

Programme

Copland: An Outdoor Overture

(Joined by Carlisle Youth Orchestra)

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess Orchestral Selections

Copland: Rodeo

Buckaroo Holiday, Corral Nocturne, Saturday Night Waltz, Hoe-Down

--Interval--

Dvorak: Symphony No.9 "From the New World"

Adagio, Lago, Scherzo, Allegro con fuoco

Welcome

Every member of the orchestra can share a story about how they came to learn their musical instrument. We also have stories about who encouraged us when we got frustrated or discouraged. Looking back we're probably aware of who made the financial sacrifice so we could have instrumental lessons. Learning to play an instrument through the classical tradition is tough and takes hours of practice over many years and the help of talented teachers. Playing a musical instrument is not just about learning a skill and having something to keep us out of mischief and away from our computer screens. It influences how our brain develops, how we understand ourselves and experience the world around us. What a great privilege it is to play an instrument. This term we have had a few young people participating in City of Carlisle Orchestra and we are very pleased to have Carlisle Youth Orchestra with us tonight.

We've had a wonderful year with Ryan Bancroft, our Music Director and Conductor. Tonight's music is specially to remind him of his homeland and to thank him for working with us this year.

Enjoy the concert!

Sarah Wilson

Chair, City of Carlisle Orchestra



Thanks



We wish to thank St John's for the use of their church. You can find out more about the church on their website, or contact Rev Steve Donald on 01228 521601 or email him at steve@st-johns-carlisle.co.uk. St Johns is a community church welcoming all members of the community to join in their activities and use their facilities. We wish to express our thanks to Cumbria County Council music library for supplying the orchestral sets.



About Tonight's Music

Copland: An Outdoor Overture

A funny thing about Aaron Copland's buoyant, invigoratingly open-air piece, An Outdoor Overture: it was written in 1938 for performance in the indoor auditorium of the High School of Music and Art in New York City. The work owes its existence to a request from the school's orchestra director, Alexander Richter, for a composition to begin the institution's long-term plan to concentrate on "American music for American Youth." And who better to inaugurate such a campaign than an American composer who had so recently affected a radical and crucial stylistic change in his music, a change from austerity and dissonance into folkish simplicity? After beginning with the south-of-the-border folkishness of *El Salón Mexico* in 1936, Copland settled creatively within the continental U.S. for a high school opera, *The Second Hurricane* in 1937, and followed this with the present work, and in the same year – 1938 – the first of the Americana ballets, *Billy the Kid*.

It is interesting to observe that, although *An Outdoor Overture* could be considered a kind of warm-up for the extended ballets that followed (although he interrupted work on *Billy the Kid* to write it) it still emerged as a fully-formed essay in the composer's new style. The melodic materials are the essence of simplicity, beginning with a main theme that proceeds from a descending C-major triad and contains plenty of straight-out scales, onto a rousing march tune that almost slips into *Camptown Races* – strangely enough with a slight Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev accent – and then to a lyric idea sung first by a flute.

In composing the piece, Copland kept in mind that, although he was writing for a high school orchestra of at least near-professional capability, he must still hold careful rein on the over-all difficulties. But neither did he underestimate the expertise of the student players and in devising the music in his typically syncopated, brilliant manner, he provided them, and professional orchestras, with an attractive bit of Coplandiana.

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess Orchestral Selections

It was in 1929 that George Gershwin (1898-1937) read DuBose Heyward's novel *Porgy* and determined to write an opera using its story dealing with black life in Charleston, South Carolina. After Heyward had made *Porgy* into a play, he fashioned a libretto for Gershwin, and collaborated with George's brother Ira Gershwin on the lyrics. The composer dedicated himself totally to the formidable task, doing research which took him for the summer of 1934 to Folly Island, ten miles from Charleston. There he absorbed the music and folkways of the resident blacks; on nearby islands he attended services of the Gullahs, taking part in their "shouting." In Charleston he was fascinated by the street vendor's cries, some of these becoming the only true folk material to be incorporated into a score that abounds in a folk-like idiom.

