

**PROGRAM NOTES**

**Mark Nelson, Tuba and Friends Recital**

Pima Community College Center for the Arts Music Recital Hall

April 16, 2003 7:00 P.M.

Mark Nelson, Tuba

Marie Sierra, Piano

Michael Sherline, Tuba

Frank Pickard, Narrator

**THE PROGRAM:**

*Sonata for Tuba and Piano* by Erik Nielsen (b. 1950) \*World Premiere  
Published by Middle Branch Music.

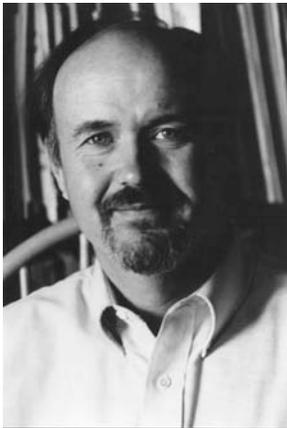
This three-movement work is the second composition written for Mark Nelson by this talented composer. His first, *Spiritual Alloys* for tuba and vibraphone, was premiered and recorded by Nelson while at Millikin University in Illinois. The composer has supplied the following notes:

I wrote the *Sonata for Tuba and Piano* in the spring of 2002 for Mark Nelson. I intended it to be a generally lighthearted work within the technical reach of a collegiate tubist. However, I also wanted the piece to appeal to professionals like Mark. I hoped that the piece would be fun to play and fun to listen to. The sonata is in three movements.

The first movement is playful and active. (At one time I had considered naming it something like "Hippo Dance.") The melody appears in a basic AABA format, is developed rhythmically in the middle of the movement and returns in a shortened version. There is then a short respite at a slower tempo before a short but active coda leads to the end of the movement.

Movement two is in the style of a jazz ballad. After a slow introduction by the piano, the tuba enters with the ballad melody. This melody is then repeated by the piano with the tuba accompanying it. Then follows an 8-bar variant which serves as a B section. The main melody then returns a final time. The middle of the movement is a 12-bar blues in a new key and at a faster tempo which features a boisterous stop chorus. We are then brought via a transitional passage back to the initial melody, which is played once and followed by a coda.

The final movement is a lyrical waltz which includes some bars which are either a bit long or a bit short, giving the waltz a slightly tipsy feel. The middle section of the piece is much slower and features a chorale-like piano part and a long melodic line in the tuba. Following a transition the waltz returns. Then comes a coda which builds to a final melodic statement and then the ending.



Erik Nielsen has been composing for 30 years and his catalog includes works for chorus, orchestra, solo instruments, chamber music of many configurations, and electronic music. His works have been performed in Europe and Australia as well as many locations in the United States and have been performed by many ensembles, including the Emerson and Ying String Quartets, the Killington and Manchester Chamber Players, Bread and Puppet Theater, the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Vermont Symphony, the Vermont Youth Orchestra and Village Harmony. He has won awards from ASCAP, the Vermont Arts Council, and in 1991 was chosen Vermont Composer of the Year by the Vermont Music Teachers Association. He has just been

awarded the National Symphony Orchestra's composition prize for Vermont, which includes a commission for a new work to be premiered at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C. He has also recently received commissions from the Vermont All-State Music Festival, Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph, the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Vermont Youth Orchestra. He was a 1994-95 recipient of a Vermont Council on the Arts Fellowship in music. In 1995 his piano quintet was performed at Carnegie Hall by the Manchester Chamber Players. In October, 2000, his opera, *A FLEETING ANIMAL: An Opera from Judevine*, a collaboration with poet/playwright David Budbill, was premiered to great acclaim in several locations in Vermont. In addition, Mr. Nielsen is the former Director of the Consortium of Vermont Composers, a position he held for three years. He is Composer-in Residence at Simsbury High School in Simsbury, Connecticut and also teaches music theory and composition with the Vermont Youth Orchestra. Mr. Nielsen lives in Brookfield, Vermont, with his wife, Barbara, and their daughters, Christina and Ingrid.

*Call of the River* by John Harmon

Published by Nichols Music Company, a division of Ensemble Publications.

