

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents



Brass Band

Kevin Stees, *conductor*

Friday, February 23, 2024

8 pm

Concert Hall



There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Patrons are reminded to turn off all pagers, cell phones, personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

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Program

Where Eagles Sing Paul Lovatt-Cooper
(b. 1976)

Pillars of Brass Terry Vosbein
(b. 1957)

I. A Fanfare and a Ditty

II. A Blues

III. A Wild and Happy Ride

World Premiere

Saturday Serenade from *Manhattan* Philip Sparke
(b. 1951)

Olivia Ellsworth – *cornet*

Other Lives Oliver Waespi
(b. 1971)

Rage – Reflection – Redemption – Renewal

Intermission

Riverdance Bill Whelan
(b. 1950)
Arr. Ray Farr

Romantic Flight John Powell
from *How to Train Your Dragon* (b. 1963)
Arr. Dan Price

Live and Let Die Paul and Linda McCartney
Arr. Ray Farr

Owen Brown – *soprano cornet*

Benedictus Karl Jenkins
from *The Armed Man* (b. 1944)
Arr. Tony Small

Andrew Ribo – *euphonium*

Shine As The Light Peter Graham
(b. 1958)

Program Notes

Where Eagles Sing

Though once endangered, the American Bald Eagle is both “huge in size and power yet so graceful in flight” according to composer Paul Lovatt-Cooper. Inspired by a bird show at Walt Disney World’s Animal Kingdom where the composer witnessed one of these great American symbols fly over himself and the rest of the gathered audience, Lovatt-Cooper (or PLC as he is affectionately known in brass banding circles) decided to compose this work to encapsulate the spirit of the eagle. With soaring melodies, nimble counter lines, and powerful fanfare figures, the piece truly encapsulates the power and majesty of the eagle as it soars over the great open expanses of our nation.

Pillars of Brass

Though long a fan of the medium, *Pillars of Brass* is the first work for Brass Band by American composer, Terry Vosbein. The jazz inflections betray his roots in big bands. Contained within the three movements are fanfares, pretty melodies, powerful climaxes, gorgeous textures, and showy solos. In the first movement, after both the fanfare and the ditty are presented, a type of development follows, drifting into more ambiguous and profound sounds before bringing the fanfare back. The second movement, though not a blues in traditional form, but a blues in feeling. Bluesy solos and a yearning quality that eventually builds into a screamed prayer. The third movement imagines the drives of Jack Kerouac. Or John Steinbeck. Or William Least Heat-Moon. An adventure on wheels across hundreds of miles, maybe thousands.

Manhattan

Manhattan was commissioned by the United States Army Band for their solo trumpet player Woodrow English, and first performed by them in Carnegie Hall, New York, in November 2003. The two-movement work demonstrates both the lyrical and technical abilities of this outstanding player. The ‘theme’ is a weekend in New York and the opening bluesy movement, *Saturday Serenade*, describes the city on a Saturday night, perhaps in a smoke-filled jazz bar. While writing Sunday Scherzo, the composer pictured an early morning jog in Central Park. This vivaciously rhythmic second movement ends with an even quicker coda bringing the work to a brilliant close.

Other Lives

Written for the powerhouse Valaisia Brass Band of his home country, Swiss composer Oliver Waespi's tour-de-force work will put any band through its paces while entertaining a diverse audience. Divided into four sections, titled "Rage," "Reflection," "Redemption," and "Renewal," this piece showcases both the technical and expressive range of brass bands. The first and third sections contain references to works by Franz Schubert, tying the piece to the mid-Romantic period, while the faster sections of the first and final sections are reminiscent of the bebop style pioneered in the 1940's by musicians including the infamous Thelonius Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker. In contrast, the second movement features soloists from across the band with melancholy melodies intertwining and building to a cacophonous climax, only to be resolved by the following "Redemption" section. Bringing the piece to a close, "Renewal" gives a reprise of melodies from "Rage" but in a lighter character, flipping minor keys to major and building to a triumphant conclusion sure to shake down any concert hall.

