

PROGRAM NOTES

Antonio Vivaldi, Concerto for Two Trumpets

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) was an Italian composer, violinist, and priest. He was one of the most influential Baroque composers, writing over 500 concertos, as well as various sacred choral works and operas. His style is marked largely by the use of bold, energetic rhythms and expressive melodies. While popular during his lifetime, much of Vivaldi's music fell into obscurity after his death. This changed in the twentieth century when his works experienced a major revival.

Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Trumpets in C Major, RV 537, showcases the Baroque trumpet's virtuosity and is a defining example of his compositional style. The first movement features the trumpets exchanging leaping, ornamental phrases in rapid runs and fanfare-like interjections. In the second movement, the piano plays a lyrical, expressive solo that demonstrates Vivaldi's ability to combine contrasting emotions within a cohesive structure. The final movement has a jubilant character with energetic sixteenth-note passages.

Herbert L. Clarke, *The Bride of the Waves*

Herbert L. Clarke (1867–1945) was an American cornet player, composer, and educator, regarded as an extremely influential figure in the development of brass playing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a performer, Clarke stood out for his virtuosic skills on the cornet, which earned him a prominent place as an international touring soloist with major wind bands, including the famous Sousa Band. Clarke composed and arranged prolifically, contributing many cornet solos and etudes that are now considered staples in the brass repertoire. His *Technical Studies* and *Characteristic Studies* have significantly shaped brass pedagogy with its emphasis on the development of technique, articulation, and tone production.

The Bride of the Waves, composed in 1907, showcases the highly expressive, lyrical, and virtuosic capabilities of the cornet. The piece opens with the piano alone in an upbeat, march-like style, and flows quickly into a grand trumpet fanfare melody. This short theme continues into a lyrically expressive section. This flowing melody captures Clarke's skill for expressivity, representing a calm, serene mood through its smooth lines. The dramatic and technical middle section introduces a more energetic, forceful mood with its rapid ornamental and fanfare-like passages. The final section recalls the original lyrical theme with an increased passion that leads into a sweeping conclusion with a brilliant flourish. *The Bride of the Waves* is a prime example of Clarke's understanding of the cornet in its use of employing wide intervals, rapid articulation, and delicate phrasing. It stands out as a significant contribution to the cornet repertoire.

Eris DeJarnett, *Go to the Garden*

Eris DeJarnett (ey/they) (b. 1995) is an American non-binary composer and educator who considers themselves an interdisciplinary narrative artist. Eir compositions consist heavily of brass solo and ensemble repertoire played over a media track soundscape. This soundscape often centers the human voice among experimental and noise-based practices, exploring topics of sexual assault, trauma, recovery, gender, and neurodivergence. Eir music has been presented nationally and internationally at events like the National Trumpet Competition, International Trumpet Guild Conference, Re:Sound Festival, Oh My Ears, etc.

go to the garden is a nine-minute piece for solo trumpet and fixed media, which can be played as one, two, or three movements. This piece was his first consortium written in conjunction with Ashley Killam. The topic and tone of the fixed media focuses on grief, rest, safety, solitude, and sanctuary. As the narrator, voiced by Ashley Killam, describes the serenity and solitude of the garden, the trumpet makes soft, delicate interjections that transition into lyrical, flowing melodies.

Kevin McKee, *A Winter's Night*

Kevin McKee (b. 1980) is an American composer, arranger, and trumpet player known for his work in brass solo and ensemble music. His works typically consist of vibrant harmonies, complex rhythms, and bold melodies. McKee's compositions reflect an in-depth technical understanding and audience-friendly accessibility by blending modern influences and traditional structures.

A Winter's Night opens with a gentle, flowing piano line evoking the calm serenity of the quiet of the winter night. McKee's use of subtle dynamics and crescendos effectively build a sense of emotional depth without overwhelming the listener. Its rich, restrained harmonies and simple, modal progressions evoke a sense of peaceful contemplation. His methodical attention to phrasing and pacing allows the music to unfold slowly but efficiently in setting the tone of overall peacefulness. While originally written for solo trombone and piano, this version for flugelhorn still manages to effectively capture the quiet, introspective nature of the piece.

Morley Calvert, *Suite from the Monteregian Hills*

Morley Calvert (1928–1991) was a Canadian composer and arranger, significant for his contributions to brass band music. His works typically combined precise technique and expressive, melodic writing that became widely recognized in pieces like *The Three Kings*, *Rhapsody for Brass*, and *Elizabethan Serenade*, which have become staples in the brass band repertoire.

Suite from the Monteregian Hills is a four-movement work that draws inspiration from the Monteregian Hills in Quebec, Canada. Significant as an early work written specifically for brass quintet, Calvert's suite contains rich, lyrical themes and energetic rhythms, illustrating the Monteregian landscape as serene and spirited. As it opens, it creates a sense of grandeur with a sweeping melody supported by rich harmonies. As the suite continues, it shifts in its variety of tempos and moods, using folk melodies and bright fanfares that lead into more introspective passages. His use of both traditional and innovative brass techniques highlights the individuality of each instrument. In addition, his complex counterpoint and bold harmonic choices add to the dynamic contrast. Calvert creates a technically challenging piece that reflects his connections to nature and showcases his skill in creating vivid musical landscapes.