

March 4, 2018  
San Antonio, TX

### THE AMERICAN BRASS QUINTET

Kevin Cobb, trumpet  
Louis Hanzlik, trumpet  
Eric Reed, horn  
Michael Powell, trombone  
John D. Rojak, bass trombone

### PROGRAM

#### Consort Music of Elizabethan and Jacobean England

Arise, awake  
Lachrimae Antiquae (Pavan)  
I Go Before, My Darling  
Though Philomela Lost Her Love  
Oft Have I Vow'd  
Canzon

edited by Louis Hanzlik  
Thomas Morley (1557-1603)  
John Dowland (1563-1626)  
Thomas Morley  
Thomas Morley  
John Wilbye (1574-1638)  
William Brade (1560-1630)

#### Suite from 19th Century Russia

Kriegslied  
Scherzo  
Lied  
Divertissement  
Morgengruss

(Edited by Kevin Cobb)  
Ludwig Maurer (1789-1878)  
Antoine Simon (1850-1916)  
Ludwig Maurer  
Antoine Simon  
Ludwig Maurer

#### Common Heroes, Uncommon Land

City Hero  
Hero of the Land  
Joy  
Hold Fast to Dreams  
Epilogue

Philip Lasser (b. 1963)

### INTERMISSION

#### The river remembers (World Premier) Special Commission for the San Antonio Tricentennial

Las Voces de la Gente  
the ancestors, the trees  
the river that remembers

James Scott Balentine

#### Canons of the 16th Century

Vive le roy  
Pleni sunt caeli  
J'ay pris amours  
Pleni sunt caeli; Agnus Dei

(Edited by Raymond Mase)  
Josquin des Prés (1440-1521)  
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594)  
Johannes Martini (c. 1440-1497)  
Josquin; Palestrina

#### Frost Fire

Bright and Fast  
Gentle and Mysterious  
Tense and Dramatic

Eric Ewazen  
(b. 1954)

The American Brass Quintet is represented by Kirshbaum Associates, New York.

## Program Notes

### **Elizabethan and Jacobean Consort Music** (edited by Louis Hanzlik)

The reigns of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and King James I (1603-1625) occurred at the height of the English Renaissance. During their reigns music, and arguably literature, became the defining artistic forms of the English Renaissance, due certainly in part to the value both monarchs placed on the inclusion of these art forms in their personal lives and their courts.

Queen Elizabeth was a music enthusiast whose love for the performance and practice of music (as well as a personal decree that all people of England embrace the things she most enjoyed) credits her with its rise as a popular art form during her reign. Elizabeth herself was a lutenist, and in turn expected all noblemen of English society to also take up the instrument. She also required that all young noblewomen be at the ready to take “their proper place in a vocal or instrumental ensemble” otherwise become “the laughing-stock of society.” Elizabeth employed dozens of musicians to accommodate music in her court, and her royal household was always bubbling with secular instrumental and vocal music intended not only for listening, but also dancing. Music of the Jacobean era continued to blossom during the monarchy of James I, but as a proclaimed poet himself, the king’s involvement with translating the bible to English (e.g., the King James Bible) and other publications proved he had a more vested interest in the literary arts.

Vocal music in the English courts was inspired largely by the rise in popularity of the Italian madrigalists of the time (numerous Italians were imported to England and employed by Elizabeth) and as a result, a relatively short lived but prolific English Madrigal School was born. This movement was led most notably by Thomas Morley whose madrigal for five voices “Arise, awake” from the Triumphs of Oriana (1601) and “I go before, my darling” and “Though Philomela lost her love” (two highly entertaining canzonets for two and three voices) are represented in this suite. Also presented here is “Oft have I vow’d” a five part madrigal for five voices, composed by John Wilbye during the Jacobean era. The influence of Italian madrigalists use of chromaticism in their works is uniquely evident in Wilbye’s composition.

With the development of the printing press (and Elizabeth’s regular habit of dancing as her preferred method of exercise) a growing number of amateur musicians made use of newly available sheet music and instrumental ensembles flourished. These “consorts” some mixed (or “broken”) and some made up of “like” instruments (such as a family of viols) performed music composed for instruments as well as voices, such as the popular madrigals of the time. Works in this suite representing popular instrumental music of the day include two popular dance forms (the pavan and galliard) on a theme by John Dowland, and an example of another strictly instrumental form, the canzona, by William Brade.

