

WIND ENSEMBLE

Eddie R. Smith, conductor

Wednesday, March 28, 2018 - 8 p.m.

MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Fiesta del Pacifico	Roger Nixon (1921–2009)
Lucid Dreams	David Gillingham (b. 1947)
Reflections on an Old Japanese Folk Song	Philip Sparke (b. 1951)
Through Darkness Light Shall Break <i>World Premiere</i>	Alex Ehredt (b. 1994)
Symphony No. 2 Shooting Stars Dreams Under a New Moon Apollo Unleashed	Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

PROGRAM NOTES

Fiesta del Pacifico

Roger Nixon

“Fiesta del Pacifico is one of several festivals held annually in various communities in California which celebrate the Old Spanish Days of the State. This particular festival is held in San Diego for 12 days in the summer and features a play on the history of the area with a cast of over 1,000, a parade, a rodeo, and street dances.”
 -Roger Nixon

Lucid Dreams

David Gillingham

“Coined by the Dutch psychiatrist and writer, Frederik van Eeden, the term ‘lucid dream’ is a dream in which the person is aware that they are dreaming and the level of vividness of the dream depends on the person’s level of self-awareness. Special lucidity exercises have been known to treat people who suffer from nightmares. *Lucid Dreams* begins in a controlled, self-aware dream state. As the dream progresses, it begins to darken and gives way to a nightmare comprised of multiple dreams of various levels of fright. The seemingly endless chain of events finally succumbs to lucidity and ends calmly with a hint of mysteriousness.”
 -David Gillingham

Reflections on an Old Japanese Folk Song

Philip Sparke

Reflections on an Old Japanese Folk Song was commissioned and premiered by the Tokyo Wind Symphony Orchestra in the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre Concert Hall on September 26, 2015, conducted by the composer in a concert dedicated to his works. It is based on the tune “Suiryo-Bushi”, which comes from the shamisen tradition; the shamisen is a versatile three-stringed, plucked instrument which is used in a variety of traditional ensembles and to accompany kabuki as well as solo singers, especially geisha. The melody was included in a groundbreaking 1892 publication by military bandmaster Y. Nagai and renowned saxophonist, Kobatake called *Collection of Japanese Popular Music*. This included some of the first examples of Japanese traditional music in Western notation, with the aim of increasing its popularity outside Japan, following the country’s resumption of trade with the West in 1853. It is assumed that Puccini used this book when composing *Madam Butterfly*, as he uses six of its songs (including “Suiryo-Bushi”) in that opera.

Reflections on an Old Japanese Folk Song opens with two contrasting statements of the melody, first sparsely presented by the woodwinds and then in a harmonized version played by the full band. This is followed by a lively section with melodies based on the pentatonic scale which characterizes the folk tune. Next is a slower variation, which centers around a plaintive english horn melody made up of sections of the original tune, and presents the opening phrases of “Suiryo-Bushi” against an intensely florid accompaniment. The final section is in the form of a scherzo, which eventually forms the accompaniment to a final presentation of the folk tune.

Through Darkness Light Shall Break

Alex Ehredt

Alex Ehredt writes: “As is the case with many of my pieces, the title didn’t come to me until the piece was almost complete. Throughout the entire time I was composing the piece I knew what kind of emotions I wanted to convey, but I just couldn’t figure out how to put my thoughts into words for a title. The title finally came to me as I was driving to school one day and saw a mom and her son sitting on a bench waiting for the bus. As she handed him a doughnut, his face lit up with joy. Just a few hundred feet down the road a father zipped up his young daughter’s backpack while she cheerfully awaited the school bus, holding what looked to be a birthday balloon. I felt as if I was in one of those slow-motion movie scenes that happens at the end when everything is finally right again. I don’t know what it was about that day that made me take notice of these events, but it got me thinking about the fact that even with all of the horrible things that happen in the world and we see on the news, there is still an immense amount of good that often goes unnoticed in the world around us. This piece is meant to celebrate all of the positive things in our lives, and to remind us that it is those moments that we should define ourselves by and not the negative ones.”

Symphony No. 2

Frank Ticheli

“My second symphony is dedicated to James E. Croft upon his retirement as Director of Bands at Florida State University on 2003. It was commissioned by a consortium of Dr. Croft’s doctoral students, conducting students and friends as a gesture of thanks for all he has given to the profession.

The symphony’s three movements allude to various kinds of celestial light: shooting stars, the moon, and the sun, respectively. The title for the first movement, “Shooting Stars”, came after its completion, but throughout

the creative process I was imagining quick flashes of color. “White-note” clusters are sprinkled everywhere, suggesting streaks of bright light. High above, the Eb clarinet shouts out the main theme, while underneath, the low brasses punch out a series of staccatissimo chords, intensifying the dance-like energy. Fleeting events of many kinds are cut and pasted at unexpected moments, keeping the ear on its toes. The piece burns quickly, and ends explosively, scarcely leaving a trail.

The second movement, “Dreams Under a New Moon”, depicts a kind of journey of the sound as represented by a series of dreams. A bluesy clarinet melody begins, answered by a chant-like theme in the muted trumpet and piccolo. Many dream episodes follow, ranging from the mysterious, to the dark, to the peaceful and healing. A sense of hope begins to assert itself as rising lines are passed from one instrument to another. Modulation after modulation occurs as the music lifts and searches for resolution. Near the end, the main theme returns in counterpoint with the chant, building to a majestic climax, then falling to a peaceful coda. The final B-flat major chord is colored by a questioning G-flat.

The finale, “Apollo Unleashed”, is perhaps the most wide-ranging movement of the symphony, and certainly the most difficult to convey in words. On the one hand, the image of Apollo, the powerful ancient god of the sun, inspired not only the movement’s title, but also its blazing energy. Bright sonorities, fast tempos and galloping rhythms combine to give a sense of urgency that one often expects from a symphonic finale. On the other hand, its boisterous nature is also tempered and enriched by another, more sublime force: Bach’s *Chorale BWV 433* “Wer Gott vertraut, hat wohl gebaut”. This Chorale—a favorite of the dedicatee, and one he himself arranged for chorus and band—serves as a kind of spiritual anchor, giving a soul to the gregarious foreground events. The chorale is in ternary form (ABA’). In the first half of the movement, the chorale’s A and B sections are stated nobly underneath faster paced music, while the final A section is saved for the climactic ending, sounding against a flurry of 16th notes.”

-Frank Ticheli