

PROGRAM NOTES

Faculty Recital

Mark Nelson, tuba

Marie Sierra, Piano

J.P. Wilbur, Cymbals

Pima Community College Music Recital Hall

April 14, 2004

Performers

Marie Sierra is a professional pianist who accompanies and records extensively. Her most recent recordings include *Seasons* and *An American Patchwork*, both with Yamaha Artist, saxophonist Michael Hester. Marie is in demand as an accompanist throughout the United States and Mexico. She has performed at numerous conferences, including the 1997 ITEC in Riva del Garda, Italy, the 2002 ITEC Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina and the 2003 Regional ITEC Conference at the University of Arizona. Marie has served on the faculties of the Belmont University in Nashville, and the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University. Mrs. Sierra earned her Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Piano Performance at the University of Miami.

J. P. Wilbur is a second year music student at Pima Community College where he studies percussion with Homero Ceron and performs with the PCC Wind Ensemble. He has performed around the Tucson area with several ensembles including the Catalina Chamber Orchestra, the Southern Arizona Symphony, and in various churches as a free-lance percussionist. He has also played for the musical *Anything Goes* at Pima and occasionally is asked to accompany the PCC Chorale and PCC Singers. He also serves as the Student Aide for the Instrumental Music Program at Pima.

Program

Serenade No. 12, op. 88 (1961)
Published by Theodore Presser, Inc.

Vincent Persichetti
(1915-1987)

I first worked on this piece as an undergraduate and have performed it a few times over the last 20 years. I find it an enjoyable and accessible unaccompanied tuba work that is from an earlier period in our repertoire history. Each movement is a small gem that could be used independently of the larger work. A variety of styles makes the set stand out as one of our more frequently performed works for this medium. The piece was commissioned by Harvey Phillips and premiered on November 14, 1962 in Elkhart, Indiana. Years ago at the Second International Brass Conference at Indiana University in the summer of 1984, I interviewed Harvey Phillips about the *Parable for Solo Tuba* also by Persichetti. I also asked how he commissioned the *Serenade*. He told me he had a conversation with Persichetti in the parking lot of Julliard about writing a solo tuba composition and within a day or so Persichetti approached him with the first movement already finished. The rest came quickly and the premiere took place the following year.

There have been few more universally admired twentieth-century American composers than Vincent Persichetti. His contributions have enriched the entire musical literature and his influence as performer and teacher is immeasurable. Born in Philadelphia in 1915, Persichetti began his musical life at age five, first studying piano, then organ, double bass, tuba, theory and composition. By the age of 11, he was paying for his own musical education and helping to support himself by performing professionally as an accompanist, radio staff pianist, orchestra member and church organist. At 16, he was appointed organist and choir director for the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, a post he held for nearly 20 years. A virtuoso pianist and organist, he combined extraordinary versatility with an osmotic musical mind, and his earliest published works, written when the composer was 14, exhibit mastery of form, medium and style. Concurrent with these early activities, Persichetti was a student in the Philadelphia public schools and received a thorough musical education at the Combs College of Music, where he earned a Mus. B. degree in 1935 under Russel King Miller, his principal composition teacher. From the age of 20, he was simultaneously head of the theory and composition departments at the Combs College, a conducting major with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute and piano major with Olga Samaroff at the Philadelphia Conservatory, in addition to studying composition with a number of important American composers. He received a Diploma in Conducting from the Curtis Institute and Mus. M. and Mus. D. degrees from the Philadelphia Conservatory. In 1941 Persichetti was appointed head of the theory and composition departments at the Philadelphia Conservatory and in the same year married pianist Dorothea Flanagan. A daughter Lauren, was born in 1944 and a son, Garth, in 1946. In 1947 he joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music, assuming chairmanship of the Composition Department in 1963. Persichetti was appointed Editorial Director of the music publishing firm of Elkan-Vogel, Inc. in 1952. He remained at Elkan-Vogel and Julliard until his death in 1987 --from the Theodore Presser website.



Sonata-Fantasia (1986)+*
Published by Tuba-Euphonium Press

Louis Calabro
(1926-1991)

The *Sonata-Fantasia* grew out of an exchange of correspondence between the performer and composer after a Vermont Symphony Orchestra performance of Calabro's *Third Symphony* in 1986. *Sonata-Fantasia* was premiered on September 16, 1987 by Mark Nelson and Sylvia Parker at a faculty recital at the University of Vermont Music Building Recital Hall. The piece, in Calabro's words, is "...sort of a 'macro-minimalist' composition where several melodies are heard over repeating ostinato figures by the pianist, especially in the outer movements." There are jazz elements such as added note chords and a modified "blues" scale in the second and third movements. He also makes daring use of sixteenth notes and extended range in fast tempo sections.

Louis Calabro (1926-1991) taught at Bennington College, Vermont from 1955 until his death. He has a diploma from the Juilliard School where he studied with his long-time friend and colleague Vincent Persichetti. In addition to being a prolific composer,

Calabro was also the conductor of the Sage Symphony in Bennington for over two decades and was a founding member of the Vermont Consortium of Composers.

Brillenbass for tuba, celeste, and cymbals (1993)+*
Published by American Composers Alliance.

