

## Classics 5: Program Notes

### Celebrating Our Sister Cities and the City of Stockton

At a Stockton Symphony Board meeting in 2017, longtime member Benjamin Reddish, Jr. wondered if it might be possible to forge a connection with Stockton's sister cities. His wife Janie—a respected former principal at several Stockton schools and an avid Symphony supporter—just happens to be the board president of the Stockton Sister Cities Association. Maestro Peter Jaffe immediately saw the potential for a great community-building musical event and dreamed up an entire season-culminating concert that features music from the regions of each of the seven cities—interspersing these selections with pieces specifically celebrating Stockton and its great Symphony. To make an even grander occasion, Jaffe enlisted the help of the Stockton Chorale and Delta College Concert Choir, both under the leadership of Bruce Southard, and the choirs of the University of the Pacific, directed by Yejee Choi.

As reported by the Stockton Sister Cities Association, one of the oldest in the U.S., having been inaugurated in 1959: “A sister city, county, or state relationship is a broad-based, long-term partnership between two communities in two countries. A sister city, county, or state relationship is officially recognized after the highest elected or appointed official from both communities sign off on an agreement. A city may have any number of sister cities, with community involvement ranging from a half dozen to hundreds of volunteers, which may include representatives from nonprofits, municipal governments, the private sector, and other civic organizations.” Their description of the seven sister cities follows:



#### **Shimizu, Japan**

Shimizu is located on the coast of Suruga Bay on the Pacific Ocean and covers a wide area from a coastal plain to the hills. With a population of 32,205 (2009), it is one of three wards of the city of Shizuoka. The main economic drivers are agriculture, heavy industry, and commerce. The primary agricultural crops are mandarin oranges, green tea, commercial fishing, and roses. Shimizu was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on March 9, 1959.



#### **Iloilo City, Philippines**

Iloilo City is a port city located on the southern shores of Panay Island on the Panay Gulf. This highly urbanized city has a population of 418,710 and is the capital city of Iloilo province. The local economy is supported by trade, commerce, and industry. Iloilo was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on August 2, 1965.



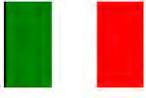
#### **Empalme, Mexico**

Empalme is located on the south-central coast of the Mexican state of Sonora. The economy is based on agriculture, cattle raising, fishing, and small industries. The population of the city is 40,630 (2005). Empalme was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on September 4, 1973.



### **Foshan, China**

Foshan is a city in central Guangdong province in southern China. Agriculture, manufacturing, and hi-tech industry support the economy for this city of 5.4 million. Foshan was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on April 11, 1988.



### **Parma, Italy**

Parma is in the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. This region is famous for its ham, cheese, architecture, and countryside. This city of 177,069 (2007) people is the home of the University of Parma, one of the oldest universities in the world. Parma was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on January 13, 1998.



### **Battambang, Cambodia**

Battambang is the capital city of Battambang province in northwestern Cambodia, located on the Sangker River. Battambang is the second-largest city in Cambodia with a population of over 250,000. It is well known for being the leading rice-producing province of the country. Battambang was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on October 19, 2004.



### **Asaba, Nigeria**

Asaba is the Delta State Capital of Nigeria with a population of 500,000. It is located on a hill at the western edge of the majestic River Niger. Asaba forms a connector between western, eastern, and northern Niger through the River Nigeria. Asaba is the major agriculture community in the oil rich delta state of Nigeria. Asaba was adopted as a Sister City by City Council Resolution on June 6, 2006.

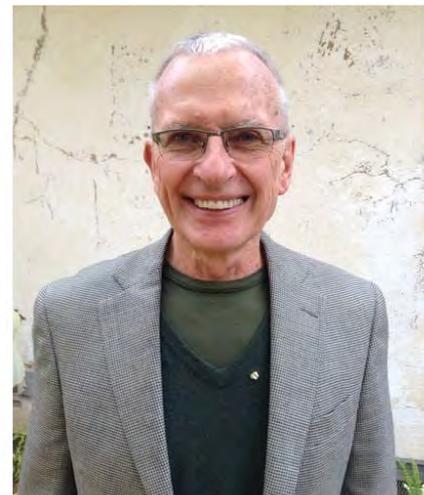
## **The Music**

### **Fanfare for a Grand Occasion**

Max Simončič

*Born in Postonja, Slovenia, February 2, 1945*

Composer of international repute and devoted pedagogue, Max Simončič has received commissions from the Stockton Symphony, San Francisco Symphony's Bay Brass, San Francisco Saxophone Quartet, St. John's Chamber Orchestra, Adelphi Chamber Orchestra of New Jersey, Flexible Symphony of New York City, and numerous other ensembles. In 2005 he won ERM Media's national competition, Masterworks of the New Era, for his orchestral composition *Petit cirque*, a shorter, reworked version of *Cirque de symphonia*, which the Stockton Symphony premiered in 2002. More recently Peter Soave performed Simončič's Accordion Concerto to great acclaim for the Stockton Symphony's 85th anniversary in the 2011–12 season.



