



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Sunday, April 6, 2025 at 2:00 P.M.
Jim Rouse Theatre
Columbia, MD
Captain Darren Y. Lin, conducting

Florence Price (1887–1953)

Suite of Dances

Allegretto
Allegretto
Allegro molto

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

entr'acte (2014)

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

La Création du monde, Opus 81a

INTERMISSION

Cole Reyes (b. 1998)

Burst (2022)

world première

Winner of the 2024 Marine Band Call for Scores Competition

Viet Cuong (b. 1990)

Extra(ordinarily) Fancy: Concerto for Two Oboes (2019)

MGySgt Leslye Barrett and GySgt Tessa Gross, soloists

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 88 in G, Hob. I:88

Adagio; Allegro
Largo
Menuetto: Allegretto; Trio
Finale: Allegro con spirito

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PROGRAM NOTES

Suite of Dances

Florence Price (1887–1953)

Arkansas-native Florence Price is rightfully being recognized as one of the most historically significant American composers of the twentieth century. Price's music having a renaissance with ensembles today with frequent performances of her work: a long-overdue phenomenon. She was a trailblazer among her contemporaries. Her Symphony No. 1 in E Minor won first prize in the Rodman Wanamaker Competition in 1932. That work was performed in 1933 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Century of Progress International Exposition, commonly known as the Chicago's World Fair. With that performance, Price became the first Black woman to have a work performed by a major American orchestra.

Suite of Dances was orchestrated in the 1950s from a set of piano pieces titled *Three Little Negro Dances* originally written in 1933. In this suite Price incorporates a "Juba dance," a Black American dance form that incorporates body percussion like the stomping of feet and the slapping and patting of the different body parts. The Juba dance is a frequent motif in Price's symphonic work, as it replaces the expected third movement European minuet or scherzo in her first and third symphonies. In the *Suite of Dances*, Price removes the descriptive titles of the *Little Negro Dances* opting to title each movement by their Italian tempo markings. She notes the following in the score of this work:

In all types of Negro music, rhythm is of preeminent importance. In the dance, it is a compelling, onward-sweeping force that tolerates no interruption. All phases of truly Negro activity—whether work or play, singing or praying—are more than apt to take on a rhythmic quality.

entr'acte (2014)

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Born in Greenville, North Carolina, American composer Caroline Shaw is one of the most important figures in contemporary music. She is the youngest ever recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for her work *Partita for Eight Voices*, holds an honorary doctorate from Yale, and has been awarded four GRAMMY awards. She describes herself as "a musician who moves among roles, genres, and mediums, trying to imagine a world of sound that has never been heard before but has always existed." Shaw writes the following about this work:

entr'acte was written in 2011 after I heard the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's Op. 77, No. 2—with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.

La Création du monde, Opus 81a

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)

Darius Milhaud's music is often grouped together with the work of his contemporaries Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Louis Durey, George Auric, and Germaine Tailleferre. These composers were called *Les Six*, a title given to them by the critic Henri Collet in 1919. Collet hoped these composers would cultivate a French nationalist style in the early twentieth century. He conceived of the title as a reference to the Russian "Mighty Five" of Modest Mussorgsky, Alexander Borodin, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Mily Balakirev, and César Cui who successfully created a Russian nationalist style in the late eighteenth century. Collet's grouping of French composers was ultimately less successful. *Les Six* each had significantly different compositional styles and influences. While these composers did work collaboratively on six occasions over a thirty-six-year-long period, Collet's title gave them all a significant publicity boost to get their works performed. Of these composers, Poulenc and Milhaud remain as the most significant contributors to the predominant French style of the mid-twentieth century.

After World War I, Milhaud began travelling extensively which had a tremendous impact on his music. Milhaud lived in Brazil from 1917 to 1918, working as the attaché in charge of propaganda for his friend and collaborator Paul Claudel: a poet, playwright, and French minister to Brazil. The syncopated rhythms of Brazilian folk music proved to be highly impactful on Milhaud, most significantly heard in his works *Saudades do Brasil* and *Le Bœuf sur le toit*.

