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Spring 2021

Graduate Wind Conducting Recital

Sean Donnelly

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Messiah University
Department of Music

Sean Donnelly
Graduate Wind Conducting Recital
Dr. James Colonna, Advisor
Spring 2021

- Festive Overture, Op. 96 (1947).....Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)
trans. Donald Hunsberger
- Incidental Suite (1966).....Claude T. Smith
(1932-1987)
 Tarantella
 Nocturne
 Rondo
- Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral (1850).....Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)
arr. John R. Bourgeois
- Chorale and Shaker Dance (1972).....John Zdechlik
(1937-2020)
- First Suite in Eb for Military Band, Op. 28 No. 1 (1909).....Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)
- Alleluia! Laudamus Te (1973).....Alfred Reed
(1921-2005)

Festive Overture, Op. 96 (1954/1965)
Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
Trans. Donald Hunsberger

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, Dmitri Shostakovich is one of the most significant composers of the 20th century. His early musical training was on piano and composition, bringing him to the St. Petersburg Conservatory, famous for producing such composers as Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky. Shostakovich had great success early in his career with his *First Symphony*, written while still in the conservatory. Shostakovich, like many Soviet artists at the time, had difficulty staying in favor with the government. He received public criticism for his works *Lady Macbeth* and his *Ninth Symphony*.

Festive Overture is one of Shostakovich's lighter works. He originally planned to write the overture in 1947, announcing a work that would celebrate the victory of World War II over the defeated enemies of the Motherland. Shostakovich did not begin writing the work until after Stalin's death in 1953. During these years, Shostakovich fell out of favor with the Communist party and it wasn't until 1954 that he began to compose again. The Bolshoi Theater requested a work to celebrate the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution and Shostakovich quickly returned to the overture never composed from 1947. Written in just a few short hours, *Festive Overture* has become one of Shostakovich's most popular works, especially among wind and brass ensembles.

Incidental Suite (1966)
Claude T. Smith (1932-1987)

Claude T. Smith is one of America's most prolific composers of band music. His first published work, *Emperata Overture*, has become a staple in the repertoire. Smith taught in public schools in both Nebraska and Missouri before becoming a professor at Southwestern Missouri State. In addition to his works for band, he wrote for orchestra and choir, maintaining a close relationship to sacred music and church choirs. Smith received many awards, including the prestigious A.S.C.A.P Composer's Award.

Incidental Suite is written in three movements: "Tarantella", "Nocturne," and "Rondo." The first movement, "Tarantella," borrows its name from an Italian folk dance popular in southern Italy. In this composition, Smith makes playful use of the hemiola, juxtaposing three beats against two. The second movement, "Nocturne," is more lyrical and evokes images of nighttime. The final movement, "Rondo," makes use of a compositional form popular during the 18th and 19th century. A rondo movement features a reoccurring theme with multiple episodes occurring in between. This rhythmically exciting movement brings the work to an energetic close.

Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral (1850/1997)
Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
arr. John R. Bourgeois (b. 1934)

German composer Richard Wagner is one of the most revolutionary and controversial figure in classical music history. He is best known for his contributions in the genre of opera, or as he referred to his works, musical dramas. He is best known for *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nurnburg*. *Lohengrin* marks the transition from Wagner's early operas to his later masterworks. Written in 1848, *Lohengrin* tells the story of Elsa who is to be wed to the knight of the Holy Grail, Lohengrin. Taking place towards the end of act II, the music is written for Elsa and a long train of ladies as they process towards the Cathedral, where she is to wed Lohengrin.

Col John R. Bourgeois was the 25th director of the "President's Own" United States Marine Band, a position he held for 22 years. In addition to his work as conductor, he performed as a french hornist and staff arranger.

Chorale and Shaker Dance (1972)
John Zdechlik (1937-2020)

John Zdechlik was an American band composer & conductor. Born in Minneapolis, he began his musical training as a hornist and trumpeter, where he developed an early interest in performing jazz. Later, Zdechlik would earn a Ph.D from the University of Minnesota and soon after, he would receive his first major commission, *Psalm 46*. Shortly after, he was commissioned to write his most significant work for band, *Chorale and Shaker Dance*.

Chorale and Shaker Dance is comprised of two melodic ideas, an original chorale and an arrangement of the Shaker song "Simple Gifts." Zdechlik uses both of these ideas interchangeably throughout the composition through multiple variations. While using traditional harmony and orchestration to introduce the ideas, Zdechlik incorporates a variety of timbres and textures throughout the variations. The work builds to a climactic finale featuring a brass chorale and virtuosic woodwind playing.

First Suite in Eb for Military Band, Op. 28 No. 1 (1909)
Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Gustav Holst is a 20th century English composer, arranger and educator. Best known for his orchestral work *The Planets*, Holst has become known as one of the most important composers in the wind band repertoire. At the beginning of the 1900's, Holst began teaching at schools around London, where he became very familiar with student and amateur performers. He was also very familiar with Kneller Hall, home of the Royal Military School of Music and the military band traditions of England. Holst perfectly

blended the amateur and professional wind traditions into this first major work for wind band, *First Suite in Eb*.

First Suite consists of three movements, "Chaconne", "Intermezzo" and "March," to be played continuous without break. The entire piece is written around a three note motive introduced at the beginning of the piece. The first movement, "Chaconne," borrows from the baroque era, consisting of a ground bass with subsequent variations. The second movement, "Intermezzo," is also written in a style popular during the 18th century. The final movement, "March," provides an energetic finale in a style familiar in band literature.

Alleluia! Laudamus Te (1973)
Alfred Reed (1921-2005)

American composer Alfred Reed has written over 250 works for band, orchestra and chorus. Born in New York, Reed began his music career as a trumpeter and arranger of the 529th Army Air Force Band. Following his time in a service band, he went on to study composition with Vittorio Giannini at Juilliard. Reed's most notable compositions for band include *El Camino Real*, *A Festival Prelude*, *Russian Christmas Music* and his transcriptions of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Alleluia! Laudamus Te, commissioned by Malone College in Canton, Ohio, is described by the composer as an instrumental canticle of praise without words. Reed writes for the wind band as one might write for a choir, using the ensemble as a full choir while also using smaller instrumental sections. The work builds to a climax with the addition of an organ, bringing to work to a powerful conclusion.

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