



Grant Park Music Festival

Seventy-sixth Season

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar, *Principal Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

Fourth Program: The Pulitzer Project

Friday, June 25, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 26, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

Harris Theater for Music and Dance

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

SCHUMAN	<i>A Free Song</i> , Secular Cantata No. 2 for Chorus and Orchestra Long, too long, America Look down, fair moon
COPLAND	Suite from <i>Appalachian Spring</i> <i>Intermission</i>
SOWERBY	<i>The Canticle of the Sun</i> for Chorus and Orchestra

This concert is sponsored by JPMorgan Chase & Co.



CARLOS KALMAR's biography can be found on page 10.

CHRISTOPHER BELL's biography can be found on page 12.



A FREE SONG, SECULAR CANTATA NO. 2 FOR CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA (1942)

WILLIAM SCHUMAN (1910-1992)

A Free Song is scored for piccolo, two flutes, three oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is approximately 22 minutes. This is the first performance of A Free Song by the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus.

William Schuman, born in New York City in 1910, was one of America's most distinguished composers and educators. As a teenager, his interest was in jazz and popular music, but he turned to concert music before leaving high school. Following study at Columbia University and privately with Roy Harris, he joined the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York in 1935. The *American Festival Overture* of 1939 was the earliest of his works to gain popular notice, and he became one of the leading artistic figures of his generation during the ensuing five years, receiving the first Pulitzer Prize in Music, in 1943, for *A Free Song*. In 1945, he left Sarah Lawrence to assume the dual responsibilities of Director of Publications for G. Schirmer, Inc. and President of the Juilliard School of Music in New York City. At Juilliard, where he remained for eighteen years, his tenure was notable for the establishment of the renowned Juilliard Quartet and for the thorough overhaul of the teaching of theory. This latter achievement arose from his philosophy of basing instruction directly on the experiences of listening and creating music rather than on any rigid pedagogical system, and it influenced the curricula of many music schools throughout the country. From 1962 to 1969, Schuman served as President of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, a period that saw the virtual completion of that influential complex. William Schuman was among this country's most prominent spokesmen and advisors for the arts as consultant to, among many others, CBS, the Rockefeller Foundation, Broadcast Music, Inc. and the MacDowell Colony, while remaining active as a composer. Thanks to a strict and methodical work schedule, he produced an enormous amount of music for a man of so many parts: ten symphonies; concerted works for piano, violin, horn, cello and viola; five ballets and an opera; several independent pieces for concert band and for orchestra (including the well-known *New England Triptych*, after music by the American Revolutionary War-era composer William Billings); two dozen choral works; and numerous chamber music scores.

The Pulitzer Prize was established in 1917 "to honor excellence in journalism and the arts" in accordance with the will of the Hungarian-American newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911), who also bequeathed \$2 million to Columbia University to establish a school of journalism; Columbia administers the Pulitzer Prize. In 1943, an award "for a distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during the year" was added to those for journalism, letters, drama and education, and its first recipient was William Schuman for his *A Free Song*, Secular Cantata No. 2 for Chorus and Orchestra. (Schuman's Secular Cantata No. 1, *This Is Our Time*, is a setting from 1940 of a poem by Genevieve Taggard.) *A Free Song* takes its texts from *Drum Taps*, Walt Whitman's powerful response to his observations and feelings while volunteering for much of the Civil War in the hospitals of Washington, D.C. In announcing the publication of *A Free Song*, the firm of G. Schirmer noted, "The vigorous, expansive verse of Whitman finds a congenial association with Schuman's fierce and concentrated style, where grace and charm are crowded out by the impact of granite-like blocks of dissonant harmony and sharp-edged counterpoint."

Long, too long, America,
Travelling roads all even and peaceful, you learned from joys and prosperity only,
But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish.

Look down, fair moon, and bathe this scene.
 Pour softly down night's nimbus on faces ghastly, swollen, purple,
 On the dead on their backs with their arms tossed wide.
 Pour down your unstinted nimbus, sacred moon.