Simončič's music has been performed throughout the United States and Europe. Other recent performances include his Accordion Concerto, performed by the Michigan Philharmonic; Concerto for Marimba and Symphonic Band, premiered at Carnegie Hall; *Haggin Suite* and Saxophone Concerto, both premiered by the Zion Chamber Orchestra; and Suite of Dances, premiered by the Valley Community Orchestra. Since the age of eight, when Simončič wrote his first pieces, he has continued to find composing both mysterious and exciting.

In 2006 Simončič retired from decades of teaching music to tens of thousands of students at San Joaquin Delta College. He has also taught theory and composition at the University of the Pacific and is active as an adjunct professor for the Stockton branch of San Diego-based National University. He and his wife Sara are raising their three children, all the while seeking new adventures; he also has four wonderful grown children.

Simončič writes: "The opportunity to honor our great musical pillar of Stockton was a gift. . . . The Symphony has played a huge part in my life since I arrived in Stockton in the late 1950s. Exploring my connection with the Symphony's long history sparked many musical ideas. *Fanfare for a Grand Occasion* conveys the spirit of the Symphony and its ability to inspire many generations in the concert hall and throughout our community. Let the legacy continue."

—@Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, xylophone, and strings*

### **Cambodian Suite**

Norodom Sihanouk

*Born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (our sister city, **Battambang**, was under his governance), October 31, 1922; died in Beijing, China, October 15, 2012*

Arr. Kostelanetz

Known as "King Father" in Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk (surname first, given name last) was born into the Khmer royal family when his country was a French protectorate. France installed him as a "puppet" king in 1941, but in 1953 he gained Cambodia's independence. He abdicated the throne in 1955, formed the party that won election in 1955, and governed as prime minister and then head of state from 1960.



Ousted by military coup in 1979, Norodom lived in exile in China. He returned to Cambodia as nominal head of state after the civil war won by the Khmer Rouge in 1975, but disagreements led to his living under house arrest until 1979. With the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge by

Vietnamese forces, Norodom went into exile again and formed an anti-Vietnamese coalition. Eventually, in 1993, he returned to the throne, but real power lay with Prime Minister Hun Sen. In 2004 Norodom Sihanouk abdicated the throne to his eldest son, Norodom Sihamoni.

Norodom Sihanouk was often criticized for his shifting alliances, but supporters maintain that he had to be a mercurial leader as a survival tactic. Though he spent most of his life immersed in turbulent politics, he also pursued life as an artist. He wrote several musical compositions, mainly songs; he played saxophone and piano in a jazz band and esteemed Duke Ellington as a great American; he loved to sing at parties and especially admired Elvis Presley's ballads; he painted; and he produced, directed, and wrote the scripts for some fifty films, among them award winners *The Little Prince* (1967), *Twilight* (1969), and *My Village at Sunset* (1992)—he even acted in several of his films.

Famed pops conductor and arranger Andre Kostelanetz made an orchestral arrangement of Norodom Sihanouk's *Cambodian Suite*, which he performed on tour with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and broadcast on CBL-FM in November 1954. He performed his arrangement with the New York Philharmonic in March 1955 on a subscription concert at Carnegie Hall and at their "Stadium" concert in July and recorded it the same year with his own orchestra. He eventually changed the title of the third movement to "Dance" instead of the original "Chérie," which we have reinstated. Below are excerpts from one of his program notes with interjections from another.

"The 'Cambodian Suite' was first brought to this country by Donald R. Heath, former United States Minister to the Indo-Chinese states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In Washington he turned it over to the Air Force Symphony Orchestra, and Colonel George S. Howard, the orchestra's conductor, premiered it at one of the orchestra's regular summer concerts. The Suite consists of three parts, [Eastern] in their inspiration and flavor but with harmonic overtones of the West.

"1. 'Berceuse' [an introduction and waltz] evokes the atmosphere of the Far East through a wistful melody that becomes haunting in its simplicity. 2. 'Nostalgia' [a languid tone sketch] depicts the stillness of a mysterious [Eastern] night, with trees and temples silhouetted against the starry sky and the perfume of rare flowers filling the air. 3. 'Dance' ['Cherie': a colorful rhapsodized beguine], with its persistent rhythm, establishes a mood of exotic festivity which gradually comes to a brilliant climax."

