

PROGRAM NOTES

Blues for a Killed Kat Jack End, Arranged by Frederick Fennell

Frederick Fennell wrote the following concerning his edition of Blues For A Killed Kat:

Jack End was a rare man who had the patience and curiosity to follow his talents to the directions in which they led him. He was a total clarinet player, a champion sailor in the snipe class, a casual marksman, and a gifted music arranger. I met him when he was still in high school. Highly recommended by Eastman's clarinet teacher, Rufus Arey, he helped me fill out the section of the Eastman School Symphony Band of which he would become concert master when a regular student. Jack was at ease in all music but his special commitment was to jazz at which he became a walking and blowing encyclopedia. This had begun when he was very young and when he also began to collect the 10"/discs, 78 rpm, which became both his passion and his textbooks for the course in jazz studies which he tried to inaugurate at the Eastman School years in advance of any school anywhere; he also organized and led its first jazz band. When these two inroads probed no deeper than the outer rim of a very conservative institution his patience yielded to administrative resistance against jazz as a curricular development and he abandoned after what had been a very good fight. Some years later another Rochester jazz musician become Eastman student would pick-up on Jack's beginnings when Chuck Mangione sealed the positive presence of the subject in the Eastman curriculum.

By this time Jack had put the clarinet and tenor sax up on a very high shelf and had become a media person and a successful television producer at the console where his gifts at time, texture, technique, and counterpoint made that complex work as simple as a dixieland chorus. He had always been a club-date player frequently returning to the School at two o'clock in the morning to leave his instruments in his studio. It was on one of those early wintry mornings when Jack observed a cat that had lain dead for a few days to be still in the dimly lit gutter in front of Sibley Music Library.

Two-in-the-morning could be a pretty dead time on Swan Street those many years ago. That cat was pretty dead, too. When he dropped the instruments in his studio he sat at the piano to express his sadness. What else, but with a Blues. His band played it for years and so did those of us who gathered for a class reunion in 1960 when I asked him to score it for The Eastman Wind Ensemble. The Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra recorded it twenty-five years later in 1986 when Jack End died in his 67th year.

Blue Tango

Leroy Anderson

The music of Leroy Anderson is firmly entrenched in American popular culture. A composer of distinctive and delightful miniatures, his best-known works include *Sleigh Ride*, *The Syncopated Clock* and of course, *Blue Tango*. He wrote nearly all his pieces originally for orchestra, then transcribed most of them himself for band and often for other groups of instruments as well. Mitchell Parrish added lyrics to seven of the works after the pieces were written. Mr. Anderson is considered an American original and served as the chief arranger of the Boston Pops from 1931-1939. Born in 1908, he died in 1975.

Blue Tango is a novelty among Anderson's novelties: a simple, lovely tune with no gimmick. It uses the traditional Argentine tango rhythm but without the melodramatic flash of authentic tangos. As a popular song written specifically for a string orchestra, it was naturally picked up and covered by Mantovani, Kostelanetz, and all their counterparts. Anderson's own recording with a studio orchestra for Decca was a #1 hit in 1951.

Gilbert and Sullivan: Symphonic Suite

Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), Arranged by Ted Ricketts

Music from H.M.S. Pinafore, The Mikado, and The Pirates of Penzance

Masters of the operetta, Gilbert and Sullivan left the musical world a legacy of marvelously playful and tuneful songs. This entertaining medley includes: We Sail the Ocean **Blue** and (I'm Called) Little Buttercup from HMS Pinafore; Overture and Three Little Maids from Mikado and Poor Wand'ring One, I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General and With Cat-Like Tread from Pirates of Penzance.

With a Cat-Like Tread is also commonly known as "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here. I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General is what is known as the trademark "patter song" that the composers included in most of their operettas. These songs add comic relief by requiring the singer to utter a non-stop stream of rapid tongue-twisting lyrics at break-neck speed.

Pablo!

