

Washington University Wind Ensemble

Chris Becker, conductor

Program

Percussion Ensemble

Of Thunder & Steel (2023)

Brian L. Monroe

Wind Ensemble

March from "Symphonic Metamorphosis" (1943/1972)

Paul Hindemith
(1895 - 1963)

trans. Keith Wilson

Colonial Song (1918/1962)

Percy Aldridge Grainger
(1882 - 1961)

Life-Stream (2022)

Frank Ticheli
(b. 1958)

Adoration (1951/2022)

Florence B. Price
(1887 - 1953)
trans. Cheldon R. Williams

Concertino for Flute (1902/2011)

Cécile Chaminade
(1857 - 1944)
trans. Jaclyn Hartenberger

Lillie Kang, flute

Symphony nr. 1 "The Lord of the Rings" (1987)

I. "Gandalf"
V. "Hobbits"

Johan de Meij
(b. 1953)

Of Thunder & Steel

From ancient Norse legend, Mjölner is a powerful hammer imbued with magical powers and wielded by Thor, the god of thunder. In this work the hi-hat represents the flow of energy sizzling through the weapon. The toms depict Mjölner's ability to call on the Bifrost to allow one to travel across the galaxy. The bass drum (shared by Players 1-3) captures the destructive power of the weapon. All combine to create an exciting piece for intermediate percussionists.

-Note from the composer

March from "Symphonic Metamorphosis"

Hindemith composed this work in 1943 while teaching at Yale University. Believing strongly that the work should be made available in a band version, he asked his Yale colleague Keith Wilson to make a transcription. After permission was finally granted by the publisher in 1960, Wilson worked on this arrangement for 18 months. He regarded it as his largest and most significant transcription. The important two-bar fragment which is stated by the brass at the outset reappears and is developed at different points of punctuation throughout the movement. There is also a more lyrical "trio" theme which is repeated and developed. The form is somewhat different from that of a standard march.

-Note from *Program Notes for Band*

The bulk of Grainger's ***Colonial Song*** is constructed in a straightforward homophonic fashion, featuring a simple melody accompanied by unencumbered woodwind arpeggios. These segments represent a grade level manageable by a variety of ensembles. However, there is an interior portion of this work that increases the technical and musical demands significantly, and the ensemble must be able to function cohesively to ensure success. The arioso-like extensions on melodic lines require expressive freedom without a loss of metronomic discipline. All ensemble performers have meaningful melodic or counter-melodic responsibilities in this thoughtful composition.

-Note from *Great Music for Wind Band*

The opening of my work ***Life-Stream***, inspired by the deeply thoughtful poem *Stream of Life* [by Rabindranath Tagore], is a flash of joyful rapid movement. In the poem, life flows, runs, throbs, rocks, dances, and shouts in joy. It is a stream flowing through all living things.

My piece celebrates the poems' life-affirming message. Short musical motives or gestures are layered upon one another forming intricate collages.

The middle section is calm, reflecting on the words, "It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean, cradle of birth, and of death, in ebb and in flow." Here, the music gently rocks like a quiet lullaby, an occasional birdsong fluttering high above.

A bright, ecstatic mood returns, and the music builds to an exuberant climax. But then the musical ideas begin to vanish, one at a time, in a gradual fade to silence. Life's dance goes on.

-Note from the composer

Concertino is a rhapsodic, romantic work that features two main themes, plus many melodic episodes. Since the work displays such thorough knowledge and appreciation of the expressive and technical qualities of the flute, it is natural that it has remained one of the great standards of the instrument's literature.

-Note from the score

Florence Price was a prolific American composer whose race and gender made it difficult for her contributions to join the widely accepted musical canon in the decades following her life. A trailblazer, Price is considered the first Black woman recognized as a symphonic composer and was the first to have her music performed by a major American orchestra when the Chicago Symphony Orchestra gave the world premiere of her *Symphony No. 1* in 1933.


Price's catalog of works boasts an impressive array of symphonies, concertos, chamber music, various symphonic works, choral works, piano music, and music for the organ. **Adoration** in its original form is one of Price's compositions for organ and fits within the genre of her semi-secular output. My goal in transcribing this piece is to grant performers exposure to Price's story and the gift of performing her music outside of its intended medium.

-Note from Cheldon Williams

Johan de Meij's first symphony **The Lord of the Rings** is based on the trilogy of that name by J.R.R. Tolkien. This book has fascinated many millions of readers since its publication in 1955. The symphony consists of five separate movements, each illustrating a personage or an important episode from the book.

