BANG THAT DRUM!

programme

Copland, Fanfare for the Common Man
Kraft, Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra

interval

Copland, Appalachian Spring: Suite
Gershwin, An American in Paris

James Sedares - Conductor
Gary France - Timpani

Wednesday 3 and Thursday 4 October 2001
Llewellyn Hall, 8.15 pm

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James Sedares
CONDUCTOR

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I'm sure all of our audience join me in extending a warm welcome to our visiting American conductor, James Sanders. James joins with great enthusiasm, and our Principal Percussionist, Gary Francis, in presenting a concert filled with music from the Mid-West. James has been generous with his time since his arrival in Canberra last week. Despite the opportunity to travel at the height of our festival he has spoken at a luncheon organised by the Friends of the CEO. The Friends continue to be an essential element in the life of the orchestra. They provide practical assistance within the office in a variety of volunteer roles and enjoy friendly fellowship with others who share a love of quality classical music. The Friends are always keen to welcome new members. Please contact Susan Ellis at the office if you would like to join them in their numerous activities. I would like to pay a special tribute to the Friends who organised and hosted a reception for the players of the orchestra following the lunchtime concert of 15 September.

The Board and other planning committees within the CEO have been working closely with our new Associate Director, Richard Gill, to formulate the concert programme for next year. I'm sure you will be happy with the outcome. Full details will be released shortly but in summary, Richard has decided upon a Classical Vienna” year of concerts. The Subscription concerts will feature many of the best loved works of four of the finest composers: the world-renowned Mozart and Beethoven, and Schubert. Richard, in his Chief Conductor role, will conduct two of the concerts. We have secured an impressive line-up of soloists to perform with our orchestra. These include David Pesci, Michael Keene, Russell Broomfield, and the von Bremen Quartet. In November, they will perform the Mozart Symphonies Concertante in Violin and Viola with his distinguished colleague Keith Groffman. 2002 promises to be an exciting year. It will all start with the annual Prom concert in the grounds of Government House. Last year was the most successful Prom ever with over 5000 people enjoying an afternoon of delightful music and fantastic weather. Nicholas Milton conducted that fine concert and he has agreed to return next year. Please note Saturday 16 February 2002 in your diaries.

An official welcome tonight to our newest sponsor, the Canberra Labor Club. The Club have unconditionally supported the Education and Developing Players Programme. The funding provided by the Labor Club will enable us to provide employment opportunities in a professional symphony orchestra for developing players. This contribution is significant and reflects the desire of the Canberra Labor Club to support the arts of Canberra. A warm welcome to the Canberra Labor Club.

I trust you have an enjoyable evening.

John Glenn

FROM THE CEO

As fortune prevails we are presenting an all American music programme this evening. May we dedicate this performance to the brave and selfless citizens of New York who continue to work tirelessly in the aftermath of the terrible events of 11 September.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Richard Gill and all the CEO players for their contributions towards the success of the Gala concert held on 15 September. Unexpectedly, we were all somewhat disappointed that we did not sell every seat in the Hall. A sell out would have been just reward for the performers who gave so much of their time and talent but it is no present certainly enjoyed a wonderful concert. Richard Gill demonstrated his wisdom as he guided us through a most entertaining and delightful programme. He has an easy going charm and a wonderful personality. I've no doubt he will be very popular with Canberra audiences during his initial three year period as our Artistic Director and Chief Conductor. As John has mentioned above Richard has prepared excellent programmes for next year and we look forward to providing quality entertainment to an ever increasing audience. I have asked Richard if he would care to contribute a message in our programme books for each concert. He will provide us with written insights into his aims for the development of the orchestra as the book for the November concerts.

The CEO commissioned Larry Sisky to write his Symphony in Four Movements sometime ago. The work received its premiere performance with the CEO during our subscription concerts in May. Larry has recently been named as the Canberra Times Artist of the Year for 2001. All associated with the CEO are proud of this deserved success and offer Larry hearty congratulations.

Enjoy tonight.

Ian McLean
JAMES SEDARES - Conductor

JAMES SEDARES - Conductor

James Sedares has proven himself one of the best and the brightest of a new generation of American conductors. In 1997 he concluded a ten-year tenure with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, an ensemble he placed under the spotlight of national and international recognition. Responding to a performance conducted by Maestro Sedares, the Arizona Republic stated, “If quality and beauty are criteria for attending a concert, patrons should be standing in line to get into Symphony Hall.”

