The Eastman Wind Ensemble

Zachary Griffin
conductor

Wednesday, October 21, 2026
Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre
7:30 PM



Eastman School of Music

~ PROGRAM ~
The Eastman Wind Ensemble
Zachary Griffin, *conductor*

Street Song (1996) — **Michael Tilson Thomas** (1944-2026), 18'

Sinfonietta (1968) — **John Williams** (b. 1932), 17'
Lento Assai-Animato
Lento
Molto Allegro

~ INTERMISSION ~

American Guernica (1982) — **Adolphus Hailstork** (b. 1941), 8'

A Nostalgic Jazz Odyssey (1972) — **John Williams** (b. 1932), 15'

Acknowledgements

As I approach the end of my time at Eastman and the end of my academic career, I cannot be anything but thankful for the many people who have supported me. Thank you first to my parents, brothers, grandmothers, aunts and uncles. Thank you also to the many people I have befriended at Eastman (there is not enough space here to list them all) but especially to my studio mates Dr. Luke Camarillo, Dr. Mason St. Pierre, and Luca Peveroni, who has been there since day one. Thank you to the fellow graduate conductors I have worked with from 2023 to now. The value you add to Eastman through the many, many things you do (both seen and unseen) as well as the constant and steady friendship, comradery, and inspiration you share has been a highlight of my degrees and is what makes Eastman so great.

I would be remiss without thanking the many, many, many teachers who have walked with me on my path at different times throughout my life. Thank you to my first piano teacher Abby Eller, who taught me a love of music making, Judy Dodd, Arie Motschmann, Michael Huebner, Doug Lindsey, Brandon Craswell, Phil Smith, Jaclyn Hartenberger, and Cynthia Johnston Turner. But, thank you most of all to Mark Scatterday, who has been so much more to me than just a mentor and teacher.

~ PERSONNEL ~

The Eastman Wind Ensemble

Flute
Manami Chiba
Yiqian Fu
Jessica O'Brien
Genevieve Skatoff
Jenny Zhang

Oboe
Nathan Clarke
Sihan Qi
Torie Ramey
Gus Smith
Samuel Suchta

Clarinet
Anju Aoto
Kevin Jin
Yerim Park
Veronica Pavlovic
Kelsey Waters

Bassoon
Gabriel Cha
Dan McCarty
Jialin Lee
Alison Pollock

Saxophone
Joseph Fondren
Jonah Kulick
Cole Moorhead
Gaurav Sarangi
Benjamin Small

Horn
Jackson Cadengo
Lilah Costanzo
Nick Culver
Emily Groenenboom
Nick Grey
Annie Rizzo
Diego Solis
Graham Ulery
Miles Woods

Trumpet
Caleb Drayer
Wesley Duncan
Clara Jury
Nati Noriega
Samantha Obara
Cole Pringle
Callie Siamof
Levi Springer

Trombone
Darren Brady
Corey Bohler
Ethan Burkett
Corey Hamm
David McKenzie
LaReena Mosbrucker
John Robinson

Euphonium
Zachary Berz
Andrew Herrick

Tuba
Jonathan Miller
Ivan Mofardin
Jack Whalen

Double Bass
Gregory Galand
Lindsey Joslin
Corbin Winters

Timpani
Myah Tokajer

Percussion
Ryan Cozzolino
Jin Dai
Miranda Hughes
Liz Morad
Grace Qian
Guanrou Yang

Harp
Daniel Reeder

Keyboard
Scarlett Zheng

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.

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MELIORA

University of Rochester
Eastman School of Music

~ PROGRAM NOTES ~

Street Song

Street Song is in three continuous parts—an interweaving of three "songs." The first song opens with a jagged downward scale suspending in the air a sweetly dissonant harmony that very slowly resolves. This moment of resolution is followed by responses of various kinds. The harmonies move between the world of the Middle Ages and the present, between East and West, and always, of course, from the perspective of twentieth- century America. Overall, the movement is about starting and stopping, the moments of suspension always leading somewhere else.
The second 'song' is introduced by a singsong horn solo. It is followed by a simple trumpet duet, which was first written around 1972. It is folk-like in character and also cadences with suspended moments of slowly resolving dissonance.

