



College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MSU Concert Orchestra

Journeys in Nature from Finland, the US, and Bohemia

Katherine Kilburn, conductor
Fátima Corona, conductor
Asieh Mahyar, conductor

Thursday, February 24, 2022
Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Finlandia, Op. 26

Jean Sibelius
(1892-1957)

Maria Fátima Corona Del Toro, conductor

Postcard*

Benjamin Gillman
(b. 1999)

Asieh Mahyar, conductor

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Allegro con brio

Adagio

Allegretto grazioso

Allegro ma non troppo

Katherine Kilburn, conductor

*world premiere

PROGRAM NOTES

Finlandia Op.26 (1899-1900) *Finlandia* was composed in 1899 by the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius for a political demonstration against Russia, in the city of Helsinki, on December 14 of the same year. These were turbulent times of great political tension. This piece was intended to mobilize the popular opposition for the revocation of Finnish autonomy from the Russian empire. By that time, Sibelius was already recognized in his country as the most important composer, joining the protests of the Finnish cultural circle that clamored for the independence of his country.

This work was a great success, causing enormous admiration, pride, and hope through these glorious minutes of music. Sibelius' work received its name as we now know it, *Finlandia*, the year after it was revised. Leaving that time, after its premiere, for the creativity and imagination of each of those who had an encounter with the work; some attributed names to mock the czarist empire as "Happy feelings at the dawn of Spring in Finland".

It caused so much acceptance and liking, that it eclipsed many of Sibelius' later, more creative, and complex compositions. This irritated the composer because he did not regard this work as a significant musical achievement.

Finlandia begins with a stormy rhythm and style, with a dark and brooding orchestration that symbolizes the oppression and struggle of the Finnish people, however, the work ends with a beautiful hymn of hope, becoming a sonorous emblem for the Finnish people. This stunning and sublime melody is one of the most famous and recognized in many parts of the world.

Finland became independent from Russia shortly after the Russian revolution; its autonomy was officially recognized in October 1920.

— Fátima Corona

Postcard (3rd Edition 2021) First written for saxophone quartet, *Postcard* is a celebration of the wonders of observing nature - seeing fish dart around the shallow waters of a lake, hearing a frog jump into a river, watching dragonflies zip around scattered cattails - the possibilities are endless.

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

As my journey to cultivate inner peace continues. There has always been that grounding moment in which I can appreciate nature's ability to always grow and improve. For me, the practice of observing nature gives insights into our abilities to cultivate happiness in ourselves, no matter what's happening around us.

— Benjamin Gillman, Sep. 2021

Symphony No. 8 in G Major Op. 88 (1889) Following the premiere of his 6th symphony, Antonín Dvořák received more praise than he had yet experienced in his musical career. The symphony was performed in London by conductor Hans Richter, officially published in Berlin, and received a nod of approval by Dvořák's favorite composer and musical inspiration, Johannes Brahms.

Encouraged by Brahms and liberated by his newfound success, Dvořák went on to compose three more symphonies which later became some of his most highly regarded works.

Out of Dvořák's final three symphonies, the eighth is arguably the most enduring, with its unabashed Bohemian pride and mastery of European symphonic techniques apparent in each movement. During the summer in which he wrote symphony no. 8, Dvořák acquired land from his brother-in-law known as "The Sheepfold", about 40 miles south of Prague. There, Dvořák built a house for his family and enjoyed many summers on the property, taking walks in the woods, tending a small garden, and playing the local town's church organ. Perhaps most of all, Dvořák reveled in the birdsong which surrounded him daily. According to the composer, the birds were the "real masters" of music and thus deserving of symphonic acknowledgement: "Before I die," Dvořák proclaimed, "I shall write a fine bird symphony and shall put my very best into it!"

