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**FALL CONCERT**  
*TRAVELER*

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019 | 3:00 PM**  
SCOTTISH RITE MUSEUM  
LEXINGTON, MA

DR. RICHARD E. WYMAN, *GUEST CONDUCTOR*  
JAMES O'DELL, *ACTING MUSIC DIRECTOR*





## Welcome to our first concert for our very exciting 49th season!



This season is special as we present five concerts, each under the baton of one of the finalists to become our next MetWinds Music Director. This provides the musicians of the MetWinds as well as our audience with a wonderful opportunity to critique the finalists and sample their programs and personalities, all in one season. Please participate in our search by completing the enclosed audience survey/conductor evaluation form and returning it to us after each concert.

First up is the former Assistant Director of the United States Coast Guard Band, Dr. Richard E. Wyman. Rick will be leading this afternoon's program **Traveler**, highlighting music inspired by various global experiences, starting at the Vermont State Fair and ending in Cuba.

For our Holiday Pops concert, Matthew Marsit, Director of Instrumental Studies at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, has programmed a wonderful and varied concert of seasonal works. It will include the world premiere of a new transcription for winds of the symphonic holiday concert favorite *A Carol Symphony* by Victor Hely-Hutchinson, transcribed by Paul Noble. And no holiday concert is complete without a holiday favorite sing-a-long!

For our Winter subscription concert, Dr. Matthew Westgate, Director of Wind Studies at UMass Amherst, explores the concept of being immediately and vividly alive in the moment, with works by Dimitri Shostakovich, Aaron Copland, Percy Grainger and David Maslanka.

Our Spring program will be conducted by Dr. Eric Melley, Director of Instrumental Activities at Providence College. Maestro Melley will be musically exploring the important moments of our lives, with music from Julie Giroux (who MetWinds has commissioned for an upcoming major work), Frank Ticheli, Michael Markowski and David Maslanka.

For the Festival of Bands concert, Steven Lipsitt will conduct. Maestro Lipsitt is the Music Director and Founder of the Bach, Beethoven & Brahms Society Orchestra who coincidentally performs at the same venue: Faneuil Hall. Maestro Lipsitt has programmed works including a wind transcription of J. S. Bach's *Fantasia in G Major*, Frank Ticheli's Postcard and the seminal wind work *First Suite in Eb* by Gustav Holst.

The programs collectively provide new interpretations of favorite wind literature as well as new works and composers to sample and enjoy. There is more information about these concerts elsewhere in this program as well as at our website: <https://metwinds.org>.





# MetWinds Program

Please see Program Notes for more information

## Pre-Concert Lecture, 2:30pm

Given by Rick Wyman

## Concert Program

*Vermont State Fair* .....Steve Danyew

*Hammersmith*.....Gustav Holst

### Three Marches:

*Manhattan Beach* .....John Philip Sousa

*March, op. 99* .....Sergey Prokofiev (arr. Paul Yoder)

*March Jeune*.....Robert Langslet

*Handel in the Strand* .....Percy Grainger (arr. Richard Franko Goldman)

## Intermission

*Danse Macabre* ..... Camille Saint-Saëns (trans. Mark Hindsley)

*Melodious Thunk*..... David Biedenbender

*Irish Tune from County Derry* .....Percy Grainger

*Cuban Overture*..... George Gershwin (trans. Mark Rogers)

This and other concerts by MetWinds are funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

### Contact us

**Email:** [info@metwinds.org](mailto:info@metwinds.org)

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## About the **Acting Music Director**



**James O'Dell**

James (Jim) O'Dell has been professionally active in instrumental music and music education for the past thirty-eight years. Mr. O'Dell holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Southern Oregon University (1978), a Master of Music in Tuba, Euphonium, and Bass Trombone Performance from the University of Oregon (1983), and doctoral studies at Arizona State University (1983-84). Mr. O'Dell is currently Associate Dean at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, twice serving as Dean *ad interim* after a nine-year tenure as Director of the Conservatory's Music Division.

Mr. O'Dell's previous full-time faculty appointments include Director of Bands at Boston University (MA), Mansfield University (PA), and Phoenix College (AZ). His adjunct appointments include Lecturing Professor and Director of the Festival Jazz Ensemble at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MA), jazz and applied faculty at the Rivers Music School (MA), graduate teaching fellow at the University of Oregon, and applied faculty at Lane Community College (OR). He has taught in the Oregon Public Schools as Director of Bands and Elementary Music Teacher (Eagle Point and Phoenix, OR), and more recently, as supervisor of Instrumental Music for the Chelsea Public Schools (Boston University/Chelsea Partnership).

