

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents

Wind Symphony

&

Symphonic Band

Stephen P. Bolstad, *conductor*

Chris DeVona, *conductor*

Sarah Mason, *graduate conductor*

Guest Composer

John Mackey

Student Composers

Mihir Borah

Quin Robinson

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

8 pm

Concert Hall



There is no intermission.

Program

Symphonic Band

The Grand Adventure (2024)

Quin Robinson

(b. 2003)

- I. Introduction and Exposition
- II. The Fairy Forest's Depths
- III. The Dark Woods/Epilogue

World Premiere

Sheltering Sky (2012)

John Mackey

(b. 1973)

Sarah Mason, *graduate conductor*

Haunted Objects (2024)

John Mackey

- I.
- II.

Wind Symphony

Snapdragons (2024)

Mihir Borah

(b. 2003)

World Premiere

Wine-Dark Sea (2014)

John Mackey

- I. Hubris
- II. Immortal thread, so weak
- III. The attentions of souls

Symphonic Band Personnel

Chris DeVona, *conductor*
Sarah Mason, *MM conductor*

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Vanessa Britton – Madison
Simon Funk – Middlesex
Emily Hughes – Honolulu, HI
Emma Lisson – Bethlehem, PA
*MaryKate Mandeville – Henrico

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Jasper Dirks – Fredericksburg
*Lily Peck – Powhatan

BASSOON

*David Kang – Chantilly
Tony Russo – Purcellville

CLARINET

Valerie Alvarado – Culpeper
Jona Benson – Stephens City
Maxwell Cooper – Charlottesville
*Kelsey Davis – Harrisonburg
Preston Davis – Henrico
Delaney Starkey – Fredericksburg

BASS CLARINET

Shelby Gardner – Fairfax

ALTO SAXOPHONE

*Elise Donley – Carrollton
Luke Lerner – Virginia Beach

TENOR SAXOPHONE

David Barredo – Charlottesville

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Iris Leffler – Mechanicsville

DOUBLE BASS

Bala Challa – Herndon

PIANO

Paul Clossey – Rutherford, NJ

* denotes principal/co-principal

TRUMPET

Chris Atkinson – Charlottesville
Dillon Chadha – Ashburn
*Logan Hayungs – Stafford
Daniel Huggins – Mechanicsville
Ryan Johnson – Centerville
Carter King – Mechanicsville
Jocelyn Moyer – Front Royal

HORN

Ethan Boswell – Herndon
*Evan Hendershot – Stanley
Halli Prescott – Louisa
Will Rapp – Virginia Beach

TROMBONE

Christopher Brown – Spotsylvania
Gabriel Caballero – Winchester
Bradley Fuller – Gate City
*William Shanahan – Warrenton

BASS TROMBONE

Peyton Barrett – Midland
Gavin Torrence – Forest

EUPHONIUM

*Andrew Donaldson – South Riding
Alivia Hakanen – Fredericksburg

TUBA

*Anders Helvey – Alexandria
Jackson Lee – Waynesboro
Henry Taylor – Culpeper

PERCUSSION

Logan Douglas – Tuscon, AZ
Zane Johnson – Lovettsville
Rowan Lane – Williamsburg
Olivia Miller – Proctor, WV
Levi Rosenberry – Front Royal
Ryan Secrist – Harrisonburg
Emily Stevens – Fluvanna
*Brian Willey – Fairfax

The James Madison University Symphonic Band uses a rotational seating system to emphasize the importance of each performer. Therefore, each section is listed in alphabetical order.

Wind Symphony Personnel

Stephen P. Bolstad, *conductor*
Sarah Mason, *MM graduate assistant*

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Mihir Borah – Woodbridge
*#Daniel Esperante – Redlands, CA
Megumi Kadarusman – Clifton
Jakob Knick – Alleghany
#Joshua Lockhart – Lincoln Park, MI
#Rebecca Needham – Palm Bay, FL

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Cady Litteral – Sterling
*Will Slopnick – Norfolk
Andrew Welling (EH) – Fairfax

BASSOON

*David Kang – Chantilly
*Michael Ross – Farmville

CLARINET

Kelsey Davis – Harrisonburg
Jeanette Gilson – Chesapeake
Ian Graff – Virginia Beach
*#Geneva Maldonado – Tobyhanna, PA
#Gregorio Paone – Bernalda, Italy
Grace Treml – York, PA
Sophie Uy – Annandale
Leah White – Leesburg

BASS CLARINET / CONTRA

Cami Holmes – Alexandria
Leah White (Contra) – Leesburg

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Adam Army – Millbury, MA
*Haven Kahn – Chesapeake
Tyrique Payne – Colonial Heights

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Thomas Allen – Stuarts Draft

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Dylan Royal - Martinsville

PIANO

#Aleksandra Velgoshia – Moscow, Russia

HARP

+Nadia Passoa – Washington, DC

TRUMPET

*Owen Brown – Charlottesville
*Olivia Ellsworth – Richmond
Taylor Lowry – Forest
Finn Marks – McLean
Max Parrish – Woodbridge
#Peyton Phaller – ZephyrHills, FL
Micah Wingfield – Harrisonburg

