

Eastman Wind Orchestra

Mary K. Schneider
conductor

Zachary Griffin
assistant conductor

Monday, November 10, 2025
Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre
7:30 PM



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

~ PROGRAM ~

Eastman Wind Orchestra
Mary K. Schneider, conductor

An Outdoor Overture (1938/1948)

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)
10'

Zachary Griffin, *conductor*

Enigma (2024)

David Biedenbender
(b. 1984)
11'

Cenizas (2022)

Volcán
The Baptism of Momotombo
Stolen Things
Promesas
Coronach en Rio Ma

Gilda Lyons
(b. 1975)
15'

Masquerade, Op. 102 (1965)

Vincent Persichetti
(1915-1987)
12'

Zachary Griffin, *conductor*

~ PROGRAM NOTES ~

An Outdoor Overture

By his very nature Copland was completely dedicated to the cause of the creation and encouragement of an authentic American music—in every manifestation of the idea. So it came to pass that relatively early in his stylistic move to a more “accessible” musical style that explored American indigenous elements, he composed *An Outdoor Overture*. The title is a bit misleading, for it played nothing in the creation, nor is it reflective of anything specific in the music itself. In 1938 he was urged by the head of the music department of the High School of Music and Art in New York City to compose a work for the school’s orchestra to more or less kick off a campaign promulgating “American Music for American Youth.” Always a supporter of music education, Copland interrupted his scoring of “Billy the Kid” to write a concert overture for the school, one that was “optimistic” and which would appeal to the youth of the country. When it was finished, it was suggested that the work had an “open-air” quality to it, and so it was named.

In Copland’s best, straightforward, simple and angular style of the time, the overture begins with a stentorian musical motif that would see much use. It is soon transformed into a formidable, cantabile solo for trumpet over a kind of string vamp—a signature of the piece. A more vigorous, rhythmic section ensues in a kind of march style that eventually dissipates and yields to a quiet, lyrical solo in the clarinet, then oboe, and finally clarinet and piccolo. Another theme is introduced—also a march, but in a different mood from the other—to round off all of the important materials of the work. All of these ideas undergo some recapitulation, varied of course, before the composer brings them all back in combination to end in dramatic fashion. The overture was warmly received and has been in the standard repertoire since. The present version for winds was transcribed by the composer and is played just about everywhere in our country by orchestras and wind ensembles, alike.

- Wm. E. Runyan, ed. Griffin

Enigma

Enigma was originally written for brass choir and organ for the dedication of the Red Cedar Organ in the Michigan State University Alumni Chapel. This version was created for my friend Henry Dorn and the St. Olaf Band.

Enigma comes from a Greek word that means “to speak in riddles,” and in this piece, the riddle -- or theme -- is revealed gradually. The theme comes from the *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* by Johann Sebastian Bach, which is one of my favorite pieces of music, and, once the theme is revealed, it is repeated cyclically with 21 variations, just like in Bach’s original.

This piece is dedicated to my former teacher, José-Luis Maúrtua, a composer, theorist, conductor, and teacher with whom I studied at Central Michigan University. José-Luis was an extraordinary musician and teacher who was tirelessly dedicated to his students and to pushing them to do their best. I am forever grateful for the lessons I learned from him, and my music and my life are far better for having known him. Unfortunately, he was taken from this earth far too young -- at the age of 57 -- by pancreatic cancer in the spring of 2022. I miss him dearly, and this music is for him.

- David Biedenbender

Cenizas

In the winter of 2022-23, my mother and I returned to Nicaragua for the first time since the civil uprisings began in April 2018. We returned to a country of extraordinary natural and cultural beauty rocked by an increasingly dictatorial government and pandemic-fueled loss where profound courage and generosity are mingled with grief and pain, joy and hope, life and ash.

Cenizas for wind ensemble traces the images evoked by the essential connection between life and ash: the volcanoes central to the Nicaraguan landscape; the friars who set out to baptize the volcano Momotombo and who never returned (a practice documented by E. G. Squier, special chargé d’affaires of the United States to the Republics of Central America in 1853); the ashes left when rights and time and possessions and lives are stolen; of promises kept and of things left undone; the ashes of my father—whom we lost during the pandemic—that we will release in our home in Río Mar this winter with the blessing “Vuela ya. Descansa en paz.” (“Fly now. Rest in peace.”). In five movements, *Cenizas* invites the performers to offer up their own voices both through their instrumental performances and through shouts, stomps, unpitched percussive sounds and chant, in a meditation on loss, life, and grace.