A distinguished and versatile educator, conductor, and musician, Mr. O'Dell is the Music Director and Conductor of the Concord Band and is the Associate Conductor of MetWinds. His collegiate conducting tenures have included all athletic bands, concert and jazz bands, wind and brass ensembles. He is founder of the New England Collegiate Jazz Festival, Boston TubaChristmas, and co-founder of the Boston Tuba Quartet and The Brass Consortium.

As a tubist he has toured, recorded, and performed with the Ken Shaphorst Big Band, True Colors Big Band, Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra, Darrel Katz Jazz Orchestra, Greg Hopkins Nonet, the Boston Globe Repertory Jazz Orchestra (Gunther Schuller, conductor), Orange Then Blue, and as soloist with the Harvard Summer Band. He has been a member of the faculty brass quintets at the University of Oregon and Mansfield University (PA), and principal tuba with the Eugene Symphony Orchestra. A low brass doubler on bass trombone and euphonium, he has performed with the Rogue Valley Symphony, Ashland Summer Band, Starlighters Swing Orchestra, and the Eugene Symphony Brass Trio.

Within New England, Mr. O'Dell is past President and Vice-President of the New England College Band Association (NECBA), served on the executive board of MAJE as the jazz composition contest chairman and all-state conference committee. He has remained active as guest conductor, adjudicator, and clinician throughout New England. He is an honorary member of Phi Kappa Lambda, Kappa Kappa Psi, and Tau Beta Sigma, and faculty advisor of Phi Mu Alpha at the college.





## In Memoriam



As MetWinds approaches our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we want to recognize former members, now deceased, whose unique contributions were integral to our success. Please help keep their memory alive.

You may find the list of these former members on our website.

Browse to: <https://www.metwinds.org/about.html> and scroll down to "In Memoriam" and click on "Former Members."

## Board of Directors



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## About the **Guest Conductor**



**Dr. Rick Wyman**

Richard E. Wyman is the former Assistant Director of the United States Coast Guard Band, where he regularly conducted throughout the United States and abroad, including the Band's historic 2008 Japan and 2011 Taiwan tours. He led the Band's educational initiatives; designing, hosting, and conducting innovative "Young People's" concerts for over 6000 students annually. Dr. Wyman also created and led a program presenting interactive chamber music assemblies in schools that reached a total of over 50,000 elementary students. He served as the Band's producer for ten CDs, two White House "Pageant of Peace" PBS specials, and brought many internationally-acclaimed artists to New London, CT, including conductor Leonard Slatkin (Detroit Symphony) and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Joseph Schwantner.

Dr. Wyman enjoys connecting people with art music in a variety of ways. He currently serves as the General Director for *Musical Masterworks* (an outstanding chamber music series in Old Lyme, CT), and as Director of Music at Noank (CT) Baptist Church where he leads the Senior Choir. Dr. Wyman also enjoys working with student musicians of all ages, regularly appearing as clinician and guest conductor with a variety of school and honor festival ensembles. He has done extensive scholarly work on American composer John Adams, and has published on John Williams in Volume 10 (and Steve Danyew in Volume 11) of the widely-used reference book series *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*, and maintains memberships in the Conductors Guild, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE), College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), and American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).

His work as a saxophonist and chamber musician has earned two year-long residency grants from the *National Endowment for the Arts*, four performance visits to the White House, an appearance on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* and employment at Disneyworld, Busch Gardens (FL), and with assorted jazz and salsa bands.

Wyman holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Instrumental Conducting from the University of Connecticut, a Master of Music in Saxophone Performance from the University of Illinois, and Bachelor's Degrees in Saxophone and Music Education from the Eastman School of Music. His primary conducting teachers have been Jeffrey Renshaw and Frank Battisti.





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## About **MetWinds**



The Metropolitan Wind Symphony was founded by Jerry Gardner in 1971 and was awarded the prestigious 2015 Sudler Silver Scroll Award for Community Concert Bands by the John Philip Sousa Foundation. Currently celebrating its 49th season, MetWinds comprise over 60 talented woodwind, brass, and percussion instrumentalists who audition for membership and seating. The organization makes a significant contribution to the cultural life of the Greater Boston community by providing its audiences with high quality concerts and its members with opportunities for musical growth.

