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The Juilliard School

presents

Juilliard Wind Orchestra

Raymond Mase and William Short, Conductors

Sunday, November 24, 2019, 3pm
Peter Jay Sharp Theater

FELIX MENDELSSOHN
(1809-1847)

Overture for Winds in C Major, Op. 24 (1824, revised 1838)

William Short, Conductor

ERIC EWAZEN
(b. 1954)

Symphony in Brass (1992)
Andante—Allegro Molto
Andante con Moto
Allegro Vivace

Raymond Mase, Conductor

IGOR STRAVINSKY
(1882-1971)

Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920, revised 1947)

William Short, Conductor

Performance time: approximately one hour, without an intermission

This performance is supported in part by the Muriel Gluck Production Fund.

Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.
Notes on the Program  By Cornelia Sommer

Felix Mendelssohn

Overture for Winds in C Major, Op. 24

Near the end of the 18th century, arts enthusiast Jacob von Stählen was awestruck by the sounds of a Turkish military band. “So oriental and foreign does this rather barbaric music sound to European ears,” he wrote, “yet making such a wonderful effect, that it delights one to a certain extent as a marked change from regular music, and it awakens the interest of all listeners.” We might consider Stählen’s viewpoint tinged with xenophobia today, but it captures the fascination many Western Europeans had with the percussive and militaristic Janissary music, called after the eponymous Ottoman infantry units that commonly employed marching wind bands. Janissary music held such wide appeal that it eventually made its way into canonic Western repertoire. Fortepianos were fitted with fashionable Janissary stops that added exciting splashes of bells and percussion to pieces such as Mozart’s *Rondo alla Turca*, and large instrumental works, including Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, incorporated the beguiling sounds of Turkish military bands.

One of the first pieces composed for European military band, Mendelssohn’s Overture for Winds uses typical Janissary percussion instruments: triangle, military drum, cymbals, and bass drum. However, Mendelssohn originally composed the piece, as a teenager, for much smaller forces. The original instrumentation had only 11 winds and no percussion, in the 18th-century tradition of *Harmoniemusik* which led to the creation of numerous works including Mozart’s masterly wind serenades. In 1838, Mendelssohn significantly expanded the ensemble to fit the evolving demands and sky-rocketing popularity of the military band. Janissary percussion and additional high woodwinds imitated Turkish bands, and extra brass were added to balance the volume and register of those instruments.

The overture begins with a clarinet melody that rises from the mists. The melody meanders and evolves, but it always ends inconclusively. Other instruments join as the melody is repeated, never quite reaching a resting point, until the trumpet proclaims a sinister fanfare. The tension builds, first loudly in the brass and then more quietly in the woodwinds, until a wild, jubilant allegro breaks out. Military rhythms pervade the texture, and the soaring piccolo and E-flat clarinets spin uncontrollably in their joy. The music overflows with martial pride. A shadow of the ominous trumpet fanfare returns, only to be quickly quelled by the band’s unstoppable energy. The overture encapsulates the Turkish influence, wind band tradition, and Mendelssohn’s compositional prowess.

Felix Mendelssohn

Born: February 3, 1809, in Hamburg, Germany

Died: November 4, 1847, in Leipzig, Germany
Eric Ewazen
*Symphony in Brass*

The repertoire for brass ensemble exists almost exclusively before Bach and after 1900—virtually no one wrote anything for brass alone for close to three centuries. Giovanni Gabrieli, who lived on the cusp of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, wrote magnificently for brass instruments in his canzoni, designed to be performed in the opulent St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice. Although Gabrieli’s compositions represent the pinnacle of instrumental music up to that point, brass music fell out of fashion and was not revived until the experimentation of 20th-century composers. Much of that music is abstract and atonal, but *Symphony in Brass* by Eric Ewazen (MM ’78, DMA ’80, composition) is immediately accessible and occupies a unique place in the repertoire. As a self-described “neo-Romantic,” Ewazen wrote a piece that, in a way, fills the gap in the brass literature.

