



Colonel Michael J. Colburn, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND  
Monday, March 31, 2014 at 7:30 P.M.  
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center  
Northern Virginia Community College  
Alexandria Campus  
Giancarlo Guerrero, guest conducting

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Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

*Bells for Stokowski (2002)*

Kurt Weill (1900–50)

Concerto for Violin and Winds

Andante con moto

Notturmo; Cadenza; Serenata

Allegro molto, un poco agitato

*SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, soloist*

## INTERMISSION

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)  
transcribed by Merlin Patterson

*The Rite of Spring*

Part I: The Adoration of the Earth

Part II: The Sacrifice

The Marine Chamber Orchestra will perform Sunday, April 6 at 2:00 P.M. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. The program will feature works by Stravinsky and Shchedrin.

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PLEASE NOTE: The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited during the concert.

# ***PROGRAM NOTES***

## ***Bells for Stokowski (2002)***

Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

Drawing inspiration from the people, places, and events that have helped shape American culture, Michael Daugherty has come closer than perhaps any other modern composer to melding together the worlds of classical and popular music. He came to international attention in 1995 when his Metropolis Symphony, a tribute to the Superman comics, was performed at Carnegie Hall by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Zinman. Since that time, Daugherty's music has entered the orchestral, band, and chamber music repertory and made him, according to the League of American Orchestras, one of the ten most performed living American composers. In 2011, the Nashville Symphony's Naxos recording of Daugherty's Metropolis Symphony and *Deus ex Machina* was honored with three Grammy Awards, including Best Classical Contemporary Composition.

Born in 1954 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Daugherty is the son of a dance-band drummer and the oldest of five brothers, all professional musicians. He studied music composition at North Texas State University in Denton and the Manhattan School of Music in New York City, as well as computer music at Pierre Boulez's IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique) in Paris. Daugherty received his doctorate in composition from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1986, during which time he also collaborated with jazz arranger Gil Evans in New York. After teaching music composition at the Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio, Daugherty joined the faculty of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1991, where he is currently professor of composition. He has served as composer-in-residence with many major symphonies and festivals including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (1999–2003), the Colorado Symphony Orchestra (2001–03), and the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music (2001–04, 2006–08, 2011) and has received numerous awards for his music, including the Stoeger Prize from the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

*Bells for Stokowski* was the result of a commissioning consortium of several major university and college band programs, and was premièred by the University of Michigan Symphonic Band on October 2, 2002. The composer offers the following regarding the inspiration for the work:

*Bells for Stokowski* is a tribute to one of the most influential and controversial conductors of the twentieth century. Born in London, Leopold Stokowski (1882–1977) began his career as an organist. Moving to America, Stokowski was fired from his organ post at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York in 1908 after he concluded a service with "The Stars and Stripes Forever." A maestro of the Philadelphia Orchestra (1912–36), he became famous for interpreting classical music in brilliant new ways, and expanding his audience's expectations of what they might hear in the concert hall.

Stokowski created a sensation by conducting world premières of avant garde composers such as Igor Stravinsky and Edgar Varese, and he enraged classical purists with his lavishly Romantic orchestral transcriptions of J. S. Bach. Appearing as a conductor in various Hollywood films, Stokowski's 1940 collaboration with Walt Disney on *Fantasia* resulted in the first stereophonic recording of an orchestral soundtrack.

It was in Philadelphia that he created the famous Stokowski sound, making the orchestra sound like a pipe organ. Stokowski's fascination with the timbre led him to experiment with the seating of players, moving sections of the orchestra to different parts of the stage. These dramatic spatial arrangements appealed to the eye as well as the ear.

In the mid-1920s, Stokowski organized the Band of Gold, attesting to his belief in the importance of band music as a medium of artistic expression. Incorporating members of the Philadelphia Orchestra in the band, Stokowski conducted not only Sousa marches, but his own Bach arrangements.

