

## Program

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Saturday, April 13, 2024 at 7:30pm  
Mary W. Sommervold Hall, Washington Pavilion

South Dakota Symphony Orchestra  
Delta David Gier, *conductor*  
Thomas Fortner, *conductor*  
Christopher Hill, *clarinet*

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**Stephen Yarbrough**  
(b. 1946) Honore et laude (World Premiere)

**Daniel Dorff**  
(b. 1956) Concerto No. 2 for Clarinet and  
Orchestra (World Premiere)

I. Allegro giusto  
II. Haunting  
III. Allegro

## INTERMISSION

**Aaron Copland**  
(1900 - 1990) Suite from *Appalachian Spring*

**Leonard Bernstein** Symphonic Dances from *West Side*  
(1918 - 1990) *Story*

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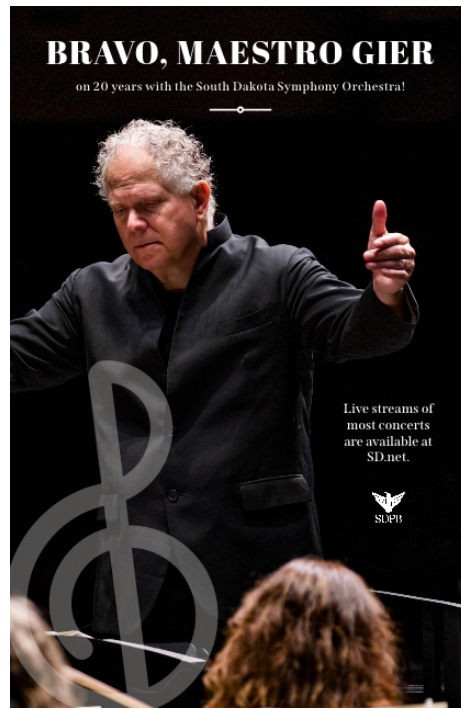
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### Program Notes

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### Honore et laude

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Yarbrough

**Born**  
1946

### Instrumentation

two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, percussion,

piano, strings

**Duration**

8 minutes

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**Program Notes**

*Written by composer*

"Honore et laude," With Honor and Praise, is a work I wrote as a tribute to my friend, Delta David Gier, on his 20th season as Music Director of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. It is a work abounding in celebration for all he has done to enhance and enrich the strength and beauty of the Orchestra's sound, and its ability to perform a lavish array of new and expanded repertoire. "Honore" is a work of personal thanks, admiration, and love for the friendship, support, understanding, advice, and welcome David and Angela have given to myself, my wife Janis, and our son, David. Blessings to both of you, to everyone in the Orchestra, to all the Orchestra Staff, and to all the Orchestra's many patrons who fill the Great Hall with their presence and deep appreciation of the SDSO's engaging performances.

**Concerto No. 2 for Clarinet and Orchestra**

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Dorff

**Born**

1956

**Instrumentation**

piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba, percussion, strings

**Duration**

20 minutes

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**Program Notes**

*Written by composer*

In some ways, *Concerto No. 2* traces back to November 2017 when Christopher Hill, Maestro Gier, and the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra performed my *Summer Solstice (Concerto No. 1)* for Clarinet and Strings. Several years after that wonderful concert, I was deeply flattered to learn that Chris and the orchestra had selected me to write a new work celebrating his retirement after 37 years with the SDSO.

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Chris and I both knew from the start that *Concerto No. 2* had to be very different from *Summer Solstice*. The earlier work is beautiful, graceful, scored for A Clarinet with strings, and with a central slow movement tenderly inspired by my newly becoming a father. In that work, the clarinet often is the lead part of a blended orchestral texture.

I began work on *Concerto No. 2* by sketching ideas that strongly contrast with the previous concerto. Most apparent is its scoring for full orchestra and solo Bb Clarinet, placing coloristic emphasis on the winds and percussion. This in turn allows for an extra dimension of drama, as various instruments emerge in their own cameo roles interacting with the solo clarinet. Most of my music has programmatic titles, framing the listening experience with visual or experiential prompts. By contrast, *Concerto No. 2* offers no worded glimpses into the soul and inspiration of the music. Emotional instrumental music can speak volumes without words, so let your mind wander wherever the music leads you!

Like all concerti, there are elements of soliloquy and dialog between the soloist and the orchestra: that's particularly poignant in tonight's valedictory concert, with the soloist having spent literally more than half of his life as principal clarinetist with the SDSO. The concerto's visceral-yet-undefined drama is most present in the central slow movement that begins with a long, melodic solo, sounding alone in the Washington Pavilion having no orchestral dialog except for occasional chimes, before gradually getting the whole ensemble more stirred up.

Chris Hill and I have been friends for 40 years, going back to the Haddonfield (NJ) Symphony; he was their principal clarinet while still at Temple University, and I was their bass clarinetist.

Watch out for some nice bass clarinet parts in the concerto!

