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Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson

Corey Seapy

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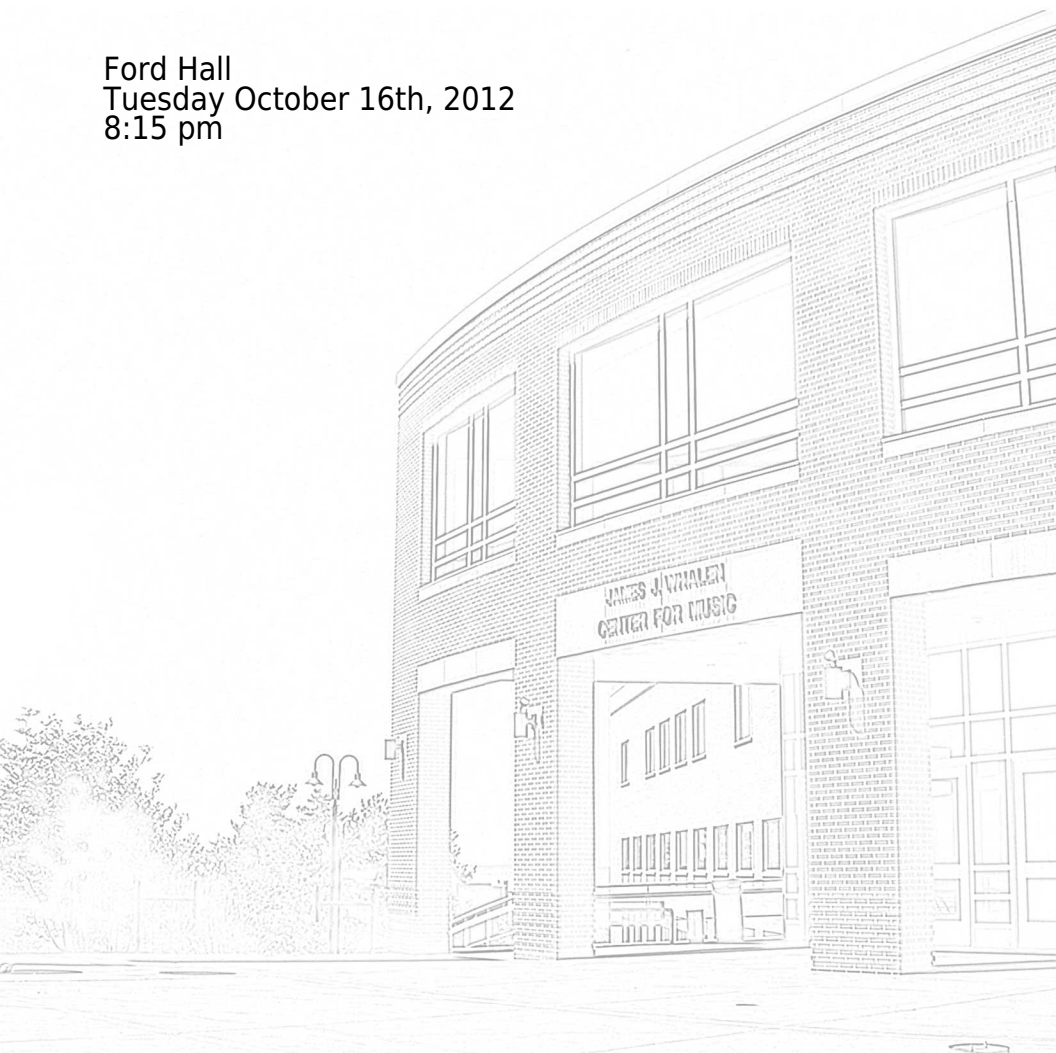
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Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

The Organization of Sound

Stephen Peterson, conductor
Rebecca Jemian, guest lecturer
Corey Seapy, graduate conductor

Ford Hall
Tuesday October 16th, 2012
8:15 pm



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Program

La Procession du Rocio (1912)

