UMD WIND ENSEMBLE

FLUTE
Lilian Honeczy
Annemarie Dickerson
Alisa Oh
Meghan Shanley
Hannah Sung

OBOE
Elizabeth Eber
Kelly Klomparens
Santiago Vivas-Gonzales

CLARINET
Kyle Caruthers
Phylicia Cotton
Gabe Ferreira
Jonathan Gligorovic
Laura Guenzel
Austin Hogan
Aaron Logan
Jonathan Schneider
Kate Sylvester

BASS CLARINET
Anna Bella Sicilia
Daniel Page

BASSOON
Mary Coy
Erica Yeager

CONTRA BASSOON
Nick Ober

SAXOPHONE
Daniel Janis
Drew Pascoe
Kyle Schick
Andy Shin
David Wannlund

HORN
Phil Doutt
Gabby Lambiase
Chandler Nadig
Michelle Reed
T’Anna Tercero

TRUMPET
Chris Crother
Sam Laulis
Benjamin Lostroco
James Martinson
Isaac Segal
Rachel Zephr

TROMBONE
Josh Gehres
Kim Harris
Nicholas Hogg
Ashleigh Naude

BASS TROMBONE
Matthew Myers

EUPHONIUM
Jermaine Fryer
Ian Kahn
Ryan Kieft

TUBA
Nick Obrigewitch
Craig Potter

STRING BASS
Shawn Alger

PIANO AND CELESTE
Jasmin Lee

HARP
Sara Magill

PERCUSSION
Graham Akertson
Jonathan Clancy
Mario Perez
Robert Schroyer

UMD WIND ORCHESTRA
CONTRASTS

Michael Votta Jr., music director

Friday, May 2, 2014. 8PM
Elsie & Marvin Dekelboum Hall
AARON COPLAND (1900–1990)

Appalachian Spring (1944)

The ballet Appalachian Spring premiered on October 30, 1944, at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. Copland arranged the ballet, originally scored for a chamber orchestra of 13, as a full-scale orchestral suite in 1945. Tonight’s performance will feature both the chamber group and the full orchestra. The chamber ensemble consists of flute, clarinet, bassoon, 4 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos, double bass and piano. The orchestral arrangement calls for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 b-flat and a-flat clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, percussion (timpani, xylophone, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, tabor, wood block, claves, glockenspiel and triangle), harp, piano and strings.

Appalachian Spring was commissioned in 1943 by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge as one of two new ballets to be choreographed by American modern dance icon, Martha Graham (1894–1991). Though Coolidge’s original plan was for Graham to work with two little-known composers, Graham convinced her to offer the commission to Copland and the Mexican composer Carlos Chávez (later replaced by Paul Hindemith). Though Graham and Copland had never previously collaborated, they had been mutual admirers since 1931 when she used his Piano Variations (1930) for her solo dance composition Dithyrambic.

Graham, known for her austere choreography based on contraction and release, was a perfect fit for the composer’s angular work. Later in his life, Copland would put his positive impressions down on paper: “Surely only an artist with an understanding of my work could have visualized dance material in so rhythmically complex and thematically abstruse a composition.”

Graham and Copland worked mostly through a lively give-and-take correspondence. She created an initial script that described the essence of the work and the basic order of events. Copland recalls being struck by the very first lines of her script: “This is a legend of American living. It is like the bone structure, the inner frame that holds together a people.” From these words, he began to generate musical ideas that could be refined once Graham supplied the appropriate timings for dance sequences. Graham borrowed the ballet’s title from a poem by Hart Crane, “The Dance,” wherein the word “spring” actually refers to a source of water, not necessarily the season. Copland was unaware of this title when composing the music (his working title was simply “Ballet for Martha”), but that did not stop audiences from remarking on how he masterfully represented the profound beauty of Appalachia — something he found quite amusing.

Set in Pennsylvania toward the end of the 19th century, the story of Appalachian Spring concerns the celebrations surrounding the completion of a new a pioneer farmhouse. As Copland writes, “[the ballet has] to do with the pioneer American spirit, with youth and spring, with optimism and hope.” The central characters are a young husband and bride (originally performed by Graham and her then-husband, Erick Hawkins) who are beginning to understand their new domestic partnership and place in the community. Some members of the society, such as a wise old neighbor and a revivalist with his flock, offer counsel to the newlyweds.

