

2-21-1999

Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen G. Peterson

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*"It is
my plan
to build
a school
of music
second
to none."*

—William
Grant Egbert
(1867–1928)
Founder,
Ithaca
Conservatory
of Music

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Stephen G. Peterson, conductor

Sun Song (1990)

Libby Larson
(b. 1950)

Sun Song
Dream Variations
Tambourines

The Good Soldier Schweik Suite (1956)

Robert Kurka
(b. 1921)

Overture
Lament
March
War Dance
Pastoral
Finale

Golden Light (1992)

David Maslanka
(b. 1942)

INTERMISSION

The Winds of Nagual (1985)

Michael Colgrass
(b. 1932)

The Desert
Carlos Meets Don Juan
Don Genaro Satirizes Carlos
Carlos Stares at the Water and Becomes a Bubble
The Gait of Power
Asking Twilight for Calmness and Power
Juan Clowns for Carlos
Lasat Conversation and Farewell

Ford Hall Auditorium
Sunday, February 21, 1999
3:00 p.m.

PROGRAM NOTES

The poetry of Langston Hughes frequently made use of blues rhythms as well as the musical language of the American jazz idiom. Inspired by the language, rhythm, and spirit of Hughes' poetry, composer Libby Larsen has written *Sun Song* in response to the major contribution that Langston Hughes made to American culture.

A major figure of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920's Langston Hughes entitled his first book of poems, *The Weary Blues*, taking its name from a prize-winning poem in the magazine, *Opportunity*. Hughes was awarded a scholarship to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1929. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship (1935), a Rosenwald Fellowship (1940) and an American Academy of Arts and Letters Grant (1947).

Sun Song

Sun and softness
Sun and the beaten hardness of the earth,
Sun and the song of all the sun-stars
Gathered together
Dark ones of Africa
I bring you my songs
To sing on the Georgia roads

Dream Variations

To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me—

That is my dream!
To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!

Till the quick day is done
Rest at pale evening . . .
A tall, slim tree . . .
Night coming tenderly
Black like me

Tambourines

Tambourines!
Tambourines!
Tambourines!
To the glory of God!
Tambourines
To glory!

A gospel shout
And a gospel song:
Life is short
But God is long!

Tambourines!
Tambourines!
Tambourines
To glory!

Libby Larsen obtained her BA, MA, and PhD from the University of Minnesota. Her composition teachers were Paul Fetler, Eric Stokes, and Cominick Argento. From 1973-1983 she was a teaching assistant at the University of Minnesota. In 1983 she became composer-in-residence for two years with the Minnesota Orchestra and later, manager-composer of the Minnesota Composers' Forum. She has many grants, awards and commissions including a citation in 1981 as the Minnesota Woman of the Year in Arts. She received National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in 1982 and 1984, and a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship in 1980.

Her compositional *oeuvre* stresses works for orchestra, chamber ensembles and voice. Larsen is currently the 1998-99 Karel Husa Visiting Professor Composition at Ithaca College.

The Good Soldier Schweik Suite is taken from the composer's opera, which was inspired from an anti-war satire by Czechoslovakian novelist, Jaroslav Hasek. The novel written after World War I, is about a common man, "Schweike," who is forced to become a soldier and fight for a cause in which he does not believe. He withstands the anguish and tragedy of war and becomes a triumphant symbol of all common people who resist the idea of war.

Robert Kurka, an Illinois native, studied violin and received his degree from Columbia University. He studied composition with Otto Luening and Darius Milhaud, although was more of a self taught composer. From 1948-1951 he taught at the City College of New York and at Queens College. He received numerous awards including those from the Paderewski Fund for American Composers, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, the George Gershwin Memorial Award, and the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Before his untimely death from leukemia, Brandeis University honored him with an award which read: "To Robert Kurka, a composer at the threshold of a career of real distinction."

David Maslanka writes: "*Golden Light* is an energetic and joyous piece which evolved out of brisk walks in the woods of upper Manhattan near where I lived for many years. The title was inspired by the play of sunlight in the trees, especially in late afternoons. The mildly hypnotic state induced by walking at a rapid pace brought about a music of short, repetitive melodic fragments and interweaving polyrhythms. The influence is distinctly traditional African where many voices arise out of a stable tonality to weave and blend together."

Golden Light—A Celebration Piece was commissioned by the South Shore Conservatory of Hingham, Massachusetts to honor its 20th anniversary.

David Maslanka studied at the New England Conservatory, the Oberlin Conservatory, the Mozarteum in Austria, and Michigan State University. His composition teachers included H. Owen Reed and Joseph Wood. He has served on the faculties of the State University of New York at Geneseo, Sarah Lawrence College, and Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York. He currently resides in Missoula, Montana. His many works for band include the *Symphony No. 2* and *A Child's Garden of Dreams*.

