

The St. Olaf Band

presents

A Fantasia in G



Timothy Mahr, Conductor

with guest artist:
Melissa Morey '00, *horn*

Saturday, October 5, 2013 • 7:30 p.m.
Skoglund Center Auditorium • St. Olaf College

THE PROGRAM

Fantasia in G (1983)

Timothy Mahr (b. 1956)

Fantasia in G is a joyful celebration for winds and percussion. The piece was inspired by the opening line of Friedrich Schiller's poem, *Ode to Joy*: "*Freude, Schoener Goetterfunken*" (Joy, Bright Spark of Divinity). This is the same text that Ludwig van Beethoven used in his famed *Symphony No. 9*. *Fantasia in G* was written for the St. Olaf Band and was premiered by that ensemble in January 1983.

Colonial Song (1905–12)

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)

Percy Grainger was a unique talent. Quite precocious, he made his first concert tour when he was 12. Soon afterwards, he went to Germany with his mother, Rose, to further his training as a pianist and composer. In 1906 his playing so impressed Edvard Grieg that the latter invited him to his home in Norway. They spent the summer of 1907 preparing the premiere of Grieg's hallmark *Piano Concerto*, due to be conducted by the composer later that year in Leeds, England. Grieg died before the performance, but Grainger's rendition established him as one of the concerto's greatest interpreters.

In the brief time they worked together, Grieg's love of national music inspired Grainger to look closely at English folk songs. With the aid of a phonograph, Grainger collected songs from folk singers, and while he had no formal training as a composer, he created many famous arrangements from these collections of songs. Of himself, Grainger said, "I regard the study of native music and a close association with folk-singers [peasants, sailors, etc.] as the most fruitful influence in my creative career."

Unlike many of Grainger's other compositions, however, *Colonial Song* is not based on folk music, but is rather composed of original melodies. Grainger initially finished *Colonial Song* in 1911 for piano. The piece was a gift to his mother, and Grainger wrote that the work was "an attempt to write a melody as typical of the Australian countryside as Stephen Foster's exquisite songs are typical of rural America."

Olav Trygvason, Scene III (1889)

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)
arr. Chalon Ragsdale

One of Grieg's dreams was to compose the "Great Norwegian Opera", and in 1873 he appeared to have the makings of just such a project at hand. Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, the great Norwegian poet and playwright, had developed three scenes of a libretto for the opera, which was to focus on Olav Trygvason, the revered Norwegian historical figure and King of Norway from about 995 A.D. to 1000 A.D. However, the opera remains a case of "what might have been," for, due to a failure of communication between composer and playwright, the work was never completed.

Grieg: A Symposium (ed. Gerald Abraham) contains a section by John Horton on Grieg's works for the stage, in which Horton tells us,

Bjørnson seems to have begun *Olav Trygvason* in 1872. In July of the following year he sent Grieg the first three scenes with a characteristically exuberant note promising the remainder of the work and urging Grieg to have the whole opera ready by the following October. Grieg not unnaturally wanted a synopsis of the plot, or at least to know how the opening scenes were to be related to the whole drama. But Bjørnson had already gone off on a fresh tack; he had begun in the same year to interest himself in writing plays about contemporary life and manners, such as *Redaktøren* (The Editor) and *En Fallit* (A Bankruptcy), which in some ways ran on parallel lines to the experiments Ibsen was making at the same period. It is therefore not surprising that Bjørnson found it difficult to drag himself back to historical drama and complete *Olav Trygvason*; what was less reasonable was his fury with Grieg for undertaking *Peer Gynt* in the summer of 1874, thereby shelving *Olav* for what Bjørnson took to be another opera text. The unedifying dispute dragged on for several years, dramatist and composer accusing each other of procrastination and negligence.

But Bjørnson never sent another line, and Grieg abandoned the work as an opera, letting the sketches lie in his desk until the end of 1889, when he adapted them for concert performance. This cause of estrangement between the two friends led, happily, to an opportunity for reconciliation when Grieg dedicated the concert version of *Olav* to Bjørnson in warm and generous terms.

...Bjørnson's verses describe *Olav's* return to Norway, after an upbringing in England, to claim his realm and establish the Christian faith there, and Grieg's setting is a straightforward, even obvious one, intended for massed singing by amateur male voices with organ accompaniment (to which orchestral parts were added for a later revival).

The setting of the three extant scenes of *Olav Trygvason* is an ancient Norse temple. The people, led by a high priest and a *vølva* or prophetess, are invoking the counsel of the gods on the approach of *Olav* and his 'new gods, strange gods.' The *vølva*, after carving runes to control the evil spirits, prophesies that *Olav* will enter the temple; 'Come he unscathed out, then will we believe!' The people thank the gods for their message. High priest and elders march round the sacred fires carrying the ceremonial horns."

