

63rd Concert Series 2016-2017



is pleased to present

Windscape

Tara Helen O'Connor, flute

Randall Ellis, oboe

Alan R. Kay, clarinet

Frank Morelli, bassoon

David Jolley, horn

Saturday, May 20, 2017 8:00 PM

Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York



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Acknowledgements

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**as of February 20, 2017*

Program

“The Roaring Twenties Revisited”

As Europe struggled in the aftermath of World War I, the New World was brimming with energy. It was the Jazz Age, the beginning of “The American Century”

Yes, I’m in the Barrel Louis Armstrong
arr. David Jolley (1901-1971)

Ragtime Igor Stravinsky
arr. David Jolley (1882-1971)

Excerpts from “The Threepenny Opera” Kurt Weill
arr. Alan R. Kay (1900-1950)
Overture
Solomon Song
The Ballad of Gracious Living
Song of the Insufficiency of Human Endeavor
The Ballad of Mack the Knife

Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2 Paul Hindemith
Lustig. Massig schnelle Viertel (1895-1963)
Walzer. Durchweg sehr leise
Ruhig und einfach
Schnelle Viertel
Sehr lebhaft

Intermission

Three Brazilian Choros Ernesto Nazareth/Zequinha Abreu
arr. Frank Morelli
Odeon
Apanheite-Cavaquinho
Tico-Tico
(performed without pause)

Quintette (en forme de Choros) Heitor Villa-Lobos
(1887-1959)

Three Virtuoso Etudes after Gershwin George Gershwin/Earl Wild
arr. David Jolley
Fascinating Rhythm
Liza
I Got Rhythm

Windscape appears by arrangement with Frank Salomon Associates, 121 W. 27th Street, Suite 703, New York, NY 10001. www.franksalomon.com.

Windscape records for Deutsche Grammophon, MSR Classics, and Arabesque Records
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Next concert

Saturday, October 7, 2017, 8:00 pm at Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York

Emerson String Quartet

Program: Beethoven: String Quartet in F Major, Op. 135; Schumann: String Quartet in A Major, Op. 41;
Beethoven: String Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 127.

Program notes

Yes I'm in the Barrel

Louis Armstrong; arr. David Jolley

Louis Armstrong is an American hero, perhaps the single most important innovator in the history of jazz. Going from poverty to international acclaim, he created music of brilliance and beauty. In New Orleans he was among the cornet players known for “monkeyshine” playing, at the time that the “Dixieland” front line – trumpet, clarinet, and trombone – got its start. In 1918, when he was 17, he joined the band of Kid Ory, a trombonist, filling the space left by his mentor Joe Oliver.

Many know Armstrong primarily as a singer and “entertainer,” yet he was a virtuoso trumpeter whose contributions to melody and rhythm are significant. If his instrumental gifts sometimes are overlooked, his compositional talents are even more so. He created original tunes with a great deal of character, often in collaboration with other artists, with melodic beauty and rhythmic sophistication.

Yes, I'm in the Barrel was created and recorded in 1926 by his band The Hot Five. He explained the title in *Esquire* in 1951: “Whenever one of those gambling guys would get busted in a gambling game....they would pawn their best clothes to pay off their gambling debts. Quite naturally they would have to go back to their raggedy clothes until they got lucky and could get the good ones out of pawn again. So that's why we used the expression, ‘Yes! I'm in the barrel.’ Yes, I too was in the barrel lots of times.”

Yes, I'm in the Barrel was something special because, in it, Armstrong introduced and codified the art of improvisation. While members of early New Orleans jazz bands were required to play together, this piece features group improvisation, particularly call and response, with miniature solos within the ensemble playing. As it has been transcribed by hornist David Jolley, it gives the clarinetist and hornist a “chance to wail.”

