



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
CHAMBER WINDS

Faculty Recital
R. Ward Miller, Conductor

LA CRÉATION DU MONDE



FERNAND LÉGER'S SCENIC BACKDROP FOR DARIUS MILHAUD'S 1923 BALLE *LA CRÉATION DU MONDE*

Thursday, February 28, 2013 – 7:30 PM
Laidlaw Performing Arts Center
University of South Alabama

PROGRAM

Fanfare No. 1 for Brass (1943) Michael Tippett

Petite Symphonie (1885) Charles Gounod

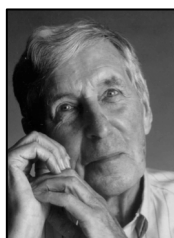
- I. Adagio, Allegro
- II. Andante Cantabile
- III. Scherzo: Allegro Moderato
- IV. Finale: Allegretto

Rondino in E-flat, WoO 25 (1793) Ludwig van Beethoven

~ INTERMISSION ~

La Création du Monde (1923) Darius Milhaud

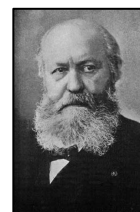
PROGRAM NOTES



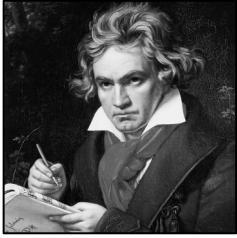
English composer Sir Michael Kemp Tippett (1905 – 1998) produced a large body of work, including five operas, three large-scale choral works, four symphonies, five string quartets, four piano sonatas, concertos and *concertante* works, song cycles, and incidental music. His deeply held humanitarian and pacifist beliefs shaped both his life and his music, going so far as leading a prison sentence as a conscientious objector during World War II. Tippett was one of the first openly gay composers to explore issues of sexuality in his work. Tippett had a keen interest in musical education, and in later life was active as a broadcaster and lecturer. As a conductor, he recorded many of his own works, and he is generally acknowledged as one of the most important British composers of the 20th century.

Tippett's *Fanfare No. 1 for Brass* showcases the composer's unique voice. Featuring the sparkling sonorities of three trumpets pitched in C, four horns, and three trombones, the work highlights Tippett's penchant for counterpoint. Imitating and answering lines trail not only within each instrumental group, but also from section to section. The work is constructed of repeated fanfares in quartal harmony, contrasted by richly textured lyrical figures. The harmonic motion continually rises to inventive and unexpected cadence points, with a tonally ambiguous moment that sets up a rich and satisfying finish.

Charles-François Gounod (1818 – 1893) was born in Paris, the son of a pianist mother and an artist father. His mother was his first piano teacher. Under her tutelage, Gounod first showed his musical talents. He entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied under Fromental Halévy and Pierre Zimmermann. In 1839, he won the Prix de Rome for his cantata *Fernand*. During his stay of four years in Italy (the reward for winning the vaunted competition), Gounod studied the music of Palestrina and other sacred works of the sixteenth century. After strongly considering a life in the priesthood, Gounod decided to pursue composition as a career.



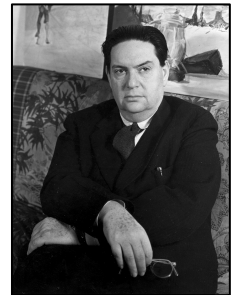
Petite symphonie pour neuf instruments à vent, or the "Little Symphony for Winds," was composed in 1885. Gounod's friend and flute professor at the Paris Conservatoire, Paul Taffanel, commissioned him to write a chamber piece for winds. Its instrumentation of a wind octet, with an added flute part in honor of Taffanel, is modeled after Mozart's wind serenades. In four movements, the work follows the form of a standard symphony. Themes are regular in structure, follow traditional harmonic expectations, and contrast in character. The complete miniature symphony is elegant, delicate, and tuneful. The first movement features a slow introduction and an Allegretto in sonata form. The second movement adagio focuses on the solo flute voice. The scherzo that follows is based on a hunting theme, with a lively finale in the fourth movement to end the symphony.



German composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827) was a crucial figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras in Western art music. He remains one of the most famous and influential of all composers. His best known compositions include 9 symphonies, 5 concertos for piano, 32 piano sonatas, and 16 string quartets. Born in Bonn, then the capital of the Electorate of Cologne and part of the Holy Roman Empire, Beethoven displayed his musical talents at an early age and was taught by his father Johann van Beethoven and Christian Gottlob Neefe. Beethoven moved to Vienna in 1792 and began studying with Joseph Haydn, quickly gaining a reputation as a virtuoso pianist. He lived in Vienna until his death. About 1800 his hearing began to deteriorate, and by the last decade of his life he was almost totally deaf. He gave up conducting and performing in public but continued to compose.

The *Rondino in E-flat* was one of Beethoven's earlier essays in composition. Beethoven composed his *Octet*, Op. 103 and the *Rondino*, WoO25 in 1792 and, although it was published separately, there is evidence to suggest that the *Rondino* was originally intended as the fourth movement of a five-movement work. The work is a highly lyrical Andante whose contemplative main theme is stated by the first horn. After it is repeated by the full ensemble, the first subsidiary section features brief solos for clarinet, oboe, and bassoon. The restatement of the opening theme is a variation on the original, with another subsidiary section modulating to the minor mode. After one more restatement of the opening section, again varied, Beethoven created a special texture in the coda, having the horns to play muted, and thereby producing a distinctive and memorable sonority.

