The “consistent, well-balanced, and beautiful” voice of soprano Erin Nafziger (Berkshire Review for the Arts) dazzled audiences as Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, where it was noted that she “soar[ed] above the others with her effortless high pianissimo soprano during the lullaby, ‘goodnight baby boy’” (Berkshire Fine Arts). Ms. Nafziger was also featured in *The Marriage of Figaro* as Countess Almaviva at the Adams Memorial Theater. She is a frequent soloist with the Williams Chamber Players, Hubbard Hall Opera, and The New Opera, shining in such roles as Micaëla in *La Tragédie de Carmen*, and Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*.


Equally at home on the concert stage, Ms. Nafziger’s “beautiful voice” and “musicianship to match” (Mark Riggleman) leave a lasting impression. Recent concert performances include the soprano solos in Reena Esmail’s *This Love Between Us*, Brahms’ *Requiem*, Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9*, J.S. Bach’s *Magnificat*, Stravinsky’s *Les Noces*, Adams’ *Grand Pianola Music*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, and Dvorak’s *Mass in D Major*, among others.

Ms. Nafziger received First Prize in the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen Vocal Concerto Competition, Third Place in the Bel Canto Foundation Competition, and was the recipient of the Francesco and Hilda Riggio Award of the New England Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In addition, she was a recent finalist in the Rochester Oratorio Society’s Classical Idol Vocal Competition, the New Hampshire Opera Idol Competition, and the Vienna Summer Music Festival Competition. This season, she makes her Ozawa Hall debut as the soprano soloist in Schubert’s *Mass in G*, as well as with the Berkshire Symphony in Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. She will also star in the world premiere of an opera about Pablo Picasso entitled *The Weeping Woman* at Mass MoCA in August 2019, and will make her role debut as Königin der Nacht in Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte* with Greylock Opera Collective in January 2020.

She is a graduate of the DePaul University and Northwestern University Schools of Music, and is a Vocal Instructor and Ensemble Director at Williams College and the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Baritone Philip Lima has regularly garnered critical acclaim for his performances on both concert and operatic stages: “His singing was glorious” (*The Boston Globe*) – “vibrant baritone and a commanding presence” (*Cleveland The Plain Dealer*) – “keen musicianship along with total dramatic intention.” (*Opera News Online*).
He has sung leading operatic roles in Germany and for regional American opera companies in repertoire ranging from traditional favorites by Handel, Mozart, Puccini, and Verdi, to important works of twentieth century masters such as Samuel Barber, Benjamin Britten, and Viktor Ullmann, to the comic masterworks of Gilbert and Sullivan. Of particular note have been his featured roles in the world premieres of operas by jazz greats Leslie Burrs, Nathan Davis, and Mary Watkins, and by award-winning composer Larry Bell.

Mr. Lima has appeared as soloist with the Boston Pops and over seventy orchestras, choral societies, and concert series across the United States and in Korea and Ukraine in beloved choral works of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Fauré, Handel, Mendelssohn, Orff, and Vaughan Williams, as well as works by Bernstein (Arias and Barcarolles and major excerpts from Mass), Dave Brubeck (The Light in the Wilderness), Mahler (Kindertotenlieder), Ravel (Don Quichotte à Dulcinée), Lee Hoiby (his setting of the “I Have a Dream” speech of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), and pioneering African-American composer Florence Price (Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight.)

The Assistant Chair of Berklee College of Music’s Voice Department, Mr. Lima is a frequent recitalist whose performance of Schubert’s Winterreise with pianist Beverly Orlove was cited by The Boston Phoenix in an annual summary of Boston’s “Unforgettable Classical Events.”

More information about Mr. Lima is available at philiplima.com, and at his YouTube channel, PhilipLimaSings.

