4-7-1998

Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

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Lawrence Dale Harper

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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
Lawrence Dale Harper, conductor

Toccata Marziale (1924) Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Five Miniatures (1930) Joaquin Turina (1882-1949)
I. Dawn arranged by John Krance
II. The Sleeping Village
III. Promenade
IV. The Approaching Soldiers
V. Fiesta

Gaian Visions (1990) Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)
I. Forgotten Forests
II. Desecration
III. Redemption

Amazing Grace (1994) Frank Ticheli

INTERMISSION

Sea Dreams† (1998) David Maslanka (b. 1943)
Concerto for Two Horns and Wind Orchestra

I. Moderate - very fast
II. Flexible and expressive
III. Moderately slow - very fast

Bill Bernatis, horn
Alex Shuhan, horn

† World Premiere

Ford Hall Auditorium
Tuesday, April 7, 1998
8:15 p.m.
PROGRAM NOTES

Toccata Marziale was written in 1924 and since that time has become one of the pillars of the modern repertoire for symphonic bands and wind ensembles. “Toccata,” meaning “to touch,” is the Italian term used to describe a composition in free keyboard style with virtuosic running passages and contrapuntal texture. Vaughan Williams aptly names this piece such, using the wind band to imitate both the light touch, and yet powerful resonance of the organ.

Though much of Vaughan Williams’s wind band music is rooted in folk song material, this piece is not. One can find major, minor, modal, and whole tone scales within a vibrant rhythmic texture. The piece retains a remarkably rich counterpoint throughout with a typically English pomp.

Joaquin Turina was one of the most representative figures of the modern Spanish “nationalist” school. The Five Miniatures are taken from his set of eight Miniatures for piano.

COMPOSERS’ NOTES

Inspired by the natural beauty of my immediate surroundings and by my concerns about the environmental future of our planet, I composed Gaian Visions in July of 1990 during a residency at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The title of the work refers to Gaia, the Earth goddess of ancient Greece, and to British scientist James Lovelock’s Gaian hypothesis, which holds that the Earth is a living, self-regulating organism that is capable of annihilating anything it perceives to be a threat, including the environmentally-destructive human race itself.

The work is in three movements:

I. Forgotten Forests. This section depicts the imposing grandeur of Gaia. A whirling, animated texture, representing the timelessness of nature, is created by the juxtaposition of independent rhythmic layers. On top of this conglomerate, the brasses engage in a rapid interchange of short, fleeting gestures that emerge to the foreground, then quickly recede. The tension mounts, unleashing a climactic succession of open brass sonorities. The movement ends with hints of a bird, a frog, distant thunder.

II. Desecration. This section depicts the environmental plagues of modern society. Relentless rhythms and wild, tonally ambiguous harmonies function as the primary driving forces. A rapid three-note call is the main melodic idea. The dramatic climax of the movement occurs when the open brass theme from the first movement (representing Gaia) returns in conflict with the material of the second movement. The movement ends in an unresolved explosion of sound.

III. Redemption. This section depicts a hope-filled prayer to Gaia. The main melody is first stated by the oboe, then passed throughout the ensemble in
several keys, accompanied by a pair of lower lines which ascend deliberately by step over a period of twenty-one bars. The goal of this rising texture is articulated by a final impassioned statement of the melody. A brief coda follows, alluding to the material from the first movement. The ending is unresolved, an unanswered question.

_Gaian Visions_ was commissioned by the Gamma Phi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, in honor of Donald E. Bowen, fifth president of Stephen F. Austin State University. On February 22, 1991, the world premiere of _Gaian Visions_ was given by the Stephen F. Austin State University Symphonic Band, John Whitwell, conductor, in Kansas City, Missouri, at the 50th anniversary convention of the College Band Directors National Association.

I wanted my setting of _Amazing Grace_ to reflect the powerful simplicity of the words and melody—to be sincere, to be direct, to be honest—and not through the use of novel harmonies and clever tricks, but by traveling traditional paths in search of truth and authenticity.

I believe that music has the power to take us to a place that words alone cannot. And so my own feelings about _Amazing Grace_ reside in this setting itself. This harmony, texture, orchestration, and form are inseparable, intertwined so as to be perceived as a single expressive entity.

The spiritual, "Amazing Grace" was written by John Newton (1725-1807), a slaveship captain who, after years of transporting slaves across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World, suddenly saw through divine grace the evilness of his acts. First published in 1835 by William Walker in the _Southern Harmony_, "Amazing Grace" has grown to become one of the most beloved of all American spirituals.

