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2023-24 Season



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# Symphonic Band

Matthew Dockendorf, conductor

Elias Gillespie, graduate conductor

7:30 p.m, Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Macky Auditorium

## Program

### Moorside March

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

arr. Gordon Jacob

### Nocturne

Zhou Tian (b. 1981)

arr. David Thornton

### Roads to Home

Elena Specht (b. 1993)

— Intermission —

### Harper's West

Henry Dorn (b. 1988)

### Tarot

Lindsay Bronnenkant (b. 1988)

I. The Fool

II. The King of Cups

III. The Tower

# Program notes

## Moorside March

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

arr. Gordon Jacob

*Moorside March*, taken from *The Moorside Suite*, was commissioned as the test piece for the British National Brass Band Championship at the Crystal Palace, London, in 1928. Holst set the pattern for other composers of international repute who also wrote for the brass band in subsequent years. He left an incomplete version for military band, containing all of the first movement and 38 bars of the second, to be completed later. It is not known whether the brass or the military band score was begun first.

Gordon Jacob arranged the suite for orchestra in 1952 and for wind band in 1960. According to Imogen Holst, her father “liked writing for brass better than for military band: it was mellower and more flexible. His affection for the trombone was lasting, and he knew the texture of the band instinctively and could get the best out of every instrument.” At the Crystal Palace he listened to the piece 15 times and was deeply impressed by players who “combined the enthusiasm of amateurs with the skill of professionals. It was not only their technical proficiency that he admired so much: it was their sense of phrasing and their real musicianship.”

—Program note from *Program Notes for Band*

## Nocturne

Zhou Tian (b. 1981)

arr. David Thornton

*Nocturne* is a chorale for wind ensemble conceived on a cold, winter night. Lyrical and reflective, the music carries a strong sense of romanticism, and strives to convey a sense of spiritual blessing. The piece was originally written as a middle movement of my first string quartet.

My sincere appreciation goes to David Thornton, who initiated this version for wind ensemble with an excellent transcription. I made further arrangements and composed new materials for the current version.

—Program note by composer

## **Roads to Home**

Elena Specht (b. 1993)

Roads to Home was composed in spring 2014 for the Vanderbilt University Wind Ensemble. In loose rondo form, it is essentially traveling music, with destination points of varying length and meaning. I sought to explore the anticipation of travel, the surprises of new places, and the discomfort of the unfamiliar. Beyond that, it asks a question: what makes a home? Or how might a place, newly discovered, become home? Roads to Home ponders this transformation and all that it encompasses.

- Program Note by composer

## **Harper's West**

Henry Dorn (b. 1988)

The namesake for this work is my daughter, Harper. She has a playful spirit. For all of her shyness, she has an incredibly warm personality for a toddler. When she was four months old, she was diagnosed with a rare seizure disorder called Infantile Spasms, also known as “West Syndrome.” When she first began to have seizures, it was as if the light left her eyes and all of her joy with it. As she grappled with the seizures, she would endure clusters of episodes where she would briefly come out of the haze in a panic—knowing that something was terribly wrong—before being consumed by the seizure again.

These were difficult to watch and endure, but what has been inspirational is watching the way in which she has learned to cope and even thrive intellectually despite these challenges. This work represents my best effort to re-create what she appeared to experience, going from playing to descending into these frightening episodes.

—Program note by composer

# Tarot

Lindsay Bronnenkant (b. 1988)

Gustav Holst was incredibly interested in Indian culture, going so far as to teach himself Sanskrit. Some evidence suggests that he tried to incorporate Indian *rāgas* into his works, and after investigating Holst's resources and analyzing his *Planets* I believe that Holst tried to reference *rāgas* that evoked similar characters to those of the planets in his suite. Holst's access to authentic performance of Indian music was limited, however, and like many composers—especially as a British composer entrenched in modal composition during the English folk song revival of the early twentieth century—he took what he understood of *rāgas* and filled in the gaps with Western theoretical knowledge, resulting in the treatment of what were once *rāgas* as scales or modes.

I decided to compose a suite that traces Holst's footsteps but applies his musical experimentation to a new topic: *Tarot*. Like astrology, Tarot cards have been used for divination, and as each planet in modern astrology represents specific characteristics and personality traits, so too does each Tarot card. Some elements of the Hindustani *thāts*, Karnātak *mēlakarta rāgas*, and pitch sets Holst references in his *Planets* are referenced in *Tarot* using a similarly Western approach to portray Tarot card analogs.