Commissioned by the Detroit Chamber Winds, *Symphony in Brass* is in a familiar three-movement structure, the outer movements fast and the middle movement slow. With warm, rich brass and shimmering percussion, the first movement opens with a slow introduction before catapulting into an energetic and heroic journey. Syncopations drive the rhythm. The groups of instruments—trumpets, horns, and low brass—function as a unit, sparring with one another and building together toward climaxes. The trumpets have a particularly virtuosic role, with figuration reminiscent of *Flight of the Bumblebee*. The first movement concludes triumphantly.

With writing that is more modal than tonal, Ewazen evokes a neo-Renaissance sound in the second movement. The movement opens with a solo for the euphonium, an instrument invented in the mid-19th century with roots dating back to the late 16th century. The euphonium’s melody serves as the basis for most of the material in the movement. After the melody passes to other instruments, the music expands through glorious harmonies with poignant suspensions. Unsettled fragments in the trumpets enter in quick imitation and foretell a more restless character. New themes and a slightly faster tempo signal the start of the middle section, in which the instruments continuously overlap each other in their imitation. Suddenly, a solo trumpet proclaims an invocation; the other instruments enter and join its raucous call. Finally, Ewazen returns to the opening melody, this time even more sublime than before.

The third movement is a joyous, off-kilter dance. With a constantly changing meter, every measure, especially those with five beats, disorients the listener’s sense of up and down. Each group of instruments seems to have a particular character, the trombones filled with strength and the trumpets light and graceful. In a slightly more subdued middle section, a soaring melody reaches ever upward. Ewazen explores the contrapuntal possibilities of the middle section’s theme: He uses stretto, in which a
second instrument enters with the theme before the first has finished its statement, and inversion, turning the theme upside-down. The inverted version of the theme appears in a misty texture and is fragmented as the ensemble accelerates and then gradually dies away. After a short pause, the original dance resumes, made even more disorienting by the occasional empty downbeat. The piece concludes joyfully with a dramatic rush to the end.

The Cleveland-born Ewazen has been on the Juilliard faculty since 1980. His orchestra and wind ensemble pieces are frequently performed around the world, and his works have been performed and recorded by the American Brass Quintet, Juilliard’s resident brass ensemble. Eugene Becker, former viola and chamber music faculty member, and Joseph Alessi, current trombone faculty member, have also recorded Ewazen’s music. Ewazen’s composition teachers included Samuel Adler, Milton Babbitt, Warren Benson, Gunther Schuller, and Joseph Schwantner.

Igor Stravinsky

Symphonies of Wind Instruments

The 1921 premiere of Stravinsky’s Symphonies of Wind Instruments was not an unmitigated success. Although Serge Koussevitzky conducted and Stravinsky was freshly famous from his ballets The Rite of Spring and The Firebird, some members of the audience laughed and hissed at this new work. Years later, perhaps in an attempt to explain the reception of the premiere, Stravinsky wrote: “I did not, and indeed I could not, count on any immediate success for this work. It lacks all those elements that infallibly appeal to the ordinary listener, or to which he is accustomed ... It is an austere ritual which is unfolded in terms of short litanies ... This music is not meant to ‘please’ an audience, nor to arouse its passions.”

Perhaps the “austere ritual” Stravinsky refers to is a funeral service: He originally wrote the piece in 1920 in memory of Claude Debussy, who had died two years earlier. (This afternoon’s performance is of the 1947 revision, for expanded forces.) Stravinsky considered Debussy to be an important influence despite their starkly contrasting styles, and though Debussy was envious of Stravinsky’s early success, it seems that Stravinsky was unaware of that jealousy. In Symphonies, Stravinsky made no attempt to imitate Debussy’s style, choosing instead to write with his own characteristic sound.