Richard Meyer

This colorful and highly original work depicts the various stages of creativity in the life of the world-renowned artist Pablo Picasso. The piece is divided into 5 distinct sections:

The Main Theme is based on the "Malaga" movement from Isaac Albeniz's masterwork Iberia (Book IV). Picasso was born in Malaga, a provincial town in Southern Spain, in 1881. (Isaac Albeniz's masterwork Iberia -(May 29, 1860 – May 18, 1909) was a Spanish pianist and composer best known for his piano works based on folk music. Iberia is a Suite for Piano with twelve pieces within 4 books. Book four contains "Malaga".) Variation I depicts Picasso's somber "**Blue** Period" which was started as a result of the suicide of his friend and fellow artist Carlos Casagemas's musical name (C-A-A-G-E-A) is heard throughout this haunting variation. Variation II represents Picasso's lighter "Rose Period". Paintings were much warmer and more cheerful during this time, most often depicting acrobats, harlequins and jugglers. Picasso and his friends attended the Cirque Medrano several times a week during this period. Variation III employs minimalist techniques to represent Picasso's highly innovative "Cubist" technique in which images were broken down into small fragments and then newly reorganized. Variation IV depicts Picasso's love of the bullfights. The virtuosic melody that opens this section is eventually combined with the original main theme (m.236) to bring the work to an exciting conclusion.

Duke Ellington in Concert

Arranged by Paul Murtha

*Take the A Train / Don't Get Around Much Anymore / Mood **Indigo***

Caravan / It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (April 29, 1899 – May 24, 1974) became one of the most influential artists in the history of recorded music, and is largely recognized as one of the greatest figures in the history of jazz, though his music stretched into various other genres, including blues, gospel, movie soundtracks, popular, and classical. His career spanned 50 years and included leading his orchestra, composing an inexhaustible songbook, scoring for movies, and world tours. Due to his inventive use of the orchestra, or big band, and thanks to his refined public manner and extraordinary charisma, he is generally considered to have elevated the perception of jazz to an artistic level on par with that of classical music. His reputation increased after his death, and he received a special award citation from the Pulitzer Prize Board in 1999.

Ellington called his music "American Music" rather than jazz, and liked to describe those who impressed him as "beyond category." These included many of the musicians who were members of his orchestra, some of whom are considered among the best in jazz in their own right, but it was Ellington who melded them into one of the most well-known jazz orchestral units in the history of jazz. He also recorded songs written by his bandsmen, such as Juan Tizol's "Caravan" and "Perdido. Several members of the orchestra remained there for several decades. After 1941, he frequently collaborated with composer-arranger-pianist Billy Strayhorn, whom he called his "writing and arranging companion. It was Strayhorn that wrote Take the A Train. Ellington recorded for many American record companies, and appeared in several films.

Ellington led his band from 1923 until his death in 1974. His son Mercer Ellington, who had already been handling all administrative aspects of his father's business for several decades, led the band until his own death from cancer in 1996. At that point, the band dissolved. Paul Ellington, Mercer's youngest son and executor of the Duke Ellington estate, kept "The Duke Ellington Orchestra." going from Mercer's death onwards.

Blue Shades

Frank Ticheli

Frank Ticheli, born in Monroe, LA, is currently Associate Professor of Music at the University of Southern California and Composer-in-Residence of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in Composition from Southern Methodist College and his Master and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Composition from the University of Michigan. He has composed many works for band, wind ensemble, orchestra, chamber ensembles, and the theatre, and has won a number of prestigious awards. The BGSB performed his work "Vesuvius" in Fall of 2009.

