



College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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SYMPHONY BAND

Conductor

David Thornton

Guest Conductors

Benjamin Horne

E. Yuji Jones

Guest Composer

Steven Bryant

Tuesday, November 26, 2024 | 7:30 PM

Cobb Great Hall

Wharton Center for Performing Arts

PROGRAM

“Transformations”

William Schuman
(1910-1992)

George Washington Bridge (1950)

E. Yuji Jones, *conductor*

John Barnes Chance
(1932-1972)

Elegy (1972)

Benjamin Horne, *conductor*

John Philip Sousa
(b. 1854-1932)

The Gallant Seventh (1922)

Steven Bryant
(b. 1972)

Ecstatic Waters (2008)

- I. Ceremony of Innocence
- II. Augurs
- III. The Generous Wrath of Simple Men
- IV. The Loving Machinery of Justice
- V. Spiritus Mundi (epilogue)

GUEST COMPOSER

Steven Bryant

Steven Bryant's music is chiseled in its structure and intent, fusing lyricism, dissonance, silence, technology, and humor into lean, skillfully-crafted works that enthrall listeners and performers alike. His seminal work *Ecstatic Waters*, for wind ensemble and electronics, has become one of the most performed works of its kind in the world, receiving over 250 performances in its first five seasons. In 2015, the orchestral version was premiered by the Minnesota Orchestra to unanimous, rapturous acclaim. The son of a professional trumpeter and music educator, he strongly values music education, and his creative output includes a number of works for young and developing musicians.



John Corigliano states Bryant's "compositional virtuosity is evident in every bar" of his 34' *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*. Bryant's first orchestral work, *Loose Id for Orchestra*, hailed by composer Samuel Adler as "orchestrated like a virtuoso," was premiered by The Juilliard Symphony and is featured on a CD release by the Bowling Green Philharmonia on Albany Records. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra commissioned "Zeal" *Alchemy in Silent Spaces*, commissioned by James DePreist and The Juilliard School, was premiered by the Juilliard Orchestra in May 2006. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW series featured his brass quintet, *Loose Id*, conducted by Cliff Colnot, on its 2012-13 concert series.

His evening-length work for the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, *The Treachery of Sounds*, based on several images of René Magritte, uses a live application of binaural technology by placing every member of the audience in headphones to create an immersive experience that defies the listener's sense of reality. Other recent commissions include *Zeal* for Leonard Slatkin and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, a large-scale intermedia project for Arizona State University, the *Concerto for Trombone* for Joseph Alessi and the Dallas Winds, as well as works for the Gaudete Brass Quintet (Chicago), cellist Caroline Stinson (Lark Quartet), pianist Pamela Mia Paul, the Amherst Saxophone Quartet (funded by the American Composers Jerome Composers Commissioning Program), the University of Texas - Austin Wind Ensemble, the US Air Force Band of Mid-America, the Japanese Wind Ensemble Conductors Conference, and the Calgary Stampede Band, as well as many others.

Steven was Distinguished Visiting Professor of Composition at the University of North Carolina Greensboro for the 2014-2015 academic year. Steven studied composition with John Corigliano at The Juilliard School, Cindy McTee at the University of North Texas, and Francis McBeth at Ouachita University, trained for one summer in the mid-1980s as a break-dancer (i.e. was forced into lessons by his mother), was the 1987 radio-controlled car racing Arkansas state champion, has a Bacon Number of 1, and has played saxophone with Branford Marsalis on *Sleigh Ride*. He resides in Durham, NC with his wife, conductor Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant (Duke University).

NOTES

George Washington Bridge | William Schuman

There are few days in the year when I do not see George Washington Bridge. I pass it on my way to work as I drive along the Henry Hudson Parkway on the New York shore. Ever since my student days when I watched the progress of its construction, this bridge has had for me an almost human personality, and this personality is astonishingly varied, assuming different moods depending on the time of day or night, the weather, the traffic and, of course, my own mood as I pass by.

I have walked across it late at night when it was shrouded in fog, and during the brilliant sunshine hours of midday. I have driven over it countless times and passed under it on boats. Coming to New York City by air, sometimes I have been lucky enough to fly right over it. It is difficult to imagine a more gracious welcome or dramatic entry to the great metropolis.

- Program note by composer

Elegy | John Barnes Chance

John Barnes Chance was a gifted composer, teacher, and administrator whose tragic death at the age of 39 is still mourned by all who knew him or his music. His works for band, including the 1966 ABA Ostwald competition winner, *Variations on a Korean Folk Song*, remain among the most popular pieces in the international repertoire.

Elegy was a reworking of *Blessed Are They That Mourn*, a composition for strings, horn, bass drum, and chorus, written while Chance was in Greensboro on the Ford Foundation grant. *Elegy* was dedicated to and premiered by Bruce Burritt and the West Genessee Senior High School Band of Greensboro, North Carolina.

