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The University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado's flagship university, honors and recognizes the many contributions of Indigenous peoples in our state. CU Boulder acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and many other Native American nations. Their forced removal from these territories has caused devastating and lasting impacts. While the University of Colorado Boulder can never undo or rectify the devastation wrought on Indigenous peoples, we commit to improving and enhancing engagement with Indigenous peoples and issues locally and globally.

Symphonic Band

Branden Steinmetz, conductor Elias Gillespie, guest conductor

Wind Symphony

Matthew Dockendorf, conductor

7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 19, 2024 Macky Auditorium

PROGRAM

SYMPHONIC BAND

A Mother of A Revolution! (2019)

Omar Thomas (b. 1984)

Pathways (2019)

Danielle Fisher (b. 1986)

Elias Gillespie, guest conductor

This Cruel Moon (2017)

John Mackey (b. 1973)

Danse Diabolique (1900/1995)

Joseph Hellmesberger Jr. (1855-1907)

trans. Tohru Takahashi (b. 1958)

WIND SYMPHONY

Sensemayá

Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940)

En mi, familia

Ivette Herryman Rodríguez (b. 1982)

Suite Francaise

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

- 1. Normandie
- 2. Bretagne
- 3. Ile de France
- 4. Alsace-Lorraine
- 5. Provence

Petals of Fire

Zhou Tian (b. 1981)

PROGRAM NOTES

Hyperlinks are bold and underlined; click or tap for more information.

A Mother of A Revolution! (2019)

Omar Thomas (b. 1984)

A Mother of A Revolution! is a celebration of the bravery of trans women, and in particular, Marsha "Pay It No Mind" Johnson. Johnson is credited with being one of the instigators of the famous Stonewall uprising of June 28,1969—one of the pivotal events of the LGBTQ liberation movement of the 20th century—which is commemorated annually during the worldwide Gay Pride celebrations. Existing as a trans woman, especially a trans woman of color, and daring to live authentically, creating space for oneself in a transphobic world is one of the bravest acts I can imagine. More than 20 trans women were murdered in the United States in 2018 alone. There is no demographic more deserving, and frankly, long overdue for highlighted heroism and bravery. The disco vibe in the latter half of the piece is meant to honor club culture, a sacred space held amongst LGBTQ persons in which to love, live, mourn, heal, strategize, connect, disconnect and dance in defiance of those outside forces who would seek to do LGBTQ persons harm simply for daring to exist and take up space. We pump our fists to honor the life, heroism, activism, and bravery of Marsha P. Johnson, to honor the legacy of the Stonewall revolution, to honor the memory of the trans lives violently ended due to fear and hatred, and in honor of trans women worldwide who continue to exist unapologetically and who demand to be seen.

A Mother of A Revolution! was commissioned by the Desert Winds Freedom Band, under the direction of Dean McDowell, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

—Program Note by composer

Pathways (2019)

Danielle Fisher (b. 1986)

Pathways was written for and dedicated to Tyler Austin and the Oklahoma State University Concert Band. The piece was inspired by a poem written by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), an Austrian poet and novelist whose work is recognized for its lyrical intensity:

"Understand, I'll slip quietly away from the noisy crowd when I see the pale stars rising, blooming, over the oaks. I'll pursue solitary pathways through the pale twilit meadows with only this one dream: You come too."

-Program Note by composer

This Cruel Moon (2017)

John Mackey (b. 1973)

This Cruel Moon is an adaptation of Mackey's Immortal Thread So Weak, the middle movement of Wine Dark Sea: Symphony for Band (2014). The full symphony tells the tale of Odysseus and his journey home following his victory in the Trojan War. But Odysseus' journey would take as long as the war itself. Homer called the ocean on which Odysseus sailed a winedark sea, and for the Greek king it was as murky and disorienting as its name; he would not find his way across it without first losing himself. This Cruel Moon is the song of the beautiful and immortal nymph Kalypso, who finds Odysseus near death, washed up on the shore of the island where she lives all alone. She nurses him back to health, and sings as she moves back and forth with a golden shuttle at her loom. Odysseus shares

her bed; seven years pass. The tapestry she began when she nursed him becomes a record of their love.

But one day Odysseus remembers his home. He tells Kalypso he wants to leave her, to return to his wife and son. He scoffs at all she has given him. Kalypso is heartbroken.

And yet, that night, Kalypso again paces at her loom. She unravels her tapestry and weaves it into a sail for Odysseus. In the morning, she shows Odysseus a raft, equipped with the sail she has made and stocked with bread and wine, and calls up a gentle and steady wind to carry him home. Shattered, she watches him go; he does not look back.

-Program note by composer

Danse Diabolique (1900/1995)

Joseph Hellmesberger Jr. (1855-1907) trans. Tohru Takahashi (b. 1958)

Hellmesberger also wrote a variety of dances, including *Danse Diabolique*. It is an exciting piece with an energetic waltz at its height. The Phrygian mode (D-Eb-F-G-A-Bb-C) results in a devil-like, diabolic atmosphere, yet at the height of the work there is an energetic waltz, a nod to the composer's musical heritage.

—Program Note by the Virginia Wind Symphony (December 21, 2012)

Sensemayá

Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940)

Sensemayá was originally written for voice and small orchestra in 1937. Recorded for large orchestra without voice, it was premiered by the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, conducted by the composer, at the Teatro de Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, on December 15, 1938. It remains his most recorded and performed score. The transcription by Frank Bencriscutto was premiered by the University of Minnesota Band, conducted by Bencriscutto, at the CBDNA conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on February 8, 1967.