In *Bells for Stokowski*, I imagine Stokowski in Philadelphia visiting the Liberty Bell at sunrise, and listening to all the bells of the city resonate. The composition begins with two percussionists, placed on opposite sides of the stage, performing stereophonically on identical ringing percussion instruments such as chimes, crotales, bell trees, and various non-pitched metals. A saxophone quartet introduces the original theme that I have composed in the style of Bach. This Baroque fantasy is elaborately transformed through a series of tonal and atonal variations. Later in the composition, I also introduce my own transcription of Bach's C Major Prelude from *The Well-Tempered Klavier*.

In keeping with Stokowski's musical vision, I look simultaneously to the past and the future of American concert music in *Bells for Stokowski*. I utilize multiple canons, polyrhythms, and counterpoints to achieve a complex timbral layering. With unusual orchestrations and an alternation between chamber and tutti configurations, I recreate the musical effect of Stokowski's experimental seating arrangements. In the coda, I evoke the famous Stokowski sound by making the symphonic band resound like an enormous, rumbling gothic organ.

## **Concerto for Violin and Winds**

Kurt Weill (1900–50)

The Kurt Weill with which many are familiar is the musical theater composer of well-known numbers such as "Mack the Knife" and "September Song." By the time Weill reached Broadway in the 1940s, he was well on his way to becoming an American citizen and pronounced his last name with a "W." It was the end result of a remarkable transformation of musical identity; in the years before the Second World War, a very different kind of composer pronouncing that same name with the traditional Germanic "V" had emerged on the modern music scene in his native country.

Weill was born in Germany as the son of a cantor and demonstrated tremendous musical potential at an early age. He was one of the most advanced pupils of composer Ferruccio Busoni and quickly developed a unique style that showed the influences of other innovative composers of the time such as Igor Stravinsky, Paul Hindemith, and Alban Berg. Weill's music was deeply rooted in thoroughly modern sonorities early in his career, but his appreciation for popular music was also ever-present. He believed that there was no value difference between light and serious music; rather there was only the distinction of good or bad music. Indeed, although his early work is undeniably "serious" at its core, hints of the popular music that would later come from his pen are discernable in bits and pieces in these compositions, including his Concerto for Violin and Winds.

The Concerto was composed in 1924 for famed virtuoso Joseph Szigeti (although he did not premiere it) and was Weill's first large-scale work after the death of his teacher. The music certainly reveals the lingering influence of Busoni, but the concerto also serves as Weill's first conscious declaration of his musical independence. Within its twenty-five minute duration, the many faces of the composer's musical sensibilities are revealed; crisp, spiky neo-classical sonorities that are punctuated by prominent percussion parts intersect with a brand of musical expression that often seems to simultaneously occupy the worlds of humor and melancholy. The second movement is especially noteworthy and is the heart of the concerto. Its unusual three-chapter construction joins a capricious nocturne that features an unusual duet with xylophone with an extended accompanied cadenza and ends with a lyrical serenade for the soloist superimposed over a bed of conspicuously contrasting gestures in the winds. It was rather rare for the time to write a major concerto for an orchestra without strings (save for the double basses) and to this day, it remains one of the few concerti for a solo string instrument with wind ensemble. Although the solo part is incredibly virtuosic throughout, there is a brilliant integration between soloist and ensemble, giving the entire work the intimate and collaborative feeling of chamber music.

The Concerto's premiere in 1925 with soloist Marcel Darieux was successful, and the work quickly became one of Weill's most often performed pieces. But within just a few years, Weill began to turn his back on the works that had made his career to that point. As the insidious elements inciting the

war began to boil around him, he fled for France and then America and never looked back. His emigration was prompted by fear for his life, however his move to America was a fateful one. He once remarked: “I never felt the oneness with my native country that I do with the United States. . . . The moment I landed here I felt as though I’d come home.” The “V” permanently became a “W,” and Weill’s metamorphosis from avante garde German composer to Broadway songsmith was complete.

