



Saturday May 21, 2022
Lutheran Church of the Ascension
460 Sunset Ridge Rd, Northfield, IL

The New Romantics

Program curation: Stephen Burns & Mischa Zupko

Program

Introit | Jonathan Bailey Holland
Street Songs Michael Tilson Thomas
AC's Turning | Trevor Weston
Copperwave | Joan Tower
Take My Hand | Heidi Joosten
Frost Fire | Eric Ewazen

- Bright and Fast
- Gentle and Mysterious
- Tense and Dramatic

Fulcrum Point Brass

Stephen Burns, trumpet
Rebecca Oliverio, trumpet
Matthew Oliphant, French Horn
Felix Regalado, trombone
Scott Tegge, tuba

Thank you for joining us in celebrating American neo-romantic new art music for brass. These composers represent three generations of artists who are inspired by their religion, traditional music from around the world, as well as the subtle sounds and variations in our environment to be appreciated and transmuted through careful observation and imagination.

In addition to the 600-year tradition of Western European-American art music we'd like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the people and elders of The Council of Three Fires—the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi tribes—upon whose traditional lands we live and share this music together.

Stephen Burns

Introit, by Jonathan Bailey Holland, is a short celebratory invocation in triple meter with an uplifted, hemiola syncopation driving the groove. Soaring melodies alternate with quirky mixed meter interludes to bring a playful variation to the swing. An introit is the psalm or antiphon that is traditionally sung to accompany the pastor or priest as they approach the altar for Eucharist. The ebullience and anticipatory joy of this work is the perfect introduction to this program of both sacred and secular neo-romantic works for brass. – Stephen Burns

Street Song: The founding members of the Empire Brass Quintet were some of my oldest musical friends. Our meeting dates back to student days at Tanglewood when we discovered that we had knowledge and reverence for good notes, good tunes, and good licks, whether from organum, serialism, or bop-shoo-wop. They commissioned *Street Song* and made the first recording. The quintet version of the piece appears regularly on brass chamber programs. The most challenging thing about it in this form is how few opportunities there are for the players to breathe. *Street Song* is in three continuous parts—an interweaving of three “songs.”

The first song opens with a jagged downward scale suspending in the air a sweetly dissonant harmony that very slowly resolves. This moment of resolution is followed by responses of various kinds. The harmonies move between the world of the middle ages and the present, between East and West, and always, of course, from the perspective of twentieth century America. Overall the movement is about starting and stopping, the moments of suspension always leading somewhere else.

The second “song” is introduced by a singsong horn solo. It is followed by a simple trumpet duet, which was first written around 1972. It is folklike in character and also cadences with suspended moments of slowly resolving dissonance.

The third “song” is really more of a dance. It begins when the trombone slides a step higher, bringing the work into the key of F sharp and into a jazzier swing. The harmonies here are the stacked-up moments of suspension from the first two parts of the piece. By now I hope these “dissonant” sounds actually begin to sound “consonant.” There is a resolution, but it is the world of a musician who after many after-hour gigs greets the dawn. Finally, the three songs are brought together and the work moves toward a quiet close. *Street Song* is dedicated to my father Ted, who was and still is the central musical influence on my life. – Michael Tilson Thomas

AC's Turning by Trevor Weston refers to the turning signal equipped on buses used by AC Transit in the Bay Area. The motive is an alternating major second, heard in the French Horn at the beginning of the piece. Having used public transportation often as a student in the Bay Area, I used this melody, motive, as the source of many whistled and hummed spontaneous inventions to creatively pass time on the bus. Movement, with occasional stops and starts, is another important concept connecting this piece with the image it represents. – Trevor Weston

Copperwave (2006) by Joan Tower was commissioned for the American Brass Quintet by the Juilliard School for its centennial celebration. This commission was supported by the Trust of Francis Goelet. The work is dedicated with great admiration to the distinguished American Brass Quintet.

