

The Eastman Wind Ensemble & Eastman Wind Orchestra

Rodney Dorsey
conductor

Zachary Griffin
assistant conductor

Wednesday, December 3, 2025
Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre
7:30 PM



Eastman School of Music

~ PROGRAM ~
Eastman Wind Orchestra
Rodney Dorsey, *conductor*

George Washington Bridge (1950)

William Schuman
(1910-1992)
8'

Zachary Griffin, *conductor*

Hydrostatics (2020)

Roger Zare
(b. 1985)
11'

Candide Suite (1956/1993)
The Best of All Possible Worlds
Westphalia Chorale and Battle Scene
Auto-da-fé
Glitter and Be Gay
Make Our Garden Grow

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)
arr. Grundman
12'

Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (1923)

John Philip Sousa
(1854-1932)
4'

~ INTERMISSION ~

The Eastman Wind Ensemble
Rodney Dorsey, *conductor*

Brilliant Brushstrokes (2025)

Ryan Lindveit
(b. 1994)
6'

Zachary Griffin, *conductor*

Flourishes and Meditations
on a Renaissance Theme (2010)

Michael Gandolfi
(b. 1956)
15'

Solar Testimonies (2021)
Dreams and Traditions
Collegial Hi-Jinks
...and they asked, How long?
...and by the word of their testimony

James Lee III
(b. 1975)
15'

~ PROGRAM NOTES ~

George Washington Bridge

There are few days in the year when I do not see George Washington Bridge. I pass it on my way to work as I drive along the Henry Hudson Parkway on the New York shore. Ever since my student days when I watched the progress of its construction, this bridge has had for me an almost human personality, and this personality is astonishingly varied, assuming different moods depending on the time of day or night, the weather, the traffic and, of course, my own mood as I pass by.

I have walked across it late at night when it was shrouded in fog, and during the brilliant sunshine hours of midday. I have driven over it countless times and passed under it on boats. Coming to New York City by air, sometimes I have been lucky enough to fly right over it. It is difficult to imagine a more gracious welcome or dramatic entry to the great metropolis.

Hydrostatics

Hydrostatics refers to the branch of mechanics that is concerned with the hydrostatic properties of liquids -- that is, the study of how liquids at rest react to changes in pressure. Water is so necessary for life as we know it, but also amazingly versatile with its many physical states and properties that occur within a relatively small temperature range that we experience in its entirety on Earth on a regular basis. It seems to be extremely flexible when it is flowing, but as soon as it is contained and at rest, its incompressible nature transmits immense power when pressure is applied to it. Application of hydrostatics gives us hydraulic presses and lifts, as well as aqueducts, water turbines, and hydroelectric dams. Hydraulics channel the power of water to move extremely heavy objects with ease. Hydroelectric dams are some of the most impressive manmade structures on the planet, holding back giant volumes of water and creating artificial lakes in order to control the flow of water to create renewable energy.

The music opens with a violent explosion of tension between the instruments of the ensemble. Slow, straining glissandos in the brass bend one pitch into another to create thick and clashing harmonies. Eventually, this texture yields a quick and more rhythmically oriented music. Underpinned with a constant flow of repeated notes, aggressive gestures made of similarly dense harmonies as heard in the first section sporadically rise and fall, with pointed and uneasy percussive interjections. At a clearing in the texture, a solo horn states the piece's first melody, bringing together a series of gestural fragments from earlier in the music into a declamatory statement. As the pressure builds, a persistent high trumpet note emerges and is accompanied by a series of cataclysmic outbursts that represent the strength of water's immutability.

The central section of *Hydrostatics* is a slow rhapsodic section, featuring an extended solo for the clarinet amidst rapidly fluttering but unmoving textures that emerge from different instrument groups. The slow-moving brass glissandos return in this new environment to create imposing waves of sound. The music closes with a reprise of the quick rhythmic and temperamental texture and a final restatement of the persistent high trumpets and cataclysmic outbursts from the whole ensemble.