_Amazing Grace_ was commissioned by John Whitwell in loving memory of his father, John Harvey Whitwell. It was first performed on February 10, 1994 by the Michigan State University Wind Symphony, John Whitwell conductor.

Frank Ticheli

_Sea Dreams_
I was born and raised in New Bedford, Massachusetts, the whaling port of Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" The sea has been a part of me forever. I was riveted by "Moby Dick" when I first read it at age fifteen. The mundane aspects of the book—the pictures of the varying ocean moods, the minute descriptions of the ship and of whaling gear—sprang to life for me as powerfully as the titanic struggles with the white whale. Since my youth, other stories of Melville, and among other things the paintings of Winslow Homer, and the sea imagery in the poetry of Pablo Neruda have opened me in the same way.

In my meditation life sea imagery has played a central role for years. The sea is the dream image of the unconscious; the seashore the connecting point of conscious mind. I have grown up through the images of my inner sea.
As I began to think deeply about the concerto for two horns, powerful images of the sea began to rise one more time. From my meditation journal I have made a selection of images which moved me in the writing of this piece. They are not a story or an explanation, rather a mosaic of moods and feelings that directly underlie the composition of this music.

I come to the sea shore. At the base of the cliff next to the sea is the long grey canoe of death. The ocean is grey, still, misty. The canoe is narrow with square ends. Two shrouded figures stand in it.

A huge boulder knocks me into the ocean. I sink with it. On the bottom it opens and life rises from it. Out in the air the life takes the form of a large diamond through which streams brilliant light.

I am at the seashore with the overturned wreckage of a whaler’s harpoon boat. There are dead bodies. One is my friend. He is young, with dark curly hair, well-formed, nice looking—and dead. I cry for him. There is a lot of death to cry for. Then I release him as part of the cycle of life and death. I think of Neruda and “The Captain’s Verses” ocean poems, and I ache for the sea. I sense that there is still in me much to cry for concerning the ocean. I sense an ocean flow that wants to be expressed in music.

Two people set out in a small slender boat on an ocean journey. It is dark. They are wearing long black robes. The ocean ahead is choppy. The night sea journey begins with apprehension.

My mind opens suddenly to the great ocean storm. I see first the ship’s mast with flying pennant at the top. There are great heaving seas. The ship capsizes but first rises and slants so sharply that everything and everyone on deck is dumped into the ocean. I see the huge wave depression opening in front of me and experience the terror and panic of going into the icy sea water. This is death.

The Concerto is in three movements. The first is a double movement with a very serious and intense opening, and a released and joyous conclusion. The opening depicts the great ocean storm and the conclusion joy in deliverance.

At the beginning of the second movement I have written in the score the words “moonlight on the quiet sea.” It is a time to reflect upon and absorb the fierce emotions of the first movement. It is personal thought, and the opening of oneself to another. There is the understanding that in this life we are for the other.

The third movement parallels the structure of the first. The opening, like its counterpart, is serious and intense—a message from the heart. Its conclusion is a rousing dance music. Throughout the Concerto there is the sense of transformation at work: the movement through terror, loss and death to an exhilarated joy in life.

David Maslanka
*Sea Dreams* was commissioned by a consortium of horn professors at the following schools, with additional support from the International Horn Society, and is offered tonight in its simultaneous world premiere.

![List of schools](image)

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Alex Shuhan** grew up in Cranford, New Jersey (in a musical household) where he began piano studies at age five and horn at age 10. After attending the National Music Camp at Interlochen, Michigan and Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School, he received bachelor’s degrees in performance and music education at the Eastman School of Music. He continued his graduate studies at Southern Methodist University and subsequently performed with the Dallas Brass for eight years. He has appeared as a soloist with numerous symphony orchestras, including those in Detroit, Dallas, Phoenix, Oregon, Rochester, Tampa and Ft. Lauderdale. His teachers have included Greg Hustis, Verne Reynolds, Harry Berv, Marvin Howe and Henry Babcock. As an orchestral player, Alex’s experience includes work with the Dallas, Syracuse and Portland Symphony Orchestras, Dallas Ballet Orchestra, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Skaneateles Festival Orchestra and the Heidelberg Castle Opera Festival Orchestra. Alex resides in Portland, Maine with his wife, Dana, and three sons, Nicholas, Samuel and Maximilian.

