

A GRADUATE CONDUCTING RECITAL

By

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A Graduate Recital
Megan Kay Hermann, Conductor

Program

Old Wine in New Bottles

Gordon Jacob (1895-1984)

III. Begone, Dull Care IV. Early One Morning

The Solitary Dancer

Warren Benson (1924-2005)

Santa Fe Saga

Morton Gould (1913-1996)

Pas Redoublé Camille Saint-Säens/trans. Arthur Frackenpohl
(1835-1921)

Old Wine in New Bottles

Gordon Percival Septimus Jacob (1895-1984) is regarded as one of the most significant British composers of the twentieth century. Jacob began studying piano at the age of eight and began composing shortly after he started piano lessons. From 1908 to 1914, he attended Dulwich College, where he studied the classics, continued his piano lessons, and played timpani and other percussion instruments in the school orchestra. Jacob served as a Lieutenant in the Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment during World War I. In 1917 he was taken prisoner by the Germans near Arras, and there he met other musicians and began arranging and writing music for the small group. After his return home from the war, Jacob enrolled in a school for journalism, but continued to work on his compositions. He soon applied for the Royal College of Music and was accepted in April 1920. There he studied composition with his primary teacher, Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, as well as Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells. Jacob also studied conducting and piano. One of Jacob's earliest works was the *William Byrd Suite* (in 1923), followed by a ballet titled *The Jew and the Harp*. After he graduated from the Royal College of Music, he was appointed to the faculty. Jacob married his childhood sweetheart, Sydney Wilmot Grey, in 1924 and shortly after he began to seriously pursue his composition career.

A majority of Jacob's music from 1924 to the 1950s comprised of orchestral works, concertos and solos for every stringed instrument and most of the orchestral wind instruments, and a variety of chamber music. Jacob also composed music for documentaries during World War II, and also for the feature film *Esther Waters* (in 1948). Jacob contributed several written works including *Orchestral Technique: A Manual for Students* (1931), followed by *How to Read A Score, The Composer and His Art*, and *The Elements of Orchestration*. After the untimely death of his first wife, Jacob married Margaret Gray, a niece of his first wife and forty-two years younger than Jacob. The couple had two children: Ruth (June 2, 1960) and David (born in 1961). Gordon Jacob officially retired from the Royal College of Music in 1967, but continued to devote his life to music and composing. In 1971, Jacob ventured to the United States for the premiere of his *Trombone Concertino*, which was commissioned by the International Trombone Association. The visit caused him to gain a new interest in his compositions for wind instruments in the United States and resulted in several commissioned works, including the march *Across the Sea*, written for the U.S. Coast Guard; and *Celebration Overture*, commissioned by Harvard University and first performed November 2, 1984. Gordon Jacob died on June 8, 1984, in Saffron Walden, England, after a massive stroke.

Gordon's piece *Old Wine in New Bottles* was complete in August 1958 and was first performed by the BBC Northern Orchestra on April 4, 1959, at the St. Bees Festival, under the direction of Stanford Robinson. *Old Wine* includes four old English folk tunes; *New Bottles* is Jacob's inventive arrangements and orchestration for 12 wind instruments.

The tunes are: “The Wraggle Taggle Gypsies,” “The Three Ravens,” “Begone, Dull Care,” and “Early One Morning.”

The Solitary Dancer

Warren Frank Benson is a distinguished composer, conductor, lecturer, and writer. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, on January 26, 1924. Benson’s father had no musical ability, but fully supported Warren’s pursuits in music. His mother was a self-taught pianist and helped foster Benson’s love for music. His formal music training began in 1932 (at age eight), when he started taking percussion lessons with Gerry Gerard. At age twelve he began taking private marimba and drum lessons with Selwyn Alvey. During his years in high school, he developed his skills on several different instruments and also took an orchestration class. He enrolled at the University of Michigan, where he completed his Bachelor’s of Music in Music Theory in 1949 and a master’s degree in music theory in 1951. Benson married Patricia Vander Velde, who had graduated in art from the University of Michigan, on November 19, 1949. He received a Fulbright scholarship for (1950 to 1952) to conduct and teach music at Anatolia College in Salonika, Greece. He returned from Greece in 1952 to serve as the Director of Bands and Orchestra at Mars Hill College in North Carolina. Benson held the position of professor of music and composer-in-residence at Ithaca College (Cornell, New York) for fourteen years and taught composition at Eastman from 1967 to 1994. Benson was self-taught in

