



ASU String Ensemble Presents:

Festive Celebrations

Cullan Lucas, conductor
Mark Alpizar, conductor

School of Music
Herberger Institute for Design & the Arts
Arizona State University
2015-2016 Season

November 23, 2015
7:30pm

Katzin Concert Hall

MUSIC

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

ASU String Ensemble

Cullan Lucas and Mark Alpizar, conductors

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 3 (1932).....Ottorino Respighi
(1879-1936)

- I. Italiana
- II. Arie di corte
- III. Siciliana
- IV. Passacaglia

Cullan Lucas, conductor

Suite for Strings (1877).....Leos Janáček
(1854-1928)

- I. Prelude
- II. Allemande
- III. Sarabande
- V. Air
- VI. Finale

Andante Festivo (1938).....Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Mark Alpizar, conductor

"Prairie Night and Celebration"

From *Billy the Kid* (1938).....Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

- I. Prairie Night (Card Game)
- II. Celebration (After Billy's Capture)

Cullan Lucas, conductor

To respect the performers, please silence all electronic devices.

ASU String Ensemble

Violin 1

- Natalie Rose*
- Haiyuan Song
- Alexis Barton
- Beatrice Lopez
- Ziyang Zhang

Violin 2

- Koon Yu Wang
- Jingting Liu
- Kevin Wang
- Lindee Burrell
- Cody Munson
- Marissa Bower

Viola

- Marcella Columbus
- Jennifer Grubbs
- Kathryn Holste
- Sarahna Cooper

Cello

- Allen Hagan
- Jennifer Ben
- Mackenzie O'Dea

Double Bass

- Benjamin Jones
- Ashley Smith

*Concertmaster

About the Conductors

Houston-born conductor **Cullan Lucas** is in his second year of assistant conducting with the orchestra and opera programs at Arizona State University. Prior to this position he served as Principal Conductor of the Columbia Community Orchestra, in Columbia, South Carolina. He has participated in both domestic and international conducting workshops, including a performance with the Nanchang University Philharmonic Orchestra in China.

Cullan earned the Master of Music Degree in Orchestral Conducting from the University of South Carolina, where he studied with Donald Portnoy and Neil Casey. He also holds Bachelor of Arts Degrees in Music and Chemistry from Texas A&M University. Currently, Cullan is pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Orchestral and Operatic Conducting at Arizona State University.

Mark Alpizar is a conductor and clarinetist in Pursuit of a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at Arizona State University where he is a teaching assistant for the orchestra and studies conducting with Phoenix Symphony's Tito Muñoz. In addition to his responsibilities at ASU, Mr. Alpizar is the conductor for the South Coast Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Artistic Director for the Four Seasons Youth Orchestra in Orange County, California. Between both groups he has played two concertos, premiered an opera, performed in the Walt Disney Concert Hall and Segerstrom Center for the Performing Arts, and toured England, Ireland, Spain, Greece, New York, and Sydney.

Formerly, he was the Assistant Conductor for the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra, and conducted the Collegium Musicum at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at Cal State Long Beach. His previous degrees in music education, clarinet performance, and orchestral conducting were also earned at the Cole Conservatory. In addition to his conducting, Mr. Alpizar is the clarinetist of *Quintessential Winds* with whom he has recorded many world premieres and toured and competed across the country.

Program Notes

Ancient Airs and Dances is an orchestral transcription of music for the lute – an intimate guitar-like instrument with a gently whispering sound. Respighi recasts the tunes upon a bold and vivid orchestral fabric. Rarely does he call for the entire orchestra to play together, therefore maintaining much of the original setting's intimacy.

This work's four movements are drawn from the works of four composers – Santino Garsi da Parma (1542-1604), Jean-Baptiste Besard (ca.1567-after 1617), Count Ludovico Roncalli (1654-1713), and an unknown fourth composer.

The opening *Italiana* is a graceful dance by Garsi da Parma. This elegant movement in a leisurely 3/4 meter is typical of popular Italian dances of the period.

Respighi's second movement, *Arie di Corte* (Courtly Aairs), is based on a set of songs by Besard. The first of these is a stately dance introduced by the cellos. Contrasting in nature, the second dance is sprightlier. Respighi returns to a slower tempo for the third section. The final dance alternates between pizzicato

regularly in the Chicago Symphony for over 3 years, and appeared on several occasions as Guest Concertmaster of the Bergen Philharmonic in Norway. She spent many summers performing at the Marlboro Music Festival, and her approach to conducting is firmly rooted in her detailed and dedicated experience as a chamber musician. She plays a 1782 Mantegazza violin on generous loan to her from a private patron.