The symphony was written in the period between March 1984 and December 1987, and had its première in Brussels on 15th March 1988, performed by the Groot Harmonieorkest van de Gidsen under the baton of Norbert Nozy. In 1989, The symphony *The Lord of the Rings* was awarded a first prize in the Sudler International Wind Band Composition Competition in Chicago, and a year later, the symphony was awarded by the Dutch Composers Fund. In 2001, the orchestral version was premiered by the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Although it is not simple to summarize such an extensive and complex work, the main outline is as follows: the central theme is the Ring, made by primaeva forces that decide the safety or destruction of the world. For years it was the possession of the creature Gollum, but when the ring




falls into the hands of the Hobbits the evil forces awake, and the struggle for the ring commences. There is but one solution to save the World from disaster: the ring must be destroyed by the fire in which it was forged: Mount Doom in the heart of Mordor, the country of the evil Lord Sauron.

It is the Hobbit Frodo who is assigned to carry out this task, and to assist him a company, the Fellowship of the Ring, is formed under the leadership of Gandalf, the wizard, which includes the Hobbits Sam, Peregrin, and Merin, the Dwarf Gimli, the Elf Legolas, Boromir, and Aragorn, the later King. The companions are secretly followed by Gollum, who does not shun any means, however perfidious, to recover his priceless ring. However, the companions soon fall apart and, after many pernicious adventures and a surprising dénouement, Frodo and Sam can at last return to their familiar home, The Shire.

The first movement is a musical portrait of the wizard Gandalf, one of the principal characters of the trilogy. His wise and noble personality is expressed by a stately motif which is used in a different form in movements IV and V. The sudden opening of the Allegro vivace is indicative of the unpredictability of the grey wizard, followed by a wild ride on his beautiful horse, Shadowfax.

The fifth movement expresses the carefree and optimistic character of the Hobbits in a happy folk dance; the hymn that follows emanates the determination and noblesse of the hobbit folk. The symphony does not end on an exuberant note, but is concluded peacefully and resigned, in keeping with the symbolic mood of the last chapter, *The Grey Havens*, in which Frodo and Gandalf sail away in a white ship and disappear slowly beyond the horizon.

-Note from the composer



Wind Ensemble

Flute

Lillie Kang (Global Public Health, Louisville, KY)

Jimin Lee (Data Science, South Korea)

Priya Ramotar (Biology, Frisco, TX)

Angelica Han (Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology: Cognitive Neuroscience, Beijing, China)

Olivia Lee (English, Oak Park, IL)

Jason Tung (Chemistry, Crown Point, IN)

Alexa Wienhoff (Chemical Engineering, Springfield, IL)

Yael Shaw (Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology and Marketing, Glencoe, IL)

Mel Mallard (Psychological & Brain Sciences, Apopka, FL)

Dalia Heller (History, Buffalo Grove, IL)

Megana Paidela (Environmental Biology, Springfield, IL)

Tanvi Gorre (Computational Biology, Westport, CT)

Riya Pant (Applied Mathematics and Economics & Strategy, Atlanta, GA)

Cherie Liu (Anthropology: Global Health and Environment, Overland Park, KS)

Oboe

Ethan Penn (Statistics, Glenview, IL)

Michelle Zhang (Computer Science and Music, Ballwin, MO)

English Horn

Claire Workinger (WashU Faculty)

Bassoon

Lucas Neres (Undeclared, Winter Haven, FL)

Haley Jetter (Neurosciences (PhD), East Windsor, New Jersey)

Clarinet

Eric Miao (Biology, Modesto, CA)

Andrea Carbonell (Chemical Engineering, Fort Lauderdale, FL)

Felix Guo (Environmental Biology, Lawrence, KS)

Q Negrete (Psychological & Brain Sciences, Morgan Hill, CA)

Abby Matthews (Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Cartersville, GA)

Julia Tompkins (Systems Engineering, Westfield, NJ)

Tyler Teague (Mechanical Engineering, Eureka, MO)

Connor Gusky (Biology: Neuroscience, Psychological & Brain Sciences, St. Louis, MO)

Kelly Dale, E-flat (Community Member)

Bass Clarinet

Dante Nicotera (MD Program, Boston, MA)

Saxophones

Brett Carnes, alto (Physics, Springfield, MO)

Sarah Baek, alto (Studio Art, Atlanta, GA)

Steven Chi, alto (Biochemistry, North Huntingdon, PA)

Matthew Yu, alto (Physics, Sunnyvale, CA)

Grant McIntyre, tenor (Physics and Mathematics, Darien, CT)

Connor Higano, bari (Mathematics and Finance, Wildwood, MO)

Wind Ensemble Cont.