HORN

*Caroline Fauber – Salem
Ainsley Hanson – Stuarts Draft
#Gray Smiley – Greenville, NC
Jacob Taylor – South Riding
Justin Ulmer – Mount Solon

TROMBONE

#William Commins – McLean
*Shiv Love – Fairfax
Quin Robinson – Warrenton

BASS TROMBONE

Teague Jenkins – Hanover

EUPHONIUM

Jake Cuppernull – Herndon
*Ben Fuller – Ashburn

TUBA

Logan Davis – Harrisonburg
*John Kelley – Falls Church

STRING BASS

Jacob Minks – Centerville

PERCUSSION

#Richard Collister III – Springfield, MO
*Tyler Ende – Williamsburg
Adelaide Hofmann – Lorton
Brian McDermott – Brookings, SD
Olivia Miller – Proctor, WV
Jonathan Ramirez – Manassas
#Josh Sheppard – Powhatan
Emily Stevens – Fluvanna

* denotes principal/co-principal

denotes graduate student

+ denotes guest performer

The James Madison University Wind Symphony uses a rotational seating system to emphasize the importance of each performer. Therefore, each section is listed in alphabetical order.

Composer Biographies

John Mackey (he/him) has written for orchestras (Brooklyn Philharmonic, New York Youth Symphony), theater (Dallas Theater Center), and extensively for dance (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Parsons Dance Company, New York City Ballet), but the majority of his work for the past decade has been for wind ensembles (the fancy name for concert bands), and his band catalog now receives annual performances numbering in the thousands.

Recent commissions include works for the BBC Singers, the Dallas Wind Symphony, military, high school, middle school, and university bands across America and Japan, and concertos for Joseph Alessi (principal trombone, New York Philharmonic), Christopher Martin (principal trumpet, New York Philharmonic), and Julian Bliss (international clarinet soloist). In 2014, he became the youngest composer ever inducted into the American Bandmasters Association. In 2018, he received the Wladimir & Rhoda Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He resides in San Francisco, California, with his spouse, A. E. Jaques, a philosopher who works on the ethics of artificial intelligence for MIT, and also titles all of his pieces; and their cats, Noodle and Bloop.

Mihir Borah is a third-year student at James Madison University studying music composition under Dr. Jason Haney and Dr. Eric Guinivan. They are also in Dr. Beth Chandler Cahill's flute studio, and a performing member of the JMU Wind Symphony, Jazz Band, and Marching Royal Dukes.

Quin Robinson is a second-year student at James Madison University studying composition under the mentorship of Dr. Eric Guinivan and Dr. Jason Haney. He has written for a myriad of groups, instrumentations, and styles, ranging from contemporary concert compositions to electronic music. Quin has found much success with premiering works on campus, including assorted chamber groups, percussion ensemble, solo / duet works, and wind band. He is also a trombonist studying under the direction of Dr. Andrew Lankford; Quin has been a member of the JMU Wind Symphony for two years and has performed in additional groups both on and off campus.

Program Notes

The Grand Adventure

The Fairy Forest and its depths await our protagonists! Join the Fuzzy trio - a diverse group of animal friends with a common goal of exploring beyond their comfort zone, on a journey of newfound sights and curiosity to find Godfrey's acorn! Upon losing his prized acorn, Godfrey the squirrel, full of fear and shock, worriedly asks one of his few close friends, Nyx the raccoon, for help on finding it. Nyx agrees, but worries about the journey ahead; Godfrey never loses anything - it must have been snatched somewhere! Nyx knew that a journey deep into the Fairy Forest was necessary, and that, once night fell, he and Godfrey would need some help. Nyx decides to ask Lunar, a local stray cat and close friend, to help search. Lunar, not being around the forest that often, is timid, but agrees, as they are the best option for sneaky maneuvers and providing muscle. Nyx owes him one!

Discover, learn, and grow alongside Lunar, Nyx, and Godfrey as they work together to fuel their curiosity, seek out new sights, and face their fears. Are you ready for the Grand Adventure?

-Program note by composer

Sheltering Sky

The wind band medium has, in the twenty-first century, a host of disparate styles that dominate its texture. At the core of its contemporary development exists a group of composers who dazzle with scintillating and frightening virtuosity. As such, at first listening one might experience John Mackey's Sheltering Sky as a striking departure. Its serene and simple presentation is a throwback of sorts — a nostalgic portrait of time suspended.

