ST. OLAF BAND
TIMOTHY MAHR, CONDUCTOR

SPRING CONCERT

SUNDAY, APRIL 07, 2019  |  3:30 P.M.

BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL
**Program**

*Feierlicher Einzug der Ritter des Johanniter-Ordens* (1909)  
Michael Terry Carahez '20, organ

Richard Strauss (1854–1949)  
transcribed by C.R. Spinney

Early in the 20th century, Richard Strauss accepted a commission to create processional music for an investiture ceremony. In English, the title of this work is "Fanfare for the Solemn Procession of the Knights of the Order of St. John." A fraternal organization with roots going back as far as the 11th century, the order still has offshoots that are doing charitable works (primarily in aiding the poor and the sick) around the world.

The original scoring of this piece included parts for 15 trumpets, 4 horns, 4 trombones, 2 tubas, and timpani. Strauss later scored the work for full orchestra, including organ and optional chorus.

— Notes compiled by Timothy Mahr

"out of a mountain of despair..." (2019)  
(Premiere Performance)  
Professor Emeritus Mac Gimsie, poet and sculptor

Erika Malpass '19 (b. 1997)

The composer writes:

This piece was written in response to poetry by Mac Gimse, written for the 51st anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I recognize that I am not a part of King’s marginalized community, and that I have approached this process from a place of privilege. In no way do I attempt to speak for any marginalized peoples, rather I merely aim to reflect, respond, and honor Dr. King with my music.

The piece begins, as the poem does, with a depiction of a storm. I used extended techniques and a freer notation system to create an organic yet intense beginning. After the storm reaches its climax, it fades away, opening the space for the next section which mirrors the second stanza of the poem. Here I focused on words like "stir," "nurtured," and "grow." There’s a melody line in the soprano saxophone which is blurred and echoed by the flutes and clarinets. This softer, more distant moment creates the space to process the intensity and violent chaos that has just occurred. The music starts to gain momentum and other instruments join in, creating a composite melody line that extends up and up, reaching ever higher, searching for an answer.

The third stanza of the poem quotes King’s “I Have a Dream,” using it as a foundation on which to build a better world for the future. It looks back on the Civil Rights movement and everything that was accomplished for King’s marginalized community in his lifetime. It is comforting to look back at this speech and the early Civil Rights movement, as Rachel L. Swarns mentions when reflecting on the 50th anniversary of King’s assassination, because “holding on to the memory of the earlier Dr. King allows us to focus on our nation’s progress, not on the deeply entrenched problems that remain.” I struggled with the second half of Gimse’s poem; his words shine with optimism and hope that we can and will build a better world. But it has been fifty years since King’s assassination, and even as an outsider from his marginalized community, I can see that King’s goals have not yet been fully realized. As an ally, I see us quote King’s call to peace but then fail to act when it really matters. We turn a blind eye to the systematic inequality we all create through our inaction, quietly supporting the institutions that maintain our privilege and marginalize others. When you read some of his later speeches, you’ll notice that all of the issues he was raising remain relevant and unsolved today. With the second half of my piece, I hope to convey that we should continue to honor and remember Dr. King, but that we can’t truly honor him without continuing his work.

The poet writes:

The significance of the life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has been stirring in my heart for decades while I have been trying to grasp the impact of racial issues from the time of the Black African migration into the USA, to current eruptions of racial violence, including recent racial tensions on the St. Olaf campus. Today’s poetry began with notes from my historical view of the tragic Black cultural reality, which, as you will hear, reaches into a host of social
and political struggles, each of them met and challenged by MLK Jr.’s practice of non-violent civil disobedience. It is based on his four words: Justice, Democracy, Love, and Hope. Justice is framed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Democracy in the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Both of these were strongly influenced by the protests organized by MLK Jr. Love is witnessed in his passion as a pastor for those who suffer, even as he was being crucified. And Hope is written in his vision for a better world in the award of his Nobel Peace Prize.

“A Stone of Hope”
Poetry for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Mac Gimse
A tribute on the 51st anniversary of his death (April 4, 1968)
Music composed by senior music major, Erika Malpass, for the St. Olaf Band

Audience, please speak all words in **bold type**:

“Hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.”
You begin me wind, the trees mime your gallop as you race across the crouching hillside, gathering into great thunderheads of power, to send lightning-grabs of pent up torrents crashing down into the chaos of my unsuspecting world, to crush my arm-in-arm march to be free at last, and violate my innermost sacred chamber ...without my permission.

“Hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.”
Ah wind...you stir the waters with *Holy Spirit* sounds to breach wombs of readiness, that will deliver children of mercy to be nurtured by us, to grow in wisdom and strength, and lead us onto common ground, where soils are saturated by every mix of human blood, and soaked down by human tears, that we might learn to sow our seeds of peace into fields of a gentler faith ...asking the God of all religions for permission.

“Hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.”
We lean against our moral obligations to friend and foe alike, bracing up each bridge of passage that pushes us to our most urgent quest. “I have a dream.” Upon this rock we will create love, not hatred. “I have a dream today.” Upon this rock we will offer mercy, not revenge. “I have a dream that one day” Upon this rock we will build peace, not war, upon war, upon brutal war, until together, as one human flesh, we pronounce a verdict of mutual respect between the powerful and the powerless, for all future generations to follow, ...making peace their only permission.

“Hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.”
Somewhere in the vastness of our separations we hear voices crying out to steady the trembling foundations of our fragile homeland; to set down our weeping weapons on screaming streets of rage; to circle our sanctuary against the sting of ethnic cleansing; to bind up wounds laid bare by warring creeds; to tame, to calm, to quiet the loudly angry crowd in order to hear our freedoms ring. Then lift up our next born “as a joyous daybreak to end the long night” and from the mountain top, looking into the promised land, where every life matters, we will “Hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.” ...
...using all humanity's permission.

I. The Blessing of Light  
II. Bitter and the Sweet  
III. Reflection and Resonance  
IV. The Creation of Faith

(U.S. Premiere Performance)

Aaron Linde ’20, *baritone*; Austin Krentz ’19, *guitar*

Symphony No. 1, *Leunig’s Prayer Book*, was inspired by four prayers written by Australian poet Michael Leunig. Movement titles are derived from each prayer that celebrate the arrival of a new season. Audience members are encouraged to embrace and internalize each prayer as the movement is performed, linking the elegance of Leunig’s verse to the musical impressions created by the composer. The prayers are reproduced here exactly as they appear in Leunig’s text *When I talk to you* and are reproduced with permission of the publisher, Harper Collins (Australia and New Zealand).

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<tr>
<th>I</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Blessing of Light</td>
<td>Bitter and the Sweet</td>
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<td>We welcome summer and the glorious blessing of light. We are rich with light; we are loved by the sun. Let us empty our hearts into the brilliance. Let us pour darkness into the glorious, forgiving light. For this loving abundance let us give thanks and offer our joy.</td>
<td>Autumn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amen.</td>
<td>We give thanks for the harvest of the heart’s work. Seeds of faith planted with faith; Love nurtured by love; Courage strengthened by courage.</td>
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<td>We give thanks for the fruits of the struggling soul, The bitter and the sweet; For that which has grown in adversity And for that which has flourished in warmth and grace; For the radiance of the spirit in autumn And for that which must now fade and die. We are blessed and give thanks.</td>
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<td>Amen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection and Resonance</td>
<td>The Creation of Faith</td>
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<td>Dear God,</td>
<td>Dear God,</td>
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<td>Let us prepare for winter. The sun has turned away from us and the nest of summer hangs broken in a tree. Life slips through our fingers and, as darkness gathers, our hands grow cold. It is time to go inside. It is time for reflection and resonance. It is time for contemplation. Let us go inside.</td>
<td>We celebrate spring’s returning and the rejuvenation of the natural world. Let us be moved by this vast and gentle insistence that goodness shall return, that warmth and life shall succeed, and help us to understand our place within this miracle. Let us see that as a bird builds its nest, bravely, with bits and pieces, so we must build human faith. It is our simple duty; it is the highest art; it is our natural and vital role within the miracle of spring: the creation of faith.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amen.</td>
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I - The Blessing of Light (Summer)

The burn of Summer is depicted in an energetic opening that is also inspired by the birth of the Sun. The pitch material utilised in the first 102 measures is based on a scale created from the speed of light: 186,282 miles per second. Commencing on G (my personal resonating pitch with the Earth) I built the scale in semitones in an ascending order:

![Semitone Scale Diagram]

The result is a 5-pitch scale (when considering the repeated tones of Ab and Bb). To emulate light refraction one-two notes in the original scale were altered by a semitone to create four new scales with a different tonal centre. The material commences in gritty, tight harmonic clusters book-ended by octave passages, guiding an energetic set of boldly intensifying statements through each of these refracted “light” scales. These harmonic clusters gradually dissipate until the audience is finally released of the tension at measure 95 with a C major chord. Measure 102-end depicts Michael's Leunig’s “glorious” light and its ability to consume the darkness that lies within.