Thomas Lawrence Read
(b. 1938)

Brillenbass was written for and dedicated to Mark Nelson, who, together with W. Ronald YaDeau and Brian Justison, gave the premiere performance at Millikin University on February 17, 1994. This new revision of the original work doubles the cymbal compliment from two to four. The composer supplied the following notes:

In the 18th Century the German word Brillenbass was a derogatory description of stereotypical accompaniment patterns whose abbreviated designation (./.) suggested eyeglasses. Appropriation of the term for the present music is not entirely ironic! The work's interrelated sections have the character of a sonataconcerto. The writing is at once virtuosic, humorous and lyrical, and explores some timbral possibilities provided by opposing the tuba with a percussion unit in this case celesta and cymbals. The music's fundamental rhythmic structure is sometimes governed by different, simultaneously projected pulses. This important structural motivator is alluded to by the following citation, included on the first page of the score: "I should like to euphonise that. It sounds an isochronism."
(Finnegans Wake)

Thomas L. Read, composer and violinist, was born in 1938 in Erie, Pennsylvania. He studied violin, composition and conducting with such noted musicians as Andor Toth, Richard Burgin, Leon Fleisher, and Benjamin Lees. As a violinist he has been a member of the Erie Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony, Boston Festival Arts and Handel/Haydn Society Orchestras, Vermont Symphony, and the Saratoga Festival of Baroque Music. He is Professor of Music at the University of Vermont and continues to appear as violin soloist and conductor. Read has composed over one hundred works, including music for small ensembles, full orchestra, solo voice, chorus, and musical theater. He has been a recipient of several Arts Council and University Stipends, and has been awarded fellowships such as McDowell Colony and the Charles Ives Institute. In the fall of 2003 Read was honored by a full concert of his music presented by the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble. His work is published by C.F. Peters, Tunbridge Music, and the American Composers Edition. A recent work, *ALCYONE*, for narrator, chorus, accordion, marimbas, steel drums and synthesizer, enjoyed a successful premiere at the Barbican Centre in London with subsequent performances at Harvard and Wesleyan Universities.



New England Reveries (1990)+*
Published by Nicolai Music

Neal Corwell
(b. 1959)

The following notes about *New England Reveries* have been supplied by the composer:

As a brass musician with a fascination for both synthesizers and composition, it was only natural that one day I would decide to combine these three musical loves. *Night Song*, a piece for solo euphonium accompanied by a pre-recorded synthesizer tape, was my first effort in this genre. Unlike many pieces for solo instrument with synthesizer, the music is tonal, and the synthesizer is NOT used merely as a source of

bizarre sound effects. Instead, analog and digital synthesis techniques are utilized as a means of expanding the timbral palette available to the composer in support of the featured instrument. Mark Nelson was present at the 1989 premiere of *Night Song*. He later commissioned me to write a similar piece for inclusion on his compact disc with Crystal Records. *New England Reveries* composition for solo tuba with a taped synthesizer accompaniment, is the product of that commission. The score was completed during July of 1990, and the final version of the synthesizer accompaniment was recorded during the first few weeks of the following September, just in time for its premiere. Though not specifically programmatic in content, the composition was inspired by the scenic beauty of the forests, mountains, and lakes of New England. The music is intended to evoke images similar to those that might be conjured up while contemplating these wonders of nature.

After having spent nine years with The US. Army Band in Washington DC (Pershing's Own) as one of the organization's featured soloists, and seven years as an adjunct faculty member at two colleges (Frostburg State University and Shepherd College) teaching low brass and electronic music, Neal Corwell is currently a freelance composer and euphonium soloist/clinician with a DMA degree in euphonium performance and pedagogy. He also rejoined the US Army Band after a several year hiatus. He has served as an elected member of the ITEA (the international society of tuba and euphonium performers) executive committee. Neal has toured Japan, and most of the US, as a guest euphonium artist, and was featured as both soloist and composer at several international music conferences in 1997, to include an appearance in Riva del Garda, Italy. In addition to the many live premieres and performances of Dr. Corwell's works worldwide, some of his compositions have been included on recent CD recordings released by Mark Records, Crystal Records, RJR Digital, TRYFAN, and Nicolai Music. Neal also composed and performed all the music for his solo euphonium/trombone CD, *Distant Images*. In addition to solo recitals, of either a formal or informal nature, he also enjoys making solo guest appearances with ensembles of various sizes, ability levels, and instrumentations. His solo recital repertoire includes not only the standards of the literature, but also many of his original works, many for the medium of solo with tape. The style of some of these works has been described as "A unique blend of 'New Age' spirituality and classical virtuosity." His recital programs also include many innovative arrangements (also with taped accompaniment) of classical favorites and other crowd-pleasers. Performances are punctuated by insightful comments and/or explanations of the music geared toward the age and background of the specific audience. Neal's years of experiences as both a private instructor and classroom teacher have given him the flexibility to handle various clinic or master class situations, and his broad range of musical experiences enables him to converse on many diverse music-related subjects. When working with low brass performers in either private or masterclass settings, he is able to provide students with insights and advice from the standpoints of both composer and performer. He has presented clinics on performing solos with tape, auditioning for and performing in military bands, the many uses of MIDI and other music technology, and many performance-related topics such as his methods for developing technique, tone quality, range, and consistency. He also frequently talks with composition and/or general music students about his own musical compositions and other composer-related topics.



--biographical information extracted from the Symphonia website:

<http://www.tubaeuph.com/symphonia/ColdFusion/NealCorwell.htm>

Sonatina for tuba and piano (1970)

Jan Koestier
(b. 1911)

Over the last 30 years, many tubists have been exposed to the music of Jan Koestier. This work dates from an explosive period of writing for the tuba worldwide and is considered by many college instructors to be part of our standard repertoire as it appears on multiple repertoire lists for tuba majors at many universities. The three-movement work is romantic with an emphasis on melodic writing and chromatic but tonal harmony. The full range of the tuba is explored in a whimsical fashion that allows the performer to demonstrate lyrical and agile performing skills.

Jan Koestier studied composition and theory at the Stern Conservatory (1924-26), and the Hochschule für Music in Berlin (1927-34). He studied with Walter Gmeindl and Julius Prüwer. Other compositions for tuba include the *Concertino* for tuba and piano.

+written for Mark Nelson

*recorded by Mark Nelson

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