After the actual work of composing was done, Gershwin spent some nine months orchestrating the opera, and in September 1935, it opened in Boston, moved to New York for a 16-week run, then went on a road tour of three months. To be sure, there were dissenting voices that said *Porgy and Bess* is a super-musical rather than an opera, but the overwhelming consensus was, and is, nomenclature aside, that the work is a masterpiece - an American classic. (An extravagant production at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in the 1980s, although late in coming, was a welcome acknowledgment of that fact.) Gershwin's success with *Porgy* was due to his sense of artistic rightness and his complete honesty with himself. The work has its big set pieces, but in style and content it does not have pretensions to grand opera status. It is gloriously melodious and unabashedly melodramatic; there are at least five

important roles; the orchestra is large and rich, and participates importantly, as does a chorus. Come to think of it, how much more grand opera-like could the work be?

Copland: Rodeo

Aaron Copland's America is rural, somehow softer and more manageable to our psyche than Bernstein's West Side Story (even though Copland the composer was just as much a product of the city as Bernstein). Copland's ballet Rodeo is a celebration of the American West and reflects an important image we have of ourselves.

The commission for Rodeo came, surprisingly enough, from the classically-oriented Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, with the music by Copland and the choreography and scenario by Agnes de Mille. The ballet was precedent setting – there were said to be 22 curtain calls at its premiere at the Metropolitan Opera House on October 16, 1942 – and the success of this ballet insured that dance would thrive as an integral part of American musical theater. In 1945, Copland made a symphonic arrangement from the ballet, the Four Dance Episodes we hear on this program.

The genesis of the scenario is told by Agnes de Mille in her memoir *Dance to the Piper*. According to de Mille, the idea of doing a ballet for the Ballet Russe, a company with a decidedly 19th-century bent, did not immediately inspire Copland in their first meeting. Nor did Copland inspire her; instead, he laughed out loud at some of her ideas for a scenario. De Mille invited him to “go straight to Hell” – an inauspicious beginning, to say the least. Something in their bantering and frank exchange seemed to work, however, because the very next day he called back to see if she would meet him for tea that afternoon. Ultimately, their collaboration was momentous in American dance history.

The ballet's scenario takes place at Burnt Ranch, where a Cowgirl finds herself competing with visiting city girls for the attention of the local cowboys, especially the Head Wrangler. Buckaroo Holiday bursts forth like a herd of wild horses. It quickly shifts to a lilting melody which announces the Cowgirl making her bid for the Head Wrangler, but she makes a fool of herself by trying to ride a bucking bronco and getting thrown. The American folk song “If He'd Be a Buckaroo by His Trade” (a trombone solo) is quoted by Copland in this dance. The jaunty Holiday ends with as much vim and vigor as it began. Corral Nocturne is moody, yearning, and melancholy. The Cowgirl's sadness is portrayed by Copland as he quotes the ballad “Sis Joe.” In this movement, the Western woman of Wallace Stegner's *Angle of Repose* comes to this writer's mind – the indispensable Western heroine who prevails against the harshest of circumstances, in spite of the violence and narcissism of the men folk.

The moodiness continues in the Saturday Night Waltz, as Copland quotes the song “Old Paint” and paints a picture of the Cowgirl's isolation, but also gives us hope that her plight is only temporary. Hoe-Down begins with dynamism and verve, signaling the Cowgirl's rebirth: she has suddenly put aside her cowpoke duds and reappeared as the prettiest girl in the room. Copland borrows two square dance tunes – “Bonyparte” and “McLeod's Reel” – to aid in this romp, a fanciful and uplifting take on the American square dance. We have a typical, stand-up-and-cheer Hollywood Western ending, too, as the girl gets the right guy for her, not the aloof and snooty Head Wrangler at all, but Another Cowboy who has shown her respect, kindness, and honor.

Of course, it is all a bit ironic, really, that two New Yorkers whose Jewish families immigrated from Eastern Europe – Bernstein and Copland – captured the soul of America, from sea to shining sea.

But it's a classic story.

