



Colonel Michael J. Colburn, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
January 19, 2014 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC

Johann Ernst Altenburg (1734–1801)
edited by Gerard Schwarz

Concerto for Seven Trumpets and Timpani

Allegro; Adagio
Andante
Vivace

*GySgt Michael Mergen, GySgt Brad Weil, SSgt Robert Singer,
SSgt Amy McCabe, SSgt James McClarty,
SSgt Brandon Eubank, and SSgt Jeffrey Strong, trumpet
MSgt Glenn Paulson, timpani
GySgt Brian Turnmire, conducting*

Arnold Cooke (1906–2005)

Nocturnes (1956)

The Moon
Returning, We Hear the Larks
River Roses
The Owl
Boat Song

*GySgt Sara Dell'Omo, mezzo-soprano
GySgt Jennifer Paul, horn
SSgt Christopher Schmitt, piano*

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

Le jardinière de Samos (1924)

Overture
Air de Danse
Prelude to Act 2
Prelude to Act 4
Prelude to Act 5

*MGySgt Betsy Hill, flute
MGySgt Jeffrey Strouf, clarinet
MSgt David Haglund, trumpet
SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin
SSgt Char Prescott, cello
MSgt Glenn Paulson, percussion*

INTERMISSION

Sir Arnold Bax (1883–1953)

In Memoriam (1916)

SSgt Joseph DeLuccio, English horn

MSgt Karen Grimsey, harp

SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang and SSgt Chaerim Smith, violin

MSgt Christopher Shieh, viola

SSgt Char Prescott, cello

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Serenade No. 11 in E-flat, K. 375

Allegro maestoso

Menuetto

Adagio

Menuetto

Allegro

SSgt Tessa Vinson and SSgt Trevor Mowry, oboe

GySgt William Bernier and SSgt Jonathon Troy, clarinet

GySgt Hilary Harding and SSgt Cecilia Kozłowski, horn

MSgt Christopher McFarlane and GySgt Bernard Kolle, bassoon

PROGRAM NOTES

Concerto for Seven Trumpets and Timpani

Johann Ernst Altenburg (1734–1801)

edited by Gerard Schwarz

Johann Ernst Altenburg was born in Germany to a musical family. His father, Johann Caspar, was a military trumpeter, and so unsurprisingly Altenburg was apprenticed as a trumpet player at age sixteen. Unfortunately, as baroque trumpet playing and social practices were in flux at the time, he was not able to find employment with his instrument. Altenburg instead worked several odd jobs until the Seven Years War, when he was employed as a trumpeter by the French Army. After the war, he turned his musical talents to the organ, though he was never able to find a satisfying position.

Altenburg is best known for his treatise on Baroque trumpet playing, published in 1795, which is important for its explanation of stylistic and technical matters when playing the natural (valveless) trumpet. He focused on the importance of the “field pieces,” or military signals, that were handed down from teacher to student as the key to Baroque trumpet playing, relegating the clarino (high) register to the background. This is significant, since modern performers regard clarino playing as the challenge to playing trumpet in the Baroque style.

The Concerto for Seven Trumpets and Timpani is found in an appendix to Altenburg’s treatise. It is unclear whether the music found in this appendix was actually written by Altenburg, though it is most often attributed to him. This work includes examples of both the military signals that Altenburg was so famous for detailing and the high, clarino register playing that epitomizes the Baroque trumpet tradition.

Nocturnes (1956)

Arnold Cooke (1906–2005)

English composer Arnold Cooke studied composition first at Cambridge and then with Paul Hindemith in Berlin, an unusual choice for British composers in this era. Hindemith’s influence is heard in Cooke’s adherence to tonality and counterpoint, rather than the more modern serial techniques popular at the time. After serving in the British Navy during World War II, Cooke was made professor of harmony, counterpoint, and composition at the Trinity College of Music in London, where he remained until his retirement in 1978. He composed six symphonies, an opera, and approximately forty-five concertos and chamber works for various instrumentations. Many of Cooke’s chamber works reflect Hindemith’s ideal of *gebrauchsmusik*, or “music for use,” intended for the talented amateur rather than a virtuoso.

It was typical for Cooke’s chamber compositions to be written for specific performers, and the *Nocturnes* for horn, soprano, and piano are no exception as they were written for soprano Sophie Wyss. Composed in 1956, the lyrical song cycle features British poets. This was a popular choice by British composers at the time, possibly highlighting the nationalism felt after the trials of the Second World War. Cooke favors tonal melodies and traditional harmonies in this song collection. Particularly notable is his use of word painting, a technique that dates back to the Renaissance, which highlights the text of the poetry through musical motifs. The most obvious example occurs in “The Owl” where the call of the owl is heard in the horn and the “whirring sail” in the soprano, though all five songs contain a certain amount of word painting used to enhance the poetry.

“The Moon” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

And, like a dying lady lean and pale,

Who totters forth,
wrapp'd in a gauzy veil,
Out of her chamber, led by th'insane
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
The moon arose up in the murky east
A white and shapeless mass.

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heav'n and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

“Returning, We Hear the Larks” by Isaac Rosenberg

Sombre the night is
And, though we have our lives, we know what sinister threat lurks there.
Dragging these anguished limbs, we only know
This poison-blasted track opens on our camp on a little safe sleep.

But Hark! joy—joy—strange joy!
Lo! Heights of night ringing with unseen larks:
Music showering on our upturned listening faces.
Death could drop from the dark
As easily as song
But song only dropped,
Like a blind man's dreams on the sand
By dangerous tides,
Like a girl's dark hair, for she dreams no ruin lies there,
Or her kisses where a serpent hides.