My father was a geologist and mining engineer, and I grew up loving everything to do with minerals and rocks. Copper is a heavy but flexible mineral that is used for many different purposes and most brass instruments are made of copper. The ideas in this piece move in waves, sometimes heavy ones and at other times lighter — also in circles, turning around on the same notes. Occasionally, there is a latin type of rhythm that appears, which is a reminder of my years growing up in South America where my father was working as a mining engineer. — Joan Tower

Take My Hand by Heidi Joosten

“Life happens when you’re busy making other plans.” John Lennon

2019 has proven to be the busiest and most fruitful year of my career thus far, but it also brought much sorrow and pain as I face(d) the inevitable passing of both of my grandfathers. 28.5 years with them (as well as both of my grandmothers) was a blessing I will forever be grateful for, but I couldn’t help but feel woefully ill-prepared to handle the anticipatory grief of knowing they would be gone as well as manage the huge hole they were to leave inside of me once they passed on. Both had an ever-present, loving, and supportive hand in raising me to be exactly who I was, and I still don’t know if I know who I am without them.

American Christianity, the faith both of my grandfathers confessed to, does not do a great job of preparing anyone for how to reach what’s beyond this life by orchestrating a beautiful death – it only discusses the joy of finally getting there. This quintet is the amalgam of emotions felt in helping to usher both of them to where they believe they’re going, powerless to stop it (even though that’s all we wished for). The persistent A-flat that trades off between the higher brass instruments represents the undulating heart monitor that beeped incessantly in the hospital room, weaving in and out as we would lose our train of thought in emotion. Parallel fifths and quintal chords are ubiquitous as the number “5” became a symbolic part of my processing – it was the number of my family unit until my sister married in June, my parents’ family units added up to a multiple of five, I made a total of five trips home between my sister’s wedding and grandfather’s funeral to be as present as I possibly could be during this time, and there are five stages of grief.

At the core of the piece is the hymn, “Precious Lord, Take My Hand”, a hymn my mother and I would constantly find ourselves both coincidentally waking up to amidst the chaos, and it was the recessional hymn at my paternal grandfather’s funeral. I wasn’t able to see my paternal grandfather

in his final days, but I remember the times as a child when he would take my hand I his to lead me somewhere, his farm-worn hands dwarfing my own. In the hospital where my maternal grandfather lay, the only thing we could do is hold his hand and talk to him in the hopes that he would awake. At the climax of the piece is the full chorale with a slightly altered harmonization, as if recognizing what is meant to be but not quite submitting. When the chorale finishes, we regain focus in the hospital room, back where we started. Nothing has changed. What is to come is to come, but we try to find our peace knowing that we, and they, are not alone.

The resignation of giving in to the inevitable is often the most painful thing we can do, all the while holding on to the only things we can, which are often just each other. "Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light. Precious Lord, lead me home."

I will never have said, "I love you," enough. But I am grateful for the places my grandfathers led me and still encourage me to go. – Heidi Joosten 2019

Frost Fire, commissioned by the American brass Quintet for the 40th anniversary season of the ensemble, has become a staple of the brass quintet literature. A heroic and intricate work which has been performed throughout the world. The first movement, marked Bright and Fast, is a joyous celebration of sonorous chords, playful motives, and rhythmic gestures. It is in a strict sonata-allegro form with a clearly defined and classically proportioned exposition-development-recapitulation framed by complimentary introduction and coda sections . The second movement, marked Gentle and Mysterious, has a waltz-like feel co it. In a ternary (A-B-A) form, the outer sections consist of ribbons of melodies being gently passed from instrument co instrument. The middle section is a stately fugue which builds in intensity, volume and rich-sounding resonance. The final movement, Tense and Dramatic, brings back material from the first movement, but sets it in a much more turbulent and frenetic environment. Although this movement is based on the skeletal outlines of a sonata-allegro form, it is much freer and more erratic, with shifting meters and contrasting, interpolated passages, ultimately leading the way to a heroic and dynamic conclusion. – Eric Ewazen

Bios

Eric Ewazen was born in 1954 in Cleveland, Ohio. Receiving a B.M. At the Eastman School of Music, and M.M. and D.M.A. degrees from The Juilliard School, his teachers include Milton Babbitt, Samuel Adler, Warren Benson, Joseph Schwantner and Gunther Schuller. He is a recipient of numerous composition awards and prizes. His works have been commissioned and performed by many soloists, chamber ensembles and orchestras in the U.S. and overseas. His works are recorded on Summit Records, d'Note Records, CRS Records, New World, Clique Track, Helicon, Hyperion, Cala, Albany and Emi Classics. Two of his solo CD's featuring his chamber music are available on Well-Tempered Productions. His music is published by Southern Music Company, International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, Keyboard Publications, Manduca Music, Encore Music, Triplo Music, and Brass Ring Editions. He has been a faculty member at Juilliard since 1980.

