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Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

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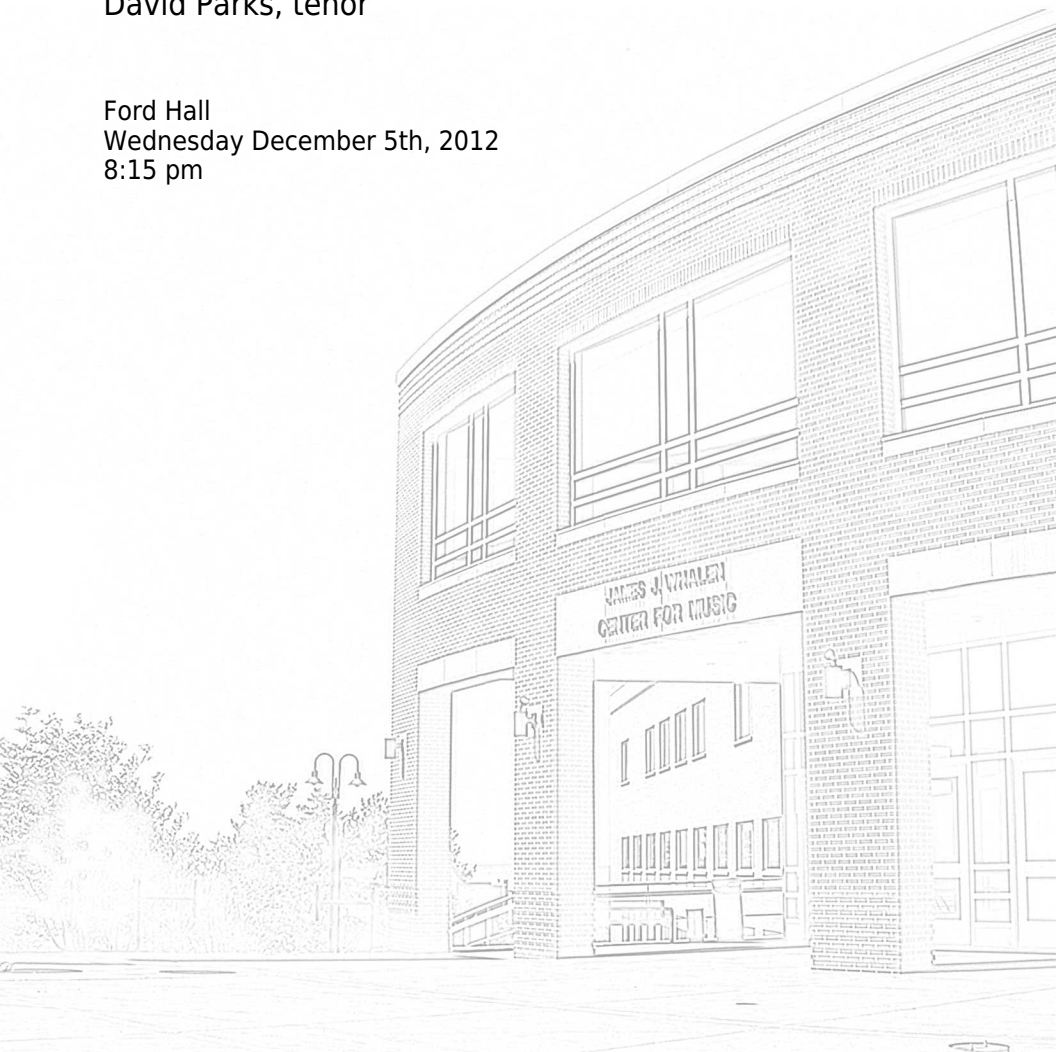
Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson, conductor

Frank Ticheli, *Col. Arnald Gabriel '50, HDRMU '89, Visiting Wind Conductor*

David Parks, tenor

Ford Hall
Wednesday December 5th, 2012
8:15 pm



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Program

La Création du Monde (1923)