She holds a Bachelor's degree in violin from the Curtis Institute of Music and a Master's degree in orchestral conducting from The Juilliard School, where she was the recipient of the Charles Schiff Award for Excellence in Orchestral Conducting, the American Conductors Award, and the Bruno Walter Memorial Scholarship. In addition to Rattle and Zweden, her most prominent mentors are Alan Gilbert and Fabio Luisi.

Ms. Canellakis was born and raised in New York City. She speaks French, German and Italian, and is equally at home performing all genres of the repertoire.

Program Notes

Gustav Mahler's *Ninth Symphony* is often viewed as a valedictory work, a final statement from the last symphonic master in the Austro-German musical tradition. Naturally, there is plenty of evidence to both confirm and complicate such a view, and a brief survey of that evidence allows the compelling story of Mahler's Ninth to begin to take shape.

Mahler was thinking about death when he composed the Ninth. His four-year-old daughter had died in 1907, traumatizing the composer - he could not bear mention of the child's name - and forcing the family to move to find a new summer retreat, one free of painful associations. They settled on Toblach (Dobbiaco) in the mountainous Tyrol region on the Austro-Italian border. Mahler would compose his final music during his summers there: *Das Lied von der Erde* (The Song of the Earth) in 1908, the Ninth Symphony in 1909, and the unfinished Tenth in 1910. In 1907, Mahler was also diagnosed with the heart condition that would kill him four years later. To a man who found inspiration in outdoor excursions, the doctor's order that he refrain from strenuous physical activity meant a drastic lifestyle change. Instead of rambling around the woods and mountains, he spent much of his time alone in his composing cabin. In a 1908 letter to the conductor Bruno Walter, Mahler wrote, "The solitude, in which my attention is turned more inward, makes me feel all the more distinctly that everything is not right with me physically. Perhaps indeed I am being too gloomy - but since I have been in the country I have been feeling worse than I did in town, where all the distractions helped to take my mind off things."

So in the Ninth Symphony we definitely have a composer preoccupied with "the end," with his own and others' mortality. But Mahler didn't see the Ninth as his final work - the Tenth, much of which he completed before he died, ended up being that. He was simply grappling with the same questions of life and death he faced in much of his music - according to his long-time friend Natalie Bauer-Lechner, the first opus

and bowed strings and duple and triple meter. The staid music of the opening returns to close the movement.

The anonymous *Siciliana* is a lilting Sicilian dance in 6/8 meter. Respighi's final *Passacaglia* is an early variation form, based here on a piece by Roncalli. Unlike more familiar variations in which a theme is used as the basis for subsequent variations, a *passacaglia* has a repeated pattern (usually in the bass, but here in the violins) upon which variations are superimposed. These build in complexity until they reach an almost overwhelming level of intensity.

-Notes from Orpheus Music Prose and Craig Doolin

Czech composer, Leos Janáček, was only 23 years old when he went on a walking tour of Bohemia in the summer of 1877 with Dvořák. Together they collected folk songs that Janáček would use as the basis of one of his earliest compositions, the *Suite for Strings*. The influence of Smetana and Dvořák are clearly present in each of these six short movements.

-Notes by Mark Alpizar

The Dean of Finnish composers, Jean Sibelius wrote the *Andante Festivo* as a short string quartet dedicated to the Saynatsalo plywood mill in Finland. Rather than express the qualities of the actual sawmill, Sibelius wrote a beautiful hymn inspired by the Finnish landscape surrounding the mill.