Blue Shades reflects Mr. Ticheli's love for the traditional jazz music that he heard so often while growing up near New Orleans. *Blue Shades* was his opportunity to express his own musical style in this medium. He provides the following description of the work:

As its title suggests, the work alludes to the Blues, and a jazz feeling is prevalent — however, it is not literally a Blues piece. There is not a single 12-bar blues progression to be found, and except for a few isolated sections, the eighth-note is not swung. The work, however, is heavily influenced by the Blues: "Blue notes" (flatted 3rds, 5ths, and 7ths) are used constantly; Blues harmonies, rhythms, and melodic idioms pervade the work; and many "shades of blue" are depicted, from bright blue, to dark, to dirty, to hot blue. At times, *Blue Shades* burlesques some of the clichés from the Big Band era, not as a mockery of those conventions, but as a tribute. A slow and quiet middle section recalls the atmosphere of a dark, smoky blues haunt.

The opening is highly reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto*. An extended clarinet solo played near the end recalls Benny Goodman's hot playing style, and ushers in a series of "wailing" brass chords recalling the train whistle effects commonly used during that era.

Missing Man

Jerker Johannsson

Complete with off-stage trumpeting, this quiet remembrance piece refers to the Air Force ceremony known by its jet formation fly-over. The Band and its audience was moved by this piece when we last performed it at 2009's Independence Day Concert. Tonight's performance of the work is dedicated to all who have been lost defending our country.

Rhapsody in Blue (1924)

George Gershwin

Arr. Tohru Takahashi

Two great Americans were born on February 12. Both were born on their respective frontiers. Both went on to worldwide recognition and acclaim.

Abraham Lincoln was born in a humble log cabin near Hardin, Kentucky in 1809. As the nation's Civil War President, his Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 declared all slaves of the breakaway South "free forever."

The *Rhapsody in Blue* premiered on February 12, 1924 in New York City's Aedean Hall. Written by the 25-year-old American musical genius, George Gershwin, the *Rhapsody* brought the freedom of jazz music to classical musicians and audiences.

Gershwin was also the piano soloist for his work. The Paul Whiteman Orchestra assisted at what was billed "An Experiment in Modern Music." The work itself is symphonic - not true jazz, with the exception of the blank pages of Whiteman's music score, marked simply, "wait for nod" after Gershwin's solo.

Although the next-day reviews were mixed, *Rhapsody in Blue* became an overwhelming popular success. It was performed live on radio, sold as a recording, and printed as sheet music.

If you are not yet familiar with this work, you could think of it as George Gershwin's musical portrait of New York City. Gershwin himself wrote that he filled the *Rhapsody* with the people in "the vivid panorama of American life."

The opening glissando of the clarinet may be the dawn's early light reaching the great skyline. The music then goes on to people getting up, and heading to work, trains rolling pedestrians on sidewalks, typewriters tapping, and elevators going up and down. After the workday, people return home to supper. The slow, soft section seems to sing, "Honey, I'm home."

As the daylight fades, the nightlights come on back downtown. The day and work seem to end in the rising of the great, blue-chord full moon.

While originally scored for Jazz Band, and more popularly known as an orchestral work, this arrangement by Toru Takahashi synthesizes the strengths of both mediums in the form of the Symphonic Band.

Our soloist tonight, Dr. Bill Crowle, is no stranger to this marvelous work, having performed it with the BGSB in both 2003 and Summer, 2005. Dr. Crowle has also performed the Grieg Piano Concerto with us, and His composition "Festival Overture" was dedicated to the Village of Buffalo Grove on its 50th Birthday and to the BGSB. That work was premiered at our Fall, 2008 Concert.

On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314

Johann Strauss

Arr. Erik G. W. Leidzen

The Blue Danube is the common English title of *An der schönen blauen Donau* op. 314 (*On the Beautiful Blue Danube*), a waltz by Johann Strauss II, composed in 1866. Originally performed 13 February 1867 at a concert of the *Wiener Männergesangsverein* (Vienna Men's Choral Association), it has been one of the most consistently popular pieces of music in the classical repertoire. Its initial performance was only a mild success, however, and Strauss is reputed to have said "The devil take the waltz, my only regret is for the coda—I wish that had been a success!"