O, a new song, a free song,

Flapping, flapping, flapping, flapping,
 Where the banner at daybreak is flapping,
 By sounds, by voices
 clearer,

By the wind's voice

By the banner's voice and child's voice and sea's voice and father's
 voice,

Low on the ground and high in the air,

Where the banner at daybreak is flapping.
 We hear and see not strips of cloth alone,
 We hear again the tramp of armies,
 We hear the drums beat and the trumpets blowing,
 A new song, a free song,

We hear the jubilant shouts of millions of men,
 We hear Liberty!

SUITE FROM APPALACHIAN SPRING (1944)

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Appalachian Spring is scored for piccolo, woodwinds, horns, trumpets and trombones in pairs, timpani, percussion, harp, piano and strings. The performance time is approximately twenty-three minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this work on July 15, 1967, Kenneth Schermerborn conducting.



Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, one of America's greatest patrons of the arts, went to see a dance recital by Martha Graham in 1942. So taken with the genius of the dancer-choreographer was Mrs. Coolidge that she offered to have three ballets specially composed for her. Miss Graham chose as composers of the music Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith and an American whose work she had admired for over a decade — Aaron Copland. In 1931, Miss Graham had staged Copland's *Piano Variations* as the ballet *Dithyramb*, and she was eager to have another dance piece from him, especially in view of his recent successes with *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*. She devised a scenario based on her memories of her grandmother's farm in turn-of-the-20th-century Pennsylvania, and it proved to be a perfect match for the direct, quintessentially American style that Copland espoused in those years.

The premiere was set for October 1944 (in honor of Mrs. Coolidge's 80th birthday) in the auditorium of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and the limited space in the theater allowed Copland to use a chamber orchestra of only thirteen instruments (flute, clarinet, bassoon, piano and nine strings). He began work on the score in June 1943 in Hollywood while writing the music for the movie *North Star*, and finished it a year later in Cambridge, where he was delivering the Horatio Appleton Lamb Lectures at Harvard. The plot, the music and most of the choreog-

raphy were completed before a title for the piece was selected. Miss Graham was taken at just that time with the name of a poem by Hart Crane — *Appalachian Spring* — and she adopted it for her new ballet, though the content of the poem has no relation with the stage work.

Appalachian Spring was unveiled in Washington on October 30, 1944, and repeated in New York in May to great acclaim, garnering the 1945 Pulitzer Prize for Music and the New York Music Critics Circle Award as the outstanding theatrical work of the 1944-1945 season. Soon after its New York premiere, Copland revised the score as a suite of eight continuous sections for full orchestra by eliminating about eight minutes of music in which, he said, “the interest is primarily choreographic.” On October 4, 1945, Artur Rodzinski led the New York Philharmonic in the premiere of this version, which has become one of the best-loved works of 20th-century American music.

Edwin Denby’s description of the ballet’s action from his review of the New York premiere in May 1945 was reprinted in the published score: “[The ballet concerns] a pioneer celebration in spring around a newly built farmhouse in the Pennsylvania hills in the early part of the 19th century. The bride-to-be and the young farmer-husband enact the emotions, joyful and apprehensive, their new domestic partnership invites. An older neighbor suggests now and then the rocky confidence of experience. A revivalist and his followers remind the new householders of the strange and terrible aspects of human fate. At the end, the couple are left quiet and strong in their new house.”

Copland wrote, “The suite arranged from the ballet contains the following sections, played without interruption:

“1. *Very Slowly*. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.

“2. *Fast*. Sudden burst of unison strings in A-major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.

“3. *Moderato*. Duo for the Bride and her Intended — scene of tenderness and passion.

“4. *Quite fast*. The Revivalist and his flock. Folksy feelings — suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.

“5. *Still faster*. Solo dance of the Bride — presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.

“6. *Very slowly (as at first)*. Transition scene to music reminiscent of the introduction.

“7. *Calm and flowing*. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer-husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title *The Gift To Be Simple*. The melody I borrowed and used almost literally, is called *Simple Gifts*.