### **Staff Sergeant Sheng-Tsung Wang, soloist**

Violinist SSgt Sheng-Tsung Wang joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Chamber Orchestra in June 2007. Wang began his musical instruction at age eight, after emigrating to the United States from Taiwan. Upon graduating in 1993 from Centennial High School in Ellicott City, Maryland, he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in violin performance from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where he studied with Victor Danchenko. Wang earned his doctor of musical arts degree at the University of Maryland in College Park, where he studied with Gerald Fischbach. His notable instructors include Eugene Drucker of the Emerson String Quartet, Elaine Mishkind, and the late Mark Ulrich. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Wang founded the Gemini Piano Trio and has been heard as part of the Arts Club of Washington concert series and on National Public Radio. He has performed at the following festivals: the Quartet Program at the State University of New York in Fredonia; Yellow Barn Music Festival in Putney, Vermont; La Jolla SummerFest in California; and the Taos School of Music in New Mexico. In addition, he has taught at the Peabody Preparatory in Baltimore, Howard Community College in Columbia, Maryland, and the Levine School of Music in Washington, D.C.

### ***The Rite of Spring***

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

transcribed by Merlin Patterson

One of the most revered stories in classical music is the riotous opening night response to Igor Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*, first presented at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris in 1913. The ballet should have been a guaranteed success, following as it did in the footsteps of two previous winning collaborations between Stravinsky and legendary impresario Serge Diaghilev: *The Firebird* (1910) and *Petrushka* (1911). Diaghilev’s Ballet Russe was the toast of Paris at the time, so successes such as *The Firebird* and *Petrushka* were more than enough to launch Stravinsky’s career internationally. In spite of his new found popularity, or perhaps because of it, the young composer decided he was ready for something a bit more controversial for his third effort: a musical depiction of “a sacred pagan ritual: the wise elders are seated in a circle and are observing the dance before death of the girl whom they are offering as a sacrifice to the god of Spring in order to gain his benevolence. This became the subject of *The Rite of Spring*.” Although the plot was a bit racy, it hardly seems enough to generate the riotous reception it received, especially in the progressive atmosphere of 1913 Paris. So why the melee? It is a question that critics and musicologists are still discussing a century later.

For the last several decades, most musicians and listeners have accepted the notion that it was the music that caused the audience’s discomfort. Unquestionably, there is a rough, primitive, and harmonically unsettled quality in much of Stravinsky’s score. In his legendary Norton Lecture at Harvard in 1973, Leonard Bernstein made the following observation: “[*The Rite of Spring* has] got the best dissonances anyone ever thought up, and the best asymmetries and polytonalities and polyrhythms and whatever else you care to name.” The opening passage of the work is scored for solo bassoon in an extremely high register seldom employed, and this alone was enough to allegedly cause fellow composer Camille Saint-Saëns to walk out of the première, muttering to himself about the unforgivable misuse of the instrument. The relentless, erratic, and pounding rhythms of various passages composed for the

chorus dances also elicited strong audience responses, as evidenced by the following account from Carl Van Vechten:

The young man seated behind me in the box stood up during the course of the ballet to enable himself to see more clearly. The intense excitement under which he was laboring betrayed itself presently when he began to beat rhythmically on the top of my head with his fists. My emotion was so great that I did not feel the blows for some time.

There are many scholars who contend that the riot had at least as much to do with the choreography as the music. Vaclav Nijinsky, the choreographer, had determined to create an understandably unconventional approach to match this unconventional score. Many of the group dances were primitive and violent in their motions, and even the solo dances were quite unusual for the time. During the climactic dance of the Sacrificial Virgin, in which the soloist was required to shake uncontrollably, someone from the balcony was heard to shout, "Call a doctor...a dentist...two doctors!"

Regardless of the cause, the audience reaction was strong and almost immediate. From the opening bars, the audience made its displeasure known, emitting boos and hisses, and loud arguments could easily be heard from the stage. Fights began to break out in the aisles, at which point the police were summoned to restore enough order to complete the performance. Even so, the hubbub in the audience was loud enough that the dancers could not hear the orchestra, and Nijinsky had to shout out the steps from the wings of the stage to keep his dancers together.

