



FALL CONCERT

October 22, 2023
7pm

Lamar Baptist Church
1000 West Lamar Boulevard
Arlington, Texas



www.arlingtoncommunityband.org



Program Order

The Barber of Seville	Gioachino Rossini
Cajun Folk Songs II.....	Frank Ticheli
Ballad For Band	Morton Gould
Prelude, Siciliano and Rondo.....	Malcom Arnold
Chanteys	Robert Sheldon
Australian Up-Country Tune.....	Percy Aldridge Grainger
On A Hymnsong of Philip Bliss	David R. Holsinger
Festivity.....	James Curnow

Program Notes

The Barber of Seville

The Barber of Seville is surely one of the most popular operas in the repertory – it ranks fifth on Opera America’s list of the 20 most performed operas in North America. Further, it is a favorite with musicians and singers – its wit, timing and invention have been admired by composers from Beethoven to Richard Strauss. And its overture appears regularly on concert programs, and along with the aria “Largo al factotum” has been parodied in animated cartoons starring Woody Woodpecker, Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Daffy Duck, and Tom and Jerry.

The truth, however, is that The Barber of Seville or The Useless Precaution was a fiasco at its premiere in Rome on February 20, 1816. The audience hissed and jeered throughout, provoked by supporters of Rossini’s rivals and by the fact that another composer, Giovanni Paisiello, had already written an opera based on the original Beaumarchais play. Further, in the premiere performance several on-stage mishaps embarrassed the singers and interrupted the action. Topping all this, the overture had nothing to do with the opera, and knowing audience members recognized it as a borrowing from previous Rossini operas. He initially composed the overture for a serious opera, Aureliano in Palmira, premiered in Milan in 1813, and then used it again for Elisabetta, Regina d’Inghilterra, produced in Naples in 1815. The busy composer wrote the entire Barber of Seville in less than three weeks, and pressed for time decided to use this overture a third time.

This time the overture stuck, and became so identified with the Barber that commentators have since tried to identify the episodes of the opera’s plot that it depicts.

The overture begins with a pompous Andante maestoso section to build suspense. After a complete stop, the main section begins, Allegro vivace, which, notwithstanding the overture's past history, reflects the hilarity and high spirits of the opera and its plot. And, of course, it features the "Rossini crescendo" – the composer's "fingerprint" of creating excitement with a long repetition of a strain beginning in a whisper and rising to a brilliant tempest of sound.

Cajun Folk Songs II

This work is the second set of folk songs composed as a tribute to the people of the old Cajun culture. Cajuns are descendants of the Acadians, a group of early French colonists who settled in Nova Scotia and were driven south to Louisiana by the British in the mid-1750s.

Louisiana-born Frank Ticheli based these works on folk melodies whose precise origins are unknown, freely combining them with original music. In the first movement, he opens with a personal reflective brass chorale, followed by two different settings of a Cajun folk song. This melancholy Ballad, with its starkly beautiful textures and harmonies, is followed by a brash and lively Country Dance. This music evokes the energetic feeling and style of a Cajun two-step, a form commonly used in the dance halls of southern Louisiana that has stylistic similarities to Scottish folk dances and the American hoedown.

The work very successfully captures the spirit of popular music of that era [1946], as well as dance forms and jazz. Lush harmonies and chord structures are on display, as well as thematic interplay between sections of the ensemble. The Ballad is one of the most beloved and most often performed of the band's literature of the mid-twentieth century.

- Program notes from San Luis Obispo Wind Orchestra concert program, 14 May 2011

Ballad for Band

In 1946 Morton Gould somehow found a few minutes to satisfy a request from conductor Edwin Franko Goldman to write a piece for his renowned Goldman Band. The result was the reflective and sensitively scored Ballad for Band, a work inspired by African-American spirituals. In an interview with Dr. Thomas Stone, Gould offered insight on how the spiritual influenced this music:

I have always been sensitive to, and stimulated by, the sounds that I would call our "American vernacular" -- jazz, ragtime, gospel, spirituals, hillbilly. The spirituals have always been the essence, in many ways, of our musical art, our musical spirit. The spiritual is an emotional, rhythmic expression. The spiritual has a universal feeling; it comes from the soul, from the gut. People all over the world react to them ... I am not aware of the first time I heard them. It was undoubtedly a sound I heard as a child; maybe at a revival.

Morton Gould offers the following additional commentary: "Ballad for Band is basically an introverted piece that starts slowly, is linear, and has a quiet lyricism; it is not big band in the sense that there is little razzle-dazzle. A discerning listener who is programmed to appreciate the nuances and subtlety of a contemporary

piece would respond favorably to this, but others merely find it from relatively pleasant to slightly boring. Only certain listeners respond to what this piece represents musically.”

It also captures the spirit of popular music and dance forms. The beauty of the melody can hide the complexities of theme exchanges within the sections of the band. Antecedent-consequent phrases play off each other and build tension. Accents, syncopation, and lively rhythmic patterns complement the lush harmonies of the chord structures.

- Program Note by composer and the United States Marine Band

Prelude, Siciliano, and Rondo

Sir Malcolm Henry Arnold was first inspired to play the trumpet after hearing a performance of Louis Armstrong. Arnold was appointed as second trumpet of the London Philharmonic in 1941 and assumed the principal chair in 1943. In 1948, Sir Malcolm turned to composition and lent his fresh and cheerful voice to movie scores and symphonic works. He contributed music to over 130 film scores and won an Academy Award in 1957 for his score for “The Bridge on the River Kwai.”

