

Five Decades of Tuba Solos

Pima Community College Faculty Recital Series

Dr. Mark Nelson Tuba, Marie Sierra Piano

Guests: Homero Céron, triangles; Dr. Matt Tropman, euphonium

Music Building Recital Hall, Center for the Arts, West Campus

7:00 PM

PROGRAM

Concertante for tuba and band by Harold L. Walters (1918-1984)

(piano reduction)

Sonata for Bass Tuba and Piano by Thomas Beversdorf (1924-1981)

I *Allegro con moto*

II. *Allegretto con grazioso e espressivo*

III. *Allegro con brio*

Babu Suite for tuba and piano* by Richard White (b. 1949)

1. *Procession and Dance*

2. *Lullaby*

3. *Jig*

4. *Babu in Love*

5. *Dance with the Herd*

**world premiere*

Dance Suite for Tuba and Triangle by Bennie Beach (1925-2016)

I *Cracoviennne*

II *Roundance*

III *Jazz*

Homero Céron, triangles

Three Florida Orchids by T.O. Sterrett (b. 1953)

I Wild Coco orchid: *Eulophia alta*

II Night Fragrance orchid: *Epidendrum nocturnum*

III Water Spider orchid: *Habenaria repens*

Dr. Matt Tropman, euphonium

PROGRAM NOTES

***Concertante* for tuba and band by Harold L. Walters (1918-1984) (piano reduction)**

©1960 Rubank, Inc. Available from Hal Leonard. \$7.99.

<https://www.halleonard.com/product/viewproduct.action?itemid=4479318>



Harold Laurence Walters (b. Sept. 29, 1918, d. October 22, 1984). He also used the pseudonym **Fred L. Frank**. He started playing cornet at the age of eight and got his first music lessons. During his five-year association with the *US Navy Band* as a tubist and arranger, he completed his music studies at the *College Conservatory of Music (CCM)* at the *University of Cincinnati* in Cincinnati, Ohio, including study with Nadia Boulanger. He also studied at the *American University* in Washington DC and at the *Washington College of Music* in Chestertown, Maryland, where he received his doctorate in 1943. He then worked as a conductor and composer at theaters, in film and in various orchestras and with the famous orchestra of Sigmund Romberg in Washington (DC) and in New York. Since 1947 he was associated with the music publisher *Rubank Publishing Company* as a composer, arranger and publisher. His *oeuvre* includes around 1500

compositions and arrangements as well as textbooks. He was versatile and composed in almost all musical styles. Walters was a member of the *American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP)*. In 1956 he was elected president of the *American Bandmasters Association* and a few years later he received an honorary doctorate in composition from the *Washington College of Music*. He has conducted wind orchestras and orchestras throughout the world. And when asked what those orchestras were, he always replied: *The smallest orchestra was a circus band of nine musicians, and the largest orchestra was made up of 12,800 musicians at the University of Michigan.*

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_L._Walters

The *Concertante* for tuba and band is a staple in the tuba literature for high school and younger college students. It was the first solo for the local solo/ensemble contest I performed in as a high school sophomore. I had been self-trained as a tubist without any lessons and minimal instruction from my band directors since taking up the tuba in 7th grade. I am amazed looking back in time that I could play this solo then. Over 45 years later I am playing it again for the first time.

***Sonata for Bass Tuba and Piano* by Thomas Beversdorf (1924-1981)**

I *Allegro con moto*

II. *Allegretto con grazioso e espressivo*

III. *Allegro con brio*

©1962 Southern Music Company. Available from Sheetmusicplus \$19.95.

