

Chamber Music Society of Louisville
March 18, 2018
Louisville, KY

THE AMERICAN BRASS QUINTET

Kevin Cobb, trumpet
Louis Hanzlik, trumpet
Eric Reed, horn
Michael Powell, trombone
John D. Rojak, bass trombone

PROGRAM

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| Consort Music of Elizabethan and Jacobean England | edited by Louis Hanzlik |
| Arise, awake | Thomas Morley (1557-1603) |
| Lachrimae Antiquae (Pavan) | John Dowland (1563-1626) |
| I Go Before, My Darling | Thomas Morley |
| Though Philomela Lost Her Love | Thomas Morley |
| Oft Have I Vow'd | John Wilbye (1574-1638) |
| Canzon | William Brade (1560-1630) |
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| Suite from 19th Century Russia | (Edited by Kevin Cobb) |
| Kriegslied | Ludwig Maurer (1789-1878) |
| Scherzo | Antoine Simon (1850-1916) |
| Lied | Ludwig Maurer |
| Divertissement | Antoine Simon |
| Morgengruss | Ludwig Maurer |
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| Music for Brass Instruments | Ingolf Dahl (1912-1970) |
| Chorale Fantasy: On "Christ Lay in the Bonds of Death" | |
| Intermezzo | |
| Fugue | |

INTERMISSION

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Common Heroes, Uncommon Land | Philip Lasser (b. 1963) |
| City Hero | |
| Hero of the Land | |
| Joy | |
| Hold Fast to Dreams | |
| Epilogue | |
| | |
| Copperwave | Joan Tower (b. 1938) |

The American Brass Quintet is represented by Kirshbaum Associates, New York.

Program Notes

Elizabethan and Jacobean Consort Music (edited by Louis Hanzlik)

The reigns of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and King James I (1603-1625) occurred at the height of the English Renaissance. During their reigns music, and arguably literature, became the defining artistic forms of the English Renaissance, due certainly in part to the value both monarchs placed on the inclusion of these art forms in their personal lives and their courts.

Queen Elizabeth was a music enthusiast whose love for the performance and practice of music (as well as a personal decree that all people of England embrace the things she most enjoyed) credits her with its rise as a popular art form during her reign. Elizabeth herself was a lutenist, and in turn expected all noblemen of English society to also take up the instrument. She also required that all young noblewomen be at the ready to take “their proper place in a vocal or instrumental ensemble” otherwise become “the laughing-stock of society.” Elizabeth employed dozens of musicians to accommodate music in her court, and her royal household was always bubbling with secular instrumental and vocal music intended not only for listening, but also dancing. Music of the Jacobean era continued to blossom during the monarchy of James I, but as a proclaimed poet himself, the king’s involvement with translating the bible to English (e.g., the King James Bible) and other publications proved he had a more vested interest in the literary arts.

Vocal music in the English courts was inspired largely by the rise in popularity of the Italian madrigalists of the time (numerous Italians were imported to England and employed by Elizabeth) and as a result, a relatively short lived but prolific English Madrigal School was born. This movement was led most notably by Thomas Morley whose madrigal for five voices “Arise, awake” from the Triumphs of Oriana (1601) and “I go before, my darling” and “Though Philomela lost her love” (two highly entertaining canzonets for two and three voices) are represented in this suite. Also presented here is “Oft have I vow’d” a five part madrigal for five voices, composed by John Wilbye during the Jacobean era. The influence of Italian madrigalists use of chromaticism in their works is uniquely evident in Wilbye’s composition.

With the development of the printing press (and Elizabeth’s regular habit of dancing as her preferred method of exercise) a growing number of amateur musicians made use of newly available sheet music and instrumental ensembles flourished. These “consorts” some mixed (or “broken”) and some made up of “like” instruments (such as a family of viols) performed music composed for instruments as well as voices, such as the popular madrigals of the time. Works in this suite representing popular instrumental music of the day include two popular dance forms (the pavan and galliard) on a theme by John Dowland, and an example of another strictly instrumental form, the canzona, by William Brade.

Note by Louis Hanzlik

SUITE FROM 19TH CENTURY RUSSIA (ed. Kevin Cobb)

It is well known that the writing for chamber brass during the Romantic period in music was relatively sparse due to a variety of factors, most notably the late development of the chromatic valve. However, the Russian presence in brass chamber music was always important, culminating in the writing of the quintets by Viktor Ewald and the sextet by Oskar Böhme. Despite these wonderful works, brass music incredibly had little attention paid to it again until after the Second World War when the influx of military brass musicians back into civil life precipitated the formation of chamber groups.