While we may never know the specific source of the audience's reaction, recent scholarship suggests that it was indeed the choreography that was the most likely cause. According to highly respected Stravinsky authority Richard Taruskin, who surveyed the reviews of the première, the commentary was devoted exclusively to Nijinsky's dances. Taruskin also notes that most of the reviews didn't even mention Stravinsky, other than to name him as the composer, and also pointed out that because of the pandemonium in the room, most of Stravinsky's score went unheard that night.

So from whence came the idea that the music caused the riot? According to Taruskin, none other than the composer himself. Always a consummate businessman, Stravinsky knew that this scandal could serve his music. At the time he published *The Rite of Spring* in the 1920s he was promoting himself as an innovative and iconoclastic composer. The idea that his music had the power to cause such a scandal reinforced this image perfectly, so he revised his accounts of the première accordingly. As the influence of his music and reputation continued to expand throughout the twentieth century, music scholars were more inclined to accept his version of events and recycle them into their own. And thus the myth of the riot against Stravinsky's music was created.

Although the source of the riot's cause may be questioned, the strength and power of Stravinsky's score cannot. Unlike the première of the ballet, the 1914 première of the concert version of *The Rite of Spring* was an unmitigated success. According to noted conductor and longtime Stravinsky confidant Robert Craft:

Stravinsky was acclaimed as no other living composer had ever been in the history of music, and the scandal of the first performance, the year before, was forgotten in triumph. Stravinsky was carried from the hall on the shoulders of the crowd.

From the time of that very first concert success, the work has never fallen out of fashion and continues to be performed regularly in concert halls around the world. Its dissonances, unusual scoring, and savage rhythms, once so unusual and exotic, are now accepted and understood as part of the fundamental orchestral musical vocabulary. They are sounds and techniques that are now commonplace among orchestral and band composers, not to mention the vast number of film and television composers who borrow liberally from Stravinsky's toolbox whenever they need to set a primitive or brutal scene. And thanks to Walt Disney's classic animated film *Fantasia*, generations of children have been introduced to *The Rite of Spring* alongside Ludwig van Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony and Johann

Sebastian Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Although the sounds may be more familiar to today's audiences, it is clear that *The Rite of Spring* still has the ability to excite the imagination and sensibilities of its listeners as powerfully today as it did a century ago.

***Giancarlo Guerrero, guest conductor***

Giancarlo Guerrero is the music director of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and concurrently holds the position of principal guest conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra Miami Residency. His recordings with the Nashville Symphony have won Grammys in two consecutive years, in 2011 and 2012, including Best Orchestral Performance. A fervent advocate of contemporary music and composers, Guerrero has championed works by several of America's most respected composers, including John Adams, John Corigliano, Osvaldo Golijov, Jennifer Higdon, Michael Daugherty, Roberto Sierra, and Richard Danielpour.

In the 2013–14 season, Guerrero will make several European debuts including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, and Copenhagen Philharmonic. In North America, he will take the Cleveland Orchestra on tour, and will return to the symphony orchestras of Cincinnati and Detroit. For many years he has maintained a close association with the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra in Brazil as well as with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and El Sistema in Venezuela.

In recent seasons Guerrero has established himself with many of the major North American orchestras, including the symphony orchestras of Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Toronto, and Vancouver, among others. He is also known to audiences of large summer festivals such as the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and the Blossom Music Festival in Cleveland. He is also cultivating an increasingly visible profile in Europe, where his recent debuts included the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

A native of Costa Rica, Guerrero gained early experience with the Costa Rican Lyric Opera and later spent time in Venezuela as music director of the Táchira Symphony Orchestra. Upon moving to the U.S. he studied conducting and percussion at Baylor and Northwestern universities. He served as associate conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra from 1999 to 2004 and was music director of the Eugene Symphony in Oregon from 2002 to 2009.