- I. Triana en Fête
- II. La Procession

Joaquín Turina
(1882-1949)
arr. Reed
9'

Corey Seapy, graduate conductor

Music: Organized Sound

Rebecca Jemian, guest lecturer

Intégrales (1925)
for 11 Wind Instruments and Percussion

Edgard Varése
(1883-1965)
11'

Fantasia in G Major BWV 572 (1705)

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)
arr. Goldman
7'

Hammersmith (1930)
Prelude and Scherzo for Band

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)
14'

First Symphony for Band (2008)

- I. Ô tempora ô mores
- II. Scherzo tenebroso
- III. Andantino pastorale
- IV. Marches funéraires et dansantes

William Bolcom
(b. 1938)
16'

Program Notes

Joaquín Turina composed *La Procession du Rocio* in 1912 while studying in Paris, shortly before returning to his native Spain. It was originally written for orchestra and is considered to be the first major success in a career that included compositions for a variety of large and small forms, typically reflecting Turina's Andalusian heritage and his time spent in France amidst the Impressionist movement. The work's two successive movements, "Festival of Triana" and "The Procession", portray the celebration known as *La Procession du Rocio* ("Procession of the Dew"), which occurs annually in Seville's Triana neighborhood. Renowned American composer Alfred Reed completed this arrangement for band in 1962.

An exuberant atmosphere characterizes the first movement, in which Turina evokes the folk dancing (a Catalonian soleare and a Castilian seguidilla), folk singing, and firecrackers that one might expect at such a grand 'fiesta'. Decidedly Spanish themes appear one after the next, depicting the diverse and vibrant occasion. Turina maintains continuity through the frequent use of syncopation and common intervallic content; 4th and 3rd relationships prevail, reflecting the open strings of flamenco music's most central instrument, the guitar. Impressionist traits abound as well: modal and pentatonic melodies, rich harmonies, and an emphasis on distinct tone colors serve to further organize the sound.

The procession itself emerges in the second movement, led by flute and drums. All dancing ceases as the tone shifts from celebratory to ceremonial and the parade pauses for a hymn. The festive spirit from the first movement intercedes sporadically in the form of familiar melodic fragments; reverence for the Virgin Mary does not replace revelry. Instead, the two moods join together as the hymn tune rings throughout Triana, accompanied by church bells and trumpets proclaiming a strain from the Spanish national anthem. The piece concludes with a final statement of the opening dance and song followed by a nostalgic trumpet solo that signifies the end of the day's festivities.

Intégrales, according to the program note Varèse wrote for the 1925 premiere conducted by Leopold Stokowski, "is not a story, is not a picture, is not psychological nor a philosophical abstraction. It is quite simply my music." This music consists of seventeen surviving works less than three hours in combined duration, yet it occupies a position of paramount importance in the history of 'organized sound'. In fact, it was Varèse himself who famously coined this term that is now a

widely accepted, if oversimplified definition of music. By eschewing convention and considering himself a “worker in rhythms, frequencies, and intensities” instead of a “musician”, Varèse pioneered concepts he would later refer to as the “liberation of sound” at the same time Schoenberg was proclaiming the “emancipation of dissonance”.

Varèse’s compositional style is characterized by an emphasis on rhythm and timbre. Writing for eleven winds provided him with a variety of direct sound colors that he manipulates within complex rhythmic structures and enhances by way of contrasting articulations and dynamic level. He also employs four percussionists throughout the work to highlight an intricate and constantly shifting metric scheme. While Varèse cautions against attaching extra-musical significance to his works by way of analysis, he admits that *Intégrales* “has definite form”. One might choose to hear the work according to a three-part structure, the first of which is divided in half and the last of which shares motivic content with the prior two.