Scene III is a series of pagan ritual dances, leaping over fires, a sword dance, etc. The participants are celebrating their gods and pagan ceremonies, while at the same time summoning their courage to face the approaching intruder, *Olav Trygvason*. According to Grieg's wife Nina, Scene III was to "conclude with a scene in which the high priest's daughter, left behind in the deserted temple, is about to close the doors when she is suddenly confronted by the tremendous figure of *Olav* standing in dazzling armour on the threshold. Involuntarily she sinks to her knees before him." Certainly the exciting ending of this neglected masterpiece would have provided a suitable climactic moment.

—notes by arranger Chalon Ragsdale

Concerto in B flat major for Horn, Op. 91 (1951)**Reinhold Glière (1874–1956)**

1. Allegro

trans. Dan Phillips

Melissa Morey '00, *horn*

Along with concerti by Wolfgang Mozart, Franz Joseph Haydn and Richard Strauss, Reinhold Glière's *Concerto for Horn in B flat* is one of the best-loved staples of the horn repertoire. Although it was completed in 1951, when contemporary composers were exploring modern, experimental techniques, Glière's last completed orchestral work is firmly rooted in the Romanticism of the previous century. At the time, his somewhat conservative style drew favor from the Russian government. In fact, some music historians consider him a purveyor of conventional and sentimental "art that serves the people." Nevertheless, generations of horn players have relished the opportunity to play his horn concerto, which is notoriously long and demanding but also beautifully showcases the versatility and range of the instrument.

This work came about when Valery Polekh, the principal horn of Moscow's Bolshoi Theater, suggested the idea to Glière during a rehearsal break. Polekh shared his understanding of the horn with the composer. He later recalled, "Glière said that what he heard was an instrument absolutely new to him; that it was an instrument for solo and concerts, and that he would have to take another interesting and unexplored approach." After a year, the composer invited Polekh to play from the just-completed manuscript. Polekh stated, "I could feel with my entire self that the concerto was a success. The composer put his whole heart, soul, talent, and great love for the instrument into it. I felt that the concerto would become a horn player's favorite. Glière did not even ask me about my impressions. He could see it for himself and sense it in my enthusiastic attitude."

Ballad (1946)**Morton Gould (1913–96)**

Morton Gould composed his *Ballad for Band* for the famous Goldman Band, a professional ensemble in New York City. Although considered by many to be one of the staples of the band repertoire, the work is somewhat of a hidden gem, receiving far fewer performances than merited by the quality of its composition. Modeled on the harmonies and melodies of the African-American spiritual but utilizing original material, the *Ballad for Band* resembles a tone poem in the truest sense of the word. The composer's subtle and varied use of instrumental timbre in the outer sections of the ternary structure provide lyric contrast to the vigorous middle section, alive with the energy and flavor of a vigorous spiritual. His musical choices are representative of the nationalist trends prevalent in American composition during the 1940s.

Morton Gould was a child prodigy both as a pianist and as a composer. His first composition was published when he was six years old and, a year later, he was engaged at age seven to play the piano for a radio station. He joined the musical staff of Radio City Music Hall when he was only 18, and by the age of 21 he was conductor and arranger for his own radio program. Gould was comfortable composing in many genres and his legacy includes works for Broadway, movies, ballet, television, band, orchestra, and solo instruments with orchestra. Gould's career as a composer, educator, and arts administrator culminated in 1994 with a prestigious Kennedy Center Lifetime Achievement Honor, and with the 1995 Pulitzer Prize in Music for his piece entitled *String Music*.

Oddities for Horns (2004)**Douglas Hill (b. 1946)**

4. Nines

Melissa Morey '00, Kira Seidel '14, B Crittenden '14, Kayla Espindola '16, *horns*

Beacon of Polaris (2010)**Gary Gilroy (b. 1958)**

Beacon of Polaris was composed to honor the first graduating class of Clovis North Educational Center in Fresno, California, along with its teachers and the whole community. As the school defined its purpose, it developed an oath that became known as the Code of the North. The code encourages students to live each day with courage, take pride in their work, and remember that character counts, even when no one is looking. Composer Gary Gilroy states, "This piece is an expression of appreciation to those who provide a guiding light and path, a Beacon of Polaris, for the many people who will teach and learn in the classrooms of the future."

