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## Ensemble Concerts: Wind Symphony, February 13, 1992

Stephen K. Steele Conductor  
*Illinois State University*

Amy Gilreath Conductor

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**Music Department  
Illinois State University**

# **WIND SYMPHONY**

**Stephen K. Steele, *Conductor***

**Amy Gilreath, *Guest Conductor***

***Graduate Assistants***

**Jeffrey Allison John Eustace Amy Johnson**

***Percussion Soloists***

**Sean Batson Michael Coers**

**Michael Hibbard Michael Levine**

**Braden Auditorium  
Sunday Afternoon  
February 13, 1992  
8:00 p.m.**

from *Sacrae symphoniae* (1597)  
Canzon primi toni

Giovanni Gabrieli  
(ca. 1554-1612)

from *Sacrae symphoniae* (1597)  
Canzon septimi toni no. 2

Giovanni Gabrieli

Amy Gilreath, *Conductor*

Deja Vu (1977)

Michael Colgrass  
(born 1932)

*Percussion soloists*  
Sean Batson Michael Coers  
Michael Hibbard Michael Levine

*Intermission*

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a  
(arranged by W. J. Duthoit)

Johannes Brahms  
(1833 - 1897)

La Fiesta Mexicana (1954)  
(A Mexican Folk Song Symphony)  
Prelude and Aztec Dance  
Mass  
Carnival

H. Owen Reed  
(born 1910)

This performance of two Gabrieli compositions focusses attention upon the masterful musical imagery of a vital period in the evolution of concerted instrumental music. It was an exciting period. Its antiquity presents problems in contemporary performance, since any playing of this music today entails a vast compromise with conditions in that distant and glorious past.

After Giovanni Gabrieli was "discovered" by Carl von Winterfeld in the early 19th century, all historians have acknowledged the importance of his work. Gabrieli seems to have been a gentle, serious introvert, an experimenter looking into the future, and, like his romantic successors Schubert and Chopin, limiting the scope of his activity in order to dig deeper, to make his music more expressive, to find a more characteristic, more intensive, and more picturesque musical expression for his texts (like Schubert), and more subtle, more refined, and more concise forms for his instrumental music (like Chopin). Like them, also he broadened the scope of harmony to attain his aims which for him meant a change from modal to tonal harmony. He was the first to introduce written dynamic signs and instrumentation. He fashioned stylistic changes that led to the sonata, the concerto, and symphonic music. He created a new form-building principle based on sound-levels, spatial separation, and dynamics.

Written originally for percussion quartet and orchestra, *Deja Vu* by Michael Colgrass was arranged for wind ensemble by the composer as the result of a commission by the Mid-American Conference Band Director's Association. It was composed in 1977 for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1978. The composer has supplied the following commentary:

"It seems everyone has had an experience with *deja vu* - the feeling that 'this exact moment has happened before.' Such was my experience when asked by the New York Philharmonic to write a piece for percussion and orchestra, because I was suddenly thrown back to my 'previous life,' that of percussionist and of percussion composer. The title *Deja Vu* applies to his work also in its hints at previous styles. For example, in the middle section the four percussionists play separate solos simultaneously: the vibraphone, a kind of dreamy romanticism; the tuned drums an almost Chopinesque obligato to the winds; the marimba a florid impressionism; and the chimes a straight classical line. The counterpoint of styles is like a stream of consciousness, which to me, produces a feeling of musical necromancy.

For those that are interested in the structural elements of this work, I might say that these fall into two main categories: thematic development and orchestration. For several years I have been interested in the effect of classical musical materials when applied to contemporary techniques. In *Deja Vu* I have written a typically classical type of melody to provide the thematic and rhythmic substance of the piece. This theme first appears in a serial form introduced at the key of the work by the four soloists, and then later in purely rhythmical form on nonmelodic percussion. From time to time, the listener will hear the original classical version of the theme very clearly and sometimes hidden in the orchestration. At one point, the theme storms out in the brass in an almost romantic outburst, so that all of the music, no matter how abstract, emanates from this classical line, even the jazz."

When he composed this magnificent set of variations Brahms was forty years old. "The Brahms-Haydn Variations," as they are familiarly known, proved a turning point in his career. Up to this point he had not dared to complete a symphony, though he had tried often enough, and working in any form for orchestra alone had filled him with inhibitions.

Robert Schumann's enthusiastic trumpeting of Brahms's genius when Brahms was only twenty had proved almost as much of a handicap as a help. "New Paths," Schumann's famous article, proclaimed the beginner a musician "called to give the highest expression to his time in ideal fashion . . . a young man over whose cradle Graces and Heroes have stood watch.... His fellow musicians hail him on his first step through a world where wounds perhaps await him, but also palms and laurels."