MetWinds presents formal performances of traditional and contemporary wind band literature, as well as more informal pops concerts throughout the metropolitan Boston area. Members rehearse Wednesdays from September through June, traveling from more than 30 communities in Massachusetts and neighboring states. Consisting of volunteers, members pursue a wide variety of careers including education, engineering, computer science, medicine, law, music, and public health.

The Metropolitan Wind Symphony Commissioning Fund, begun through an anonymous endowment, allows MetWinds to actively contribute to the wind band literature by annually commissioning new works. Our commissioning program has included four categories of composers. These include internationally-known composers James Curnow, Johan de Meij, Elliot Del Borgo, Peter Schickele, Guy Woolfenden, Chen Yi, Lewis Buckley, and Frank Ticheli. Massachusetts composers include Allen Feinstein, Peter Hazzard, Marjorie Merryman, and Greg Tucker. Emerging composers include David Dzubay, John Heins, and Greg Sanders. The first student composers commissioned by MetWinds were Hayato Hirose, Noah Taylor, and Jesse Brault, whose pieces premiered in 2005 and 2007, followed by Matthew LaRocca and Joseph Kaz in 2013.

In 2010 and 2011, MetWinds premiered fanfares by John Heins, Kevin Wilt, Joseph Eidson, and Alexandra Conza, winners of our 40th Season Fanfare Competition. Many of these works have been published and have been performed in the United States and abroad by other wind ensembles.

The Boston Festival of Bands, founded by MetWinds in 1989, includes bands from New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, and Canada. The Festival is celebrated annually at the historic Faneuil Hall in Boston on the second Saturday in June. The Continuum series, also founded by MetWinds, involves middle school, high school, and New England college bands in educational interaction and outreach. The latest Continuum was hosted by MIT at Kresge Auditorium in Cambridge in March, 2016. Besides the Metropolitan Wind Symphony, the concert featured the MIT Wind Ensemble and the Foxboro High School Wind Ensemble.

In April 2005 at the invitation of the New England College Band Association, MetWinds performed at their Gordon College conference. MetWinds is a member of the Association of Concert Bands (ACB), the national organization for concert bands, and has been selected three times to perform at the ACB National Convention: April 1994 in Burlington, VT, April 2012 in Poughkeepsie, NY and April 2019 in Woodcliff Lake, NJ.





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## MetWinds **Friends Group**



The MetWinds Friends Group seeks members to assist at concerts by selling tickets and distributing programs. Admission is free to Friends Group members. If you would like to join, note your interest on the enclosed survey form, or call 978-419-1697.

## MetWinds **Music Funds**



MetWinds is blessed to have two funds which support the acquisition of new music for the ensemble. Contributions may be directed to either fund and are greatly appreciated.

The **Metropolitan Wind Symphony Commissioning Fund** is an endowment that provides the financial means for MetWinds to commission new works to be composed for concert band. More than 25 new works have been contributed to the concert band repertoire by MetWinds due in large part to this endowment. This includes compositions by internationally renowned composers including James Curnow, Johan de Meij, Elliot Del Borgo, Peter Schickele, Guy Woolfenden, Chen Yi, Lewis Buckley, and Frank Ticheli.

The **Roy L. and Lauren J. Komack Music Memorial Fund** was established due to the generosity of 58 individuals and families who donated to MetWinds in Roy and Lauren's memory. Both Roy and Lauren loved performing and listening to original band music. Contributions to this fund insure we have the resources to acquire original band works. With the passing of Lauren in 2017, she bequeathed a generous additional gift to the MetWinds to provide on-going financial support for the organization.

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*Have a great season!*



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## More ways to enjoy MetWinds



### Holiday Pops

**Matthew M. Marsit, guest conductor**

Saturday, December 7, 2019, 7:00 pm (cocktails at 6:00 pm)

Church of St. John of Damascus, 300 West St, Dedham, MA

'Twas in the month of Christmas and all around Boston city, the MetWinds were stirring, preparing something quite pretty. The instruments all tuning and practicing with care, in hopes that our Holiday Pops Concert, soon would be there!

