



Evening Concert Series

2021–2022 Season

Helen M. Hosmer Hall

Monday, November 22, 8:00 PM

The Crane Wind Ensemble
Brian K. Doyle, conductor

Gavorkna Fanfare (1991)

Jack Stamp
(b. 1954)

Winter Mountain (1996)

Persis Vehar
(b. 1937)

Alexander Gray, Marco Tomassi, narrators

The Engulfed Cathedral (1910)

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)
trans. Merlin Patterson

Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

Intermission

Tarot (2021)

The Fool
The King of Cups
The Tower

Lindsay Bronnenkant
(b. 1988)

First Suite in E-flat, op. 28, no. 1 (1909)

Chaconne
Intermezzo
March

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Crane Wind Ensemble Personnel

Piccolo

Emma Fusco

Flute

Sara McIntyre*

Anna Detweiler

Chris Connors

Sabrina Clubine

Julie Williams

Oboe

Justin Tan

Cailyn Monastero

Derek Warshauer

Courtnee Waldref

English Horn

Derek Warshauer

Bassoon

Jordon Gyarmathy

Jason Flay

E-flat Clarinet

Sam Forrester

Clarinet

Alexander Gray *

John Aebly

Mary Lorini

Gabriella Cicchinelli

Haley Goodwin

Libby Sheldon

Anthony Justiniano

Elizabeth Fomenko

Jaelyn Twitchell

Bass Clarinets

Marco Tomassi

Abby Rodriguez

Ethan Feuer

Alto Saxophone

Shayna Filion *

Madeline Fitzgerald

Nathaniel Cobb

Tenor Saxophone

Claire Ames

Baritone Saxophone

Darren Dutton

Trumpet

Amelia McNamara *

Ryan Rafferty

Brianna Novotny

Justin Wheeler

Nolan Ostrowski

Frank Pietraniello

Horn

Hali Wack *

Sarah Lueck

Gabriella Perticone

Heather Murphy

Angel Doll

Gianna Ingersoll

Trombone

Jason Lensky *

Allie Budd

Alec Vogel

Bass Trombone

Alex Sanders

Euphonium

Joey Hudson *

Jennifer Carden

Tuba

Nicholas Salomone *

Analiese Meidenbauer

Sam Regan

Double Bass

Robin Tucksmith

Percussion

Isaiah-Eli Van Buren *

Tim Cullen *

Abbie Yaeger

Joanna Green Delgado

Liam Fitzgerald

James Knapp

Piano

Amelia Arguelles

Harp

Ricky Chui

Librarians

Samuel Forrester

Mia Kilker

Chris Panullo

Keegan Wallace

* *Principal Player*



THE FOOL



KING OF CUPS



THE TOWER

THE CRANE WIND ENSEMBLE

Program Notes • 22 November

GAVORKNA FANFARE

Jack Stamp

Gavorkna Fanfare was composed for and dedicated to Eugene Corporon and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Wind Symphony. The work exploits the idea of a fanfare for full wind band, rather than the traditional brass and percussion instrumentation. The opening pyramids lead to the melodic minor third cluster heard in original and inversion simultaneously. A polychordal transition based on the upcoming "fugato" subject leads to a minimalist accompaniment to the four-part counterpoint. The opening idea returns with a coda based on the melodic minor third.

The composer also writes,

I wish I had never named this work "Gavorkna." I constantly receive calls inquiring as to the meaning of the title. It is a made-up word and a joke between Eugene Corporon and myself.

Gene called me in October 1999, stating that his Cincinnati College Conservatory Wind Symphony would be performing at the College Band Directors National Association Conference in Kansas City in February. He asked me to suggest an opener. I said, "Let me write you one. If you like it, you can have it for free. If you don't I won't be upset." I wrote the piece in two days. I scored it and sent it to Gene. He called and said, "You can ignore me completely, but the fugue is boring." I said, "How can a four-part fugue be boring?" But he was right! So, on Christmas Eve, I re-wrote the fugue by ornamenting each entrance. It made the work much stronger. To date, this is my most popular work and has launched some of the earlier works as well as provided numerous commissions. I owe Gene a lot, both as my teacher of conducting, and as a friend.