II - Bitter and Sweet (Autumn)

The second movement was originally conceived for string orchestra and brings with it an overtone of bitter victory through the consideration of the sacrifice made by thousands of men and women during the Great War (1914-1918). It is a continuous thought that merges and evolves, bringing traces of melodic material from the opening movement, these being the themes of love and light. The orchestration has been carefully considered and is inspired, for the most part, by Strauss and Mendelssohn. The instrumentation is inspired by Stravinsky's Symphonies for Wind Instruments and provides the audience with some reprieve from the intensity of a full wind symphony. Punctuated by delicate woodwind moments, the Bitter and the Sweet is as delicate as it is vulnerable.

III – Reflection and Resonance (Winter)

With light now fading and Leunig’s recommendation to “go inside”, this movement strips back the ensemble to the simplicity of a saxophone quartet, flugel horn trio and percussion. Ensemble members contribute choral overtones and a startling soprano saxophone solo shatters audience comfort. To ease the pain of personal reflection, a classical guitarist accompanies a fragile vocalist (baritone), transporting the audience to a safer place where truth and beauty live in the heart of the composer. For it is here that the soul is making meaning of the darkness, preparing to return.

IV – The Creation of Faith (Spring)

The final movement injects hope into despair, releasing the audience from the heaviness of Winter. In alignment with the prayer, “the returning and the rejuvenation of the natural world” is brought about by ascending, pedalled chords, resonated by mallet percussion and a single pedal note shared throughout the ensemble. From the opening of the beginning of the dance (measure 81) I have aimed to capture the feeling of flying through the air with “gay abandon.” Parts weave in and out around a simple Flute melody, underpinned by pulsating, dove-tailed percussion. The dance from 81-end is the rebuilding of human faith with “bits and pieces” as Spring brings us warmth, wildlife and the return of goodness and faith in humanity.

— Notes by Jodie Blackshaw

The St. Olaf Band Endowment Fund provided the financial support needed for participation in the international consortium commissioning project that enabled Jodie Blackshaw to create her first symphony.

— Intermission —
Michael Martin, born in Marietta, Georgia, became the youngest member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Pops as Third/Utility trumpet in July 2010, at the age of 24. Martin attended Northwestern University where he received both his BM and MM degrees in trumpet performance. Prior to joining the Boston Symphony, Martin performed with a diverse array of professional orchestras, ensembles and performing artists.

Martin has long been devoted to both performing and creating music at the highest artistic level and has become an extremely sought-after musician in both disciplines, forging a unique niche within the world of professional music. He has collaborated with and been commissioned by members of the Atlanta, Boston, and Chicago Symphonies; the Boston Pops; the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics; the Chicago Chamber Musicians; the Northshore Concert Band; and Northwestern University’s Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

The composer shares these thoughts about *Lontano: Symphony for Wind Ensemble*:

*Lontano* is an Italian word meaning “at or from a great distance,” often used in a musical context to describe something intended to be played extremely quietly or very distantly offset. In the case of this piece, the title is certainly representative of the use of both musical devices, but is intended more to describe a musical range and scope in a context that is subjective to the listener. While the published narrative of the piece may be slightly cryptic (if a bit simplistic), it is my hope that the listener is able to simply enjoy what they hear, the music perhaps inspiring something more personal for each person than what I imagined. That being said, there is a somewhat specific journey the music is intended to illustrate, and in the spirit of trying to create something special and personal for the commissioner of this piece, Mallory Thompson, Director of Bands at Northwestern University, it is worth it to me for you to be at least peripherally aware of where we start, where we end, and how we get there.