Jonathan Bailey Holland, originally from Flint, MI, JBH began studying composition while a student at the Interlochen Arts Academy, where he received a school-wide award for his very first composition. Upon graduation from Interlochen, he continued his composition studies with Ned Rorem at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he received a Bachelor of Music degree. He went on to receive a Ph.D. in Music from Harvard University, where his primary teachers were Bernard Rands and Mario Davidovsky. Currently, he is Professor of Composition at the Berklee College of Music and The Boston Conservatory, and a founding faculty member in the Low Residency MFA in Music Composition program at Vermont College of Fine Arts.

A musical polymath hailing from the woods of northwest Wisconsin, **Heidi Joosten** has called Chicago home since 2014. Since then, she has established herself as a reputable music director, composer, orchestrator, arranger, improviser, pianist, vocalist, and harpist. Heidi has music directed over 65 productions, and she is currently music directing *James and the Giant Peach* at Vernon Hills High School, *Saint Hildegard: the Rupertsberg Tour* at Theo Ubique, and *Queer Eye: the Musical Parody* (TBA). An avid lover of works for the stage and screen, Heidi's music is heavily influenced by romantic opera, contemporary musical theatre, and film and television scores. With over 175 original compositions to her name, she enjoys writing for a multitude of genres, such as vocal, choral, opera, chamber, musical theatre, solo piano, and wind ensemble. She has received commissions from many of her fellow performer colleagues as well as the Gaudete Brass Quintet, Bach + Beethoven Experience, University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire Wind Symphony, Women's Concert Chorale, Wind Symphony, Singing Statesmen, Rice Lake Municipal Band, Platteville (WI) School District, Columbus (WI) High School, Beaver Dam (WI) High School, Lakeland All-Conference Honors Choir. Her award-winning music has been performed across the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia.

Michael Tilson Thomas is Founder and Artistic Director Laureate of the New World Symphony, Music Director Laureate of the San Francisco Symphony, and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. In addition to conducting the world's leading orchestras, MTT is also noted for his work as a composer and a producer of multimedia projects that are dedicated to music education and the reimagining of the concert experience. He has won eleven Grammys for his recordings, is the recipient of the National Medal of Arts and the 2019 Kennedy Center Honors, and is an Officier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France.

Joan Tower is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than sixty years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo, and Muir quartets; soloists Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, Paul Neubauer, and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Nashville, Albany NY, and Washington DC, among others.

Trevor Weston's honors include the George Ladd Prix de Paris, the Lieberson Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and residencies at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts, and the MacDowell Colony. His music has been featured on programs by the Washington Chorus Boston Children's Chorus (national TV broadcast,) and The Manhattan Choral Ensemble. Dr. Weston was a student at St. Thomas' Choir School, Tufts University, UC Berkeley. Currently he is Associate Professor of Music at Drew University.

Conductor, composer and trumpeter **Stephen Burns** is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Fulcrum Point New Music Project in Chicago. He has been acclaimed on four continents for his virtuosity and interpretative depth in recitals, orchestral appearances, chamber music, and multi-media performances. He has worked closely with composers John Corigliano, Osvaldo Golijov, Gunther Schuller, Jacob TV, and La Monte Young. He won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, Avery Fisher Career Grant, the NEA Recital Grant, the Naumburg Award, the Charles Colin Award, the Meier Arts Achievement Award, and the Maurice André Concours International de Paris. Mr. Burns is on faculty at DePaul University's School of Music and The Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. CDs at Naxos, MHS, Dorian, Delos, Essay, Kleos, & Innova. Stephen Burns is a Yamaha performing artist.