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, temple blocks, drums with brushes, glockenspiel, antique cymbal, large gong, "elephant bell" in E, and strings*

## Movements I and III from Three Film Scores

Tōru Takemitsu

*Born in Tokyo (near our sister city, **Shimizu**), October 8, 1930; died there, February 20, 1996*



Tōru Takemitsu was largely self-taught as a composer, except for some private lessons with Yasuji Kiyose and Fumio Hayasaka. His early compositions embraced the newest developments in Western music of the post-War era, including unconventional instrumentation, chance music, and mixed media. He once said that it was only through his study of modern Western music that he recognized his own Japanese traditions. Rather than simply injecting Japanese traditions into Western music or blending the two forms, however, he strove to create an individualized art that illuminates the human condition. His resulting style proved irresistible to commissioning groups and audiences internationally.

Takemitsu became recognized worldwide through his Requiem for strings (1957), which Stravinsky declared a masterpiece. In 1970 he designed the Space Theater for Expo '70 in Osaka. He taught at Yale University (1975) and the University of California at San Diego (1981) and lectured at Harvard, Boston, and Yale Universities in 1983. He organized the annual Music Today festival in Tokyo beginning in 1973 and later served as composer-in-residence for the Colorado Music Festival and Britain's Aldeburgh Festival. Recipient of numerous awards and honors, he composed more than thirty-five works for orchestra, more than fifty pieces for a wide variety of smaller instrumental combinations, and some ninety(!) film scores.

In 1994 Takemitsu arranged excerpts from three of his film scores into a three-movement work for string orchestra. *Three Film Scores* was first performed by the English Chamber Orchestra, conducted by William Boughton, on March 9, 1995, at the CineMusic Festival, Gstaad. The first movement, Music of Training and Rest, is from the music for the 1959 documentary *Jose Torres*, about the legendary Puerto Rican boxer. Takemitsu purposely adopted a "Latin" style for the film score and marked the present movement "Jazzy, blues-like." Constructed primarily of short, chordal, syncopated phrases, the movement unfolds in a series of five sections, through which a recurring phrase makes further subdivisions. A dramatic effect is created by the muted entrance of the final section after a grand pause.

The last movement, Waltz, was originally part of the score for *Face of Another*, a 1966 film about the scarred victim of a factory fire, whose personality changes when a psychotherapist gives him a lifelike mask. Woven into the story is a subplot involving the incest and suicide of a woman disfigured by the Hiroshima bombing. Written for a scene in a beer hall, Takemitsu's Waltz—replete with key signature (C minor)—bows to Austro-German tradition with its afterbeat accompaniment and form—waltz-trio-waltz. Not only does the master composer evoke nineteenth-century harmonies, but he orchestrates the movement in the Austro-German waltz style.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for strings*

## Overture on Philippine Folk Songs (Medley of Filipino Folk Songs)

Traditional/Bernard Green

*Born New York, September 14, 1908; died Westport, Connecticut, August 8, 1975*

*Some of the folk songs here are from the Visayas region, representing our sister city, Iloilo.*



Bernard “Bernie” Green won widespread recognition in the 1940s as a composer, arranger, and conductor for radio and in the 1950s and ’60s for television. He dated the score of his *Overture on Philippine Folk Songs* (also referred to as *Medley on Filipino Folksongs*) “May 4, 1974,” but the occasion that prompted the composition remains elusive. Robert Shroder, conductor of the Filipino American Symphony Orchestra, suspects that it was written for Imelda Marcos, first lady of the Philippines from 1965 to 1986. We are deeply indebted to Maestro Shroder for his help in providing the score and parts for this performance.

Researchers may yet find some information about the occasion for which Green wrote his *Overture on Philippine Folk Songs* (also referred to as *Medley on Filipino Folksongs*), but for the present all we have is his date of May 4, 1974, handwritten on the score. We are deeply indebted to Robert Shroder, conductor of the Filipino American Symphony Orchestra, for his help in providing the score and parts for this performance.

Green skillfully manages to fit eight well-known Philippine songs into his relatively short Overture, leading off with the stirring “**Pamulinawen**,” an Ilocano rather than Tagalog courting song—lyrics by Isidro Castro, music by Julian Dacuycuy Sales—in which a lover asks forgiveness from the woman he has hurt, his “*pamulinawen*” (hardhearted one). The music slows and softens for the beloved love song “**Dahil sa iyo**” (Because of you, 1938), music by Mike Velarde, lyrics by Dominador Santiago, rendered here by lush strings.

The comical “**Chichiritsit**” (alternately spelled “Sitsiritsit” or “Chitchiritchit”) provides contrast with its catchy phrases portraying a flirtatious woman who threatens a storekeeper by saying ants will eat everything if he doesn’t extend her credit. Remarkably—as in the terrifying elements of many nursery tales and songs—she then asks a boat owner to take this child and exchange it for a doll and similarly asks a woman holding an umbrella to exchange this baby for shrimp paste.