As a result of this impressive record as an orchestra builder, Mr. Sedares has recently been appointed to the position of Principal Guest Conductor with the Wellington Symphony in Wellington, New Zealand (2001).

In his active recording career, Maestro Sedares led The Phoenix Symphony’s critically acclaimed premiere recording of Copland’s works which was released on the Koch International Classics label in September 1991, later winning the prestigious Independent Record Dealers Association’s (NARAS) Album of the Year award. Mr. Sedares’s second recording with the Phoenix Symphony, featuring works of William Schuman and Bernard Herrmann, appeared on the Billboard classical album charts for seven weeks.

Last year saw the release of former PSO Composer-in-Residence Daniel Asia’s Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3 on New World Records. But undoubtedly the greatest success for Sedares and the Orchestra was the recording of Elmer Bernstein’s reconstructed score to The Magnificent Seven on Koch International Classics in 1994. This blockbuster CD was listed on Billboard Magazine’s classical crossover best seller chart and continues to be one of the top rented releases of the year. The composer calls it “the definitive interpretation” and won the Echo Award, the prestigious German Record Critics Prize (Deutscher Schallplattenpreis), as well as another Indie award as best CD in the film music category. Another recent film score recording, on Koch, is that of the late Miklos Rózsa for Aladdin with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

James Sedares’s collaboration with the Koch International label includes two Grammy-nominated recordings, one with the London Symphony Orchestra of film repertoire by composers Ennio Morricone, Walter Filser, and Elmer Bernstein, performed by Direct Anthony Dreyer, the other, in all Zurich, with the Luzern Festival Orchestra. Altogether, Mr. Sedares has recorded 26 projects for release on Koch International Classics. He has fifteen recordings with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and two with the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra.

An active guest conductor, Sedares has led the St. Louis Symphony and the orchestras of Denver, Tucson, San Antonio, Virginia, Louisville, North Carolina, Hawaii, and San Diego. Internationally, he has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Prague Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra, Auck and Hamilton, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Slovenian Radio & Television Symphony Orchestra in Ljubljana, the National Symphony Orchestra in Brazil, the National Orchestra of Mexico, and the Bilbao (Spain) Symphony Orchestra.

A native of Chicago, James Sedares studied at St. Louis where his mentors included Polish conductor Jerry Somrow and the late Walter Susskind. In 1979, Sedares was appointed Associate Conductor, and later Musical Director, of the St. Louis Symphony. In 1980 Maestro Sedares joined the Phoenix Symphony as Resident Conductor, then became its Music Director in 1989.

James Sedares' last appearance with the CSO was at last year's Russian Festival concert of March.

James Sedares appears courtesy of the Friends of the CSO
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GARY FRANCE - Timpani

Gary France hails from Syracuse New York. His early training began with Herb Flower, principal percussionist of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra. France's formal education continued receiving a Bachelor of Music (1972) from the Crane School of Music - SUNY Potsdam and a Master of Music (1985) from the University of North Texas. This passion for percussion has lasted until the present day.

A relentless musician, France's unique, hard-hitting enthusiasm for percussion has taken him worldwide, both in search of new music experience and bringing listening pleasure to an international audience. He has given percussion workshops and masterclasses throughout the United States, The Peoples Republic of China, Indonesia, Asia, Europe, and extensively in Australia and New Zealand.

France's artistry has inspired numbers of composers to write works specially for him, among them the works on his 1996 CD, Works for Percussion. He has performed with ensembles such as the Abirus Percussion Group with Mike Hulse, dedicated his 1977 percussion orchestra Roll Mas. In 1996 France gave the first performance of set another work, written as a vehicle to demonstrate his performing depth in Michael Nelson's Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra, with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

Gary France's versatility enables him to be equally effective in the classical and commercial arenas. This, and vast performance experience gained working with the Abirus Percussion Group (Tokyo, Japan), the Syracuse Society for New Music, The Paulworth Symphony Ensemble, the Chicago Brass, the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, and Nova Ensemble among others, contribute to give the stamp of distinction to his every music initiative.

France's career has been nothing but fulfilling. The breadth of his performing experience is quite extraordinary. He participated as a major part of the USA by the Clyde Beauty Cole Brothers Circus (1984), was a member of the Four in the Hood jazz quartet, which made a national tour of India in 1989, and toured Australia with Dale Rinch (1989). A recording of this tour was described by Rolling Stone Magazine as "one of the most accomplished country music albums ever released in Australia". He also performed as principal solo percussionist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra in Peter Brook's La Tragedie de Carmen for the 1989 Festival of Perth.

