

what
dreams
may
come

HOLST • BRYANT • MASLANKA • THOMAS

“THE PRESIDENT’S OWN” UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

With each dream, I tried to imagine a real picture, to put myself in that picture, and to allow the emotions and insights of that experience to come through my own system.

— DAVID MASLANKA

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF DREAMS

what dreams may come

SUITE NO. 1 IN E-FLAT, OPUS 28, NO. 1

GUSTAV HOLST / EDITED BY COLIN MATTHEWS

Chaconne

Intermezzo

March

SUITE DREAMS

STEVEN BRYANT

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF DREAMS

DAVID MASLANKA

There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.

A drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.

A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.

A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope.

The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.

An ascent into heaven where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell where angels are doing good deeds.

COME SUNDAY

OMAR THOMAS

Testimony

Shout!

SUITE NO. 1 IN E-FLAT, OPUS 28, NO. 1

GUSTAV HOLST

EDITED BY COLIN MATTHEWS

Nine years before the première of *The Planets* launched him to international fame, Gustav Holst wrote his “First Suite for Military Band.” It was so recorded in his own handwritten list of compositions and that remains one of the most certain facts about its genesis.

Holst wrote nearly 200 compositions in a wide range of styles from folk-inspired British works to Hymns from the *Rig Veda*. Settings of Sanskrit poetry, which he translated himself, were a far world to the Cheltenham-born man whose given name Gustavus Theodore von Holst suggested its own legend. The regal-sounding name aside, he was thoroughly English. He called himself Gustav and in 1914 dropped the “von” in the face of WWI anti-German

sentiment.

His father was an organist and choir-master, a role he would take on at age seventeen. He was also trained on piano and violin. When neuritis impaired his keyboard playing, he switched to trombone and played professionally with area bands and orchestras. In his youth, Holst’s favorite “modern” composer was Edvard Grieg.

He received his principal education at London’s Royal College of Music (RCM) where he studied composition with Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. The Victorian era shaped British musical taste, including the academic waters in which Holst swam at RCM. Orchestral repertoire leaned heavily to Austro-German masters Johann Sebastian Bach,

George Frideric Handel, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Richard Wagner and new voices like Richard Strauss excited the public, who were as likely to revel in Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. It was an innocent time when Britain had an expanding worldwide empire on which the sun would eventually never set.

By the time the Suite in E-flat was composed in 1909, Holst had composed five operas, over a dozen chamber works, another dozen orchestral works including a symphony, and other compositions. Imogen Holst, the composer’s daughter and biographer, wrote “The First Suite in E-flat was an experiment in form” but we don’t know what prompted the experiment.

It appears the Suite was not the result of a commission, but could it have been prompted by a competition? Holst wasn’t allergic to competitions. He

entered his 1906 opera *Sita* in a competition for English opera sponsored by the Italian publishers Ricordi. Might he have been motivated by a 1909 competition for a new military band work? It was



sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Musicians and first prize was nearly \$10,000 in today's dollars.

First prize went to a modest suite by Percy Fletcher titled "Woodland Pictures" and third prize was to a march also by Fletcher. That both rest in obscurity suggests an artistic standard well below that of Holst's First Suite. If he didn't enter the competition, perhaps he was simply inspired to explore the medium. The timing of his first band composition and this competition the same year is interesting to contemplate.

Holst's Suite in E-flat is markedly more sophisticated than typical band music of the day. His artful scoring and precise dynamic markings show impressive attention to detail. It's an intimate work, first scored for nineteen instruments with another seventeen parts marked "ad lib." The small scoring allowed it to be

played by British military bands, some of which were as small as 20 players. After Holst's death, publishers incrementally enlarged the scoring in subsequent editions in pursuit of a "standard band instrumentation." The original "ad lib" parts and even new ones were made essential.

The Suite is in three delicious movements, each linked by thematic material from the first movement. The Chaconne features a ground bass over which are skillful variations. Imogen Holst wrote, "The ostinato bass already showed signs of becoming a habit in the Rig Veda hymns. It was indispensable to him in these early attempts to achieve continuity of form..." Purists classify this movement as a passacaglia rather than a chaconne, a distinction insignificant to listeners. There's a musical resonance here with Holst's experience as an

organist and the son of one.

The second movement Intermezzo is delightful. Sparse scoring with minimal percussion, especially at the beginning, reinforces the spirit of a large chamber work. It's unique and superbly constructed.

The third movement March honors the best British march tradition but in Holst's own voice. The scoring at first is that of a brass band, with the woodwinds joining as the march proceeds. The music sings when the marching is light of foot and heart, without Elgarian pomp or circumstance.

