

variations which can be played in any consecutive order. The Variation I is a passionate song, Variation II a light and whimsical march, and the Variation V a dramatic brass statement ending quietly in the woodwinds. Variations III and IV have passages where several instruments are given precise pitches to perform as the player chooses, all within a span of indicated time. The composer also allows for two or more variations to be played simultaneously, or to change from one variation to another at the player's or conductor's discretion.

REQUIEM

David Maslanka

A Requiem is a Mass for the dead. This relatively brief instrumental piece with the title *Requiem* is not a Mass but serves a parallel function – the need to lay to rest old things in order to turn the mind and heart toward the new.

I have an abiding interest in why humans go to war. I have recently read much about World War II and was confronted once again with the awful fact of fifty million needless deaths. Shostakovich thought of every one of his compositions as a tombstone and wished that he could have written a separate memorial piece for every person who died in war.

I do believe that we are in a major transitional time, and that this transition happens first in each of us. My *Requiem* is both for the unnamed dead of all wars, and for each person making their own inner step, saying goodbye in order to say hello.

Requiem is a single-movement fantasia written in response to an event of the Holocaust in World War II. It is not possible truly to grasp the deaths of millions of people, but the death of one, in this case a year-old baby – brought me face-to-face with the horror and revulsion of the whole. We think that history is past, and nothing can change it. But the effects of such things as the Holocaust are still immediately with us; the open wound has not been healed. It is my feeling that music can bring closure, and it is my hope that *Requiem* will serve in this capacity.

Note by David Maslanka

O MENSCH, BEWEIN' DEIN' SÜNDE GROß

Johann Sebastian Bach

This chorale prelude is taken from Bach's *Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book)* written between 1708 and 1717 while organist of the ducal court in Weimar. Bach's preface explains the pedagogical intent of the book, "in which a beginning organist receives given instruction as to performing a chorale in a multitude of ways while achieving mastery in the study of the pedal, since in the chorales contained herein the pedal is treated entirely obbligato [an independent, indispensable melody]."

The chorale itself, "O man, bewail thy sins so great," is a Lutheran Passion hymn whose text dates from 1530, although the melody predates that. Bach's setting is one of his most celebrated chorale preludes, versions of which he included in both the *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion*.

Percy Aldridge Grainger arranged several historical works for band, calling them his "Chosen Gems for Winds." The music of J.S. Bach played a central role in Grainger's musical life, and he set at least four of Bach's works for his "Gems." His setting of this chorale prelude is akin to his setting of DeCabezon's *Prelude in the Dorian Mode* in that both use Grainger's "elastic scoring" concept – with each instrumental voice assigned a "tone strand" – making the work performable by any variety of instrumental combinations.

His Bach setting dates from 1937-42, composed during his summer teaching at Interlochen. Grainger's approach to ornamentation, while perhaps unusual today, would have been considered revolutionary in the 1940s.

PLANET B

Catherine Likhuta

Children are one third of our population and all of our future
Select Panel for the Promotion of Child Health 1981

It is no secret to anyone that our planet is suffering, least of all to the children of today. I heard the following sentiment: "Take care of your planet. There is no planet B." And I thought: what if there were an ideal planet without violence, racism, greed, ecological emergencies, and global pandemics? A musical journey towards such a planet could give us all some optimism for the future. I believe that in 2021 we need it more than ever.

The piece opens with static stacked perfect fifths, representing the vastness and the mysterious power of Space. Then, we zoom in on Earth, singling it out from the entire galaxy. The Earth is crying. It is hurt. It is letting out deep sighs, as if a wounded majestic animal.

The next section of the piece, characterized by rising tension, is the musical version of "enough is enough!" It represents the protests, the high-school kids carrying huge posters, the outcries of the young generation. They are brave, bold, and they demand change and action. They came to protest and brought their message across loud and clear. Think about Greta Thunberg screaming: "...we will NEVER forgive you!!!" with tears running down her cheeks. The Earth is shouting with them, and the Earth is grieving with them.

The final section opens with the musical imitation of the sky clearing after a storm, sun coming out, and nature starting to awaken. This section is about positivity, hope and healing. In the final chords, we are zooming out and going back into Space, seeing the Earth get smaller and smaller. The Earth is smiling. It looks greener. It feels healed.

Note by Catherine Likhuta

THE CASTLE HOUSE RAG

James Reese Europe

James Reese Europe was born in Mobile, Alabama, and moved when young with his family to Washington D.C., and then New York. In 1910, at the age of 29, Europe organized the Clef Club in Harlem, a society for Black Americans in the music industry – part booking agency, part labor exchange, part fraternity, part concertizing organization. Instrumentalists consisted of the usual compliments of strings and brass one could find in bands and orchestra, but also included mandolins, guitars, ukuleles and banjos, as well as a men's chorus, soloists, and pianists.