~Program Notes~

Berkshire Symphony Orchestra
October 18, 2019

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Knoxville: Summer of 1915, op. 24

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 by Samuel Barber is one of the bona fide classics of American music (not quite attaining the status of the composer's universally beloved Adagio for Strings). It was premiered by the soprano Eleanor Steber with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Koussevitzky in April 1948. Although it was Steber who ultimately commissioned the work, it predated her involvement and was a product of Barber’s relationship with Koussevitzky and the BSO, which had already performed the composer’s School for Scandal Overture, the Violin Concerto, the first Essay for Orchestra, and the premiere of his Second Symphony, Airborne. Barber had no particular prospects for Knoxville when he sent Koussevitzky the score in 1947, but the conductor was delighted, suggesting Barber send it to Steber.
The text is taken from James Agee’s autobiographical essay “Knoxville, 1915,” used as the introduction to his novel A Death in the Family. The point of view (but not the language) is that of the six-year-old Agee, whose innocent understanding is variably comfortable, excited, and emotionally intense. Barber sets the straightforward but image-rich prose in several episodes. The outer sections focus on Agee’s family and home, at first descriptive, then examining. Barber sets the descriptive sections with lilting, three-beat melodies. The opening tune, which returns throughout the piece, uses the common pentatonic scale for a strong, clear, folk-like quality. This moves almost without transition to an overstimulated episode describing Knoxville’s bustling evening activity, centered on the streetcar. We return to the front porch and the opening tune, which broadens out into a major-key musing on the narrator’s family. The child is overcome with emotion: “May God bless my people.” After the child’s final brief crisis of identity the opening melody returns in the oboe as a kind of ultimate comfort.

~Robert Kirzinger

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Old American Songs (selections from sets 1 and 2)

One of the ways Aaron Copland sought to create a music that was recognizably “American” to the average listener was to investigate the wealth of folk music produced in this country. There is a certain irony here in that an urban composer, trained in Europe and long resident in New York, should choose to set many songs that he had surely never heard in their original “folk” context. Yet the musical language that he evolved in composing his popular ballets Billy the Kid, Rodeo, and Appalachian Spring was so appropriate that his Old American Songs were quickly recognized as masterful artistic interpretations of American folk material—much like the work that Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, and later Benjamin Britten accomplished with the folk traditions of their native England. In fact, it was at Britten’s request that Copland wrote the first of his two sets of Old American Songs in 1950, for performance at Britten’s Aldeburgh Festival; this set proved so popular that Copland followed it with a second set in 1952. Each set consists of five songs, ranging from folk ballads, lullabies, and revivalist hymns to numbers from popular theater. Copland found the original music, in most cases, in the extraordinary Harris Collection at Brown University.

"The Boatmen's Dance" is a minstrel song published in 1843 in Boston as an "original banjo melody" by Dan D. Emmett, who later composed "Dixie." A version of the campaign song "The Dodger" appeared in the collection Our Singing Country published by John A. and Alan Lomax; the song was supposedly used in the Cleveland/Blaine presidential campaign in the 1880s. "Simple Gifts" is a Shaker hymn tune from the period 1837-47; it has become the best-known of all such tunes from Copland’s use of it in Appalachian Spring. "I Bought Me a Cat" was a children’s nonsense song sung for Copland by the playwright Lynn Riggs, who learned it as a child in his native Oklahoma (it was Riggs's play Green Grow the Lilacs that was turned into the book of Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic musical Oklahoma!). "Zion's Walls" was a revivalist
melody credited to the compiler of the collection of hymn runes called the Social Harp. “The Golden Willow Tree” is an arrangement by Copland of “The Golden Vanity,” an Anglo-American ballad; Benjamin Britten also made use of this melody among his own settings of folk songs. "Ching-a-ring Chaw" was a minstrel song, from the form of musical theater that was most popular in the United States during the middle years of the nineteenth century. "At the River" is a well-known hymn tune with words and music created by the Reverend Robert Lowry in 1865.

~Steven Ledbetter

**Howard Hanson (1895-1963)**

*Symphony No. 2, “Romantic” in D-flat major, op. 20. W45*

Concerning my second symphony, as the subtitle implies, it represents for me a definite and acknowledged embracing of the romantic phase. I recognize, of course, that romanticism is, at the present time, the poor stepchild, without the social standing of her elder sister, neoclassicism. Nevertheless, I embrace her all the more fervently, believing, as I do, that romanticism will find in this country rich soil for new, young, and vigorous growth.

