

# Program Notes

## **KIRKPATRICK FANFARE – Andrew Boysen, Jr.**

*Kirkpatrick Fanfare* was commissioned by Central Missouri State University for the dedication of the James C. Kirkpatrick Library in March 1999. This work has a definite Irish flavor, including a strain of *Danny Boy*. The "fanfare" features driving rhythms and exciting brass figures, making this dramatic work sure to please both performers and audiences alike.

- Program Note by composer

## **OLD CHURCHES – Michael Colgrass**

According to composer Michael Colgrass, *Old Churches* is one of the most challenging pieces he can remember writing. His solution was to write a work based on Gregorian vocal chant with unison melodies. Playing in unison helps student musicians feel more confident and allowed Colgrass to copiously double the melodic lines. The tempo is slow; the phrases are all in quarter and eighth notes, and the harmonies are simple. Some easy *graphic notation* and *chance* techniques are employed, such as pitches played without rhythm, and a *murmuring effect* that simulates the idea of voices echoing in monastic churches.

*Old Churches* uses Gregorian chant to create a slightly mysterious monastery scene filled with the prayers and chanting of monks in an old church. Gregorian chant is ancient church music and that has been in existence for over 1500 years. The chant unfolds through call and response patterns. One monk intones a musical idea, then the rest of the monks respond by singing back. This musical conversation continues throughout the piece, except for a few brief interruptions. Perhaps they are the quiet comments church visitors make to one another.

- Program Note by composer

## **IN DREAMS – Cait Nishimura**

*In Dreams* explores the powerful and surreal experience of the crossover between dreams and reality. With subtle shifts in color and texture, tender and soaring memories, and driving ostinatos, the piece introduces intermediate to advanced bands to elements of minimalism and provides musical challenges for all sections of the ensemble. *In Dreams* takes players and listeners on an emotional and music journey full of hope and yearning, from deep sleep to a world of dreams and back. The piece was commissioned by a consortium of 38 ensembles across Canada and the United States. The consortium was organized by Dr. Patrick Murphy at the University of Portland.

## **AMERICAN HYMN SONG SUITE – Dwayne S. Milburn**

*American Hymn Song Suite* is firmly rooted in my family history as church musicians. I grew up singing and playing many different hymns, including the four tunes featured in this work. The final impetus to compose this treatment came during an organ concert in Atlanta, Georgia. One section of the program featured innovative settings of three hymns. With the gracious consent of composers Joe Utterback and Brooks Kukendall, I adapted their settings to act as the inner movements of the suite, bracketed with my own original treatments of favorite hymns.

*The Prelude on Wondrous Love (What Wondrous Love is This)* opens with a chant-like statement of this southern tune before proceeding to a more kinetic retelling. *Ballad on Balm in Gilead* features a rich jazz harmonization of this familiar spiritual. The *Scherzo on Nettleton (Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing)* contains rhythmic playfulness and the *March on Wilson (When We All Get to Heaven)* calls to mind the wildest marching band ever heard.

- Program Note by composer

## **OLYMPIC FIREWORKS – David Stanhope**

*Olympic Fireworks* was given its premiere by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, with the composer conducting, at the closing ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. *Olympic Fireworks* was performed during the opening ceremony and the final fireworks. The wind band version was written at the same time.

Much of the work is based on the composer's *Ceremonial Fanfare No. 1* for brass quintet. Olympic Fireworks is made up of four main sections. The first begins with sparkling sixteenth-note patterns, followed by a rising theme in triplets. The second (announced by the horns) introduces a new triplet theme with rising and falling duplets answering; these themes are developed to some extent before the fourth section repeats much of the opening part, adding a majestic coda. Commissioned by Dale Lonis for the University of Missouri-Columbia Wind Ensemble, USA

### **CAPRICCIO FOR BASS TROMBONE AND WIND BAND – Steven Verhelst**

*Capriccio* was written especially for Ben Van Dijk, bass trombonist of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and was premiered in November 2005 at the Kentucky University Trombone Day.

William Shillington, bass trombone soloist, is a senior music education major from Fort Mill, South Carolina and is the 2024 Bruce Thompson Concerto Competition winner. Mr. Shillington has a long resume of performance experiences including the Rock Hill Symphony Orchestra and the Rock Hill Choral Society. Will's leadership while a student at Winthrop University includes serving as president for both the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), Winthrop Chapter #344 and the Winthrop Association of Brass Students (WUABS). Will Shillington is a student of Dr. Justin Isenhour.

### **REDWOOD – Ryan George**

*Redwood* was commissioned by the Collins Hill High School Band and written in honor of Richard Marshall.

"When the Collins Hill High School Band in Suwanee, Georgia approached me about writing a piece for their Director of Bands, who was set to retire at the end of the year, they wanted something that spoke not only to this man's love of music but also to his love for the great outdoors. I was reminded of the times growing up when my family and I would go camping in Sequoia National Park setting up our tents among the giant redwood trees. These trees command attention with their immense stature and size as the result of years gone by and storms weathered. And yet they exude a peaceful and subtle tranquility. This idea of powerful-tranquility became the cornerstone of this lyrical tone poem."

- Ryan George

### **SEA SONGS – Ralph Vaughan Williams**

Written in 1923 for the following year's Wembley Exhibition, Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Sea Songs* is a march medley of three well-known British sea shanties: *Princess Royal*, *Admiral Benbow*, and *Portsmouth*. Written in typical march form with a trio, it was published simultaneously for brass band and wind band, and was later transcribed by the composer for symphony orchestra. *Sea Songs* was originally arranged for military band in 1923 as the second movement of *English Folk Song Suite*. This work stemmed from Vaughan Williams' admiration for the band of the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall.

### **PHOENIX – Andrew Boysen Jr.**

The idea of rebirth has been explored by artists, authors, and composers throughout history, probably because it is subject matter that is significant to almost everyone. Who hasn't felt the need to start over? Who hasn't experienced great loss or sadness and needed to find a way to move on? Who hasn't found joy and beauty in life again after facing difficulty and struggle? Considering the situation, this seemed like the perfect subject matter to me, and I was immediately attracted to the concept of the *Phoenix*, the mythical bird which cyclically perishes in fiery death, before rising again from its own ashes to begin life anew.

*Phoenix* is in two interconnected parts, both at a single fast tempo. The first part explores emotions of aggression and destruction, a sustained, fierce, and furious push leading to ultimate demise. Two extended and unmetered solos in the flute and clarinet signify the final moments before death and then the second section of the work begins. Introduced by mallets, keyboards and crystal glasses, the emergence of a new version of the original pitch material brings a new perspective and a feeling of openness and promise for the future. This is the turning point, and although there is still a battle to return home, it is a time of resurrection, rebirth, and celebration.

- Program Note by composer