Long live the American way.

Dvorak: Symphony No.9

We know that Dvorák's assistant Harry Burleigh introduced him to African-American music and that Dvorák opined publicly that these could be the basis of a true American style: "In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music." The African-American emphasis often overshadows another source of inspiration: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *Hiawatha* — a connection that music historian Michael Beckerman reveals goes beyond a generalized "native" influence to explicit connections. Dvorák wrote to his American patron Jeannette Thurber about his admiration of the poem, and described the second movement in an interview on the day the New World Symphony premiered: "It is in reality a study or a sketch for a longer work, whether a cantata or an opera which I purpose [sic] writing, and which will be based upon Longfellow's *Hiawatha*." Dvorák's 1893 comments that "America can have great and noble music of her own, growing out of the very soil and partaking of its nature — the natural voice of a free and vigorous race" assume a broader meaning with the native American connection in mind.

The listener knows from the slowly unfolding harmonies that begin the Symphony that the work is one of great dimension, both in scale and emotional impact — a first impression reinforced by the sudden interruption of angular motive and thunderclap timpani that lead into the Allegro proper. The main theme is characterized by a dotted (long short) rhythm, a device Dvorák employs throughout the four movements. Its consistent use infuses even the slower movements with a folk-dance quality, and allows him to marshal his orchestral forces in large blocks without the sounds becoming muddy.

After an opening chorale, the English horn gives out the main theme of the second movement, a wordless song reminiscent of an African-American spiritual and later adapted by William Arms Fisher for the hymn "Goin' Home." The *Hiawatha* connection is that of the journey home and death of Minnehaha; in either event, both melody and timbre transcend local color toward a more universal human emotion. As Beckerman notes, even while painting a broad American canvas "Dvorák also discovered a sadness in the stillness of the prairie." Another writer, Willa Cather, described it as "the amazement of a new soul in a new world; a soul new and yet old, that had dreamed something despairing, something glorious, in the dark before it was born." The middle section moves from an individual voice to a collective one, as the phrases alternate in call-and-response and evoke physical gesture of waving back and forth.

The third movement begins with a nod to the scherzo in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. But Dvorák connects the European past to the American present with a rhythmic dance underlaid by powerful timpani strokes. Here the dancing figure is Pau-Puk-Keewis at *Hiawatha*'s wedding:

First he danced a solemn measure,[...]reading softly like a panther,[...]Then more swiftly and still swifter,[...]Whirling, spinning round in circles,[...]Leaping o'er the guests assembled,[...]Eddying round and round the wigwam,[...]Till the leaves went whirling with him,[...]Stamped upon the sand and tossed it[...].Wildly in the air around him.

Dvorák draws the musical threads together in the last movement, weaving new material with moods and themes from previous movements into a grand finale that resulted in extended cheering from the New York audience at its December 1893 premiere. The New York critic W. J. Henderson raved: "It is a great symphony and must take its place among the finest works in the form produced since the death of Beethoven." In Boston, however, the more parochial culture shines through the words of William Apthorp: "The great bane of the present Slavic and Scandinavian Schools is and has been the attempt to make civilized music by civilized methods out of essentially barbaric material.... ...Our American Negro music has every element of barbarism to be found in the Slavic or Scandinavian folk-songs; it is essentially barbarous music." Apthorp's words remind us that even the "new world" of Gilded Age America could not escape the narrow provincialism Szymanowski lamented in Old World Europe.

Written by Ryan Bancroft

Our Conductor – Ryan Bancroft



Ryan Bancroft is a conductor and trumpeter hailing from Los Angeles. Ryan was educated in Los Angeles where he studied under Edward Carroll and Thomas Stevens and is currently studying at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland under Garry Walker and Alasdair Mitchell. Having completed postgraduate studies in trumpet at the prestigious California Institute of the Arts, he was active as a conductor and freelance trumpeter. Ryan relocated to Glasgow, Scotland in September of 2013.