Ragtime

Igor Stravinsky; arr. David Jolley

Europe was enormously fascinated by the American phenomenon of ragtime; during the beginning of the 20th century, piano scores and adaptations were widely available there even if performances were not. Stravinsky, a tad more isolated in Russia than he would have been in Europe, didn't have direct exposure to it as a young man. But in 1918, following an American tour, his friend the Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet brought a gift of some of the music he'd heard. Stravinsky wrote later: “My knowledge of jazz was derived exclusively from copies of sheet music and, as I never had actually heard any of the music performed, I borrowed its rhythmic style not as played, but as written. I *could* imagine jazz sound, however, or so I liked to think.” The immediate result of this exposure to a new rhythmic style was the *Ragtime* section in *L'Histoire du Soldat* (“*The Soldier's Tale*”), as well as this composition **Ragtime**, scored for eleven instruments (1918) and *Piano-Rag Music* (1919).

Begun in March 1918, **Ragtime** for Eleven Instruments was composed at Morges, Switzerland. Stravinsky finished the work, according to his records, at the moment of Armistice at the end of World War I: 11:00 am on November 11. He was trying to give it the importance of a concert piece; it is a kind of rondo with a quasi-development section that is almost improvisatory in nature. Instead of working at the piano, Stravinsky composed it at the cimbalom, a large Hungarian hammered dulcimer that at the time was thought to have a great future in American jazz and popular music. Now a harp or piano often takes the prominent cimbalom part. The other instruments originally required in this piece are flute, clarinet, horn, cornet, trombone, percussion, two violins, viola, and double bass.

Excerpts from “The Threepenny Opera”

Kurt Weill; arr. Alan R. Kay

Kurt Weill is best remembered now as a composer for the stage. **The Threepenny Opera** and *Mahagonny*, both of which he wrote for the theaters in Germany in the 1920s, are among the most important works of that era. After 1935, when he settled in New York, Weill elevated the artistic quality of our theater, too, with the musicals he wrote for Broadway: *Kickerbocker Holiday*, *Lady in the Dark*, *Street Scene*, and *Lost in the Stars*.

First performed on August 31, 1928, **The Threepenny Opera** was a “play with music” adapted by the writer Berthold Brecht from John Gay’s 18th century *The Beggar’s Opera*. Weill’s jazzy score outraged Nazi officials and made him a target for their propaganda, especially as his works incited riots at their performances. It eventually was blacklisted but not before it became the biggest success of the Weimar Republic, running for more than 350 performances. (In the United States two decades later, in the mid-1950s, starring Lotte Lenya, it became the longest-running musical show at that time.)

The “opera” is, of course, as little like a conventional opera as Weill and Brecht could make it. Its language was in English, not Italian; its tunes are not long-winded arias but rather adaptations of current popular songs; the characters are not the gods and heroes of classical antiquity, but rather figures from the world of poverty and crime. Weill’s score fuses Viennese operetta and American jazz to forge a distinctive new style that is both edgy and melodic. It originally was scored for a jazz band, and wind group with saxophones, and a rhythm section with banjo and guitar.

The *Little Three-Penny Music* was an instrumental arrangement of excerpts prepared at the suggestion of the German conductor Otto Klemperer when the work was still new. The Austrian composer, Max Schoeherr, made a shorter version of it in 1950, creating a suite for full symphony orchestra. The suite you will hear tonight includes *Overture*, *Solomon’s Song*, *Ballad of Gracious Living*, *Song of the Insufficiency of Human Endeavor*, and the popular *Ballad of Mack the Knife*.

Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2

Paul Hindemith

Hindemith composed **Kleine Kammermusik** (“Little Chamber Music”) for woodwind quintet in 1922, early in his career, when he was performing in the orchestra of the Frankfurt Opera. During this period he was writing most of his works for small ensembles and chamber orchestras.

In this work, written in less than a week, Hindemith highlights each of the instruments, bringing out its various specific qualities and allowing each player to display some of their own instrument’s virtuosic technique. The music openly displays Hindemith’s sense of humor, so characteristic of his work in this period.