Green next presents a wistful version of “**Lawiswis kawayan**” (Swishing bamboo), a Waray folk song (Visayas region, where our sister city Iloilo is) that became popular as both a song and dance throughout the Philippines. Different texts exist, of which one of the most popular is about a man who asks a woman to go with him to the bamboo grove. She wants to ask her parents’ permission, he sulks, she cries, and eventually they both rhapsodize about the bamboo grove. Green begins with solo flute playing the melody, and when the violins take over he adds a countermelody suggestive of the swishing of the bamboo in the wind.

The romantic classic **“Sampaguita”** (a type of jasmine, national flower of the Philippines) compares a beloved Philippine maiden to the beautiful flower. Composed by Dolores Paterno (1854–1881) as “La flor de Manila” with Spanish words, the song was translated into Tagalog by Levi Celerio. Here Green gives the lovely melody to the cellos.



The folk songs **“Condansoy”** (or “Kondansoy”) and **“Dandansoy”** (each titled for the person being addressed in the song) come from the Visayas region, again representing our sister city Iloilo. In the lighthearted “Condansoy,” here a kind of circus-y waltz, a young boy is asked to drink *tuba*, a coconut wine, which he wisely refuses. By contrast, “Dandansoy” is a poignant farewell song, sung by the one who is departing. If you follow me some day, the singer advises, you need not bring water because you can always dig wells along the way. The song in its different versions has also become symbolic for cultural workers in Iloilo and as social commentary in Antique. Here Green gives the sorrowful melody to a solo violin with spare accompaniment.

The Overture concludes with the Ilocano folk song **“Ti ayat maysa nga ubing”** (The love of a young girl), in which the singer tells an old suitor that young love is as sweet as jasmine in April and that an old man’s love is bitter enough to make her retch. Look for a widow, she urges, and not a young girl who has already given her heart to someone. Green’s setting begins majestically in the winds and brass before turning to parade-like merriment and concluding in a blaze of glory.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 4 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, triangle, xylophone, glockenspiel, cymbals, tambourine, piano, and strings*

### **The Port Stockton March**

Benjamin Casey Allin III

*Born in Chicago, Illinois, November 14, 1886; died in Berkeley, California, January 10, 1960*

Arr. Peter Jaffe

After earning his bachelor’s degree at the University of Chicago in 1908, Benjamin Casey Allin III pursued an illustrious career in civil engineering, beginning as a surveyor for the Illinois Central Railroad, then for the Board of Insular Affairs in the Philippines, where he also published an English-Philippine dictionary—a nice connection for our Sister Cities concert. He worked for the Illinois Steel Company and on bridge evaluation for the Rock Island & Pacific Railway, and he served in both World Wars. In between, in



1919, he was made director of the Port of Houston, where he oversaw the design and construction of what became one of the world’s busiest and most renowned ports. In 1930 he

was called to the proposed Port of Stockton as an engineering consultant, later serving as director of the port and chief engineer until 1942. He also consulted on the Port of Bhavnager, India, and the Port of The Dalles, Oregon.

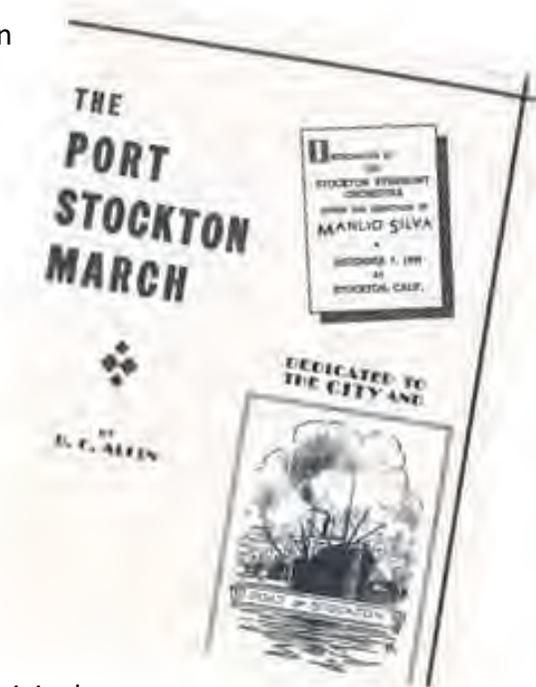
An acknowledged expert on the problems of railroads serving ports, Allin patented a system of railroad trackage and wharves. He also standardized terminology in port matters and authored numerous articles on port engineering, including “The Progress of the Port of Stockton, 1856–1935” and “Port of Stockton Developing Plan Balances Warehouse and Berthing Space.” In 1956 he penned his autobiography, *Reaching for the Sea*.

