



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

100YEARS
1918-2018

Trains and/of/or Thought **Wind Ensemble**

Gillian MacKay, *conductor*

Friday, April 5, 2019

7:30 pm

MacMillan Theatre, 80 Queen's Park

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates.

For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat,
the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across
Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Wind Ensemble: *Trains and/of/or Thought*

Gillian MacKay, *conductor*

PROGRAM

To the Introspective (2019) Daniel Romberger
(b. 1991)
premiere performance

Arrival Platform Humlet (1916) Percy Grainger
(1882-1961)

Solitary Dancer (1966) Warren Benson
(1924-2005)

Piece of Mind (1987) Dana Wilson
(b. 1946)

- i. Thinking
- ii. Remembering
- iii. Feeling
- iv. Being

Intermission

Trains of Thought (2017) Alex Shapiro
(b. 1962)
Brendan McLean, *graduate conductor*

Ghost Train (1994) Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

- i. Ghost Train
- ii. At the Station
- iii. Motive Revolution

WIND ENSEMBLE

Flute

Mollin Balisi
Ricci Ebron
Noah de Verheyen
Tyler Hastings
Michelle Hui
Vincenzo Volpe

Oboe

Bradley Duffy
Eric Luo
Ciara Wheeler

Clarinet

Andrea Chan
Mimmy Hsu
Katelyn Katic
Mark Kim
Bruce Luo
Kevin Vuong
Jonathan Wong

Bassoon

Eric Bélanger
Andrew Duncan
Quentin Kamieniecki
Rae Pazú

Saxophone

Nicholas Bridi
Samuel Chen
Chris Jones
Jason Lau
Jesse Ma
David Yuan

Trumpet

Daniel Barak
Alexis Dill
Adrian Rogers
Nicholas Stevenson
Jason Town
Ben Yoon

Horn

Simon Au-Yeung
Gabriel Conquer
Anna Ding
Bridget Gaines
Paolo Rosselli
Paige Summach

Trombone

Jasmine Fok
Ethan Mattei
Benjamin Storm
Joseph Distefano
(Bass)

Euphonium

PJ Bradley
Carter Friesen

Tuba

Mike Liu

Piano

Adele Qian

Percussion

Julia Araiche
Britton-René Collins
Samuel Kerr
Lian McMillan
Ewan Deveaux
Keshav Sharma-Jaitly
Jacob Valcheff

Double Bass

Peter Eratostene

Graduate Assistant

Brendan McLean

MacMillan Theatre

Ian Albright,
Technical Director

Les Stockley,
Technical Assistant

Ross Hammond,
Production Assistant

Performance Collection

Karen Wiseman,
Librarian

PROGRAM NOTES

To the Introspective (2019) is a fanfare celebrating the 100th anniversary of University of Toronto's Faculty of Music. Introspection is the act of looking inside oneself to examine one's own mental state and feelings. This concept is inspiring to me because in today's highly active society, we are often inclined to make decisions, whether for work or leisure, at a rapid-fire pace without time for critical thought or self-reflection. But looking within oneself can help identify what goals one sets out to accomplish and what steps can be taken to achieve them. So here's to the Introspective and to the Faculty of Music; may you both understand yourselves in order to achieve great success!

Program note by Daniel Romberger

Arrival Platform Humlet (1908-1910) was written while Percy Grainger was in his late 20s, living in both England and Norway. Unlike his characteristic and familiar folksong-based compositions, it is a work comprised of original material. The young pianist and budding composer conceived of *Arrival Platform Humlet* while waiting for a train at the Liverpool and Victoria Street station in London. He explains that the work is not programmatic in nature but instead conveys the happy anticipation that accompanies awaiting the arrival of a loved one—"the sort of

thing one hums to oneself as an accompaniment to one's tramping feet as one happily, excitedly, paces up and down the arrival platform." Fascinatingly, the entire piece contains almost no harmonies, but rather a single line that is simply performed in unison or doubled in octaves. Grainger describes the piece as also lacking themes, instead consisting of a constantly evolving melody that rarely re-cycles its previous motives. The work was originally written for solo piano but in 1916 was included as the first movement of his *In a Nutshell* suite, which had versions for orchestra, solo piano, and two pianos. Today's version of the work has been scored for large Wind Ensemble by Carl Simpson.

Warren Benson was a composer and former professor at both Ithaca College and the Eastman School of Music where he taught composition. Benson is known for wind band writing that defied the conventions and norms for concert band music of his day—he rejected the predictable, formulaic, mass-appeal music so common to bands at the time. The title of this work, ***Solitary Dancer*** (1966), refers to the "quiet, poised energy that one may observe in a dancer in repose, alone with her inner music." In creating the work, Benson wanted to do something that had not been done before in the band world—create a work that

was fast and exciting but that also, paradoxically, possessed a calm and stillness. As such, the work possesses a tremendous rhythmic energy that constantly simmers but never boils over. Unlike most other band compositions from the mid-20th century, which typically have a grandiose climactic conclusion, the dynamics in *Solitary Dancer* never exceed a moderate level and the culmination of energy that has accumulated slowly and seamlessly recedes back to a quiet resting place.

