

# SYMPHONIC BAND PROGRAM NOTES

OCTOBER 12, 2023 7:30PM

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# KU

## BANDS

The University of Kansas

*Sea Songs* ..... Ralph Vaughan Williams

Vaughan Williams was an influential British composer and folk-song collector. His powerful and expressive orchestral music is notable for its very “English” sound. His early adventures collecting folk songs in the English countryside profoundly influenced his later compositions. Along with Gustav Holst and Percy Grainger, his works for wind band form a foundation for the serious literature in that medium.

*Sea Songs* was written in 1923 as the original second movement of the English Folk Song Suite, and premiered as such at Kneller Hall that July. It was later split from the suite, and received its premiere as a standalone work just a year later at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. Throughout its fairly typical da capo march form, it uses three sea shanties: “Princess Royal”, “Admiral Benbow”, and “Portsmouth.” Vaughan Williams created an orchestral version in 1942.

- Program Note from Andy Pease

*Voyage of the Northern Lights* ..... Isabella Piritta Morrill

The musical narrative of *Voyage of the Northern Lights* comes from an old Scandinavian folk tale. The myth explains that the beautiful, awe-inspiring northern lights are carrying fallen soldiers and Vikings up to heaven. Other versions of this folklore explained that the lights were their final exhales and farewells before entering the afterlife. *Voyage of the Northern Lights* was the recipient 2022 National Band Association/Merrill Jones Memorial Composition Award.

- Program Note from National Band Association

*The Humors of Hidden Shadow*..... Gabriel Leverett

*The Humors of Hidden Shadow* is a piece on self-reflection and the culmination of a years’ work from start to finish. When I began writing this piece, I was in a period of my life where I began to look inward towards the parts of myself, I generally try to ignore, or forget - parts that I would be happier without. In learning about and deciphering these complex and enigmatic portions of my being, I grew to find nuance and humor in the things I kept in the shadows.

Gabriel Leverette is a senior in music composition at the University of Kansas. His primary composition teacher has been Ingrid Stölzel, and he was the 2023 recipient of the Eugene & Mary Mingle Scholarship Award for young composers at KU.

- Program Note from composer.

*Symphony No. 2*..... John Barnes Chance

In 1962, John Barnes Chance and Clifton Williams both agreed to write a piece using the four-note motif of C#-D-F-E. When Chance sent a recording of a part of his piece, Williams decided to abandon the project. Chance also shelved the project. Ten years later, while he was teaching at the University of Kentucky, he was commissioned by the Northwest Music Center in North Dakota to write a piece dedicated to the Minot State College Wind Ensemble. He dug up the work he put away ten years ago and completed this symphony. He died shortly after finishing the piece, and he was never able to hear it performed.

- Program Note from Mansfield University concert program, 6 April 2014

*Caribana Afterparty* ..... Omar Thomas

A further exploration and study of the dance styles at heart of my larger work *Caribana*, *Caribana Afterparty* brings soca and calypso music within reach of younger musicians, as well as musicians just beginning their exploration of Caribbean dance music. *Caribana* is the former name of the largest Caribbean carnival celebration outside of the Caribbean itself, which takes place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Titling this piece an “afterparty” gave me space to incorporate themes from the original work while developing new and different grooves from the region, reimagining them in a more accessible context.

- Program note from the composer