



School of Music
University of Missouri

2023-2024 Series | Large Ensemble

Wind Ensemble

Dr. Brian A. Silvey, conductor

Amanda Greenbacker-Mitchell, guest conductor

Alice Dade, flute

Christina Casey Ray, mezzo-soprano

October 2, 2023 • 7:00PM

Missouri Theatre

Program

Key West Pink! (2009) **Yukiko Nishimura**
(b. 1967)

Amanda Greenbacker-Mitchell, graduate conductor

The Shadow of Sirius (2009) **Joel Puckett**
(b. 1977)

- I. The Nomad Flute
- II. Eye of Shadow
- III. Into the Cloud

Alice Dade, flute

Symphony No. 2 "Voices" (2016) **James M. Stephenson**
(b. 1969)

- I. PRELUDE: 'of PASSION'
- II. SHOUTS and MURMURS
- III. of One

Christina Casey Ray, mezzo-soprano

Program Notes

Key West Pink! (2009)

Yukiko Nishimura is a Los Angeles-based composer and pianist. Yukiko graduated from Tokyo University of the Arts as a composition major. She also studied at the University of Miami and Manhattan School of Music. Among her honors are the special mention at the 15th and 26th International Competition for Original Composition for Band in Corciano, Italy, the 6th Aoyama Award in Kyoto, Japan, and nominations in the category of Contemporary Classical for the 8th, 9th & 10th Hollywood Music in Media Award. She has composed music for various instrumentations for commissioning, publications, and theater works. The commissioning works include Music for the silent film “Edison’s 1910 Frankenstein”, “The Water Magician” directed by Kenji Mizoguchi, the theatrical work “Fantasy of Kenji”, “Chiko”, and the collaboration project with Japanese Noh play “Kazuraki”. Yukiko has studied composition with Atsu Tada Otaka, Alfred Reed, Richard Danielpour, and Giampaolo Bracali, and studied piano with Ivan Davis and Sara Davis Buechner. She is a member of the Society of Composers and Lyricists, the American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers, the Alliance of Women Film Composers, the Academy of Scoring Arts, and ASCAP.

Key West Pink! is a rarely performed piece inspired by the composer’s travels to the Florida Keys. When discussing her inspiration for the piece, the composer stated that “this band work got many inspirations from Latin and Jazz music. Although I wrote this piece several years ago, I’d like to introduce it to people who are seeking something rhythmic and noisy!” *Key West Pink!* is a boisterous aural picture of the vibrancy, beauty, culture, and famous pink hues brightening its namesake island city.

The Shadow of Sirius (2009)

The composer wrote the following program note:

“I have always found comfort in poetry. While in school, I was the guy with a collection of Bukowski under one arm and a collection of Yeats under the other. I have always enjoyed the rhythm of other people’s thoughts and feelings.

In the winter of 2009, my wife and I experienced a heartbreak that left me unsure of how to even breathe, let alone grieve.

On March 1st, 2009, I found a copy of W.S. Merwin’s *The Shadow of Sirius*, and

I began to feel myself heal. I have almost no idea what most of this poetry means. But I know that it fills me with a profound sadness that is, at the same time, brimming with hope.

I recently heard Mr. Merwin discussing the origin of the title of his collection. He related that scientists have discovered that the star known as Sirius is actually a star system. What looks to our eye like a single object is actually many. Merwin found himself wondering what is on the other side of Sirius, lying in its shadow.

A friend once said to me, “Many concerti explore a virtuosity of technique but not many explore a virtuosity of expression.” It was with that thought in mind that I began work on my *The Shadow of Sirius* for solo flute and wind orchestra.

Each movement offers my reflection on a single Merwin poem from the collection. Although the work is played without pause, the soloist plays unaccompanied solos to separates the individual movements.

A consortium of American wind ensembles led by Michael Haithcock and the University of Michigan commissioned *The Shadow of Sirius*. The work is dedicated to the fantastic Amy Porter.”

These are the three poems that correspond with each movement:

Movement 1

The Nomad Flute

You that sang to me once sing to me now
let me hear your long lifted note
survive with me
the star is fading
I can think farther than that but I forget
do you hear me

do you still hear me
does your air
remember you
oh breath of morning
night song morning song
I have with me

all that I do not know
I have lost none of it
but I know better now
than to ask you
where you learned that music
where any of it came from
once there were lions in China

I will listen until the flute stops
and the light is old again

Movement 2

Eye of Shadow

Sentry of the other side
it may have watched the beginning
without being noticed in all
that blossoming radiance
the beggar in dark rags
down on the threshold
a shadow waiting

in its own fair time
all in its rags it rises
revealing its prime claim
upon the latter day
that fades around it
while the sky is turning
with the whole prophecy

o lengthening dark vision
reaching across the faces
across colors and mountains
and all that is known
herald without a sound
leave-taking without a word

guide beyond time and knowledge
o patience
beyond patience

I touch the day
I taste the light
I remember

Movement 3

Into the Clouds

What do you have with you
now my small traveler
suddenly on the way
and all at once so far

on legs that never were
up to the life that you
led them and breathing with
the shortness breath comes to

my endless company
when you could stay close to me
until the day was done

o closest to my breath
if you are able to
please wait a while longer
on that side of the cloud

Symphony No. 2 “Voices” (2016)

The composer, Jim Stephenson, wrote this set of program notes in October 2018 once he felt more comfortable sharing the true genesis of this Symphony:

“On April 23, 2016, my mother, Shirley S. Stephenson, passed away, at the age of 74. It was the first time anyone that close to me had died, and I honestly didn’t know how to respond. As this new piece – the symphony – was the next

major work on my plate, I thought the music would come pouring forth, as one would imagine in the movies, or in a novel. However, the opposite happened, and I was stuck, not knowing how to cope, and not knowing what to write.