Trumpet

Gabi Grasso (Psychology and Music, San Diego, CA)

Ankit Chhajed (Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology, Bolingbrook, IL)

Juliet Ainsley (Environmental Science; Anthropology: Global Health and the Environment, Wilmette, IL)

Jake Tillman (Economics, Strafford, MO)

Nathan Pravda (Physics, Natick, MA)

Seth Peters (Mechanical Engineering, Barnhart, MO)

French Horn

Ceresa Munjak-Khoury (Cognitive Neuroscience, Kansas City, MO)

Ethan Holtzman (Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology, St. Louis, MO)

Will Corbin (Classics, Shaker Hts, OH)

Aobo Lyu (Systems Science & Mathematics (PhD), Beijing, China)

Tai Moore (Art, St. Louis, MO)

Trombone

Sean Wang (Biochemistry, Pleasanton, CA)

Julian Mitchell (Biology, O'Fallon, IL)

Henry Wasserman, bass (Biochemistry, Concord, MA)

Euphonium

Grace Moore (Neurosciences (PhD), Keller, TX)

Josh Adams (Community Member)

Tuba

Sriharsha Gonuguntla (Biology, Ballwin, MO)

Jamie Nicholson (Economics & Strategy, Libertyville, IL)

Bass

Joe Paule, Jr. (Community Member)

Percussion

Kobe Hayes (Design, Gulfport, MS)

Maya Irvine (Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Camdenton, MO)

Phoenix Jarosz (Computer Science and Mathematics, O'Fallon, MO)

Alex Nguyen (Earth, environmental, & Planetary Sciences (PhD), St. Peters, MO)

Jake Page (Biochemistry, St. Louis, MO)

Jessica Flannigan (WashU Staff)

Piano

Jenny Lin (Systems Science & Engineering, Nanjing, China)

Harp

Amy Camie (Community Member)

Director



Chris Becker is the Director of the Wind Ensemble and the Jazz Bands at Washington University in St. Louis, and serves as the director of winds and percussion. Mr. Becker graduated from the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music "With Distinction" in 1977, receiving the Bachelor of Music Education Degree, and earned a Master of Arts in Education from Lindenwood University.

Mr. Becker has taught instrumental music in Missouri for 46 years from the elementary to the university level. In June 2017, he retired as Director of Bands at Parkway South High School, after serving for 36 years in the Parkway School District (St. Louis County, Missouri). During his tenure there, he directed Marching Bands, Symphonic Bands, Jazz Bands, and all other related band activities.

In addition, he is the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Manchester Community Band, a highly successful ensemble founded ten years ago and enthusiastically received by the residents of Manchester. Mr. Becker has also been a frequent guest conductor for both concert bands and jazz bands in Missouri and Illinois.

Mr. Becker has served as the Jazz Vice President for the Missouri Music Educators Association, the first educator to hold that position after it was established as a part of the MMEA Board. Mr. Becker is a Past President of the Missouri unit of the International Association of Jazz Educators. During his term he helped clarify the mission and goals of the unit, and endeavored to reach out to music educators, those in the music industry, and professional players to create a broader base of support for jazz education. Becker has also served as Jazz Vice President for the St. Louis Suburban Music Educators Association. Becker plays the trumpet professionally with a variety of ensembles in the St. Louis area, and has taught trumpet privately in both the Kansas City and St. Louis areas.

Mr. Becker is a member of the National Association for Music Education, the Missouri Music Educators Association, the Missouri Association for Jazz Education, the Missouri Band Masters Association, the College Band Directors National Association, and Phi Beta Mu Band Directors Fraternity. He was named "Charles Emmons Outstanding Band Director of the Year" by Phi Beta Mu in January 1999. He was nominated numerous times for the Pillar of Parkway Award, which recognizes commitment and dedication for work in the Parkway School District, and was awarded a Pillar of Parkway in April 2016. Mr. Becker was honored for his distinguished career by the St. Louis Suburban Music Educators Association in January 2018, and named to their Hall of Fame.

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