

Orchestra

TOSHIYUKI SHIMADA
Music Director & Conductor

OF THE SOUTHERN FINGER LAKES

Sunday, March 6, 2022 at 4:00 PM

The Clemens Center, Elmira, NY

Música Diversa

Program

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Capriol Suite

[11']

I. Basse-Danse

II. Pavane

III. Tordion

IV. Bransles

V. Pieds-en-l'air

VI. Mattachins

Junior String Ensemble & Youth Orchestra

Debrah Devine, Conductor

Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)

Danzón No. 2

[10']

Youth Orchestra & OSFL

Augusto Diemecke, Conductor

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 18

[12']

I. Moderato

Christopher Tillen, piano

2020 Doreen B. Hertzog Competition Winner

Intermission

Florence Price (1887-1953)

Adoration

[4']

Bright Sheng (b. 1955)

Black Swan

[7']

William Grant Still (1895-1978)

Symphony No. 1 in A-flat Major "Afro-American"

[25']

I. Longing: Moderato assai

II. Sorrow: Adagio

III. Humor: Animato

IV. Aspiration: lento; con risoluzione

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Christopher Tillen, piano

Christopher Tillen is a junior at Noble and Greenough High School in Dedham, MA. He started taking piano lessons at age 6 and has been a top prize winner in many competitions, including Steinway & Sons Piano Competition, Bay State MTNA Piano Competition, University of Rhode Island Piano Extravaganza Bach Award, and the A. Ramon Rivera Piano Competition. In addition, he has been named the Fall Rivers' Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Concerto winner; the Doreen B. Hertzog Concerto winner; Concert Festival NYC Grand Prix soloist; and the Sempre Musick Concerto first prize winner. He has performed in many venues, community events, and recitals, including the Mildred Freiberg Piano Festival, New England Conservatory's A. Ramon Rivera Advance Senior Piano Seminar, and the Rivers School Conservatory Seminar on Contemporary Music.

Christopher is a Young Artist Diploma Level IV scholar at the Rivers School Conservatory and currently studies with Ms. Erin Lindsey. In his spare time, he enjoys debating, writing, singing, theatre and musical performance, community service, and running. He is an Achieve and Immigrant Family Services Institute tutor; a member of Nobles Model UN, debate and Mock Trial clubs; the Nobles Theater Collective; the school newspaper; and he is the Assistant Artistic Director of Nobleonians male acapella group.

The Doreen B. Hertzog Concerto & Aria Competition originated as a program of the Elmira Symphony and Choral Society, known as the Young Artists' Competition that began in the late 1960s. It was later renamed in honor of one of its founders, Doreen B. Hertzog. The merged successor of the Elmira Symphony and Corning Philharmonic, now known as the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes, has continued the competition since its formation in 1995. Designed to showcase the finest young musicians, the Hertzog Competition is a vehicle for the OSFL to nurture and support talented young performers throughout the region and beyond.

Taking place in the spring, the winner will perform one movement of a concerto or aria with the OSFL during the following concert season. Students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible to audition on piano, strings, brass, woodwinds, percussion, and voice.

Applications and preliminary audition recordings are now being accepted for the 2022 competition. Applications and recordings are due by 5 PM on Wednesday, April 20, 2022. The Final Round will be held in-person on Saturday, June 4, 2022.

Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes

Toshiyuki Shimada, Music Director and Conductor

Violin I

Augusto Diemecke, concertmaster
Debrah Devine, assistant concertmaster
Jessica Anthony
Katie Marshall
Lisa Lantz
Michael Hahn
Chet Chang
Jenny Choi*

Violin II

Denise Nosewicz, co-principal
Margaret Matthews, co-principal
Gary Chollet
Don Webster
Tracey Ingerick
Erika Nick
Mateo Garza*

Viola

Joanne Lowe, principal
Mark Lewis
Ashley English
John Paul Tobin
Wednesday Hsu*

Cello

Christine Lowe-Diemecke, principal
Rintaro Wada
Gilbert Antoine
Eric Johnson
Zac Fung*