The merry first movement is a blithe march that begins with a clarinet theme. As it progresses, there is much light-hearted, witty dialogue among the instruments as well as sophisticated cross rhythms and polytonality. The second movement, a gentle waltz, is awkward but nonetheless appealing; the various instruments share the theme. The movements give a sense of “wrong notes,” but all with a sense of humor.

The calm, quiet central third movement contrasts with its more serious character. Its middle section highlights the oboe with a long, flowing lyrical theme over the other instruments’ accompaniment. The movement’s first two sections are skillfully melded in its third section. The fourth movement lasts less than a minute but in that short time miraculously features each of the members of the quintet in a virtuosic display with what could be termed mini-cadenzas. The vigorous finale is full of syncopated subjects. More lyrical secondary themes are quickly interjected, as this demanding movement brings the work to a merry, exhilarating end.

Three Brazilian Choros

Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1934)/Zequinha de Abreu (1880-1935); arr. Frank Morelli

Ernesto Julio Nazareth, the most popular composer of Brazilian national music, had a profound influence on its course, both popular and classical. Chopin's short, fanciful pieces particularly had appealed to him early on, as had those of the American composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who died in Rio in 1869 and was one of the first to mix European and Brazilian elements. Fellow countryman Villa-Lobos called Nazareth "the truest incarnation of the Brazilian musical soul."

When he was seventeen, Nazareth joined a band of *chorinhos*, performers of the urban variety of folk music that he loved. These strolling serenaders used guitar, mandolin, flute, clarinet, and the small Portuguese guitar called the cavaquinho, as they evolved the nostalgic song form called *choro*. Literally translated lament, the choro became a compendium of riffs, dueling instruments, and idiosyncratic improvisations, all created many years before jazz emerged in the United States.

Nazareth was one of the first to blend polka and *maxixe* with the *habañera*, resulting in a new dance rhythm he called the "Brazilian tango." It is not closely related to the more sultry Argentine tango, but rather is faster and more joyful. In the age of silent films he was one of a few musicians who played in concerts held prior to showing them. He became one of the most popular movie theater musicians, drawing crowds that came to hear him at least as much as they came to see the films. One of his popular works, *Odeon*, written in 1910, is a tango named after the most famous of these theaters. This set includes that piece and the infectious choro *Apanheite-Cavaquinho*; it refers to the spirit of choro called *malícia*, which is an attitude of spirited competition in which one musician strives to outwit the other.

Zequinha de Abreu, like Nazareth, was one of the prominent Brazilian composers of the "Belle Époque," having contributed to the establishment of the *choro* genre. His most famous composition is "*Tico-tico No Fuba* (usually just referred to as "*Tico-Tico*"), ("Sparrow in the cornmeal"), written in 1917.

Around 1915, Abreu already had written nearly 100 compositions. In 1917 he play a new one for the first time at a dance with his orchestra. This jumpy, fast-tempo song, still un-named at the time, made the dancing couples in the ballroom go crazy. He commented to his band-mates that those people were just like tico-ticos (a kind of little bird) eating cornmeal. Hence, the name.

Quintette en forme de Choros

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Villa-Lobos, Brazil's most famous composer, drew his inspiration primarily from the music of the Choros musicians in his native Rio, with whom he performed extensively as a cellist early in his career. His desire to be a composer first arose around 1904; in 1921 Arthur Rubenstein discovered him, and subsequently performed his works widely. From 1923 to 1930, Villa-Lobos lived in Paris, where he broadened his artistic horizons. By the time he returned home, he had become one of the most important musicians of the Americas: a prolific composer, assiduous folklorist, educator, and conductor.

Self-taught as a composer, Villa-Lobos fashioned a large amount of chamber music. In it, he created highly personal, expressive works that combined variety, contrast, various timbres, and unusual melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements. This quintet could be thought of as belonging to Neo-Classicism, as it melds elements of the Baroque (Vila-Lobos's great classical model was Bach) and the Romantic, and places them alongside folk influences. Originally scored for flute, oboe, clarinet, English horn, and bassoon, **Quintette en forme de Choros**, composed in 1928, went through several revisions of instrumentation and register before it arrived in the version we hear tonight.