In the fall of 1915, the young French composer Darius Milhaud (1892 – 1974) enlisted in the French Army Photographic Services. By December, his director had assigned him as secretary to Paul Claudel, a poet and writer who was serving as the French Ambassador to Brazil. In June of 1920, Milhaud accompanied Claudel on a visit to London. Claudel had official business in Britain, and Milhaud was conducting a two-week showing of his *Le Bouef sur le toit*. It was in London that Milhaud would first turn his ear to jazz. In their free evenings both he and Claudel would visit the Palais de Danse in Hammersmith, where the American jazz piano act "Billy Arnold's American Novelty Jazz Band" was giving regular performances. Milhaud's memoirs are strikingly colorful in his description of this new musical experience.



In 1922, Robert Schmitz, a Conservatoire-trained French pianist living in New York City, connected Milhaud to a series of performance engagements in the city. Amidst a whirlwind of solo performances, compositional premieres, and guest conducting throughout Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City, Milhaud repeatedly made time to hear live jazz music performances. However it was Yvonne George, the Belgian vocalist performing on Broadway connected to Milhaud by their mutual author friend Jean Cocteau, who took Milhaud to Harlem to hear true jazz performed by black musicians. As often as he could, Milhaud went to bars, dance halls, and theaters, noting that in "some of their shows, the singers were accompanied by a flute, a clarinet, two trumpets, a trombone, a complicated percussion section played by one man, a piano, and a string quintet." An alto saxophone replaced the viola in the string quartet, and a string bass was added. The show to which he referred was Maceo Pinkard's musical comedy *Liza*, and that instrumentation would be nearly duplicated in the ensemble for *La création du monde*.

His experiences with authentic jazz in New York left Milhaud resolved more than ever to use jazz for a chamber-music work." Upon returning to France in April of 1923, he immediately began collaborating with the artist Fernand Léger and the author Blaise Cendrars on a new ballet that Rolf de Maré had commissioned for his Ballets Suédois. The Paris art world of the early 1920s was in the grip of Primitivism, and African art and legend provided the perfect font of exoticism from which to sip. Just one year earlier in 1921, Cendrars had published *Anthologie Nègre*, a collection of African myths, some regarding the creation of the world. Thus, the three artists decided to create a ballet based on these myths. The ballet would premiere at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on October 25, 1923.

La création du monde elaborates an African creation myth of the earth, its plants and animals, and the First Man and First Woman. It features a harmonic language that hybridizes Milhaud's unique bitonal language with the mixed-mode "blue" notes of American jazz. The predominant voices are the alto saxophone, which both opens and closes the work, and the oboe, which elaborates several blues melodies as the voice of the gods creating new life on earth. The narrative takes the listener from the initial stillness of the voice and the chaos of creation, to the dance of these created beings, and through the cacophonous triumph as the First Man and Woman consummate their love. As the ballet comes to a close, the flutter of flutes and a delicate dissonance in the alto saxophone accompany the Man and Woman as they share a gentle kiss before the curtain falls.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA CHAMBER WINDS

Flute

Andra Bohnet +
Rachel Moody ~

Oboe

Rebecca Mindock +
Madi Kreamer ~

Clarinet

J.C. Barker +
Emily Allen ~

Bassoon

Evie Watkins #
Scott Miller #

Horn

Jodi Wood +
Morgan Wilkins ~
Lauren Morrison ~
Christopher Gaal ~

Trumpet

Peter Wood +
Drew Pritchard ~
Dennis Parker ~

Trombone

Greg Gruner +
Edward Doyle ~
Jonathan Faust ~

Piano

Bob Holm +

Violin

Gosia Leska +
Rebecca Mitchell ~

Alto Saxophone

Karl Bentley ~

Cello

José Sunderland +

String Bass

Sean Noah +

Timpani

Matt Greenwood +

Percussion

Luis Rivera +

+ USA Faculty Member
Guest Artist
~ USA Student

R. WARD MILLER - ENSEMBLE CONDUCTOR

Ward Miller is a native of Alabama, hailing from his family's cotton farm in Loachapoka, just outside of Auburn. He is the University of South Alabama's first-ever Director of Athletic Bands. He is the Director of the University of South Alabama Symphony Band, the university's second concert band composed of a majority of music majors selected through competitive auditions. Dr. Miller is also the Associate Conductor of the USA Wind Ensemble, the school's premiere instrumental ensemble. He is the Director of the 250-member Jaguar Marching Band and the Jaguar Basketball Pep Bands. In addition, he teaches the Marching Band Techniques and Brass Methods classes. Dr. Miller also teaches Fundamentals of Conducting, and assists in coaching the trombone choir and quartet, and brass quintet ensembles.

Miller earned his doctorate in band conducting at the University of Iowa. He received his master's degree in trombone performance from Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona and his bachelor's degree in music education from Auburn University.

Dr. Miller served as assistant wind ensemble director at Mesa Community College (Mesa, AZ) and Director of Bands at Pleasant Grove and Andalusia High Schools in Alabama. He has served as musical arranger and assistant music director for the Macy's Great American Marching Band during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, brass clinician for the Phoenix (AZ) Symphony Guild, clinician for numerous high school marching and concert bands across the southeast, and marching band arranger for high schools and colleges throughout the nation. He is a published composer through Cimarron Music Press (formerly Tuba-Euphonium Press).