<https://www.sheetmusicplus.com/title/sonata-sheet-music/193134>



Thomas Beversdorf, 1924-1981. Composer, conductor, performer. Beversdorf received his Bachelor's degree in music from the University of Texas at Austin, and his Masters' and Doctoral degrees from Eastman School of Music. He studied composition under Kent Kennan, Eric DeLemarter, Anthony Donato at UT; Bernard Rogers, Howard Hanson at Eastman; Aaron Copland and Arthur Honegger at Tanglewood; and Anis Fuleihan at Indiana University. Beversdorf was a member of the Pittsburgh and Houston symphonies, both as player and guest-conductor, and later taught at Indiana University from 1949-1980, heading both Composition and Brass Departments at the [now named] Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, Indiana. His works tend to break boundaries and assumptions about the kind of music typical of each

instrument, offering, for example robust and martial flute music and lyrical music for the tuba. Beversdorf's music is regularly performed worldwide, and some pieces have become standard repertoire for their instruments.

<http://beversdorf.com/about/>

I first performed this work as an undergraduate at Southwestern Community College in the mid-1970s. It is a challenging work with quartal harmonies, tricky cross-rhythms and difficult repetitive tonguing for the tubist. It was written in 1956 a year after the *Sonate für Bass Tuba und Klavier* by Paul Hindemith became the first sonata for tuba by an established composer. I have played it a couple of times since but lately I have been itching to play it again as it needs a pianist the caliber of Marie Sierra to pull it off!

***Babu Suite* for tuba and piano* by Richard White (b. 1949)**

1. *Procession and Dance*
2. *Lullaby*
3. *Jig*
4. *Babu in Love*
5. *Dance with the Herd*

©2018. Available from Whitecopress (www.whitecopress.com) distributed by Subito Music Distribution. Catalogue No. 29050380. \$23.95. [Babu Suite purchase page](#).



Composer **Richard White** was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1947 and now resides in Tucson, Arizona. His musical life has been as varied as it has been colorful. In his music, White has continually sought to communicate his ideas to the listener using strongly etched melodic lines, colorful, fresh harmonies and a solid architectural design. "The latter," he freely admits, "is the consummate challenge to the composer. Whether or not the listener is aware of it, architecture is the chief component of intelligibility. If music is still unintelligible to the listener -- even after repeated hearings -- whatever the composer is trying to get across will be completely lost. Most listeners want to arrive at their final destination with as few encumbrances as possible. It is the composer's responsibility to see to it that their 'trip' is safe

one, and one that includes as many adventures as possible!"

"Finding ideas is not a problem for me, what to do with them is. Shaping ideas into a meaningful scenario in which they contrast, argue, fight, and eventually come to terms, is a monumental challenge for me. Ultimately, each piece of music must stand independently, be wholly logical, and with some assistance from the Muses, even sound inevitable. These qualities exist in all great music. I think form (structure and architecture) is really the issue for all creative artists. It is our struggle, our nemesis. In short -- how can we speak in the clearest, leanest and most unequivocal terms, yet excite the listener at the same time?"

White majored in composition at the **Mannes College of Music** in New York City, studying with **Peter Pindar Stearns** and **William Sydeман**. However, it was not until he met the noted American composer, **Elie Siegmeister** that, as he noted, "my musical education began in earnest. All through my schooling I had the gnawing sense that something was missing. I couldn't put my finger on it, though. After being out of school for a few years, a haunting, deeply felt paralysis set in, a newly noticeable inability to sustain a composition beyond a few minutes in length. Nothing would satisfy me. I decided something should be done, and quickly! By a stroke of great fortune I chanced upon a composition of Elie Siegmeister's on the radio. I made the necessary phone calls and was soon hard at work with him. The first few years were especially trying. I

began again, from scratch, re-learning and re-thinking the simplest things -- the shapes of melodies and phrases, harmonic progressions, culminating in several arduous years of strict Sixteenth-century species counterpoint. In short, through intense personal supervision and the detailed study of every possible aspect of master composers and their music, every facet of my being as a composer was reshaped. Of course, I fought the process as much as I dared, but I knew in the end the process was what I had been seeking all along. After nine years of apprenticeship (I literally worked in the studio for hours on end, copying, cutting and pasting, and editing Elie's music in exchange for lessons) I finally began to feel some compositional 'muscle' take shape."