Although *Symphony No. 8* is not explicitly a "bird symphony", it finely captures Dvořák's natural surroundings in the heart of Bohemia, his newfound creative freedom, inspiration from Brahms, and appreciation for his Czech roots. The first movement begins with a sweeping cello theme, characteristic of contemporaries such as Tchaikovsky and Brahms; the "birdsong" expressed by the flutes gives way to a distinctly Bohemian theme, reminiscent of a boisterous folk band. The second movement is once again reminiscent of Tchaikovsky in particular, emanating his trademark symphonic waltz; however, Dvořák adds a distinctly Czech character to the movement through delicate woodwind features

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

and almost haunting melodies brought forth by lower woodwind and stringed instruments. Similarly, movement three encapsulates the style of popular European masterworks of the era, once again utilizing a waltz structure frequently seen in works by Brahms. It is the fourth and final movement, however, where Dvořák's multifaceted approach to composition truly shines. A triumphant brass fanfare announces an elegant, distinctly European theme carried by the strings, bringing to mind fashionable dances popular at the time. This theme suddenly gives way to a lively melody featuring full orchestra with an emphasis on the brass section. The movement alternates between the dignified, slow motif to its energetic counterpart. In fashioning the movement in such a manner, Dvořák proves his capacity for writing in the European style as well as his confidence in utilizing the sounds of his homeland.

Symphony No. 8 was premiered in Prague on February 2, 1890 and conducted by Dvořák himself. The symphony, once again promoted by Hans Richter, launched Dvořák to fame in America, where he became director of the National Conservatory in New York and composed his final symphony, the famed "New World" Symphony.

— Paige Rissman

COMPOSER BIO

Benjamin Gillman, Benji G. (he/him) is always doing something unique - he takes pride in cultivating arts and practices that are both zestful and mindful.

As a composer, his recent works are vivid mosaics of joy and curiosity that embody childlike wonder, contemplative literature, and elements of Zen Buddhism. He can be seen writing for groups of instruments including recorders, melodicas, and lots of percussion.

He is an avid walker, amateur gardener, and plays the piano, recorder, percussion, and more.

ARTIST-FACULTY BIO

Katherine Kilburn was a recipient of the Thelma A. Robinson Conducting Award, and has been Assistant Conductor of the National Repertory Orchestra, the El Paso Opera, the Hot Springs Music Festival, the Bowling Green State University Philharmonia, and the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. She was Conductor of the Interlochen Arts Academy Wind Ensemble, Music Director and Conductor of the Greater New Haven Youth and Chamber Orchestras, Conductor of the Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Repertory Orchestra, and Interim Director of the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association's Philharmonia.

She has conducted the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra, the Lawrence University Symphony Orchestra and Opera Theater, the Green Bay Symphony, Ensemble X, Cleveland Opera Theater, and the Baldwin Wallace Symphony Orchestra.

STUDENT BIOS

María Fátima Corona del Toro after graduating with honors in violin performance from the University of Baja California, Ms. Corona became a professor of music at the University of Nayarit.

In 2011, she made her debut as the conductor of the Esperanza Azteca Nayarit Symphony Orchestra, becoming the first female conductor of this project nationwide.

In 2020, Ms. Corona pursued an Artistic Diploma in orchestral conducting at Catholic University of America with Simeone Tartaglione and Murry Sidlin. She served as assistant conductor and violin coach for the DC Concert Orchestra Society, and Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras.

She has taken masterclasses with Linus Lerner, Benjamin Zander, Carlos Spierer, Ángel Garrido, Alfredo Ibarra, David Harutyunyan, and Kenneth Kiesler, among others. She has performed in numerous venues across the US, Mexico, Canada, and Ecuador.

Currently, Miss Corona is pursuing her master's degree as a TA at Michigan State University with Octavio Más-Arocas. She serves as assistant conductor of the Opera, Musique 21, Concert, and Symphony ensembles from MSU.

Passionate about performing music from different cultures, **Asieh Mahyar** is pursuing her Doctor of Musical Arts in orchestral conducting at Michigan State University with Octavio Más-Arocas and Katherine Kilburn. She is the assistant conductor of the MSU Symphony Orchestra, MSU Concert Orchestra, Musique 21 Ensemble, and MSU Opera. Ms. Mahyar holds a MA in orchestral conducting from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst where she studied with Morihiko Nakahara and Kristo Kondakci. She received her BA in choral conducting from Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan-Armenia with Hovhanness Mirzoyan and in orchestral conducting with Ruben Asatryan. Miss Mahyar has served as teaching assistant at UMass, assistant conductor at UMass SO and co-director of UMass All university Orchestra. She was appointed assistant conductor at Tchaikovsky Music School of Yerevan, Sorayesh Choir, Charentz Choir and Narek Choir. Ms. Mahyar has attended masterclasses with Miguel Hart- Bedoya, Kenneth Kiesler and Antanina Kalechyts, among others. Her other mentors include Loris Tjeknavorian, Yervand Yerkanian, and Anahit Nersesyan.