My aim, in this symphony, has been to create a work young in spirit, romantic in temperament, and simple and direct in expression. The work is in three movements. The first, Adagio Allegro moderato, begins with an atmospheric introduction in the wood winds, joined first by the horns, then the strings, and finally the brass choir, and then subsiding. The principal theme is announced, Allegro moderato, by four horns, with an accompaniment of strings and wood winds, and is imitated in turn by the trumpets, wood wind, and strings. An episodic theme appears quietly in the oboe and then in the solo horn. A transition leads into the subordinate theme, Lento, with the theme itself in the strings and a counter subject in the solo horn. The development section now follows, with the principal theme announced in a changed mood by the English horn and developed through the orchestra. The episodic theme, influenced by the principal theme, also takes an important part in this section. The climax of the development section leads directly to the return of the principal theme in the original key by the trumpets. This is followed in turn by the episodic theme, now in the clarinets and then in the first horn, with canonic imitation in the oboe. The subordinate theme then follows, and the movement concludes quietly in a short coda.

The second movement, Andante con tenerezza, begins with its principal theme announced by the wood winds with a sustained string accompaniment. An interlude in the brass, taken from the introduction of the first movement and interrupted by florid passages in the wood winds, develops into the subordinate theme which is taken from the horn solo in the first movement. A transition, again interrupted by a florid wood wind passage, leads into a restatement of the principal theme of the movement.
The third movement, Allegro con brio, begins with a vigorous accompaniment figure in strings and woodwinds, the principal theme of the movement reminiscent of the first movement entering in the four horns and later repeated in the basses. The subordinate theme, Motto meno mosso, is announced first by the violoncellos and then taken up by the English horn, the development of which leads into the middle section, Pia mosso. This section begins with a pizzicato accompaniment in the violas, violoncellos, and basses, over which is announced a horn call. This call is taken up by the trombones and leads into a fanfare first in the trumpets, then in the horns and woodwinds, and then again the trumpets and wood winds. The climax of this fanfare comes with the announcement of the principal theme of the first movement by the trumpets, against the fanfare rhythm in the wood winds. The development of this theme leads into a final statement of the subordinate theme of the first movement fortissimo. A brief coda of this material leads to a final fanfare and the end of the symphony.

~Howard Hanson, 1930

~Text and Lyrics~

*Knoxville: Summer of 1915*

“We are talking now of summer evenings in Knoxville Tennessee in that time that I lived there so successfully disguised to myself as a child.

“...It has become that time of evening when people sit on their porches, rocking gently and talking gently and watching the street and the standing up into their sphere of possession of the trees, of birds' hung havens, hangars. People go by; things go by. A horse, drawing a buggy, breaking his hollow iron music on the asphalt; a loud auto; a quiet auto; people in pairs, not in a hurry, scuffling, switching their weight of aestival body, talking casually, the taste hovering over them of vanilla, strawberry, pasteboard and starched milk, the image upon them of lovers and horsemen, squared with clowns in hueless amber.

“A streetcar raising its iron moan; stopping, belling and starting; stertorous; rousing and raising again its iron increasing moan and swimming its gold windows and straw seats on past and past and past, the bleak spark crackling and cursing above it like a small malignant spirit set to dog its tracks; the iron whine rises on rising speed; still risen, faints; halts; the faint stinging bell; rises again, still fainter, fainting, lifting, lifts, faints foregone: forgotten. Now is the night one blue dew. Now is the night one blue dew, my father has drained, he has coiled the hose. Low on the length of lawns, a frailing of fire who breathes....

Parents on porches: rock and rock. From damp strings morning glories hang their ancient faces. The dry and exalted noise of the locusts from all the air at once enchants my eardrums.