While the ending may sound a bit triumphant, there is still much unresolved tension. Humanity has done much to harness the strength of water for its benefit, but in today's changing climate, we continue to see many examples of how water still controls us. Floods have become more frequent and devastating, hurricanes and thunderstorms more powerful. Water has the power to give us life as well as take it away.

- Roger Zare

Candide Suite

Probing the existential questions that haunt us was a hallmark of Bernstein both as a person and composer. He was not satisfied unless he was immersed in major issues, upending and questioning the status quo, often with irreverence and insouciance. That was what made Bernstein so much fun to be around and imbued his music with such depth for me. How many people would even consider turning Voltaire's satirical novella from 1759, *Candide*, into musical theater, let alone jump at the opportunity? Playwright Lillian Hellman approached Bernstein in 1953 with the concept. They delighted in the idea of drawing parallels between Voltaire's satirical portrayal of the Catholic Church's blatant hypocrisy and violence and the inquisition-like tactics then being implemented by the U.S. government under the House of Representatives' House Un-American Activities Committee. Voltaire's charges against society in the 1750s — puritanical snobbery, phony moralism, inquisitional attacks on the individual — all rang true for Hellman and Bernstein in the 1950s. They set out with zeal to create a show that would capture a contemporary Voltaire viewpoint.

While there is clear brilliance in Bernstein's *Candide*, the show fell victim to its own weighty agenda and its authors' cleverness. *Candide* may be the most labored over Broadway show in history, enduring many incarnations since it opened in 1956. But there can be no doubt about the brilliance of Bernstein's score, which he conceived as a Valentine's card to European music. Few composers could construct a score where European dance forms like the gavotte, waltz and polka are interwoven seamlessly with bel canto arias, Gilbert and Sullivan-style comedy, grand opera and Bernstein's own "Jewish tango."

It reminds me of an evening I spent with Bernstein. It started out with a discussion of a Schumann symphony and ended up with him at the piano, playing every song the Beatles wrote. Connecting the dots was his genius for me, but the fact that he never lost his capacity to believe in the inherent goodness of humankind was his gift to the world. From the cleverness and clarity of *Candide*'s overture, through the biting sarcasm of "Auto-da-fé (What a Day)" and then to bring us full circle to the unwavering optimism of "Make our Garden Grow" is Bernstein at his best.

- Marin Alsop

Nobles of the Mystic Shrine

Sousa became a member of the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine in Washington in April, 1922, and was promptly named the first honorary director of the Almas Temple Shrine Band. His nephew, A. R. Valera, who sponsored him, asked him to compose this march. The new march saluted Shriners in general but was dedicated specifically to the Almas Temple and Imperial Council, A. A. O. N. M. S. The Shriners' national convention was held in Washington in June, 1923, and Sousa was called upon to lead a huge band of 6,200 Shriners in Griffith Stadium. This, incidentally, was the largest band Sousa ever conducted, and a new association with Shriners had just begun. Several Shrine bands accompanied the Sousa Band in performances of the new march as it toured the United States, and many additional appearances of the Sousa Band were arranged by Shriners. It is also noteworthy that in the last years of the Sousa Band approximately half the members were Shriners.