Taken together, the Suite is a masterpiece. Even considering the impact of World War I, it's curious that the official première didn't occur until 1920—eleven years after composition. That performance featured a 165-piece massed band at the Royal Military School of

Music, a number over eight times the original instrumentation.

Imogen Holst speculated on an earlier first performance. She wrote, "[The Suite] must have been a startling change from the usual operatic selections, and there are bandmen who still remember the excitement of the first rehearsal in 1909." But for what was it rehearsed?

She remembered there were non-autograph manuscript parts with the name "Gustav von Holst," indicating they were copied prior to 1914. She suggested it might have been written for a festival at London's People's Palace in 1909 or for the previously mentioned contest by the Worshipful Company of Musicians. She also mentioned it might have been performed in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the summer of 1917. It seems likely that the Suite was performed somewhere prior to its 1920 "official" première.

The Suite in E-flat was first published in 1921 and entered the United States Marine Band's repertoire soon thereafter. It was joined with the publication in 1922 of his Second Suite in F, and the Marine Band had the honor of giving the world première of Holst's *Hammersmith* in 1932 in Washington, D.C. That première was to have been conducted by the composer, but illness prevented his travel and it was led by Marine Band Director Captain Taylor Branson. Over the decades the Marine

Band has regularly performed Holst's original band works and other music in transcriptions for band. There is a long affinity between the Marine Band and Holst's music.

In another statement of the E-flat Suite's originality, Holst wrote a note to conductors: "As each movement is founded on the same phrase, it is requested that the suite be played right through without a break." It is performed here in that manner, providing continuity as the composer intended.

SUITE DREAMS

STEVEN BRYANT

Steven Bryant has described his music as "chiseled in its structure and intent, fusing lyricism, dissonance, silence, technology, and humor into lean, skillfully-crafted works that enthrall listeners and performers alike." He has composed for young musicians and for professional symphony orchestra, is three-time winner of the National Band Association's William D. Revelli Composition Award, and also winner of the American Bandmasters Association ABA/Sousa/Ostwald composition award.

Suite Dreams was commissioned by the Jasper, Indiana, High School Band and premiered by them in 2007 under director James Goodhue. It was commissioned in appreciation of longtime Jasper HS Band volunteer

Linda Sermersheim and her invaluable contributions to their program. It won the NBA/Revelli composition award in 2008.

Suite Dreams was inspired by memories of playing and hearing Holst's Suite in E-flat. The composer offered the following thoughts:

It's the fourth in my series of compositions based on musical quotations. I've described it as "Gustav Holst through John Corigliano." John was my teacher, and I felt his influence.

I love writing works that quote from other music as it allows one to jump directly into development. I've called "parody" works, but don't mean mocking in any sense. My fa-

ther was a band director. I grew up in a band room and this is a tribute to my musical memories, intended at all times to be respectful.

With such a familiar piece as the Holst E-flat Suite, it's easy to lose a sense of it because we've heard it so many times. Our minds fill in gaps and sometimes we're not really hearing the performance before us. I want to turn something on its head and give the sense of hearing it for the first time.

Suite Dreams is a likeness of an internal sonic memory. It's a dream-like fantasia overlapping the first and third movements of the Holst. For example, the first 105 bars is an elongation of the beginning of

the third movement. It's a long, long build with the open concert G in the clarinets returning around m. 100, ultimately resolving down to F at the arrival in m. 106, psychologically keeping you suspended for nearly five minutes before it finally coalesces.

Nothing is exactly the same as the Holst original but there are moments of hyper lucidity that then fade back into dream. The progression of time is important to me. I want a sense that the music is moving on rails, pulling the listener along. That's what I want music to do for me and what I want for others as well.

Bryant also commented, "It was truly wonderful to be in the room helping to produce this recording by the Marine Band. This is what I want the listener's ear to hear."

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF DREAMS

DAVID MASLANKA

David Maslanka is one of the most significant composers for wind ensemble of his generation. He published over 150 pieces, fifty of which were for wind ensemble and eight of those full symphonies. He earned his BM degree from Oberlin Conservatory and both MM and PhD from Michigan State University. Prior to deciding to compose full time, he served on the faculties of Genesco College, Kingsborough Community College, and Sarah Lawrence College.

A Child's Garden of Dreams was commissioned by John and Marietta Paynter for the Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble. The première performance occurred at the 1982 North Central Division meeting of the College Band Directors National

Association held in Columbus, Ohio, with John Paynter conducting. Maslanka shared that in discussing the commission, Paynter said he wanted "the wind equivalent of Béla Bartók Concerto for Orchestra."

