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SOUNDS FROM ST. OLAF  
DIGITAL CONCERT SERIES

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*INVITATION TO THE DANCE*  
STEVEN AMUNDSON AND MARTIN HODEL, *HOSTS*



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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2020

**ST. OLAF PHILHARMONIA**  
Martin Hodel, *conductor*

**Hungarian Dance No. 5**

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

**ST. OLAF BAND**

Timothy Mahr '78, *conductor*

**“Mambo Loco” from *Divertimento***

Ira Hearshen (b. 1948)

Living in Los Angeles, Ira Hearshen has worked steadily as an arranger and orchestrator in motion pictures, television, and recordings for the majority of his career. His works for the concert stage include the original composition *Symphony on Themes of John Phillip Sousa*, a 45-minute, four-movement symphony nominated for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in music. The concert works bear the mark of a seasoned professional orchestrator.

Hearshen's *Divertimento for Band* was inspired by the Vincent Persichetti band composition of the same title. It is an exciting and major work for contemporary wind ensemble that reflects the multicultural American experience. Cast in five movements, Hearshen's *Divertimento* melds popular and traditional musical styles indigenous to the United States, Europe, and Cuba.

—*Program note by Timothy Mahr*

**ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA**

Steven Amundson, *conductor*

**Valse Triste**

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Jean Sibelius's *Valse Triste* (“Sad Waltz”) is a poignant dance written as incidental music for the 1903 play *Kuolema* (“Death”). The Finnish composer wrote *Valse Triste* to accompany a scene in which an old woman on her deathbed dreams that dancers fill the room around her, and that she joins them in a swirling waltz. As she dances, the music grows increasingly frenzied until there is a knock on the door, and Death, in the form of the woman's late husband, comes to claim her.

*Valse Triste* creates an atmosphere of haunting beauty by juxtaposing the woman's happy memories with her imminent death. The singing melodies oscillate between major and minor modes, all the while lilting in a traditional triple meter waltz tempo. The work ends with four muffled solo violins, playing a fading series of anguished chords as Death leads the woman into darkness.

—*Program note by Sonja Wermager '14*

## VIKING CHORUS

Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, *conductor*

### Betelehemu

Via (Babatunde) Otalunji (1927–2003)  
arr. Wendell Whalum (b. 1931)

Betelehemu,  
Awa yio ri Baba gbojule.  
Awa yio ri Baba fehinti.  
Nibo labi Jesu, nibo labe bi i?  
Betelehemu ilu ara,  
Nibe labi Baba o daju.  
Iyin, iyin, iyin, nifun o.  
Adupe fun ojo oni,  
Baba oloreo.  
Iyin fun o Baba anu,  
Baba toda wasi.

*Bethlehem,  
We are glad that we have a Father to trust.  
We are glad that we have a Father to rely upon.  
Where was Jesus born? Where was he born?  
Bethlehem, the city of wonder,  
That is where the Father was born for sure.  
Praise, praise, praise be to Him.  
We thank Thee for this day,  
Gracious Father.  
Praise be to Thee,  
Merciful Father.  
—Nigerian carol*

## MANITOU SINGERS

Therees Tkach Hibbard, *conductor*

### Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

arr. Malcolm V. Edwards (b. 1944)

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:  
I would my true love did so chance  
To see the legend of my play,  
To call my true love to my dance:

*Refrain:*

Sing O my love, my love;  
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
Of her I took freshly substance;

Thus was I knit to man's nature,  
To call my true love to my dance:

*Refrain*

In a manger wrapp'd I was,  
So very poor, this was my chance,  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,  
To call my true love to my dance:

*Refrain*

*—Traditional English*

## ST. OLAF PHILHARMONIA

Martin Hodel, *conductor*

### Symphony No. 1, "Jeremiah" II. Profanantion

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Leonard Bernstein was born in Massachusetts in 1918, and by his late twenties had established himself as a leading American conductor, educator, and composer. Bernstein held prestigious positions, including music director and assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic, and led the orchestral and conducting departments of Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer institute, Tanglewood. He was popular internationally as a guest conductor, and is greatly acclaimed for his performances of the Mahler symphonies with the New York Philharmonic in the 1960s.

The "Jeremiah" Symphony was Bernstein's first large-scale work, completed in 1943, and premiered by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 1944. Bernstein's three symphonies are concerned with the loss and recovery of

faith. The “Jeremiah” Symphony is greatly influenced by Bernstein’s Jewish upbringing. In 1939, he wrote what he called a “Hebrew song” for orchestra and soprano, based on text from the book of Lamentations. This later became the third movement of Bernstein’s First Symphony, named for the prophet Jeremiah’s lamentations after the destruction of Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Bernstein did not intentionally use Hebrew thematic material outside of the text from Lamentations when composing the symphony, but these influences can be seen in the musical and emotional quality of the other movements. The opening theme of the first movement is derived from a liturgy of Hebrew benedictions, and the *scherzo* theme from the second movement is similar to traditional Hebrew chant. Bernstein dedicated the piece to his father, a scholar and religious mentor.