Bass

Patrick Dugan, principal
Camilla Carvalho
Andrew O'Connor

Flute

Jeanne Sperber, principal
Laura Campbell
Melissa Moore

Oboe

Susan Laib, principal
Lesley McClelland, English horn

Clarinet

Emily Dobmeier, principal
Richard MacDowell
John Greenly, bass clarinet

Bassoon

David Resig, principal
Heather Cole

Horn

Tyler Ogilvie, principal
Terry Martens
Rebecca Dodson-Webster
Linda Bergstrom

Trumpet

Jeff Stempien, principal
Scott Kelley
Bill Arnts

Trombone

Norm Wilcox, principal
Duane Smith
Craig Harrigan

Tuba

Logan Owens, principal

Timpani

Emily Ickes, principal

Percussion

Simon Bjarning, principal
Chris McAllister
Leah Gardner
Dale Palmatier

Harp

Rosanna Moore, principal

Piano/Keyboard

David Peckham

Banjo

John Paul Tobin

*members of the Eastman School of Music
student quartet-in-residence with the OSFL

Junior String Ensemble

Debrah Devine, Conductor

Violin I

Cyrus Law, concertmaster

Anika Kamaraju

Amelia Ellison

Violin II

Thang Tran, principal

Imari Kelleher

Viola

Brenna Van Gordon, principal

Youth Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes

Augusto Diemecke, Conductor

Violin I

Giuliana Keeth, concertmaster

Alex Chen

Sophie Chen

Isabel Metz

Hayne Webster

June Park

Beatrice Beaudry

Viola

Rosemary Mead, principal

Cello

Laura Mead, principal

Cassandra Hamilton

Selina Dong

Flute

Sophia Myers, principal

Celene Sahoo



In Memoriam

The OSFL mourns the loss of second clarinetist, Diana Groll, who passed away after a private battle with cancer in mid-February. Diana was a passionate educator, teaching instrumental music in the Watkins Glen Central School District and teaching privately. She also contributed her talent to the Corning Area Community Concert Band and the Elmira College commencement ceremonies.

Diana, and her music, will be missed by all.

Notes on the Program

By Patrick Dugan

Capriol Suite

**Peter Warlock
(1894-1930)**

Peter Warlock is one of several pseudonyms used by English composer and critic, Philip Heseltine. He was notorious in his time for a variety of reasons—not least of which was his interest in the occult—and he found publishing his work, whether it was music or prose, quite difficult. His reviews were so scathing that few musicians would willingly perform his music; his frequent spats with publishers left him with few outlets for his writing.

Despite these difficulties, and the composer's early death at the age of 36, Heseltine's work has been consistently performed. The modern early music movement views him as a pioneer in the field, as his research on Elizabethan music and the folk songs of the British Isles was quite extensive.

The *Capriol Suite* is one of Heseltine's few purely instrumental works—the bulk of his output is vocal—and it reflects the composer's interest in music of the Renaissance. It is one of his most frequently performed pieces today and is a favorite among young ensembles.

Danzón No. 2

**Arturo Márquez
(b. 1950)**

Danzón No. 2 is one of the best known works by a Mexican composer. It was catapulted to fame thanks to an electrifying performance given by the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra in 2007. In the years following it has become so popular that transcriptions of it have been made for concert bands and it is frequently performed by ensembles all over the world. The piece is a favorite among performers, as several instruments have prominent virtuosic solos, and it rarely fails to impress audiences.

The *danzón* is a style of dance developed in Cuba and is immensely popular in the Mexican state of Veracruz, which is where Márquez became familiar with it. The basic rhythm of a *danzón* is called the *baqueteo*, which has its roots in sub-Saharan Africa and can be heard being played by various percussion instruments. In Veracruz, it is common to see *danzóns* danced in public squares, where it is a lively social event—an opportunity to flirt tastefully, commune with friends, greet neighbors, and to simply enjoy the evening air.

Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 18

**Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)**

Rachmaninoff was only 27 when he wrote the 2nd Piano Concerto, which was the first orchestral work he had written after the disastrous premiere of his first symphony in 1897. This setback and public humiliation caused Rachmaninoff to fall into an intense depression—he experienced crippling self-doubt and despondency for years afterward. While he continued to give concerts

and started a lucrative career as a conductor, he did not produce any significant new pieces for several years; projects he had started previously lay untouched on his desk. Rachmaninoff was able to overcome these struggles with the help of his loving friends, who encouraged him to seek out the services of Dr. Nikolai Dahl, a practitioner of hypnotherapy, which was a new discipline at the time. After Dr. Dahl's treatment, Rachmaninoff was able to write the concerto within seven months, finishing it in April of 1901 and premiering it as the soloist on November 9th of the same year. He was so grateful to Dr. Dahl that the concerto is dedicated to him. Dahl eventually left his native Russia and ended up in Beirut. He spent some of his free time playing viola in a university orchestra there; they played Rachmaninoff's concerto on one concert and the conductor insisted that the dedicatee in the viola section take a well-deserved bow, along with the soloist.