The piece opens with a three-note motive: an ascending tritone and whole step in the E-flat clarinet, arriving on B-flat. This pitch is then reiterated insistently as it is developed through rhythm, articulation, and dynamics over accompanying trichords and percussive gestures. Unique individual elements, sometimes imitative, are added to the texture, then varied and combined to generate solid masses of heterophonic sound. The first such climax marks the midway point of the opening section, as the percussion is silent for the first time and all eleven wind players crescendo on a sustained unique pitch, omitting only the C that has anchored the trombone trichord thus far. The horn assumes a primary role in the latter half of the opening section, taking over the thematic material that now centers on G. Dialogue with an assertive quintuplet figure in the trombone is punctuated by wind outbursts and strong percussion figures led by the woodblock in imitation of the trombone.

A leaping trumpet flourish initiates the second section, in which a faster tempo and layered wind fanfares set a varied succession of ideas in motion. Alternating tempo, meter, texture, register, and color combine in a typically Varésian manner as intense rhythmic activity propels static harmony. The lion’s roar (string drum) suddenly announces an actual tune; a syncopated jazzy melody is supported by primitive fifths that evoke Stravinsky, but the contrast is short-lived. Alternating screams and rhythmic exclamations give way to a chorale-like moment in the brass, brief stillness, an ominously scored iteration of the aforementioned tune, and a stabbing brass fanfare that builds to another eleven-note apex, this time supported by percussion, that marks the end of the middle section.

The concluding section begins quietly and slowly; Varèse often used

dynamic contrast to articulate musical divisions. The oboe enters with a sustained F, the only pitch lacking in the opening phrases of this piece, which unfolds into a sentimental solo that reflects the composer's admiration for Debussy, especially early in his career. A muted trumpet echoes the initial clarinet figure a half step higher, and compressed fragments recall motives from the opening section, punctuated by percussion as before. Feelings of recapitulation give way to an oboe cadenza beginning on a high F and a variety of jagged figures. The oboe's theme returns, a third lower, before the lion's roar initiates a sequence of ideas from the second section: brass fanfare, woodwind squeals, and brass chorale. The work ends with one final sustained mass of sound.

In his cautionary program notes for the premiere, Varèse concedes that he gets "much amusement out of choosing (his) titles", yet they are of "no importance". *Intégrales* is French for 'integrals', a word rarely encountered as a plural noun in either language. While it is possible that this title carries no significance, it seems to reflect Varèse's organizational approach. An integral, or integer, can be defined as something that is a complete entity. When considered in plural, perhaps it refers to the combination of individual sound-masses projected together into space to form one multifaceted audible shape. Varèse would go on to become the 'Father of Electronic Music', and many consider this piece to be a forerunner to his work in the electronic realm of sonic beams and densities. Meaning aside, scholars consider *Intégrales* to be one of his most perfect creations, and it occupies an important and unique role in the wind ensemble canon.

Program notes by Corey Seapy

The great **G Major Fantasia** for organ was composed between 1703 and 1707 during Bach's residence in Arnstadt. It was here, at the beginning of his career, that his music was found to be too full of "wonderful variations and foreign tones"; and certainly the Fantasia is strikingly dissonant in its constant texture of suspensions. But the breadth of the five-part polyphonic writing and the richness of the harmonic sonority make the Fantasia one of the grandest of all Bach's compositions for organ. It is also one that lends itself most perfectly to the sound and sonorities of the modern wind band.

The transcription by Richard Franko Goldman and Robert L. Leist was undertaken as a memorial to Edwin Franko Goldman, who was the first bandmaster to include the works of Bach regularly in the band's concert repertoire, and who did so much to introduce the music of this great master to wide audiences. In this transcription an attempt

is made to recapture the sound of the Baroque organ through the medium of the modern band. The first performance of this transcription was given by The Goldman Band with Richard Franko Goldman conducting on July 1, 1957.

Nineteen long years passed between the composition of Holst's last two works for winds, the Second Suite for Band and the masterful ***Hammersmith***. Commissioned by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for its military band, *Hammersmith* was Holst's first band work for professional musicians, the earlier suites having been composed for amateur bands. Holst was to have conducted the first performance at the third annual convention of the American Bandmasters Association, but he was forced to cancel his appearance due to illness. The premiere took place as scheduled on April 17, 1932 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. by the United States Marine Band led by their director, Taylor Branson. *Hammersmith* (in its original incarnation, Holst later re-wrote it for symphony orchestra) remained unpublished and did not receive another performance until nearly 22 years later. When that long-delayed second performance finally arrived, it was given by an American band (the Kiltie Band of the Carnegie Institute of Technology -now Carnegie Mellon University- in Pittsburgh, PA on 14 April 1954, Robert Cantrick, conductor).