In addition to his percussive capabilities, France has participated in numerous broadcasts for Australasian ABC Classic FM including conducting a national radio interview with renowned percussion artist Evelyn Glennie. France has visited Australia and New Zealand (1987); workshops in percussion in Adelaide, South Australia (1988); percussion masterclasses at the Victorian College of the Arts (1990); and at the Institute for the Arts, University of Western Australia (1990). As well as researching percussion instruments of the world, France has visited Indonesia, Japan, and India, as well as继续 his research on the history of percussion instruments in the world.

France has taught percussion extensively at tertiary institutions such as: State University of New York (1976); New York Summer School of the Arts (1977); Skidmore College (1982); University of North Texas (1988-1987); and at the University of Melbourne (1987); The University of Western Australia (1995); and Edith Cowan University in Australia, among others.

Mr. France is currently Department Head of Percussion and Drums at the Cobber School of Music (Australian National University), as well as Principal Percussionist and Timpanist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

In 1991 Mr. France collaborated with Australian percussionist Michael Askhill to present the music for the Drums Service for the opening ceremony for the Australian National Museum. He was on the staff of Youth Music Australia for New Music New York and National Music Camp 2000. In his position as President of the Percussive Arts Society International, Australian Chapter, Mr. France is regularly consulted on educational and policy needs.
AARON COPLAND 1900 - 1990

The idea of reflecting our country in music was very attractive to me. Debussy was not just a composer. He was a French composer, different from Beethoven or Brahms, who were German. We in America had not quite succeeded in reflecting our country in serious music.

By the time Copland died in 1990, he had unquestionably achieved the status often described as the quintessentially American composer. The titles of many of Copland's works have an overtly American resonance: Billy the Kid, Rodeo, Appalachian Spring, and the film scores for such American classics as Of Mice and Men and The Red Pony.

The child of Jewish immigrants from Poland and Lithuania, the very life story of Aaron Copland led into a peculiarly American early 20th century picture. His family moved by middle class influence, the promise of which attracted many of the United States twentieth century immigrants, the young Copland envied the freedom of studying music. He studied composition with Goldmark, and later in Paris, was the first of Nadia Boulanger's American students.

After travelling through Europe, absorbing the culture and music of the French, the German, and the Austrian, again a typical activity for the young educated American of the times, Copland returned to America. Paradoxically, perhaps, his immersion in the music of other nations made the composer reflect on his own style. Prompted in part by the economic and social decline of the Depression years, Copland moved towards simplicity and accessibility. The values and history of the relatively young and optimistic United States were found expression in his work.

It is here that the inherent contradictions of this most American composer start to reveal themselves. The picture of rural and simple America that Copland painted in such works as his 'Billy the Kid', Rodeo, and the film scores for The Red Pony, much like the Hollywood version of the Wild West on which it is based, The home spun optimism and rural romanticism embedded in this picture came in stark contrast to the realities of Depression and rural America. In this way it becomes apparent that a deal of Copland's Americaanness is seen from the idealized view of their nation of which many Americans are no found.

During the years of World War II, Copland's nationalism became even more marked, composing A Lincoln Portrait, among other works. However, the 1950s saw the rise of McCarthyism and Copland's political leanings, like those of many of America's leading creative artists were brought into question. From this point the style of the composer changed. His idealized American, as a less well defined construct has been introduced by the mistrust of post-Fascistic tendencies on the part of the Right.

In the 1970s Copland retired from composing, preferring instead to conduct. On the occasion of his 75th birthday, however, it was apparent that his last love remained composition.

I began by wanting to be a composer and now 50 years later, I still want to be a composer. As an ever-present preoccupation, the idea that I am putting down music that will tell people 100 years hence what it was like to be alive now, here in the United States, it is perhaps the story of Aaron Copland, rather than his idealized music, which achieves this goal of his work, perhaps we can see that in a century's time people will hear consummately crafted and passionate music that evokes an era of idealism and optimism.

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APPALACHIAN SPRING: SUITE

Aaron Copland

The orchestral suite heard here comes from a full length ballet commissioned by Martha Graham in 1944. Originally for small chamber ensemble, this orchestral rendering reveals the grandeur with which Copland could imbue his idealised frontier America.

The ballet depicts a pioneer celebration in spring around a newly built farm-house in the hills of Pennsylvania in the early part of the 19th century. The young farmer and his bride to be go through the joy and apprehension engendered by the prospect of their new domestic life. Older neighbours give the benefit of their experience, while a revivalist preacher and congregation remind the couple of the vagaries of human fate. Eventually they are able to enjoy their new house in peace.