The third song is really more of a dance. It begins when the trombone slides a step higher, bringing the work into the key of F--sharp and into a jazzier swing. The harmonies here are the stacked- up moments of suspension from the first two parts of the piece. By now, I hope these "dissonant" sounds actually begin to sound "consonant." There is a resolution, but it is the world of a musician who, after many after--hour gigs, greets the dawn. Finally, the three songs are brought together, and the work moves toward a quiet close.

Street Song is dedicated to my father Ted, who was the central musical influence on my life.

- **Michael Tilson Thomas**

Sinfonietta

Nearly all of John Williams's concert works are written for someone–either in the form of fanfares or concerti, or works like his 1965 *Essay for Strings*, written for his friend and fellow composer–pianist turned conductor Andre Previn. The *Sinfonietta* is unique in this already unique catalogue in that it is not written for any one person, and instead was a general commission from Donald Hunsberger via MCA Music Publishing (who, when approaching Williams about a work said that 'a work for winds would get performed more than a work for orchestra'). *Sinfonietta* was written in between commercial projects which Williams scholars would retrospectively call "breakthrough" works in Williams's output–*Heidi* (for which he won his first Emmy) and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Given the open-ended nature of the commission and Williams's own attitude towards his concert scores (he in at least one interview says he writes concert music for "...my own instruction and self edification"), the work is in some ways a study in orchestration, pacing, and process, but in reality is a monumental example of color, narrative, and form.

Initial encounters with John Williams's *Sinfonietta* often produce mixed reactions. The work is firmly post tonal and has at times an air of darkness and mystery. One review of the 1972 Deutsche

Grammophon Eastman Wind Ensemble recording of the *Sinfonietta* called it "austere", "eminently serious", and "occasionally banal". Modern listeners familiar only with Williams's now canonical Neo-Romantic film scores often ask, "Is it really *that* John Williams?".

Despite the daunting nature of the work, which is a technical feat for performers and an aural challenge for listeners, beneath the surface is a work which is anything but austere, banal, or serious. *Sinfonietta* does not represent a dry orchestration etude, or a film composer "trying his hand" at more serious composition, but rather should be viewed as an aesthetic point in time. In the work, Williams "riffing" on the things in his musical life–commercial and film music, jazz, Second Viennese traditions, and maximal Romantic era expressionism. Instead of reproducing any one style in a pastiche, Williams synthesizes and plays with certain markers of all of these styles and articulates them in a piece that is fresh, holistic, and unique. In that way, the *Sinfonietta* is a modernist rendering for wind ensemble which is as fresh as it is today as it was in 1968. - **Zachary Griffin**

American Guernica

American Guernica began as a technical challenge to Adolphus Hailstork to combine gospel-flavored material with contemporary compositional techniques. That led to the idea of an interrupted church service, which called to mind the bombing (in which four girls were killed and another child was blinded) in Birmingham, Alabama, September 15, 1963. What would that moment (and music reflecting that moment) contain? Sunday School music, explosion sounds, chaos, anguish, screaming. Eventually, there would be a funeral.

This work is in two major contrasting sections. (Allegro and Solemn) with an extensive coda. Each section is interrupted by a piano solo. This new second edition has been newly engraved with revisions made by editor Brent Levine in collaboration with Adolphus Hailstork.

A Nostalgic Jazz Odyssey

John Williams's *A Nostalgic Jazz Odyssey* was written for Donald Hunsberger and the Eastman Wind Ensemble for the 50th Anniversary of the Eastman School of Music and in appreciation for Hunsberger's 1971 recording of Williams's *Sinfonietta*. The work was originally conceived as a concerto grosso with a big band and wind ensemble. After many, many months of back and forth and negotiations between Hunsberger and Williams, the piece became neither a concerto grosso, or big band chart, or even a wind ensemble piece. Instead, the big band is integrated and becomes the wind ensemble, and the wind ensemble a big band.

Hunsberger proposed that Williams write a jazz-infused work. Williams said, "Although at first I resisted the idea of doing a jazz-oriented work, the more I thought about this the more attractive the

idea seemed to me, at least from the point of view of my own personal nostalgia. Jazz may not be a thing of the past, but at least for me privately and personally it seems more an activity indulged in a few seasons or more back." While writing the piece, Williams says "...what I have written so far seems to be very nostalgic, simple, and lyrical, with occasional reminiscences piled vertically one on top of another, causing what might be described as a mirror-reflected "freak out". - **Zachary Griffin**