



University of Maryland School of Music presents
VARIATIONS ON A REVOLUTION
UMD WIND ORCHESTRA

November 5, 2016 . 8PM
DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL
at The Clarice

UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND

SOM
SCHOOL of MUSIC

UMD School of Music presents

VARIATIONS ON A REVOLUTION
University of Maryland Wind Orchestra

Michael Votta Jr., music director

Aria with 18 Variations, BWV 988, "Goldberg Variations"

Johann Sebastian Bach

arr. Michael Colgrass

INTERMISSION

Sensemayá

Silvestre Revueltas

arr. Frank Bencriscutto

Tiento del Segundo Tono (Prelude in the Dorian Mode)

Antonio de Cabezón:

arr. Percy Grainger

Cancion de Gesta

Leo Brouwer

Approximately 120 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission

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, unmitigated joy.” Ensembles under his direction have received critical acclaim in the United States, Europe and Asia 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 Bands at the University of Maryland where he holds the rank of Professor. Under his leadership, the UM Wind Orchestra has been invited to perform at the international conference of the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles as well as national and regional conferences of the College Band Directors National Association. UMWO has also performed with major artists such as the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Eighth Blackbird, and the Imani Winds. UMWO has commissioned and premiered numerous works by composers such as Andre Previn, Steven Mackey, Alvin Singleton, and James Syler.

Votta has taught conducting seminars in the US and Israel, and has guest conducted and lectured throughout the world with organizations including the Beijing Wind Orchestra, the Prague Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, the National Arts Camp at Interlochen, the Midwest Clinic and the Conductors Guild.

His performances have been heard in broadcasts throughout the US, 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.

His arrangements and editions for winds have been performed and recorded by university and professional wind ensembles in the US, Europe and Japan. He is also the author and editor of books and articles on wind literature and conducting.

He is currently the President-Elect of the Eastern Division of the College Band Directors National Association, and the Big Ten Band Directors Association. He previously 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 US and Europe. His solo and chamber music recordings are available on the Partridge and Albany labels.

Aria with 18 Variations, BWV 988, "Goldberg Variations"

Johann Sebastian Bach

Born: March 21, 1685, Eisenach, Germany

Died: July 28, 1750, Leipzig, Germany

Original Instrumentation: Harpsichord

Composed: 1741

Arranged: 2003, by Michael Colgrass

Duration: 35 minutes

Johann Sebastian Bach wrote an aria and a series of 30 variations for harpsichord in 1741, typically referred to as the *Goldberg Variations*, after Johann Gottlieb Goldberg. A possibly apocryphal story has been handed down for many years: supposedly Goldberg was tasked to play music in order to help his benefactor, Count Kaiserling, the Russian ambassador to the electoral court of Saxony, cure his insomnia.

The arranger, Michael Colgrass, writes,

My arrangement of the Aria and 18 variations of Bach's Goldberg Variations was inspired by Glenn Gould's 1981 recording. Gould's touch on the keyboard suggests instruments to me. I hear a clarinet here, a viola there, now an alto flute, instrumental colors and textures I don't usually hear when other pianists play Bach. Gould sang while he played, and often his free hand would shape phrases in the air, like a composer orchestrating the sounds as he goes.

I think this creative process accounts for Gould's conception of this work, and might explain some of his extraordinary tempi. For example, the opening Aria is extremely slow, some would say too slow for the piano and certainly too slow for the usual andante feeling of a Bach slow movement. But if you imagine that different instruments are sharing these notes, talking to each other in a musical dialogue, it makes a new kind of sense, because the phrases need more time to breathe. Imagining this interchange between instruments inspired me to orchestrate this music as I think Gould might have enjoyed hearing it.

Glenn Gould was an experimenter, an innovator who took ownership of a piece of music and had the audacity to re-create it. And he was playful, which inspired my approach to some of the fast music. His pixie nature came out in the late night phone calls this reclusive man would make to my wife, Ulla, with whom he loved conversing. He would regale her with anecdotes and entertain her with imitations, a la Rich Little, of popular political figures and movie stars.

It seemed quite natural then to create this arrangement to celebrate Ulla's 65th birthday, hopefully as Gould himself might have liked to hear the Goldberg Variations for chamber orchestra. In keeping with his mischievous nature, the premiere performance by members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and others on 25 March 2003 was a surprise performance for Ulla in our living room, with the 10 musicians plus an audience of friends. I could just imagine Gould's delight at this musical surprise party that he had inspired.

I invite the listener to share this enjoyment.

