

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents

Musical Journeys

Symphony Orchestra

Foster Beyers, *conductor*
Kimberly Souther, *DMA conductor*
Sandeep Das, *tabla*

Tuesday, October 3, 2023
8 pm
Concert Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission.

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Program

Through the Bay

Joe Jaxson
(b. 2000)

World Premiere Performance

Tabla Concerto

Dinuk Wijeratne
(b. 1978)

Canons, Circles

Folk song: 'White in the moon the long road lies (that leads me from my love)'

Garland of Gems

Sandeep Das, *tabla*

Kimberly Souther, *DMA conductor*

Intermission

Symphony No. 8, Op. 88

Antonín Dvorak
(1841-1904)

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegretto grazioso – Molto vivace
- IV. Allegro ma non troppo

Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Foster Beyers, *conductor*
Daniel Esperante, *DMA graduate assistant*

Violin

Briana Clark
Aiden Coleman
Jonathan Colmenares
Marley Fritz
Alex Goodell
Nathaniel Gordy
Aiden Hall
Addie King
Zoe Lovelace
Johnny Park
Anthony Parone
Jonathan Petrini
Zike Qi
Sierra Rickard
Patrick Shaughnessy*
Rachel Tan

Viola

Elliot Drew
Madeleine Gabalski
Katie Hayes
Julia Johnson
Micah Lee
Ana Mooney
Sunny Robertello
Emma Thomas

Cello

Chris Hall
Julia King
Vikram Lothe
John Meshreky
Danny Postlethwait
Jessi Sfarnas

Bass

Tina Battaglia
Gabriella Biberich
Jack Choi
Michael Dean
John Foley
Ruben Garcia
James Adkison-Piccirello
Frankie Sellars

Flute

Daniel Esperante
Jacob Knick
Joshua Lockhart

Oboe

Will Slopnick
Andrew Welling

Clarinet

Geneva Maldonado
Gregorio Paone

Bassoon

David Kang
Tony Russo

Horn

Evan Hendershot
Michael Parlier
Gray Smiley
Benjamin Wagner

Trumpet

Logan Hayungs
Max Parrish
Theo Young

Trombone

Nikhil Argade
William Commins
Andrew Ribo

Tuba

Logan Davis

Keyboard

Sarah Mason

Timpani

Shelby Shelton

Percussion

Blaze Benavides
Grayson Creekmore

**Concertmaster*

Program Notes

Through the Bay

"Through the Bay" is inspired by the first time I rode a ferry boat in Seattle (which was the summer of 2022, when this consortium was initiated later that Fall) The experience was significant to me because growing up in a rather rural city in Virginia, added by the fact that I rarely traveled, I have been a late bloomer to a lot of things others experienced way sooner—and that is perfectly okay! Nowadays, I have the motive, means, and the growing opportunities to catch up on a lot of things some or most of my peers have likely done in their childhood only now I am finally getting to it as a young adult. And of course, when we experience something new, something thrilling, our imagination can often exaggerate the emotions we feel, making moments like these all the more memorable whether positive or negative.

For me, this ferry boat ride in the wide Elliot Bay in Puget Sound, surrounded by trees and commercial boats brought to me feelings of excitement, adventure, cold (it was surprisingly cold out there in May), and the lasting wonder of "What else is out there?" When you experience something new, something you have always been wanting to witness, participate, to exist in.

-Program note by composer

Tabla Concerto

While the origins of the Tabla are somewhat obscure, it is evident that this 'king' of Indian percussion instruments has achieved global popularity for the richness of its timbre, and for the virtuosity of a rhythmically complex repertoire that cannot be separated from the instrument itself. In writing a large-scale work for Tabla and Symphony Orchestra, it is my hope to allow each entity to preserve its own aesthetic. Perhaps, at the same time, the stage will be set for some new discoveries.

While steeped in tradition, the Tabla lends itself heartily to innovation, and has shown its cultural versatility as an increasingly sought-after instrument in contemporary Western contexts such as Pop, Film Music, and World Music Fusion. This notion led me to conceive of an opening movement that would do the not-so-obvious by placing the Tabla first in a decidedly non-Indian context. Here, initiated by a quasi-Baroque canon in four parts, the music quickly turns into an evocation of one my favourite genres of electronic music: 'Drum-&-Bass', characterised by rapid 'breakbeat' rhythms in the percussion. Of course, there are some North- Indian Classical musical elements present. The whole makes for a rather bizarre stew that reflects globalisation, for better or worse!

A brief second movement (whose title comes from A. E. Housman) is a short respite from the energy of the outer movements, and offers a perspective of the Tabla as accompanist in the lyrical world of Indian folk-song. Set in 'dheepchandhi', a rhythmic cycle of 14 beats, the gently lilting gait of the Tabla rhythm supports various melodic fragments that come together to form an ephemeral love- song.

Program Notes *continued*

Typically, a Tabla player concluding a solo recital would do so by presenting a sequence of short, fixed (non-improvised) compositions from his/her repertoire. Each mini-composition, multi-faceted as a little gem, would often be presented first in the form of a vocal recitation. The traditional accompaniment would consist of a drone as well as a looping melody outlining the time cycle - a 'nagma' - against which the soloist would weave rhythmically intricate patterns of tension and release. I wanted to offer my own take on a such a recital finale, with the caveat that the orchestra is no bystander. In this movement, it is spurred on by the soloist to share in some of the rhythmic complexity. The whole movement is set in 'teentaal', or 16-beat cycle, and in another departure from the traditional norm, my nagma kaleidoscopically changes colour from start to finish.