*Call of the River* is one of those rare melodic pieces that tubist rarely have an opportunity to perform unless they are stealing from the repertoires of Schubert or Schumann or Brahms, for example. Harmon using long flowing lines in the tuba part with extended arpeggios in the piano accompaniment. Written for and premiered by Sam Pilafian, currently Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at Arizona State University, it has received many performances since its 1994 publication date.

*Tango Images* by Adriana Figueroa Mañas \*World Premiere

*Tango Images* is the result of a commission I undertook last year after corresponding with Ms. Mañas about a Tuba Fantasy-Concerto she wrote a couple of years ago that was recently premiered in Brazil. Each movement is a tango with a different and distinct style. Although sequences and chords often allude to popular music, the combination of the piano and tuba in this venue works quite well.



Adriana is flautist & singer-songwriter from Argentina, and graduated from the School of Music at the National University of Cuyo. As well as having played classically in various settings, including for the Symphonic Orchestra of Mendoza, she enjoys playing jazz, fusion and pop. In addition to the flute, she plays alto & soprano sax and piccolo. Her jazz band, "West Jazz Band" won the prize for the best band in Mendoza, and a woodwind ensemble that she was part of won first prize in the 1998 Antorchas Chamber Competition, playing a selection of her own compositions. She teaches music and flute at the English-German school, Konrad Lorenz, where she greatly

enjoys working with children. She has recorded two albums of songs for children, including "Canciones para los inquietos."

*Wonderland Duets* by Raymond Luedeke (b. 1944)  
Published by Tenuto Publications.

Published in 1971, this 1968 composition displays much of the whimsy Luedeke has brought to the concert stage in other works of his. He has also written another set of tuba duets entitled *Eight Bagatelles*. In this work, the texts are drawn from Lewis Carroll poems of which the narrator must read with relish while the two tubas take turns accompanying and leading in a rather thick but boisterous mix.



Dr. Raymond Luedeke was born in New York in 1944. He attended the Eastman School of Music, the Vienna Academy of Music, the Catholic University of America, and Northwestern University, from which he received a Doctorate in composition. His composition teachers were George T. Jones at Catholic University, George Crumb at the summer session of Dartmouth College and Allan Stout at Northwestern.

Beginning in 1967, Luedeke was a professor of composition and clarinet at the Universities of Wisconsin and Missouri, was a founding member of the Twittering Machine, a contemporary music ensemble of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and played with orchestras in Rochester, Milwaukee, and Kansas City. He has performed as Associate Principal Clarinet with the Toronto Symphony since 1981.

In recent years, the originality and craftsmanship of Luedeke's music has been recognized by numerous grants and awards, among them the first and second prizes from the 1983 Percussive Arts Society Composition Contest, the 1982 Orchestra Fanfare Contest to write the piece which opened the Toronto Symphony's Roy Thomson Hall, and the 1980 International Horn Society Composition Contest. Other awards include the 1976 Fericy Award for his Viola Sonata and a 1966 Fulbright Grant. He has received commissions from the Toronto Symphony, several universities, as well as from numerous individual performers.

--Biography excerpted from the Canadian Music Centre

*The Dancing King* by Jesse Ayers (b. 1951)  
Published by Tuba-Euphonium Press

The Dancing King was written for the composer's good friend Frank Banton and premiered by Jerry Young at the International Tuba-Euphonium Conference, Sapporo, Japan in 1990. The composer has supplied the following notes:

The title of this work refers to King David of ancient Israel, who, upon the recapture of the Ark of the Covenant from Israel's enemies, "danced before the Lord with all his might" (II Samuel 6:14). This music is a depiction of the elation and exhilaration described in the Old Testament scene as the warrior-poet leads his people in praise and thanksgiving.



Jesse Ayers (b. 1951) is one of only six American composers whose music was selected by the International Society for Contemporary Music for performance during World Music Days 1992 in Warsaw, Poland. His music has been performed in the United States, Europe, and Japan, including two International TubaEuphonium Conferences and the MENC national in-service in New Orleans. Ayers has received five consecutive Special Awards from ASCAP as well as grants from Meet the Composer and the American Music Center. In 1996, he was one of five

guest composers selected from across the United States to participate in the Symposium for New Band Music and he has been an artist-in-residence at the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Perspectives of New Music says Ayers' music is "appealing in its virtuosity, playfulness, and drive," and TUBA Journal describes his music as having "intense rhythmic drive and beautiful melodic writing sophisticated in texture and pleasurable to listen to." Ayers holds the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of Tennessee and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kentucky. His teachers have included Karel Husa, John Anthony Lennon, David Van Vactor, and conductor Donald Neuen. His compositions include works for orchestra, symphonic band, brass, percussion, piano, and chamber ensembles, as well as choral works, art songs, electroacoustic works, a miniballet, and a suite of traditional Christmas carols orchestrated on electronic music instruments.