To describe the work, the composer wrote: "I came across the dreams that formed the basis of *A Child's Garden of Dreams* in [Carl] Jung's 'Man and His Symbols,' and thought immediately that there was music in them. They were the dreams of an eight-year-old-girl that spoke uncannily of her impending death. I decided to approach the dreams through active imagination, bringing each image into full conscious awareness."



Composer Steven Bryant
Courtesy Steven Bryant



"It is a five-movement symphonic suite for one-on-a-part wind ensemble. Prominent oboe solos tie the movements together. The second movement quotes the folk song, 'Black is the Color.' The third movement is the most graphic, a fierce depiction of a monster devouring the young girl. The fourth movement is the most abstract – the nature of creation, the girl sees the world in a drop of water – but also the centerpiece of the work. The final movement depicts a reversal: pagan dances in heaven, and angels doing good deeds in hell."

In an interview with Thomas Martin Wubbenhorst (an American conductor, educator, and Maslanka scholar), Maslanka described his initial process: "I typed all twelve dreams on a single sheet of paper, put the paper on the piano in front of me, and started finding musical ideas in bits and pieces as I read

each dream. It was a process of letting them 'light up' one at a time. The ones that came forward the strongest got used in the piece... With each dream, I tried to imagine a real picture, to put myself in that picture, and to allow the emotions and insights of that experience to come through my own system. The starting point was always a particular dream. The music is representative of the dream, though it does not describe it in a literal sense."

Maslanka created the titles for each of the movements. "I selected five of the twelve dreams as motifs for the movements of this composition."

There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.

A drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.

A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.

A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.

An ascent into heaven where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell where angels are doing good deeds.

In the Wubbenhorst interview, Maslanka said, "As a student at Oberlin, I performed in Igor Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments and *La création du monde* by Darius Milhaud and heard live performances of *Déserts* by Edgar Varèse. Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* is a strong influence on *A Child's Garden of Dreams*.... Percussion is certainly prominent in *A Child's Garden of Dreams*. In fact, the drumming groups in the 3rd movement ("a horde of animals ...") were inspired by the basketball pep-band at Northwestern University. The sound of this group hammering away

at one end of a cavernous field house made a strong impression on me and found its way into the piece."

About the title, Maslanka remembered: "It popped into my head one day. It is a variation on *A Child's Garden of Verses*, the collection of poetry by Robert Louis Stevenson. I wanted a title that would give a whimsical tone to the questions of death and transformation that were touched upon by the young girl. The rather formal reserve of the title *A Child's Garden of Dreams* gives no real clue as to the actual nature of the piece. This appeals to me."

COME SUNDAY

OMAR THOMAS

Omar Thomas is an exciting, fresh voice in the wind ensemble world. He is currently Associate Professor of Composition and Jazz Studies at the University of Texas at Austin and is a Yamaha Master Educator. He previously served on the faculties of the Berklee College of Music and the Peabody Conservatory.

He was awarded the ASCAP Young Jazz Composers Award in 2008 and was invited by the ASCAP Association to perform his music in their highly exclusive JaZzCap Showcase held in New York City. In 2012, Omar was named the Boston Music Award's "Jazz Artist of the Year." In 2019, he was awarded the National Band Association/William D. Revelli Composition Award for

Come Sunday, the first black composer awarded in the competition's forty-two-year history.

He began in music at age seven on trombone. With his mother's encouragement, he began to take music more seriously and along the way taught himself piano. Thomas said, "It wasn't until high school that I tried to write my own music. Mistakes are the best teacher. When you're learning, the best way is to imitate. It's how we learn to talk. We find our voice through other people."

Thomas began his college path at James Madison University, graduating in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in music education. "I went to school to be a high school band director. All my teachers were mentors to me and I wanted to do

the same thing, to be that person who was there for me. I got into composing seriously via my college jazz ensemble. My director pushed me to write for the big band and I wrote two pieces that years later ended up on my first album.” In 2006, Thomas moved to Boston to pursue a master’s degree in jazz composition at the New England Conservatory of Music.

To date he has composed eight works for wind ensemble, the second of which was *Come Sunday*. It was commissioned by the Illinois State University wind ensemble and was premièred by them in 2018 under the direction of Anthony Marinello. Since then it has been performed hundreds of times.

Come Sunday was an idea Thomas had thought about for fifteen years before he wrote the piece. “I played a lot of sacred music in wind ensemble. None of it was from black sacred traditions. I

grew up in choir singing spirituals, but felt like a lot of that music is rooted in trauma and I wanted to write something that reflected the joyful black experience. I said, ‘I’m going to write this just because nobody else has done it’. The title is a direct nod to Duke Ellington, who held an inspired love for classical music and allowed it to influence his own work in a multitude of ways.”