Darius Milhaud
(1892-1974)
15'

From a Dark Millennium (1981)

Joseph Schwantner
(b. 1943)
12'

Intermission

Nitro (2006)

Frank Ticheli
(b. 1958)
3'

Symphony No. 1 (2011)

I. Of Youth
II. Of Wisdom
III. Profanation
IV. Prayer

Frank Ticheli
(b. 1958)
trans. Gary D. Green
31'

*Frank Ticheli, guest conductor
David Parks, tenor*

Program Notes

Darius Milhaud's infatuation with jazz began in 1920, at a concert given in London by an American band. Two years later he was in New York, haunting the dance halls and theaters of Harlem. As the composer would recall, "In some shows the singers were accompanied by flute, clarinet, trumpets, trombone, a complicated percussion section played by one man, piano, and string quartet." Among the shows was *Liza* (by Maceo Pinkard, immortalized as the composer of "Sweet Georgia Brown" and, for Al Jolson, the infamous "Mammy"), whose instrumentation Milhaud adapted for ***La création du monde***. This piece was written for and first performed by the Ballet Suédois in 1923 in Paris, to a scenario by the Swiss poet and novelist Blaise Cendrars on an African creation myth. The ballet began with three African gods of creation on the stage conjuring trees and animals into being with rituals and spells. Male and female dancers emerged as the deities created humankind; the ballet ended with a solitary couple left on the stage after group dances representing desire and mating. The French cubist painter Fernand Léger - himself interested in primitive African art - designed the sets.

The saxophone theme of the introduction and the following section - led by the double-bass - are among the most original uses to which Baroque form has been put, a jazz prelude and fugue, reaching a spectacularly chaotic climax: Dixieland run amok. The two preceding themes are quietly restated, giving way to a meditative oboe melody that suggests at once the blues and the shepherds' music of the composer's native Provence; then another brisk dance launched by strings and piano; a cheeky clarinet concertino; then a racy recollection of the fugue, and a lyrical coda which brings this brightly inventive, prototypical work of "classical jazz" to a quiet close.

Program note by Herbert Glass

Joseph Schwantner is one of today's most prolific American composers, having received the Pulitzer Prize, the Charles Ives Prize, multiple Grammy nominations, and membership in The American Academy of Arts and Letters. His four original works for wind ensemble are among the most performed and highly regarded in the repertoire. ***From a Dark Millennium*** is Schwantner's second piece for the medium, commissioned by the Mid-American Conference Band Directors Association in 1980 after the success of *...and the mountains rising nowhere*. It draws its musical material from an early Schwantner chamber work entitled *Music of Amber*. Both pieces were inspired by the composer's poem "Sanctuary":

*Sanctuary . . .
 deep forests
a play of shadows,
 most ancient murmurings
from a dark millennium,
 the trembling fragrance of
the music of amber . . .*

Schwantner does not consider *From a Dark Millennium* to be programmatic, but he acknowledges that “the mysterious and shadowy atmosphere... springs from images drawn from a brief original poem that forms the poetic backdrop for the work. The poem helped to stimulate, provoke, and enhance the flow of my musical ideas.”

Program note by Corey Seapy

Nitro, an energy-charged three-minute fanfare for band, was commissioned by the Northshore Concert Band, Mallory Thompson, music director, in celebration of their 50th anniversary season, and received its premiere performance by them on April 9th, 2006.

Nitrogen is the most abundant component of the Earth’s atmosphere (78 per cent by volume), and is present in the tissues of every living thing. It is the fifth most abundant element in the universe, created by the fusion deep within stars; it has recently been detected in interstellar space. The sheer prevalence of nitrogen in all of nature, and the infinite range of compounds it is part of — life-giving, energizing, healing, cleansing, explosive — all appealed to me, and served as the inspiration for my music.