Gary Gilroy is a Professor of Music and Director of Bands at California State University, Fresno, where he has taught since 1993. He is a graduate of the University of Oregon, where he completed his doctorate in 1995. Gilroy has served for 14 years as a board member and former president of the California Band Directors Association. He also served for eight years on the board of the National Band Association as a Member at Large and as the Western Division Chairman. He is in demand as a guest conductor, having previously appeared in 39 states as well as throughout Canada. An ASCAP award-winning composer, Gilroy's music is published for concert band, marching band, and percussion ensembles through a variety of publishers. Gilroy also served as the arranger/composer for the 2008 Olympic Orchestra in Beijing, China.

—program notes compiled by Timothy Mahr





• **Our Guest Artist** •

Melissa Morey '00 is a free-lance horn player, singer, and teacher who holds a master of music degree in horn performance and pedagogy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she studied with Douglas Hill. She earned a bachelor of music degree (with departmental distinction) in vocal music education from St. Olaf College, where she studied horn with Priscilla McAfee and voice with Margaret Eaves-Smith. In her college career, Morey was a member and featured soloist of the St. Olaf Choir, St. Olaf Band, and St. Olaf Orchestra. More recently, Morey has performed in numerous professional vocal and instrumental groups throughout the Twin Cities region, most notably the Minnesota Orchestra and the Dale Warland Singers. She teaches out of her home studio and also serves as principal horn for the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Morey also recently joined the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, serving as the horn teacher as well as a member of River Falls Brass. She lives in St. Paul with her husband Nicholas Ellison '01 and their two cats, Boris and Natasha.

Upcoming St. Olaf Band Concerts

(All on-campus events are free and open to the public and streamed at <http://www.stolaf.edu/multimedia>.)

Saturday, Nov. 9: Festival of Bands
4 p.m. ♦ Skoglund Center Auditorium

Sunday, Dec. 8: Christmas Festival Sunday Service
10:30 a.m. ♦ Boe Memorial Chapel

Saturday, Jan. 25 – Saturday, Feb. 8: Winter Tour

Edina High School
Saturday, January 25, 7 p.m.
Edina, Minnesota

St. Paul Central High School
Sunday, January 26, 3 p.m.
St. Paul, Minnesota

Linn-Mar High School
Saturday, February 1
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Bettendorf High School
Sunday, February 2
Bettendorf, Iowa

**Corbett Center for the Performing Arts,
University of Cincinnati**
Monday, February 3
Cincinnati, Ohio
**Joint concert with the CCM Wind Orchestra*

North Hills High School
Tuesday, February 4
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
**Joint concert with the North Hills High School Wind Ensemble*

Bowling Green High School
Wednesday, February 5
Bowling Green, Ohio

Shattuck Music Center, Carroll University
Thursday, February 6
Waukesha, Wisconsin
**Joint concert with the Youth Wind Orchestra of Wisconsin*

DeKalb High School
Friday, February 7
DeKalb, Illinois

Verona High School
Saturday, February 8
Madison, Wisconsin

Monday, Feb. 10: Tour Home Concert
7:30 p.m. ♦ Skoglund Center Auditorium

Saturday, April 12: Concert with the St. Olaf Orchestra
2 p.m. ♦ Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis

Thursday, May 1: Run-Out Concert
11:30 a.m. ♦ Northfield Middle School

Saturday, May 3: Spring Concert
3:30 p.m. ♦ Skoglund Center Auditorium

Saturday, May 24: Celebration Weekend Concert
3 p.m. ♦ Skoglund Center Auditorium

Tuesday, May 27 – Tuesday, June 10
Tour to Spain, France, and Italy

The St. Olaf Band

TIMOTHY MAHR, CONDUCTOR ~ TERRA WIDDIFIELD, MANAGER

PICCOLO

+Δ Ida Zalk, *Maplewood, Minn.*

FLUTE

Emily Baker, *Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Libby Brown, *Ipswich, Mass.*