When we first discussed the piece in 2013 in anticipation of her 20th year at Northwestern, Mallory requested that it in some way honor and represent both her relationship with all of her Symphonic Wind Ensemble (“SWE”) students of the past 20 years and also her connection to one of her greatest mentors, the late Vincent Cichowicz. “Vince” is a powerful voice not only in the history of Northwestern, where he was the Professor of Trumpet spanning three decades and mentor to hundreds of aspiring brass players, but also in the world of brass playing from his years as 2nd Trumpet in the Chicago Symphony. Vince transformed the lives of countless musicians, not just trumpet players, with his singing and fluid approach to playing a brass instrument. Mallory studied trumpet with Vince during her time as a student at Northwestern, and in her words, Vince “forever impacted the way I thought about music, performed music, and eventually how I taught and conducted it. In some way, however small or large, everything I have to give in a rehearsal or a concert found its origins in something I learned from Vince. He’s there with me everyday, and by extension, with whatever group I am in front of.” Musically speaking, Vince is there throughout the symphony as well (F, E, F, G, F, D); his theme opens the first movement in the clarinets and piano, then is expanded in inverted in solo bassoons, laying the tonal foundation for the entire symphony. It returns here and there, always present in some way. The same theme brings the symphony to a close in the final phrase of the last movement, in unison brasses.

As anyone who knows me might expect, there is some theatricality involved in this symphony; offstage brass and percussion, extra players, and a narrative that asks you to suspend disbelief for a moment and open yourself to the complex depths of grief, catharsis, and inevitably the heights of triumph. The movement titles, and individual “chapters” listed within the first movement, are intended to depict a somewhat visceral and narrative representation
of grief, whose process is at once unique and common to us all. The analogy is that of floating through complete blackness, becoming immersed in a massive orb of light, being flung violently back into the dark, spiraling out of control, and eventually arriving at a collection of the most beautiful horizons we could imagine. Indeed, the grieving process is a long one, the destination of which always seems to be just out of reach; always a great distance away. I have specific thoughts in mind for what every measure of the music means to me. I would prefer not to impose those thoughts on you, the listener, (also for whom this was written), but for you to experience the piece as you are, as whatever stop in your journey brought you to this concert.

**Biographies**

Guest composer **Jodie Blackshaw** grew up in the south-east of rural Australia and formed a very personal relationship with music early in life through the creative application of her imagination to musical colors and movement. Today, she continues to seek creative experiences for students through her teaching, conducting, and composing so they, too, may enjoy the personal relationship she discovered in her formative years. In 2019, Blackshaw will complete her PhD in composition at the Australian National University (supervisor Dr. Christopher Sainsbury) with a portfolio of works exclusively written for the wind band genus. As part of her study, Blackshaw has unearthed fresh colors from the medium through a series of works, particularly her first symphony, *Leuniq’s Prayer Book*, and related these to sensitive and often challenging life experiences. Jodie desires that her music not just be “another piece,” but an imaginative and spiritual journey for performers and audiences alike. To find out more about this Australian composer from the bush, please visit [www.jodieblackshaw.com](http://www.jodieblackshaw.com).

**Mac Gimse** ’58 arrived at St. Olaf in 1970 to build a ceramics studio and a bronze foundry, and to teach the History of Architecture and Asian Visual Culture. He expanded into the Great Conversation, and taught more than 20 years as a tutor in the Paracollege and in the team-taught Fine Arts Major. The (Norwegian) Nobel Peace Prize Forum was established at St. Olaf in 1989, and in the next 30 years, he created bronze sculpture and poetry for 11 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates. “A Stone of Hope,” with music composed by Erika Malpass ’19, makes this his second appearance with the St. Olaf Band. The first was in 2011 with “Try to Praise the Mutilated World,” set to music by Christopher Sherwood-Gabrielson ’11, dedicated to Mother (Saint) Teresa.

Over the last 45 years, Mac and his wife Jackie travelled 35 times around the world with Oles, while he taught Monuments to Power and Faith. Gimse states that “a super high” came in January, 2010, when he taught the Visual Culture of Japan on tour with the St. Olaf Band.

The life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has been stirring in Mac’s heart since his travels through the south in the fall of 1956. He lived briefly with a cross-section of people in Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama and Florida, trying to grasp racial issues that had eluded him as a lad from North Dakota. Today’s poetry began with notes from his dystopian look into what became a view of a tragic cultural reality, which, as you will hear, reaches into a host of social and political struggles, each of them met by MLK Jr.’s practice of non-violent civil disobedience.

**Erika Malpass** is a senior from Evergreen, Colorado, and will be graduating in May with a bachelor of music in elective studies. She plans to live in the Twin Cities, either continuing to develop as a composer or working in arts management. She loves to work on interdisciplinary art projects, and hopes to attend graduate school in the next few years, likely focusing on composition. She wrote the majority of today’s work during the summer of 2018 with support from the St. Olaf College Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry program.

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