

La Crosse
Wind
Symphony

Presents

Spring!
A Rebirth of the Spirit

Jeff C. Krauklis, Conductor

Sunday, April 24, 2022
7:00 PM

Trygve Mathison Fine Arts Center
Holmen High School

free admisson

PROGRAM

FESTIVE OVERTURE, Op. 96

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
transcribed by Donald Hunsberger

THE SEAL LULLABY

Eric Whitacre (1970-)

COMMANDO MARCH

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

**IRISH TUNE FROM COUNTY DERRY and
SHEPHERD'S HEY**

Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882-1961)

Intermission
(10 minutes)

ENCORE IN JAZZ (Percussion Septet)

Vic Firth (1930-2015)

SYMPHONY No. 3
Allegro energico
Allegretto
Allegro con brio

Vittorio Giannini (1903-1966)

Program Notes

Like many Soviet composers, Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) found himself constantly under pressure from restrictions imposed by the Soviet musical world with its concern for the moral and social rather than the purely aesthetic aspects of music – its wishes for works to be of immediate and practical value from the point of view of Soviet influence upon culture (Does it sound “Russian” enough?) Therefore, the musical style of Shostakovich remains unbalanced with works containing crude parodies, programmatic devices and conventional simplicity countered by works of originality, distinction and significance.

Festive Overture, Opus 96, was completed in 1954. Arranged first for the Russian Military Band by the composer in 1958, it was subsequently scored for American bands by Donald Hunsberger and has become an all-time favorite work of many wind musicians ever since. It demonstrates the composer’s distinctive talent for writing a long sustained melodic line punctuated with driving rhythmic pulses. Lightning-fast woodwinds, lush harmonies, brilliant brass and percussion scoring all combine to make this a truly “festive” overture.

* * *

Eric Whitacre (1970-) has become one of the most popular and performed composers of our generation, as well as a distinguished conductor and public speaker. Educated at the Julliard School of Music, his ground-breaking Virtual Choir 1.0, *Lux Aurumque*, on YouTube received over a million views in just two months, featuring 185 choir members from 12 countries. Eric’s Virtual Choir 2.0, *Sleep*, involved over 2,000 voices from 58 countries. An exceptional orator, in 2011 he was honored to address the U.N. Leaders programme and give a TED Talk, earning the first full standing ovation of the conference. Among his many honors, Whitacre has been appointed Composer in Residence at Sidney Sussex College at Cambridge University and has been elected the first non-Japanese Honorary Member of the Japanese Choral Directors Association.

The ***Seal Lullaby*** began life as a composition for a proposed animated film based on Rudyard Kipling’s *The White Seal*. The film project never materialized and nothing became of the music until the Towne Singers commissioned a full choral arrangement of it and from that Whitacre transcribed the present work for wind band in 2011. *The White Seal* is a beautiful story, classic Kipling, dark and rich and not at all condescending to kids. Best of all, Kipling begins his tale with the mother seal singing softly to her young pup. (The opening poem is called “The Seal Lullaby”).

*Oh! Hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o’er the combers, looks downward to find us,
At rest in the hallows that rustle between.*

Where billow meets billow, then soft by the pillow,
Oh weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas!

— Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

* * *

As Johann Sebastian Bach was a “conservative” composer, building on the traditions in which he was raised, so Samuel Barber (1910-1981) was conservative, building on romantic structures and sensibilities and eschewing many of the experimental practices propagated by other composers during his lifetime. One of the few composers ever to be trained as a singer, he knew he possessed a fluent talent and was encouraged by generous and cultivated adults. While studying abroad in the 1930’s he was discovered by Arturo Toscanini, who conducted—in 1938—the *First Essay For Orchestra* and the *Adagio For Strings* with the NBC Orchestra in New York. Forty years later Zubin Mehta opened his first season with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra by conducting Barber’s *Third Essay For Orchestra*. During the years in between, Barber enjoyed much critical success. He was the recipient of two Pulitzer Prizes, received an honorary degree from Harvard and was elected to the Academy of Arts and Letters.

Barber’s second symphony, produced for the Army Air Corps in 1942, made use of an electronic instrument to imitate radio signals. In a similar wartime spirit, he completed his first and only band work, the **Commando March**, in 1943, likely inspired by the military bands he came in contact with during his basic training. The march reflects some traces of the basic style of Barber, but these characteristics are less obvious when placed within the framework of the stirring medium which is suggested in the title. Written in quadruple meter, but with the indication to be played in “fast march-time”, the composition utilizes constant contrast of dotted and triplet rhythms, and centers around a tune which appears in a different instrumental dressing four times in the course of the work.