“8. *Moderate. Coda*. The Bride takes her place among her neighbors. At the end the couple are left ‘quiet and strong in their new house.’ Muted strings intone a hushed, prayer-like passage. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.”

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THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN FOR CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA **(1943)**

Leo Sowerby (1895-1968)

The Canticle of the Sun is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, bass clarinet, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is approximately 25 minutes. This is the work’s first performance by the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus.

Composer, teacher and church musician Leo Sowerby was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on May 1, 1895. By the time that his family moved to Chicago fourteen years later, he had shown genuine talent as a pianist and begun to compose and teach himself to play organ. In Chicago, he studied piano with Percy Grainger and theory with Arthur Olaf Andersen; the Chicago Symphony Orchestra premiered his Violin Concerto No. 1 in 1913. Chicago Symphony premieres of the Piano Concerto and the Cello Concerto followed before Sowerby left to serve as a military bandmaster

during World War I. He earned a degree from the American Conservatory soon after returning to Chicago following the war. In 1920, he became the first composer to be awarded an American Prix de Rome; he lived at the American Academy in Rome until 1924. Back in Chicago in 1925, Sowerby joined the faculty of the American Conservatory and two years later became organist and choirmaster of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. James. He served in both posts until 1962, when he moved to Washington, D.C. to become the founding director of the College of Church Musicians at the National Cathedral. He died in Port Clinton, Ohio on July 7, 1968. Sowerby was honored with election to the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1935 and a Pulitzer Prize in 1946 (for his cantata *The Canticle of the Sun*), and he was the first American to be made a Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music in London (1957).

The 1946 Pulitzer Prize for Music was awarded to Leo Sowerby for *The Canticle of the Sun* for Chorus and Orchestra. The work is a setting of *Canticum Solis* (canticle = hymn in the Catholic liturgy) that St. Francis of Assisi was said to have composed late in 1224 while recovering from illness at San Damiano, the first monastery of the Order of St. Clare, which followed strictly the holy man's teachings of devotion, extreme poverty and the interconnectedness of man and nature. St. Francis wrote his *Canticle* in the dialect of the central region of Umbria, and it is generally regarded as among the earliest works of literature in the Italian language. For his setting, Sowerby used the translation of *The Canticle of the Sun* that Matthew Arnold included in his 1865 *Essays on Criticism*.

O Most High, O Almighty good Lord God,
 To Thee belong praise, glory, honor and all blessing.
 To Thee alone, Most High, do they belong,
 And there is no man worthy to mention Thee.
 Praised be my Lord God with all his creatures,
 And specially our brother the Sun,
 Who brings us the day and who brings us the light,
 Fair is he and shines with a very great splendor.
 O Lord, he signifies to us Thee.
 Praised be my Lord for our sister the Moon,
 And for the stars, the which He has set clear and lovely in heav'n.
 Praised be my Lord for our brother the Wind,
 And for Air and Cloud, Calm and all weather,
 By the which Thou upholdest life in all creatures.
 Praised be my Lord for our sister Water,
 Who is very serviceable unto us, and humble and precious and clean.
 Praised be my Lord for our brother Fire,
 Through whom Thou givest us light in the darkness,
 And he is bright and very pleasant,
 And very mighty and strong.
 Praised be my Lord for our mother the Earth,
 The which doth sustain us and keep us,
 And bringeth forth divers fruits and flow'rs of many colors, and grass.
 Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for His love's sake,
 And who endure weakness and tribulation;
 Blessed are they who peaceably shall endure,
 For Thou, O Most Highest, shalt give them a crown.
 Praised be my Lord for our sister the Death of the Body,
 From which no living man escapeth.
 Woe to him who dieth in mortal sin.
 Blessed are they who are found walking by Thy most holy will,
 For the second death shall have no pow'r to do them harm.
 Praise ye the Lord, bless ye the Lord,
 And give thanks unto Him
 And serve Him with great humility.