

11-3-2017

The Epic of Gilgamesh

Utah State University Wind Orchestra

Thomas P. Rohrer

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Utah State University
WIND ORCHESTRA

Thomas P. Rohrer,
conductor
... in concert

Friday, November 3, 2017

7:30 PM

Morgan Theater

Logan, Utah

The Epic of Gilgamesh





DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

• UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

— The Utah State University Wind Orchestra —
— Thomas P. Rohrer, conductor —

Festive Overture (1954/1965)..... Shostakovich/Hunsberger

Mountain Song (1990)..... Philip Sparke

Centra-fuge (2007)..... Charles Booker

Celebration Fanfare:

Fanfare & Chacoone (2017)..... Thomas P. Rohrer

Symphony No. 1 “Gilgamesh” (2003)..... Bert Appermont

Gilgamesh & Enkidu

Battle of the Titans

Adventures in the Forest

Friday, November 3, 2017

7:30 PM

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Audio and video recording is prohibited

Please turn off alarm watches and cell phones during the concert

Please enter and leave the hall between pieces only

Please refrain from talking and extraneous noise during performance

There will be a reception in Dalby Rehearsal Hall following tonight's performance

— Program Notes —

***Festive Overture (1954/1965)*.....Shostakovich/Hunsberger**

Composed in 1954, *Festive Overture* received its American premiere by Maurice Abravanel and the Utah Symphony Orchestra in 1955. A Russian band version—including a complete consort of saxhorns—appeared in 1958, and the current version for American symphonic band came at the hands of Donald Hunsberger in 1965. The work is equally popular in its band and orchestra versions, demonstrating Shostakovich's optimism in the face of the tyranny of the Stalin regime.

***Mountain Song (1990)*.....Philip Sparke**

Commissioned by Bob Bernat and the River City Brass Band, the original version of *Mountain Song* is a programmatic piece descriptive of many happy holidays the composer spent in Mayrhofen in the Austrian Tyrol. On Sundays, the village is quiet and peaceful, the only sound being the church bell summoning the faithful. A mountain peak behind the village is a gentle three-hour climb away. The piece opens with the sound of the church bell, dying away as the village becomes more distant. As the climber gets higher the broad panorama of the Ziller Valley is visible through the trees. A fresh breeze catches the climber by surprise, rustling the nearby branches and a few steps further on we are above the tree line and the full beauty of the surrounding scenery is revealed. Having rested a while and taken in the views, it is time to start the climb down, and we eventually reach the village again to the echoes of the church bell.

The band transcription was commissioned in 1992 by the Kosei Publishing Company for a recording of Sparke's music made by the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra.
— Philip Sparke

***Centra-fuge (2007)*.....Charles Booker**

Centra-fuge: Homage to Hank levy and Don Ellis was commissioned by the University of Central Arkansas Music Department for the UCA Wind Ensemble, Dr. Ricky Brooks, conductor. The piece is meant to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the University of Central Arkansas and to capture the vitality, energy, and continuous growth of this exceptional university. The composer chose the title from the work, centrifuge, a mechanical device causing centrifugal force. This force impels a "thing" or parts of a thing outward from a center of rotation (Webster). The university is the "center of learning" that teaches and prepares students to begin their journey in this world and to have hopefully, a positive impact on our society and nation.

In 1970 at the age of 18, the composer, Charles Booker entered college and discovered many kinds of music including the big band music of the Don Ellis Orchestra and the arranger/composer, Hank Levy of the Stan Kenton Orchestra. This music in particular is especially noteworthy in respect to its asymmetrical meters and exciting and vibrant tempos. *Centra-fuge* is all that and more. The trumpet section is featured emulating Don Ellis' fiery trumpet playing and later, in the middle section, "walls of sound" are heard from the brass in pure Stan Kenton/Hank Levy vintage.

— Charles Booker

Celebration Fanfare:
***Fanfare & Chacoon* (2017)..... Thomas P. Rohrer**

Celebration Fanfare was commissioned as an orchestral overture for the Gala opening of the Daines Concert Hall on the campus of Utah State University [USU] on October 18, 2017. To include the band program in the event, the composer included an off-stage doubling of the ending for the university's marching band, performed in the aisles of the new hall. The wind ensemble version was conceived concurrently for performance by the USU Wind Orchestra on its fall concert, November 3, 2017.