- Paul E. Bierley,
The Works of John Philip Sousa

Brilliant Brushstrokes

Brilliant Brushstrokes is inspired by an overwhelmingly colorful and bold painting that the Knoxville-born artist Beauford Delaney (1901-1979) painted on a fragment of his old raincoat when he was living in Paris in 1954. Delaney's raincoat fragment overflows abstractly with swirls, rings, splotches, and lines of forest green, deep orange, bright yellow, fire-engine red, hazy gray, spacious white, peaceful azure, and deep ocean blue. Upon closer viewing, the seams and pockets of the cut-up raincoat are also visible, revealing that the fanciful artwork is the result of Delaney's resourcefulness in the face of limited money and art supplies. As a fellow artist, I find Delaney's unrelenting and restless impulse to be creative even when he lacked proper materials to be almost as inspiring as the painting itself. Although *Brilliant Brushstrokes* is tightly constructed around only a few melodic gestures, the music constantly cycles through changes in instrumental texture, density, harmony, and energy. Musical phrases are often cut-off abruptly with a quick down-up gesture that I view as related to the stitched seams on the raincoat. Overall, the composition uses the vast and variegated color palette of the wind ensemble to capture the inventive spirit and brilliant dynamism of Delaney's brushstrokes, splatters, and daubs. *Brilliant Brushstrokes* was commissioned by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Wind Ensemble (John Zastoupil, conductor) and premiered at the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) National Conference at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX on March 27, 2025.

- Ryan Lindveit

Flourishes and Meditations on a Renaissance Theme

Flourishes and Meditations on a Renaissance Theme is a set of seven variations on an anonymous Renaissance melody that is simply titled Spagnoletta. It is derived from a popular melody titled *Española* or 'Little Spanish Tune'. The titles of the different variations are as follows:

- Variation I. (A Cubist Kaleidoscope)
- Variation II. (Cantus in augmentation: speed demon)
- Variation III. (Carnival)
- Variation IV. (Tune's in the round)
- Variation V. (Spike)
- Variation VI. (Rewind/Fast Forward)
- Variation VII. (Echoes: a surreal reprise)

I first knew this melody as quoted by Joaquín Rodrigo in his *Fantasia para un gentilhombre* for guitar and orchestra. I also found this tune in the 1970s in a collection of Renaissance songs for classical guitar, and I have played it in that form countless times over the years. I was motivated to probe this elegant tune with which I have been acquainted for four decades, with the expectation that it would prompt a wealth of ideas unique to such a longstanding relationship. The beauty and elegance of the original tune resides in its simplicity, so I chose to present it at the outset of the piece in a clear and streamlined orchestration.

The form of Spagnoletta is AA BB and Coda. The first part of *Flourishes and Meditations on a Renaissance Theme* consists of Variations I and II. Each of these variations adheres strictly to the form of Spagnoletta. Additionally, Variation I has a kinship to cubist painting in which various features of the original are fragmented, framed and juxtaposed, resulting in a kaleidoscopic amplification of its details. Variation II uses the entire Spagnoletta melody as a cantus firmus while new melodies and lines are sounded over it, an ancient musical technique popular in medieval and renaissance times.

The second part is comprised of variations III, IV and V. These variations are the most wide-ranging of the set, but always maintain motivic connections to Spagnoletta. Variations III and V are each expressed in AA form and largely derived from the original. Variation IV uses the original motives in layered ostinato in canon.

Variations VI and VII form the third and final part of the piece and function as the coda, recycling previously heard thematic material that leads to a final cadence. In this spirit, Variation VI points in two directions: it forecasts the main texture of Variation VII while briefly reflecting upon each variation already heard (in reverse order). Variation VII returns to the original Spagnoletta melodies but places them in a new "dream-like" environment featuring a series of pulsating patterns and textures interwoven with strands of each of the original melodies, all of which move the piece to a gentle close.

- Michael Gandolfi

Solar Testimonies

My work *Solar Testimonies: Symphony for Band* is inspired by various aspects of the history of UNCG (University of North Carolina Greensboro), its student traditions, and various elements of the civil rights movement in Greensboro. The symphony is organized in four movements, which include the titles “Dreams and Traditions”, “Collegial High-Jinks”, “and they asked, How Long?”, and “by the word of their testimony”. If the audience listens carefully, they will be able to hear a quote of a prominent song that was sung during the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

I am hoping that the audience will be moved by the musical journey that tells a story of aspirations, perseverance, and overcoming obstacles.

- James Lee III

~ MEET THE ARTIST ~

Rodney Dorsey is Professor of Music at the Florida State University College of Music where he conducts the FSU Wind Orchestra and guides the graduate wind conducting program.