The piece is in three short sections. The first alternates contrasting Russian folk melodies, one fanfare-like and the other pastoral. The second jerkily starts and stops in a rhythmic dance reminiscent of the ballets. The final section pays homage to Debussy in a solemn chorale. Throughout, Stravinsky uses two compositional devices that characterize his Russian period: juxtaposition and stratification. In juxtaposition, two completely contrasting ideas, often played by different groups of instruments, happen
in succession. In stratification, rather than place contrasting ideas next to each other, Stravinsky places one above the other so that they occur simultaneously. In both techniques, the two ideas are not only unrelated but uncommunicative, as if one idea is hardly aware of the other’s existence.

With these quick shifts of mood and the lack of tonal harmony, one might imagine how some of those in that first audience felt dismissive or confused. But what holds the piece together is tone color. The “symphonies” in the title do not refer to the 18th and 19th century genre of symphony, but rather to the ancient Greek meaning of the word: “sounding together.” Stravinsky explores the timbral possibilities of each instrument family, often juxtaposing one family with another. Ultimately, the piece shows how a diverse ensemble can sound together—beautifully.

Bassoonist Cornelia Sommer is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Juilliard.

Meet the Artists

William Short
Conductor

William Short was appointed principal bassoon of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 2012. He previously served in the same capacity with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra and has also performed with the Houston Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra. He serves on the faculties of Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music, and Temple University, and has presented classes at colleges and conservatories around the country and at the 2014 International Double Reed Society Conference. He has performed and taught at the Interlochen, Lake Champlain, Lake Tahoe, Mostly Mozart, Stellenbosch (South Africa), Strings, Twickenham, and Verbier Festivals, and in 2015 made his solo debut with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, performing David Ludwig’s Pictures from the Floating World. He has toured the U.S. with Curtis on Tour and has performed and taught in Belize, Cuba, Guatemala, and Nicaragua with the wind quintet Liberty Winds. His performances have been featured on American Public Media’s “Performance Today” and on WHYY’s “Onstage at Curtis.” As a composer, his works have been published by TrevCo-Varner Music. Committed to forging connections between audiences and performers, he has written articles for the MET Orchestra Musicians’ website. Short received his Bachelor of Music from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Daniel Matsukawa and Bernard Garfield, and his Master of Music from Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, where he studied with Benjamin Kamins. Additional major teachers have included Jeanine Attaway, Kristin Wolfe Jensen, and William Lewis.
Meet the Artists (continued)

Raymond Mase
Conductor

Chair of the Juilliard brass department since 1991, trumpeter Raymond Mase has enjoyed a diverse career as soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, and teacher. As a member of the American Brass Quintet (ABQ) from 1973 to 2013, Mase performed worldwide, premiered more than 100 new works for brass, and is heard on more than 35 of ABQ’s recordings. His ABQ editions of Renaissance music are published by Medici, Balquhidder, and Hickman Editions. As a soloist, Mase has appeared with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Boston Pops, Naumberg Orchestra, and Summit Brass, at the Bethlehem Bach and Aspen Music festivals, and in recitals with the trumpet and organ duo Toccatas & Flourishes. He premiered David Sampson’s trumpet concerto Triptych with the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall and recorded it for the Summit label. Mase can be heard on more than 135 recordings, including two solo CDs, Trumpet in Our Time and Trumpet Vocalise. After 32 years with the New York City Ballet Orchestra, Mase recently retired as the orchestra’s principal trumpeter. He has been a Juilliard faculty member since 1987 and artist-faculty of the Aspen Music Festival and School since 1973, and he has performed and recorded with the New York Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Orpheus, and Musica Sacra. In 2014 he was the recipient of the FONT (Festival of New Trumpet) award of recognition for his contributions to contemporary brass music and has served on the board of directors of Chamber Music America. Born in Meriden, Connecticut, Mase received his Bachelor of Music degree in 1973 from the New England Conservatory, where he was a student of Armando Ghitalia.
Juilliard Wind Orchestra

