*

String Bass

Laura Bass, *Vernon Hills*

Percussion

Thomas J. Ford, *River Forest*
Kevin Greene, *Orland Park*
Alec Levy, *Deerfield*
TJ Mitchell, *Arlington Heights*
Rachel Manago, *Lockport*
Kyle Singer, *Chicago Ridge*
Mallory Konstons, *Aurora*