Dorsey comes to FSU from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music where he conducted the IU Wind Ensemble and taught graduate conducting courses. Prior to his tenure at the Jacobs School, Dorsey served on the faculties of the University of Oregon, University of Michigan, DePaul University and Northwestern University. He also gained extensive experience teaching in the public schools of Florida and Georgia.

Dorsey studied conducting with Mallory Thompson, John P. Paynter, and James Croft. He was a clarinet student of Fred Ormand and Frank Kowalsky.

During his conducting career, Dorsey has led performances at several prominent events including the American Bandmasters Association Convention, College Band Directors National Conference North/Northwest Regional Conference, and the Bands of America National Festival. He is active as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator in the United States. International engagements include Hungary, Canada, and Bulgaria.

Dorsey's commitment to community has been demonstrated by his participation on the board of directors for Music for All and the Midwest Clinic. He currently serves as the president of the Midwest Clinic. Other professional memberships include the College Band Directors National Association, National Association for Music Education, Florida Bandmasters Association, Kappa Kappa Psi, Tau Beta Sigma (honorary), Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated. Dorsey is also an elected member of the American Bandmasters Association. Most recently Dorsey was named a Yamaha Master Educator.

~ PERSONNEL ~

Eastman Wind Orchestra

Flute

Yiqian Fu
Lucy Zeng
Jenny Zhang

Oboe

Marty Bailey
Madison Barber
Hannah Lundahl
Summer McCurdy
Lily Ortiz
Torie Ramey

Clarinet

Audrey Bray
Yushu Ma
Ethan Montgomery
Yerim Park
Kelsey Waters

Bassoon

Fabrizio Milcent
Alison Pollock
Faith Weigand

Saxophone

Zachary Jantzi
Timothy Lam
Liam McQuade
Karolina Shrader

Horn

Jackson Cadengo
Aiden Christensen
Kasey Gibbons
Nick Grey
Aidan Koch
Allen Reddick
Aliza Small

Trumpet

Wesley Duncan
Noah Hornok
Clara Jury
Emily Lipper
Kai Mahone
Colin Mroczko
Nati Noriega
Devin Reale
Callie Siamof
Levi Springer

Trombone

Gabriel Clark
David McKenzie
John Robinson

Euphonium

Zachary Berz
Adam Yastion

Tuba

Henry Foster
Jonathan Miller

String Bass

Harley Genus

Timpani

Seven Swinford

Percussion

Eli Kim
Caleb McCree
Chance Park

Harp

Daniel Reeder

Keyboard

Sam Leung

~ PERSONNEL ~
The Eastman Wind Ensemble

Flute

Helen Freeman
Haley Gruwell
Kaja Hammerschmidt

Oboe

Kayla Miller
Gus Smith
Josh So
Samuel Suchta

Clarinet

Barak Dosunmu
Daniel Ketter
Harrison Kim
Jay Kline
Veronica Pavlovic
Andrew Robertson

Bassoon

Colin Gentry
Alistair Picken
Samantha Webster

Saxophone

Muzi Li
Gaurav Sarangi
Benjamin Small
Yunfei Xie

Horn

Andrew Foster
Aaron Fulton
Diego Solis
Graham Ulery
Sam Wood

Trumpet

Norman Carswell
Trevor King
Ian Larkin
Lauren Taylor
Yue Zhang

Trombone

Corey Hamm
Angel Paz
Matous Rybka
Sam Streeter

Euphonium

Jack Altenbach
Nathanael Kumar

Tuba

Kyle Boschen
Bec Caldwell

String Bass

Melody Pan

Timpani

Remy Thomas

Percussion

Aidan Chase
Jin Dai
Anais Griffith-Oh
Jake Kundu
Ben Landon
Andrew Laufer
Myah Tokajer

Harp

Kathleen Miao

Keyboard

Veniamin Blokh

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the “Great Hill People” and “Keepers of the Western Door” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.



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