Note by Jack Stamp

WINTER MOUNTAIN

Persis Vehar

Composer and pianist Persis Vehar received her training at Ithaca College and the University of Michigan. She served on the Crane Faculty during the 1994-95 academic year, where she met Timothy Toplewski, then director of the Crane Wind Ensemble. Toplewski and the Crane Wind Ensemble commissioned Prof. Vehar for a work, resulting in *Winter Mountain*, premiered on 20 November 1996.

The eponymous work is inspired by Arthur Axlerod's poem, **Winter Mountain**:

In the slanting northern light, in the wandering organ tones
Of the wind, the mountain stands, layer over layer firm---
A winter monolith.

The roof of evergreen rises beneath the white sky, revealing
The sun against the winter forest and its quality, as if through a seal of gold
Its light enduring.

The choice of the poem reflects Potsdam's nearby mountainous terrain.

Winter Mountain is written in what the composer refers to as "circular form," one based on circular thinking which concerns itself with many ideas at once. The piece has three ideas that develop simultaneously, often overlapping each other. The beginning tone cluster based on g-sharp introduces the first idea. The cluster is played by muted brass and develops into a chorale like statement. The disjunct tones of the solo flute entrance are the first notes of the second idea that the woodwinds extend continuously. The percussion section signals the introduction to the third dance like idea in five-four meter. This rhythmic ostinato mixes the tone colors of the woodwind, brass and percussion sections. As this idea develops, it contains a melody, sounded initially by the flugelhorn and clarinets. The

melody floats over the top of the rhythmic ostinato. All ideas have primarily upward melodic lines and have no particular order in their development.

Towards the end of the first section, the percussion players start improvising against the notated music. By the middle of the work, the entire wind ensemble improvises for ten seconds within the limits that the composer has prescribed. This is the climax of the piece and represents the forces of nature that humans often cannot control.

In the last half of the piece, the three ideas return primarily in retrograde, which gives them a downward melodic motion. The brasses begin the last section, and gradually the improvisation subsides. Each idea diminishes and returns to its initial shortened form. However, at the conclusion of the three concluding lines of the Axlerod poem, the muted brass tone clusters give way to the woodwinds. Like the “enduring sun,” the woodwinds ascend in pitch and finally end on a tonic A Major tone cluster reinforced by percussion. The basic shape of the entire work reflects the sun ascending and descending on the WINTER MOUNTAIN.

Note by Persis Vehir

THE ENGULFED CATHEDRAL

Claude Debussy

In this transcription of Debussy’s *The Engulfed Cathedral*, I have tried to create a work that displays the tonal beauty as well as power and grandeur of the modern symphonic band. Unusual instrumental combinations have been used throughout, and great care has been given to subtle shadings of color and texture.

The Engulfed Cathedral (La Cathédrale engloutie) is No. 10, Book 1 of Debussy’s *Préludes*; it is one of his best-known and popular works, not only in its original version for solo piano, but in its numerous transcriptions, the most notable of which is the orchestral setting by Leopold Stokowski.

La Cathédrale engloutie depicts an old legend from Brittany: To punish the people for their sins, the Cathedral of Ys is engulfed by the sea. Each sunrise the townspeople watch as the sunken cathedral rises from the water...and then sinks again slowly into the ocean.

Note by Merlin Patterson

SYMPHONIES OF WIND INSTRUMENTS

Igor Stravinsky

In 1908, on the death of his beloved teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff, Igor Stravinsky responded by composing a work in his memory which was conceived in terms of instrumental ritual and which he afterwards remembered as the best work of his early period – the *Chant funèbre* – later, unfortunately lost [and then found in the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 2015]. Ten years later, the death of this admired colleague, mentor and friend Debussy caused him to write another memorial composition which stands among his most characteristic and influential masterpieces – the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments (Symphonies d’Instruments à Vent)*, dedicated “To the memory of Claude Achille Debussy.”