Eventually, after a month or so, I sat at the piano, and pounded a low Eb octave, followed by an anguished chord answer. I did this three times, with three new response-chords, essentially recreating how I felt. This became the opening of the symphony, with emphasis on the bass trombone, who gets the loudest low Eb. I vowed I wouldn't return to Eb (major) until the end of the piece, thus setting forth a compositional and emotional goal all at once: an Eb to Eb sustaining of long-term tension, technically speaking, and the final arrival at Eb major (letter I, 3rd movement) being a cathartic and powerful personal moment, when I finally would come to terms with the loss of my mother.

The voice in the piece is that of my mother, an untrained alto, which is why I ask for it without vibrato. In the end, she finally sings once last time, conveying to me that "all will be ok".

I think it is the most difficult times we endure that force us, inspire us, to dig deeper than we could ever imagine. On the one hand, I am, of course, deeply saddened by the loss of my mother; but on the other, I will always have this piece – which is the most personal to me – to in essence keep her alive in my heart. I always tear up at letter I. Always. But they are tears of joy and treasured memories of 74 years with my mother.

Here are the originally-published program notes that Stephenson wrote in 2016 when he was not emotionally ready to talk about the true intention behind the work:

"Recently, I was awaiting an international flight, when I heard the distinct sound of laughter coming from behind me. Because I could not see the people laughing, it occurred to me that it was a universal language of happiness; one which cannot evoke any judgment based on racial, religious, gender, social, or any other type of prejudice. I decided to not turn around, but rather to enjoy the laughter for what it was. It was this decidedly delightful sound of the human voice that inspired my 2nd symphony for wind ensemble.

Voices. They come in so many forms. Some high, some low. Extremely loud, or extremely soft. Some are menacing, or angelic. A voice is completely unique to each individual, and instantly recognizable to a close friend or relative. As

a verb, it is used to express or vocalize an opinion. Used together, voices can express opposition, or unification. It occurred to me that all of these and more can be represented within the scope of a wind ensemble. The symphony No. 2 is an exploration of as many voices as I could formalize, resulting in a kind of concerto for wind ensemble. The culmination of the symphony is one of a unified voice, bringing together all of the different “cultures” and “individual voices” of the wind ensemble to express an amassed vision of hope and love; a vision I believe to be shared throughout all the world, yet disrupted continually by misguided and empowered individuals. I could think of no better messenger for such a work than the US “President’s Own” Marine Band – the commissioners of the work – who not only stand among the best musicians of the world, but also represent a country based on the principles of all-inclusiveness and celebrated diversity. It is because of this that no text is used for the mezzo-soprano voice used in this symphony. Instead, the singing voice is another instrument in the ensemble, joining in, or emerging from, the surrounding textures. I would like to personally thank Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig for his invitation to compose such a significant work, and also the members of the band, many of whom I’m honored to call friends, for their remarkable musical gifts and dedication to our country.”

Personnel

Piccolo

Amanda Greenbacker-Mitchell

Flute

Lexie Cheek, co-principal
John Goodson*
Nadia Lake, co-principal
Lauren Marino*
Kyrsten Wehner

Oboe

Anna Claunch, principal
Kara Balthrop

English Horn

Dan Willett

Bassoon

Luke Frith, principal
Erich Unterschutz

Contrabassoon

Molly Legg

E-flat Clarinet

Elizabeth Ganey

B-Flat Clarinet

Maddie Balsman, principal
Samantha Decker
Elizabeth Ganey
Ava Rittgers
Emily Stokes
Abby Twyman
Anton Yang

Bass Clarinet

Meghan Brown

Alto Saxophone

Warren Lane
Andrea Lee, principal

Tenor Saxophone

Abby Reed

Baritone Saxophone

Nate Leslie

Trumpet

Layden Dukes
Jesse Hamilton
Madison Haugsven
Emily Rahn, principal
Matthew Redshaw
Brandon Sconce

Horn

Brandon Guillen
Sydney Hendrickson
Erica Ohmann, principal
Abby Oreskovich
Pauline Rocha

Trombone

Andrew Jaggi
Tyler Martindale, principal
Neil Reed
Chloe Wilson

Euphonium

Reece Hinton
Noah Wright, principal

Tuba

Jonah Hammontree, principal
Atticus Schlegel

Percussion

Alex Baur
Miles Bohlman, principal
Jacob Deeter
Chloe Hart
Luke Haymon
Ryan Heckman
Michael Tiffany

String Bass

Sammy Asel

Piano/Celeste

Garrett Peterman

Harp

Maria Trevor

*Antiphonal flute for *The Shadow of Sirius*.

Names appear in alphabetical order to illustrate the importance of each ensemble member's contributions to the group.