The work is based on two motivic elements: a triplet figure stated at the outset by the percussion and subsequently trumpets along with a four-note motive based on a major triad with added sixth and played in order 6-3-1-5. The opening, based on the triplet motive, leads to a lush flourish based on the added-sixth triad. The first statement of a recurring theme occurs in the thirty-sixth measure with four successive statements by the trumpets, oboe, flute, and tutti upper woodwinds, respectively. An eight-measure interlude leads to a final thematic statement by the full ensemble to conclude the opening section.

Upon the cadence of the opening section, a percussion ostinato appears and accompanies seven statements of an eight-measure chaconne melody that builds through increasingly-frequent appearances of the triplet and added-sixth motives along with growing forces of instrumentation. After a four-measure percussion "roll-off," the main theme again appears in tutti, leading to a return of the fanfare section of the beginning. A dramatic coda follows, leading to climactic finish.

***Symphony No. 1 "Gilgamesh"* (2003)..... Bert Appermont**

The Epic of Gilgamesh was found in the middle of the 19th century, written on 25,000 clay tablets. After an extensive study of the tablets, this old Sumerian epic was translated, even though many of the tablets were never found. The epic was a source of inspiration for Appermont to write this, his first symphony. Richard Hooker wrote the following:

Gilgamesh was an historical king of Uruk in Babylonia, on the River Euphrates in modern Iraq; he lived about 2700 B.C. Although historians tend to emphasize Hammurabi and his code of law, the civilizations of the Tigris-Euphrates area, among the first civilizations, focus rather on Gilgamesh and the legends accruing around him to explain, as it were, themselves. Many stories and myths were written about Gilgamesh, some of which were written down about 2000 B.C. in the Sumerian language on clay tablets which still survive; the Sumerian language, as far as we know, bears no relation to any other human language we know about. These Sumerian Gilgamesh stories were integrated into a longer poem, versions of which survive not only in Akkadian (the Semitic language, related to Hebrew, spoken by the Babylonians) but also on tablets written in Hurrian and Hittite (an Indo-European language, a family of languages which includes Greek and English, spoken in Asia Minor). All the above languages were written in the script known as cuneiform, which means "wedge-shaped." The fullest surviving version, from which the summary here is taken, is derived from twelve stone tablets, in the Akkadian language, found in the ruins of the library of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria 669-633 B.C., at Nineveh. The library was destroyed by the Persians in 612 B.C., and all the tablets are damaged. The tablets actually name an author, which is extremely rare in

the ancient world, for this particular version of the story: Shin-eqi-unninni. You are being introduced here to the oldest known human author we can name by name!

Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Gilgamesh, two-thirds god and one-third human, is the greatest king on earth and the strongest super-human that ever existed; however, he is young and oppresses his people harshly. The people call out to the sky-god Anu, the chief god of the city, to help them. In response, Anu creates a wild man, Enkidu, out in the harsh and wild forests surrounding Gilgamesh's lands. This brute, Enkidu, has the strength of dozens of wild animals; he is to serve as the subhuman rival to the superhuman Gilgamesh.

Enkidu is gradually introduced to civilization by living for a time with a group of shepherds, who teach him how to tend flocks, how to eat, how to speak properly, and how to wear clothes.

Battle of the Titans. Enkidu then enters the city of Uruk during a great celebration. Gilgamesh, as the king, has a reputation for overstepping his power, and infuriated at this abuse, Enkidu blocks Gilgamesh's way. They fight furiously until Gilgamesh wins the upper hand; Enkidu concedes Gilgamesh's superiority and the two embrace and become devoted friends.

Adventures in the Forest. Both Enkidu and Gilgamesh gradually weaken and grow lazy living in the city, so Gilgamesh proposes a great adventure: they are to journey to the great Cedar Forest in southern Iran and cut down all the cedar trees. To do this, they will need to kill the Guardian of the Cedar Forest, the great demon, Humbaba the Terrible. Enkidu knows about Humbaba from his days running wild in the forest; he tries in vain to convince Gilgamesh not to undertake this folly.

