



INTERNATIONAL INSPIRATIONS. TIMELESS TUNES.

Beach and the British Isles

Sunday October 29th, 2023 – 3:30pm
Beachwood Middle School Auditorium

Domenico Boyagian, Conductor



F. DELIUS (1862-1934)

La Calinda from Koanga (1897)

R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E minor, (1925)

R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

English Folk Song Suite (1923)

I. March - *Seventeen Come Sunday*

II. Intermezzo - *My Bonny Boy*

III. March - *Folk Songs from Somerset*

- Intermission -

A. BEACH (1867-1944)

Gaelic Symphony in E minor, Op. 32 (1896)

I. Allegro con fuoco

II. Alla siciliana - allegro vivace

III. Lento con molto espressione

IV. Allegro di molto



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Orchestra Musicians

Season 2023-2024

Domenico Boyagian, Music Director



VIOLIN I

Sara Beam
Concertmaster
Bella Brandelis
David Clare
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Jessica Fish
Kendra Frey
Douglas Hotvedt
Alan Lichtin
Caroline McCool
Colby Orton
Nancy Perillo
Rei Sakurai
Maria Sedivy

VIOLIN II

Ryan Detwiler
Principal
Jenny Bohl
Rachel Gamin
Abbey Koehl
Felicia McDonald
Carina Montoya
George Nemeth
Jennifer Olson
Erin Ross
Donna Silk
Nancy Smekal
Laura Spraker
Barbara Truitt
Leia Withee
Carol Ann Youtz

VIOLA

Allison Richards
Principal
Jeanette Accorinti
Mandi Centeck
Anne Hunter
Amy Roth
Alice Seifullah
Greg Takacs

CELLO

Tatum Hodgson
Principal
Robert Anastos
Samantha Beam
Hannah Benjamin
Tanya Blue
Michelle Chan
Carl Greppin
Luda Grossman
Emily Hazzard
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Joy Slonaker
*Idele and Allen Benjamin
Chair*
Sydney Webb

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Zoe Perrier

CLARINET

James Patterson
Principal
Gayle Kish

BASS CLARINET

Chris Jones

FRENCH HORN

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Principal
Tren Cheshier
Melinda Kellerstrass
Harlan Meinwald
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*Principal
Dave Wakser Chair*
Steve Shafron

TROMBONE

Victor Arias-Ocampo
Principal
John Fisher
Anna Spangler

BASS TROMBONE

Nicholas Matheos

TUBA

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Domenico Boyagian



Maestro Domenico Boyagian, Music Director of Cleveland Opera Theater and Suburban Symphony Orchestra, has been praised as a “born conductor” by the Cleveland Plain Dealer, and has dedicated himself to symphonic music and opera. Producing performances of compelling artistry and beauty, Boyagian “appears to be a conductor for whom the music is the sole point of standing before musicians.” (The Plain Dealer)



Maestro Boyagian was appointed as Music Director for Suburban Symphony in 2018, and has since celebrated several ambitious seasons of programming. As part of his “Beethoven Cycle” initiative, the SSO will have performed all of Beethoven’s symphonies as of 2025. The orchestra also presents music from all genres, including musicals, operas, and film scores in addition to notable symphonic standards. The orchestra has performed symphonic standards including Dvorak, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Respighi, and Mahler, as well as pieces by more modern composers, including Amy Beech, Nathaniel Stookey, and Ralph Vaughn Williams. The SSO also sponsors a student concerto competition, creating a prestigious opportunity for High School musicians to perform with a full orchestra.

Maestro Boyagian is recognized not only as a conductor, but also as a pianist, a songwriter and as a gifted educator throughout the Cleveland area. He has led performances for Cleveland Opera Theater, Suburban Symphony, Blue Streak Ensemble, Heights Chamber Orchestra, Cleveland Philharmonic, Baldwin Wallace Conservatory, and worked extensively with the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. Boyagian’s 2023 season also included leading the orchestras of Opera Delaware and Opera Baltimore in performances of *La traviata*, and collaborating with the Milwaukee Symphony for Florentine Opera’s performances of *L’elisir d’amore*.

Born and raised in Bologna, Italy, Maestro Boyagian is the proud son of internationally renowned Metropolitan Opera Verdi Baritone, the late Garbis Boyagian, who inspired his son’s innate passion for opera and appreciation for vocal artists. In 2000 Boyagian came to the USA to further his musical studies, after receiving diplomas from Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy, and Conservatorio “G.I. Martini” in Bologna, Italy; and he holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and California State University, Northridge. In recognition of his burgeoning talent, Boyagian was named “one of 10 most successful Italians in the U.S.” by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce in New York City, and is a “Most Distinguished Artist” Grant Recipient from the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture in Cleveland, Ohio.