Note by Louis Hanzlik

### **SUITE FROM 19TH CENTURY RUSSIA** (ed. Kevin Cobb)

It is well known that the writing for chamber brass during the Romantic period in music was relatively sparse due to a variety of factors, most notably the late development of the chromatic valve. However, the Russian presence in brass chamber music was always important, culminating in the writing of the quintets by Viktor Ewald and the sextet by Oskar Böhme. Despite these wonderful works, brass music incredibly had little attention paid to it again until after the Second World War when the influx of military brass musicians back into civil life precipitated the formation of chamber groups.

One of the major centers of musical influence of the 19th Century was St. Petersburg and it is from here that we draw inspiration for this collection. Many notable composers of the day were drawn to this vibrant city, among them Ludwig Maurer, one of the two composers featured in our Suite. Maurer was a violinist who split his career between his native Germany and St. Petersburg, and his writing brings a glimpse of traditional string chamber music to brass.

The other composer is another European émigré, Anton Simon, who left his native Paris at the age of 21 to reside in Moscow until his death in 1916. Like Maurer, Simon - a pianist - approached brass writing with more of the traditionally used songful string writing, making these two composers a perfect stylistic compliment to one another. Of particular note, to end the suite is the seldom played “Morgengruss”, or morning greeting. Beautifully lyric, this is a wonderful example of what is possible with brass, both then and now.

Note by Kevin Cobb

### **PHILIP LASSER: Common Heroes, Uncommon Land**

Philip Lasser is an American composer with French musical roots. Trained from an early age at Nadia Boulanger’s Ecole d’Arts Americaines in Fontainebleau, France, he has created a unique sound world that blends together the harmonies of French Impressionist sonorities and the dynamic rhythms and characteristics of American music. Following his studies at Harvard College, Lasser moved to Paris to work with Boulanger’s closest colleague and disciple, the Catalan composer, Narcis Bonet and continue his piano studies with Gaby Casadesus. His music has entered the repertoire in all genres with regular performances and broadcasts by artists including Frank Almond, Zuill Bailey, Steven Blier, Sasha Cooke, Natalie Dessay, Simone Dinnerstein, Elizabeth Futral, Margo Garrett, Jimmy Lin,

Susanna Phillips, Liv Redpath and Brian Zeger and performances by the Atlanta Symphony, Berlin and Leipzig Radio Orchestras, and Juilliard415. Lasser received his BA *summa cum laude* from Harvard College, his MA from Columbia University, and his DMA from Juilliard where he studied with David Diamond. He has been on the faculty at Juilliard since 1996 and is also director for the EAMA—Nadia Boulanger Institute in Paris. Lasser is author of *The Spiraling Tapestry*, a seminal treatise on contrapuntal analysis exploring the musical universe from Bach to Debussy, and his works can be heard on the Sony, Decca, and Delos labels. ([philiplasser.com](http://philiplasser.com)) *Common Heroes, Uncommon Land* was commissioned by The Juilliard School for the American Brass Quintet in honor of the ensemble's 30th anniversary. Philip Lasser has written the following about the work:

*Common Heroes, Uncommon Land* speaks of the glory of the everyday. It celebrates the human spirit in its daily routine and uncrushable work ethic. Based on five short poems by various poets, each movement explores a particular facet of the American experience. The first movement describes the urban heroes in their dogged morning trek towards work and sustenance. The second honors the farmers in their rural struggle with the land. The third and fourth movements celebrate our common quest for joy and the noble act of holding fast to dreams. The last movement serves as an epilogue to the work offering an ode to the everyday heroes and heroines of our land as they create the future.

#### **JAMES SCOTT BALENTINE: the river remembers**

*the river remembers* was commissioned by the San Antonio Chamber Music Society for the American Brass Quintet as a fanfare in celebration of the San Antonio Tricentennial, for a performance on March 4, 2018. The piece was inspired by the poem *This River Here* by Carmen Tafolla, San Antonio's first Poet Laureate. The piece was composed as two fanfares with a short interlude between them as a memorial to the ancestors of the many peoples that comprise the rich cultural heritage of San Antonio. Thank you to Carmen for permission to use the opening preface of her poem.