“On the rough wet grass of the back yard my father and mother have spread quilts. We all lie there, my mother, my father, my uncle, my aunt, and I too am lying there....They are not talking
much, and the talk is quiet, of nothing in particular, of nothing at all. The stars are wide and alive, they seem each like a smile of great sweetness, and they seem very near. All my people are larger bodies than mine, ... with voices gentle and meaningless like the voices of sleeping birds. One is an artist, he is living at home. One is a musician, she is living at home. One is my mother who is good to me. One is my father who is good to me. By some chance, here they are, all on this earth; and who shall ever tell the sorrow of being on this earth, lying, on quilts, on the grass, in a summer evening, among the sounds of the night. May God bless my people, my uncle, my aunt, my mother, my good father, oh, remember them kindly in their time of trouble; and in the hour of their taking away.

“After a little I am taken in and put to bed. Sleep, soft smiling, draws me unto her: and those receive me, who quietly treat me, as one familiar and well-beloved in that home: but will not, oh, will not, not now, not ever; but will not ever tell me who I am.”

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Old American Songs

The Boatmen’s Dance

The boatmen dance, the boatmen sing,  
The boatmen up to ev’rything,  
And when the boatman gets on shore  
He spends his cash and works for more.  
Then dance the boatmen dance,  
O dance the boatmen dance.  
O dance all night ’til broad daylight,  
And go home with the gals in the mornin’.

High row the boatmen row,  
Floatin’ down the river the Ohio.

I went on board the other day  
To see what the boatmen had to say.  
There I let my passion loose  
An’ they cram me in the callaboose.  
Dance the boatmen dance,  
O dance the boatmen dance.

The Dodger

Yes the candidate’s a dodger, yes and I’m a well known dodger,

Yes the candidate’s a dodger, yes and I’m a dodger too.
He’ll meet you and treat you and ask you for your vote
But look out boys he’s a dodgin’ for a note,
Yes we’re all dodgin’, a dodgin’, dodgin’, dodgin’
Yes we’re all dodgin’ out away through the world

Yes the preacher he’s a dodger, yes a well known dodger,
Yes the preacher he’s a dodger yes and I’m a dodger too.
He’ll preach you a gospel and tell you of your crimes
But look out boys he’s a dodgin’ for your dimes,
Yes we’re all dodgin’, a dodgin’, dodgin’, dodgin’
Yes we’re all dodgin’ out away through the world

Yes the lover he’s a dodger, yes a well known dodger,
Yes the lover he's a dodger yes and I'm a dodger too. 
He'll hug you and kiss you and call you his bride 
But look out girls he's a tellin' you a lie. 
Yes we're all dodgin', dodgin', dodgin', dodgin' 
Yes we're all dodgin' out away through the world

Simple Gifts

‘Tis the gift to be simple 'tis the gift to be free 
‘Tis the gift to come down where you ought to be 
And when we find ourselves in the place just right, 
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained 
To bow and to bend we shan’t be ashamed 
To turn, turn will be our delight. 
'Till by turning, turning we come round right.

‘Tis the gift to be simple 'tis the gift to be free 
‘Tis the gift to come down where you ought to be 
And when we find ourselves in the place just right, 
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.

I Bought Me a Cat

I bought me a cat 
my cat pleased me 
I fed my cat under yonder tree 
My cat says "fiddle eye fee"

I bought me a duck 
my duck pleased me 
I fed my duck under yonder tree 
My duck says "Quack, quack"

I bought me a goose 
My goose pleased me 
I fed my goose under yonder tree 
My goose says "quaa quaa"

I bought me a hen 
My hen pleased me 
I fed my hen under yonder tree 
My hen says "shim-my-shack" "shim-my-shack" 
My goose says "quaa quaa"

I bought me a pig 
My pig pleased me 
I fed my pig under yonder tree 
My pig says "griffy, griffy" My hen says "shim-my-shack, shim-my-shack" 
My goose says "quaa quaa"

I bought me a cow 
My cow pleased me 
I fed my cow under yonder tree 
My cow says "moo, moo" My pig says "griffy, griffy" My hen says "shim-my-shack, shim-my-shack" 
My goose says "quaa quaa"

I bought me a horse 
My horse pleased me 
I fed my horse under yonder tree 
My horse says "Neigh, Neigh"
My cow says "moo, moo"
My pig says "griffy, griffy"
My hen says "shim-my-shack, shim-my-shack"
My goose says "quaa quaa"
My duck says "Quack, quack"
My cat says "fiddle eye fee"

I got me a wife
My wife pleased me
I fed my wife under yonder tree
My wife says "Nag, nag"
My horse says "Neigh, Neigh"
My cow says "moo, moo"
My pig says "griffy, griffy"
My hen says "shim-my-shack, shim-my-shack"
My goose says "quaa quaa"
My duck says "Quack, quack"
My cat says "fiddle eye fee"

As she sailed in the lowland lonesome low,
As she sailed in the lowland so low.