After his travels to Brazil, American jazz became a new fascination for Milhaud. He heard jazz for the first time in London in 1920, but immersed himself in that musical style during a 1922 visit to New York City. There he heard the Paul Whiteman Band, most famous to American classical music audiences as the group which Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* was written for. Milhaud also spent considerable time in Harlem's jazz clubs on this trip. Milhaud synthesized Whiteman's jazz-inspired orchestrations with the improvisational harmonies and rhythms of the Harlem clubs. The result was the 1923 ballet, *La Création du monde*. It is curious to note that while *Rhapsody in Blue* has had far more popular success than *La Création du monde*, Gershwin's fusion of classical and jazz styles was written and premiered a year after Milhaud's work.

Milhaud's ballet was commissioned by wealthy Swedish art collector and performing arts benefactor, Rolf de Maré. De Maré founded the *Ballets Suédois*, an avant-garde ballet company based in Paris. Reflecting a French fascination with African Primitivism, the ballet was set to a scenario based on African creation myths by Blaise Cendrars, featured sets and costumes by Fernand Leger, and choreographed by Jean Borlin. Cendrars, Leger, and Milhaud did not travel, nor consult Africans on the creation of this ballet. One should view this ballet as the product of the French imagination set to music inspired by Black Americans, not as a faithful recreation of African folk traditions.

The ballet is set in five sections, performed without break. Milhaud scores the work for chamber orchestra, unusually replacing a violist with an alto saxophone in the string quintet. The following is a description of the ballet's five tableaux:

- I. The curtain opens to reveal the dark-ness and chaos before the world began as the piano and percussion begin a jagged rhythm over which Milhaud builds a vigorous jazz fugue. The original melody of the Overture returns as the darkness gives way to reveal a few gods dancing and chanting around a rotating mass of unknown origin.

- II. Trees, animals, insects, and beasts are gradually conjured from the ambiguous orb, and they all join the chanting and dancing while a solo oboe intones a melody influenced by the blues.
- III. A man and woman appear and perform a joyous and affectionate dance of coupling to a pair of violins that invoke a lively cakewalk.
- IV. An extended jazz solo for the clarinet signals that the witch-doctors have interrupted the proceedings and they perform an increasingly frantic ritual, but the couple's union prevails and all cacophony gradually disappears.
- V. After a few lingering memories of the story that has just unfolded around them, the music returns to where it began and the man and woman are united in a quiet springtime embrace.

Burst (2022)

Cole Reyes (b. 1998)

Cole Reyes is a composer, educator, and arts administrator who describes his musical output as inspired by “diverse genres such as pop, rock, and folk music...[and] distinguished by a fusion of lyricism and rhythmic propulsion.” Ensembles such as the JACK Quartet, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and Contemporaneous have performed his works. Various organizations such as the National Orchestral Institute and Festival, Bang on a Can Summer Festival, and the Victory Players commissioned works by Reyes. As an educator, he taught in the University of Michigan composition and music theory departments. Reyes is also the co-founder of the New York City-based Telos Consort, a chamber ensemble dedicated to new music featuring saxophones, strings, and piano. His primary composition teachers include Julia Wolfe, Michael Gordon, and Bright Sheng. He is currently pursuing doctoral studies at the University of Michigan.

Reyes writes the following regarding *Burst*:

After the myriad of images from the James Webb telescope, I have been contemplating many of the celestial phenomena that happen constantly in our universe – one of these being the supernova. The bursting of a star is simultaneously hot and violent, but safely from millions of light-years away, it is a stunning sight to witness. This duality is the basis for this piece – mitigating the explosivity and the beauty

Extra(ordinarily) Fancy: Concerto for Two Oboes (2019)

Viet Cuong (b. 1990)

Viet Cuong, originally from West Hills, California, is an American composer whose works, “explore the unexpected and whimsical.” He “is often drawn to projects where he can make peculiar combinations and sounds feel enchanting or oddly satisfying.” This manifests in Cuong’s sensitivity to instrumental color and exploration of complex rhythmic structures. His work often draws on diverse influences ranging from minimalist and post-minimalist traditions of the late-twentieth century to jazz and electronic music of the twenty-first century. Cuong currently serves as the California Symphony’s Young American Composer in Residence, as well as Assistant Professor of Composition at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He writes the following regarding *Extra(Ordinarily) Fancy*:

The USDA uses the term “extra fancy” to label foods that pass the highest quality standards. For example, the USDA website describes extra fancy apples as “mature but not overripe, clean, fairly well formed, free from decay, internal browning, internal breakdown, soft scald, scab, freezing injury, visible water core, and broken skins.” Since I usually don’t think of apples and mixed nuts as fancy foods (let alone extra fancy foods), I’ve always found the term quite endearing and have always wanted to write a piece that’s discernibly fancy. This piece doesn’t exactly convey the USDA’s pristine connotations of the term, but instead sets some music in motion and then folds in a plethora of double-reed extended techniques to make the once-normal musical ideas sound extra fancy and, more importantly, deliciously strange.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Leslye Barrett, soloist

Co-principal oboe Master Gunnery Sergeant Leslye Barrett of Liberty, Missouri, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in February 1997. She was appointed section leader in December 2004. Master Gunnery Sgt. Barrett began her musical training at age three and graduated from the Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan, in 1990. In 1994 she earned a bachelor of arts degree in performance from Southern Methodist University in Dallas and in 1996 a master of music degree in performance from Arizona State University in Tempe. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she was a member of the Quintessence Chamber Ensemble in Phoenix, and performed with the Phoenix Symphony, the Arizona Opera in Phoenix, and the Dallas Wind Symphony. Her solos with “The President’s Own” include Johann Wilhelm Hertel’s Concerto in E-flat for Trumpet and Oboe, Ottorino Respighi’s Concerto a cinque, John Corigliano’s Oboe Concerto, and the Concerto Grosso for Woodwind Quartet and Wind Orchestra by Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Gunnery Sergeant Tessa Gross, soloist

Oboe and English Horn Player Gunnery Sergeant Tessa Gross of Santa Monica, California, joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in October 2008. Gunnery Sgt. Gross began her musical training at age eight. Upon graduating from Santa Monica High School in 2001, she attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she studied with Stuart Horne of the Los Angeles Opera. In 2005, she earned a bachelor’s degree in music from the Manhattan School of Music in New York. She continued her education at the Manhattan School of Music, and earned a master’s degree in orchestral performance in 2007. Her instructors include David Weiss of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Robert Botti and Joseph Robinson of the New York Philharmonic. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” she performed with the New York City Opera, The Aeros Quintet, and the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas. She also held a residency at the 92nd Street Y’s Music Unlocked Project and served as the associate oboe teacher for the Manhattan School of Music.

Symphony No. 88 in G, Hob. I:88

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Joseph Haydn, often hailed as the “father of the symphony” and “father of the string quartet,” occupies a central role in the development of Western classical music. His prolific

output of over one hundred symphonies, sixty-eight string quartets, and works for nearly every musical genre significantly shaped the Classical style. Haydn's work influenced both his contemporaries and subsequent generations of composers, most notably Mozart and Beethoven. His career reached its peak during his long tenure at the court of the Esterházy family, where he served as *Kapellmeister* or the court's director of music for nearly three decades. This position afforded him remarkable creative freedom and resources, which allowed him to experiment with form and orchestration. Haydn's work is characterized by his mastery of formal structures, innovative thematic development, and an uncanny ability to infuse humor, wit, and emotional depth into his compositions.

The Symphony No. 88 in G was completed in 1787 and has become one of the most frequently performed Haydn symphonies due to its charm, elegance, and humor. Haydn's previous five symphonies, numbers 82 through 87, became collectively known as the Paris Symphonies as they were commissions by the French Count d'Ogny and *Les Concerts de la loge Olympique*. Though No. 88 is not grouped into one of Haydn's "international" symphony sets, the Paris and London symphonies, it does have a cosmopolitan history. Haydn sent Johann Tost, a violinist in the Esterházy orchestra from 1783 to 1788, to Paris to sell Symphony No. 88 and 89 to publishers "for the best possible price." Tost tried to pass off a third symphony written by Adalbert Gyrowetz as an additional work by Haydn, but his deception was eventually uncovered. A composer known for "quirky" moments in his music, Symphony No. 88 includes the unusual usage of trumpet and drums in the slow movement, mono-thematic development in the first movement, and sophisticated counterpoint. The American musicologist and Classical era specialist H. C. Robbins Landon described the symphony as "an inspired work from beginning to end."