In *Tarot*, the Fool represents someone who dives head-first through open doors with enthusiasm (and sometimes with a blissful ignorance of any looming danger). The card represents new beginnings, playfulness, naïveté, and optimism. The first movement, *The Fool*, contains several intentionally comedic moments as the Fool, unaware of the luck manifesting from his will, manages to skip through a minefield unharmed. The movement references the pitches of the *Kalyān* that are found in *Jupiter*, a benefic planet of good fortune, to represent the Fool's beginner's luck. The movement also uses the whole-tone scale hinted at in some of Holst's themes for *Uranus*, a chaotic and unpredictable planet, to depict the unintentional mayhem that inevitably follows each of the Fool's steps.

In Tarot, the suit of cups corresponds with emotional energy and the element of water. A deeply empathic soul, the King of Cups tempers his emotions by balancing his heart with his head. The King leads diplomatically through compassion. The second movement, *The King of Cups*, references the pitches of *mēlakarta rāga Dhavalāmbari* from *Neptune* as a nod to a fellow intuitive and ruler of the sea, and additionally employs the pitches of the *Bhairavī* that are found in *Venus* to allude to the King's kind and gentle countenance.

The Tower represents surprise, upheaval, and destruction. It represents the collapse of structure, the crumbling of façades based on faulty foundations. The final movement references Mars, the Bringer of War with two similar pitch sets: the one Holst uses in *Mars*, as well as a theme that Holst may have meant to draw from, *Bhairav*.

—Program note by composer

# Personnel

*Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink; click or tap for more information.*

## **Matthew Dockendorf**, conductor

## **Elias Gillespie**, graduate conductor

Elias Gillespie, a Kansas native, is currently pursuing a master's degree in wind conducting at the University of Colorado Boulder where he studies with Don McKinney. Prior to his studies at Colorado, Gillespie taught in Lincoln, Nebraska for five years where he served as director of bands at Lincoln Northeast High School. During this time, he was the recipient of the 2022 Nebraska Young Music Educator of the Year award which is given to one person annually in recognition of outstanding promise in music education in the state of Nebraska. Gillespie received a Bachelor of Music Education in 2018 from Kansas State University. At Kansas State, he was heavily involved in university ensembles, community music making, and served in multiple leadership roles. Gillespie served as president of the Epsilon Pi chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi (National Honorary Band Service Fraternity) and studied conducting with Frank Tracz, and trumpet with Gary Mortenson and Rebecca Walenz.



# Symphonic Band

*In alphabetical order*

## Flute

Aria Henson  
Tyler Irving  
Santiago Reveiz  
Timothy Scott  
Andrew Stein

## Oboe

Eirian Anciaux  
Benjamin Smith  
Riley Stone

## Bassoon

Alacias Boaz  
Raleigh Eversole  
Grace Moon

## Clarinet

Gabby Barbic  
Sophia Eyl  
Thomas Flint  
Emma Haas  
Kayla Hall  
Robin Kelley  
Liam Kiernan  
Benjamin Rathje

## Saxophone

Vivian Lassiter  
Gustavo A. Olguin  
Anthony Petrocco  
Lee Ross  
Morgan White

## Horn

Dane Burton  
Max Campbell  
Sammy Rees  
Dani Richard  
Barrett Teston  
Lilli Vincent

## Trumpet

Keegan Arnsmeier  
Toby Buss  
Gwen Milete  
Justin Sokolowski  
Baylee Womack +

## Trombone

Marshal Goff  
Jacob Kayler +  
Cameron Mitchell  
Kyle Nakaji  
Morgan Ochs  
Alex Weeks

## Euphonium

Sam Webster  
Ryann White

## Tuba

Anton Akse  
Lucy Rogers +  
Liam Ryan

## String bass

Daniel Kaminski

## Piano

Matt Sebald

## Harp

Lydia Krason

## Percussion

Paul Clasen  
Paul Finckel\*  
Ben McCorrison  
Izzy O'Neill  
Ibrahim Square  
Reese Whitaker

\* *hired player*

+ *graduating player*

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