Winds of Nagual is based on the writings of Carlos Castaneda about his 14-year apprenticeship with Don Juan Matis, a Jaqui Indian sorcerer from Northwestern Mexico. Castaneda met Don Juan while researching hallucinogenic plants for his master's thesis in Anthropology at UCLA. Juan became Castaneda's mentor and trained him in pre-Columbian techniques of sorcery, the overall purpose of which is to find the creative self—which Juan calls the *nagual*.

Each of the characters has a musical theme: Juan's is dark and ominous, yet gentle and kind; Carlos's is open, direct and naive. We hear Carlos's theme throughout the piece from constantly changing perspectives, as Juan submits him to long desert marches, encounters with terrifying powers and altered states of reality. A comic aspect is added to the piece by Don Genaro, a sorcerer friend of Juan's who frightens Carlos with fantastic tricks like disappearing and re-appearing at will.

In keeping with Colgrass's artistic philosophy, *Winds of Nagual* is highly programmatic. Throughout the score programmatic references to the writings of Carlos Castaneda appear. According to Colgrass:

"My object is to capture the mood and atmosphere created by the books and to convey a feeling of the relationship that develops as a man of ancient wisdom tries to cultivate heart in an analytical young man of the technological age."

The text appears as follows:

The Desert

Don Juan emerges from the mountains.

Carlos approaches Don Juan

Carlos Meets Don Juan...First Conversation.

Don Genaro Appears

Genaro clowns for Carlos.

Genaro satirizes Carlos.

Genaro laughs.

Genaro leaps to a mountain top.

Genaro disappears.

Carlos Stares at the River and Becomes a Bubble

Carlos stares at the river.

. . . and is transfixed by the ripples on the water.

Carlos is mesmerized by the bubbles.

. . . and becomes a bubble

Carlos travels with the river.

Carlos tumbles in cascades of water.

Juan jolts Carlos awake with a shrill voice.

The Gait of Power

Don Juan shows Carlos how to leap between boulders in the dark.

Carlos tries it.

Something moves in the dark.

A terrifying creature leaps at Carlos.

Carlos runs. . . It chases him.

The creature grabs his throat.

Carlos exerts his will.

Asking Twilight for Calmness and Power

Carlos calls to the desert from a hilltop.

Carlos dances.

Carlos meditates.

Carlos moves again.

He feels deep calm and joy.

Nightfall. . .Mist rolls in and the moon rises.

Juan Clowns for Carlos

Last Conversation and Farewell

Carlos leaps into the abyss,

. . . and explodes into a thousand views of the world.

Michael Colgrass has become an increasingly important American composer. His works include *Deja vu* (for which he won a Pulitzer prize in 1977) and *Winds of Nagual* which are considered to be two of the most significant pieces of wind music written within the last twenty years. He studied composition with Eugene Weigel and Lukas Foss at Tanglewood, Darius Milhaud at Aspen, and Wallingford Riegger and Len Weber in New York City. Since 1967, after a brief career as a percussionist, Michael Colgrass has made his living exclusively as a composer. *Winds of Nagual* was commissioned by the New England Conservatory and was premiered in Boston on February 14, 1985 with Frank Battisti conducting.

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE

Stephen G. Peterson, conductor

Piccolo

Joel M. Nolan*

Flute

Serena Cameron*

Lisa Horton

Dara Kahkonen

Becky Gay

Meridith Gabrielle

Oboe

Colin Bauer

Kristina L. Czerwiak*

Stacy Reckert

Soprano Clarinet

Jeffrey Bittner

Clarinet

Lucas Christensen

Todd A. Hearn

Peter Norman

Natalie Noyes

Joleen Walas

John Waytena*

Bass Clarinet

Mickey Ireland

Contra Bass Clarinet

Marco Cestaro

Bassoon

Kristijan Bogdanovski

Eleanor Conley

Edward Montoya*

Alto Saxophone

Michelle Free

Todd Pray*

Tenor Saxophone

Joseph Tubiolo

Baritone Saxophone

Therese Yagy

Trumpet

William Bertram

Todd E. Jenkins*

Chad Louden

John Lufburrow

Russell Posegate

Amanda Whitten

Matthew Oram

Horn

Katie Albinski

Lindsey MacNab*

Michael A. Mogensen

Alysia Nemeth

Deana Saada

Amy Sanchez

Trombone

David McCormick

Brian Zimmer*

Phil Obado

Kate Donnelly

Bass Trombone

Jim Peer

Mike Dobranski

Euphonium

Katie Sims

Michael Stephenson*

Tuba

Mason Daffinee

Matt Wilson*

Percussion

David Boisvert

Tim Collins*

David Mayotte

Sloane Treat

Tori Lillie

Timpani

Anthony Calabrese

String Bass

Michael Ward

Piano

Russell Posegate

*Denotes Principal