## Suite from "Appalachian Spring"

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Copland

*Written by Anna Vorhes*

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### **BORN**

November 14, 1900, New York, New York

### **DIED**

December 2, 1990, Sleepy Hollow, New York

### **COMPOSED**

1943 on a commission from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for a "dance piece" for Martha Graham who gave the piece the title

**PREMIERED**

The complete ballet was presented at the Library of Congress' Coolidge Auditorium with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham dancing the lead roles, on October 3, 1944. The suite for full orchestra was premiered by Artur Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic Symphony on October 4, 1945

**INSTRUMENTATION**

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, strings

**DURATION**

23 minutes

**SOMETHING INTERESTING TO LISTEN FOR**

The comparison has been made between Copland's orchestra style and the style of pointillistic painters. The painters use the tips of their brushes to create a picture that can be viewed as a complex scene from far away but looks like mere dots viewed too close. Copland uses the instruments of the orchestra in a rather similar fashion. Each instrument or family might have only a few notes at a time, but combined with the orchestra around them the result offers lovely melodies with complex but light harmony. No matter how many times an orchestra performs this piece, it requires attention to fit the parts together in the most aesthetic way. With an orchestra like the SDSO, this piece is enchanting and showcases the ensemble's finesse.

**PROGRAM NOTES**

Telling American stories was a large part of Aaron Copland's mission as a composer. His third ballet, *Appalachian Spring* was written for choreographer Martha Graham and underwritten by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation for production in their theater in the Library of Congress. The plot of the ballet revolves around a bride and groom being given their newly constructed farmhouse in pioneer days. Friends and neighbors and a traveling revival preacher all offer advice and encouragement. In Copland's words, the work ends with the couple left "quiet and strong in their new home."

The working title of the ballet was "Ballet for Martha", which remains in the score as a dedication. The actual title was chosen by Martha Graham herself, after the work was completed and the premier was being prepared. She had read a poem by Hart Crane called "The Dance" from a group of poems called "The Bridge." The poem describes a canoe trip, with one line beginning, "O Appalachian Spring!" That became the title of the ballet, referring to the rural area where Martha

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imagined the ballet to be taking place. Copland hadn't been thinking of Appalachia, or the actual water spring referred to in the poem, or even the season of spring when he wrote the music. He wasn't upset by the connection, however. "Over and over again," he said in 1981, "people come up to me after seeing the ballet on stage and say, 'Mr. Copland, when I see that ballet and when I hear your music, I can just see the Appalachians and I just feel spring.' Well, I'm willing if they are!" Tonight's version is the fully orchestrated suite rather than the thirteen instruments that accompanied the original ballet.

The most familiar melody from this work is a hymn Copland borrowed from the Shakers. The Shakers are an unusual small sect found primarily in Pennsylvania. They were quite active in the nineteenth century. Their beliefs include simple living using good designs, which makes their handcrafted furniture highly sought after. One of their innovations was taking the round bundle of straw that made up a broom and sewing it flat to create the shape we think of as a broom today. The worship services of the Shakers include trance states self-induced by spinning around, rather like the Islamic dervishes. In addition, the Shakers are a celibate religion, living communally segregated into men's and women's groups. To insert a hymn from that tradition into a wedding about a bride and groom seems a bit ironic, but the hymn is one that reveres the simple life that allows time for close connections with God. It has become an American staple, and Copland also presented choral and vocal solo versions of it.

**Symphonic Dances from "West Side Story"**

Bernstein

*Written by Anna Vorhes*

**BORN**

August 25, 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts

**DIED**

October 14, 1990, New York, New York

**COMPOSED**

This suite was excerpted from the successful original musical by Bernstein with assistance of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal

**PREMIERED**

February 13, 1961, Carnegie Hall, New York, performed by the New York Philharmonic, Lukas Foss conducting, as part of a gala in support of a pension fund. The concert was called "A Valentine for Leonard Bernstein."



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### INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, e-flat clarinet, two clarinets, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano/celesta, and strings.

### DURATION

24 minutes

### SOMETHING INTERESTING TO LISTEN FOR

*West Side Story* investigated the sounds drawn from the Puerto Rican culture which was growing in New York City in the 1950s. It also included popular jazz rhythms and instrumentation. Along with the expected ballads and ensemble numbers, there are examples of Cha Cha and Mambo. You will hear jazz rhythms along with the inclusion of saxophone and a full complement of brass, percussion, and wind instruments. The work is presented without pauses between sections though they are woven together so that those familiar with the musical can imagine the scenes and solos that originally used the music as an integral part.

### PROGRAM NOTES

In 1949, Jerome Robbins presented Leonard Bernstein and Arthur Laurents with the idea for a reworking of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The idea was based in the East Side of New York City and featured romance between a Jewish young woman and an Irish Catholic young man. A number of circumstances postponed further discussion, including other projects for those involved. For Bernstein, it was the premier of *Candide*. By the time the project came up again the tension between rapidly growing Hispanic communities-Mexican in Los Angeles and Puerto Rican in New York-led to resetting the conflict to the West Side of New York and making the lead couple a Puerto Rican woman and a Polish/Irish Catholic man.

Jerome Robbins choreographed the resulting musical. When Laurents opted out of the project, young Stephen Sondheim was encouraged to become the librettist as it would bring him in close working contact with Bernstein. The resulting musical included dance scenes that stretched the boundaries of ballet in a musical. The choral numbers in ensemble scenes proved the classical control of Bernstein's writing could enhance something that relied on popular genres. The emotional content gripped the audience. When the musical opened in September 1957, it became an immediate hit.