Tonight’s performance is of the orchestral suite derived by Copland from the original ballet, and arranged in eight sections. The material is true to the original score, though extended sections — meant to facilitate dancing — are omitted. The first movement,
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

“Very Slowly,” is a gradual introduction to the setting (originally meant to facilitate the introduction of the individual characters), as if morning light was dawning on the small pioneer community. A sudden burst of unison strings signals the start of the second movement, “Fast/Allegro,” and brings the pioneer settlement to life. The third movement, “Moderate/Moderato,” is a tender dance between the bride and her young husband. It begins with a courtly statement between harp and woodwinds that transitions to a rhapsodic and lushly orchestrated exploration of their complicated feelings: love mixed with trepidation toward the long and uncertain path the pair has set upon. This poignant moment begins with a courtly statement between harp and woodwinds that transitions to a pioneer community. A sudden burst of unison strings signals the start of the second passage, “a final statement of the profound beauty the work explores.”

The final movement, “Moderate. Coda/Moderato — Coda,” begins with orchestral bursts that essentially clear the dance floor for her and features a more contrapuntal texture than the preceding square dance. The sixth movement, “Very Slowly,” is a gradual introduction to the setting (originally meant to facilitate the introduction of the individual characters), as if morning light was dawning on the small pioneer community. The chamber version is scored for four women’s voices (one high soprano, two lyric sopranos and one alto), piccolo, flute, oboe, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, 6 percussion (playing small tuned tambourines with no jingles, clapping, maracas, marimba, vibraphone and crotale), 2 electric organs, 2 violins, viola, cello and bass. The voices, winds and strings are amplified in performance. In the orchestral version there are full strings and winds with amplification for the voices only.

The first text begins as a solo with drum and clapping accompaniment only. It is repeated with clarinet doubling the voice and with a second drum and clap in canon with the first. It then appears in two-voice canon and at last the strings enter with long-held harmonies. At this point all four voices, supported by a single maraca, doubled by two electric organs and harmonized by the strings, sing four four-part canons on each of the four verses of the first text. When these are completed the solo voice restates the original complete melody with all drums and full string harmonization. The second text begins immediately after a short drum transition. Here the three verses of text are presented in two- or three-voice harmony in a homophonic texture. Sometimes the voices are replaced by the cor anglais and clarinet or by the drums and clapping. Soon the melodic lines begin augmenting (or lengthening) and then adding melismas. The effect is of a melodic line growing longer and more ornate. After a pause, the third text begins in a slower tempo and with the percussion changes to a marimba and vibraphone. The text is presented as a duet first between two and then all four voices. This third text is not only the first slow movement I have composed since my student days, but also the most chromatic music I have ever composed (with the possible exception of Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards of 1979). The fourth and final text resumes the original tempo and key signature and combines techniques used in the preceding three movements. It is, in effect, a recapitulation of the entire piece which then, in a coda based solely on the word “Halleluyah,” extends the music to its largest instrumental forces and its harmonic conclusion. This last movement affirms the key of D major as the basic tonal center of the work after considerable harmonic ambiguity.

The tambourines without jingles are perhaps similar to the small drum called “tol” in Hebrew in Psalm 150 and several other places in the Biblical text. Hand clapping as well as rattles were also commonly used throughout the Middle East in the Biblical period as were small pitched cymbals. Beyond this there is no musicological content to Tehillim. No Jewish themes were used for any of the melodic materials. One of the reasons I chose to set Psalms as opposed to parts of the Torah or Prophets is that the oral tradition among Jews in the West for singing Psalms has been lost. (It has been maintained by Yemenite Jews.) This meant that I was free to compose the melodies for Tehillim without a living oral tradition to either imitate or ignore.

In contrast to most of my earlier work, Tehillim is not composed of short repeating patterns. Though an entire melody may be repeated either as the subject of a canon or variation, this is actually closer to what one finds throughout the history of Western music. While the four-part canons in the first and last movements may well remind some listeners of my early tape pieces It’s Gonna Rain and Come Out, which are composed of short spoken phrases repeated over and over again in close canon, Tehillim will probably strike most listeners as quite different from my earlier works. There is no fixed meter or metric pattern in Tehillim as there is in my earlier music. The rhythm of the music here comes directly from the rhythm of the Hebrew text and is consequently in flexible changing meters. This is the first time I have set a text to music since my student days and the result is a piece based on melody in the basic sense of that word. The use of extended melodies, imitative counterpoint functional harmony and full orchestration may well suggest renewed interest

MAGNUS LINDBERG (b. 1958)
Gran duo (1999–2000)

Gran Duo was composed in 1999–2000 and is a dialogue between the two orchestral families of woodwind and brass, each with their respective material. Their initial characters, equating to the poetic stereotypes of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine,’ become progressively blurred and androgynous during the course of the work as larger sound masses give way to chamber music-style sub-groupings and individual instrumental solos.