The impact of the Clef Club Orchestra concert at Carnegie Hall in 1912 cannot be overstated. This singular concert brought the music of Black Americans directly in contact with the white concert-going audience in a preeminent classical venue. While not a jazz band, the Clef Club Orchestra presented many of the musical elements that would become jazz in that concert – years before the ensembles of Paul Whiteman and Benny Goodman. In the words of Gunther Schuller, Europe "had stormed the bastion of the white establishment and made many members of New York's cultural elite aware of Negro music for the first time."

During that same period, Vernon and Irene Castle were the most famous exponents of the modern social dance movement in New York. Not only did the Castles revitalize dancing by incorporating an elegant and streamlined athleticism, but they also fueled the dance craze by pairing it with the new music of the day, and James Reese Europe, fresh off his success at Carnegie Hall, was hired as their musical director.

The *Castle House Rag* of 1914 was an astounding musical achievement. The title of the vigorous fox trot and one-step is a nod to Europe's patrons and helped propel all of them to soaring popularity. The Victor Talking Machine Company recorded Europe's Society Orchestra playing this work in 1913 and kept the record in print until 1920. At the time, Victor had only one other black organization in its catalog, the Fisk University Jubilee Singers. Remarkably, an extant recording is available to hear through the Library of Congress *National Jukebox*.

Europe would go on to lead the band of the 369th Infantry Regiment ("Harlem Hellfighters") during WWI, introducing the British and French to a whole new music that would change the course of musical composition and consumerism, ripples still felt today over a century later.

AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL

Samuel Ward

This American patriotic anthem has its origins in Samuel Augustus Ward's 1882 hymn, "Materna," a setting of "O Mother Dear, Jerusalem." Katharine Lee Bates contributed the poem. "America, the Beautiful," composed during the summer of 1893 while in Colorado Springs. While Ward and Bates never met, their combined work has become emblematic of the hopeful promise that is America.

THE CRANE WIND ENSEMBLE

Program Notes • Friday, September 24

CAVE OF THE WINDS

Robert Nathaniel Dett

R. Nathaniel Dett was born near Niagara Falls, in Drummondville, ONT – a town founded by former African slaves who escaped their bondage and went north. In 1908, Dett was the first African American to complete the five-year course at Oberlin Conservatory, studying piano and composition. He received further tutelage with Arthur Foote at Harvard, Nadia Boulanger at Fountainebleau, and later earned a Master of Music degree from Eastman. Dett went on to become a prominent and successful composer, particularly known for his choral works and his leadership of the Hampton Singers, a group he trained and conducted for nineteen years to significant acclaim. Many of Dett's works are characterized by the use of folk songs or spirituals, as the preservation and promotion of the music of Black peoples was central to his efforts.

Dett's 1902 composition, *Cave of the Winds* is a march and two-step, a wonderful example of popular music of the time. The work takes its title from the popular and featured attraction at Niagara Falls, the natural cave behind Bridal Veil Falls. The cave was discovered in 1834 and originally called Aeolus' Cave, after the "Keeper of the Winds" in Greek mythology. Whether the march is an early "nod" to the *March King* John Philip Sousa is unknown, but Dett was most definitely known to Sousa. In 1926, Sousa performed Dett's "Juba Dance" from *In the Bottoms* on his programs that season, stating Dett would certainly "achieve a place as one of the truly great composers of his race."

TAKE A CHANCE

Hale Smith

Born in Cleveland, Hale Smith began the study of piano at age 7 – regularly attending the children's concerts of the Cleveland Orchestra. His initial performance experience included both jazz and classical music, and he began amassing a library of orchestral scores. He played both mellophone and piano in high school ensembles, and was befriended by Duke Ellington, who offered comments on one of his early compositions. After serving from 1943-45 in the military as both arranger and instrumentalist (double bass & piano), he enrolled at the Cleveland Institute of Music. By 1952, his compositions were winning competitions, particularly his *Five Songs*, and *The Valley Wind*, which was praised by Wallingford Riegger. Smith's first recital dedicated exclusively to his own music took place in 1955. After working as a music editor for E.B. Marks, C.F. Peters, and Sam Fox, he taught composition at C.W. Post College until 1970, and then at the University of Connecticut.

A list of students, colleagues and friends influenced by Hale Smith includes Ron Ancrum, Regina Baiocchi, Dizzy Gillespie, Chico Hamilton, Marilyn Harris, Isaac Hayes, Ahmad Jamal, Quincy Jones, Abbey Lincoln, Melba Liston, Oliver Nelson, Jessye Norman, Horace Silver and Eric Dolphy.

Take a Chance was the second of Hale Smith's works in the "Adventures in Form" series, published by Frank Music. *Take a Chance* allows the conductor and players to collaborate with the composer in the process of creation. The work is *aleatoric*, leaving the exact mode of performance up to the players in a controlled-improvisational environment. It has five