After the original music was written, words were added by the Choral Association's poet, Joseph Weyl. Strauss later added more music, and Weyl needed to change some of the words. Strauss adapted it into a purely orchestral version for the World's Fair in Paris that same year, and it became a great

success in this form. The instrumental version is by far the most commonly performed today. An alternate text by Franz von Gernerth, *Donau so blau* (*Danube so blue*), is also used on occasion.

The sentimental Viennese connotations of the piece have made it into a sort of unofficial Austrian national anthem. It is a traditional encore piece at the annual Vienna New Year's Concert. The first few bars are also the interval signal of Österreich Rundfunk's overseas programs. On New Year's Eve the waltz is traditionally broadcast by all public-law television and radio stations exactly at midnight.

When Strauss's step-daughter, Alice von Meyszner-Strauss, asked the composer Johannes Brahms to sign her autograph-fan, he wrote down the first bars of *The Blue Danube*, but adding "Leider nicht von Johannes Brahms" ("Alas! not by Johannes Brahms").

The Blue Danube was ironically used in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, prominently accompanying a scene in which a Pan Am space plane is seen docking with a space station, as well as its trip to Clavius Base. It was also used in the film's closing credits.

Who's Who in Navy Blue

John Philip Sousa

Arr. Frank Byrne

Sousa composed *Who's Who in Navy Blue* as the result of a request from Midshipman W.A. Ingram, President of the Class of 1920 at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. It had become a custom for each graduating class to have its own "new" song or march performed at graduation. Since Sousa had served in the Navy in World War I, this was a logical request. Sousa had a difficult time selecting a title for his march -- eventually deciding on *Who's Who in Navy Blue* and dedicating the march to Tecumseh, the famous Native American statue that stands outside Bancroft Hall at the Academy.

Air Force Song "Into the Wild Blue Yonder"

Capt. Robert M. Crawford

"The U.S. Air Force" is the official song of the United States Air Force. It is known informally as "The Air Force Song," and is often referred to informally as "Into the Wild Blue Yonder", "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder," or simply "Wild Blue Yonder."

Originally, the song was known as the 'Army Air Corps Song.' Captain Robert MacArthur Crawford wrote the lyrics and music during 1939. During 1947, the words "U.S. Air Force" in the title and lyrics replaced the original "Army Air Corps". On September 27, 1979, General Lew Allen, Jr., Chief of Staff of the Air Force, adopted it as the official song for the service.

In 1937, Assistant Chief of the Air Corps Brig. Gen. Hap Arnold persuaded the Chief of the Air Corps, Maj. Gen. Oscar Westover, that airmen needed a song reflecting their unique identity, and proposed a song competition with a prize to the winner. However, the Air Corps did not control its budget, and could not give a prize. *Liberty* magazine stepped in, offering a prize of \$1,000 to the winner.

Around 757 compositions were entered, and evaluated by a volunteer committee chaired by Mildred Yount, the wife of a senior Air Corps officer, and featuring several distinguished musicians. The committee had until July 1939 to make a final choice. However, word eventually spread that the committee did not find any songs that satisfied them, despite the great number of entries. Arnold, who assumed command of the Air Corps in 1938 after Westover was killed in a plane crash, solicited direct inquiries from contestants, including Irving Berlin, but not even Berlin's creations proved satisfactory. Just before the deadline, Crawford entered his song, which proved to be a unanimous winner.

Not everyone was fond of the song. During a dinner of September 1939, committee chair Yount played a recording of the song for Charles Lindbergh and asked his opinion of the song. He responded politely to Yount, but years later remarked in a diary, "I think it is mediocre at best. Neither the music nor the words appealed to me." Arnold did not share Lindbergh's opinion: he sought to fund publication of band

and ensemble arrangements of the song for nationwide distribution. However, the Air Corps did not have enough money to publicize the song, so Crawford arranged a transfer of the song's copyright to New York music publisher Carl Fischer Inc., including a perpetual performance release in favor of the U.S. Air Force.

~~~ **Howard M. Green**