- Program note by Norman Wilson

The Gallant Seventh | John Philip Sousa

It is amazing that this march, regarded as one of Sousa's finest and certainly one of his most vigorous, was composed while he was recuperating from a broken neck. The march takes its title from the 7th Regiment, 107th Infantry, of the New York National Guard, whose history may be traced back to the Civil War. The conductor of the famous 7th Regiment Band was Major Francis Sutherland, a former Sousa Band cornetist.

Upon America's entry into World War I, Sutherland left his position with Sousa to enlist in the army; he was made a bandmaster in the U.S. Field Artillery. Several other Sousa men then secured their release to enlist, some for service with Sutherland's band.

Sutherland did not return to the Sousa Band at the war's end; he accepted the position of bandmaster of the 7th Regiment. The regiment's commanding officer, Colonel Wade H. Hayes, made a formal request of Sousa for a march. Sousa obliged, paying tribute to the organizational ability and professional standing of one of his band's alumni. For the official send-off of the new march at the New York Hippodrome on November 5, 1922, Sutherland's 7th Regiment Band augmented the Sousa Band on stage.

Although no less than seven other composers had also written marches for this regiment, Sousa's was the only one to gain wide acceptance, and Sousa was named honorary bandmaster of the regiment. Many years later, Sutherland repaid his debt to Sousa in an appropriate way. He was one of eight founders of the living Sousa memorial known as the Sousa Band Fraternal Society.

- Program note by Paul E. Bierly

Ecstatic Waters | Steven Bryant

Ecstatic Waters is music of dialectical tension – a juxtaposition of contradictory or opposing musical and extra-musical elements and an attempt to resolve them. The five connected movements hint at a narrative that touches upon naiveté, divination, fanaticism, post-human possibilities, anarchy, order, and the Jungian collective unconscious. Or, as I have described it more colloquially: W.B. Yeats meets Ray Kurzweil in the Matrix.

The overall title, as well as “Ceremony of Innocence” and “Spiritus Mundi” are taken from poetry of Yeats (“News for the Delphic Oracle,” and “The Second Coming”), and his personal, idiosyncratic mythology and symbolism of spiraling chaos and looming apocalypse figured prominently in the genesis of the work. Yet in a nod to the piece’s structural reality – as a hybrid of electronics and living players – Ecstatic Waters also references the confrontation of unruly humanity with the order of the machine, as well as the potential of a post-human synthesis, in ways inspired by Kurzweil.

The first movement, Ceremony of Innocence, begins as a pure expression of exuberant joy in unapologetic Bb Major in the Celesta and Vibraphone. The movement grows in momentum, becoming perhaps too exuberant – the initial simplicity evolves into a full-throated brashness bordering on dangerous arrogance and naiveté, though it retreats from the brink and ends by returning to the opening innocence.

In Mvt. II, Augurs, the unsustainable nature of the previous Ceremony becomes apparent, as the relentless tonic of Bb in the crystal water glasses slowly diffuses into a microtonal cluster, aided and abetted by the trumpets. Chorale-like fragments appear, foretelling the wrathful self-righteousness of Mvt. III. The movement grows inexorably, spiraling wider and wider, like Yeat’s gyre, until “the center cannot hold,” and it erupts with supreme force into The Generous Wrath of Simple Men.

Mvt. III is deceptive, musically contradicting what one might expect of its title. While it erupts at the outset with overwhelming wrath, it quickly collapses into a relentless rhythm of simmering 16th notes. Lyric lines and pyramids unfold around this, interrupted briefly by the forceful anger of a chorale, almost as if trying to drown out and deny anything but its own existence. A moment of delicate lucidity arrives amidst this back-and-forth struggle, but the chorale ultimately dominates, subsuming everything, spiraling out of control, and exploding.

The Loving Machinery of Justice brings machine-like clarity and judgment. Subtle, internal gyrations between atonality and tonality underpin the dialogue between lyric melody (solo Clarinet and Oboe) and mechanized accompaniment (Bassoons). An emphatic resolution in Ab minor concludes the movement, floating seamlessly into the epilogue, Spiritus Mundi. Reprising music from Mvt. I, this short meditative movement reconciles and releases the earlier excesses.