In his spare time Allin dabbled in writing music. He reminisced in his autobiography about his *Port Stockton March* characterizing it as “a musical romp” and noting that it was “played on at least one occasion by the Stockton Symphony to generous applause and my own satisfaction.”

The piano score, unearthed by current Port of Stockton Director Richard Ascheris, notes that the piece was introduced under Manlio Silva’s direction on December 7, 1936, and that it is dedicated to the “the City and the Port of Stockton.” Because the orchestral score and parts couldn’t be found in time for the Stockton Symphony’s revival of the work on January 27, 2018, Peter Jaffe arranged the march in the Sousa style that Allin’s music suggests. Jaffe added atmospheric touches—chimes suggesting ship bells and chromatic runs evoking swirling winds on the sea—and imaginatively varied the march’s repeated sections.

On the eve of the performance, Tod Ruhstaller, director of the Haggin Museum, read Lori Gilbert’s article in the *Stockton Record* and contacted Maestro Jaffe saying the museum had the original orchestral score and a newspaper account of the “lively and stirring” premiere. As it turns out, the orchestration was not made by Allin but by Hoyle Carpenter—in a different key from the original and with unvaried repeats. Jaffe’s arrangement went on as scheduled and the reception was so enthusiastic that the *Port Stockton March* was encored on the spot. The present concert provides the perfect occasion to honor the many requests to hear the piece again.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe



*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, glockenspiel, chimes, and strings*

## **Conga del fuego nuevo**

Arturo Márquez

*Born in Álamos, Sonora-Mexico (near our sister city **Empalme**, Sonora-Mexico),  
December 20, 1950*



Arturo Márquez studied piano, violin, and trombone as a youth, then concentrated on piano and theory at Mexico's Conservatorio Nacional. After studies at the Taller de Composición of the Institute of Fine Arts of Mexico, he studied privately in Paris with Jacques Castérède. Later, on a Fulbright scholarship, he earned his master's degree at the California Institute for the Arts. He currently works at the National University of Mexico, the Superior School of Music, and the National Center of Research, Documentation, and Information of Mexican Music (CENIDIM).

Márquez has written ballets, orchestral pieces, electro-acoustic music, film scores, and chamber music, along with interdisciplinary works that involve photography, actors, or experimental new sounds. Among his numerous works, which have been performed all over the world, his lively *Danzón No. 2* is best known, having become a secondary national anthem in Mexico. The various pieces in his *Danzón* series mix twentieth-century urban popular music and classical elements with great success.

Another of Márquez's highly successful fusions of popular and classical style, the *Conga del fuego nuevo* (Conga of new fire) dates from 2005 (though a few sources suggest as early as 1999 or 2000—perhaps an early version for the inaugural Cumbre Tajín festival), the piece was popularized all over the world by Gustavo Dudamel touring with the Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar, the flagship orchestra of Venezuela's remarkable El Sistema project.

The *Conga del fuego nuevo* continues Márquez's line of dance-inspired pieces. Of Afro-Cuban origin, the *conga* began as a street dance performed by *comparsas* or masqueraders during Carnival (the period before Lent) in Latin American countries. It made its way into Havana salons in the early twentieth century and by the 1930s became all the rage as a ballroom dance in North America and Europe, largely through Hollywood's "Latin" musicals. Márquez was particularly influenced by the folkloric music of the gulf region of Veracruz, Mexico, which absorbed so much of Afro-Cuban culture.

With its signature catchy rhythms, Márquez's rollicking *Conga del fuego nuevo* embraces both the raucous carnival aspect of the conga and the exuberance of the ballroom dance. The colorful, plentiful percussion section includes congas, the tall Afro-Cuban drums (or *tumbadoras*) that became popularly known congas during the 1930s dance craze. Márquez sets up a propulsive rhythm for his jaunty main theme, from which a more lyrical trumpet melody

soon emerges. This tune, muted and slowed down, forms the basis for the tranquil middle section before the catchy main theme returns to heat up the final section.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, suspended cymbal, congas, snare drum, quijada (donkey jaw), tambourine, cymbals, bass drum, tubular bells, triangle, glockenspiel, and strings*



### **Fanfare for a Remarkable Friend**

Chris Brubeck

*Born in Los Angeles, March 19, 1952*

*For biographic information about Chris Brubeck, please see Classics 2, Guest Artists.*

In 2015, to celebrate Peter Jaffe on his 20th anniversary as music director and conductor of the Stockton Symphony, the Board of Directors commissioned Chris Brubeck to compose a fanfare in his honor. That fall at a very full board meeting Brubeck surprised Maestro Jaffe with a phone call—it was 3 am in Barcelona, where Chris was performing—and played him and the assemblage a synthesized version of the work, for which the score and performance parts were on their way. Peter was completely surprised, humbled, and honored, and he added the piece to the program of the closing concert of the season, at which it received a standing ovation. The present festive occasion seemed the perfect opportunity to bring back this gem honoring the Stockton Symphony and its conductor.