Debussy died on 25 March 1918. Stravinsky’s earliest sketches for the work that became *Symphonies*, including most of the principal motifs, date from July 1919 and are scored for harmonium. In April 1920 he was invited to contribute a piece to a Debussy memorial supplement of the new musical journal *La Revue musicale*, and in June he wrote the final chorale (which had not been among the original sketches). Between July and November he composed the whole work and scored it for 24 woodwind and brass instruments. In December the supplement appeared: the *Tombeau de Claude Debussy*, with a title page by Raoul Dufy and consisting of pieces for piano, instruments of voice by ten leading contemporary composers (including Bartók, Falla, Ravel and Roussel). They mainly mourned the departed Debussy in varieties of Impressionistic languor or chromatic grief. In this company, the stark austerity of Stravinsky’s contribution – a piano arrangement of the chorale entitled *Fragment des Symphonies pour instruments à vent à la mémoire de C.A. Debussy* – stood out in bold relief.

The work is not a ‘symphony’ in the accustomed sense. Stravinsky went back to the world’s ancient connotation of groups of instruments sounding together and used the plural to indicate that the music is made up of several of these instrumental colloquies. He described it at various times as a ‘grand chant, and objective cry,’ and ‘an austere

ritual which is unfolded in terms of short litanies between different groups of homogenous instruments.’ The overall form is an apparent challenge to all previously accepted canons of musical architecture. It is a kind of mosaic, made out of discrete blocks of contrasting material, separate yet interlocking, in different but closely related tempi. These are shuffled, juxtaposed or intercut without modulation or transition, culminating in the ineffably severe calm of the concluding chorale. Stravinsky had already explored the potential of such ‘anti-symphonic’ discontinuity in the *Rite of Spring* and *Les Noces*, but the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* raises it to a new level. The scoring, which associates each idea with a different grouping of instruments, enhances the impression. Yet paradoxically, at the smallest level, the melodic and harmonic cells out of which the music is spun work across the surface divisions of the work, lending it a kind of secret organic continuity. Stravinsky’s description of the music as a ‘ritual’ however gives the clue to its expressive nature: this is an instrumental liturgy, a burial service, the chorale rounding off the proceedings in something like a Byzantine *Alleluia*. In this sense *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* is the forerunner of such later Stravinsky works as the *Mass* and *Requiem Canticle*.

The first performance of the complete work was given at the Queen’s Hall in London on 10 June 1921, conducted by Serge Koussevitsky as part of a series of Russian Festival Concerts. Coming at the end of a long program it made only a faint impression, and the work only slowly gained acceptance. The original version of 1920 was never finalized for publication except in piano reduction. In 1945, Stravinsky made a revised version, published in 1947, for a slightly different ensemble, dropping the two ‘exotics’ of the original scoring, the alto flute in G and the alto clarinet in F. He also changed some of the music, added a few bars, entirely re-thought the rhythmic articulation and re-barred the entire work, breaking down its larger irregular phrases into simpler units. It is in this form that *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* has entered the repertoire, but in recent years the original form of 1920 has been performed with increasing frequency and stands as a viable alternative version. It is the original 1920 version that will be performed tonight.

Note by Malcolm MacDonald

TAROT

Lindsay Bronnenkant

Gustav Holst was incredibly interested in Indian culture, going so far as to teach himself Sanskrit. Some evidence suggests that he tried to incorporate Indian rāgas into his works, and after investigating Holst’s resources and analyzing his *Planets*, I believe that Holst tried to reference rāgas that evoked similar characters to those of the planets in his suite. Holst’s access to authentic performance of Indian music was limited, however, and like many composers—especially as a British composer entrenched in modal composition during the English folksong revival of the early 20th century—he took what he understood of rāgas and filled in the gaps with western theoretical knowledge, resulting in the treatment of what were once rāgas as scales or modes.