Kristina Butler, *Burnsville, Minn.*

†*Δ Chappy Gibb, *Oak Park Heights, Minn.*

Elizabeth Gosse, *Iowa City, Iowa*

Emily Haller, *Centennial, Colo.*

Kelsee McDermott, *Maplewood, Minn.*

Δ Mariah Meyers, *Sioux City, Iowa*

Gabrielle Sanderson, *Maple Grove, Minn.*

Nick Swanson, *Dublin, Ohio*

Elizabeth Ulanday, *Libertyville, Ill.*

†Δ Joshua Weinberg, *St. Peter, Minn.*

+Δ Ida Zalk, *Maplewood, Minn.*

OBOE

† Angela Boone, *Richardson, Texas*

*• William Raun, *Minden, Neb.*

Luke Simonson, *Morristown, Minn.*

➤ Δ Elizabeth Townsend, *Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

E-FLAT CLARINET

+Δ Jacob Meyer, *St. Paul, Minn.*

CLARINET

Δ Joseph Barnard, *St. Paul, Minn.*

Amanda Bauer, *Apple Valley, Minn.*

Natalie Bentley, *Edina, Minn.*

Δ Grace Clark, *Lawrence, Kan.*

Δ Jennifer Crawford, *Roselle, Ill.*

Sarah DeVries, *Monroe, Iowa*

Andrew Horton, *Lake Forest Park, Wash.*

Anna Koester, *Bloomington, Minn.*

†Δ Erinn Komschlies, *Appleton, Wis.*

Zoe Kosmas, *Eden Prairie, Minn.*

*•Δ Annie Lips, *Orono, Minn.*

Ben Lipson, *Centennial, Colo.*

+ Jacob Meyer, *St. Paul, Minn.*

Amy Neidich, *Sioux Falls, S.D.*

Anika Pruiem, *Grand Rapids, Mich.*

Donyell Sison, *Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Annika Wayne, *Macomb, Ill.*

BASS CLARINET

*Δ Allison Brumfield, *Tullahoma, Tenn.*

† Kate Fridley, *Apple Valley, Minn.*

Δ Jenny Mohn, *Eden Prairie, Minn.*

Δ Jonathan Sanchez, *Columbia, S.C.*

CONTRALTO CLARINET

Benjamin Cooper, *Florence, Mass.*

CONTRABASS CLARINET

Margaret Gerty, *Lindstrom, Minn.*

BASSOON

Ethan Boote, *Ada, Mich.*

† Joshua Kosberg, *Wildwood, Ill.*

Eliza Madden, *Burlington, Vt.*

~*Δ Linnea Pierson, *San Jose, Calif.*

ALTO SAXOPHONE

* Cianna Bedford, *New Germany, Minn.*

Brian Craig, *Rochester, Minn.*

Erica Hall, *Waseca, Minn.*

†Δ Derek Smith, *Thousand Oaks, Calif.*

Elizabeth Trites, *Overland Park,*

Kans.

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Jessica Anderson, *Gonzales, La.*

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Δ Dylan Polivany, *Buffalo, Minn.*

CORNET/TRUMPET

Δ Sarah Berry, *Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Eliza Block, *Tacoma, Wash.*

Rebecca Cooper, *Florence, Mass.*

Maia Erickson, *Rochester, Minn.*

Tristan Frank, *Mount Horeb, Wis.*

Ryana Holt, *Colorado Springs, Colo.*

Drew Larson, *Wadena, Minn.*

Austin Martin, *Thornton, Colo.*

Stephen Martin, *Mounds View, Minn.*

†* Tim McCarthy, *Brush Prairie, Wash.*

Kellan Passow, *Maple Plain, Minn.*

Christopher Wellems, *Lincolnshire, Ill.*

HORN

B Crittenden, *DeKalb, Ill.*

Nathan Crowe, *Wheaton, Ill.*

Claire Dennis, *Middleton, Wis.*

Kayla Espindola, *Eden Prairie, Minn.*

Madeleine Folkerts, *Port Orchard, Wash.*

Irene Henry, *St. Louis, Mo.*

Katelyn Hewett, *Wauwatosa, Wis.*

†*Δ Kira Seidel, *Minneapolis, Minn.*

TROMBONE

Whitney Lussier, *Charlotte, Vt.*

✧ Phillip Meyer, *Woodstock, Ill.*

Abigail Senuty, *Bellingham, Wash.*

Ben Stevens, *Rochester, Minn.*

†• Ramsey Walker, *Vashon, Wash.*

BASS TROMBONE

✧*Δ Mitch Evett, *Wexford, Pa.*

Matthew Johnson, *Sudbury, Mass.*

EUPHONIUM

†•*Δ Paul Davis, *St. Louis, Mo.*

Nicholas Hoverstad, *Waseca, Minn.*

Adam Sanders, *Brentwood, Tenn.*

TUBA

Jack Langdon, *De Forest, Wis.*

†*Δ Peter Micholic, *Apple Valley, Minn.*

Michael Petzold, *Naperville, Ill.*

Meredith Varie, *Indianapolis, Ind.*

STRING BASS

* Micah Stoddard, *Omaha, Neb.*

HARP

Δ Grace Clark, *Lawrence, Kan.*

PIANO

Michael Betz, *Mason City, Iowa*

PERCUSSION

†* Michael Betz, *Mason City, Iowa*

Δ Soren Docken, *Chatfield, Minn.*

Δ Tommy Dolan, *Edina, Minn.*

Dan Frankenfeld, *Inver Grove Heights, Minn.*

Andrew Hess, *Ann Arbor, Mich.*

John Kronlokken, *Eden Prairie, Minn.*

Δ Tim O'Grady, *Fort Collins, Colo.*

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