F. Delius: La Calinda from Koanga

Written by Rachel Gamin

English composer Frederick Delius (1862-1934) was born in Bradford to a prosperous wool merchant but resisted his family's attempts to bring him into the family business, wishing instead to pursue a musical career. His father, opposed to music as a profession, eventually sent young Frederick to Florida to manage an orange plantation. During his stay at Solano Grove near Jacksonville, he neglected his supervisory duties to focus on studying composition with Thomas Ward while being influenced by the spirituals and other songs, he heard from the African American plantation works and deckhands. This exposure to African music would emerge in his works many times throughout his career, and rarely more so than in his opera *Koanga*, written in Paris in the 1890s, which features the interlude known as La Calinda.

The plot of *Koanga* centers on an enslaved African prince on a Mississippi plantation and Delius borrowed a theme from his first orchestral work (*Florida Suite*) inspired by a 17th century traditional dance from Martinique as the interlude "La Calinda." The selection is an early example of Delius's emerging idiosyncratic and sometimes polarizing style, with heavy chromaticism, distinctive orchestration, and impressionistic tonalities. The orchestration typically performed was done by Delius's amanuensis, companion, and scribe Eric Fenby, in 1938. Fenby had this to say about the opera:

"Koanga is one of those singular works that attract attention in Delius's development, but which stand apart from the rest of his music. Usually, once a work was written, Delius's interest in it would wane. It would then be renewed and be relived temporarily every time he heard it again. For Koanga, however, he showed concern as though it held some secret bond that bound him to his youth in Florida. It was the once work he deplored in old age he was never likely to hear again. And so it proved. A dark grandeur pervades the score which, whilst yielding to hankerings after Wagner, recalls the tragic gusto of Verdi. The elements of time, place, and plot allowed him a range of textures and moods wider than in his other operas."

Although *Koanga* is rarely performed in its entirety today, "La Calinda" has endured as a perennial selection for orchestras, thanks in part to the championing of Delius's music by the conductor Thomas Beecham and the Delius Society.

Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Composer for of the People

Written by Abigail Koehl

Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in the village of Down Ampney, Gloucestershire in 1872. He studied violin and piano. From an early age, he began collecting traditional folk songs that eventually went on to inspire many of his later works. Vaughan Williams studied at several prestigious institutions, such as the Royal Music Academy of London and Cambridge University, and he received his doctorate from Cambridge in 1901. As he began to compose, Vaughan Williams was amongst the first to traverse the English countryside to collect folk songs and carols from singers. He took pride and a sense of responsibility in notating them for future generations to enjoy. Vaughan Williams was privileged to be amongst the wealthy in his schooling and throughout his career. However, he never took his background for granted and worked tirelessly for democracy and egalitarian rights. He viewed music as a gift to be shared amongst all people, not just reserved for the elite. Vaughan Williams served in World War I in France and Salonika due to his commitment to justice. He went so far as to take three years off his age in order to do so. Although gunfire left him with hearing impairments, he never lost his joy and gift for creating music. In his final years, Vaughan Williams was still composing music well into his eighties. In the end, he had written nine symphonies, operas, and film scores. He died the evening before the recording of his ninth symphony in 1958.



Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E Minor

Historical Importance: The Norfolk Rhapsodies are three orchestral rhapsodies written between 1905 & 06. The first (the one SSO will be playing for you today) is the only rhapsody to survive in its entirety, having been revised in 1914. It is based on folk songs collected from Norfolk, particularly the fishing port of King's Lynn.

What to Listen For: Vaughan Williams turns towards his folk song collection of Norfolk to pull from and create this masterpiece. The opening of the piece is meant to evoke the sense of sky and space one would feel being in East Anglia (England). It is mystical, like a sunrise over the countryside and cliffs. Our viola solo leads into influences from *The Captain's Apprentice*, turning the piece into a haunted melody. Although notes of *A Bold Young Sailor* and *On Board a '98* are also present for a breezier feel, *apprentice* captures the theme of a darker quality. Listen to see if you agree!

English Folksong Suite

Historical Importance: English Folksong Suite was composed in 1923 for the UK's military band. Vaughan Williams adored his homeland and recognized the importance of military bands as something crucially important to UK culture and community values. It is one of the first serious pieces written for a band of this nature.

What to Listen For:

1st Mvmt
"Seventeen Come Sunday" is a march opened by the woodwind section joined closely after with vibrant strings. The melody is followed by the influences of two other folk songs from the counties of Norfolk and ends with the original theme ("Pretty Caroline" and "Dives and Lazarus").