One of the major centers of musical influence of the 19th Century was St. Petersburg and it is from here that we draw inspiration for this collection. Many notable composers of the day were drawn to this vibrant city, among them Ludwig Maurer, one of the two composers featured in our Suite. Maurer was a violinist who split his career between his native Germany and St. Petersburg, and his writing brings a glimpse of traditional string chamber music to brass.

The other composer is another European émigré, Anton Simon, who left his native Paris at the age of 21 to reside in Moscow until his death in 1916. Like Maurer, Simon - a pianist - approached brass writing with more of the traditionally used songful string writing, making these two composers a perfect stylistic compliment to one another. Of particular note, to end the suite is the seldom played "Morgengruss", or morning greeting. Beautifully lyric, this is a wonderful example of what is possible with brass, both then and now.

Note by Kevin Cobb

INGOLF DAHL: Music for Brass Instruments

Born June 9, 1912 in Hamburg, Germany, and died August 7, 1970 in Frutigen, Switzerland.

In spirit and accomplishment, Ingolf Dahl was truly a Renaissance musician of the rarest abilities. Highly esteemed by his colleagues, revered by his students and loved by his friends, Dahl brought to his musical activities a depth of understanding and enthusiasm that never failed to invigorate and inspire performers and audiences alike. The scope of his mastery of so many diverse musical skills is astonishing--he was acclaimed as a conductor, composer, pianist (soloist and accompanist), historian, writer and arranger, editor, administrator and educator.

From the time of his immigration to California in 1939 until his death, Dahl committed himself to selfless labors on behalf of 20th-century music, particularly American works. Through performing or conducting he was responsible for the West Coast premieres of many important American works, including the Third Symphony and several of the violin sonatas of Charles Ives. With Ives's approval, he prepared (along with the violinist Sol Babitz) an edition of Ives' Third Violin Sonata for publication. As a founding member and active participant in the Evenings on the Roof concerts, board member of the Monday Evening Concerts and director of the Ojai Festivals for several years, Dahl introduced hundreds of new scores to the Western region of the country. He was a true scholar in his field (which included the history of all of Western music) and from 1945 was a professor at the University of Southern California, where he became active in virtually every facet of music making and teaching.

Though Dahl was not a prolific composer--his demanding schedule in addition to his obsession with rewriting and revising precluded a large output--several of his works have become classics of American music. There include the Allegro and Arioso for woodwind quintet (1942), Music for Brass Instruments (1944), Concerto for clarinet, violin and cello (1947), Concerto for Saxophone (1949), and the great Sinfonietta for Band (1961). Music for Brass Instruments was commissioned in 1944 for the Modern Music Festival in Los Angeles by Arthur Leslie Jacobs, the director of the festival. Jacobs wanted a brass work to complement Dahl's woodwind quintet, Allegro and Arioso, that had been successfully premiered during the 1943 festival. Dahl composed the work while serving as accompanist to Gracie Fields on an East Coast tour. The third movement was the first completed, in New York City on February 27, 1944, while the first and second movements were finished, respectively, in Louisville on April 24 and Toronto on May 3. The completed score was inscribed: "To Cpl. Gail Kubik, 32824096, A.A.F.F.M.P.U.," Gail Kubik being a close composer friend of Dahl who at the time was in the armed forces. The numbers and abbreviations refer to Kubik's rank, service number and unit. The work was first performed on May 27, 1944 at the sixth annual Modern Music Festival of the First Congregational Church in Los Angeles, with Dahl conducting the brass quintet.

It is interesting to note that the two main themes of the last movement are based on personal numerical associations for Dahl. The first somewhat angular fugal theme is based on the telephone number of Universal Studios: HO4-2761, where Dahl was actively engaged in composing film music during the 1940s. The theme is built on 4-2-7-6-1 of the C scale. The second theme, more subdued and lyrical in nature, is a notational representation of the army serial number of Gail Kubik (32824096) that appeared in the dedication.

The American Brass Quintet enjoyed a special personal rapport with Dahl, for the composer on several occasions attended their performances. Dahl apparently was very much impressed by the interpretive and technical mastery of the group, for he wrote in glowing, enthusiastic terms of their performances of *Music for Brass Instruments*. In a subsequent after-concert dinner, the American Brass Quintet finally extracted a promise of a new quintet from Dahl that had been requested for many years. In a letter to Donal Michalsky dated April 8, 1970, Dahl humorously referred to this meeting by writing: "In self defense I'll have to write a new brass quintet--but I'm afraid that *Son of Lassie* isn't going to be as good as *Lassie*." This promise was, unfortunately, not fulfilled, for Dahl died only several months afterward.