Piano Concerto No. 2 cemented Rachmaninoff's reputation as his generation's foremost composer and performer of such works, and has remained an essential part of the classical repertoire ever since. It is considered one of the most difficult works for a pianist to perform, which perhaps has only helped it endure.

Black Swan

Bright Sheng
(b. 1955)

Bright Sheng is a composer known for knitting seemingly disparate traditions together, and much of his work puts Western musical idioms and instruments alongside the musical traditions of China, where he was born.

Black Swan was part of a larger project celebrating the end of Gerard Schwarz's tenure at the Seattle Symphony. The piece is a transcription of Brahms' *Intermezzo Op. 118, No. 2*, which is a piece well-known to listeners and beloved by pianists. Taking a pre-existing work and adapting it for new situations is a task familiar to any composer, be they amateur, student, or professional. In this case, Sheng chose to give his orchestra treatment of the Intermezzo qualities redolent of Brahms' own orchestral writing, and does so without diminishing his own voice.

Symphony No. 1 in A-flat Major

William Grant Still
(1895-1978)

William Grant Still was one of the most accomplished musicians and composers that the United States has yet produced and was a key part of the Harlem Renaissance. He wrote the *Afro-American Symphony* in the midst of the Great Depression, when his previously fruitful career as a Broadway musician was interrupted and he had long stretches without gainful employment. It was premiered in 1931 by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Howard Hanson—this was the first time an American orchestra played a piece by an African-American composer. The symphony was a tremendous success and was soon played all over the U.S.; Hanson even toured Europe with the piece, where it was received with great enthusiasm.

I. *Longing: Moderato assai*. On a purely formal level the first movement resembles other symphonies; themes are presented and developed according to well-established procedures; the key of A-flat major is established at the beginning and confirmed again at the end. At the time, writing such music would have seemed quite conservative, since composers on either side of the Atlantic had started venturing into the realm of atonality decades previously. Still's use of such conventional materials is not a product of deep-seated conservatism on his part; he studied composition with Edgard Varese, who was one of the leading voices of the avant-garde, and Still was eminently capable of expressing himself in more radical ways. Still described his thinking thusly:

"The harmonies employed in the Symphony are quite conventional except in a few places. The use of this style of harmonization was necessary in order to attain simplicity and to intensify in the music those qualities which enable hearers to recognize it as Negro music. The orchestration was planned with a view to the attainment of effective simplicity."

The qualities he describes here are derived from the Blues, which is the basis of the main theme of the first movement. This theme is first introduced by an English horn in a demure and plaintive manner; it is reinstated afterwards by a trumpet, accompanied by the orchestra playing what is unmistakably a 12-bar blues. At the time Still wrote this piece (late 1920's to 1930), the Blues did not have the respect it enjoys now. Among white audiences, and even among some Black people of a certain class, the Blues had associations similar to how Hip-Hop is viewed today; it was seen through the lens of criminality, debauchery, excess, in short as something unrespectable. While such notions say more about those who hold them than the art they attempt to describe, they were so dominant that the Blues, and the people who played the Blues, were denied the respect they deserved. Still gave his thoughts on the matter in an interview towards the end of his life:

"I didn't look on it with scorn. I realized that people looked down their noses at that [sort of music], but I saw no necessity for it. I still don't...[treat it with scorn]. I think it has great value. It certainly is American music. Now in the Blues, I saw this: a unique musical creation of Negroes."

Putting African-American music in a symphonic form, thus putting it in the same league as Beethoven and people like him, was itself an intensely radical act on Still's part. The whole symphony, as its title implies, takes this as its basis.

II. *Sorrow: Adagio*. The second movement looks to spirituals for its melodic content. It is slightly more harmonically complex than the preceding movement—as it displays more sophisticated chromatic elements—but still stays well within the bounds of tonality.

III. *Humor: Animato*. Audiences at the time the symphony was written took a tremendous liking to the third movement. On several occasions, in North America and Europe alike, orchestras were made to repeat it due to their audiences' enthusiasm. Still titled it "Humor" and the movement has two main themes, both of which undergo two variations.

