

UNIVERSITY OF
R Redlands
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

STUDIO BIG BAND
Dr. David Scott, director

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 - 8 p.m.
CASA LOMA ROOM

Aurora	Patrick Williams (b. 1939)
Left Bank Express	Pete Jackson
Fog Over East	Nathan Smith (b. 1974)
Kopi Luwak	Alan Ferber (b. 1975)
A Farmer's Life	Ken Ebo (B. 1968)
Bolivia	Cedar Walton (1934-2013) Arr. Eric Richards
Opus in Pastels	Stan Kenton (1911-1979)
Ice-Nine	Steve Weist (b. 1957)

PROGRAM NOTES

Aurora

Patrick Williams

Written by Patrick Williams, who is better known as a composer-arranger for projects such as *Columbo* and *Mary Tyler Moore*, you can hear some of the musical language from 1970's television and film in this work. The rhythm section opens the piece with a samba before introducing the horns on sustained notes which, if you happen to catch, harken back to the famous opening notes of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. After this horn interjection, a duet between sax and trumpet introduces lines that develop as the main thematic material of the piece. The piece unfolds with a sax and trombone feature and the standard big band shout choruses. Author Bill DeMain best describes this as "2001: A Space Odyssey-goes-Cuban groove."

Left Bank Express

Pete Jackson

This is a high-octane piece due in part to the well-known style of famed trumpeter Maynard Ferguson. Early in his career he played with the Stan Kenton group, which was the spring board for some of his future success as a soloist and bandleader. Hitting high notes in the extreme high register and sustaining them are a part of Maynard's signatures, and this piece makes room for this display of virtuosity while also creating a rather funky groove. The melodies are mainly created through connecting lines from one big band hit or swell to the next. The overall energy of the work is just high and in-your-face.

Fog Over East

Nathan Smith

If you have attended any of the most recent Studio Big Band concerts, you have been exposed to the eclectic and progressive compositional style of Nathan Parker Smith. This work does not deviate from that. Appearing on his 2014 album, *Not Dark Yet*, it starts with timbral effects produced by the percussion and is eventually accompanied by the other sections. The introduction can only be described as

the soundtrack to a horror film, letting us know there is something roaming in the fog. A pulsing theme slowly emerges from the sonic fog and a more stable heavy rock groove begins to form, along with a somber melody presented by the whole band, it turns into a rock ballad. The tune fades at the end in a similar matter to which it began.

Kopi Luwak

Alan Ferber

Appearing on the 2013 album *March Sublime*, whose title track appeared on our previous concert, this work's title holds a reference to the world's most expensive coffee. Its high cost is due to the location and unique method of production. This work is rhythmically driving and complex. It opens with a short saxophone solo that is echoed by the rest of the section. The rest of the band enters in unison on a descending line that leads into a melodic line that swirls around chromatically. What really drives the piece and serves as its focus is seemingly sporadic and uneven placement of accents, giving the piece an off-kilter feel.

A Farmer's Life

Ken Ebo

Written by GySgt Ken Ebo, trombonist and vocalist in the USMC All Star Jazz Band, this piece is inspired by the classic Basie-ballad style. This is what GySgt Ebo says:

“*A Farmer's Life* is dedicated to the memory and legacy of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Robert Farmer (Ret.), former U.S. Marine Band Officer and head of the Marine Corps Music Program. In addition to being a devoted husband and father, Robert was a beautiful conductor, a fine trombonist, and a prolific composer, arranger, and author. Those who had the honor of being under his command knew him as an officer of unflinching integrity and utmost devotion to his Marines. We would have followed him anywhere.”

Bolivia

Cedar Walton, Arr. Eric Richards

This high energy piece was arranged from the original tune by pianist Cedar Walton. It first appeared on the 1975 album *Eastern Rebellion*. It opens with a strong big band fanfare before mellowing out with a short rhythm section riff. Shortly after, the main themes are presented through a variety of smaller combos within the band. Much of the harmonic language derives from early fusion with some very colorful scoring throughout and funky Latin grooves underneath.

Opus in Pastels

Stan Kenton

A classic from the Stan Kenton library, this ballad is a wonderfully luxuriant saxophone feature. It utilizes the saxophone and rhythm sections, and is a quintessential Big Band era ballad, with very sweet harmonies and gliding melodies over a slow shuffle. Originally recorded in 1940, it has appeared again and again on many albums.

Ice-Nine

Steve Wiest

Existing within a similar vein as some of Nathan Smith's works, the work infuses rock elements into its overall effects, especially with the use of electric guitar and bass. The piece appeared on the album *Lab 2009* released by the University of North Texas. The driving rhythm, heavy scoring, and chromaticism all add to the rock aesthetic. The main thematic idea is a really chromatic line that represents the doomsday weapon in Kurt Vonnegut's novel “*Cat's Cradle*.”

STUDIO BIG BAND

Saxophones

Jeffrey Boehl, alto
Trueman Gibson, alto
Michael Kalb, tenor
Connor Edmundson, tenor
Manuel Perez, bari

Trombones

Jonathan Heruty
Marcelo Aguinaga
Ihab Hamideh
Todd Thorsen, bass

Trumpets

Jacob Ferntheil
Jorge Araujo-Felix
Matthew Richards
Andrew Priester

Rhythm Section

Jonathan Kretchmer, piano
Marcel Valenzuela, guitar
Fatima Baeza, bass
Collin Tarr, aux. percussion and vibes
Tate Kinsella, drum set

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