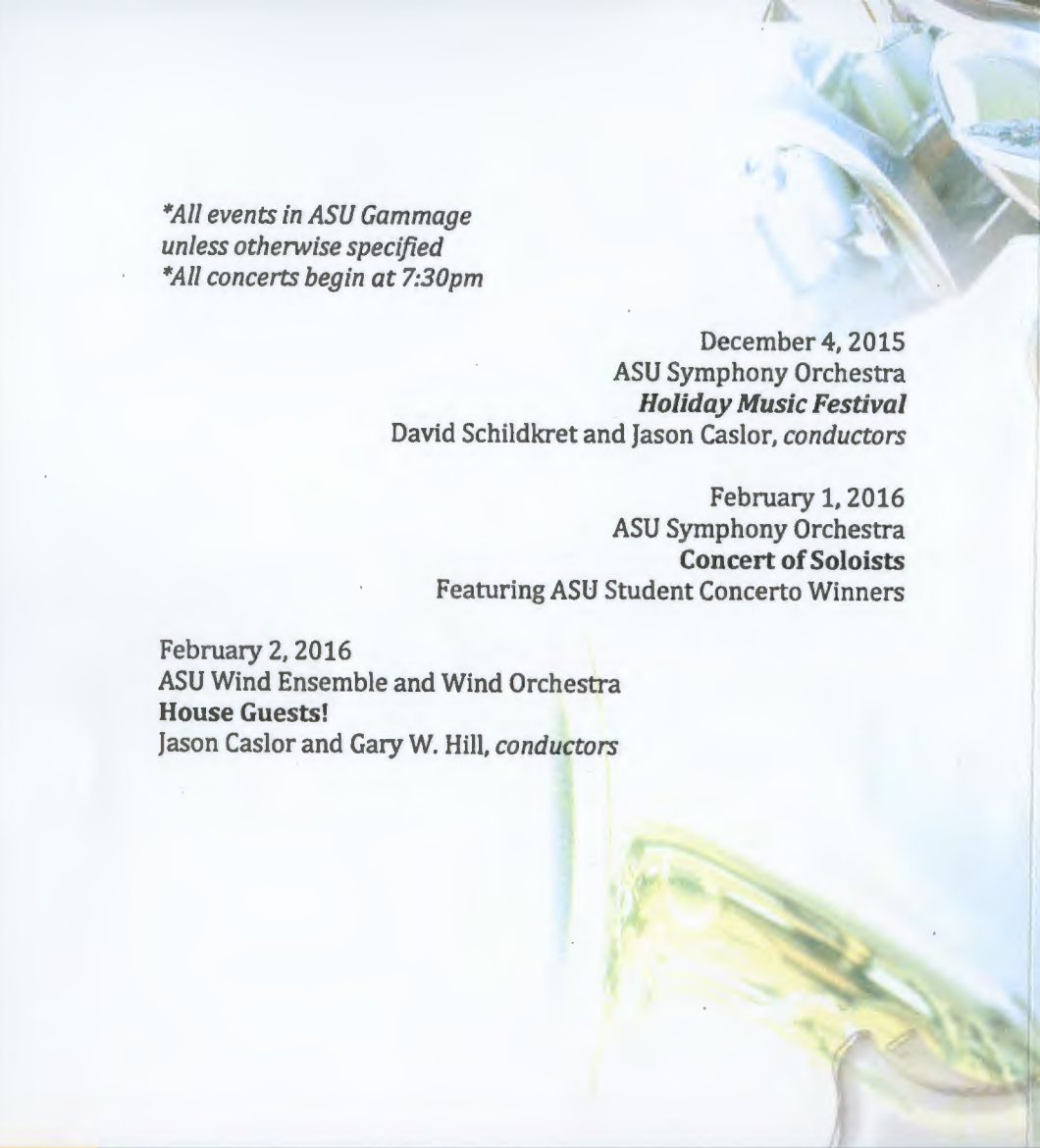
Perhaps due to alcoholism or an adverse reaction to the trends of modern music, Sibelius virtually abandoned composition altogether by the mid 1920s. However, in 1939, Sibelius conducted a new arrangement of *Andante Festivo* for string orchestra and timpani for a New Year's Eve broadcast for the World Exhibition in New York. During the rehearsal, Sibelius famously asked the players to "play with more humanity," a quote, which many suggest, qualifies *Andante Festivo* as his preemptive emotional balm to a war-torn Europe.

-Note by Mark Alpizar

During the 1930's and 40's, Copland brought a refined simplicity of both structural and harmonic concept to his works. In 1952, he wrote in *Music and Imagination*, "Certain modes of expression may not need the full gamut of post-tonal implications and...certain expressive purposes can be appropriately carried out only by a simple texture in a basically tonal scheme....It is a satisfaction to know that in composing a ballet like *Billy the Kid*...I have touched off for myself and others a kind of musical naturalness that we have badly needed."

In *Prairie Night*, the melodies of the suite's introduction flow upward, reflecting the release of heat baked into the earth from the boiling-hot sun in the prairie. The jaunty and boisterous *Celebration*, sarcastically mocks Billy after his capture by a posse.

-Notes by Max Derrickson and Mark Alpizar



**All events in ASU Gammage
unless otherwise specified
All concerts begin at 7:30pm

December 4, 2015
ASU Symphony Orchestra
Holiday Music Festival
David Schildkret and Jason Caslor, *conductors*

February 1, 2016
ASU Symphony Orchestra
Concert of Soloists
Featuring ASU Student Concerto Winners

February 2, 2016
ASU Wind Ensemble and Wind Orchestra
House Guests!
Jason Caslor and Gary W. Hill, *conductors*

**EVENT INFORMATION 480.965.TUNE (480.965.8863)
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