- Helen Saunders

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CONCERTO FOR TIMPANI AND ORCHESTRA

William Kraft

Allegro
Slowly
Fiercely

William Kraft was appointed to the Dorothy and Sherill C. Gorham Chair in Music Composition at the University of Santa Barbara in September, 1991, in recognition of his long and distinguished career as a composer, conductor and teacher. He served as percussionist (1955 - 1962) and timpanist (1962 - 1981) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1955 to 1981 and was the orchestra’s first composer-in-residence (1981 - 1985) during which time he founded and directed the Philharmonic New Music Group. He also served as regular guest conductor and was assistant conductor for three seasons.

Alfamy Records
Reprinted with kind permission of William Kraft

The Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra was commissioned by Percussion Projects for Thomas Atkins and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. The premiere took place on 9 March 1984, with John Nelson conducting, and subsequently won second prize in the Kentucky Center/Reihlen Awards.

The work is scored for 2 flutes (both doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (second doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 1 bass clarinet, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, 3 percussion, harp, piano, celesta, and strings. There are three movements.

When Mr. Atkins first called to tell me about the commission, I told him I doubted that the timpani could sustain sufficient musical interest for a full-length concerto and suggested a five movement suite containing movements of contrasting character. However, when I began actual composition, I realised I had found the excerpt, the material, and the structure that would make a large three movement concerto.

Before commencing any actual writing, I met with Mr. Atkins in Indianapolis to get acquainted with him and his whole approach to playing the timpani, and to discuss various ideas. One primary idea that came from that discussion was the use of gloves with different materials on the fingers. Knowing that two important works of Pachelbel were to precede the Concerto, I wanted the Concerto to generate the same serenity of the Deux as an established known identity. Therefore we looked for the correct method of playing. From stalks we went to hands, and from hands to fingers, and from fingers to gloves with different coverings. The reverse order of this exhibits a vital part of the construction of the first movement, starting with felt covered fingers, the timpanist moves to leather, then to the whole-glove hand, and then to stacks of increasingly hard coverings, until we have reached uncovered wood.

Likewise, the musical material grows. Beginning with a timpani solo that itself unfolds from its originary notes, other instruments are gradually added in an interplay with the solo until the entire orchestra is involved. The first movement was completed on my birthday, September 6, 1983, at MacDowell Colony - where, indeed, except for the first half of the first movement, the entire Concerto was written.

The second movement is dedicated to my mother, who died September 12, 1984, during its composition. It is titled Poem for Timpani, Two String Orchestra, Cello, and Percussion. Ideally the string parts divide into two sections, A” on stage right, B” on stage left, or A” front strings, B” rear strings. Considering one of the idiomatic techniques of the timpani, the movement is based on glissandos.

The third movement is built on a four-note motive, the complete theme being first written for the timpani to establish its idiomatic character, and then set in various ways for the orchestra. However, in its final realization it is expressed by the orchestra, particularly in the brass. Without prior intention, the movement emerged into three forms, climaxing in a brief timpani cadenza just before the very end.

I would like to thank Thomas Atkins, Percussion Projects, John Nelson, and the Indianapolis Symphony, as well as the MacDowell Colony, for their various roles in bringing the Concerto not only to completion but also to a most successful and, to me, meaningful premiere.

William Kraft
Reprinted with kind permission of William Kraft
Fanfare for the Common Man

Aurora Copland
1900 - 1990

This work, for brass and percussion, was first performed in Cincinnati in 1942, under the baton of Eugene Goossens. Despite this link, however, for most Australians - and indeed most of the rest of the world - this majestic yet humble work will forever be linked with the extravagant opening ceremony of the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984. Once again, a range of contradictions colours a work of Copland: his fanfare for the common and ordinary man, stemming from the simple and abiding values of humanity and democracy, became synonymous with the Olympic Games that - almost single-handedly - relocated the event from a sporting endeavour celebrating those very values to the glamorous, Hollywood-ised multi-million dollar affair that we now take for granted.

