

ALABAMA WIND ENSEMBLE

Thursday, November 2, 2023
Concert Hall
7:30 p.m

KEN OZZELLO, CONDUCTOR

PROGRAM

George Washington Bicentennial March (1930)	John Philip Sousa (1854-1932)
Symphony No. 7 (2006) I. Moderate II. Slow III. Very Fast IV. Moderately Slow	David Maslanka (1943-2017)
The Low-Down Brown Get-Down (2020)	Omar Thomas (b. 1982)

20th Program of the 2023 - 2024 season

PROGRAM NOTES

John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) remained active as both a composer and conductor to the very end of his life and wrote several superb marches in 1930 and 1931. A special commission was formed in Washington, D.C., in 1930 to coordinate the upcoming national celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary of George Washington's birth, and Sousa was engaged to compose a special march for the occasion. He completed the score to *George Washington Bicentennial* in June of that year, and while on tour with his Sousa Band in November, he made a stop in Washington, D.C., to conduct a preview of the new march with the U.S. Marine Band for President Herbert Hoover and his guests in front of the White House.

The Sousa Band continued to perform the march on its 1930 and 1931 tours before the actual bicentennial in 1932. Sousa himself took part in the climactic ceremony held at the Capitol Plaza on February 22, 1932, where he conducted the combined premier bands of the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. This would be the last time he would conduct the Marine Band in public. Just a few weeks later, after finishing a rehearsal in preparation for a concert with the famed Ringgold Band of Reading, Pennsylvania, Sousa unexpectedly passed away on March 6, 1932.

- Program Note from U.S. Marine Band concert program, 14 December 2016

David Maslanka (1943-2017) was an American composer known for his profound and spiritually resonant compositions. Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Maslanka's musical career was characterized by his exploration of the human experience through music. He received his education at the Oberlin College Conservatory and Michigan State University and went on to teach composition at various institutions.

Maslanka's work spanned various genres, with a particular emphasis on wind band music. His compositions, such as "A Child's Garden of Dreams" and "Symphony No. 4," are celebrated for their emotional depth and evocative harmonies. His music often explores themes of spirituality, nature, and the human connection, leaving a lasting impact on performers and audiences alike.

Throughout his career, Maslanka received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions to contemporary classical music. His compositions continue to be performed worldwide, leaving a legacy of beauty and introspection in the world of music. David Maslanka's enduring works have left an indelible mark on the world of contemporary classical composition, and his memory lives on through his music.

Symphony No. 7 for Wind Ensemble was completed in 2004. It was commissioned by a consortium headed by Illinois State University/Stephen K. Steele. The work was premiered March 10, 2005, at the Illinois State University Center for the Performing Arts, Normal, Illinois, by the Illinois State University Wind Symphony, Stephen K. Steele, conductor.

The composer says the following about his work:

I am strongly affected by American folk songs and hymn tunes, and I think of this symphony as old songs remembered, with one exception. All of the tunes are original, but they all feel familiar. Each song has a bright side and a dark side, a surface and the dream underneath. Each is a signal or call, which evokes an inner world of associations.

I. Sunday night church services from your youth. Mr. Smith played the piano. The opening piano piece is marked “enthusiastically” in the score. A dream travels to a far place.

II. In the manner of an American folk song, with a setting that might come out of the 19th or early 20th centuries.

III. A ferocious fast music, unrelenting, determined to get a grip on chaos. Toward the end a fractious quote of the Bach chorale melody *Du Friedesfurst Herr Jesu Christ* (Prince of Peace Lord Jesus Christ).

IV. A simple song of peace and healing.

- Program note by William V. Johnson for the San Luis Obispo Wind Orchestra concert program, 24 March 2012

Omar Thomas (b. 1982) is a highly acclaimed American composer and educator, known for his innovative contributions to contemporary classical and jazz music. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Thomas earned his music degrees from Northwestern University and the University of Texas at Austin. He has also taught at various institutions, including the Berklee College of Music.