Rebecca Oliverio is currently a member of the Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra. Prior to joining the Lyric Opera, Ms. Oliverio spent one season with the New World Symphony in Miami Beach. She received her Master of Music degree at Northwestern University where she studied with David Bilger, Channing Philbrick, Thomas Rolfs, Michael Sachs and Robert Sullivan. During her undergraduate degree at Boston University she studied in London at the Royal College of Music with Mark Calder and Paul Sharp on natural trumpet. Her teachers at BU were Terry Everson, Thomas Rolfs and Thomas Siders. Summer engagements during her studies included fellowships at the Tanglewood Music Center, Music Academy of the West and the National Repertory Orchestra. In addition, she was a member of the New England Brass Band as a front row cornet player and soloist. She has also performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Philharmonic.

Hornist **Matthew Oliphant** is a new music and chamber music specialist living in Chicago, IL. Oliphant is known as an adventurous and courageous young player. As solo hornist with new music group Ensemble Dal Niente, he performs the music of our time by established and emerging composers, as well as classics of the new music repertoire. Oliphant is also a member of the Grossman Ensemble, part of the Chicago Center for Contemporary Composition (CCCC). In residence at the University of Chicago, the ensemble presents 12 world premiers a year. Composers have included luminaries like Shulamit Ran, David Rakowski, Tania León, and Kate Soper. In demand as a freelance chamber musician, he has performed with Fulcrum Point New Music Project, Access Contemporary Music, Present Music, the New Millennium Woodwind Quintet, and on the Rush Hour concert series. Also an orchestra player he regularly plays with the Lyric Opera (Chicago), Grant Park Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, and has served as guest principal horn of the St Paul Chamber Orchestra, The Florida Orchestra, the Chicago Chamber Orchestra, and Orchestra Prometheus. Oliphant is a faculty member at Midwest Young Artists, coaching talented middle and high school students in chamber music. As a member of Axiom Brass from 2007-2014, he traveled the country performing for and engaging with audiences through music. Far from being constrained by the classical tradition, he regularly performs with experimental ensemble a.pe.ri.od.ic, performed as a member of the free jazz/classical/improv hybrid ensemble the Tomorrow Music Orchestra.

Felix Regalado is currently a first-year graduate trombone student at Northwestern's Bienen School of Music. Felix received his Bachelor of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and studied under Timothy Higgins, Principal Trombone of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Paul Welcomer, Trombone at the San Francisco Symphony. During his time at the conservatory, Felix had the opportunity to perform and work with various orchestras in the bay area, including the San Francisco Opera, San Jose Opera, and Santa Rosa Symphony. In his free time, Felix enjoys spending time with friends and family, taking unplanned naps, and accidentally drinking way too much coffee for his own good!

Scott Tegge dedicates his career to the performance and expansion of repertoire for the tuba and brass quintet, and to developing the next generation through his work as an educator. With a long-standing passion for chamber music, Scott has performed extensively in brass quintets since the age of fourteen, and founded his current ensemble, the Gaudete Brass Quintet, in 2004. (pronounced *gow-day-tay*.) Toward the goal of leaving future musicians robust and expanded repertoire, Scott and the Gaudete Brass are particularly committed to commissioning original works for brass, and have premiered more than fifty new works to date. Keeping a rigorous touring schedule, the Gaudete Brass Quintet has performed at a variety of venues including the Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park in Chicago, Symphony Space, Kaufman Music Center, and Carnegie Hall in New York City. Gaudete Brass has also recorded critically acclaimed albums featuring many of their commissions and other original brass works. Scott regularly freelances with a variety of orchestras in the Chicagoland area and is a frequent speaker and guest lecturer on inventive career development, entrepreneurship, and building successful teaching studios.



Created in 1998 by Stephen Burns, **Fulcrum Point New Music Project** pushes the boundaries of the musical experience globally by: supporting new compositions, creating and performing new music experiences, and educating audiences to imagine the possibilities of music. Its programs are influenced by popular culture, literature, film, dance, jazz, Latin and world music. Through multi-disciplinary programs, Fulcrum Point encourages audiences to make cross-cultural connections between new music, art, and technology, gaining greater insight into today's diverse world. Fulcrum Point's *AuxIn: Connected* and *Discoveries: Hear & Be Heard* are co-curated by Caitlin Edwards and Angelo Hart.

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