- Program Note by Jake Wallace

Haunted Objects

Haunted Objects (tsukumogami) is cast in two relatively short movements, each of which captures the phantasmagoric nature of these pseudo-creatures. The first movement begins with a wail of terror: clanging percussion and dissonant clusters of notes with an insistent marching rhythm set the stage for the unexpected. Out of this cacophony emerges a gentle, bubbling pointillism that seems far removed from anything unnatural, except for the strange ghostly descent of ethereal trombone glissandi. A dreamy oboe solo feigns a continuation of the musical material, but is almost immediately (and repeatedly) disrupted by loud interjections of fragments of the opening wail. Adding to the foreboding atmosphere, each new phrase finds itself in a shifting harmonic landscape, giving a sense of instability and unease. At the apex of the movement, the two ideas merge, as the dreamy melody takes on the aggressive character and shows that, in reality, the two were the same all along. The movement ends ominously, with the monstrous side of the tsukumogami in full display.

The second movement begins with the contrast of a short, beautiful chorale that emphasizes a rising motif, before bursting forth with a quirky dance in asymmetric mixed meters. In many ways, this movement mirrors the first: the effervescent textures mimic those from the opening movement, and the primary melody is once again stated in a long oboe line before being conjoined with the opening chorale material. One might suggest that the two movements envision the tsukumogami from two different perspectives: in the first movement, we feel the terror and disquiet of a home's resident suddenly aware that there may be spirits surrounding them, and in the second, we hear the perspective of the tsukumogami themselves, with unassuming love for their home and a playful sense of purpose. The coda of the work, however, spins out of control with velocity and fervor, showing that despite their (mostly) friendly intentions, these kindly spirits sometimes just can't help sending their human counterparts running for the hills.

- Program Note by Jake Wallace

Snapdragons

I had no concrete inspiration when I started, but as I continued writing, the more I was drawn to themes of nature, and especially the idea of "flower language". Antirrhinum, known as snapdragons because of their resemblance to a dragon's face opening and closing when squeezed, have been known to represent strength and graciousness, but also deception, mischief, and playfulness - I chose them as the namesake for this piece to represent the dichotomy between the calm, peaceful music and the exciting, upbeat music.

Much of the material in Snapdragons was inspired by bits and pieces of the repertoire I was playing in my ensembles at the time, alternating between minimalist-adjacent textures and jazz-funk-adjacent ideas. It opens with a calm, serene section, sparsely decorated with "blossoming" flourishes in the woodwinds. This builds to an explosive climax that drops off into a piano solo, which is where the playful jazzy feel is first introduced. An expansion of that piano solo played by the full ensemble follows. Saxophone and trombone solis lead into a much slower, peaceful section that features a trio of English horn, flugelhorn, and alto flute. The full ensemble takes over for a heroic hit before the final push to the end - the "blossoming" textures return in soprano saxophone and E-flat clarinet solos, and a final shout chorus, complete with a woodwind feature, brings it home.

-Program note by composer

Program Notes *continued*

Wine-Dark Sea

I. Hubris

Odysseus filled his ship with the spoils of war, but he carried another, more dangerous, cargo: Pride. This movement opens with his triumphal march, and continues as he and his crew maraud through every port of call on their way home. But the arrogance of a conquering mortal has one sure consequence in this world: a demonstration of that mortal's insignificance, courtesy of the gods. Odysseus offends; Zeus strikes down his ship. The sailors drown. Odysseus is shipwrecked. The sea takes them all.

II. Immortal thread, so weak

This movement is the song of the beautiful and immortal nymph Kalypso, who finds Odysseus near death, washed up on the shore of the island where she lives all alone. She nurses him back to health, and sings as she moves back and forth with a golden shuttle at her loom. Odysseus shares her bed; seven years pass. The tapestry she began when she nursed him becomes a record of their love. But one day Odysseus remembers his home. He tells Kalypso he wants to leave her, to return to his wife and son. He scoffs at all she has given him. Kalypso is heartbroken. And yet, that night, Kalypso again paces at her loom. She unravels her tapestry and weaves it into a sail for Odysseus. In the morning, she shows Odysseus a raft, equipped with the sail she has made and stocked with bread and wine, and calls up a gentle and steady wind to carry him home. Shattered, she watches him go; he does not look back.

III. The attentions of souls

But other immortals are not finished with Odysseus yet. Before he can reach his home, he must sail to the end of the earth, and make a sacrifice to the dead. And so, this movement takes place at the gates of the underworld, where it is always night. When Odysseus cuts the throats of the sacrificial animals, the spirits of the dead swarm up. They cajole him, begging for blood. They accuse him, indicting him for his sins. They taunt him, mocking his inability to get home. The spirit of his own mother does not recognize him; he tries to touch her, but she is immaterial. He sees the ghosts of the great and the humble, all hungry, all grasping. Finally, the prophet Teiresias tells Odysseus what he must do to get home. And so Odysseus passes through a gauntlet beyond the edge of the world, beset by the surging, shrieking souls of the dead. But in the darkness he can at last see the light of home ahead.

Wine-Dark Sea is dedicated to Jerry Junkin, without whom the piece would not exist. The second movement, "Immortal thread, so weak," telling of Kalypso's broken heart, is dedicated to Abby, without whom none of my music over the past ten years would exist.

- *Program Note* by John Mackey