This richly creative work contains many of the musical idioms of Africa and Brazil that are characteristic of the choros. With a rich melody and popular character, it is free in form, and offers variety in texture. It is a continuous work in one movement, with separate sections strung together that have many extremes of dynamics and pitch in each of the five instrumental lines. It begins with a mysterious, fascinating jungle-like sound. Overall, the quintet is rhapsodic in

nature; one hears cadential patterns in which solo figures succeed one another quickly with some intense discussion between instruments. Extended themes, flowing together produce changing textures in the slower sections and become more energetic and excitable in the music's faster sections. A shrill chord closes the piece.

Three Virtuoso Etudes after Gershwin

George Gershwin/Earl Wild; arr. David Jolley

Earl Wild (1915-2010) was an American composer and teacher who built an impressive career as a supremely technically accomplished pianist. He was best known for his mastery of 19th century Romantic showpieces and for playing his own virtuoso interpretations of works by many famous composers, from Bach to Gershwin.

His **Virtuoso Etudes after Gershwin** was originally a series of piano etudes based on songs from Broadway musicals by Gershwin. He essentially re-composed the original songs in complicated, dazzling, brilliant elaborations. The etude, or study, a form that historically was focused on one particular technical challenge, here has no single focus; instead each etude presents wide-ranging demands on the performer. In making such demands in his delightful Virtuoso Etudes, Wild essentially created new works based on the exuberant Gershwin songs, yet he retained the Gershwin charm, infusing them with Gershwin's inherent spontaneity and accentuating his jazzy style. Here hornist David Jolley has faithfully transcribed Wild's arrangements for woodwinds.

"Liza" from *Show Girl* (1929) features a series of deft ornamentations. The expressive "Fascinating Rhythm" from *Lady Be Good* (1924) and "I've Got Rhythm" from *Girl Crazy* (1930) include polyrhythms, syncopation, scales, and other virtuosic calisthenics, all infused with Gershwin's feel for jazz.

— notes provided by Susan Halpern

About the Artists

Created in 1994 by five eminent woodwind soloists, **Windscape** has won a unique place for itself as a vibrant, ever-evolving group of musical individualists, an "unquintet," which has delighted audiences throughout North America. The group's innovative programs and accompanying presentations take listeners on a musical and historical world tour – evoking, through music and engaging commentary, vivid cultural landscapes of distant times and places.

As Artists-in-Residence at the Manhattan School of Music, the members of Windscape are master teachers, not only imparting the craft of instrumental virtuosity but also presenting a distinctive concert series hailed for its creative energy and musical curiosity.

In addition to Windscape's performances and residencies throughout the United States, the ensemble continues to collaborate regularly with the Orion String Quartet on the late flutist Samuel Barron's brilliant transcription of Bach's The Art of Fugue. This collaboration originally appeared on the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center series in New York City and was recorded by Deutsche Grammophon for digital release. Highlights of the last few seasons have included performances at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, Tuesday Evening Concert Series in Charlottesville, VA, the Chamber Music Society of Detroit, Duke University in North Carolina, the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego, and Yale University in New Haven. Other esteemed chamber musicians with whom they have collaborated include the late Eugene Istomin, André-Michel Schub, Jon Kimura Parker, Jeremy Denk, and Anne-Marie McDermott. Recent residencies have included those at Skidmore College, Penn State University, Baylor University in Texas, and Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA.

Windscape's most recent CD release is of Ursula Mamlok's "Quintet" on Bridge Records. Other critically acclaimed releases include *The Music of Maurice Ravel* and an all-Dvořák CD with guest artists Jeremy Denk and Daniel Phillips, both on the MSR Classics label.

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