-Program note by composer

Symphony No. 8, Op. 88

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) was the first bohemian composer to attain global recognition. He wrote music for almost all major genres, which made him one of the greatest composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He used many characteristics of the music from his home of Bohemia, now Czech Republic, as well as embraced his influence of Brahms and Beethoven. Dvořák's works are considered classics in all genres, including his *Symphony No. 8 in G Major*.

Dvořák's *Symphony No. 8 in G Major* (1889) was originally published as Symphony No. 4 at the time of his election to the Bohemian Academy of Science, Literature and Arts. In contrast to the composer and the time period, this symphony is cheery and optimistic in nature. Dvořák very much drew inspiration from the Bohemian folk music that he loved. The work showcases a variety of themes throughout the four movements, making the structure more unusual compared to others Dvořák composed. The use of the piccolo and English horn is also unusual for this symphony in that they are only played for a very brief time.

The first movement opens up with a lyrical theme in G minor before the introduction of the "bird call" by the flute is heard and the symphony's true key of G major is reached. The music develops in a storm-like sense before ending with an energetic coda. The second movement begins with the main theme in the strings, followed by the different sections of the orchestra. The movement is essentially a long development of the main theme, inspired by landscapes and a summer's day interrupted by a thunderstorm. The third movement is a melancholy waltz, acting more as an intermezzo rather than a minuet or scherzo. The characteristics of this movement represent Dvořák's interpretation of a Bohemian folk dance. The symphony ends with a "complex theme and variations." The music calls to dance, switching between major and minor throughout, but still maintaining a cheery and optimistic mood.

-Program note by Geneva Maldonado (Clarinet)

Guest Artist Biography

Hailed as a “creator of myths with Houdini-like skills” (The Sydney Morning Herald, Australia), **Sandeep Das** is one of the leading Indian Tabla virtuosos in the world today. A disciple of the legendary Pt. Kishan Maharaj ji of the Banaras Gharana, he debuted at the age of 17 with renowned Sitar maestro Pt. Ravi Shankar ji and went on to lead a prolific international career that now spans more than three decades. He has collaborated with top musicians and ensembles from across the globe such as Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, with whom he has performed for the past 21 years, as well as Paquito D’Rivera, Bobby McFarin, and iconic orchestras like the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, and Chicago Symphony, among others.

A Grammy winning-musician and Guggenheim Fellow, Das’ groundbreaking new music projects sit at the crucible of ancient tradition and modern innovation, enchanting audiences worldwide with “flawless playing” (Songlines Magazine, U.K.) and a “roadmap for irresistible aural adventures” (Downbeat Magazine, USA). His original compositions have been performed in over 50 countries at venues like China’s Forbidden City Concert Hall, Australia’s Sydney Opera House, and the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, California. Transcending Borders One Note at a Time, his most recent project, was launched in 2020 to widespread international acclaim, and seeks to harness the power of music to create positive social change.

Kimberly Souther currently serves as Associate Visiting Professor of Orchestras at Clemson University, where she conducts the Clemson University Symphony Orchestra, Clemson University String Orchestra, and Clemson Musical Orchestra. She is in the final stages of completion for her DMA in Orchestral Conducting at James Madison University and holds a Masters in Music Education from Shenandoah Conservatory and Bachelor of Music from James Madison University. Former conducting positions include directing the Shenandoah Valley Youth Concert Orchestra and Nelson County Community Orchestra as well as numerous guest conducting opportunities including Sinfonietta Memphis, Wintergreen Music Festival, Four County Players, Peninsula Players and the Kalamata Music Festival. Souther also served as Executive Director of Shenandoah Valley Preparatory Music, where she and a staff of over 30 private teachers and musicians served over 600 students in the Shenandoah Valley. Souther studied orchestra and opera conducting techniques with Foster Beyers, Larry Rachleff, Donald Schleicher, Carl St. Claire, Michelle Merrill, Carl Topilow, Chris Zimmerman, Tom Newall, and Joshua Weilerstein. Her involvement as a cellist with the Silk Road Ensemble and its Global Musician Workshop informs her pursuit of eclectic programming and creative audience engagement. Her current research The Art of Sustaining Orchestras through Creative Audience Engagement engages the need for connection and accessibility for all symphony orchestra audiences.

JMU School of Music Statement of Community & Belonging

Difference in identity enriches our community, fosters artistic and intellectual growth, and is vital to creating thriving venues for expression in a global world. In addition to welcoming all individuals and perspectives regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socio-economic status, or citizenship status, we wish to make the following acknowledgements and affirmations, adapted from Americans for the Arts:

- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result. We resolve to educate ourselves, keep vigilant watch, and act to bring an end to systemic oppression.
- Cultural equity—which embodies values, practices, and policies that ensure all people have access to, and are represented in, the arts—is critical to the sustained engagement of music in society.
- Acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.
- The prominent presence of musicians in society can challenge inequities and encourage alternatives.



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