Sensemaya

Silvestre Revueltas

Born: December 31, 1899, Santiago Papasquiaro, Mexico

Died: October 5, 1940, Mexico City, Mexico

Original Instrumentation: Symphony Orchestra

Composed: 1949

Arranged: 1980, by Frank Bencriscutto

Duration: 7 minutes

Sensemaya is based on the Afro-Cuban writer Nicolás Guillén's poem about a ceremony for the sacrifice of a serpent. Revueltas's thumping ostinato is the musical echo of Guillén's refrain: "mayombé, bombe, mayombé." With its thrilling, obsessive rhythmic thrust—it is written throughout in 7/8 or 7/16—and powerfully dissonant harmonies, this extraordinary little score is as original as anything in European music of the time, but it owes nothing to those distant schools or celebrated composers. It represents one of the signal moments when American music unmistakably came into its own.

"All his music seems preceded by something that is not joy and exhilaration, as some believe, or satire and irony, as other believe," the Mexican poet Octavio Paz wrote of Revueltas's output. "That element, better and more pure... is his deep-felt but also joyful concern for man, animal, and things. It is the profound empathy with his surrounding which makes the works of this man, so naked, so defenseless, so hurt by the heavens and the people, more significant than those of many of his contemporaries."

- Program note by Phillip Huscher

Sensemaya, Nicolás Guillén:

Canto para matar una culebra

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

La culebra tiene los ojos de vidrio

la culebra viene y se enreda en un palo

Con sus ojos de vidrio, en un palo

Con sus ojos de vidrio

La culebra camina sin patas

La culebra se esconde en la yerba

Caminando se esconde en la yerba

Caminando sin patas

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé...

Prelude in the Dorian Mode (Tiento del Segundo Tono)

Antonio de Cabezón

Born: March 30, 1510, Castrillo Mota de Judíos, Spain

Died: March 26, 1566, Madrid, Spain

Original Instrumentation: Organ

Composed: c. 1550

Arranged: Percy Grainger, 1937-1941

Duration: 4:30

Program notes from the published score:

Antonio de Cabezón (Spanish 1510-1566) was one of the 16th Century's greatest keyboard performers and composers. Blind from infancy, born of noble parents, he became composer and organist to the court of Charles and Isabella. He later served Philip II, with whom he travelled throughout Europe.

de Cabezón's music is richly polyphonic. Although he composed primarily for keyboard instruments, his music also possesses a haunting vocal quality. His tientos, such as the Prelude in the Dorian Mode, are instrumental fantasies built upon the opening motive. These compositions make masterful use of fugal counterpoint, creating tensions between the motive and imitative secondary lines. The Dorian mode is a scale beginning on the second tone. In this Prelude in the Dorian Mode, the opening motive repeats at irregular intervals throughout the main body of the work, forming a basis for the four-part polyphony which evolves around it.

When Grainger's band setting was created, Leopold Stokowski's orchestral Bach transcriptions were much in vogue. Unlike Stokowski's gleaming, modern sounding Bach, Grainger skillfully recalls the darker historical quality of the tiento and its vocal counterpart, the motet. The music is de Cabezón, the expressive concept and colors are entirely Grainger's. His modern wind-band setting is beautifully evocative of de Cabezón's Renaissance world.

Percy Grainger's wind-band setting of the Prelude in the Dorian Mode was created from 1937-1941, while he was teaching at the Interlochen Music Camp in Michigan. Later, a saxophone choir version was written, also at Interlochen, in 1943. Finally in 1952-1953, Grainger made a few minor revisions in the band arrangement. This first published score combines all of these sources.

- Program Note by Keith Brion

Cancion de Gesta (Epopéya del "Gamma," la nave llena de Futuro; Epopée of "Gamma," the ship loaded with Future)

Leo Brouwer

Born: March 1, 1939, Havana, Cuba

Instrumentation: Symphonic Winds

Composed: 1979

Duration: 26 minutes

There are numerous extant descriptions and program notes of Leo Brouwer's *Canción de Gesta*, each taking a decidedly political tone. However, the work actually has a much more insightful, diplomatic, and peaceful genesis.

The American Wind Symphony, a summer wind orchestra for college musicians led by Robert Austin Boudreau, commissioned Brouwer to write a piece for their group in the 1970s. Upon reception of *Canción de Gesta*, the American Wind Symphony then took the piece on their summer tour, performing it upon their floating stage barge; the ensemble still often closes their concerts with the work.

Boudreau writes,

A package arrived from Cuba in 1980 inside, a full score for wind orchestra, with a note saying, "This is my gift to you for what you have given to my brothers and sisters."