Omar Thomas’ compositions are characterized by their unique blend of classical and jazz elements. He is particularly recognized for his works for wind ensembles, orchestras, and jazz ensembles. His pieces often reflect a deep sense of storytelling and social awareness, addressing themes of race, identity, and justice. Thomas’ music has been performed by numerous renowned ensembles and orchestras, and he has received recognition for his groundbreaking work, including commissions and awards. His compositions are celebrated for their emotional depth, rich harmonies, and captivating storytelling, making him a significant and influential figure in contemporary music.

As a composer and educator, Omar Thomas continues to inspire and push the boundaries of musical genres, leaving an indelible mark on the world of contemporary classical and jazz music.

Thomas provides the following note about *The Low-Down Brown Get-Down*: The end of the 60s into and through the 70s saw the era of the “blaxploitation” film – a genre of filmmaking aimed at African-American audiences which put us in leading roles of stories that often followed antiestablishment plots. These films were often controversial due to their exaggerated bravado, hypersexuality, and violence. Noticing the lucrative potential of blaxploitation films, Hollywood began to market these films to a wider audience. Though low budget, they possessed an exciting, raw, soulful quality unlike any other genre up until that time, and from these films were born some of the most iconic characters (Shal, Dolemite, Foxy Brown, and Cleopatra Jones, to name a few) and soundtracks ever created, written by some of the biggest names in African-American popular folk music of the day and since, including Issac Hayes, Curtis Mayfield, James Brown, and Marvin Gaye.

The Low-Down Brown Get-Down is the soundtrack for a nonexistent blaxploitation film. It pulls from various sounds and styles of African-American folk music, such as funk, R&B, soul, early hip hop, the blues, and even film noir to stitch together its “scenes.” The title pulls from and is inspired by “post-jive” African-American Vernacular English(AAVE). The word “Brown” in the title, in addition to its reference to none other than the Godfather of Soul, James Brown, whose most-famous licks and bass lines pepper the intro and recur throughout the piece, also refers to the melanin of the people who created these sounds. This piece unapologetically struts, bops, grooves, slides, shimmies, head bangs, and soul claps its way straight through its thrilling “chase scene” finale. It was my intention with the creation of this piece to go full steam ahead on bringing African-American folk music to the concert stage to take its place amongst all other types of folk music that have found a comfortable home in this arena. May this work push back against notions of “sophistication,” “appropriateness,” and “respectability” that have been codified in the concert music setting for a century and more.

PERSONNEL

Piccolo

Sara Reeves
Cullman, AL
B.S. Music Education

Flute

Tyree Wilson, Co-Principal
Hamilton, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Greg Lucero, Co-Principal
Huntsville, AL
M. M. Music Performance

Laura Tillman
Harvest, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Anna Chong
B. S. Biology
San Diego, CA

Oboe

Michael Tijerina, Principal
San Antonio, TX
M.M. Music Performance

Brett Stafford
Muscle Shoals, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Eli Sivel
Birmingham, AL
B.S. Music Education

English Horn

Brett Stafford
Muscle Shoals, AL
B.M. Music Performance

E-flat Clarinet

Megan Amrine
Hoover, AL
B.S. Music Education

B-flat Clarinet

Jorge Diez, Principal
Medellin, Columbia
M.M. Music Performance

Hayden Purser
Madison, AL
B.S. Music Education

Will Wenger
Mechanicsville, VA
B.S. Music Education

Yash Trivedi
Surgoinville, TN
B.M. Music Performance

Olivia Van Fleet
Naperville, IL
B.S. Musical Audio Engineering

Eliana Leonard
Helena, AL
B.S. Music Education

Bass Clarinet

Chandler Myhan
Muscle Shoals, AL
B.M. Music Performance & B.S. Music Ed.