Join the MetWinds for this special celebration of the holiday season as we share a selection of time-tested and new works to kindle your holiday spirit. Announcing the start of this exciting musical journey with brass fanfares, woodwind virtuosity and a few familiar Christmas tunes, we share Japanese composer Satoshi Yagisawa's *Christmas Fantasia*. With your attention fully captured, the MetWinds are excited to offer the world-premiere of a new transcription for winds of the symphonic holiday concert favorite *A Carol Symphony* by Victor Hely-Hutchinson, transcribed by Paul Noble. Composer friend to the MetWinds Julie Giroux leads us through the experience of dreaming about Tchaikovsky's famous *Nutcracker Ballet* in her *Nutcracker Fantasia*. Long considered one of the fathers of wind band writing, composer Percy Grainger created an instrumental setting of the *Sussex Mummers Christmas Carol*, arranged for band in this new edition by Larry Clark, paying homage to the great masters' style and orchestration.

No Christmas holiday celebration would be complete without a reading of Clement C. Moore's iconic *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, set with lush virtuosity and thoughtful orchestration by Randol Bass. We bring this beautiful evening to a close with the help of our audience and community joining us in song, through a collection of holiday favorites in David Lovrien's *A Christmas Sing-Along*. Surely something for everyone in the family to enjoy!

### Winter Concert: *It Only Takes A Moment*

**Matthew Westgate, guest conductor**

Sunday, March 1, 2020, 3:00pm | (Snow date: Sunday, March 8, 2020, 3:00pm)

Scottish Rite Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Lexington, MA

Our Winter Concert explores the idea of being immediately and vividly alive in the moment, the reason why music making can be so vital and compelling. Shostakovich's exhilarating *Festive Overture* opens the program, Steven Bryant's *Dusk* captures the reflective calm of a sunset, and *Letters from Home* by Aaron Copland will take you through moments of subtle beauty, melancholy, nostalgia, and simple charm.

Trumpet virtuoso Eric Berlin (principal trumpet, Albany Symphony) will join us for Joseph Turrin's tour-de-force *The Sounding of the Call*, and the ensemble will show off all of its colors during Percy Grainger's difficult concert march *The Lads of Wamphray*, a musical depiction of the battles between cattle-raiding, swashbuckling English and Scottish borderers in the sixteenth century. The concert will close with David Maslanka's short symphony for winds *Give Us This Day*. Music allows us to connect with what David called a "true awakesness and awareness," and *Give Us This Day* attempts to provide all of us a moment of awakesness and awareness so that we can "build a future in the face of a most dangerous and difficult time"... together.





## **Spring Concert: *Passages***

**Eric Melley, guest conductor**

Sunday, May 3, 2020, 3:00pm

Scottish Rite Museum, 33 Marrett Rd, Lexington, MA

We often choose music to commemorate and accompany us through the most important moments of our lives. Times of celebration or sorrow, or even the passage of time itself can be marked and memorialized in music. The pieces that comprise this program were all composed to mark moments or passages in time. Opening the program is Kevin Puts's symphonic fanfare, *Millennium Canons*, composed for the Boston Pops Orchestra at the turn of the new millennium. Shift with themes of birth and parenthood, Frank Ticheli composed the melody for *Joy Revisited* on the occasion of the birth of his first daughter and Joel Puckett created *Avelynn's Lullaby* as a rhapsodic portrait of soothing his child to sleep. We'll also be performing a piece that has become a classic of the wind band repertoire, *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral*, from the wedding scene of Wagner's monumental opera, *Lohengrin*.

Two works by David Maslanka and Michael Markowski deal with transitions over time. Maslanka's *Traveler* was written as a retirement gift to a friend and captures the emotion of moving from one phase of life to another. Markowski's *Instinctive Travels* draws inspiration from a passage in Darwin's *Origin of the Species* and, in the composer's words, is itself "inherently animalistic, primal, and constantly evolving." Concluding our concert with music of celebration, John Philip Sousa's *Easter Monday on the White House Lawn* was composed to commemorate the spring tradition in the nation's capital.

## **Boston Festival of Bands: 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary**

**Steven Lipsitt, guest conductor**

Saturday, June 13, 2020, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm

Historic Faneuil Hall, Boston – Free Admission

Spend June's second Saturday in Boston shopping, eating, enjoying the city, and listening to some of New England's finest wind ensembles, as MetWinds hosts its 32nd annual Boston Festival of Bands. Enjoy the many talented bands performing throughout the day in the heart of Faneuil Hall near Boston Harbor. Visit [www.metwinds.org](http://www.metwinds.org) for more details on the participating bands.