* * *

Australian by birth, Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882-1961) began studying piano at an early age with his mother, a professional teacher, and later with Louis Pabst in Melbourne. It was his early success as a budding concert pianist that took him to such distant places as Europe, England and South Africa. His playing so impressed Edward Grieg, that he was invited to the composer’s home in Norway and chosen to premiere his piano concerto with the composer conducting. Grieg died before the premiere, but Grainger’s rendition established him as one of the concerto’s great interpreters. He came to America in 1915, winning acclaim for his playing. At the outbreak of World War I, Grainger enlisted as an Army bandsman (an oboist) that began a lifelong infatuation with wind band music. He became a United States citizen in 1919 and for some time was head of the music department at New York University.

Grainger's position as a relative unknown in the ranks of 20th century composers is difficult to assess. He was a remarkable innovator, using irregular rhythms before Stravinsky, pioneering in folk music collection at the same time as Bartok, writing random music in 1905 and predating Varese in experimentation with electronic music. Possible explanations for his lack of favor include his use of a basically nineteenth-century harmonic palette, lack of compositions in large scale symphonic forms, and his popular reputation as an extraordinary but eccentric pianist and arranger of folk music.

One of Grainger's most recognized folk settings, ***Irish Tune From County Derry*** (more commonly recognized the world over as *Oh, Danny Boy*) is based on a tune collected by a Miss J. Ross of New Town, Limavaday, County Derry, Ireland, and published in *The Petrie Collection of Ancient Music of Ireland* in 1885. Grainger's setting was written in 1909 and was dedicated to the memory of Edward Grieg. The "perfect" melody and rich sonorities have kept the *Irish Tune* in a favored position for over 100 years. The air on which ***Shepherd's Hey*** is based was collected by Cecil J. Sharpe. In some agricultural districts in England, teams of "Morris Men", decked out with jingling bells and other finery, can still be seen dancing to such traditional tunes as "Shepherd's Hey", which are played on the fiddle or on the "pipe and tabor" (a sort of fife and drum).

* * *

The son of a successful trumpet player, Vic Firth (1930-2015) started learning the cornet at age four, turning later to percussion, trombone, clarinet, piano and music arrangement. When he reached high school, he was a full-time percussionist and created an 18-piece band at age 16. He played a variety of percussion instruments such as vibraphone, timpani and the drumset. Graduating from the New England Conservatory in Boston, he became the principal timpanist (and orchestra's youngest member) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, serving from 1956 to 2002.

Although most young percussionists are familiar with the name Vic Firth because of his sticks and mallets, many promising students first encounter Firth's musical substance through his numerous compositions and etudes. One of which is a tried-and-true old-school classic scored for seven percussionists. ***Encore in Jazz*** has catchy melodies, a smooth swing feel with sets and kicks in all the right places, and solo sections that give the opportunity to showcase lead players. Designed for the conservatory and advanced high school percussion group, ***Encore in Jazz*** is written in the jazz idiom using drumset, timpani, bongos, congas, 3 toms, Indian drum, cowbell (everyone needs more right?) as well as vibraphone and marimba. It is divided into two main sections; the first is a medium riff tempo and the second is an up-tempo two-beat section. At one point in the piece there is a "battle of drums" between the drumset player and the rest of the ensemble.

Vittorio Giannini (1903-1966) was one of the most distinguished of those American composers of the first half of the twentieth century whose work represented an evolution of aesthetic values and musical techniques inherited from the centuries-long European classical tradition. The romantic spirit of Giannini's own music and the traditional approach he advocated as a teacher place him in a similar position within American musical life to that occupied by his older contemporary, Howard Hanson.

Born in Philadelphia to a family of professional musicians, Giannini won a scholarship at age nine to study composition at the Verdi Conservatory in Milan, Italy. He returned after four years, continued to study privately and entered the Julliard school in 1925 where his chief composition teacher was Rubin Goldmark. He later returned to serve on the faculty there in 1939, as well as The Manhattan School of Music in 1941 and the Curtis Institute in 1956.