Music for Brass Instruments, symphonically conceived and written with an orchestral expansiveness, is a multi-faceted work of exceptional nobility and stature. The nature of the music--stately and proud, mischievous and playful, melancholy and pensive--affects the listener through its gently probing, searching character. As the essence of this music transcends the materials of its creation, one is immersed in a wealth of sound and experience that is both intensely personal and for some, luminously visionary.

Note by Paul Cohen

PHILIP LASSER: *Common Heroes, Uncommon Land*

Philip Lasser is an American composer with French musical roots. Trained from an early age at Nadia Boulanger's *Ecole d'Arts Americaines* in Fontainebleau, France, he has created a unique sound world that blends together the harmonies of French Impressionist sonorities and the dynamic rhythms and characteristics of American music. Following his studies at Harvard College, Lasser moved to Paris to work with Boulanger's closest colleague and disciple, the Catalan composer, Narcis Bonet and continue his piano studies with Gaby Casadesus. His music has entered the repertoire in all genres with regular performances and broadcasts by artists including Frank Almond, Zuill Bailey, Steven Blier, Sasha Cooke, Natalie Dessay, Simone Dinnerstein, Elizabeth Futral, Margo Garrett, Jimmy Lin, Susanna Phillips, Liv Redpath and Brian Zeger and performances by the Atlanta Symphony, Berlin and Leipzig Radio Orchestras, and Juilliard415. Lasser received his BA *summa cum laude* from Harvard College, his MA from Columbia University, and his DMA from Juilliard where he studied with David Diamond. He has been on the faculty at Juilliard since 1996 and is also director for the EAMA—Nadia Boulanger Institute in Paris. Lasser is author of *The Spiraling Tapestry*, a seminal treatise on contrapuntal analysis exploring the musical universe from Bach to Debussy, and his works can be heard on the Sony, Decca, and Delos labels. (philiplasser.com) *Common Heroes, Uncommon Land* was commissioned by The Juilliard School for the American Brass Quintet in honor of the ensemble's 30th anniversary. Philip Lasser has written the following about the work:

Common Heroes, Uncommon Land speaks of the glory of the everyday. It celebrates the human spirit in its daily routine and uncrushable work ethic. Based on five short poems by various poets, each movement explores a particular facet of the American experience. The first movement describes the urban heroes in their dogged morning trek towards work and sustenance. The second honors the farmers in their rural struggle with

the land. The third and fourth movements celebrate our common quest for joy and the noble act of holding fast to dreams. The last movement serves as an epilogue to the work offering an ode to the everyday heroes and heroines of our land as they create the future.

JOAN TOWER: Copperwave

Joan Tower is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than fifty years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo, and Muir quartets; soloists Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Washington DC among others. Tower's tremendously popular five *Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman* have been played by more than 400 different ensembles. Since 1972 Tower has taught at Bard College, where she is Asher Edelman Professor of Music.

Tower was the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission of sixty-five orchestras. Leonard Slatkin and the Nashville Symphony recorded *Made in America* in 2008 (along with *Tambor* and *Concerto for Orchestra*). The album collected three Grammy awards: Best Contemporary Classical Composition, Best Classical Album, and Best Orchestral Performance. Nashville's latest all-Tower recording includes *Stroke*, which received a 2016 Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. In 1990 she became the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for *Silver Ladders*, a piece she wrote for the St. Louis Symphony where she was Composer-in-Residence from 1985-88. Other residencies with orchestras include a 10-year residency with the Orchestra of St. Luke's (1997-2007) and the Pittsburgh Symphony (2010-2011). She was the Albany Symphony's Mentor Composer partner in the 2013-14 season. Tower was cofounder and pianist for the Naumburg Award winning Da Capo Chamber Players from 1970-1985.

Note by the composer:

The title of the piece is COPPERWAVE. What this means is that copper (in brass) creates a weighty (and heavy) motion and feeling that travels in waves (and circles) throughout the piece. Another more "background" story is that my father was a mining engineer and dealt with copper in some of his jobs in Latin America where the family lived for nine years-hence the "conga" rhythm.

Copperwave was commissioned for the American Brass Quintet by The Juilliard School for its Centennial Celebration. This commission was supported by the Trust of Francis Goelet.

Copperwave is recorded by the American Brass Quintet on its CD "State of the Art" (Summit DCD 553)

The pre-concert presentation will feature Bruce Heim, Professor of Horn at the School of Music, whose comments will draw on his extensive experience and enthusiasm for this concert's repertoire. All are welcome to attend the session starting at 2 PM in Room 130.