Dana Wilson is an award-winning composer who is currently Professor Emeritus in composition at Ithaca College in upstate New York. *Piece of Mind* (1987) was his first piece for wind ensemble and was wildly successful, winning both the American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald and Sudler International Composition prizes, while also gaining widespread notoriety in the wind band community. The work, through each of its movements—*Thinking, Remembering, Feeling, Being*—reflects the depth and idiosyncrasies of the different modalities of the human mind. The first movement presents a repeating four-note motive which serves as a base from which different musical layers and ideas logically evolve. This motive recurs throughout the work and unifies the four movements. The second movement, with its jazz infusions, reflects the way in which memories

come into our mind—sometimes in brief flashes or episodes and at other times as vague recollections. The third movement explores the affective aspects of human existence and the gamut of the emotional spectrum. To round out the work, Wilson addresses the awakened mental state of—simply—*being*, a manner of existing which he explains is inspired by South Asian culture.

Alex Shapiro is a Washington State-based composer who frequently experiments with electroacoustic music. Today's work, *Trains of Thought* (2017), combines the sonorities of the wind ensemble with various train-related sounds Shapiro obtained from a friend and fellow composer. These two media form a soundscape which mirrors the constant internal tracks that play-out in our minds. Several persistent, recurring musical motives reflect the streams of voices and images that rove our minds. Sometimes these thoughts persist, and other times they disappear as quickly as they came. At times, Shapiro's work is ethereal and atmospheric, and at other times it is intense and goal-driven, reflecting our tendencies to both daydream and move logically from one idea to the next to pursue a line of thinking. *Trains of Thought* was originally scored as a longer electroacoustic sextet in 2015. The version being performed today was commissioned in 2017 by the W.F. West High School Wind Ensemble

in Chehalis, WA under the direction of Adam Campagna, and by a consortium which includes Dr. Gillian MacKay and the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble whose performance today will be the Canadian premiere of the work.

Written in 1993-1994, ***Ghost Train*** was Grammy Award-winning composer Eric Whitacre's first work for instrumentalists. Whitacre, who is most-known for his choral music, became inspired to write for the wind band after hearing a concert band rehearsal while an undergraduate at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. The first movement of the work was premiered by the UNLV Wind Symphony several months later at the College Band Directors National Association conference and became an instant hit. As a result of this early success, Whitacre composed the next two movements and went on to become one of the most sought-after wind composers in the world. The name *Ghost Train* refers to the

American folklore legend which tells of a mysterious rogue train which chugs through deserted towns and empty canyons in the dead of night. The first movement is a direct aural painting of the various noises associated with the supernatural locomotive. The second movement portrays the hustle and bustle of a train station—the meeting of loved ones, the grandeur of the architecture, and the (real or imagined?) innocence of a bygone era. The third movement is a nod to the era from 1850-1870 in which the steam engine transformed industry and transportation. The name—*Motive Revolution*—also refers to the cycling of musical motives throughout the movement. The work is dedicated to Thomas G. Leslie, director of the UNLV Wind Symphony who first premiered the work and, in doing so, indirectly launched Whitacre's highly successful career as a wind band composer.

Program notes by Brendan McLean

Please note that photography and recording are strictly prohibited during the performance. Kindly turn off all electronic devices as a courtesy to the performers and your fellow patrons.



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BIOGRAPHIES

Gillian MacKay is Professor of Music of the University of Toronto, where she conducts the Wind Ensemble and teaches conducting. Gillian has an active professional career as a conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. She has conducted honour ensembles throughout Canada and internationally, and serves as Associate Conductor of the Denis Wick Canadian Wind Orchestra. Dr. MacKay has adjudicated Canadian band festivals at local, provincial, and national levels in Canada. She has conducted honour bands and judged competitions abroad, including Singapore, Thailand, and Korea.

Dr. MacKay enjoys presenting clinics and workshops at conferences and symposia, and is known for her work on the relationship between conducting and mime. Currently, she is investigating the application of the Michael Chekhov acting technique to movement and meaning in conducting. Gillian leads the University of Toronto Wind Conducting Symposium each July, and has been the guest instructor at other symposia in Canada and abroad.

Gillian earned degrees from University of Lethbridge, McGill University, and Northwestern University.

Raised by music educator parents, music has been a fixture in **Brendan McLean's** life from his earliest days. After completing his Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, he moved to Manitoba, where he taught band and jazz band for nine years at the middle and high school levels. He is currently on leave from a teaching position in Pembina Trails School Division, a school district known across Canada for its excellence in music education. Concert bands under McLean's direction have earned honours at many festivals, including Outstanding Performance awards at the Winnipeg Optimist International Band Festival. The Wind Ensemble at Henry G. Izatt Middle School, of which McLean was the director, has been one of a small number of middle years ensembles invited to perform at the Canadian Rocky Mountain Festival in Banff. Brendan McLean is excited to be finishing his Master of Music at the University of Toronto where he is currently studying wind conducting with Dr. Gillian MacKay.