Riverdance

Best known as the worldwide theatrical tour-de-force of music and dance, *Riverdance* began as an interval piece at the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest. Featuring now-famous dancers Michael Flatley and Jean Butler, the piece became an immediate success, spurring on an expansion into a full production at times featuring up to 100 dancers on stage. Though most popular from 1995-2003, the show is still performed around the world as a showcase of Irish music and dance.

Romantic Flight

The story takes place in a mythical Viking world where a young Viking teenager named Hiccup aspires to follow his tribe's tradition of becoming a dragon slayer. After finally capturing his first dragon, a Night Fury, and with his chance at last of gaining the tribe's acceptance, he finds that he no longer wants to kill the dragon and instead befriends it. *Romantic Flight* serves as the theme for Astrid, Hiccup's friend and eventual love interest, and as the musical accompaniment to their high-adrenaline ride on Toothless, the dragon Hiccup befriends.

Program Notes *continued*

Live and Let Die

Now celebrating its 50th anniversary, *Live and Let Die* is the theme song from the James Bond film of the same name. Written by Beatle Paul McCartney and his wife Linda, the song was recorded by the British-American rock band *Wings* and was the first rock song used as a Bond theme.

Benedictus

The Armed Man is a Mass by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins, subtitled "A Mass for Peace". *Benedictus* was commissioned by the Royal Armouries Museum for the Millennium celebrations, and to mark the museum's move from London to Leeds, and it was dedicated to victims of the Kosovo crisis. Like Benjamin Britten's War Requiem before it, it is essentially an anti-war piece and is based on the Catholic Mass. *Benedictus* is a beautiful and almost "zen" like hymn, extracted from the mass. Here the solo cello line is set for solo euphonium and was written for euphonium virtuoso David Childs.

Shine as the Light

Written for the composer's visit to the Salvation Army's Star Lake Music Camp, *Shine as the Light* is dedicated to the memory of Captain Al Honsberger. The music is played through with no stops, but there are three movements of music within the structure. Three Salvation Army church songs are featured throughout the music: "It's a Great Day", "Candle of the Lord", and "The Light Has Come."

Personnel

Principal Cornet	Olivia Ellsworth
Soprano Cornet	Owen Brown
Solo Cornet	Max Parrish
	Logan Hayungs
	Bryson Naftel
	Carter King
Repiano Cornet	Jocelyn Moyer
2nd Cornet	Taylor Lowry
	Micah Wingfield
3rd Cornet	Peyton Phaller
	Jacob Fujioka
Flugel Horn	Steffi Tetzloff
Solo Horn	Caroline Fauber
1st Horn	Finn Marks
2nd Horn	Jacob Taylor
	Ryan Johnson
1st Baritone	Jake Cuppernull
2nd Baritone	Jackson Varga
1st Trombone	Shiv Love
2nd Trombone	Alex Mizroch
Bass Trombone	William Commins
Solo Euphonium	Andrew Ribo
2nd Euphonium	Daisey Kludt
Eb Bass	Logan Davis
	Luke Armstrong
Bb Bass	John Kelley
	Jackson Lee
	Andy Helvey
Percussion	Blaze Benavides
	Tyler Ende
	Brian McDermott
	Olivia Miller
	Jonathan Ramirez

About the Band

Under the direction of Professor Kevin Stees, The JMU Brass Band is one of the most successful collegiate brass bands in the world today. Formed in the Fall of 2000, the band was named the North American Brass Band Association 1st Section Champion in 2004 and 2005, and was the 2006, 2007, 2010, 2016, 2019, and 2022 NABBA Championship Section Runner-up. The group maintains an active schedule, performing regularly throughout the academic year, and has been a featured ensemble at numerous festivals and conferences around the globe. In the summer of 2008, the ensemble embarked on a concert tour of England sharing the stage with many outstanding bands including the No. 1 ranked brass band, Cory Band. In 2009, the group became the first brass band to perform a full-length concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. In 2022, the ensemble was invited to Kerkrade, the Netherlands to represent the United States in the Championship Division of the 19th World Music Contest. Always interested in showcasing new repertoire, the band has given the North American premiere of over a dozen major works for brass band. The JMU Brass Band is currently ranked in the top 100 brass bands worldwide.