

PROGRAM NOTES

SYMPHONIC DANCE NO. 3, "FIESTA"

Symphonic Dance #3 "Fiesta" is one of five symphonic dances commissioned by the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra to celebrate its 25th anniversary in 1964. Each of the five dances represents the spirit of a different time and place in the history of San Antonio. This dance reflects the excitement and color of the city's many Mexican celebrations, which Williams called "the pageantry of Latin American celebration - street bands, bull fights, bright costumes, and the colorful legacy of a proud people."

The introductory brass fanfare creates an atmosphere of tense anticipation, while the bells, solo trumpet, and woodwinds herald the arrival of an approaching festival. The brass announces the matador's arrival to the bullring, and the finale evokes a joyous climax to the festivities. Williams rescored this work for band, and it was first performed in 1967 by the University of Miami Band, where he was chairman of theory and composition.

UM MITTERNACHT

One of five songs contained in Mahler's "Rückert Lieder," **Um Mitternacht** is the only song in the set scored for orchestral winds without strings. It is in fact Mahler's one and only contribution to the wind repertoire. *Um Mitternacht* (At Midnight) recounts the poet's battle with darkness in both its literal and figurative senses. Three central instrumental motives are introduced in the opening bars and form the foundation for much of the song: a three-note dotted figure in the clarinets; a rising and falling dotted figure in the flute; and an even descending scale in the horns, mirrored by an ascending scale in the voice.

Each of the first four stanzas weave these motives in different contexts and modalities, representing the poet's psychological fear of God, darkness, and the earthly realm. The poet's initial awareness of God is followed by the pursuit to understand the heavenly unknown. The poet then recognizes his own humanistic limitations and struggles to fight inherent "afflictions." This leads to a very different orchestration of the final section: the transcendent moment where the proportion, harmony and grandiosity build into extravagant fruition.

BOUNCING BALL (BRANDY)

Bouncing Ball (Brandy) was written in the Spring 2002 as a jazz quintet. Later that year it was adapted for studio orchestra, inspired by pianist and composer Roger Kellaway. In 2023, the work was adapted for winds. *Bouncing Ball (Brandy)* is a program piece, meant to represent the struggle between someone searching for a new and better life while holding on to a life mired in addiction and self-destruction. It is told from the perspective of a new lover, torn between the promise of forever, and abandonment. Back and forth the story plays between this new life and love, and the seductive calling of the past. The temptation proves too much to escape, and the relationship comes to a bitter end.

The piece begins with a short introduction for the winds, during which the themes of the work are subtly masked. The primary theme arrives at the tempo change and is found in the ostinato bass part, its constant presence underlining the relentlessness of addiction and the life that surrounds it. It never resolves and is a constant reminder that no matter how hard you try, you can never escape the inevitable.

The secondary theme enters with the tenor saxophone, and the setting is complete for this programmatic journey. As the trumpet enters, take note of the two voices working together against the unrelenting bass. The Wind Ensemble accompaniment often swarms the melodies and represents the torrent of emotion that surrounds a relationship like this one. Dramatic at times, subtle at others, the piece ends quietly and without resolution.

WILLOW WEEP FOR ME

The arranger writes:

Willow Weep For Me was composed in 1932 by Ann Ronell and dedicated to George Gershwin, the composer who helped her get her start in the music industry. It was recorded by Paul Whiteman the same year and became a popular hit single, rising to number 2 on the charts. Considered a jazz standard, this song has been recorded many, many times by various singers and instrumentalists, including the great trumpeter Clifford Brown, whose version is a favorite of my wife, Siubhan. I'm not sure why I thought that it would be a good idea to do my own version and invite that comparison! My only defense is that love is stupid. Regardless, my version is dedicated to my wife who was a classically trained ballerina, so it has moments that are supposed to sound like Russian ballet music.

COLORS

The composer writes:

Colors was written for the Belgian trombonist Ben Haemhouts, and was premiered on 29 December 1998, in Belgium. The starting point of *Colors* is bipartite: On the one hand I wanted to create a solo piece based upon the colors yellow, blue, red and green. I wanted to express the characteristics, associations and emotions related to these colors in a subtle manner. This way, every movement was named after a color:

- 1) Yellow: inspiring and stimulating, (also: wisdom and light)
- 2) Red: dynamic, passionate developing into dramatic (also: courage and willpower)
- 3) Blue: melancholic, dreamy and introvert (also: truth and peace)
- 4) Green: hopeful and full of expectation (also: balanced power and harmony)

A second important source of inspiration was the death of an uncle who was a trombone player in his free time. The unity in the piece is reached by the use of a three tone motif (c-d-g) which constantly returns in various ways throughout the composition and which is the basis of every important theme.

***Program Notes compiled from information found on the
Wind Repertory Project website (www.windrep.org)***



Symphonic Winds

Nikk Pilato, *conductor*

Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023 // 7 p.m.
Greaves Concert Hall

PROGRAM

Symphonic Dance No. 3 (1964/1967) Clifton Williams (1923-1976)

Um Mitternacht (1901) Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Kimberly Gelbwasser Lazzeri, *soprano*

Bouncing Ball (Brandy) (2002/2023) William Brian Hogg (b. 1973)

Willow Weep for Me (1932/2023) Ann Ronnell (1905-1993)

arr. John Zappa

John Zappa, *trumpet*

Colors (1998) Bert Appermont (b. 1973)

Movement I: Yellow

Movement IV: Green

Louis Setzer, *trombone*

PERSONNEL

FLUTE

Emily Brummett
Chyenne Hoge
Jessica Nottingham
Anna Stivers
Hayley Voorhees *

BASSOON

Caroline Phipps

CLARINET

Lena Dossa (bass)
Jackson Hatfield (contrabass)
Ashlyn Kendrick
Daniel McGee Marin
Noah Mattoon
Jorge Mendoza
Morgan Meyer (bass)
Meagan Miller (bass)
Erin Mills
Abby Morrison
Edward Rolett
Tobias Sturgeon
Peyton Wallace *
Derek Whippo

SAXOPHONE

Garrett Adams (tenor)
Emilie Becker (alto)
Aaryn Craig (bari)
Nathan Deininger (alto)
Jordan Figs * (alto)
Erin Horning (tenor)
Evan Schneider (alto)
Kylie Willis (alto)

TRUMPET

Spencer Cains
Quinn Caney *
Abigail Cole
Robby Lasonczyk
Max Robinette
Maddy St. Germain

HORN

Barbara Phillips ◇
Daniel Rottenberger

TROMBONE

David-Michael Davies
J.T. Dotson
Alex Lang (bass)
Rachel Millward
Kian Raleigh *
Kennedy Straub

EUPHONIUM

Vee Minauf
Melissa Young *

TUBA

Matthew Gray ◇
Jackie Stephens

PERCUSSION

Noah Blythe
Jules Eirich
Avary Harper
Patrick Medovich ◇
Sera Michel
Luke Myers *

PIANO

Rachel Millward

HARP

Madeline Arney ◇

COMBO

Jim Connerly (piano) ◇
Brian Hogg (saxophone) ◇
John Taylor (drumset) ◇
Matt Wiles (bass) ◇
John Zappa (trumpet) ◇

* principal
◇ guest performer

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