Matthew Rocchio
Birmingham, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Contrabass Clarinet

Paul Troxler
Orange City, FL
B.S. Music Education

Bassoon

Clara Cagle
Hoover, AL
B.M. Music Therapy

Nelson Menjivar
D.M.A Music Performance
San Salvador, El Salvador

Katelyn Thomas
Kimberly, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Contabassoon

Clara Cagle
Hoover, AL
B.M. Music Therapy

Katelyn Thomas
Kimberly, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Alto Saxophone

Jackson Smith, Principal
Langston, AL
B.S. Music Education

Yukino Schichinohe
Cullman, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Sarah Blakney
Northport, AL
B.M. Music Performance Tampa, FL

Jason Wimsett
Huntsville, AL
B.S. Music Education

Tenor Saxophone

Kody Mincey, Principal
B.S. Music Education
Buena Vista, GA

Logan Bentley
Placentia, CA
B.S. Music Audio Engineering

Baritone Saxophone

Jackson Smythe
Murfreesboro, TN
B.M. Jazz Studies

Trumpet

Nathan Shadix, Principal
Mobile, AL
D.M.A. Music Performance

Nathan Sanderson
Hamilton, AL
B.S. Music Education

Travis Quesenberry
Moody, AL
B.S. Music Education

Will Pettry
Guntersville, AL
B.S. Music Education

Conner Hughes
Hartselle, AL
B.S. Music Education

Horn

Matt Meadows, Principal
Jasper, AL
D.M.A. Music Performance

Emily Jones
Dudley, MO
D.M.A. Music Performance

Tyler Winningham
Kimberly, AL
B.S. Music Education

Inman Herbert
Prattville, AL
B. M. Music Performance

Ryan Ortakales, Asst. Principal
Huntsville, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Trombone

Isaiah Vasquez, Principal
Harvest, AL
B.S. Music Education

James Diffey
Birmingham, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Jackson Parker
Leitchfield, KY
M.M. Music Performance

Bass Trombone

Walker White
Madison, AL
B.M. Music Composition

Euphonium

Jon Buchholz, Principal
Lawrenceville, GA
D.M.A. Music Performance

Aaron Easdon
Trussville, AL
M. M. Music Performance

Chris Wilson
Helena, AL
B.S. Music Education

Tuba

Andrew Gambrell, Principal
Blythewood, SC
M.M. Music Performance

Hampton Neugent
Helena, AL
B.S. Music Education

Issac Crawford
Trussville, AL
B.S. Music Education

String Bass

Lauren Erwin, Principal
Birmingham, AL
B.M. Music Performance

Bailey Lynn
Tuscaloosa, AL
B.A. Creative Media

Percussion

Michael Rivera Gonzalez. Principal
Crossville, AL
M.M. Music Performance

Charlotte Daughtery
Mansfield, OH
D.M.A. Music Performance

Aaron Hyatt
Acworth, GA
M. M. Music Performance

Scarlett Maples
Tuscaloosa, AL
B.S. Music Education

Wyatt Pettry
Guntersville, AL
B.S. Music Education

Todd Quin
Guntersville, AL
B.S. Music Education

Dawson Welch
Forney, TX
B.M. Music Performance

Aidan Wilson
Greenville, SC
B.S. Music Education

Piano

Luke Turner
Mountain Brook, AL
B. S. Management Information Systems
B.M. Music Performance

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Spectrum

Friday, November 3

7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Faculty Recital: Jacob Adams

Monday, November 6

7:30 p.m., Recital Hall,

Symphonic Band

Monday, November 6

7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Michael Walker, bass-baritone

Tuesday, November 7

7:30 p.m., Recital Hall

Percussion Ensemble

Tuesday, November 7

7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Ashley Overby, viola

Thursday, November 9

7:30 p.m., Recital Hall

University Singers

Thursday, November 9

7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Harrison Bruner, horn

Friday, November 10

7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Jake Pietroniro, viola

Saturday, November 11

3:30 p.m., Recital Hall

Hailey Beard, Soprano

Saturday, November 11

3:30 p.m., Bryant Jordan Hall

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