Brahms himself seemed skeptical and fearful of entering a field of music where he knew he would be measured by the symphonies of Beethoven. "You have no idea," Brahms said to a conductor friend, "how the likes of us feel when we hear the tramp of a giant like him behind us." For some reason these variations seem to have unlocked the door; the next fifteen years were rich in orchestral works. The Variations were composed in two versions at almost the same time: one for orchestra, another for two pianos. It is not certain which was completed first. In any case, so much of the writing (even in the piano version) is clearly orchestral in concept and grows so idiomatically out of the style and color of the instruments that Brahms must have had the orchestra in mind as he conceived it.

The Variations have a curious background. In 1870 Brahms's friend, the great Haydn biographer Karl Ferdinand Pohl, showed Brahms a B-flat Feldpartita (an open-air suite for wind instruments) believed to have been composed by Haydn. Brahms was much attracted to the theme of the second movement, apparently a traditional tune, marked "Choral St. Antoni." He copied it down and three years later used it as the basis of "The Brahms-Haydn Variations." Until recently the Feldpartita seems generally to have been accepted as authentic Haydn. But in 1951 the Haydn expert, H. C. Robbins Landon, wrote in the Saturday Review of Literature ("The True and False Haydn," August 25, 1951) that the whole series of works in the manuscript containing this Feldpartita "is spurious and . . . not one note was by Haydn. One of his students, perhaps Pleyel, was probably the real author."

Whoever wrote the Feldpartita, Brahms's liking for the "Choral" is easy to understand. Its irregular five-bar phrases must have particularly appealed to his unconventional rhythmic imagination. His score consists of a theme, eight variations and a passacaglia finale.

#### Theme.

I. *Poco più animato*. The repeated chords with which the "Choral" ends are echoed softly by horns and woodwinds, while graceful arabesques weave a complex two-against-three rhythm.

II. *Più vivace*. Built on the simple dotted rhythm of the first two notes of the "Choral," this variation is dominated by woodwind color.

III. *Con moto*. The long melodic line is an even-flowing rhythmic variant of the original melody.

IV. *Andante con moto*. A languorous 3/8 transformation of the "Choral" glows in the warm tone of a solo French horn with added tints of woodwind color.

V. *Vivace*. Sprightly 6/8 rhythms give this delicate variation almost the buoyancy of a Mendelssohn scherzo.

VI. *Vivace*. Traditional fanfares associated with the hunting ancestor of the orchestral horn inspired this vigorous variation.

VII. *Grazioso*. A graceful, lilting melody in traditional siciliano rhythm with a subtle interplay of the winds.

VIII. *Presto non troppo*. Whispering woodwinds give a phantom-like quality to the last variation.

*Finale: Andante*. The Finale is built on the passacaglia form, which Brahms so loved and which he was to use again so memorably for the finale of his Fourth Symphony. The passacaglia, of course, is itself a variation form. As its basis Brahms uses a five-bar phrase adapted from the "Choral St. Antoni." Beginning in a quiet hymn-like statement, it builds to a climax of majestic momentum when the "Choral" returns, decked out with flashing scales.

*La Fiesta Mexicana* by H. Owen Reed, subtitled A Mexican Folk Song Symphony, was written after Reed had spent a year in Mexico studying folk music and composing on a Guggenheim Fellowship. The entire work depicts a religious festival dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and it faithfully represents all of the contrasts and contradictions of these festivals. It is both serious and comical, festive and solemn, devout and pagan, boisterous and tender.

I. *Prelude and Aztec Dance*: The tumbling of the church bells at midnight officially announces the opening of the Fiesta, which has previously been unofficially announced by the setting off of fireworks, the drinking of tequila, and the migration of thousands of Mexicans and Indians to the center of activity, the high court surrounding the cathedral. The main part of the movement represents a midday parade (announced by the trumpets) featuring a group of brilliantly plumed and masked Aztec dancers who dance with increasing frenzy to a dramatic climax. After a brave effort at gaiety, the celebrators settle down to a restless night until the early quiet of the Mexican morning is once more shattered by the church bells and fireworks.

II. *Mass*: The tolling of the bells now is a reminder that the Fiesta is, after all, a religious celebration. The rich and poor slowly gather within the great stone walls of the old cathedral to reverently pay homage to their Virgin. The principal theme is chant-like and it is set amid coloristic sections representing the tolling of church bells.

III. *Carnival*: Mexico is at its best on the days of the Fiesta, days on which passion governs the love, hatred and joys of the "Mestizo" and the "Indio". There is entertainment and excitement for both young and old, the itinerant circus, the market, the bullfight, the town band, and always the "Cantinas" with the ever-present band of "Mariachis".