— Magnus Lindberg

STEVE REICH (b. 1936)
Tehillim (1981)

Tehillim (pronounced “the-hill-leem”) is the original Hebrew word for “Psalms.” Literally translated it means “praises,” and it derives from the three-letter Hebrew root ‘hey, lamed, lamed’ (hill) which is also the root of halleluyah. Tehillim is a setting of Psalms 19:2-5 (19:1-4 in Christian translations), 34:13-15 (34:12-14 in Christian translations), 18:26-27 (18:25-26 in Christian translations) and 150:4-6. The chamber version is scored for four women’s voices (one high soprano, two lyric sopranos and one alto), piccolo, flute, oboe, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, 6 percussion (playing small tuned tambourines with no jingles, clapping, maracas, marimba, vibraphone and crotale), 2 electric organs, 2 violins, viola, cello and bass. The voices, winds and strings are amplified in performance. In the orchestral version there are full strings and winds with amplification for the voices only.

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in Classical or, more accurately, Baroque and earlier Western musical practice. The non-vibrato, non-operatic vocal production will also remind listeners of Western music prior to 1750. However, the overall sound of Tehillim and in particular the intricately interlocking percussion writing which, together with the text, forms the basis of the entire work, marks this music as unique by introducing a basic musical element that one does not find in earlier Western practice including the music of this century. Tehillim may thus be heard as traditional and new at the same time.

— Steve Reich
Michael Votta Jr. has been hailed by critics as “a conductor with the drive and ability to fully relay artistic thoughts” and praised for his “interpretations of definition, precision and most importantly, unmilitated joy.” Ensembles under his direction have received critical acclaim in the United States and Europe for their “exceptional spirit, verve and precision,” their “sterling examples of innovative programming” and “the kind of artistry that is often thought to be the exclusive purview of top symphonic ensembles.”

He currently serves as Director of Wind Activities at the University of Maryland where he holds the rank of professor. Under his leadership, the UMD Wind Orchestra has been invited to perform at national and regional conferences of the College Band Directors National Association, and has collaborated with major artists such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, eighth blackbird, the Imani Winds and Daniel Bernard Roumain.

His performances have been heard in broadcasts throughout the U.S., on Austrian National Radio (ÖRF) and Southwest German Television, and have been released internationally on the Primavera label. Numerous major composers including George Crumb, Christopher Rouse, Louis Andriessen, Karel Husa, Olly Wilson, Barbara Kolb and Warren Benson have praised his performances of their works.

Votta has taught conducting seminars in the U.S. and Israel, and has guest conducted and lectured at institutions such as the Prague Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the National Arts Camp at Interlochen. He has also conducted and taught at the Midwest Clinic, and at conferences of the College Band Directors National Association and the Conductors Guild.

He is the author of numerous articles on wind literature and conducting. His arrangements and editions for winds have been performed and recorded by university and professional wind ensembles in the U.S., Europe and Japan. He is currently the vice-president of the Eastern Division of the College Band Directors National Association, and has served as editor of the CBDNA journal, as a member of the Executive Board of the International Society for the Investigation of Wind Music (IGEB) and on the board of the Conductors Guild.

Before his appointment at Maryland, Votta held conducting positions at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Duke University, Ithaca College, the University of South Florida, Miami University (Ohio) and Hope College.

Votta holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting degree from the Eastman School of Music where he served as assistant conductor of the Eastman Wind Ensemble and studied with Donald Hunsberger. A native of Michigan, Votta received his undergraduate training and Master of Music degrees from the University of Michigan, where he studied with H. Robert Reynolds.

As a clarinetist, Votta has performed as a soloist throughout the U.S., and Europe. His solo and chamber music recordings are available on the Partridge and Albany labels.
JAMES ROSS is currently the director of orchestral activities at the University of Maryland, faculty of the Conducting Program at The Juilliard School, and orchestra director of the newly formed National Youth Orchestra USA at Carnegie Hall.

His musical activities cover three fields: conducting, horn playing and teaching. Ross grew up studying the horn in Boston and earned his bachelor’s degree from Harvard University in 1981. Upon graduation, he began his conducting studies in earnest with Kurt Masur in Leipzig while simultaneously serving as solo-horn of the prestigious Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, becoming the first American member in the orchestra’s 250-year history.

After two summers of study at the Tanglewood Music Center (1984–85) Ross served as interim assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In June 1994 he completed a four-year tenure as music director of the Yale Symphony Orchestra. He has also served a three-year term collaborating with William Christie as the assistant conductor of the Paris-based period instrument ensemble Les Arts Florissants. He has guest conducted such diverse orchestras as the Leipzig Gewandhaus, the Utah Symphony, the Orquesta Ciudad Granada, the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra, the Orquesta Sinfónica of Galicia, the Neubrandenburger Philharmonie, the Binghamton Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra in side-by-side concerts with UMSO.