Up stepped a little carpenter boy, Says
“What will you give me for the ship that I’ll destroy?”
“I’ll give you gold or I’ll give thee,
The fairest of my daughters as she sails upon the sea
If you’ll sink ‘em in the lowland lonesome low,
If you’ll sink ‘em in the land that lies so low.”

He turned upon his back and away swum he,
He swum till he came to the British Roverie,
He had a little instrument fitted for his use,
He bored nine holes and he bored them all at once.
He turned upon his breast and back swum he,
He swum till he came to the Golden Willow Tree.

“Captain, O Captain, come take me on board,
And do unto me as good as your word
For I sank ‘em in the lowland lonesome low,
I sank ‘em in the lowland so low.”

“Oh no, I won’t take you on board,
Nor do unto you as good as my word,
Tho’ you sank ‘em in the lowland lonesome low,
Tho’ you sank ‘em in the land that lies so low:’

“If it wasn’t for the love that I have for your men,
I’d do unto you as I done unto them,
I’d sink you in the lowland lonesome ow,
I’d sink you in the lowland so low:’

Zion’s Walls

Come fathers and mothers,
Come sisters and brothers,
Come join us in singing the praises of Zion.
O fathers, don’t you feel determined
To meet within the walls of Zion?
We’ll shout and go round
The walls of Zion.

The Golden Willow Tree

There was a little ship in South Amerikee,
Crying O the land that lies so low,
There was a little ship in South Amerikee,
She went by the name of the Golden Willow Tree,
As she sailed in the lowland lonesome low,
As she sailed in the lowland so low.

We hadn’t been a sailin’ more than two weeks or three,
Till we came in sight of the British Roverie,
He turned upon his head and down swum he,
He swum till he came to the bottom of the sea.
Sank himself in the lowland lonesome ow,
Sank himself in the land that lies so low.

Ching-a-ring Chaw

Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,  
Ho a ding-a-ding kum larkee,  
Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,  
Ho a ding kum larkee.

Brothers gather round,  
Listen to this story,  
'Bout the promised land,  
An' the promised glory.

You don't need to fear,  
If you have no money,  
You don't need none there,  
To buy you milk and honey.

There you'll ride in style,  
Coach with four white horses,  
There the evenin' meal,  
Has one two three four courses.  
Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,  
Ho a ding-a-ding kum larkee,  
Ching-a-ring-a ring ching ching,  
Ho a ding kum larkee.

Nights we all will dance  
To the harp and fiddle,  
Waltz and jig and prance,  
"And Cast off down the middle!"

When the mornin' come,  
All in grand and splendour,  
Stand out in the sun,  
And hear the holy thunder!

Brothers hear me out,  
The promised land's a-comin'  
Dance and sing and shout,  
I hear them harps a strummin'.

Ching-a-ring-a ching  
ching ching, ching a ring ching  
Ching-a-ring-a ching ching,  
ching-a-ring-a ching ching,  
ching-a-ring-a,  
ching-a-ring-a,  
ching-a-ring-a,  
ring, ching ching ching CHAW!

At the River

Shall we gather by the river,  
Where bright angel's feet have trod,  
With its crystal tide forever  
Flowing by the throne of God.

Yes, we'll gather by the river,  
The beautiful, the beautiful river,  
Gather with the saints by the river  
That flows by the throne of God.

Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
Soon our pilgrimage will cease,  
Soon our happy hearts will quiver  
With the melody of peace.

Yes, we'll gather by the river,  
The beautiful, the beautiful river,  
Gather with the saints by the river  
That flows by the throne of God.