<http://www.whitcypress.com/bio.html>

Review from the *International Tuba Euphonium Journal*, volume 46, no. 3, Summer 2018

The *Babu Suite* was composed in late 2018 after conversations between the composer and tubist of the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra, Mark Nelson about writing a new tuba work. The title is based loosely on the children's book *The Adventures of Babu: From There to Here* by Justin Kalizewski. It is about an extraordinary elephant and his search for meaning in the cosmos. Richard White (b. 1947) is a composer with many music titles to his credit in many genres including piano, concert band, chorus, string orchestra, symphonies, operas, chamber music and instrumental solos among others. This is his first tuba work. He was educated at the Mannes College of Music and counts Elie Siegmeister as one of his mentors.

The work is in five movements titled *Babu's Procession and Dance*, *Lullaby*, *Jig*, *Babu in Love*, and *Dance with the Herd*. Although one may be tempted to compare this work with Alec Wilder's *Effie Suite No. 1*, the similarity really ends with the elephant!

Although the score stated Tuba in F, the range and nimbleness of the music lends itself to the CC tuba as a possibility. The total range is GG-g but the music goes above the staff only occasionally and touches the high G pitch once in the *Lullaby*. This could be a contest solo for the more advanced high school student. The piano part is mostly idiomatic and written as an accompaniment. The last movement, *Dance with the Herd*, does require three notes per hand chords at times as part of the opening bars and subsequent accompaniment.

What is endearing is the emphasis on melody for the tuba with mostly scalar steps and easy arpeggiated leaps. There are key changes for virtually every movement and the *Jig* delves into Cb major! Of all the movements, I think the *Lullaby* and *Dance with the Herd* offer the most in melodic intensity and technical prowess respectively. The music never wavers from tonal compositional practices although some of the harmonic implications do wander into interesting areas at times! In all, this is a wonderful new addition to the tuba repertoire that would easily satisfy a performer looking for something new and different for a recital.

--Mark Nelson, Pima Community College

***Dance Suite for Tuba and Triangle* by Bennie Beach (1925-2016)**

I *Cracovienne*

II *Roundance*

III *Jazz*

©1978 Neil Kjos Music Company (KJ.S1446). Available from sheetmusicplus, \$5.00

<https://www.sheetmusicplus.com/title/dance-suite-for-tuba-and-triangle-sheet-music/295603>



Bennie Beach, a native Mississippian, earned his undergraduate degree from Delta State University in 1948 after a tour of duty in the Army Air Force from 1943-46. His first teaching position was director of bands in Cleveland, Mississippi, 1948-49. In the summer of 1950, Bennie became a member of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra trumpet section, a position he held until 1975. He began his graduate work at George Peabody College-Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee in 1951. While in graduate school he studied composition privately with Roy Harris for two years, and also studied with Nicolas Slonimsky, Philip Slates, John Boda,

Howard Hanson, Ernst Krenek and William Schuman at various other times of his life. He received a M.A. degree in Music in 1951 and a M. Ed. Degree in 1951, both from Peabody College.

After serving as director of bands at Nashville's Litton High School from 1952-53, he became a member of the music faculty of Western Kentucky University in the fall of 1952 where he taught theory, composition, brasses and conducting. While at Western he was responsible for the development of the brass ensemble program. He also served on numerous campus-wide committees. Professionally active throughout his career, he was vice-president and composition chairman of the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Teachers. Other memberships held include MENC, ASCAP, National Federation of Musicians (since 1940), Phi Mu Alpha and the Warren County Kiwanis Club. In 1965, he was awarded the designation of Kentucky Colonel. He also served as the official state bugler of Kentucky from 1964 into the 1980's. Delta State University named Bennie Beach their Alumnus of the Year in 1975, and he was inducted into the DSU Music Hall of Fame in 1976. Also in 1976, he was named Kentucky Composer of the Year by the Kentucky Music Teachers Association.