Arnold rejected the atonality of the serial composers and instead crafted beautiful melodies. His collections of English and Scottish dances are mainstays of the symphonic band repertoire.

Originally written for brass band and entitled “Little Suite for Brass, Op. 80,” “Prelude, Siciliano and Rondo” opens as a dignified procession including mild dissonance and well-placed fanfares. Harmonically straight-forward, it announces the hauntingly beautiful Siciliano, a 6/8 dance featuring trumpet and alto sax solos and arching woodwind lines. The whole thing comes to a joyful conclusion with a romp in Rondo form. Never one to deny his audience, Arnold pushes tempo to the very end for a flag-waving conclusion.

Chanteys

Chanteys is an original work that recalls the music of the sea and its sailors. A jaunty opening sparkles with character and style before yielding to a pensive “Andante.” The piece closes with a spirited juxtaposition of thematic material. Expressive, entertaining and great fun to play, this piece was also selected by the Yamaha Music Media Corporation of Japan as one of the “100 Best Pieces for Band” for 2001.

- Program Note from publisher

Australian Up-Country Tune

Grainger’s Australian Up-Country Tune is based on the composer’s Up-Country Song, written for unaccompanied and wordless voices. “In the tune,” the composer wrote, “I had wished to voice an Australian up-country feeling as Stephen Foster had with American country-side feelings in his songs.”

- Program Note by Heritage Encyclopedia of Band Music

On A Hymnsong Of Philip Bliss

On A Hymnsong Of Philip Bliss is a radical departure of style of this composer. The frantic tempos, the ebullient rhythms we associate with Holsinger are replaced with a restful, gentle, and reflective composition based on the 1876 Philip Bliss-Horatio Spafford hymn, It Is Well with My Soul. Written to honor the retiring principal of Shady Grove Christian Academy, On A Hymnsong Of Philip Bliss' was presented as a gift from the SGCA Concert Band to Rev. Steve Edel in May of 1989.

Horatio G. Spafford, a Chicago Presbyterian layman and successful businessman, planned a European trip for his family in 1873. In November of that year, due to unexpected last minute business developments, he had to remain in Chicago; but he sent his wife and four daughters on ahead as scheduled aboard the S.S. Ville du Havre. He expected to follow in a few days. On November 22, the ship was struck by the Lochearn, an English vessel, and sank in twelve minutes. Several days later the survivors were finally landed in Cardiff, Wales, and Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband, "Saved alone." Shortly afterward, Spafford left by ship to join his bereaved wife.

It is speculated that on the sea near the area where it was thought his four daughters had drowned, Spafford penned this text with words so significantly describing his own personal grief, "When sorrows like sea billows roll..." It is noteworthy, however, that Spafford does not dwell on the theme of life's sorrows and trials, but focuses attention in the third stanza on the redemptive work of Christ. Humanly speaking, it is amazing that one could experience such personal tragedy and sorrow as did Horatio Spafford and still be able to say with such convincing clarity, "It is well with my soul..."

Hymnwriter Philip Bliss was so impressed with the experience and expression of Spafford's text that he shortly wrote the music for it, first published in 1876. Bliss was a prolific writer of gospel songs throughout his brief lifetime, and in most cases he wrote both the words and the music. This hymn is one of the few exceptions.

There is speculation that this was perhaps the last gospel song written by Bliss. Bliss and his wife, Lucy, were killed in a train wreck in Ashtabula, Ohio, on December 29, 1876. Most sources mention that Bliss actually escaped from the flames first, but was then killed when he went back into the train to try to rescue his wife. Neither body was ever found.

As a postscript, Bliss's trunk was salvaged from the wreckage, and in it, evangelist D. W. Whittle found an unfinished hymn, which began, "I know not what awaits me, God kindly veils my eyes..."

Celebration Fanfare

Franz Joseph Haydn's famous melody from the second movement of his Emperor Quartet is frequently heard in hymns, anthems and alma maters worldwide. Presented in this extended celebratory fanfare, this noted composer skillfully weaves this majestic melody into a spectacular display of exuberance and sonic energy.



Rick Baker has been the Conductor and Music Director of the Arlington Community Band since 2010. Prior to his appointment as its Conductor, he played first trumpet in the band for 28 years, and a Charter member. He has also been a music educator since 1977. Rick retired in 2007 after twenty-nine years teaching Band in the Arlington I.S.D. He was most recently Director of Bands at James Bowie High School where he also served as Head of the Fine Arts Department. Prior to his tenure at Bowie High School, Mr. Baker taught Junior High School Bands in Arlington for nineteen years. He is a graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington and also holds a Masters in Music from East Texas State University.

Bands under his direction have won numerous First Divisions at U.I.L. competitions, as well as many well-known Festivals throughout the United States.

Mr. Baker is also very active as a professional trumpet performer. He played Principal Trumpet with the Wichita Falls Symphony for five seasons and played in the Texas Wind Symphony for fifteen seasons. In

addition, he has spent twenty-eight years in the Arlington Community Band, and six years in the Collection Jazz Orchestra. He also plays in the Metro Praise Orchestra and The Joshua Experience, two area Christian Big Bands. He also free lances in local churches and musical theater productions. He is very active in his retirement, presenting many band clinics, judging contests and playing trumpet. Mr. Baker is an adjunct professor of music at Dallas Baptist University where he teaches classes in Music Education, conducts the Jazz combo and teaches instrumental private lessons. Mr. Baker resides in Arlington with his wife, Nan. The Bakers enjoy their Lake House, traveling, scuba diving and spending time with their 4 grandsons.



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