composition and has written over 150 works for solo instruments and voice, chamber ensembles, choirs, bands, and orchestras. He has written for most genres, except for opera, and is best known for his song cycles and his wind and percussion music.

The Solitary Dancer evolved from the ballet *Bailando*, a collaboration between Warren Benson and Interlochen Arts Academy choreographer Bill Hugg. During this experience, Benson noted the dancers' attention to the music before rehearsal began. Benson wrote a note in the score: “*The Solitary Dancer* deals with quiet, poised energy that one may observe in a dancer in repose, alone with her inner music.” The composition is a through-composed work in d phrygian. The two themes prevalent throughout the piece are presented in the first two measures. The first theme is a melodic four-note motive presented by the soprano saxophone (which is a predominant voice throughout the composition). The second theme is a two-note rhythmic motive presented by the piccolo. The melodic language that follows is developed from inversions, augmentations, and combinations of these two motives. Much of the work is dependent on quiet soloistic playing over a percussion ostinato.

Santa Fe Saga

Morton Gould was born in Richmond Hill, New York, on December 10, 1913. He began playing piano and composing when four years old; his first composition was published at the age of six (titled *Just Six*); and he won a scholarship to the Institute of Musical Art at the age of eight. Most of his musical studies were with Abby Whiteside and Dr. Vincent Jones. During the Great Depression, Gould worked in New York City,

playing piano in movie theaters, as well as with vaudeville acts. When Radio City Music Hall opened, Gould became the staff pianist. At the age of twenty-one, he conducted and arranged a weekly series of orchestral radio programs for *WOR Mutual Radio*. He has composed for musical comedy, television, and motion pictures; his ballet scores include those for Jerome Robbins, George Blanchine and Agnes de Mille. His other compositions for band include *American Salute*, *Ballad for Band*, and his *Symphony for Band-West Point Symphony*. Gould has conducted all of the major American orchestras as well as those of Canada, Mexico, Europe, Japan, and Australia and won a Grammy award in 1966 for his recording of Charles Ives' *First Symphony* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In 1995, he received the Pulitzer Prize for *Stringmusic*, a piece commissioned by the National Symphony in recognition of the final season of director Mstislav Rostropovich. Gould died February 21, 1996, at the age of 82 in Orlando, Florida. The evening before his death, he attended a concert by the U.S. Military Academy Band, which performed all Gould compositions.

Santa Fé Saga was commissioned by the famous bandmaster and march composer Edwin Franko Goldman for performance at the 1956 convention of the American Bandmasters Association, held in Santa Fé, New Mexico. Gould himself conducted the premiere there on March 9 of that same year. “Because the meeting was held in Santa Fé,” he recalls, “and Santa Fé having charisma, climate and character, it seemed appropriate to compose a piece evoking that area and its history. The work is in four brief interlinked sections; they are not separate movements, but do bear individual titles:

“Rio Grande,” “Round-up,” Wagon Train,” and “Fiesta.” All represent what Gould describes as a general Spanish-Mexican-Western influence on our music.