Chris Brubeck writes: “I initially met Maestro Jaffe through my father, Dave Brubeck, who told me that Peter was an extremely talented and cheerful conductor whose company I would really enjoy. As with many things, my father was right in his assessment!” Brubeck used a technique his father was fond of in his later years—looking for the inherent rhythm in someone’s name and using that as the “rhythmic cell” for the piece. Thus, the Fanfare begins with “a series of orchestral pyramid chords” proclaiming “Pe-ter Jaf-fe, Pe-ter Jaf-fe.”

Throughout Brubeck introduces elements that he knew would delight Jaffe—a Bach-like passage, a stabbing “*Petrushka* chord” that was also a favorite of Dave Brubeck, a fugal section based on the rhythmic cell and launched by Chris Brubeck’s own instrument (bass trombone), a passage with the cell running simultaneously at different speeds, a romantic theme as a “salute to Peter’s lovely wife, Jane,” and a “blues shuffle/boogie-woogie ostinato” on a variant of the cell. A compressed recap of the introduction builds in energy to conclude the piece—acknowledging Jaffe’s energy as a conductor.

“I hope you enjoy listening to this piece as much as I enjoyed writing it. I have played with many great orchestras and conductors all over the world. I want you to know that in my opinion the citizens of Stockton are extremely fortunate and blessed to have a man of Peter Jaffe’s abilities and character leading one of the most important organizations in their community for the last twenty years. This is my sincere musical tribute to a marvelous musician, great friend, and innovative thinker with a very big heart. I think the ideas expressed in this piece beat the heck out of me giving a long speech praising his many achievements. Bravo Maestro Jaffe! May your days continue to be filled with joyful music!”

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, glockenspiel, chimes, xylophone, vibraphone, marimba, triangle, suspended and crash cymbals, bass drum, drum set, snare drum, piano, harp, and strings*

### **Lullaby from African Suite**

Fela Sowande

*Born in Oyo, Nigeria (a day’s drive from our sister city **Asaba**, Nigeria), May 29, 1905; died in Ravenna Ohio, March 13, 1987*



Fela Sowande received his earliest musical training from his father, an Anglican priest who taught at St. Andrew’s College in Oyo, Nigeria. When transferred to Lagos, his father arranged for Fela to be a choir boy at King’s College (Lagos), where he also studied organ with T. K. Ekundayo Phillips, who became his mentor for twenty years. Phillips not only introduced Sowande to European music but influenced his use of the melodies and musical features of the Yoruba people (Oyo empire), such as pentatonic scales, melodic inflection of texts, and parallel harmonies. While still in Nigeria, beginning in 1932, Sowande also became fascinated with jazz and especially Duke Ellington via American, French, and British radio broadcasts.

Sowande continued his education in London, studying music privately and as an extension student at the University of London and Trinity College of Music while supporting himself as a dance-band pianist, band leader, and Hammond organist. He was especially proud of playing with Adelaide Hall and Fats Waller, among other great jazz musicians. He began to be mistaken for an African American, which contributed to his desire to showcase his Nigerian roots beginning around this time.

During World War II Sowande joined the Royal Air Force but was then appointed to the British Colonial Film Unit, which enabled him to compose educational works for broadcast in Africa. He was particularly inspired to use folk songs from Nigeria and Ghana in these works. In 1944 he

wrote one of his most famous works, the *African Suite*, which he recorded in 1953 and which is often listed as composed in 1955, actually its date of publication.

In 1953 Sowande returned to Nigeria as head of music and music research of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. He continued to compose, commissioned for occasions such as the Nigerian celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation as well as events in England. He also made numerous arrangements of African-American spirituals. In 1960 he composed his last major work, his *Folk Symphony*, based on African themes, for the occasion of Nigeria's independence from England. Ironically, however, the premiere took place in England by the Bournemouth Symphony that October.

In the following years Sowande concentrated on teaching, holding positions at Northwestern and Princeton Universities in the U.S., the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, and—back in the U.S.—Howard University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Kent State University. During his time in the U.S. he conducted numerous performances of his works, especially his *African Suite* and *Folk Symphony*. He died at age eighty-two in a nursing home in Ravenna, Ohio.