PERSONNEL

Violin I

Will Zhou*
William Chettleburgh
Harvey Lee
Eliza Guernsey
Joan Rissman
Madison Plunkert
Peter Van Osdol
Shawn Pryde
Jessica Hopson
William Quackenbush
Kaori Marikawa
Gokul Murali
Arianna Fobbs
Ariana Newberry

Violin II

Ethan Biederman*
Kaede Schenk
Jewellian Grace
James Cozzi
Jackie Bao
Bryce Kobe
Jolie Kretzschmar
Maya Stackable
Srishti Gowda
Priyanka Gadam
Evan Dyke
Melissa Guerra
Sydney Martin
Abigail Banks
Kelia Patterson
Prenaj Blerta

Viola

Sarah Percival*
Madelaine Fussy
Noelle Riccobono
Thomas Burns
Leah Fan
Jared Bloch
Joy Li
Nathan Banotai
Ali Cramer
Clarence Nanamori

Cello

Alex Logan *
Allison Voneida
Justin Hamlin
Kayleigh Manchester
Madigan Lautzenheiser
Sylvie Martin-Eberhardt
Curtis Rogers
Erika Shiino

Bass

Jadyn Waggoner*
Jenna Thayer
Macey Matthews
Nick Zoller
Kehan Batt
Colette Walraven
Theo Durrett
Izabella Schlusel

Flute

Alex Coble
Kaitlin Gaynor
Taeyoon Hur
Paige Rissman
Gabe Schroeder

Oboe

Sevana Mailian
Nathan Marsch
Lauren O'Connor

Clarinet

Jingxian Chen
Cade Dembski
Madeline Howard
Audrey Rancourt

Saxophone

Zack Costello

Bassoon

Eric Hall
Christina Hazell
Guy Sloan

Horn

Evan Bell
Newt Kelbley
Keshav Lalchandani
Jonah Weber
Elias Young

Trumpet

Mark Davis
Emmet Lewis
Jack Louvar
Drew Robinson

Trombone

Alex Bakke
Hannah Davies
Charles Grace
Brody Keeley
Annaliese Marks
Tom Schluckbier

Tuba/Euphonium

Michael Kirby
R.J. McLaren

Percussion

Maura Drinkert
Lacy Jewell
Catherine Lee (coach)*
Erin Widman

*denotes principal

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- **Brenda and Floyd Akins, Jr.**, (MSU Professors of Jazz, September 10, 2021)
- **Anonymous Donor Family** (MSU Symphony Orchestra and Choirs, *Songs of Comfort and Joy*, December 4, 2021)
- **Arts Midwest Touring Fund** (Westerlies)
- **Sam and Mary Austin** (Musique 21 concerts)
- **Sam and Mary Austin Fund for New Music** (Reverón and Khemia Ensemble, Interconnected: Chamber Work Premieres, and Chamber Fusion: Jazz Meets Classical)
- **Lorie Seitz Barbieri and Chuck Barbieri, in loving memory of Midge Seitz (MSU '52)** (Alumni Chapel New Organ Dedication)
- **Ken and Sandy Beall** (Cello Plus Chamber Music Festival Series and John Clayton Residency, April 21-23, 2022)
- **James and Susan Bonfiglio** (MSU Symphony Orchestra, September 26, 2021, and Spring Opera)
- **Joanne and Bill Church** (West Circle Series and Legends)
- **April Clobes and Glen Brough** (Happy Birthday Mozart!)
- **Byron and Dee Cook** (Lift Every Voice)
- **Randolph Cōwen and Phyllis Green** (Jane Bunnell and Marc Embree, February 28, 2022)
- **Susan Davis** (Fall Opera)
- **Ed and Wanda Eichler** (Alumni Chapel New Organ Dedication)
- **John and Gretchen Forsyth** (Philip Sinder, January 19, 2022)
- **Thea Glicksman** (Richard Sherman, September 22, 2021, and Ralph Votapek, October 5, 2021)
- **Belle S. and Julius N. Harris Distinguished Visiting Artist Fund established by Lauren Julius Harris** (Dorothy DeLay Master Class Series)
- **Lauren Julius Harris** (MSU Symphony Orchestra, February 13, 2022)
- **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowment for Chamber Music** (A Festival of Keys)
- **Eleanor H. and Harold E. Leichenko Opera Endowment established by Lauren Julius Harris** (Fall Opera)
- **Doug and Brenda Jewell** (Piano Monster)
- **Taylor Johnston Early Music Series Endowment established by Taylor Johnston** (Taylor Johnston Early Music Series)
- **Hari Kern and the late Ralph R. Edminster, M.D.** (Ralph Votapek and Friends, September 1, 2021)
- **Abby and Ann-Marie Lindley** (Gwen Dease and Yvonne Lam, October 13, 2021)

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021-2022 SPONSORS (cont.)