Pas Redouble

Paris-born Charles Camille Saint-Saëns was a child prodigy, composing his first piece for piano at the age of three. He studied with Stamaty and Boëly before entering the Paris Conservatory in 1848, and studied organ with Benosit. He won the *premier prix* in 1851, and in the same year began studying composition and orchestration with Halévy. Camille also took lessons in accompaniment and singing, and was a private student of Gounod. Saint-Saëns had total recall; any book he read or tune he heard was forever committed to his memory. He held the coveted post of organist at the Madeleine from 1857 to 1875. He was also an accomplished pianist, conductor, score reader, and astronomer. As a composer, he wrote in many genres, including opera, symphonies, concertos, sacred and secular choral music, concertos, and chamber music. His highly popular works, including *Danse macabre* (1875) and *Samson and Delilah*, were written during a short and tragic marriage to nineteen year old Marie-Laure Truffot that included the loss of his two young sons within a period of six weeks. *The Carnival of the Animals* is a favorite of children of all ages, but it had only two performances while Saint-Saëns was alive, possibly because he had written it as a parody of some of the popular music of the time. Saint-Saëns died in December 1921 after he had closed his conducting career with rehearsals for *Antigone* in August and had returned to Algiers. “The perspective of history shows him as a neo-classicist and as the embodiment of certain traditional French

qualities – moderation, logic, clarity, balance and precision – that were coming back into fashion at the turn of the 20th century” (Ratner, www.oxfordmusiconline.com).

This quickstep concert march (Opus 86) is reminiscent of the gallops by Offenbach and other 19th century composers. Originally written for four-hand piano in 1887 and published in 1890, this transcription was made by Arthur Frackenpohl in 1972 and dedicated to Harry Phillips and the Crane Wind Ensemble at the State University in Potsdam, New York, where Frackenpohl became a member of the music faculty in 1949. The tempo of a pas redouble varies with the proficiency of the performer(s) as well as the wishes of the composer and the customs of that period. Saint-Saens defended technical virtuosity, because it was for him, at least partially, a gift. During the mid-19th century, military units in some nations were marching to a cadence of about 90 steps per minute for the slow march (pas ordinaire), 120 for the quick march (pas redouble), and 160 to 180 for the double-quick march (pas de charge). Frackenpohl suggest a tempo of 144 for this march.

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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Megan Hermann received her bachelor’s degree in music education from Tennessee Technological University, in May 2004. During her tenure at Tennessee Tech, Miss Hermann served in several leadership positions including drum major and member of the undergraduate staff for the Golden Eagle Marching Band, principal oboist of the Tennessee Tech Symphony Band and Wind Ensemble, President of Kappa Delta Pi, President of the Newman Campus Ministry, Vice President of Public Relations for Kappa Delta, and senator for the Student Government Association. Miss Hermann has been recorded with saxophone soloist James Spinazzola and the Tennessee Tech Wind Ensemble on the album “Discovery: Emerging and Celebrated Repertoire for Solo

Saxophone and Band Vol. 1" and also with tuba soloist Timothy Northcut and the Tennessee Tech Symphony Band on the album entitled "Tennessee Tech Pride." While attending Tennessee Tech, Miss Hermann achieved the dean's list all four years and graduated *magna cum laude*.

In summer 2004, Miss Hermann moved to West Des Moines, Iowa, where she served in the West Des Moines Community School District at Clive and Hillside Elementary Schools as the Band Director for the 5th and 6th Grade. She conducted the Northside 6th Grade Band, which included four district schools; and the Eighth Street 5th Grade Band. In May 2005, she was asked to conduct the 6th Grade District All Star band which consisted of students from all eight elementary schools in the West Des Moines school system.

During the summer of 2006, Miss Hermann moved to Cleveland, Tennessee, and began work as the Assistant Band Director for Walker Valley High School. She conducted the Wind Ensemble, the Symphonic Band, the 9th Grade Band, the Woodwind Ensemble, and the Mustang Marching Band. She also assisted with the choir program and played piano for the Fine Arts Department production's of *Footloose* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

Miss Hermann is affiliated with several professional organizations including the Music Educator's National Conference, the International Double Reed Society, Kappa Delta Pi, the Tennessee Music Educators Association, the East Tennessee Band and Orchestra Association, the National Band Association, the Tennessee Education

Association, the Bradley County Education Association, the Florida Bandmasters Association, the Florida Music Educators Association, and the Mortar Board National Honor Society.