An explanation: Ever since my meetings with Villa Lobos, I have had a penchant for developing more concrete relationships with my fellow musicians in the Americas. In '79 [ed. note: 1969?] I had traveled extensively in Latin America and Central America. I had auditioned a wonderful horn player in Bogota, actually the principal with the National Symphony.

When he told me that his only teacher had been a drunken clarinetist, I asked if he would have an interest in studying with Rainer D'Intinnis, who had been a colleague at Juilliard and was then principal with the New York Philharmonic. He was excited about the idea.

From that conversation developed the concept of bringing 12 "Caribbean Scholars," young musicians from Costa Rica, Colombia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Honduras, Puerto Rico, who came to Pittsburgh and studied at Pitt, Carnegie-Mellon and Duquesne Universities, while the AWSO housed, fed and provided winter clothing for them.

Out of that program came Pedro Dias, principal English horn with the Met, Fernando Meza, percussion faculty at the University of Minnesota, and Rolando Morales Matos, on the faculty of Curtis Institute. These were the "brothers and sisters" whom Leo Brouwer indicated.

The thematic material of this epic voyage of "the boat loaded with future" is based on Handel's Water Music; dramatic use of percussion reappears again and again.

Weaving many musical and programmatic themes together to create a complex tapestry, *Canción de Gesta* incorporates a story of optimism and hope for a new day from Brouwer's Cuban home with the ideals of the American Wind Symphony. As can be seen in the work's subtitle, *Epopeya del Granma, la nave llena de Futuro* (Epopée [epic poem] of Granma, the ship loaded with Future), the work synthesizes Handel's *Water Music* with the journey of Fidel Castro and his revolutionary compatriots from Mexico to Cuba aboard the boat *Granma* in 1959. Brouwer took inspiration in this vein from from the Pablo Neruda poem, also named *Canción de Gesta*, that detailed the *Granma's* journey in verse. However, "the ship loaded with the future" can also be interpreted as the American Wind Symphony's *Point Counterpoint II*, the floating stage barge populated by young musicians, a musical heir to the ship utilized to premiere Handel's *Water Music*.

The **University of Maryland Wind Orchestra** was founded in 2008 to give advanced undergraduate, MM and DMA performance students the opportunity to participate in a professional caliber ensemble with the intent of furthering their preparation as professional orchestral and chamber music performers.

UMWO is committed to the idea that chamber music is central to all ensemble performance, and it embraces the ethos of chamber music even in large ensemble contexts. UMWO regularly incorporates string, keyboard and vocal performers. In addition to expanding repertoire possibilities, UMWO seeks to create a "next-generation" of string, keyboard and vocal performers who embrace the wind ensemble as a vital and integral part of their musical world.

During its seven-year history, UMWO has performed in collaborations with major professional ensembles such as the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Eighth Blackbird and the Imani Winds, has been invited to perform at international, national and regional conferences, and has been active in commissioning and premiering new works for winds.

All wind, brass, and percussion players rotate between the UM Wind Orchestra and the UM Symphony Orchestra by concert period, placing constantly shifting demands on our musicians every four weeks and inspiring the development of skills that serve them best in a variety of musical situations.

WIND ORCHESTRA

Michael Votta, Jr., *Conductor*

Brian Coffill, Joseph Scott, David Wacyk, *Graduate Assistants*

Flute

Natasha Costello
Alexandra Gilbert
Laura Kaufman
Hannah Liao

Oboe

Amanda Dusold
Michael Homme
Michael Helgerman

Clarinet

Nathan Dorsey
Gabe Ferreira
Cliff Hangarter
Matt Rynes
Josh Waldman
Nina Elhassan

Bassoon

Sam Fraser
Lucas Cheng
Eddie Rumzis

Saxophone

Brian Starace
Hansu Sung
Drew Pascoe

Horn

Joshua Blumenthal
Daniel Eppler
David Flyr
Katilyn Schmitt
Clinton Soisson

Trumpet

Justin Drisdelle
Chris Rother
Isaac Segal
Luke Spence
John Walden

Trombone

Michael Dranove
Josh Gehres
Corey Sansolo

Bass Trombone

Matthew Myers

Euphonium

Ryan Kieft

Tuba

Andrew Dougherty
David Rea

Harp

Iraida Poberezhnaya

Piano

Szu-Yi Li

Percussion

Jon Clancy
Brad Davis
Laurin Friedland
Chris Herman
Mario Perez

Violin

Jesse Munoz

Viola

Hannah Dara

Cello

Peter Swanson

String Bass

Ian Saunders



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The **UMD School of Music** nurtures artists, scholars, and educators who understand tradition and celebrate innovation.