- **Ann-Marie and John Lindley in memory of Marian Braund** (Bach in the U.S.A. and Marc Embree, October 10, 2021)
- **Merritt Lutz** (150th Anniversary Celebration of Bands, April 30, 2022)
- **Joseph and Jeanne Maguire** (A Jazzy Little Christmas and Jazz on the Grand)
- **Patrick McPharlin** (Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer, and Protest Concert)
- **Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, and the Crane Group** (Westerlies)
- **Dr. James M. Miller and Dr. Rebecca H. Lehto** (Fall Opera)
- **Mike and Midge Morrow** (Lift Every Voice)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union** (Showcase Series, Spartan Spectacular, and Music for Social Justice Video Series)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union Entrepreneurial Musical Artist-in-Residence Endowed Fund** (Westerlies)
- **Beth and the late Dr. Milton Muelder** (MSU Symphony Orchestra, October 24, 2021)
- **Liz and Tony Raduazo in honor of Andy Raduazo** (Sensory Friendly Spartan Concert, April 19, 2022)
- **George Orban and Rae H. Ramsdell** (Alumni Chapel New Organ Dedication)
- **Jim and Elaine Rauschert** (Richard Fracker, March 15, 2022)
- **Nancy and Charlie Seebeck** (A Night at The Movies and A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
- **Brenda Sternquist** (A Jazzy Little Christmas)
- **Leonard and Sharon Tabaka** (Annual Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
- **Dr. Robert W. Uphaus and Dr. Lois M. Rosen** (Suren Bagratuni, November 14, 2021, and Dmitri Berlinsky, November 15, 2021)
- **Linn Van Dyne and Mike Knox** (MSU Symphony Orchestra and Choirs, *Verdi's Requiem*, April 28, 2022)
- **Provost Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. and Thomas V. O'Halloran, Ph.D.** (MSU Symphony Orchestra and Choirs, *Songs of Comfort and Joy*, December 4, 2021, and *Verdi's Requiem*, April 28, 2022)
- **Worthington Family Foundation** (Opera Season)
- **Barbara E. Wagner** (Barbara Wagner Chamber Music Competition Showcase)
- **Dr. Charles and Philippa Webb** (Beacon Hill Music Series)
- **WKAR** (Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series)
- **Andrea L. Wulf** (Vox Humana)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2/25 Friday

MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence

Jazz Orchestras with Stefon Harris, vibraphone

6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., Murray Hall \$\$

2/28 Monday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Songs for the Re-Opened World: Jane Bunnell, mezzo-soprano,

Marc Embree, bass-baritone

7:30 p.m., Fairchild Theatre \$

3/1 Tuesday

Orchestra Lecture Recital

7:30 p.m., Fairchild Theatre, free

3/15 Tuesday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

The Old Man and the C, Sea, Si, Sí, See?: Richard Fracker, tenor,

Elden Little, piano

7:30 p.m., Cook Recital Hall \$

3/18 Friday

MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence

Jazz Octets with Vanessa Rubin, vocals

6:30 & 8:30 p.m., Murray Hall \$\$

3/22 Tuesday

Music Theory Lecture: Dr. Richard Desinord

12:45 p.m., online, free

3/22 Tuesday

Symphony Band

7:30 p.m., Cobb Great Hall, Wharton Center \$

3/23 Wednesday, 3/25 Friday, 3/26 Saturday, 3/27 Sunday

Worthington Family Foundation Opera Theatre Season

Albert Herring, by Benjamin Britten

7:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. (Sunday), Fairchild Theatre \$\$\$

TICKET PRICES

\$ \$12 Adults, \$10 Seniors (age 60 and older), Students with ID and anyone under age 18 are free but require a ticket for admission.

\$\$ \$17 Adults, \$15 Seniors, \$7 Students with ID and anyone under age 18.

\$\$\$ \$22 Adults, \$20 Seniors, \$12 Students and those under age 18.

Please note: *All events scheduled in Murray Hall are general admission seating.*