### Coming Band Events

February 23	Symphonic Winds	Braden Auditorium	8:00 pm
March 4	Symphonic Band	Braden Auditorium	8:00 pm
April 4	Junior High School Concert Band Festival	Braden Auditorium	Morning & Afternoon
April 11	High School Concert Band Festival	Braden Auditorium	Afternoon & Evening
April 12	Wind Symphony Special guests David Maslanka (for the performance of his new symphony) and conductor/educator, Gary Green (guest conductor)	Ballroom	8:00 pm
April 15	Symphonic Band & University Band	Braden Auditorium	8:00 pm
April 26	Symphonic Winds	Braden Auditorium	8:00 pm

### Wind & Percussion Faculty

Max Schoenfeld, *Flute* Tim Hurtz, *Oboe* Aris Chavez, *Clarinet*  
Michael Dicker, *Bassoon* Jim Boitos, *Saxophone*  
Joe Neisler, *Horn* Amy Gilreath, *Trumpet* Charles Stokes, *Trombone*  
Ed Livingston, *Euphonium & Tuba* David Collier, *Percussion*

### Bands at Illinois State University

The *Wind Symphony* and the *Symphonic Winds* are highly selective ensembles of the finest instrumentalists at Illinois State University, performing outstanding and representative works in all styles from "classical" to "avant-garde." In addition to campus programs, the Wind Symphony and the Symphonic Winds tour annually. In the Spring of 1990, the Wind Symphony performed at the prestigious American Bandmasters Association Convention at the University of Illinois. Membership is by audition only and is open to all Illinois State University students.

The *Symphonic Band* is comprised of approximately 75 outstanding wind and percussion players from across campus. They perform quality band literature and concertize both on and off campus. This organization rehearses three hours per week. Membership is by audition only and is open to all Illinois State University students.

The *University Band* is comprised primarily of non-music majors and music majors gaining experience on a secondary instrument. This ensemble provides students the opportunity to continue playing while devoting the major portion of their time to other academic disciplines. It rehearses once a week and presents one concert at the end of each term on campus. Membership is open to all Illinois State University students.

*Chamber Winds* are selected ensembles comprising numerous quartets and quintets which are coached by members of the applied music faculty at ISU. The collective ensembles perform diverse repertoire and concertize both on and off campus. Membership is by audition only and is open to all Illinois State University students.

The *Illinois State University Marching Band*, "The Big Red Marching Machine," has a long and proud history of performances at major events at home and across the Midwest. Each year, in addition to performing at all home football games and for over 4,000 high school band members at the State of Illinois Invitational High School Marching Band Championship, the "Pride of Illinois" travels to an away ISU football game and a televised Chicago Bears game. The "Big Red" is open to all Illinois State University students and is comprised of winds, percussion, color guard, twirlers and danceline.

The *Pep Band*, "The Red Tops," provide spirit and enthusiasm at all ISU men's and women's home basketball games, as well as various other events on campus and in the community. Members from this band accompany the ISU basketball teams to the NCAA and NIT tournaments. Membership is by audition only, and is open to all students who participate in another band during the academic year.

*Flute*

Kim Barnett  
Valerie Crull  
Amy Johnson  
Julie Long  
Kim McCoul  
Scot Schickel

*Oboe*

April Faires  
Karla Ilten

*E-flat Clarinet*

Lisa Staples

*Clarinet*

Jeff Allison  
Matt Dethrow  
Mandy Fey  
Chris Hoover  
Lisa Staples  
Lori Zlotow

*Low Clarinet*

Karl Kalis  
Larry VanMersbergen

*Bassoon*

Robin Roessle  
Lynnette Sawyer

*Contrabassoon*

Chris Harrison

*Alto Saxophone*

Sarah Walczyk  
Amy Gates

*Tenor Saxophone*

David King

*Baritone Saxophone*

Keith Carlson

*Personnel*

*Horn*

Kent Baker  
Rachel Bettin  
Marc Cash  
Sandi Turski

*Trumpet*

Brenda Gritton  
Laura Enos (Colgrass only)  
Gerry Magallan  
Tim McCoul  
Jerry Mohlman  
Mitch Young

*Trombone*

John Eustace  
Kathy Hoff  
Eric Chandler (Colgrass only)  
Ken Haylock (Colgrass only)  
Paul Hefner (Colgrass only)

*Bass Trombone*

Matt Kastor

*Euphonium*

Matt Chapman

*Tuba*

Ed Risinger  
Doug Mattsey

*String Bass*

Brian Dollinger (Colgrass only)  
Dave Huber

*Percussion*

Sean Batson  
Mike Coers  
Mike Hibberd  
Mike Levine  
Craig Sayles

The members of the Wind Symphony are listed in alphabetical order to emphasize their flexibility in playing both primary and secondary parts.