MENDELSSOHN Overture for Winds in C Major, Op. 24

Flute
Audrey Emata, Principal

Piccolo
Viola Chan

Oboe
Alexandra von der Embse, Principal
Victoria Chung

Clarinet
Bum Namkoong, Principal
Yingcun Jin

E-flat Clarinet
Keeheon Nam
Na Yoon Kim

Basset Horn
Philip Solomon
Raphael Balk Zimmerman

Bassoon
Soo Yeon Lee, Principal
Troy Baban

Contrabassoon
Thalia Navas

French Horn
Lauren Robinson, Principal
Alana Yee
Lee Cyphers
Jason Friedman

Trumpet
Michael Chen, Principal
Marshall Kearse

Trombone
Hanae Yoshida, Principal
George Foreman

Bass Trombone
Ehren L. Valmé

Tuba
Giovanni Maraboli

Percussion
Benjamin Cornavaca, Principal
Jake Borden
Simon Herron
Stella Perlic

EWAZEN Symphony in Brass

French Horn
Alana Yee, Principal
Lauren Robinson
Jason Friedman
Lee Cyphers

Trumpet
Clinton McLendon, Principal
Marshall Kearse
Michael Chen
Anthony Barrington

Trombone
Levi Boylan, Principal
Hanae Yoshida

Bass Trombone
Ehren L. Valmé

Euphonium
Griffin Cutaiar

Tuba
Giovanni Maraboli

Percussion
Omar El-Abidin, Principal
Benjamin Cornavaca
Juilliard Wind Orchestra

STRAVINSKY *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1947 revision)

Flute
Viola Chan, *Principal*
Ruitong Qin
Audrey Emata

Oboe
Victoria Chung, *Principal*
Mia Fasanello

English Horn
Alexandra von der Embse

Clarinet
Na Yoon Kim, *Principal*
Phillip Solomon
Raphael Balk Zimmerman

Bassoon
Thalia Navas, *Principal*
Troy Baban
Soo Yeon Lee

Contrabassoon
Soo Yeon Lee

French Horn
Lee Cyphers, *Principal*
Jason Friedman
Lauren Robinson
Alana Yee

Trumpet
Anthony Barrington, *Principal*
Michael Chen
Marshall Kearse

Trombone
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Bass Trombone
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Deandre Desir

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 9
7:30pm Alice Tully Hall
Juilliard Chamber Orchestra
William Socolof, Bass-Baritone
Nina Bernat, Double Bass
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 1 in C Major
MOZART Per questa bella mano, K. 612
STRAUSS Le bourgeois gentilhomme
Tickets $20

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
7:30pm Alice Tully Hall
Carlos Miguel Prieto, Conductor
Gabriela ORTIZ Téenek—Invenciones de Territorio
John HARBISON Viola Concerto
COPLAND Symphony No. 3
Tickets $30

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25
7:30pm Alice Tully Hall
Marin Alsop, Conductor
BARBER Toccata festiva
SHOSTAKOVICH Cello Concerto No. 2 in G Major
BRAHMS Symphony No. 2 in D Major
Tickets $30

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31
7:30pm Alice Tully Hall
Focus 2020 | Pioneering Trailblazers: Women Composers of the 20th Century
Anne Manson, Conductor
Samuel DeCaprio, Cello
Raphael Vogl, Organ
Betsy JOLAS A Little Summer Suite (New York premiere)
BACEWICZ Cello Concerto No. 2
SMYTH On the Cliffs of Cornwall (Prelude to Act II of The Wreckers)
Thea MUSGRAVE Rainbow
Sofia GUBAIDULINA The Rider on the White Horse (New York premiere)
FREE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20
7:30pm Alice Tully Hall
Juilliard Orchestra Composers Concert
Jeffrey Milarsky, Conductor
FREE

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