Ryan has conducted orchestras such as the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, RedNote, and has worked with great conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Placido Domingo, Donald Runnicles, Ilan Volkov, and James MacMillan. Ryan also has a keen interest in contemporary music; a field in which he has commissioned over 100 works for himself or ensembles. Ryan is currently music director of the City of Carlisle Symphony Orchestra, St. James Orchestra (Paisley), the Clyde Ensemble, and the Scottish Chamber Singers, a choir that focuses on presenting premieres and pieces by female composers. Along with music, Ryan has a background in dance where he focused on ballet and currently focuses on contemporary choreography.

The Players - City of Carlisle Orchestra

1st Violins

Rachael Cosslett
Robert Charlesworth
David Howdle
Angela Lawrence
David Humpston
Catherine Swarbrick

2nd Violins

Joan Masters
Sarah Wilson
Robert Thurlow
Hilary Lawrence
Monika Davies
Kasia Davies
Zelda Robertson

Viola

Peter Wood
Joy Hall
Sue Greenwood

Cello

Kenneth Wilson
Susan Beeby
Joanne Crossley
Lawrence Smith
Pam Przybyla
Steven Thompson
Jake Cardigan

Double Bass

Jan Forlow
Emma Burt
Ben imThurn
Ruth Pickles

Oboe

Glenys Braithwaite
Anthea Lee

Flute

Lyn Young
Terry Mullett
Samantha Willis

Clarinets

Jane Bell
Rebecca Raven

Bassoon

Andrew Smith
Ann Bishop

Trombone

Graham Harris
Cliff Attwood
Simon Evans

Horn

Pam Harris
Julie Ratcliffe
Tim Barrett
David Logie

Trumpet

Gordon Kydd
Delyth Owen
Emma James

Base Clarinet/Saxophone

Norma Baggot

Timpani

David Birkett

Percussion

Sue Roe

The Players - Carlisle Youth Orchestra

Violins

Kasia Davies
Ruben Burt
Monika Davies
Jordan Hay
Annabel Houghton

Lena Shimmin
Philippa Hall
Joe Lush
Jake Mann
Alice Reid

Cello

Anna Bainbridge
Iona Reilly
Sally Warwick

Flute

Kira Peart
Jana Brown

Clarinet

Christina Kirpatrick

Bassoon

Taylor Sindall

Trumpet

Elliot Laidlaw

City of Carlisle Orchestra will next be in concert:

Saturday 5th December 2015 - St John's Church, London Road, Carlisle

Watch out for posters, connect to our facebook group www.facebook.com/CityofCarlisleOrchestra or email us on CityofCarlisleOrchestra@hotmail.com and ask to go on our mailing list and be sure to know when our concerts are.

Other Classical concerts coming up soon:

Friday 10th July to Sunday 12th July - **Carlisle Classical Music Festival 2015**

www.classicalmusic-carlisle.org.uk

A weekend of concerts in Carlisle. Events include Choral Pilgrimage conducted by Harry Christophers and The Festival Chorus singing Dvorak Mass in D. Don't miss the performances of original works by Cumbrian music students at 11 am on Sat. 11th July in the Cathedral Fratry.

13th July, 7.30pm – **Cumbria Youth Orchestra**, St. John's, London Rd, Carlisle

Programme to include Holst, Britten, Grieg and Stavinsky pieces from the BBC 10 Pieces.

21st Sept, 7.30pm - **Northern Chamber Orchestra**, Penrith Methodist Church

www.penrithmusicclub.com

8th Oct, 7.30pm - **Atesh String Quartet**, St Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle

www.carlislemusicsociety.weebly.com

And for the younger musician . . .

Carlisle Music Centre - There are fantastic opportunities for young musicians at the various groups run by Carlisle Music Centre from beginner level to advanced, we cater for string players, brass, woodwind and percussion in either an orchestra or wind band setting and meet at Trinity School, Carlisle. Contact Andrew Tugwell (Head of Centre) on 07789 616489 or Andrew.tugwell@cumbria.gov.uk

Carlisle Cathedral Choir - For boys and girls aged 8 and over who like singing. Contact

jeremysuter@hotmail.com 01228 526646