I decided to compose a suite that traces Holst’s footsteps but applies his musical experimentation to a new topic: Tarot. Like astrology, Tarot cards have been used for divination, and as each planet in modern astrology represents specific characteristics and personality traits, so too does each Tarot card. Some elements of the Hindustani thāṭs, Kamāṭak mēlakarta rāgas, and pitch sets Holst referenced in his *Planets* are referenced in *Tarot* using a similarly western approach to portray Tarot card analogs.

In Tarot, the Fool represents someone who dives head-first through open doors with enthusiasm (and sometimes with a blissful ignorance of any looming danger). The card represents new beginnings, playfulness, naïveté, and optimism. The first movement contains several intentionally comedic moments as the Fool, unaware of the luck manifesting from his will, manages to skip through a minefield unharmed. The movement references the pitches of the Kalyāṇ thāṭ found in “Jupiter,” a benefic planet of good fortune, to represent the Fool’s beginner’s luck. The movement also uses the whole tone scale hinted at in some of Holst’s themes for Uranus, a chaotic and unpredictable planet, to depict the unintentional mayhem that inevitably follows each of the Fool’s steps.

In Tarot, the suit of cups corresponds with emotional energy and the element of water. A deeply empathic soul, the King of Cups tempers his emotions by balancing his heart with his head. The King leads diplomatically through compassion. The second movement references the pitches of mēlakarta rāga Dhavaḷāmbari from “Neptune” as a nod to a fellow intuitive and ruler of the sea, and additionally employs the pitches of the Bhairavī thāṭ found in “Venus” to allude to the King’s kind and gentle countenance.

The Tower represents surprise, upheaval, and destruction. It represents the collapse of structure; the crumbling of façades based on faulty foundations. The final movement references “Mars, the Bringer of War” with two similar pitch sets: the one Holst uses in “Mars,” as well as a *thāt* that Holst may have meant to draw from, Bhairav.

Tarot received its premiere on 5 May 2021, with the composer conducting the Eastman Wind Ensemble in Kodak Hall at the Eastman Theater.

Note by Lindsey Bronnenkant

FIRST SUITE IN E-FLAT, OP. 28, NO. 1

Gustav Holst

Although it is uncertain for which occasion Gustav Holst wrote his *First Suite in E-flat*, his daughter and biographer Imogen Holst speculates that the piece was most likely written for either the Festival at the People’s Palace of 1909, or for a contest sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Musicians that same year. If one considers the requirements of the contest, it is *very likely* that Holst intended to submit his work for the competition – the work *did* receive a reading about that time. However, there has yet to be found conclusive evidence that Holst submitted this work for consideration. Whatever its genesis, Holst’s *First Suite* languished unperformed for eleven years before its first documented performance on 23 June 1920 at Kneller Hall by the Royal Military School of Music Band.

In an interesting turn of events, this premiere preceded the initial performance of Holst’s *Second Suite in F*, also for military band, by two years - almost to the day. Ironically, the *Second Suite in F* also received an unwarranted hiatus of eleven years, having been composed in 1911. Both works achieved immediate critical acclaim in the London press and have since become cornerstones of the wind band repertoire along with works by Percy Grainger and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

The melodies in *First Suite in E-flat* unfold from an original, germinal idea: the first three notes of the work – E-flat, F, and C. Cast in three movements – “Chaconne,” “Intermezzo” and “March.” Holst intended the suite to be played *attacca*, without break.

In “Chaconne,” Holst draws upon Baroque influences, blurring the line between two variation forms – the *passacaglia* and the *chaconne*. Holst spins fifteen harmonic, melodic, and orchestrational variations based upon the melody presented in the first eight measures. The fleet-footed “Intermezzo” provides stark contrast to the brooding gravitas of the first movement. Holst employs a simple ABA form to showcase his melodic aesthetic and penchant for bitonal composition. In the introduction to “March,” the three-note germinal melody is inverted. True to its title, however, this British quick-march serves as a rousing conclusion to the suite. In addition to its own theme, Holst reprises the “Chaconne” theme in a “Land of Hope and Glory” style [Americans know this as *Pomp and Circumstance*]. Eventually, these two themes combine in thrilling counterpoint, leading to the climactic coda with a dynamic marking of *ffff*!