- Program note by composer

MSU SYMPHONY BAND

DAVID THORNTON | CONDUCTOR

FLUTE

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OBOE

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Katelynn Miller, Roseville
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Te-Fen Cheng, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
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Madeline Howard, Trenton
Colin Mile, Rochester Hills
Xavier Smith, Grand Ledge
Korben Wilson, Davenport, IA
Haochen Zhang, Xi'an, China

SAXOPHONE

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Mingzhe Wang, Clarinet Philip Sinder, Tuba/Euphonium
Guy Yehuda, Clarinet Kevin Brown, Double Bass
Joseph Lulloff, Saxophone Gwendolyn Dease, Percussion
Corbin Wagner, Horn Jon Weber, Percussion

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONCERT BAND AND CAMPUS BAND | December 4, 2024 | 7:30 PM
Cobb Great Hall | Wharton Center for Performing Arts

CONCERT ORCHESTRA | December 5, 2024 | 7:30 PM
Cobb Great Hall | Wharton Center for Performing Arts

JAZZ ORCHESTRAS | December 8, 2024 | 3:00 PM
Fairchild Theatre | MSU Auditorium

HOLIDAY GLORY WITH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHOIRS |
December 7, 2024 | 8:00 PM
Cobb Great Hall | Wharton Center for Performing Arts

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THANK YOU TO OUR 2024-2025 SPONSORS

- **Anonymous Donor Family** (Holiday Glory)
- **Sam and Mary Austin** (Musique 21 concerts)
- **Sam and Mary Austin Fund for New Music** (Wind Symphony, Oct. 25; Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 27; Musique 21, Oct. 28; Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **Ken and Sandy Beall** (Cello Plus Chamber Music Festival Series; Jazz Spectacular)
- **James and Susan Bonfiglio** (Symphony Orchestra, Apr. 26; Fall Opera)
- **Jenny Chung and Family for Human Rights Fund** (Jazz Nonets concerts)
- **Joanne and Bill Church** (West Circle Series)
- **April Clobes and Glen Brough** (Celebrating the Spectrum; Whirlwinds)
- **Trustee Emerita Dee Cook in memory of her husband Byron Cook** (Baroque Fest)
- **Susan Davis** (Fall Opera)
- **Dean Transportation** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Alena Fabian, M.D.** (Votapek, Sept. 25; Piano Monster)
- **John and Gretchen Forsyth** (Sinder, Feb. 16; Oboe, Trumpet and Organ, Feb. 11)
- **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowment for Chamber Music** (Happy Birthday Mozart!)
- **Thea Glicksman** (From Vienna with Love, Jan. 17)
- **Howard and Pam Gourwitz** (Lulloff, Nov. 25)
- **Anne Hiller** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Lauren Harris** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Taylor Johnston Early Music Series Endowment established by Taylor Johnston** (Taylor Johnston Early Music Series)
- **Hari Kern and the late Ralph R. Edminster, M.D.** (Votapek, Mar. 27)
- **Michael and Paula Koppisch** (Zuber, Feb. 17)
- **Robert Last and Jill Canny** (MSU Federal Credit Union Jazz Artist in Residence, J. Clayton, Dec. 8; Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest Concert)
- **Eleanor H. and Harold E. Leichenko Opera Endowment established by Lauren Julius Harris** (Fall and Spring Opera)
- **Ann, John and Abby Lindley** (Holiday Glory; Wind Symphony, Nov. 24)
- **Merritt Lutz** (Celebrating the Spectrum; Wind Symphony, Apr. 24)
- **Clare Mackey** (Pass a Good Time, Oct. 6; Oboe, Trumpet and Organ, Feb. 11)
- **Joseph and Jeanne Maguire** (A Jazzy Little Christmas)
- **Patrick and Victoria McPharlin Guest Artist Endowment for Jazz Studies in the College of Music** (Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest Concert)
- **Pat & Mary McPharlin** (Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **Dr. Roy and Christine Meland** (Vive La France)
- **Gordon E. Miracle** (Votapek, Sept. 25; Helton, Oct. 31)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union** (Showcase Series; Spartan Spectacular; Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union Entrepreneurial Musical Artist-in-Residence Endowed Fund** (Tambuco Mexican Percussion Ensemble, Nov. 21)
- **George Orban and Rae Ramsdell** (Red Cedar Organ, Sept. 15)
- **Milton Powell, in memory of Sue Powell, accomplished pianist and organist** (Red Cedar Organ, Sept. 15)
- **Liz and Tony Raduazo in honor of Andrew Raduazo** (Sensory Friendly Spartan Concert, Nov. 9 and April 8)
- **Nancy and Charlie Seebeck** (MSU-Stanford Piano Quartet)
- **Michael and Elaine Serling** (A Celebration of a Beautiful Voice)

- **Leonard and Sharon Tabaka** (Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
- **TechSmith** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Dr. Robert W. Uphaus and Dr. Lois M. Rosen** (Symphony Orchestra, Sept. 27; Woodward String Quartet, Mar. 13; Bagratuni, Mar. 31)
- **Linn Van Dyne and Mike Knox** (Symphony Orchestra, Feb. 7)
- **Barbara E. Wagner** (Wagner Chamber Music Competition)
- **Dr. Charles and Philippa Webb** (Beacon Hill Music Series)
- **Richard Witter** (A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
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- **Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. and Thomas V. O'Halloran, Ph.D.** (Holiday Glory)
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