Professor Beach has written extensively for vocal and instrumental mediums. As a result of his artistic success, he has been awarded numerous commissions. Notable among his many honors are two premier performances in Carnegie Hall. He retired from WKU in 1981. Ever the innovator, he coined the word *Harmatinality* to describe his unique tonal-atonal approach to writing music. Bennie Beach has been characterized as a fully dedicated teacher, one who remained consistently devoted to the welfare and musical development of his students.

<https://www.wku.edu/music/walloffame/index.php?memberid=5501>

I first heard this work when I was a student of Bart Cummings. It was dedicated to and premiered by him and composed in 1975. He also recorded it on his *Barton Cummings – Music*

for *Tuba* LP recording (Coronet LPS 3065). I had programmed it several decades ago and always liked the unusual instrument combination, rhythmic diversity, and carefree feeling when playing it.

Three Florida Orchids by T.O. Sterrett (b. 1953)

I Wild Coco orchid: *Eulophia alta*

II Night Fragrance orchid: *Epidendrum nocturnum*

III Water Spider orchid: *Habenaria repens*

©2009, GAR Music. Available from SymbiosisDuo. \$24.00.

<http://symbiosisduo.com/product/orchids>



Currently T.O. Sterrett is a conductor, pianist, and keyboardist on Broadway at *Wicked*, *Shrek the Musical*, *Cats*, and others. He is also a composer/arranger/orchestrator for film and television at PBS, the Discovery Channel, Great Projects Film Company, for Gabrielle Pfeiffer, Rachel Grady, etc. and had been an arranger and the music director for *Gutenberg! The Musical!* at The Actors' Playhouse, Off-Broadway, and at 59E59. He was also the keyboard player/backup vocalist for Didi Stewart, Andy Pratt, and others and played at Boston Music Clubs such as The Paradise, Jonathan Swift's, and more. He is also a staff composer for the OmniMusic Production Music Library, a BMI composer and publisher and a member of Local 802, AFM. He holds the B.A. in American Literature from Duke University.

His *ANIMALOOPIDY*, a CD of 14 original songs was called "the perfect pre-school album" by Disney's Family Fun magazine. His current project: <http://yourbestaudition.com/>.
-excerpted from <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/t-o-sterrett/4/49b/84>

Three Florida Orchids presents a variety of musical moods: raucous rhythm & blues; pensive tranquility; and playful mischief. These match more the names than the appearances of the orchids in question. In the first movement — *Wild Coco* — the euphonium and tuba are hot-dogging for pure fun. The second movement — *Night Fragrance* — gives them a chance to show off melodic beauty, and the last movement — *Water Spider* — is an opportunity to romp and play. *Three Florida Orchids* was commissioned by DEG Music Products/Willson USA.
--T.O. Sterrett

The *SymbiosisDuo*, Dr. Gail Robertson, euphonium, and Dr. Stacey Baker, tuba recorded *Three Florida Orchids* on their first CD recording. I first heard them play it at a conference and had to have the work. I performed it with the late Dr. Kelly Thomas at a faculty recital at Pima Community College on April 5, 2012 with Marie Sierra on piano. I always wanted to return to the piece with Dr. Matt Tropman, the current euphonium/tuba professor at the University of Arizona. This recital is just the moment to make it happen.

PERFORMERS



Dr. Mark Nelson is in his thirty-eighth year of teaching and performing. He is currently the Performing Arts Department Head and Director of Bands at Pima Community College. He served four terms as vice-president for professional development and a term as vice-president for collegiate/research for the Arizona Music Educators Association. AMEA also awarded him the George C. Wilson Leadership Award and the Excellence in Music Administration Award. As a member of the International Tuba Euphonium Association, Dr. Nelson was one of the initial recipients of the Clifford Bevan Award for Meritorious Work in Low Brass Scholarship. At the Southwest Regional Tuba Euphonium Conference at the University of Arizona in March, 2017, Dr. Nelson was presented with a plaque and citation from the ITEA Executive Board noting his 30+ years of continuous service as an editor for the *ITEA Journal*. His two CD recordings *New England Reveries* and *Aboriginal Voices* have received critical acclaim over the years. As an advocate for new music for the tuba, he has commissioned and premiered over 30 new works for the instrument. He has adjudicated bands and orchestras in several states and often is called to substitute for the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and Tucson Pops Orchestra. He is currently Principal Tuba of the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra. His degrees include the B.A. from Point Loma Nazarene University, the M.M. and D.M.A. from Arizona State University, the M.Ed. in Education Administration from the University of Vermont, and the Licentiate Performer's Diploma from Trinity College of Music, London. Previous appointments include Professor of Music (tenured) at Millikin University and Associate Professor of Music (tenured) at the University of Vermont as well as several years as a public school instrumental teacher. He has been the Performing Arts Department Head and Director of Bands at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona since 2000 where in addition to directing the wind ensemble, he teaches courses in electronic music, music fundamentals, exploring music and applied tuba and euphonium studio instruction. During the summer of 2016 through the first part of September 2016 and the fall of 2018, he also served as Acting Dean of the Arts Division.