MetWinds performs wind ensemble classics and classics-to-be: from Bach's G major *Fantasia* (written a few years before the construction of Faneuil Hall), through Holst's iconic *First Suite*, encompassing David Gillingham's moving variations on *Be Thou My Vision* and Frank Ticheli's masterful *Postcard*, and including James Stephenson's new celebratory overture *Wildcat Run*, the artistry of MetWinds musicians will embrace you! MetWinds performs at 1:00 pm.





## More ways to **enjoy MetWinds**

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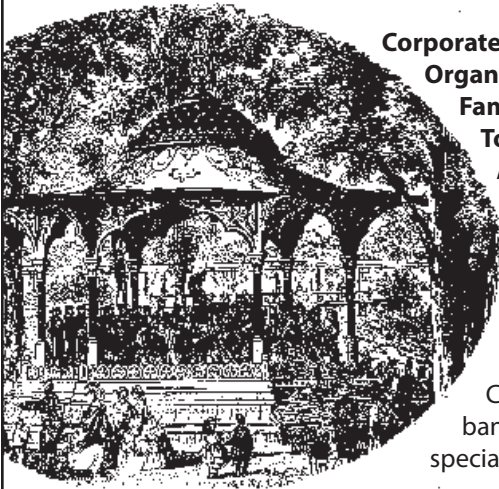
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## MetWinds Notes



**Steve Danyew** (b. 1983)

*Vermont State Fair* (2015) [7 min]

Composer and saxophonist Steve Danyew is based in Rochester, NY where he teaches at the Eastman School of Music's Institute for Music Leadership. His well-crafted compositions have quickly gained recognition for their appeal to both musicians and audiences. He says this about his *Vermont State Fair*:

When I was a kid, we'd often travel a few hours north to Vermont for Labor Day, to spend the final days of summer with my extended family. While there, we'd pile in the car to spend a day at the Vermont State Fair. The fair was an exciting, vibrant place, with rides and games, animals, fried dough, and horse racing. That was always the most exciting part of the fair, for me -- the horse racing. My grandfather was a big fan and would study the racing program days in advance of the races -- I can still picture his notes written all over the program. In *Vermont State Fair*, you'll experience the sights and sounds of the fair, the hustle and bustle of activity, and the excitement and energy of watching the races. Off to the fair!

**Gustav Holst** (1874-1934)

*Hammersmith: Prelude and Scherzo* (1930) [13 min]

Considered one of the greatest works for band, *Hammersmith: Prelude and Scherzo* was written in 1930 by British composer Gustav Holst, 15 years after his famous orchestral work *The Planets*. Like *The Planets*, *Hammersmith* is a work of contrasts and contradictions.

Holst lived for 30 years in Hammersmith, a section of London, England. During his walks through town, Holst was aware of the quiet and unhurried Thames River, while just around the corner was the noise of people pushing, laughing, and partying. While this music was not written to portray a specific story, these contrasts are demonstrated throughout the work. The soft and slow-moving Prelude is like the slow-moving river. Eventually, a solo piccolo disturbs the quiet, soon followed by trumpet; both, perhaps, like invitations to a party around the corner. The Prelude ends in dynamic, tonal and harmonic suspense. Then, the party!

The Scherzo is a fully developed, joyous fugue, yet continues the drama of contradiction. Like the rest of the work, the music never settles on one tonality; in many places it is polytonal. The Prelude's music never disappears, however; it returns occasionally throughout the Scherzo. Its last return is without preparation; the wild music is abruptly wiped out, and the slow-moving music closes the work, like it began. Like the river flowing through Hammersmith.

**Three Marches:** The musical significance of the march form is sometimes regarded as low, as something to simply entertain audiences or to facilitate military movement. It is not seen as an artistic statement. Maestro Wyman has programmed three marches, chronologically from three time periods, that showcase the astonishing variety of the form.





**John Philip Sousa** (1854-1932)

*Manhattan Beach* (1893) [3 min]

Following in the footsteps of Patrick Gilmore, Sousa became a popular figure at Manhattan Beach, the famous (now defunct) New York summer resort. He wrote the march of the same title while playing a summer engagement there. *Manhattan Beach* became a staple of bands all over the world, but the Sousa Band performed it differently by playing the trio and last section as a short descriptive piece. In this interpretation, soft clarinet arpeggios suggest the rolling ocean waves as one strolls along the beach. A band is heard in the distance. It grows louder and then fades away as the stroller continues along the beach.