Bernstein spoke of the symphony in 1977, saying, “I suppose I am always writing the same piece, as all composers do. But each time it is a new attempt...to have the piece achieve new dimensions. The work I have been writing all my life is about the struggle that is born of the crisis of our century, a crisis of faith...The faith or peace found at the end of Jeremiah is really more a kind of comfort, not a solution. (But) comfort is one way of achieving peace...”

—Program note by Lauren Williams '21

## ST. OLAF PHILHARMONIA

Martin Hodel, *conductor*

### The Party Starter

Jonathan Bailey Holland (b. 1974)

Hailing from Flint, Michigan, Jonathan Bailey Holland is an African-American composer who is well versed in many different styles and genres, without feeling “tied to any one specific genre or style.” He began studying composition while at Interlochen Academy for the Arts, and went on to get a bachelor of music from the Curtis Institute for Music (studying composition with Ned Rorem) and a doctorate in music from Harvard University (studying with Bernard Rands and Mario Davidovsky). He has served as Composer in Residence for a variety of symphonies, chamber groups, and organizations. He currently serves as the Chair of Composition, Theory, and History at Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

This groovy work is part of a number of compositions that Holland has written with hopes of speaking to a broader audience. Holland says, “There’s something about turning on the radio and hearing a beat, and just not being able to sit still; it’s an element I want to capture in my music.” In *The Party Starter*, he certainly does just that; the orchestra seems to function as a giant keyboard on which an incredibly catchy solo is played.

—Program note by Jacob Wilde '21

## ST. OLAF CHOIR

Anton Armstrong '78, *conductor*

### Sorida (A Zimbabwe Greeting)

Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)

arr. William C. Powell

Sorida.

*Greetings.*

Greetings, my brothers.

Greetings, my sisters.

Greetings ev’rybody.

Love one another.

Wave to your brothers.

Wave to your sisters.

Sorida.

*Greetings.*

—Rosephanye Powell

**ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA**  
Greta Marohl, *guest conductor*

**“Do Re Mi” from *The Sound of Music***

Richard Rodgers (1902–1979)  
arr. Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981)

**ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA**  
Steven Amundson, *conductor*

**Danzón No. 2**

Arturo Marquez (b. 1950)

Arturo Márquez was born into a musical family as the child of a mariachi musician and grandchild of a Mexican folk singer. Though he was one of nine children, he was the only sibling to go into music of any kind. He studied piano, violin, and trumpet until he began composing at age 16. He attended the Mexican Music Conservatory to study piano and music theory, and proceeded to study composition for another three years. Later, he received a Fulbright Scholarship and obtained his master of fine arts degree in composition from California Institute of the Arts. Much of Márquez’s music is influenced heavily by his father and grandfather, and he is a well-known master of blending musical styles seamlessly and convincingly. Most often featured in Márquez’s music is Mexican “salon music,” a Romantic style normally written for solo piano. This inspiration is clear in *Danzón No. 2*. From the beginning, the traditional Afro-Cuban clave rhythm is heard in the pizzicato strings and in the percussion. This distinctive rhythm is used as a backdrop for Mexican inspired melodies, first in the clarinet and subsequently passed around the orchestra. Márquez himself describes the piece’s origins as follows:

The idea of writing the *Danzón No. 2* originated in 1993 during a trip to Malinalco with the painter Andrés Fonseca and the dancer Irene Martínez, both of whom are experts in salon dances with a special passion for the danzón, which they were able to transmit to me from the beginning, and also during later trips to Veracruz and visits to the Colonia Salon in Mexico City. From these experiences onward, I started to learn the danzón’s rhythms, its form, its melodic outline, and to listen to the old recordings by Acerina and his Danzonera Orchestra. I was fascinated and I started to understand that the apparent lightness of the danzón is only like a visiting card for a type of music full of sensuality and qualitative seriousness, a genre which old Mexican people continue to dance with a touch of nostalgia and a jubilant escape towards their own emotional world; we can fortunately still see this in the embrace between music and dance that occurs in the State of Veracruz and in the dance parlors of Mexico City.

The piece gained fame after esteemed conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela included it in their 2007 European and American tour. Since then, it has been called the unofficial national anthem of Mexico and has been performed by hundreds of orchestras worldwide. It is clear why the piece has gained such notoriety: *Danzón No. 2* has a unique energy that is incomparable. With frequent and sudden changes in tempo and dynamics, the music takes on a life of its own and transports listeners to the ballroom in Veracruz that inspired it.

—Program note by Penelope Musto '21