On each day of the six day journey, Gilgamesh prays to Shamash [the sun god]; in response to these prayers, Shamash sends Gilgamesh oracular dreams during the night. These dreams are all ominous: The first is not preserved. In the second, Gilgamesh dreams that he wrestles a great bull that splits the ground with his breath. Enkidu interprets the dream for Gilgamesh; the dream means that Shamash, the bull, will protect Gilgamesh.

At the entrance to the Cedar Forest, Gilgamesh begins to quake with fear; he prays to Shamash, reminding him that he had promised Ninsun that he would be safe. Shamash calls down from heaven, ordering him to enter the forest because Humbaba is not wearing all his armor. The demon Humbaba wears seven coats of armor, but now he is only wearing one so he is particularly vulnerable. Enkidu loses his courage and turns back; Gilgamesh falls on him and they have a great fight. Hearing the crash of their fighting, Humbaba comes stalking out of the Cedar Forest to challenge the intruders. Gilgamesh convinces Enkidu that they should stand together against the demon.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu enter the gloriously beautiful Cedar Forest and begin to cut down the trees. Hearing the sound, Humbaba comes roaring up to them and warns them off. Enkidu shouts at Humbaba that the two of them are much stronger than the demon, but Humbaba, who knows Gilgamesh is a king, taunts the king for taking orders from a nobody like Enkidu. Turning his face into a hideous mask, Humbaba begins to threaten the pair, and Gilgamesh runs and hides. Enkidu shouts at Gilgamesh, inspiring him with courage, and Gilgamesh appears from hiding and the two begin their epic battle with Humbaba. Shamash intrudes on the battle, helping the pair, and Humbaba is defeated.

On his knees, with Gilgamesh's sword at his throat, Humbaba begs for his life and offers Gilgamesh all the trees in the forest and his eternal servitude. While Gilgamesh is thinking this over, Enkidu intervenes, telling Gilgamesh to kill Humbaba before any of the gods arrive and stop him from doing so. Should he kill Humbaba, he will achieve widespread fame for all the times to come. Gilgamesh, with a great sweep of his sword, removes Humbaba's head. But Gilgamesh and Enkidu cut down the cedar forest and in particular the tallest of the cedar trees to make a great cedar gate for the city of Uruk.

[After returning to the city of Uruk,] Enkidu falls ill after having a set of ominous dreams; he finds out from the priests that he has been singled out for vengeance by the gods. The Chief Gods have met and have decided that someone should be punished for the killing of Humbaba and the killing of the Bull of Heaven, so of the two heroes, they decide Enkidu should pay the penalty. Enraged at the injustice of the decision, Enkidu curses the great Cedar Gate built from the wood of the Cedar Forest, and he curses the temple harlot, Shamhat, and the trapper, for introducing him to civilization. Shamhash reminds him that, even though his life has been short, he has enjoyed the fruits of civilization and known great happiness. Enkidu then blesses the harlot and the trapper. In a dream, a great demon comes to take Enkidu and drags him to Hell, a House of Dust where all the dead end up. Enkidu commends himself to Gilgamesh, and after suffering terribly for twelve days, he finally dies.

Gilgamesh laments the loss of his friend and determines not to share his fate. He learns of an ancient being, Utanapishtim, the only man to gain immortality, and once again, he sets out from Uruk. In exchange for eternal life, the ancient one challenges Gilgamesh to stay awake for six days and seven nights. But as soon as he finishes speaking, Gilgamesh falls to the ground in a deep sleep. His opportunity for immortality lost. Back the king travels, across the waters of death, through paradise, and to the land of night. The road back to Uruk seems long and harsh beneath the feet of the king. When the great walls rise up in the distance, he stops and falls to his knees. He raises his arms and praises the walls of Uruk, his finest achievement, for it is not man's fate to live forever, but for his creations to carry his name into generations to come.

Bands at USU

Bands are a vital part of the Department of Music and the campus life at Utah State University. The Aggie Marching Band and Pep Band make an exciting contribution to USU Athletics while the Wind Orchestra and Symphonic Band perform the finest in wind and percussion literature year-round. In addition, the Jazz Ensembles perform twice each semester, and there are several chamber music offerings.