A symphonic suite seemed inevitable. Bernstein enlisted the help of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal to produce this suite. From the plaintive *Somewhere* to the jazz of *Cool*, the dances that produce the thread of the plot even without the words, come



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together to create a very entertaining suite. As the movie remains accessible to viewers, the audiences remain familiar with the story here told only through the music of dance. Even without the physical dancers presenting the story, we can follow. The orchestra is asked to incorporate a few sounds the cast would add to the music - finger snaps and shouts of *Mambo* in appropriate places - but it doesn't detract from the orchestral experience.

The work is a single movement in nine sections. The sections are clearly separated by connecting material. They are:

Prologue: the opening dance sequence, originally presented by young men in blue jeans and t-shirts, is presented by the orchestra. The opening gesture is a three-note phrase ending with a tritone, sending listeners into the cool jazz realm.

Somewhere: The poignant ballad of longing sets up the sense of doomed romance.

Scherzo: A normal bustling street life is the inspiration for this section, though *Somewhere* does reappear toward the end.

Mambo: Latin American dance rhythms lead this section. Pay attention to the brass as they use various mutes to good effect.

Cha-Cha: Based on a Cuban dance form, Bernstein changes the mood of the hero's solo *Maria* into their first dance together. This dance is accomplished without words to each other.

Meeting Scene: The music that was originally the backdrop for the words shared between the star-crossed lovers connects the dances to the building tension between the gangs.

Cool: The vocal fugue that builds tension in the musical is recast with instruments. The intensity is palpable.

Rumble: The final fight between the gangs cannot come to a good end. A poignant flute solo finishes the rumble, helping us hear the now deserted streets.

Finale: Suitable music for heartbreak with echoes of earlier melodies and the cries of those left behind after violence echoing through the orchestra.

*West Side Story* is still produced today, though as our attitudes continue to change toward increasing cultural awareness, it seems a bit dated. Productions have included the Puerto Rican Sharks speaking and singing in Spanish among other attempts at being more aware of today's values. While there is room for criticism of depictions of the gangs in the musical, the music remains a masterpiece of Bernstein's ability to incorporate his wide body of compositional tools to create something amazing.



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## Soloist



**Chris Hill**

clarinetist

Christopher Hill is in his 37th and final season as principal clarinetist of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. Paul Globus, in The Clarinet magazine, calls Hill a "first rate clarinetist...whose playing is uniformly excellent." He has performed with the Baltimore Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Omaha Symphony, New Sousa Band, Carousel National Tour, Evita World Tour, Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, Binghamton Symphony, and the Rome Festival Orchestra. He has been a soloist with the SDSO, Sioux Falls Municipal Band, and other orchestras and bands, and he and John Walker performed at ClarinetFest 2005, in Tokyo, Japan. They made a recording of this music, and he is also featured on recordings with the SDSO and Dakota Wind Quintet. He also performed at ClarinetFest 2012 with the Manhattan Bass Horn Trio. He is proud that there are now three clarinet solos that have been

written for him: "Concertino" by Nathan Pawelek, "Pink Ribbon for Susan" by Christopher Stanichar, and "Concerto No. 2" by Daniel Dorff.

Hill is the Conductor Emeritus of the Sioux Falls Municipal Band, and has conducted the SDSO, Hunterdon Symphony, and was a rehearsal conductor for the Carousel National Tour. He has been a clinician at many universities and music schools, including the Peabody Institute, University of Minnesota, Arizona State University, University of Northern Iowa, University of Southern California, and Oakland University, and is a clarinet instructor at Augustana University. Hill holds a Bachelor and Master of Music degree from Temple University, where he was a student of Anthony Gigliotti. In addition, he has studied with Donald Montanaro, Burt Hara, Ronald Rueben, Karl Herman, David Peck, and George Silfies. A noted mouthpiece craftsman, Hill is the designer of his own line of mouthpieces. He is a Royal Global and a D'Addario artist.

Hill would like to thank the audience members and performers of the South Dakota Symphony and the Sioux Falls Municipal Band for the opportunity to have a wonderful performing career in an incredible city!



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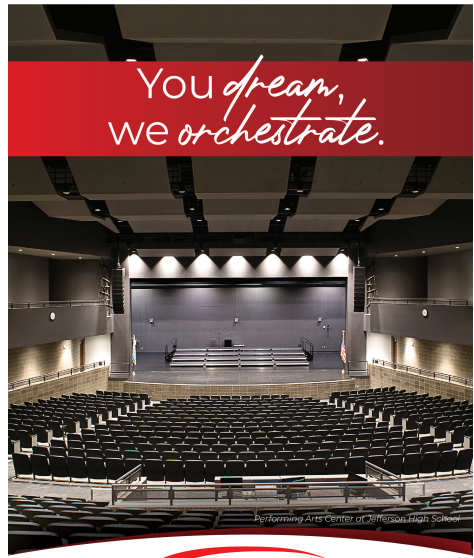


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