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Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

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Lawrence Dale Harper

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

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA
ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Lawrence Dale Harper, conductor

"Of Poetry, Song and Dance"

The Sussex Mummers’ Christmas Carol (1905)  Percy Aldridge Grainger
Mock Morris (1910) (1882-1961)
orchestrated by Carl Simpson

Variations on an Original Melody (1910-1991)

Music for a Medieval (K)night (1997)  Bernard van Beurden
I.
II.
III.

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 1 (1992)  Hugo J. Hartig
Three Fantasies on Poetry of E. A. Robinson (b. 1947)

I. ... and all wars were done
II. the black and awful chaos of the night
III. ... the coming glory of the Light

Ford Hall Auditorium
Sunday, April 26, 1998
3:00 p.m.
PROGRAM NOTES

Percy Aldridge Grainger began his piano setting of *The Sussex Mummers’ Christmas Carol* in 1905 and finished the work shortly before its publication in 1911. Grainger subsequently published an arrangement for cello (or violin) and piano. The program note in the 1911 score reads as follows:

This tune was notated by Miss Lucy E. Broadwood at Lyne, near Horsham (Sussex), in 1880 and 1881 from the singing of Christmas Mummers called “Tipteers” or “Tipteerers” during their play of “St. George, the Turk, and the Seven Champions of Christendom.” The words sung to the carol contain, among others, the following verses:

O mortal man, remember well
When Christ our Lord was born;
He was crucified betwixt two thieves,
And crowned with the thorn.

God bless the mistress of this house
With a gold chain round her breast;
It’s whether she sleeps, or whether she wakes,
Lord send her soul to rest.

O mortal man, remember well
When Christ died on the rood;
It was for we and our wickedness
Christ shed His precious blood.

God bless the master of this house
With happiness beside;
It’s whether he walks, or whether he rides,
Lord Jesus be his guide.

God bless your house, your children too,
Your cattle and your store;
The Lord increase you day by day,
And send you more and more.

Shortly after Grainger’s death in 1961, Richard Franko Goldman, who apparently had suggested a band version to the composer, undertook what he described as the “completion and scoring” of this work for concert band. Goldman’s version differs from the piano original in two important respects: length and harmonization.

For the present version, which is entirely based on the 1911 piano original, the lengthening has been effected by presenting three statements of Grainger’s richly harmonized setting, each scored differently, with a three measure extension in the
final statement. (The piano original features two statements of the basic material.) The idea for three statements came from Grainger’s own three-statement orchestral treatment of the “Irish Tune from County Derry.”

Carl Simpson
Christmas, 1987

Mock Morris
In 1910, as a birthday gift for his mother Rose, Grainger composed the original string sextet version of Mock Morris in three weeks’ time, starting on May 19th and finishing on June 4th (well in time for Rose’s July 3rd birthday.) In his usual fashion, Grainger “dished-up” the work for piano in both “concert” and “popular” versions shortly prior to the publication of all three in 1912 as the first number in his Room Music Tit-Bits series. Though a completely original work, the thematic material used in Mock Morris is most convincingly composed in the style of an English Morris Dance tune—so much that the composer found it necessary to state in his prefaces to the published scores that no actual folk material was used. To quote from the preface to the “concert” piano arrangement:

No folk-music tune-stuffs at all are used herein. The rhythmic cast of the piece is Morris-like, but neither the build of the tunes nor the general lay-out of the form keeps to the Morris dance shape.

Carl Simpson
Spring, 1993

American Hymn
William Schuman (1910-1991) is regarded as one of the premiere composers of our time, capturing the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1943. American Hymn, composed in 1980, was written for the American Bandmasters Association 50th Anniversary. The piece utilizes many of the composer’s signature techniques—dense sonorities, expansive gestures, and a sharp, vigorous rhythmic drive. All of these devices support the beautiful, poignant melody, composed by Schuman in the 1950’s. The hymn-tune was a contribution to a comprehensive survey titled “American Hymns Old and New.” The plaintive text to the tune, written by Langston Hughes, reads:

The Lord has a child
That child I know is me
Even when I’m not all I ought to be
His loving care guides me on my way
Ev’ry place, ev’rywhere, ev’ry day

Sometimes I’m lost,
Sometimes I’m lone;
Sometimes there’s no one
To call my own
But the Lord has a child.  
That child I know is me  
Even when I'm not all I ought to be  
His loving care guides me on my way  
Ev'ry place, ev'rywhere, ev'ry day

*Music For A Medieval (K)night*

Music for a Medieval (K)night was inspired by and borrows material from the great wealth of tunes played on diverse instruments and sung in the 12th through the 15th century. The first movement is based on three central details:

1. A dance melody (Estampie) from the twelfth century;  
2. A Dutch folk song, about four centuries later;  
3. A love song from the French thirteenth century.

The Estampie does not appear in totality until the 37th bar and is assigned to trumpets, horns, flute and later on, to various groups of the orchestra. Motives and fragments from this Estampie melody are heard throughout the movement. The polyphony is essentially a monophony, as was also the case in that period of the Middle Ages. Up to bar 62 there is a playing of motives and displaying the Estampie around a central “D” tone. The chords begin to play a more important part and a counterpoint method is introduced, not as in Palestrina or Bach, but rather a continuous and simultaneous playing across and with other parts.

The Dutch folk song, which is also about tough men, namely “Those who want to sail as pirates better be intrepid men,” is introduced in bar 99 by the horns and the alto saxophones. This song does not really come as a surprise. Its beginning is derived from the beginning of the Estampie and is already introduced earlier. Because of the relationship with the Estampie, the addition of this song is almost a matter of course.

