



presents

Mary O'Connell, Conductor
In a Graduate Recital

Featuring:
The University of Northern Iowa Wind Ensemble

In partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the graduate degree in Wind Conducting
From the Studio of Danny Galyen

Chester

William Schuman
(1910-1992, USA)

Melodious Thunk

David Biedenbender
(1984, USA)

Ascent

Alex Shapiro
(1962, USA)

The Lighthouse

Joanne Harris
(1984, USA)

Mysterious Village

Michael Colgrass
(1932-2019, USA)

Folk Suite

Get on board, little children
Deep river
Medley

William Grant Still
(1895-1978, USA)

UNI Wind Ensemble

Flute

Juliana Becerra
*Carissa Blumka
Miranda Finn
Jennifer Valenzuela
Abby Wendland

Oboe

Lauren Geerlings
Caroline McReynolds

Bassoon

Marco Olachnovitch
*Sophia Patchin
Kate VanGorp

Clarinet

*Lindsey Davison
Angelina DeSocio
Katherine Czarnik
*Madeline Echternacht
Elias Phipps
Elizabeth Stanish
Brayden Stockman
Abby Voshell

Saxophone

Hannah Elerding
Luke McIlhon
*Logan Neifert
Lindy Slocum
Claire Uselding

Trumpet

*Megan Bennett
Abigail Holschlag
Sean Kiefer
Kate McAlister
Dora Roorda
Rylee Scheel
Evan Wahlstrom

Horn

Patrick Mooney
Mitchell Stevens
*Morgan Stumpf

Trombone

Jacob Chaplin
Sophia Pastorino
*Spencer Schnetzer
Morgan Uitermarkt

Euphonium

Morgan Westphal

Tuba

Aidan Anderson
*Isaac Sand

Percussion

Bradley Bodkin
Jess Herron
Preston Hirsch
Randall Kinner
Claretta Larson
*Xander Webb

Bass

Sam Stover

Piano

Caitlyn Beyer

* = Section Leader

Program Notes

The tune on which this composition is based was born during the very time of the American Revolution, appearing in 1778 in a book of tunes and anthems composed by William Billings called *The Singing Master's Assistant*. This book became known as *Billings' Best* following as it did his first book called *The New England Psalm Singer*, published in 1770. **Chester** was so popular that it was sung throughout the colonies from Vermont to South Carolina. It became the song of the American Revolution, sung around the campfires of the Continental Army and played by fifers on the march. The music and words, both composed by Billings, expressed perfectly the burning desire for freedom which sustained the colonists through the difficult years of the Revolution.

*Let tyrants shake their iron rod,
And Slav'ry clank her galling chains,
We fear them not, we trust in God,
New England's God forever reigns.*

*The Foe comes on with haughty Stride;
Our troops advance with martial noise,
Their Vet'rans flee before our Youth,
And Gen'ral's yield to beardless Boys.*

*What grateful Off'ring shall we bring?
What shall we render to the Lord?
Loud Halleluiahs let us Sing,
And praise his name on ev'ry Chord.*

Schuman originally composed **Chester** as the third movement of his *New England Triptych* for orchestra, where he interpreted William Billings's hymn and marching song of the same name. He later developed and extended the work to become an overture for band; however, the work is often performed as the answer to Schuman's second movement prelude of the *Triptych*, *When Jesus Wept*.

– Adapted from notes by the composer and Jennifer Daffinee

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.

– Program note from composer

ASCENT reflects the effort to get off the ground, literally or figuratively. It's a micro-overture that begins with the promise of upward transcendence, yet soon flies off into rogue disorganization. The raucous flock of many notes finally gathers into a united upward-headed murmur, but the freedom of soaring into the sky brings an uneasy mystery before settling into the tranquil air of anticipation.

– Program note from composer

Harris wrote *The Lighthouse* in 2018 after enduring a lengthy travelogue by her parents about seeing every single lighthouse in Nova Scotia. During this travelogue, Harris’s sister started pulling supplemental materials from the internet and found drone footage of Port Meadway Head. Harris’s sister said: “I think this video would be better if you had scored it.” This sparked Harris’s idea for the piece, which is built around oscillating textures and minimalist influences.

– Program note from University of Nebraska Omaha Symphonic Wind Ensemble concert program, 2019

Mysterious Village is written for young bands. My goal was to write a piece that challenges young performers while also appealing to listeners of all ages.

The village I envision is pure fantasy and could exist anywhere in the world. It’s a place I’ve never been and reflects a kind of life I’ve never experienced. Perhaps no one lives in this village and it is inhabited only by ghosts. This sense of unknown is what inspired *Mysterious Village*. Though listeners will hear sounds that may suggest ancient cultures, I hope they would also feel emotions that are common to us today. In spite of differing customs, values, and beliefs, people everywhere and all through time seem to share the same feelings. So it is not through the intellect that we connect with people far away and long ago, but through emotions that never change. I’m hoping that this piece evokes a sense of wonder in listeners and a curiosity about those whom we may never meet, but with whom we share a universal human experience.

– Program note from composer

The major part of William Grant Still's creative work has been in the field of original compositions, yet in his *Folk Suite for Band*, he has made one of his rare excursions into the realm of traditional American melodies, this time in building several of the most widely loved and often sung negro spirituals into a larger work. Wherever American music is known, *Get On Board*, *Little Children*, *Deep River*, *The Old Ark's a Moverin'*, and *Sinner, Please don't Let This Harvest Pass* are favorites. The Suite was first performed in Los Angeles on August 18, 1963, by one of the Bureau of Music's symphonic bands, Dale Eymann conducting.

– Program note from score