**ALTHOUGH MANY MEMBERS OF THE BANDS ARE MUSIC MAJORS,
MEMBERS OF THE USU BANDS REPRESENT EVERY ACADEMIC
UNIT ON CAMPUS.**

*Whatever your major area of study, professional aspirations, time allotments, or
taste in musical style...*

...THERE IS A BAND FOR YOU AT USU!

Upcoming USU Bands Events

Friday, November 17, 2017

"Sounds of the Stadium" Marching Band Concert

7:30 PM, Daines Concert Hall

Tuesday, November 28, 2017

Symphonic Band, Cache Wind Symphony, and Low Brass Ensemble

7:30 PM, Daines Concert Hall

Friday, December 1, 2017

USU Bands Sampler Concert as part of the Tri-State Band Symposium

8:00 PM, Daines Concert Hall

Saturday, December 2, 2017

Tri-State Band Symposium Finale Concert

3:00 PM, Daines Concert Hall

Friday, February 16, 2018

Wind Orchestra and Symphonic Band

7:30 PM, Daines Concert Hall

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

Junior High/Middle School Band Festival (434-797-3004)

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

Cache Wind Symphony and USU Chamber Ensembles

7:30 PM, Morgan Theater

Friday, April 20 2018

Symphonic Band

7:30 PM, Morgan Theater

Friday, April 27, 2018

High School Band Festival (434-797-3004)

Friday April 27, 2018

Wind Orchestra in Concert

7:30 PM, Morgan Theater

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Junior High/Middle School Band Clinic (435-797-3004)

**UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY WIND ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL,
Thomas P. Rohrer, conductor**

PICCOLO

Alexandria Traini - Arimo, ID

FLUTE

*Patty Serbousek - Murray
Kate Hansen - Nampa, ID
Jennifer Christensen - Grantsville

OBOE

*Jessica Clayton - South Jordan
Reid Scholz - Ashburn, VA

BASSOON

*Jenny Thompson -
Cottonwood Hts.
Julia Maughan -
Colorado Springs, CO

CLARINET

*Karelyn Isaacson - Layton
Kresten Erickson - Eagle Mountain
Madeline Julian - Danville, IL
Paul Ward - Nibley
Kaitlin Murphy - Chubbuck, ID

BASS CLARINET

Sam Dalrymple - Santa Rosa, CA

* Denotes Section Leader

ALTO SAXOPHONE

*Tyler Curtis - Eagle, ID
Morgan Moulton - West Jordan

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Mike Larson - Logan

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Kyle Merrill - Centerville

TRUMPET

*Stephanie England - Pocatello, ID
Bridger Bush - Park City
Amy Abel - Fruit Heights
Marc Johnson - Menan, ID
Jose Ayala - Hyrum
Braden Smart - Tooele
Sam Dickson - St. George

HORN

*Abigail Erickson - Payson
Sam Armstrong - Logan
Jacob Wheelwright - Blackfoot, ID
Amanda Couch - Waynesboro, VA
Alex Pierson - North Logan

TROMBONE

*Aaron Walker - Syracuse
Michael Hansen - Eagle, ID
Erik Anderson - West Valley City
Steven Clemons - Burley, ID

EUPHONIUM

*David Young - Boise, ID
Keri Hedman - Bozeman, MT
Anne Moulton - West Jordan

TUBA

*Logan Tolman - Provo

PERCUSSION

Austin Chadwick - Pleasant Grove
*Justice Ferguson - Woods Cross
Chris Jessee - Riverton
Caesar Perfidio - Bountiful
Thomas Stephan - Nampa, ID
Zach Tavernier - Roseburg, OR

DOUBLE BASS

Whitney Eliason - Bellingham, WA

PIANO

John Hatch - Las Vegas, NV

HARP

Katelyn Anderson - Logan

**UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
WIND AND PERCUSSION FACULTY**

Leslie Timmons, flute
Bonnie Schroeder, oboe
Dennis Hirst, bassoon
Gregory Wheeler, woodwinds
Nicholas Morrison, clarinet
Jon Gudmundson, saxophone
Max Matzen, trumpet
Laura Huggard, horn
Todd Fallis, trombone
Lane Weaver, low brass
Jason Nicholson, percussion

**www.usu.edu/
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