There is a moment towards the beginning of the movement which bears striking resemblance to one of George Gershwin's most famous tunes, "I've Got Rhythm." The similarity is strong enough to provoke debate as to which performer originated the melody. It is certain that the two composers knew each other and enjoyed a mutual respect. The crux of the debate is as follows: a few years before either the *Afro-American Symphony* or "I've Got Rhythm" were written, Gershwin attended a performance where Still was a member of the pit orchestra, playing the oboe. Still was known to improvise before performances and potentially played some version of this melody while Gershwin was in earshot. Despite this, Still never claimed to have originated the melody. It is perhaps impossible to give a definitive answer, but this situation still serves as a wonderful example of how musicians communicate, perhaps without their knowing.

IV. *Aspiration: lento; con risoluzione*. The fourth movement is the most forward looking part of the symphony, at least in terms of harmonic material. The movement opens with a subdued hymn-like passage for the clarinets, low brass, and strings. At this point, the music seems more modal than tonal, and a clear tonal center—ultimately F minor—is not solidified until midway through the movement. Even then, definitive cadences are avoided entirely until the very end. But even here the music does not conform to tonal expectation, which would be for the dominant chord of F minor, C Major, to resolve to an F minor chord. Instead a progression from D-flat to F minor appears. This is not unheard of in music—a similar moment occurs in Dvořák's *New World Symphony*—but it is noteworthy nonetheless, and gives the piece an air of looking towards the horizon.

Still originally used extracts from several poems by Paul Lawrence Dunbar, a prominent African-American poet of the late 19th century, as epigraphs for each movement. They are reproduced on the next page in the same manner as they appeared in the symphony's first edition. Each further clarifies Still's thinking behind each movement and the work as a whole.

With humble thanks to God, the source of inspiration.

William Grant Still

I. Moderato assai

"All my life long twell de night has pas'
Let de wo'k come ez it will,
So dat I fin' you, my honey, at last',
Somewhah des ovah de hill."

Paul Laurence Dunbar

II. Adagio

"It's moughty tiahsome layin' 'roun'
Dis sorrer-laden earfly groun',
An' oftentimes I thinks, thinks I
'Twould be a sweet t'ing des to die
An' go 'long home."

Paul Laurence Dunbar

III. Animato

"An' we'll shout ouah halleluyahs,
On dat mighty reck'nin' day."

Paul Laurence Dunbar

IV. Lento, con risoluzione

"Be proud, my Race, in mind and soul.
Thy name is writ on Glory's scroll
In characters of fire.
High mid the clouds of Fame's bright sky
Thy banner's blazoned folds now fly,
And truth shall lift them higher."

Paul Laurence Dunbar

He who develops his God-given gifts with view
to aiding humanity, manifests truth.

A Message of Healing

The past few years have been universally stressful. Likely, we can all agree that we are in need of healing—both as individuals and as a community. A group of diverse cultural organizations of the Southern Finger Lakes came together early in the pandemic to share information and help one another through numerous existential crises—and we have bonded over what has been an unparalleled experience in our professional lifetimes.

We believe—individually and collectively—in the power of natural beauty, cultural experiences, and the arts. We have always understood what an outlet they can be for reflection and personal expression, for cultural storytelling, and for conveying emotions. Cultural institutions serve important roles as community centers and are a place of respite in challenging times. Although we were deemed “non-essential” for a period of time, we are essential to the next steps in our communal healing process.

We invite you to experience history, art, drama, music, and the beauty of the natural world in your community. It is time to come together once again to enjoy the unique shared experiences offered by the arts and cultural attractions in our region. The nine organizations listed below offer something for everyone, and have each worked hard to make sure your experience is as safe as possible. Your local organizations need you—but more importantly, you need the healing power of the arts! We hope you will consider a visit to a nearby cultural institution to get lost in the moment, find peace, and to feel better. Just feel better.

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Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes	Clemens Center	The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes

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Join us for the OSFL Season Finale, featuring Ukrainian-American violin soloist, Solomiya Ivakhiv, performing Beethoven's *Violin Concerto*. The OSFL will also commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Flood of 1972 with "Twin Cities" from Duke Ellington's *The River*.

OSFL Spring Concert

Sunday, May 1 at 4:00 PM
Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY

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