Symphony No. 1 was begun in the fall of 2000 in Pasadena,2 California, and completed the following summer at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Its four movements represent a journey of the soul from innocence, to introspection, to darkness, and finally to enlightenment.

Before writing a note of music, I began jotting down a list of the kinds of sounds I wanted to evoke in the symphony. These jottings eventually evolved into a poem. Moving from themes of hope, to peace, to crisis, and finally to reconciliation, the poem’s four main stanzas correspond directly to the symphony’s four movements.

*I want to hear the sounds of hope---
of big church bells and distant horns,
Sounds that wash away the wars
and arouse the human heart.
A sure harmony gliding over a sea of stillness.*

*I want to play the sounds of peace---
of sighing winds and rustling leaves,
Sounds that silence troubled thoughts
and calm the spirit’s raging storms.
A song of serenity from high atop an ancient hill.*

*But my harp is stilled by voices---
Children, hungry, crying out.
Their dreams, windswept,
My house of wisdom, a web of sorrow.*

I only know that I am longing...

*And then...I catch a glimpse---
an ancient tree...an open gaze,
Some eternal euphony
that dances upon the light.
And for one fleeting moment, I know...
I am the sound of hope,
the instrument of peace,
the song within the Song.*

The first movement, "Of Youth," expresses vivid aural images of a spring morning --- bell sounds, trumpet fanfares, bright harmonies, and clear textures illuminate the movement and give it a youthful energy. Themes come and go quickly, suggesting a short attention span and a childlike impatience.

The second movement, "Of Wisdom," despite its strong melodic and harmonic connections to the first, is in many ways its alter ego. Bright fanfares give way to greater lyricism. Childlike optimism yields to introspection. After a series of vast modulations and an orchestral swell, a lengthy period of calm follows. A repeated major chord hangs high, becoming an immovable block that is quietly implacable to the pleadings of the solo bassoon. Vague recollections of the first movement appear like fleeting dreams.

The third movement, "Profanation," represents a crisis of faith. The key of D minor is used as a symbol of darkness. This association also pays tribute to Mozart, who used the key only on rare occasions as a symbol of pessimism and struggle (e.g., the appearance of the stone guest in *Don Giovanni*, and the unfinished *Requiem Mass*). The main theme wedges upward and back again, as though dodging some menacing force. A contrasting middle section provides an uneasy moment of respite before surrendering to the return of the *scherzo* and its racing heartbeat.

The poem sung in the final movement, "Prayer," summarizes the dramatic flow of the entire symphony. The accompanying music searches in vain for resolution, wandering from one tonal area to another (D, C, F, A, B) before finally resigning itself in the poignant key of B minor. After a period of darkness and vulnerability, the music ultimately yields to themes of transcendence as the singer discovers an inner light.

Program notes by Frank Ticheli

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Piccolo

Sandi O'Hare

Flute

Stephanie Dumais
Sophia Ennocenti*
Jessica Peltz

Oboe

Melissa Knapp
Phoebe Ritrovato
Chloe Washington*

Clarinet

Megan Belansky
Justine Call
Anna Goebel
Kelsey Paquin
Christopher Peña*
Aileen Razey
Michael Reineman