Giannini's earliest compositional interests primarily centered on vocal music, but in the 1940's he turned his attention more fully toward instrumental music, showing a predilection for Baroque and Classical forms, which he imbued with a Romantic warmth. From the mid 1950's through the early 1960's, Giannini composed five works for concert band. Though somewhat marginal to the aesthetic core of his output, they have become his most consistently and frequently performed pieces. Of these, the warmly affirmative **Symphony For Band No. 3** has become one of the most beloved works in the wind band repertoire. By the early 1960's, Giannini's compositional style took something of a turn. Although his formal and developmental procedures essentially remained the same, many of these later works reveal a darker character, a greater depth of expression, and a more dissonant harmonic language.

The Symphony No. 3 follows no program. The opening **Allegro energico**, in sonata-allegro form, offers a victorious opening. Its fundamental germinating force is the interval of a fourth, which is heard immediately in the first theme. The **Allegretto** movement, ABAB, is an example of rhythmic playfulness. Here, the kaleidoscopic shifting pulses of 6/8 and 3/4 meters rebound over and upon one another in intriguing fashion. The final **Allegro con brio**, also in sonata-allegro form, is announced by a tremendous woodwind sweep. Its pure excitement gives a thrilling emotional climax to the work.

La Crosse Wind Symphony Personnel

(listed alphabetically by section)

PICCOLO

Stephanie Brookman

FLUTE

Mona Gardner
Pamela Helgerson-
Dome
Rita Koch-Thometz
Nancy Pilmonas

OBOE

Mariah Forster Olson
Abigail Kading

ENGLISH HORN

Finola Dienger Hanson

BASSOON

Jeff Copp
Shannon Finn

CLARINET

Josh Baker
Michael Chesher
Jordan Cox
Kristin Freedlund
Harry Hindson
Karen Keil

BASS CLARINET

Jacob Erickson

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Kate Haller Ailabouni
Andrew Jones

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Josh Dohm

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Nate Johnson

TRUMPET

Josh Beron
Gary Boyd
Jaime Greenfield
Sara Hallberg
Scott Jensen
Jacob Klingbeil
Eric Larson
Robert Swerman

HORN

Tammy Bartz
Justin Davis
Chris Meunier
Jodi Monerson
Vickie Rortvedt

TROMBONE

Michelle Jensen
Tom Jensen
George Von Arx

BASS TROMBONE

Rachel O'Donnell

EUPHONIUM

Robert Coe
Mark Lakmann

TUBA

Scott Bradford
Geoff O'Donnell

STRING BASS

Leo Chavolla

PERCUSSION

Tammy Fisher *
Sam Hantzsch *
Dave Kies *
Carson Kopecky *
Van Maxwell *
Paula Neuzil *
Mary Wirkus *

PIANO

Michelle Jensen

* *personnel for Firth
ENCORE IN JAZZ*

JEFF C. KRAUKLIS retired as a band director in 2019 after a thirty-five year teaching career, the last twenty-eight years in the Holmen Schools. He received his Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, studying conducting with Donald E. Greene and his Master of Music Degree in Wind Conducting from Northwestern University, where he was a student of John P. Paynter. Prior to Holmen, he held teaching positions in Galesville, Wisconsin and Menominee, Michigan, and has served as an adjunct faculty member at UW-La Crosse where he conducted the Symphonic Band and at Viterbo University, where he instructs Instrumental Techniques. He was in the conducting rotation of the La Crosse Concert Band for over twenty years and was a long-time section leader, board member and officer on the Executive Committee.

An active composer, Krauklis has arranged or composed over 200 works for band, orchestra, jazz band, marching band, chorus and show choir. An avid performer and brass teacher, he maintains an active trumpet studio and performs frequently in the greater La Crosse area as a soloist, in brass quintets, and in classical and jazz ensembles. Krauklis has served as trumpet coach for the Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA) Middle Level State Honors Band and on the state board of directors for the Wisconsin chapter of the National Band Association. He was also a long-time adjudicator and clinician with WSMA.

THANK YOU!

We could not have staged a performance of this magnitude without the generous help and assistance of many people. A very special "Thank You" to the following for their invaluable contribution of time and resources:

*Mrs. Michelle Jensen and the Holmen H.S. Band Department
Dr. Kristin Mueller, District Administrator, Holmen Schools
Holmen High School Activities Office
Alex and Jacqueline Vaver*

*Robert (Bix) Swerman, Website and Facebook Coordinator
Kris Cvikota and Webteam, Inc for Website Design*

UW-La Crosse Music Department, La Crosse Central and Logan High Schools (for loan of music)

Paul Geyer Insurance

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