Sowande's *African Suite* consists of five movements—Joyful Day, Nostalgia, Lullaby, Onipe, and Akinla—of which four of them (I, III, IV, and V) are based on African melodies which he combined with European techniques. Our featured movement, Lullaby, begins with a solo violin playing the contemplative melody from Southern Nigeria, soon joined by muted strings creating a dreamlike atmosphere. Passages in quickly oscillating parallel motion—somewhat reminiscent of Debussy's and Ravel's string textures—alternate with lyrical passages that peak and subside until the movement comes to a pause, a flutter, another pause, and an ethereal reminiscence.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for strings*



### **KC Capriccio**

Chen Yi

*Born in Guangzhou, China (near our sister city Foshan, China), April 4, 1953*

Chinese-American composer Chen Yi writes bold, sometimes pensive or humorous compositions that seek to distill and combine the essence of Chinese and Western traditional music. Her works have been performed throughout Europe, the United States, and China, and her

numerous honors include the prestigious Charles Ives Living Award and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Fromm, Ford, and Rockefeller foundations. She has been commissioned to compose for myriad orchestras, chamber groups, and soloists, including the Central Philharmonic of China, Cleveland Orchestra, Women's Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Kronos Quartet, Emanuel Ax, Yo-Yo Ma, and James Galway.

Having begun violin and piano studies at the age of three, Chen Yi managed to continue her music studies during China's cultural revolution in the 1960s by practicing on a muted violin. She later served as a concertmaster and resident composer at the Beijing Opera Troupe of Guangzhou, where she started researching Chinese traditional music and Western and Chinese theory. Her studies at the Beijing Central Conservatory culminated in her becoming the first woman in China to receive the master's degree in composition in 1986. She earned her doctorate in 1993 at Columbia University, where she studied with Chou Wen-chung and Mario Davidovsky.

Chen Yi has served since 1998 as Lorena Searcy Cravens/Millsap/Missouri Distinguished Professor at the Conservatory of the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) and is a frequent guest lecturer and composer/advisor for many organizations. Her recent teaching endeavors have included her position as Thousand Talents Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music (2012–15), and her recent compositions range from a solo percussion work, *Colors of Naobo* (2015), performed by Evelyn Glennie at the Edinburgh Festival, to *Thinking of My Home* (2015) for treble clef choir performed by the Frontier Trail Middle School Choir in Kansas.

As a cultural ambassador for new music from the East and West and education exchange programs, Chen Yi has been involved in recent years with the programs of the Beijing Modern Music Festival, the Beijing International Composition Workshop (BICW), the Shanghai Spring Festival, the Tianjin May Festival, the China-ASEAN Music Week, the Thailand International Composition Festival, and orchestras throughout China and other Asian countries. She believes that music is a universal language; improving understanding between peoples of different cultural backgrounds and helping to bring peace in the world.

The festive, exuberant *KC Capriccio* was commissioned by the UMKC Conservatory of Music for the UMKC Wind Ensemble and the Heritage Chorale for the celebration of Kansas City's 150th Anniversary. The premiere took place on September 28, 2000, at the White Hall, University of Missouri-Kansas City, conducted by Sarah McKoin. The China National Symphony and Choir gave the Asian premiere in 2001 at the Beijing Concert Hall, conducted by Robert Olson. For that performance Chen Yi expanded the wind ensemble instrumentation to include a full symphony orchestra.

According to the composer, the work was inspired by a folk tune played on a bagpipe that she heard on the lawn outside of the Nelson Art Gallery in Kansas City. She also drew on the "wild singing sound" and spirit of the Asian folk choral music tradition to accompany this tune. An opening wedge of sound brings on the folk-song motive in a fragmented version, which solidifies with the choir's joyful rendition on the syllable "la" rather than with words. The other main choral texture—a lively kind of rhythmic chanting with merrily emphasized ends of phrases—also uses wordless syllables. The orchestra's bold interjections eventually open out into a majestic fanfare before the choir rejoins for the celebratory conclusion.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for SATB chorus, 2 flutes, 2nd doubling piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, baritone, tuba, timpani, snare drum, wood block, suspended cymbal, mark tree, bass drum, wood block, and strings*

### **Text Syllables**

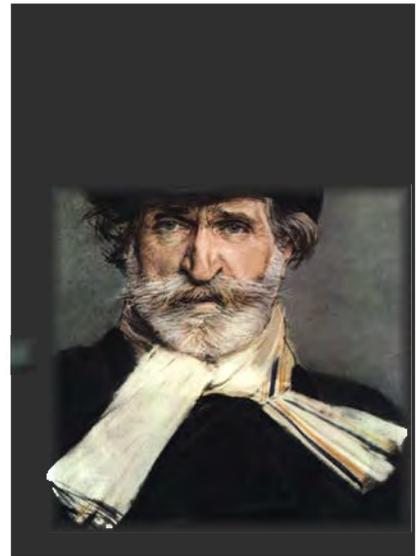
yo yo yo yo, la la la, etc., la la la, etc., yi,  
la, la, la, etc., wu, wu, la, la, la, la, la,  
ah, ah, ah, etc., ha!  
yo ha yo ha, za ba za ba, etc., jup, jup, etc., ha!  
dong, dong, dong, dong, dong, ha, yo ha, etc.,  
za ba za ba, etc., jup, jup, etc., za ba, etc., jup, ha, jo, ha!  
za ba za ba, etc., jup, ha,  
hei, hei, za ba za ba jup jup hei hei,  
za ba za ba jup jup hei hei za ba za ba jup jup hei ha!