The score bears the dedication "To the Author of the Water Gypsies." This author is Alan P. Herbert, and his 1930 novel deals with a working-class girl from Hammersmith who shares her life with two very different types of men: An illiterate barge worker and an artist, a duality that obviously appealed to Holst.

Hammersmith is a Prelude and Scherzo in bridge form. Its composition is a result of Holst's long familiarity with the Hammersmith metropolitan borough of London, which sits on the Thames River, and the bridge that crosses this river. At the time, 125,000 inhabitants were packed into an area of 3.6 square miles. Holst's fascination with the duality of his surroundings is reflected in his composition. The Prelude (representing the inexorable, "unnoticed and unconcerned" river) is slow and unconcerned, reflecting a duality in its very key: E Major set against F minor. The Scherzo (representing the Cockney street markets and the laughing, bustling crowds) is boisterous, exuberant, and vulgar. The music and mood of the Prelude returns at the end of the composition, bringing us back to the great slow-moving river, passing relentlessly out to sea.

Program notes by Kevin Peters

Born in Seattle in 1938 William Bolcom's early musical exposure to the wind ensemble as a vehicle for the performance of serious repertoire was limited, at best. A student of Darius Milhaud in his early adulthood, Bolcom took more interest in his teacher's songs and chamber music than his foray into the band repertoire (the well-known *Suite française*). Indeed, as has been the case with many composers only familiar with the orchestral repertoire, Bolcom relates that his initial attitude towards the wind ensemble was quite jaded.

The composer writes of the work:

"Commissioned by the Big Ten Band Directors Foundation, and premiered by the University of Michigan Symphony Band under Michael Haitcock, my **First Symphony for Band** (2008) was originally planned to be my *Ninth Symphony*: I had decided to follow my friend John Corigliano's example of calling his magnificent *Circus Maximus* for band *Symphony No. 3*. On reflection I realized that, since Beethoven and Mahler, ninth symphonies have been thought of as a composer's last will and testament—a third symphony doesn't have that stigma—and I'm not ready for that final word yet. Thus, this is a *First Symphony for Band*.

The *First Symphony* is by far the most ambitious piece in my very small catalogue for band. In form it relates most closely to my fifth and sixth symphonies for orchestra: as with them, it begins with a tight sonata movement followed by a scherzo, a slow movement, and a sort of rondo-finale. "*Ô tempora ô mores*", a tragic and forceful protest, laments our dark time. "*Scherzo tenebroso*" is a cousin to the scherzi in my third, fifth and sixth symphonies, especially in the sardonic use of popular material in their trios; in this trio, as we hear the cornet playing a waltz, I envision a clown dancing. "*Andantino pastorale*" belies a seemingly simple tunefulness with its dark undercurrent. The image of a New Orleans funeral procession, followed by a joyous dancelike march back from the graveyard, gives the form of "*Marches funéraires et dansantes*", and leaves us at long last with an atmosphere of exuberance and hope."

Bolcom has elaborated on these notes, and suggests that the work as a whole was conceived as a political commentary. To paraphrase the composer: The first movement's title, "*Ô tempora ô mores*" ("O the times! Oh the customs!"), is taken from a line in Cicero's *Fourth Oration Against Verres* - a proclamation which decried the increasing autocracy and decreasing morality of the late Roman Republic. In this case, the aforementioned "dark times" of the first movement are a specific reference to the harsh and somewhat unenlightened political and social climate present in the United States in the better part of the first decade of this century. The second movement is similarly dark: a sort of dysfunctional waltz, as he suggests in the program notes. The third provides an apparent respite from this gloom—but an