That said, Copland’s soaring brass remains capable of lifting the human heart in a celebration of all of which humanity is capable.
AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

George Gershwin
1898 - 1937

There are some interesting parallels to be found between the lives and works of Aaron Copland and another of America's finest composers, George Gershwin. Both were the sons of immigrant parents living in New York. Both showed musical talent at an early age. Both enjoyed popular success during their lifetimes (not always the case for the contemporary composer, and stemming, in Gershwin's case, from his involvement in music theatre and Hollywood rather than his 'serious' compositions) and both enjoyed a renaissance of interest after the 1984 film, Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. But Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, his first 'serious' composition, was memorably accompanied by an extraordinary number of grand piano duets during the opening ceremonies of the 1932 Olympics, bringing Copland's Rhapsody in Blue to the attention of a wider audience. The film also brought Gershwin's music to a new generation, who were exposed to the beauty of his compositions for the first time.

Arguably, both exemplify something quintessentially American. In Gershwin's case, it is the Tin Pan Alley to Hollywood, vaudeville to movies, kind of theme that defined the golden age of Hollywood musicals. George Gershwin, most notably with his brother Iris, was a musical director and composer, and supplied music for films including several featuring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The popular standards he penned, amongst the finest of this era, include 'Fascinating Rhythm', 'Someone to Watch Over Me', 'Lady Be Good' and 'Strike Up the Band'.

And yet, Gershwin had aspirations beyond the popular. He travelled the reputation of 'serious' composers, and indeed his forays into art music did much to pave the way for figures such as Copland to gain acceptance as 'American' composers. The success of Rhapsody in Blue, composed in just three weeks in 1924 to a commission by Paul Whiteman, the jazz orchestra (the short deadline resulted from Gershwin only remembering that he had accepted the commission; he saw a poster advertising its premiere), encouraged Gershwin to devote more time to serious works: the Piano Concerto in F (1925) and the tone poem An American in Paris (1928) were the result of this early success.

Many will be familiar with the 1951 movie An American in Paris, starring Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron dance an extended sequence creating the course of the romance. In addition to the use of the tone poem in this ballet, several Gershwin songs are used. Among the many Oscars won by the film was that for best score. Gershwin composed the tone poem after he visited Paris; the authenticity of the sounds of the city represented by the ear horns included in the orchestration.

- Helen Saunders
The Canberra Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1949 and has enjoyed continuous existence ever since.

At first largely amateur, the Orchestra now has three full-time and one part-time staff, employs over 100 Canberra-based musicians and regularly engages conductors and soloists from interstate and overseas.

This year the orchestra will present thirteen concerts in two Series in the 1462-seat Hewellyn Hall, and in February, the Orchestra Hicks to the Canberra Theatre in the grounds of Government House for the first time in its history. It also performed in the Playhouse for the first time in April.

From time to time, the CSO provides orchestral and chamber services to visiting ensembles such as The Australian Ballet and touring musical stage productions.

Financial support comes from the ACT Government, corporate sponsorship and private benefactors, which together with box office, programme sales, programme advertising and fees for external services produces revenue totalling over $1m in 2000.

Links with the Canberra School of Music and the ANU are strong, and many of the faculty and some students regularly appear with the Orchestra, both as soloists and rank and file players.

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*italics denote principal player
† denotes Acting Principal player
‡ denotes 2nd Principal player
§ denotes 3rd Principal player

* denotes player currently at Canberra School of Music Strings and valued performers
+ denotes non-returning player
FRIENDS OF THE CSO

The reception after the Gala concert was a great success with many Friends taking the opportunity of meeting members of the orchestra and renewing friendships over nibbles and a glass of wine. Thanks to all those Friends who brought a plate and contributed to a happy evening. A highlight, of course, was welcoming our new music director, Richard Gill, and hopefully enabling him to feel at home among "Friends".

Last Tuesday Friends welcomed tonight’s conductor, James Secrest, at a lunch at the Novotel where James gave us an interesting rundown on his career with American orchestras and his attributes as a conductor prior to conducting.

Friends continue to be active in volunteers in the CSO office, helping staff with ticket sales. Many thanks to you all. We welcome Randy Brown and Tamra Tobin as new members.

Finally, we welcome all these new Friends who have joined us since the Program of Patronage was instituted. We look forward to your involvement in future Friends activities.

Eddie Davenport
Convenor

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Teeny speakers are the trademark of the company, and wall-mounted in your chosen room, the coffee-cup sized Jewel Cubes blend unobtrusively with your décor. Concealed within your coffee table in the same room are the systems electronics. An active bass module to handle low frequencies, a multi room interface box, and a six disc CD changer that, with its brushed aluminum fascia, is perhaps too good looking to be hidden away.

Operation of the system is via Bose’s Personal Music Centre, a palm-sized touch-screen that, being radio frequency operated rather than infrared or hard wired, is so portable it’s possible to walk from room to room (to garden) and still have complete control of the home’s audio system.

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