**Sergey Prokofiev** (1891-1953) arr. Paul Yoder

*March, op. 99* (1944) [2 min]

Like so much of the music written during the Soviet era, only limited information is available about Prokofiev's *March, op. 99*. He wrote his *March* in Bb for Soviet military bands and was premiered on a radio performance in Moscow on March 30, 1944. Prokofiev recycled it by using materials in several sections of his final opera, *Story of a Real Man*, op. 117 (1947-1948), particularly in the opening number. While some ensembles perform the work at a typical "march" tempo, others interpret it in a much faster (and more exciting) "Galop."

Paul Yoder is credited with bringing the work to the U.S., changing the orchestration from the instruments found in Soviet military bands (e.g. Saxhorn.)

**Robert Langslet** (b. 1988)

*Marche Jejeune* (2017) [4 min]

Robert Langslet is the former pianist and arranger for the U.S. Coast Guard Band and has recently relocated to Portland, Oregon to compose music full time.

*Marche Jejeune* is an exploration of the march form, a type of composition that has been such an important part of the American musical heritage. There is some wryness and tongue-in-cheek, but the work is also a deeply felt tribute to the musical form. "Jejeune" can mean youthful, unbridled enthusiasm or vigor, or it could be mean dry, uninteresting and intellectually unsatisfying. The composer invites the listener to decide which definition is more appropriate. (The composer instructs the musicians to play "churlishly.")

Program Note adapted from composer's oral remarks, 2 July 2017





**Percy Grainger** (1882-1961) arr. Richard Franco Goldman

*Handel in the Strand* (1912) [6 min]

Eccentric and whimsical composer/pianist Percy Grainger is well remembered for his successful arrangements of English, Irish, and Scottish folk-tunes, and his sojourns through their countrysides to recover, record, and transcribe tunes. While not a folk song transcription, *Handel in the Strand* maintains Grainger's typical folk wit.

"My title was originally 'Clog Dance.' But my dear friend William Gair Rathbone (to whom the piece is dedicated) suggested the title 'Handel in the Strand,' because the music seemed to reflect both Handel and English musical comedy (the "Strand," a street in London, is the home of London musical comedy) as if jovial old Handel were careening down the Strand to the strains of modern English popular music." - Percy Aldridge Grainger

**Camille Saint-Saëns** (1835-1921) arr. Mark Hindsley

*Danse Macabre* (1874) [7 min]

Next Thursday night, neighborhoods across America will be flush with roaming 2-foot-tall "Darth Vaders" and ghosts and Elmos. In preparation, it's only appropriate that MetWinds audience members enjoy this transcription of a classic orchestral tone poem by French composer Camille Saint-Saëns: *Danse Macabre*. It's based on an ancient French superstition, where "Death" appears at midnight every year on Halloween. He has the power to call forth the dead from their graves to dance for him while he plays his fiddle. Skeletons and other dead counterparts dance until the first break of dawn (and the rooster's crow, portrayed by the oboe), when they must return to their graves until the next year.

**David Biedenbender** (b. 1984)

*Melodious Thunk* (2012) [5 min]

David Biedenbender's works are often influenced by his diverse musical experiences in rock and jazz bands as an electric bassist, in wind, jazz, and New Orleans-style brass bands as a euphonium, bass trombone, and tuba player, and by his study of Indian Carnatic music. A professor of composition at Michigan State University, his best known work for Band is perhaps *Melodious Thunk*, about which he writes:

I don't normally like to begin program notes with dictionary definitions, it feels pretty stuffy to me, but it seemed appropriate for this piece, so here goes:

thunk [thuhngk] noun & verb

1. [n.] an abrupt, flat, hollow sound (example: The book landed on the floor with a thunk.); synonym: thud
2. [v.] to produce an abrupt, flat, hollow sound
3. [v.] colloquial past tense and past participle of think.





Melodious Thunk was inspired by the famous jazz pianist Thelonious Monk. Monk's wife, Nellie Smith, nicknamed him "Melodious Thunk" because of his clunky, awkward, and brilliant(!) piano playing, and his, somewhat scatterbrained and disoriented nature. I really liked the idea of playing around with Monk's name—first, because I personally really enjoy goofing around with "spoonerisms" (silly, ridiculous, mix-and-match letter games, which often happen by accident: for example, slip of the tongue becomes tip of the slung), and, second, because this nickname actually provided great musical inspiration. Melodious, well, that's fairly obvious, and thunk (which is a great onomatopoeia!) became the starting points for the piece. Big, fat thunks are interspersed with pointy, clunky, bluesy blips, which are then transformed into a long, smooth, laid-back melody accompanied by a funky bass line. I haven't consciously borrowed any specific tunes or licks from Monk, although I do use a small fragment of Dizzy Gillespie's tune Salt Peanuts, but I hope you'll hear some similarities between this piece and Monk's iconic musical style and quirky attitude.