insidious undercurrent remains and reaches a climax in a jarring outburst towards the center of the movement. Finally, the fourth—perhaps the most programmatic—is inspired dramatically and structurally by a somewhat idiosyncratic funeral rite practiced in New Orleans. In that tradition, a traveling band would accompany the cortege to the graveyard, accompanying the precession with dark, mournful music. Yet upon the burial, the band would traditionally burst into a song of optimism and exuberance: music evocative of the ultimate catharsis provided by the ceremony. This rite is an appropriate analog for the compositional and dramatic aims of the fourth movement—Bolcom implies that its structure represents both a reflection on the “dark times” illustrated in the first movement, and an invitation to participate in a different type of catharsis: a recognition that such times have concluded (albeit incompletely), and a hope that such a climate will never return.

Oblique and direct references to the symphonic and band literature abound throughout the structure of the work; such varied stylistic references constitute an obvious celebration of the union of such immense (and until recently, it would seem, relatively incongruous) musical traditions, but also denote a hallmark of Bolcom’s compositional language: “polystylism.” In character, the first movement is (appropriately enough) something of a march; it provides both a parody of the boorish militarism the work castigates and an acerbic reference to a genre all-too-familiar to band musicians. Yet the movement is much more than a march: it is also cast in sonata form—a form that, for more than two centuries, has quintessentially defined symphonic first-movements.

The second movement is a scherzo, marked “*tenebroso*” (“shadowy”) by the composer; he indicates that it was partially inspired by the “*Nachtmusik*” movements of Mahler’s *Seventh Symphony*. And as Mahler often did in his scherzi, Bolcom makes room for a tongue-in-cheek reference to his musical vernacular: in this case, a cornet solo reminiscent of those of the famed Herbert L Clark, principal cornettist of the Sousa Band (whom the composer witnessed perform in person as a child).

The third movement—the slow movement of the bunch—is seemingly innocent at the outset; a huge central outburst serves both as a reminder that the aggressive pessimism of the first movement has yet to be addressed, and as an allusion to Haydn’s symphonic oeuvre: the slow movements of *Hob 1/88* and *Hob 1/103* are the more famous examples of the many of his symphonic movements to possess such volcanism.

“*Marches funéraires et dansantes*”—the final, concluding movement—brings the work to a dramatic close and is demarcated by a form that is, in the context of the symphony as a whole,

geographically quite appropriate; it is a rondo, like that to be found at the close of so many works in symphonic canon.

The numerous formal and stylistic allusions to divergent musical sources that seem to define the language of this piece (and, to a certain extent, the language of Bolcom's oeuvre in general) are extremely significant: for through them, the composer pays tribute to both the western symphonic tradition and to the history of the wind ensemble itself.

Program note by Reed Thomas

Now in its second century, the Ithaca College School of Music affirms its fundamental belief that music and the arts are essential components of the human experience. The School of Music prepares students to be world-class professionals and the music leaders of tomorrow - ready to transform individuals and communities by advancing the art of music.

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson, conductor

Piccolo

Sandi O'Hare

Flute

Stephanie Dumais
Sophia Ennocenti*
Jessica Peltz
Sarah Peskanov
Justine Stephens

Oboe

Julia Perry
Katie Jessup-McDermott
Phoebe Ritrovato
Chloe Washington*

E-flat Soprano Clarinet

Aileen Razey

Clarinet

Jimmy Conte
Emily Dobmeier
Stephen Fasteau
Anna Goebel
Katie Hurd
Michelle McGuire
Chris Peña*

Bass Clarinet

Kyle McKay

Contrabass Clarinet

Devon LePore

Bassoon

Tommy Connors*
Kailey Schnurman
Ross Triner

Contrabassoon

Sean Harkin

Alto Saxophone

Tina DeBoard
Rachel Rushing*

Tenor Saxophone

Erika Friedman

Baritone Saxophone

Andrew Horwitz

Trumpet

Jason Ferguson
Tom Pang
Paul Schwartz
Aaron Scoccia
Sam Thurston*
Jenna Ververka

Horn

Alyssa A'Hearn
Megan Carpenter
Margaret Kelly
Lauren Maaser
Robbie Oldroyd*
Emma Staudacher