**Bill Bernatis** is currently Assistant Professor of Horn at Ithaca College and principal horn with the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra. He also performs as a member of the Ithaca Brass and Ithaca Wind Quintet. Prior to his coming to Ithaca College, Mr. Bernatis taught at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas and at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He has been principal horn with the Corpus Christi Symphony, the Waco Symphony, the San Angelo Symphony, and the Breckenridge Music Institute. He was an instructor for the Empire Brass Seminar at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute and a member of the AIMS orchestra in Graz, Austria. His teachers include John Iltis, William Scharnberg, and Philip Farkas. After receiving his BM from Washburn University, Mr. Bernatis taught music in public school for three years and then went on to pursue his MM at Indiana University. He is currently a DMA candidate at the University of North Texas. Over the years, Mr. Bernatis has performed, judged, done studio recording, and held master classes around the country. He has toured with the Dallas Brass, performed solos with the Corpus
Christi Symphony, Waco Symphony, Corpus Christi Chamber Orchestra, Dallas Wind Symphony, the Victoria Bach Festival, and International Horn Society regional and international workshops. He is still an active recitalist and freelance performer playing with such groups as the Syracuse Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Chautauqua Symphony, North East Pennsylvania Philharmonic, and the Skaneateles Music Festival.

**Lawrence Dale Harper** is visiting professor of music and conductor of the Wind Ensemble at Ithaca College. He is currently on leave from his post as Director of Bands at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, where he is also the conductor and music director of the Waukesha Area Symphonic Band. In addition, he is the founder and artistic director of the Wisconsin Wind Orchestra, one of a handful of professional-level community wind ensembles in the country. He has brought these ensembles to local and regional prominence through innovative programming, CD releases, performances at major concert halls, and appearances at professional conferences.

He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in wind conducting from Michigan State University in East Lansing and has done post-graduate study in conducting at the University of Northern Colorado. He also earned a Master of Science degree in music education from the University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana and a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from California State University, Northridge.

An accomplished hornist, Dr. Harper has played principal horn in the first of five bands at the University of Illinois and has appeared as a guest soloist in the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts on the Urbana campus. He performed with the Milwaukee Chamber Winds on their European concert tour, the Festival City Symphony and Racine Symphony of Wisconsin, and taught for the past two years at the University of Wisconsin Indianhead Arts and Education Center.

Dr. Harper is an active member of the College Band Directors National Association. His national reputation has led to appearances as guest conductor at the organization's regional and national conventions, and he served for five years as the Wisconsin State Chairman of the Association. Harper has served as a clinician and guest conductor throughout the United States, as well as in Central America, Europe, and Israel.
ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Lawrence Dale Harper, conductor

**Flute/Piccolo**
Joel Nolan
Aiven O'Leary
Sarah Paysnick
Molly Punzal
Yuko Yamamoto

**Oboe**
Leanna Munce
Lauren Urban

**Eb Clarinet**
Crescent Lonnquist
Natalie Noyes

**Bb Clarinet**
Adam Berkowitz
Karen Brown
Peggy Ho
Tracey Snyder
Tiffany Twitchell

**Bass Clarinet**
Rebecca Weissman

**Contrabass Clarinet**
Peter Norman

**Bassoon**
Katy Frary
Mark Hekman
Suzanne Snyder

**Contra-Bassoon**
Suzanne Snyder

**Alto Saxophone**
Todd Pray
John Wagner

**Tenor Saxophone**
Jill Fried

**Baritone Saxophone**
Michael Walls

**Horn**
Heather Bowen
Katie Mason
Kevin O'Connor
Michael Plum

**Trumpet**
Aaron Brown
Jennifer Dearden
Emily Kluga
Alex Meixner
Mathew Oram
Amanda Whitten

**Trombone**
Eric Davidson
Kate Donnelly
James Peer
Maria Portello-Swagel

**Euphonium**
Matthew Borek
David Seibert

**Tuba**
Andrew Tobin
Matthew Wilson

Personnel are listed in alphabetical order to emphasize each player's contribution to the ensemble.
String Bass
Michael Murphy
Audrey Wang
Michael Ward

Timpani
Emily Lemmerman

Percussion
Tori Lillie
David Mayotte
Daniel Meunier
Philip Patti
Matthew Richmond
Sloane Treat
Tim Collins
Eric Smith

Piano/Celeste
Elizabeth Johnson

Harp
Myra Kovary†

† guest performer