Bass Clarinet

Kyle McKay

Bassoon

Tommy Connors*
Kailey Schnurman
Ross Triner

Alto Saxophone

Rachael Rushing*
Erika St. Denis

Tenor Saxophone

Erika Friedman

Baritone Saxophone

Andrew Horwitz

Trumpet

Matt Allen
Jason Ferguson
Thomas Pang
Aaron Scoccia
Danny Venora*
Jenna Ververka

Horn

Alyssa A'Hearn
Jacob Factor
Margaret Kelly
Robbie Oldroyd*
Emma Staudacher

Trombone

Matt Niedemeier
Chad Van Holtz
Ethan Zawisza*

Bass Trombone

Jeff Chilton

Euphonium

Peter Best-Hall
Steve Vaughn*

Tuba

Bill Connors*
Kevin Kozik

Percussion

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

Timpani

Heather Hill

Double Bass

Andrew Ryan

Piano

Yuaming Hu
Meicen Guo
Kevin S. Jopp

Celeste

Bizhou Jin

Violin

Joohyun Lee
Brian Schmidt

Cello

Jacqueline Georgis

Graduate Assistants

Kevin Peters
Corey Seapy

* Denotes Principal
Player

Biographies

Frank Ticheli

Frank Ticheli's music has been described as being "optimistic and thoughtful" (Los Angeles Times), "lean and muscular" (New York Times), "brilliantly effective" (Miami Herald) and "powerful, deeply felt crafted with impressive flair and an ear for striking instrumental colors" (South Florida Sun-Sentinel). Ticheli (b. 1958) joined the faculty of the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music in 1991, where he is Professor of Composition. From 1991 to 1998, Ticheli was Composer in Residence of the Pacific Symphony.

Frank Ticheli's orchestral works have received considerable recognition in the U.S. and Europe. Orchestral performances have come from the Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, the radio orchestras of Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Saarbruecken, and Austria, and the orchestras of Austin, Bridgeport, Charlotte, Colorado, Haddonfield, Harrisburg, Hong Kong, Jacksonville, Lansing, Long Island, Louisville, Lubbock, Memphis, Nashville, Omaha, Phoenix, Portland, Richmond, San Antonio, San Jose, Wichita Falls, and others.

Ticheli is well known for his works for concert band, many of which have become standards in the repertoire. In addition to composing, he has appeared as guest conductor of his music at Carnegie Hall, at many American universities and music festivals, and in cities throughout the world, including Schladming (Austria), Beijing and Shanghai, London and Manchester, Singapore, Rome, Sydney, and numerous cities in Japan.

Frank Ticheli is the recipient of a 2012 "Arts and Letters Award" from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, his third award from that prestigious organization. His Symphony No. 2 was named winner of the 2006 NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Band Composition Contest. Other awards include the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize and First Prize awards in the Texas Sesquicentennial Orchestral Composition Competition, Britten-on-the-Bay Choral Composition Contest, and Virginia CBDNA Symposium for New Band Music.

Ticheli was awarded national honorary membership to Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, "bestowed to individuals who have significantly contributed to the cause of music in America," and the A. Austin Harding Award by the American School Band Directors Association, "given to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the school band movement in America." At USC, he has received the Virginia Ramo Award for excellence in teaching, and the Dean's Award for Professional Achievement.

Frank Ticheli received his doctoral and masters degrees in composition from The University of Michigan. His works are published by Manhattan Beach, Southern, Hinshaw, and Encore Music, and are recorded on the labels of Albany, Chandos, Clarion, Equilibrium, Klavier, Koch International, Mark, Naxos, and Reference.

David Parks

D.M.A., University of Arizona; M.M., University of Michigan; B.M.Ed., Westminster Choir College. Formerly, faculty, College of William and Mary. Solo performances with Bach Aria Group, Mid-America Productions (Carnegie Hall), and numerous opera companies and orchestras, and at colleges and universities throughout the U.S. Performances with Syracuse Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Virginia Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Delaware, Syracuse Symphony, Pacific Symphony, Erie Philharmonic, Louisville Bach Festival, Spoleto U.S.A., Piedmont Opera Theater. International performances with CAPAB Opera and PACOFS Opera (South Africa), National South African Arts Festival, Mauerbach Festival (Vienna), Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra (in a December 2001 tribute concert for terrorism's victims), Spoleto Festival (Italy). Award winner, national semifinals, National Association of Teachers of Singing competition, Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions. Chairperson, Decentralization Committee for New York State Council on the Arts; formerly, New York State governor for National Association of Teachers of Singing. Professor Parks joined the Ithaca College School of Music faculty in 1987.

Stephen Peterson

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.