### **Percy Grainger** (1882-1961)

*Irish Tune from County Derry* (1918) [4 min]

This folk-tune setting was one of Grainger's first contributions to the repertoire for wind band and is a prime example of his work in the genre. Grainger says, "This tune was collected by Miss J. Ross of New Town, Limavady, County Derry, Ireland, and in *The Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland*, Dublin, 1855." He created three other versions of the same arrangement: for unaccompanied mixed chorus, piano solo, and string orchestra (Grainger preferred the term "string band").

### **George Gershwin** (1898-1937) arr. Mark Rogers

*Cuban Overture* (1932) [10 min]

In mid-February 1932, George Gershwin left New York with several friends to take a vacation in Havana, Cuba. He had just presented a successful show on Broadway (*Of Thee I Sing*) and the premiere of his *Second Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*. While there, he became fascinated with the native music of Cuba and returned to New York armed with Cuban percussion instruments and musical ideas.

These ideas culminated in a symphonic work entitled *Rumba*; its first performance was presented in an all-Gershwin concert in Lewisohn Stadium on August 16, 1932, conducted by Albert Coates. Later, on November 1 of the same year, it was presented at the Metropolitan Opera under the title *Cuban Overture*. Gershwin provided these program thoughts:

In my composition I have endeavored to combine the Cuban rhythms with my own thematic material. The result is a symphonic overture, which embodies the essence of the Cuban dance. It has three main parts. The first part is preceded by an introduction featuring some of the thematic material. Then comes a three-part contrapuntal episode leading to a second theme. The first part finishes with a recurrence of the first theme combined with fragments of the second.





A solo clarinet cadenza leads to the middle part, which is in a plaintive mood. It is a gradual developing canon in a polytonal manner. This part concludes with a climax based on an ostinato of the theme in the canon, after which a sudden change in tempo brings us back to the rumba dance rhythms.

The final is a development of the preceding material in a stretto-like manner. This leads us back once again to the main theme.

The conclusion of the work is a coda featuring the Cuban instruments of the percussion.

As is the case with *Second Rhapsody*, *Cuban Overture* portrays a composer in transition — trying out new ideas in harmony and counterpoint and streamlining his orchestration.

Certainly, Gershwin's musical interests were widening at this point since his music library now included Bach's *The Art of the Fugue*, Schubert, Beethoven, Brahms and the then-avant-garde works of Berg and Schoenberg. While linear aspects of his music revealed a growing influence (of the classics), Gershwin's orchestral technique was making even greater strides. *Cuban Overture* has the fewest examples of the excessive instrumental doublings that Gershwin overused in his orchestration of the *Concerto in F*, *An American in Paris*, and *Second Rhapsody*. However, Gershwin, remaining true to his own spirit, continued his orchestral palette and sound.

Gershwin also highlighted the formal aspects of his music since he was obviously aware that even critics praising his work were not happy with the sometimes awkward construction of some of his orchestral music. This was an aspect of his creative effort that he constantly sought to improve. Thus, *Second Rhapsody* and *Cuban Overture* were opportunities to experiment in form, imitative counterpoint and more effective transitions.

In *Cuban Overture*, Gershwin was thus able to demonstrate a great leap forward in musical maturity as well as to show how his interest in new and different musical cultures could affect his own creativity.

Program Note by Mark Rogers

Program notes by Richard Wyman and Gregory C. Depp

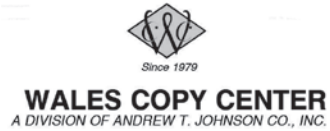




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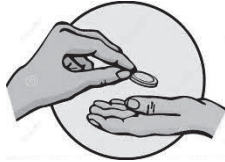


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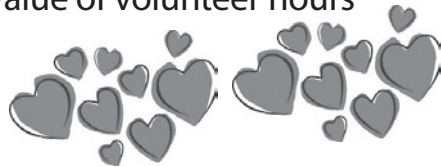


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