*Listen to the voices in this breeze,  
your ancestors, the trees,  
the river that remembers...*  
- Carmen Tafolla

Composer, arranger, and performer, Balentine has had music commissioned and performed by the San Antonio Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Cactus Pear Music Festival, and many soloists and ensembles across the United States and Europe, including Belgium, France, Sweden, and the UK. He has received awards, grants and commissions from the Artist Foundation of San Antonio, the American Music Center, the Barlow Endowment, Krost Symposium, and ASCAP. His music is recorded on the Albany and Navona record labels, and published by Southern Music (Hal Leonard), Cimarron Music, and Guildhian Music. Dr. Balentine is Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where he taught courses in music theory and analysis, composition, jazz studies and music business.

#### **CANONS OF THE 16TH CENTURY (ed. Ray Mase)**

By definition, the canon is the strictest form of musical imitation - a polyphonic composition in which all the parts have the same melody throughout, but start at different points. Both written and improvised canons existed as early as the 14th century, but in the mid-15th century, important Franco-Flemish composers - like Ockegem, Isaac, and Josquin des Prés adopted the canon in both sacred and secular music. This 15th century tradition of canonic writing culminated in the 16th century with the works of the great choral composer Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. Palestrina's works have long served as the model of the discipline of counterpoint, but by 1600 the canon had become an old form of polyphony.

Josquin des Prés was the most illustrious composer of his day, and highly respected by his contemporaries. In *Vive le roy*, likely written for King Louis XII of France, he uses a three-part canon to accompany the cantus firmus. Martini's setting of the popular *J'ay pris amours* juxtaposes the canonic parts so closely together, that at times they seem in danger of becoming unison. But while these two secular pieces show canonic techniques in the most obvious way, it is in masses of the period, like those of Palestrina, where canons are used in the most expressive and beautiful way. Both the Josquin and Palestrina settings of *Pleni sunt caeli* are canons at the interval of the major second that mask their strict imitation and create unusual harmonies. *Agnus Dei*, from Palestrina's *Missa ad fugum* (a mass entirely composed of canons) is a beautifully developed double canon that supports the notion that the perfect canon, like the perfect crime, must not be suspected, much less detected.

(Note by Raymond Mase)

## **ERIC EWAZEN: Frost Fire**

Frost Fire was gratefully dedicated to the American Brass Quintet in honor of their 30th anniversary. Over these past nineteen<sup>1</sup> years, it has been performed worldwide and has been recorded on the Well-Tempered label. It was commissioned by them in 1989 with support from the Jerome Foundation. The work, based on traditional musical forms and models, is in three movements.

The first movement, marked Bright and Fast, is a joyous celebration of sonorous chords, playful motives, and rhythmic gestures. It is in a strict sonata-allegro form with a clearly defined and classically proportioned exposition-development-recapitulation framed by complimentary introduction and coda sections.

The second movement, marked Gentle and Mysterious, has a waltz-like feel to it. In a ternary (A-B-A) form, the outer sections consist of ribbons of melodies being gently passed from instrument to instrument. The middle section is a stately fugue that builds in intensity, volume and rich-sounding resonance.

The final movement, Tense and Dramatic, brings back material from the first movement, but sets it in a much more turbulent and frenetic environment. Although this movement is based on the skeletal outlines of a sonata-allegro form, it is much freer and more erratic, with shifting meters and contrasting, interpolated passages, ultimately leading the way to a heroic and dynamic conclusion.

Note by the composer

Eric Ewazen (b. 1954, Cleveland), studied under Samuel Adler, Milton Babbitt, Gunther Schuller, and Joseph Schwantner at the Eastman School and The Juilliard School (where he received numerous composition awards, prizes, and fellowships). His works have been performed by numerous ensembles and orchestras in the U.S., overseas, and at festivals such as Woodstock, Tanglewood, Aspen, Caramoor, Tidewater, and the Music Academy of the West, among others. Mr. Ewazen's music is published by Theodore Presser, Brass Ring Editions, Triplo Press, Encore Music, Southern Music Company, Boosey & Hawkes, Seesaw, and Eric Ewazen Publishing.

He has been lecturer for the New York Philharmonic's Musical Encounters Series, Vice-President of the League of Composers--International Society of Contemporary Music, and Composer-In-Residence with the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New York City. Eric Ewazen has been a faculty member at Juilliard since 1980.