2nd Mvmt
This intermezzo titled my "My Bonny Boy" has a stark contrast from its march counterparts. Kicked off with a hauntingly beautiful oboe solo, the piece grows more jovial with a light folksy air that feels cinematic pulled from "Green Bushes" before returning to the original darker melody.

3rd Mvmt
"Folk Songs from Somerset" rounds out the piece with a final march. This movement takes the gold for highest number of folk influences such as "Blow Away the Morning Dew," "High Germany," and "The Trees They Do Grow High." It is jaunty and carries a high energy to end the suite.

A. Beach: Gaelic Symphony

Written by Mandi Centeck

Who is Amy Beach?

A woman of many talents... and many names: Amy Marcy Cheney Beach, also known as Mrs. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach was born in New England. She was an accomplished pianist and is considered to be the first significant American-born composer (of any gender!).

A tiny musical prodigy: At the age of 1, Beach had memorized over 40 tunes. At age 2, she harmonized with her mother's lullabies and would cry when her mother sang off key or played music in a minor key. At age 4, she composed a set of three waltzes. Young Beach was trained in piano by her mother, who would withhold lessons as punishment and so as not to encourage in her daughter, a desire for a career in music.

A talent constrained: Though Beach's talents on the piano were well-recognized, her parents refused to let her go to Europe to attend conservatories (as was the convention at the time), since they desired a more "traditional life" for her.

Fun Fact:

Beach was a synesthete, seeing specific colors associated with pitches and keys.



Instead, she studied with a local German piano teacher. As a composer, she was largely self-taught since she was not allowed to study at the New England Conservatory of Music.

A performing career cut short: As a pianist, Beach made her debut with the Boston symphony to much acclaim at age 16, but this career lasted a mere two years. Why? Marriage! A condition of her marriage at age 18 to the esteemed Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach (who had quite the extraordinary mustache) was that she limit her performances to a mere lady-like twice per year.

A composer emerges: Though he restricted her public performing career, Dr. Beach very much encouraged her in the more private musical activity of composing, which he saw as more suitable for a married society lady and used his influence to advance her career.

Freedom: After living the constrained life of a proper society lady for over 20 years, at age 44, Beach was finally free. Upon the back-to-back untimely deaths of her husband and mother, she took the opportunity to travel to Europe and perform again. She used her influence and fame to advocate for and support women in music.

About the Gaelic Symphony

Historical importance: Beach's Gaelic symphony is considered the first great American symphony and the first symphony by a female composer composed, published, and performed by a major orchestra. Its debut in Boston on October 30, 1896 (126 years and 364 days ago!) was enthusiastically received by audiences and praised by critics, who expressed surprise at how good it was...for a girl.

Influences: The Gaelic symphony was in part, a response to her contemporary, Dvorak's, challenge to American composers to incorporate musical influences of their native land, specifically that of Native Americans and African Americans. Beach felt it was inappropriate to use the melodies and rhythms of a culture in which one was not fully immersed. She opted to highlight the culture and folk songs of the Irish people she was surrounded by in Boston.

Fun Fact:

The Cleveland Orchestra has never performed this symphony!

Gaelic Symphony - What to listen for:

1st

Mvmt

The piece opens with a depiction of a dangerous sea crossing and contains themes based on the folk song "Dark is the Night", which Beach herself composed years earlier. Pay attention to the theme in dramatic coda at the end of the movement, you might hear it again later!

2nd

Mvmt

The peaceful nostalgic themes are based on a tune "The Little Field of Barley" Beach found in an 1841 Irish Magazine published around the time of the potato famine. The movement opens with solos by horn and oboe, followed by a lovely duet between oboe and English horn. The tempo picks up in a quick lively scherzo before the gentle theme returns.

3rd

Mvmt

Haunting violin and cello solos set the mood as Beach incorporates two Irish folk songs she found in the same magazine - "Cushlamachree" and "Which way did she go?". These songs about children and universal sadness are intended to evoke "the laments of a primitive people [the Irish], their romance and their dreams"

4th

Mvmt

The energetic movement depicts "the rough, primitive character of the Celtic people, their sturdy daily life, their passions and battles, and the elemental nature of their processes of thought and its resulting action". Two main themes are intertwined throughout: the opening march-like theme derived from the end of the first movement and a lush romantic melody introduced by the cellos, violas, and bassoons. The coda builds to a rousing ending.



Contributors

Contributions received between 5/17/2023 and 10/21/2023



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