In bar 152 a Medieval love song joins in. In the meantime notes can be heard in bar 123 which point to a different approach to the Middle Ages, as if the twentieth century is listening in around the corner. That contribution becomes stronger all the time and climaxes around bar 200 to bar 250. The first movement collapses and the timpani announces the next movement, which follows without pause.

Based on a Gregorian hymn, the second movement is almost wholly about stillness and restraint. This is why the solo instruments in particular play an important part and the rest of the orchestra plays modestly around them. Already in bar 5 one can hear in the flute, a quotation of the *Salve Regina* hymn which forms the basis of the movement. Other groups in the orchestra increasingly pick up the *Salve Regina* in a counterpoint which climaxes in rather dramatic chords. Then a diminuendo follows and the material and mood from the opening dominate. Finally there is a cadence of chords, known as the cadence of Guillaume de Machaut, the famous French Medieval composer.
The third movement is based on an English Estampie from the thirteenth century. In this Estampie an element plays a role which is very characteristic of the Estampie: repetition. In the original version the repetition is constantly present. In my version there is much less question of repetition because I begin to play with the dance melody concerned. In this the motor element plays an important part and it continues to do so until the final bars. Fragments from the first movement are repeated briefly in the final bars of the piece, bringing the work to an exciting and satisfying conclusion.

Bernard van Beurden

*Symphony No. 1 for Winds*

Symphony No. 1 for Winds was composed between January and May of 1991 while I was on sabbatical leave from Carroll College. The following poems, by the great American poet Edwin Arlington Robinson, were used as starting points for musical direction, ideas and moods, but the music conveys little of either poem in any specific way.

There are interesting relationships between these two poems, even though they are from different collections and were written at different times. In addition to the beautiful reference to music in both, there is a similarity in their use of the imagery of darkness and light - both in the literal and in the metaphorical sense. Furthermore, both poems deal to a certain extent with our search for meaning.

The first movement is based on “The Dark Hills” and the last two movements are based on “Credo.” In a sense, the entire symphony may be viewed as an odyssey from darkness to light or, perhaps, from confusion and meaningless to understanding and purpose.

*The Dark Hills*

Dark hills at evening in the west,
Where sunset hovers like a sound
Of golden horns that sang to rest
Old bones of warriors under ground.
Far now from all the bannered ways
Where flash the legions of the sun,
You fade—as if the last of days
Were fading, and all wars were done.

E. A. Robinson (1869-1935)
Credo

I cannot find my way, there is no star
In all the shrouded heavens anywhere;
And there is not a whisper in the air
Of any living voice but one so far
That I can hear it only as a bar
Of lost, imperial music, played when fair
And angel fingers wove, and unaware,
Dead leaves to garlands where no roses are.

No, there is not a glimmer, nor a call,
For one that welcomes when he fears,
The black and awful chaos of the night;
For through it all—above, beyond it all—
I know the far-sent message of the years,
I feel the coming glory of the Light.

E. A. Robinson

Aesthetically, this piece is unabashedly neo-romantic. I have paid personal tribute to the music of Gustav Mahler in the outer movements. The first seven notes of the piece (heard in the clarinet and which reappear throughout the movement) are borrowed from the opening of the fourth movement of Mahler's Third Symphony. The text of that movement, from Nietzsche, states, "O Man, take heed! What does the deep midnight say? I slept! From deep dreaming I was woken! The world is deep. And deeper than the day imagined! Deep is its grief."

Toward the end of the third movement the low brass play a transformation of the main theme from the opening of Mahler's Eighth Symphony. The text of that movement is the Latin hymn, "Veni, Creator Spiritus," the text of which begins, "Come Holy Spirit, Creator come, from Thy bright heavenly throne."

All three movements are further unified by constant permutations of the first four notes from the Lutheran chorale tune, "Aus Tiefer Not" ("Out of the Depths"). This motive, which consists of a perfect fifth down followed by a perfect fifth and a minor second up, is usually very audible.

Symphony No. 1 was composed specifically for the Carroll College Wind Symphony, who gave the world premiere performance in 1992. The work is dedicated to Dr. Larry Harper.

Hugo Hartig
Hugo Hartig is Associate Professor of Music at Carroll College where he has taught music theory and history since 1976. He holds a Ph.D. degree in music composition from Michigan State University and a master of music degree in composition from the University of Oregon. He is a charter member of the Wisconsin Alliance for Composers and has served on the Board of Directors of that organization. He is also active in the Great Lakes Chapter of the College Music Society and is currently Immediate Past President of the chapter.

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
Molly Punzal
Joel Nolan
Aiven O’Leary
Sarah Paysnick
Yuko Yamamoto

Oboe
Leanna Munce
Lauren Urban

English Horn
Heather Barmore

Eb Clarinet
Natalie Noyes

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

Bass Clarinet
Rebecca Weissman

Contrabass Clarinet
Peter Norman

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

Euphonium
Matthew Borek
David Seibert

Tuba
Andrew Tobin
Matthew Wilson

Contra-Bassoon
Suzanne Snyder

String Bass
Michael Ward

Personnel are listed in alphabetical order to emphasize each player’s contribution to the ensemble.
Cello
Stephen Duckworth
Anna Jessye
Karen Bergman
Ruth Fisher

Timpani
Emily Lemmerman

Percussion
David Boisvert
David Mayotte
Daniel Meunier
Philip Patti

Piano
Elizabeth Johnson

Organ
Timothy Tuller