Trombone

Tim Taylor
Ethan Zawisza
Josh Zimmer*

Bass Trombone

Jeff Chilton

Euphonium

Peter Best-Hall
Steve Vaughn*

Tuba

Bill Connors*
Eric Hoang
Joe Sastic

Percussion

Eric Brown
Taylor Eddinger
Sean Harvey*
Dennis O'Keefe
Keegan Sheehy
Aaron Walters

Timpani

Heather Hill

Double Bass

Andrew Whitford

Piano

Xinni Zhang

Harp

Myra Kovary

Graduate Assistants

Kevin Peters
Corey Seapy

Stephen Peterson, conductor

Stephen Peterson was appointed director of bands at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, in 1998, where he currently conducts the Wind Ensemble, teaches courses in conducting and wind literature, and heads the band and MM wind conducting programs. From 1988-1998 he served as associate director of bands at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Dr. Peterson was also conductor of the renowned Northshore Concert Band. He held positions as associate and interim director of bands at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas and has several years of successful teaching experience in the public schools in Arizona.

Peterson has conducted throughout the United States, and in Canada, Ireland, the Republic of China, Luxembourg, and Qatar. For many years he served as a new music reviewer for *The Instrumentalist Magazine*. He is a member of the Music Educator's National Conference, the College Band Directors National Association, the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, The New York State Band Director's Association, the New York State School Music Association, and has been honored with membership in the prestigious American Bandmaster's Association. Beginning in 2013, he will serve as president of the College Band Directors National Association.

Dr. Peterson holds the Doctor of Music degree from Northwestern University and Master's and Bachelor's degrees from Arizona State University. His ensembles have appeared before national conventions of the American Bandmaster's Association, the College Band Director's National Association, the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors, the American School Band Director's Association, at Orchestra Hall with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, and at Lincoln Center.

Upcoming Events

October

- 22 - Hockett - 7:00pm - Composition Premieres
- 25 - Ford - 8:15pm - Percussion Ensemble
- 28 - Hockett - 5:00pm - Jaekook Kim, tenor
- 29 - Nabenhauer - 8:15pm - Octubafest Solo Recital
- 30 - Hockett - 8:15pm - Ithaca Brass
- 31 - JJWCM - 6:00pm - Healthy Living For Musicians
- 31 - Hockett - 8:15pm - Tuba Ensemble

November

- 2 - Ford - 8:15pm - **Family Weekend:** Concert Band and Jazz Vocal Ensemble (*Webstreamed at www.ithaca.edu/music/live*)
- 3 - Ford - 4:00pm - **Family Weekend:** Symphonic Band and Jazz Ensemble (*Webstreamed at www.ithaca.edu/music/live*)
- 4 - Ford - 1:00pm - **Family Weekend:** Choral Concert (*Webstreamed at www.ithaca.edu/music/live*)
- 5 - Hockett - 7:00pm - Faculty Showcase (*Webstreamed at www.ithaca.edu/music/live*)
- 7 - Hockett - 6:00pm - "On the Edge" Masterclass with Jean Kopperud
- 8 - Hockett - 8:15pm - Alan Huckleberry, piano masterclass
- 9 - Hockett - 3:00pm - Alan Huckleberry, piano pedagogy lecture
- 10 - Ford - 7:00pm - Choral Composition Festival
- 11 - Hockett - 4:00pm - Susan Waterbury, violin Charis Dimaras, piano
- 11 - Ford - 7:00pm - Taylor Braggins, soprano
- 12 - Hockett - 7:00pm - Composition Premieres
- 13 - Hockett - 7:00pm - Flute Choir
- 13 - Iger - 8:15pm - David Rakowski, Husa Visiting Professor, lecture
- 14 - Hockett - 8:15pm - Contemporary Chamber Ensemble