“*Come Sunday* is a two-movement tribute to the Hammond B-3 electric



organ’s central role in black worship services. The first movement, Testimony, follows the Hammond organ as it readies the congregation’s hearts, minds, and spirits to receive The Word via a magical union of Bach, blues, jazz, and R&B.”

“The first movement is harder than the second. Musicians need to understand that the music is designed to be performed by one person’s hands and feet on a Hammond Organ. The ensemble needs to function like one person.” In terms of interpreting the music he added, “Western notation is very finite—it’s only approximations. Performers need to understand how my articulations work, how the music is traditionally played. I communicate the style via homework for the directors. I’ll sing it for them if I’m there.”

“The second movement, Shout!, is a virtuosic celebration - the frenzied and joyous climactic moments when

The Spirit has taken over the service.” Thomas continued, “With regard to the second movement – there’s a classic jazz understanding that not every note is equally important. That’s antithetical to students who spend hours in practice rooms perfecting every note.”

Thomas had a new and personal vision of *Come Sunday* for wind ensemble: “I’m really about deconstructing the idea that these instruments and these ensembles are supposed to do one thing. That doesn’t honor the musicianship of the people who bring this inanimate object to life.” He added, “This piece is not just about black church music. I wanted to make space for other people to tell their stories. To all the black musicians in wind ensemble who were given opportunity after opportunity to celebrate everyone else’s music but our own - I see you and I am you. This one’s for the culture!”



“THE PRESIDENT’S OWN” UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

Established by an Act of Congress in 1798, the United States Marine Band is America’s oldest continuously active professional musical organization. Its mission is unique—to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. President John Adams invited the Marine Band to make its White House debut on New Year’s Day, 1801, in the then-unfinished Executive Mansion. In March of that year, the band performed for Thomas Jefferson’s inauguration and is believed to have performed for every presidential inaugural since. An accomplished musician himself, Jefferson is credited with giving the Marine Band its title, “The President’s Own.”

Whether performing for State Dinners or South Lawn arrivals, events of national signifi-

cance, or receptions, Marine Band musicians appear at the White House an average of 200 times each year. Every fall, the Marine Band performs throughout a portion of the continental United States during its National Concert Tour, a tradition initiated in 1891 by “The March King” John Philip Sousa, who was the band’s legendary 17th Director from 1880-92. While preserving its musical traditions, the Marine Band is equally committed to serving as a leading ensemble in the development of new repertoire for winds and continues to attract prominent guest conductors to its podium. Now in its third century of bringing music to the White House and America, “The President’s Own” continues to affirm that the arts are an invaluable bridge between people.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RYAN NOWLIN

Director Lt. Col. Ryan Nowlin joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in August 2010 as staff arranger. He was appointed Assistant Director and commissioned a first lieutenant in July 2014, was promoted to the rank of captain in July 2016, was appointed Executive Officer and Associate Director in May 2018, and earned the rank of Major in January 2020. He was promoted to his current rank in December 2023. On Dec. 20, 2023, during a Change of Command Ceremony officiated by Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps General Christopher J. Mahoney, Lt. Col. Nowlin became the 29th Director of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band.

With “The President’s Own,” Lt. Col. Nowlin has arranged and composed a variety of music for the Marine Band, Marine Chamber Orchestra, and small ensembles. His arrangements are frequently included in high-profile national events to include a 2013 collaboration with Beyoncé (“The Star-Spangled Banner”) and Kelly Clarkson (“America”) for the second inauguration of President Barack Obama as well as an arrangement of “The Star-Spangled Banner” for Jordin Sparks in honor of the anthem’s 200th anniversary at

Fort McHenry (2014). His setting of “Amazing Grace” is regularly included as part of the annual Marine Corps Worship Service held at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. In 2013, Lt. Col. Nowlin’s concert march “The Montford Point Marines” honoring the first African Americans to serve in the United States Marine Corps was premiered for President and Mrs. Obama at the Friday Evening Parade at Marine Barracks Washington. In 2018, he composed the march “Century of Service” in honor of 100 years of women’s service in the Corps.

Lt. Col. Nowlin is a 1996 graduate of North Royalton High School in Ohio. He earned both a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education and his Master of Music in Music Education and Conducting in 2004 from Bowling Green State University in Ohio, where he studied horn with Herbert Spencer, Jr. and conducting with Bruce Moss and Emily Freeman Brown. He has also studied composition with prolific composer Anne McGinty and has participated in workshops and master classes with several renowned conductors and educators including H. Robert Reynolds, Mallory Thompson, Harry Began, and Frederick Fennell.