“River Roses” by D. H. Lawrence

By the Isar, in the twilight
We were wandering and singing,
By the Isar, in the ev'ning
We climbed the huntsman's ladder and sat swinging
In the fir tree overlooking the marshes,
While river met with river, and the ringing
Of their pale green glacier water filled the ev'ning.

By the Isar, in the twilight
We found the dark wild roses
Hanging red at the river;
And simmering frogs were singing, and over the river closes
Was savour of ice and roses,
And glimmering fear was abroad.
We whispered: “No one knows us—Let it be as the snake disposes
Here in the simmering marsh.”

“The Owl” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

When cats run home and light is come,

And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round,
Alone and warming his five wits
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock has sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice, twice or thrice,
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Alone and warming his five wits
The white owl in the belfry sits.

“Boat Song” by John Davidson

The boat is chafing at our long delay,
And we must leave too soon
The spicy sea pinks and the inborne spray,
The tawny sands, the moon.

Keep us, O Thetis, on our western flight,
Watch from thy pearly throne
Our vessel plunging deeper into night
To reach a land unknown.

Le jardinière de Samos (1924)

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

French composer Jacques Ibert was born in Paris to a father who was an export trader and a mother who was a pianist. His musical training began on the violin at age four, and shortly after receiving his baccalaureate he devoted himself to composition. Ibert came of age at the same time as *Les Six*, a group of famous French composers including Darius Milhaud and Francis Poulenc, but his service during World War I made his association with them difficult by virtue of his absence from Paris.

Ibert’s music is varied in style, taking on impressionist, folk-song, or sharply modern characteristics to suit the desired mood. Much as the composers who comprised *Les Six*, Ibert revived the French qualities of melodic and tonal clarity and transparent textures while avoiding unnecessary complexity. He was later employed as a cinema pianist, which strongly influenced his lifelong interest in film scoring. In addition to film, Ibert’s eclectic compositional career included opera, ballet, incidental music, film scores, and symphonic, solo, and chamber works.

Le jardinière de Samos (The Gardener of Samos) was composed in 1924 as incidental music for a comedy by Charles Vildrac and was Ibert’s first work for the theater. It is bubbly, occasionally brazen music that uses an interesting and unusual combination of woodwind and string instruments accented by a field drum.

In Memoriam (1916)

Sir Arnold Bax (1883–1953)

English composer Sir Arnold Bax began composing at the keyboard and predominantly wrote for the piano and voice in his early years. As his compositional skills evolved, he began to compose chamber

music for ensembles of varying sizes. Though most associate Bax with his later orchestral writings, some of his best works were for the chamber medium. Aside from a few favorites, a great deal of this chamber music remains largely unknown.

Much of Bax's chamber and orchestral styling stems from his love of Ireland and Irish poetry. He spent long periods of time over the course of ten years in Ireland and became immersed in the country's history and mythology. He was so enamored by all things Irish that he even wrote poetry under an Irish pseudonym. It is fairly common to hear these Irish influences in his music, as well as the influence of a war-torn UK and Europe over the course of both world wars. Most believe Bax was at the height of his powers between the wars, composing several chamber works as well as larger works for orchestra.

In Memoriam (1916) is an elegiac, one-movement sextet for harp, English horn, and string quartet. The year 1916 is part of the title because he wrote a work for orchestra under the same name but designated it 1917. The folk-like main theme is announced first by the English horn after being introduced with a spread chordal motif by the harp. The strings soon share the theme, but when a second theme is introduced, again by the English horn, the strings become noticeably muted. After a central climax the English horn continues on its own, in a rather plaintive mood. A restatement of the main theme occurs and this time builds to a more agitated climax. Bax closes the piece with most of the passion exhausted, ending with a high note in the violin supported by arpeggiated chords in the harp.

Serenade No. 11 in E-flat, K. 375

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

The Serenade No. 11 in E-flat, K. 375 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was written in 1781 when he was twenty-six years old and living in Vienna. This was a significant period in Mozart's life as he married Constanze Weber in August 1782 and began his close friendship with Franz Joseph Haydn, whom he called "Papa Haydn," in 1783. During these years Mozart composed two other serenades for winds; the C minor Serenade No. 12, K. 388, and the B-flat Serenade No. 10, "Gran Partita." His opera, *Idomeneo*, had also recently premiered in 1781.

Mozart composed this serenade for a party at the Vienna home of court painter Joseph von Hickel on October 15, 1781. Serenades (*sera* meaning "evening" in Italian) were most often performed outside at night, but could be performed inside as well. Mozart intended to impress Joseph von Strack, a guest at the party and the personal cellist to Emperor Joseph II, in the hopes that he would pass along praise of Mozart's music to the emperor. The serenade was originally composed for wind sextet, but when Mozart learned that the house band of the emperor was comprised of a wind octet, he added a pair of oboes to the original scoring for pairs of clarinets, horns, and bassoons. Unfortunately for Mozart, his efforts were in vain since the emperor's taste ran toward suites from popular ballets and operas of the day rather than new music. Thus, Mozart's serenade was never performed at court. It was, however, a success at von Hickel's party, being so admired that the musicians were whisked away to two more parties that night to perform the piece. Regardless of the emperor's taste, the octet version of this serenade has stood the test of time and is one of Mozart's most popular and performed chamber works to this day.