

Program Notes

MASQUE – Francis McBeth

Masque was commissioned in 1967 by the State College of Arkansas for the dedication of the Fine Arts Center. The piece is in a contemporary idiom familiar to followers of concert band music -- not unusually experimental but nevertheless making use of twentieth-century devices. For example, *Masque* uses a variety of percussion instruments, has nontraditional harmonies, and makes use of short motifs for melodic interest. Two themes serve as the basic material for the entire piece; one is rhythmic, being heard only in the fast sections, and the other is a melodic three-note motif, which is developed during the entire course of the work.

- Program notes from University of North Carolina, Greensboro, University Band concert program, 3 October 2016

GOODNIGHT MOON – Eric Whitacre/Arr. Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant

Over the past few years, I must have read *Goodnight Moon* to my son a thousand times -- maybe more. Somewhere around reading number 500, I began hearing little musical fragments as I read, and over time those fragments began to blossom into a simple, sweet lullaby. I knew it was a long shot, but I asked my manager, Claire Long, to contact HarperCollins and see if they would allow the text to be set to music. To my surprise and delight they agreed -- the first time they had ever allowed *Goodnight Moon* to be used in such a way.

I composed the piece relatively quickly, originally setting the text for harp, string orchestra, and my son's mother, soprano Hila Plitmann. I later arranged *Goodnight Moon* for SATB choir and piano. More recently, my dear friend Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant arranged the piece for wind ensemble and soloist.

The melody of *Goodnight Moon* will forever make me think of those quiet nights, reading my son to sleep.

- Program Note by Composer

SCENES FROM “THE LOUVRE” – Norman Dello Joio

Scenes from "The Louvre" comes from a 1964 television documentary produced by NBC News called *A Golden Prison: The Louvre*, for which Dello Joio provided the soundtrack. The documentary tells the history of the Louvre and its world-class collection of art, which is in many ways inseparable from the history of France.

Dello Joio chose to use the music of Renaissance-era composers in his soundtrack to match the historical depth of the film. He collected the highlights of this Emmy-winning score into a five-movement suite for band in 1965. The first movement, *Portals*, is the title music from the documentary, and it consists entirely of Dello Joio's original material, complete with strident rhythms and bold 20th-century harmony. The second movement, *Children's Gallery*, never actually appears in the film. It is a light-hearted theme and variations of Tielman Susato's *Ronde et Saltarelle*. The stately third movement is based on themes by Louis XIV's court

composer, Jean-Baptiste Lully, and is aptly titled *The Kings of France*. Movement four, *The Nativity Paintings*, uses the medieval theme *In Dulci Jubilo*. The *Finale* uses the *Cestiliche Sonata* of Vincenzo Albrici as its source material, to which Dello Joio adds his own harmonic flavor, particularly in the final passages of the piece.

- *Program Note from Ohlone Wind Orchestra concert program, 10 November 2013*

A MOTHER OF A REVOLUTION – Omar Thomas

This piece is a celebration of the bravery of trans women, and in particular Marsha "Pay It No Mind" Johnson. Marsha is credited with being one of the instigators of the famous Stonewall uprising of June 28, 1969 -- one of the pivotal events of the LGBTQ liberation movement of the 20th century -- which is commemorated annually during the worldwide Gay Pride celebrations. Existing as a trans woman, especially a trans woman of color, and daring to live authentically, creating space for oneself in a transphobic world, is one of the bravest acts I can imagine. Over 20 trans women were murdered in the United States in 2018 alone. There is no demographic more deserving and, frankly, long overdue for highlighted heroism and bravery. The disco vibe in the latter half of the piece is meant to honor club culture, a sacred space held amongst LGBTQ persons in which to love, live, mourn, heal, strategize, connect, disconnect, and dance in defiance of those outside forces who would seek to do LGBTQ persons harm simply for daring to exist and take up space.

We pump our fists to honor the life, heroism, activism, and bravery of Marsha P. Johnson, to honor the legacy of the Stonewall revolution, to honor the memory of the trans lives violently ended due to fear and hatred, and in honor of trans women worldwide who continue to exist unapologetically and who demand to be seen.

This piece was commissioned by the Desert Winds Freedom Band, under the direction of Dean McDowell, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

- *Program Note by Composer*

TERPSICHORE – Bob Margolis (after Michael Praetorius)

Terpsichore for Symphonic Band is based on dances from the Court of Henry IV of France, first published under the same title by Michael Praetorius, in Germany, in 1612. *Terpsichore* is the Greek Muse of dancing. She is one of the nine Muses, who are the daughters of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory and Zeus, the presiding Greek god.

The beginning of this band work is a quiet invocation to the spirit of ancient dance and is followed by a street scene depicting wild and savage goings-on. The energy level and tunes are explosive, the moods, constantly and unpredictably changing. Speed, flexibility, and energy dominate. Towards the middle of the movement, a brass quintet plays the original Renaissance music upon which the movement is based. The invocation reappears, and the music ends in a florid swirl of notes.

The second movement begins with a quintet of gently chirping flutes (*The Robin*) followed by a brazen ballet, *Amazons*. A loud chime introduces a scintillating and vibrant jumping dance, or *Volte*, which takes us to a breathless and abrupt close.

The third movement begins with a bright xylophone solo, followed by a series of bright and transparent *Bourees*. The end of the movement reproduces, as nearly as is possible in the modern symphonic band, the sound of an actual *Renaissance* wind band.

The final movement, which is the longest, most complex, and most exciting one, begins with a sprightly *Gaillarde* for solo organ. The *Gaillarde* is followed by a series of warmly peaceful variations called *Reprinses* before a unique series of tunes that feature the individual instrumental choirs of the band. Finally, an exhilarating and strongly rhythmic *Volte* features a euphonium soloist before building in energy to a resplendent close.

-Program Note by Composer