He has worked both joyously and often with youth orchestras, among which are included the Mendelssohn Conservatory Orchestra of Leipzig, the Curtis Institute Orchestra of Philadelphia, the Orchestra of the Conservatorio Superior of Salamanca, the McGill Symphony Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra of Spain, the Kansas All-State Orchestra and the Youth Orchestra of Acarigua-Arauca in Venezuela, part of the famed “El Sistema.” His principal conducting teachers are Kurt Masur, Otto-Werner Mueller, Seiji Ozawa and Leonard Bernstein.

As a horn soloist, he has performed with such orchestras as the Boston Symphony, the Boston Pops, the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, the Leipzig Radio Orchestra and the Leipzig Gewandhaus. When he was awarded Third Prize in the Munich International Horn Competition in 1978, he became the first American and one of the youngest competitors ever to do so. His performances and recordings as principal horn of the Gewandhaus, including the Strauss Four Last Songs with Jesseye Norman, helped him gain international recognition as an artist.

In the field of opera, he has conducted productions of Mozart’s Abduction from the Seraglio at the Théâtre du Rhin in Strasbourg, Le nozze di Figaro in the Théâtre Champs-Elysées in Paris, and Handel’s Rodelinda at the Glyndebourne Festival. He has prepared concert presentations of Torstensson’s The Expedition and Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex with the Stockholm Philharmonic.

As a teacher, prior to his appointment at the University of Maryland, Ross served on the faculties of Yale University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Haverford and Bryn Mawr colleges, and as a guest artist at the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, Japan. He was a founding director of the Music Masters Course in Kazusa, an international chamber music festival dedicated to the concept of artistic cross-cultural exchange which takes place yearly in Chiba, Japan. In his work as artistic advisor to the Escuela de Practica Orquestal of the Orquesta Sinfonica of Galicia and conductor at the International Festival of Lucena, he played a vital role in the education of the present generation of active Spanish musicians and has recently retired from his position as artistic director of the National Orchestral Institute where his leadership since 2001 has helped to foment change in the orchestral landscape of the United States.
Thomas is a recipient of a 2009 Best of Baltimore-Choreographer Award, 2009 Baker Artist Choice Award (B-Grant), a 2009 Metro DC Dance Award for Outstanding Overall Production (for his new work Witness), several Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Dance Awards, a 2008 Kennedy Center Local Dance Commission Project Award, two 2006 Metro DC Dance Awards for Emerging Choreographer and Outstanding New Work (for his evening-length work The Grandmother Project). He received rave reviews for his performance of Come Change in the 2012 Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. His work We Hold These Truths... was selected for the 2012 National ACDFA Festival at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Thomas was awarded the 2011–2012 Towson University Student Government Association Faculty Member of the Year. Thomas is a 2012–13 American Dance Institute Incubator Artist (MD), an Urban Bush Women BOLD Facilitator, co-artistic director and faculty member for the UBW Summer Institutes (NY) and an associate professor of dance at Towson University (MD).

VTDance
universal – tangible – essential

Vincent E. Thomas founded VTDance as an outlet for performance projects including solo, group and collaborative choreographic endeavors. VTDance is multi-dimensional. The work builds on the use of contemporary dance, improvisation, text/movement, a variety of sound sources, and collaborations with other artists, including dancers, musicians, poets, visual artists and others [to be discovered]. These ideas coupled with witty, poignant, athletic and gestural movement are the rich palette for VTDance.

www.vtdance.org

MARTHA WITTMAN has been dancing, teaching and making work for more than 50 years. As a young performer she danced with the Juilliard Dance Theatre under the direction of Doris Humphrey, and in the companies of Ruth Currier, Anna Sokolow and Joseph Gifford. For many years she was an associate choreographer with the Dances We Dance Co. headed by Betty Jones and Fritz Ludin.

Awards in choreography include the Doris Humphrey Fellowship from the American Dance Festival, NEA Fellowships, Individual Artist Awards from the Maryland State Arts Council and from Dance/USA's National Choreography Initiative.

From 1996 to 2011 Wittman was a member of Liz Lerman’s Dance Exchange Co., which toured nationally and internationally. She is continuing to work in several more of Lerman’s projects currently under development.

A long-term member of the Dance Faculty at Bennington College in Vermont, Wittman has been a guest artist and teacher at a number of other colleges, universities and summer dance programs in the United States.