Four Works Celebrating the Solstice/Equinox Cycle of 2001 by James Grant (b. 1954)

*Stuff* (Theme with Seven Variations for Solo Tuba)

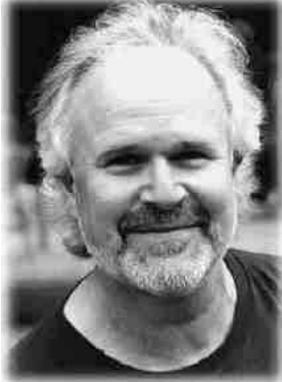
*Just a Thought* for tuba and piano

*High Autumn* for tuba and piano

*Endorphins* for tuba and piano

Published by Tuba-Euphonium Press.

The Solstice/Equinox Commissioning project involved 78 tubists from 30 states and 3 countries. Each paid a nominal commissioning fee to launch this project of intermediate works for tuba, each arriving during the subsequent solstice or equinox of the 2001 year. The composer's website has a list of all participants and a history of the project. Each piece is a gem designed for the intermediate tubist although there are plenty of challenging moments. The music is carefree, light, and brilliantly scored beginning with an unaccompanied theme and seven variations through a beautiful melody by way of a haunting interplay between tuba and piano to a delightful romp ending the series of compositions. Each was delivered on or near the 2001-2002 solstices or equinoxes in the order presented tonight beginning with the Vernal Equinox as part of the year-long commission.



The music of composer James Grant (b. 1954) is known by musicians and audiences for its colorful language, honed craft and immediacy. In recent years, Grant's music has been performed in the United States, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, the Czech Republic, England, Japan, and New Zealand by groups ranging from youth orchestras, to community choruses, to professional contemporary chamber ensembles, ballet companies and orchestras. In addition to receiving First Prize in the 1998 Louisville Orchestra competition for new orchestral music, Grant was one of five American composers to

win the 2001 Aaron Copland Award. After completing the DMA degree in composition from Cornell University in 1988, Grant was Assistant Professor of Music at Middlebury College in Vermont. In 1992, Grant left academe to compose and lecture full-time and from 1993-96 served as Composer-In-Residence to the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra in Fairfax, Virginia. As of this writing, Grant is in his third year as Composer-In-Residence to the Bay-Atlantic Symphony in Bridgeton, New Jersey. A resident of Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, he continues to be active as a lecturer and private teacher of composition. For further information on James Grant and his music, go to [www.JamesGrantMusic.com](http://www.JamesGrantMusic.com).

## THE PERFORMERS

### Marie Sierra, Piano

**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 and 2002 Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina. 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.



**Michael Sherline** has been principal tuba with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra since 1980. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Tuba Performance from The Catholic University of America and a Master of Music in Tuba Performance, with honors, from Michigan State University. He studied with David Bragunier of the National Symphony, Abe Torchinsky of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the University of Michigan, and Robert Whaley of Western Michigan University and the Kalamazoo Symphony. He was previously a member of the U.S. Navy Band and was Principal Tuba in the Lansing, MI Symphony. He has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, National Gallery

Orchestra, National Ballet, Washington Opera Society, American Ballet Theater, Southern Arizona Light Opera Company, and Arizona Opera. In July, 2001 Mr. Sherline

retired after 23 years as a dispatcher with the Pima County Sheriff's Department. For non-symphonic fun, he plays bass trombone in Big Band Express, a Tucson swing band.



**Dr. Frank Pickard** became Dean of Visual and Performing Arts at Pima Community College in 2000. The departments include Digital Arts, Visual Arts, and Performing Arts. He also oversees the Center for the Arts on West Campus. He was formerly the Chair of Theatre Arts at New Mexico State University at Las Cruces for many years. His doctorate is in Higher Education from the University of Arizona. He holds advanced degrees in Theatre.