### **Triumphal Scene from Act II of *Aida***

Giuseppe Verdi

*Born in Roncole, near Busseto (on the outskirts of **Parma**, our sister city), October 9 or 10, 1813; died in Milan, January 27, 1901*

Verdi declined when the Khedive of Egypt asked him to write an inaugural ode for the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, nor was he interested in composing a new opera for the opening of the Cairo opera house that year—*Rigoletto* was performed instead. But eventually Verdi agreed to compose an opera to be premiered there, based on a scenario by Egyptologist Mariette Bey, shaped by Camille du Locle, with a libretto by Antonio Ghilanzoni. *Aida* was completed by the January 1871 deadline, but the Franco-Prussian War delayed the premiere until December 24, 1871.



By this time Verdi was a superstar and any opera by him was virtually guaranteed success. *Aida* predictably triumphed in Cairo, its reception matched by Milan's enthusiasm a month-and-a-half later. Critics, however, were ambivalent about *Aida's* surprising mixture of modern and traditional elements—harmonic richness, exoticism, and “Wagnerisms” on one hand, and closed forms, stereotypical plot, and classic character types on the other. Critics aside, *Aida* has maintained a triumphant career owing to its beautiful writing for the voices and orchestra and its opportunity for spectacle.

The plot centers on the classic conflict between love and duty. The young Egyptian general Radames is loved by the Egyptian king's daughter Amneris, but he loves Aida, Amneris's slave,

who is really the daughter of the king of Ethiopia, Egypt's enemy. Torn between her love for Radames and her patriotic duty, Aida is bullied into making Radames betray a military secret, for which he is condemned to be buried alive. His own stubbornness thwarts the attempts of Amneris (now his wife) to save him. Aida slips into his tomb to die with him.

The opera is particularly celebrated for the second act's Grand Finale, often called the "Triumphal Scene" or "Triumphal March," which constitutes one of the greatest spectacles in opera. Verdi was careful, however, to insure that the scene carried dramatic weight—it highlights the divided loyalties that are central to the drama by showing Radames as a victorious Egyptian and introducing the captive Ethiopian king, Aida's father. The scene begins with trumpet fanfares as Radames and his victorious Egyptian army march into Thebes. The chorus "Gloria all'Egitto" bursts forth like sudden sunlight from the Egyptian populace which has turned out to greet the conquering heroes. The famous Triumphal March, which Verdi scored for special "Egyptian" trumpets, accompanies the troops marching past. The Ballabile (Ballet) is then performed for the king, followed by a choral reprise. The present excerpt ends with the full forces majestically reaffirming their glory.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

*Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani,*

### **Text and Translation**

#### **POPOLO**

Gloria all'Egitto, ad Iside  
Che il sacro suol protegge;  
Al Re che il Delta regge  
Inni festosi alziam ecc.

#### **DONNE**

S'intrecci il loto al lauro  
Sul crin dei vincitori;  
Nembo gentil di fiori  
Stenda sull'armi un vel.  
Danziam fanciulle egizie,  
Le mistiche carole,  
Come d'intorno al sole  
Danzano gli astri in ciel!

#### **SACERDOTI**

Della vittoria agli arbitri  
Supremi il guardo ergete;  
Grazie agli dei rendete  
Nel fortunato dì, ecc.

#### **POPULACE**

Glory to Egypt and to Isis,  
who protects the sacred land!  
To the King who rules the Delta  
festive hymns let us raise! *etc.*

#### **WOMEN**

Let the lotus be entwined with the laurel  
on the conquerors' brows!  
Let a soft cloud of flowers  
veil the arms of war.  
Let us dance, Egyptian maidens,  
the mystic dances,  
as, around the sun,  
the stars dance in the sky!

#### **PRIESTS**

To the supreme arbiters of victory,  
lift your eyes,  
give thanks to the gods  
on this happy day, *etc.*

**Marcia****Ballabile**

POPOLO

Vieni, o guerriero vindice,

Vieni a gioir con noi;

Sul passo degli eroi

I lauri, i fior versiam! Gloria! *ecc.***March****Ballet**

POPULACE

Come, O conquering warrior,

come, rejoice with us.

In the path of our heroes

let us cast laurels and flowers. Glory! *etc.*