RECORDING PERSONNEL

PICCOLO

GySgt Courtney Morton

FLUTE

MGySgt Elizabeth Plunk*
GySgt Ellen Dooley
GySgt Heather Zenobia
GySgt Kara Santos

OBOE

MGySgt Lesley Barrett*
GySgt Trevor Mowry*

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

GySgt Joseph Deluccio

E-FLAT CLARINET

GySgt Jonathon Troy

CLARINET

GySgt Kristin Bowers
SSgt Harrison Burks
GySgt Lucia Disano
GySgt Parker Gaims
GySgt Zachary Gauvain
GySgt Lewis Gilmore
MSgt Christopher Grant
GySgt Andrew Jacobi
SSgt Jakob Lenhardt
MSgt Patrick Morgan*
SSgt Jacob Moyer
MSgt Harry Ong
SSgt Angelo Quail
SSgt Samuel Ross
MGySgt Michelle Urznicok

BASS CLARINET

GySgt Andrew Dees

BASSOON

SSgt Matthew Gregoire*
SSgt Bridget Piccirilli
SSgt Stephen Rudman

SAXOPHONE

GySgt Jacob Chmara
MSgt David Jenkins
MGySgt Nomar Longoria*
MGySgt Steven Temme

TRUMPET

GySgt Robert Bonner
MGySgt Matthew Harding*
SSgt Tyler Lindsay
GySgt James McClarty
SSgt Brent Proseus
MGySgt Susan Rider
SSgt Daniel Taubenheim
MSgt Brian Turnmire

HORN

MGySgt Hilary Harding*
GySgt Timothy Huizenga
GySgt Brigitte Knox
MSgt Jennifer Paul
SSgt Emma Shaw

EUPHONIUM

SSgt Philip Broome
MGySgt Mark Jenkins*

TROMBONE

MGySgt Samuel Barlow*
MSgt Timothy Dugan
GySgt Christopher Reaves

BASS TROMBONE

MGySgt Karl Johnson

TUBA

MGySgt Franklin Crawford*
SSgt Benjamin St. Pierre
MGySgt Christopher Tiedeman

PERCUSSION

SSgt Jeffrey Grant
GySgt Michael Hopkins
MGySgt Mark Latimer*
MSgt Gerald Novak
MSgt Steven Owen
MGySgt Christopher Rose
MGySgt Ken Wolin

PIANO

SSgt Dominic Muzzi
GySgt Christopher Schmitt

HARP

SSgt Taylor Fleshman

DOUBLE BASS

SSgt Kevin Thompson

COME SUNDAY ADDITIONAL CLAPPING

Cpl Niala Banks, SSgt Danny Fookson, SSgt Bradley Geneser, MSgt James Holt, SSgt Tammy Lau, SSgt Aram Piligian, MSgt Jamie Schwendinger, SSgt Elena Specht

DIRECTOR

LtCol Ryan Nowlin

PRODUCERS

Capt Darren Y. Lin
1stLt Jose D. Toranzo

RECORDING/EDITING/

MIXING/MASTERING

SSgt Jacob Cypher
GySgt Michael Ducassoux
GySgt Ophir Paz
SSgt Aram Piligian

LIBRARIAN

SSgt Anya Brodrick

ALBUM ARTWORK & DESIGN

MSgt Brian Rust

ALBUM NOTES

Capt Frank Byrne, USMC (ret.)

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Come Sunday by Omar Thomas

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what dreams may come

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|------|---|--------------|
| 1. | SUITE NO. 1 IN E-FLAT, OPUS 28, NO. 1 | 10:51 |
| | GUSTAV HOLST / EDITED BY COLIN MATTHEWS | |
| | Chaconne | |
| | Intermezzo | |
| | March | |
| 2. | SUITE DREAMS | 10:17 |
| | STEVEN BRYANT | |
| 3—7. | A CHILD'S GARDEN OF DREAMS | 36:29 |
| | DAVID MASLANKA | |
| 3. | There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell. | 5:10 |
| 4. | A drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober. | 5:36 |
| 5. | A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl. | 3:19 |
| 6. | A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world. | 12:30 |
| 7. | An ascent into heaven where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell where angels are doing good deeds. | 9:54 |
| 8—9. | COME SUNDAY | 12:56 |
| | OMAR THOMAS | |
| 8. | Testimony | 7:17 |
| 9. | Shout! | 5:39 |
| | TOTAL TIME | 70:36 |