This powerful composition is an extremely complex and primitive-sounding work. The challenging rhythms include much use of 7/8, 5/8, 9/8, 5/16 and 7/16 meters. Sensemayá, like many of the composer's other works, contains compact melodic ideas which are woven into a vibrant texture of dissonant counterpoint and free polyrhythms. Leonard Bernstein called it "the work of a sophisticated composer with a very advanced technique handling an idea of savage primitiveness." According to the sister of Revueltas, the piece was inspired by a poem about "killing a deadly snake with glossy eyes" by the Cuban poet Nicholas Guillén. The title Sensemayá has no interpretation and no sense. The poet used it solely as an idiomatic rhythm in his poem."

-Program Note from Program Notes for Band

Sensemayá canto para matar una culebra by Nicolás Guillén

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé! ¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé! ¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé! La culebra tiene los ojos de vidrio; la culebra viene y se enreda en un palo; con sus ojos de vidrio, en un palo; con sus ojos do vidrio. La culebra camina sin patas,; la culebra se esconde en la yerba; caminando se esconde en la verba, caminando sin patas. ¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe! ¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé! ¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé! Tú le das con el hacha, y se muere: idale ya! ¡No le des con el pie, que te muerde, no le des con el pie, que se va! Sensemayá, la culebra, sensemayá, Sensemayá, con sus ojos, sensemaya. Sensemayá, con su lengua, sensemayá. Sensemayá, con su boca, sensemayá. ¡La culebra muerta no puede comer; la culebra muerta no puede silbar; no puede caminar,

iLa culebra muerta no puede mirar; la culebra muerta no puede beber; no puede respirar, no puede morder! iMayombe-bombe-mayombé! Sensemayá, la culebra . . . iMayombe-bombe-mayombé! Sensemayá, no se mueve . . . iMayombe-bombe-mayombé! Sensemayá, Za culebra . . . iMayombe-bombe-mayombé! Sensemayá, Za culebra . . . iMayombe-bombe-mayombé! Sensemayá, se murio!

Sensemayá (Chant to kill a snake) translated by Willis Knapp Jones

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
The snake has eyes of glass;
The snake coils on a stick;
With his eyes of glass on a stick,
With his eyes of glass.
The snake can move without feet;
The snake can hide in the grass;
Crawling he hides in the grass;
Crawling without feet.
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!
Hit him with an ax and he dies:

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Hit him! Go on, hit him!

Don't hit him with your foot or he'll bite;

Don't hit him with your foot, or he'll get away.

Sensemayá, the snake,

sensemayá.

Sensemayá, with his eyes,

sensemayá.

Sensemayá, with his tongue,

sensemayá.

Sensemayá, with his mouth,

sensemayá.

The dead snake cannot eat;

the dead snake cannot hiss;

he cannot move,

he cannot run!

The dead snake cannot look;

the dead snake cannot drink;

he cannot breathe,

he cannot bite.

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

Sensemayá, the snake . . .

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

Sensemayá, does not move . . .

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

Sensemayá, the snake . . .

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

Sensemayá, he died!

En mi, familia

Ivette Herryman Rodríguez (b. 1982)

I dedicate this piece to my immediate family: my parents, my brother, my nephews and my little niece.

In the piece, I include ideas such as my brother's life search, which sometimes hits dead ends, but remains relentless after all; my dad's sensitivity and, although subtly, his love for dancing; and my own version of a melody of a song my mom used to sing every Sunday while doing laundry.

The title of the piece expresses that I believe, although I have become my own person, I am still very much connected to my family. Lots of my past memories and my present are filled with my family. This piece is a loving homage to them.

Program Note by composer

Suite Française

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

For a long time I have had the idea of writing a composition fit for high school purposes, and this was the result. In the bands, orchestras and choirs of American high schools, colleges and universities where the youth of the nation be found, it is obvious that they need music of their time, not too difficult to perform, but nevertheless keeping the characteristic idiom of the composer.

The five parts of this suite are named after French Provinces, the very ones in which the American and Allied armies fought together with the French underground of the liberation of my country: Normandy, Brittany, lle-de-France (of which Paris is the center), Alsace-Lorraine and Provence (my birthplace).

I used some folk tunes of these provinces. I wanted the young American to hear the popular melodies of those parts of France where their fathers and brothers fought to defeat the German invaders, who in less than seventy years have brought war, destruction, cruelty, torture, and murder three times to the peaceful and democratic people of France."

Program Note by composer

Petals of Fire

Zhou Tian (b. 1981)

Petals of Fire is a fierce and colorful rhapsody inspired by American artist Cy Twombly's 1989 painting of the same title. Part of the work was adapted from a movement of my Concerto for Orchestra. I've always been interested in learning how artists mix different styles and techniques to create a unique, new look. Inspired by Twombly's attempt to combine text and color to express himself visually (literally, words are part of his painting, much like what Chinese painters did during the Song dynasty), I, as a composer, wanted to create a fusion of musical styles, harmony, and timbre, using a large wind ensemble. In a way, everyone in the ensemble is a "petal": together, the fire glows, disappears, and dances.

Petals of Fire was commissioned by Michigan State University Wind Symphony and Director of Bands Kevin Sedatole on the occasion of the ensemble's performance at the 2017 CBDNA National Convention.

-Program Note by composer

PERSONNEL

Hyperlinks are bold and underlined; click or tap for more information.

Branden Steinmetz, conductor Matthew Dockendorf, conductor

Elias Gillespie, graduate conductor

Elias Gillespie, a Kansas native, is pursuing a master's degree in wind conducting at the University of Colorado Boulder where he studies with Matthew Dockendorf. 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 Degree 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.

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