Marie Sierra is a professional pianist who performs collaboratively in over 40 concerts annually and is formerly the staff pianist for the Tucson Girls Chorus and currently the staff pianist for the Tucson Boys Chorus. Recently, Marie has performed and recorded with Artists Michael Becker (trombone) and Viviana Cumplido (Flute). She has also recorded extensively with Yamaha Artist and Saxophonist, Michael Hester, on *Seasons* and *An American Patchwork*. Marie is in demand as an accompanist throughout the United States and Mexico. Additionally, she has performed at numerous international music conferences, including the 2010 International Tuba Euphonium Conference in Tucson. Marie has served on the faculties of the Belmont University in Nashville, and the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University. Ms. Sierra earned her Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Piano Performance at the University of Miami.



Homero Cerón, concert percussionist, is based in Tucson, Arizona. Homero has lived a diverse life as a percussionist. Starting in the music business as a 12 year old drummer in Monterrey, Mexico, he went on to study music at The Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in the mid 70's followed by graduate work at The University of Arizona. He has played: drums/vibes/timpani and orchestral percussion in many different settings from small jazz combos to symphony orchestras, ballet, opera and in the orchestra pit of numerous touring shows. He has appeared as a soloist on marimba/vibraphone and percussion with various chamber groups including the Tucson Symphony, True Concorde and Tucson Pops Orchestras. He is the PCC adjunct percussion instructor since 1989 and is the recipient of the Arizona Arts Award (1999) and the You are my Sunshine award

(Young Audiences of America 1996). He presently is the Principal Percussionist of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Timpanist of the Tucson Pops, Timpanist/percussionist with True Concorde and freelances as a marimba, vibraphone and steel drum player as well as a musician in jazz and chamber music. Homero is co-director of The Tucson Latin Jazz Nonet, an ensemble that specializes in Afro-Cuban jazz.



Dr. Matthew Tropman currently serves as Assistant Professor of Tuba/Euphonium Studies at the University of Arizona and is an active freelancer, soloist and chamber musician. His performances have been praised in numerous publications such as the New York Times, which stated “Tropman makes a serious case for the euphonium as a solo instrument.” An active clinician and recitalist on both the euphonium and tuba, Matt has performed and taught throughout the U.S. and Europe. He recently published a euphonium method book and has numerous other pedagogy projects in development. Matt’s two commercially released two CD’s; *Continuum* and *From the Balcony* (Summit Records), have been featured on programs such as NPR’s “All Things Considered”, CBC Radio’s “Disc Drive”, and

“Music and Company”. He has performed with numerous bands, orchestras and chamber groups including the San Francisco Symphony and the Detroit Symphony. In his early career as a member of the U.S. Marine Band (President’s Own), he frequently performed as a soloist throughout the U.S. on the band’s National concert tours. Dr. Tropman received his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in euphonium performance from the University of Michigan and Arizona State University, respectively, and the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in tuba performance from the University of Michigan.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Mark Nelson
Pima Community College
2202 W. Anklam Road
Tucson AZ 85755
520-206-6826
manelson@pima.edu
www.marknelsontuba.com