- Gilda Lyons

Masquerade, Op. 102

In addition to his status as a cornerstone composer of twentieth century American neoclassicism, Vincent Persichetti's contributions extend to his teaching and writings about music. The crown jewel of this body of pedagogical work is his textbook *Twentieth Century Harmony*. The incipits composed by the author for this text to illustrate the various concepts and techniques became the seeds for *Masquerade*. Persichetti says:

I composed phrases of music to illustrate specific points, and years later these fragments began haunting me. I realized that certain examples had a thematic kernel in common. Like the hymns and responses, which demanded expansion and elaboration and became the *Liturgical Symphony* (*Symphony No. 7*), these examples from the harmony book evolved into a set of variations for fifty wind and percussion instruments. The work is a masquerade of my book: I called it *Masquerade for Band*.

Formally, *Masquerade* is a loose set of variations. A motto is presented at the beginning of the work by a solo cornet; however, much of the thematic material comes from various chapters of the text, with each variation loosely representing a different chapter. Presenting techniques in octatonicism, pentatonicism, polytonality, modality, parallelism, whole tone harmony, quartal harmony, pedal-points, and serialism, the work is a kaleidoscopic journey through twentieth century harmony that is bound together by Persichetti's ever present wit and musical creativity.

- **Zachary Griffin**

~ MEET THE ARTIST ~

Mary K. Schneider is Professor of Conducting and Director of Bands at Eastern Michigan University where she conducts the EMU Wind Symphony, teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in conducting and music education, and oversees the comprehensive university bands program. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Schneider held a teaching position at the University of Minnesota School of Music and had a successful career as a secondary school instrumental music educator in her native state of New Jersey.

Active nationally and internationally as a guest conductor and clinician, Dr. Schneider has served as an adjudicator for the Music For All National Concert Band Festival, the Thailand International Wind Symphony Competition, and the Illinois SuperState Concert Band Festival. She served as clinician and chief adjudicator for the Victorian School Music Festival in Melbourne, Australia, and featured instructor of the ABODA Conducting Symposium in Sydney, New South Wales. Schneider has been an invited guest conductor of the U.S. Air Force Band, Dallas Winds, Eastman Wind Ensemble, New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble, Sydney Conservatorium of Music Wind Symphony, Concordia Santa Fe, Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Festival Band, and Wheaton Municipal Band, and is a frequent guest conductor of regional and All-State honor bands throughout the United States.

An elected member of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association, Dr. Schneider continues to serve in various leadership roles within her profession. She recently made history as the first woman ever elected as President of the College Band Directors National Association, a role she will assume in 2027. A strong advocate for new wind music, she has participated in commissioning and/or premiering over three dozen works for wind band, and her ensembles frequently collaborate with a diverse group of composers. In addition to published articles in the GIA book series, *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*, she has presented on the topic of wind band repertoire at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago and is a frequent invited lecturer on the celebrated American composer, John Corigliano, and his Symphony No. 3 for large wind ensemble, "Circus Maximus."

Schneider holds a doctoral degree in conducting from the University of Texas at Austin, and degrees in horn performance and music education from the New England Conservatory of Music, and the University of Connecticut, having graduated with Distinction in Performance honors from the former.

~ **PERSONNEL** ~
Eastman Wind Orchestra

Flute

Haley Gruwell
Jessica O'Brien
Genevieve Skatoff
Keegan Zicko

Oboe

Katie Roberts
Linda Xu

Clarinet

Audrey Bray
Barak Dosunmu
Yushu Ma
Ethan Montgomery
Yerim Park

Bassoon

Claire Heitke
Avery Mbuka
Faith Weigand

Saxophone

Zachary Jantzi
Timothy Lam
Liam McQuade
Karolina Shrader

Horn

Sarah Chou
Seth Corlew
Maggie Eidel
Alex Gagne
Allen Reddick
Aliza Small

Trumpet

Wesley Duncan
Clara Jury
Logan Manildi
Colin Mroczko
Devin Reade
Ian Springer

Trombone

Ethan Burkett
Corey Hamm
Jonas Ruelas
Aidan Tardif

Euphonium

Zachary Berz
Adam Yastion

Tuba

Henry Foster
Jonathan Miller

Double Bass

Rowan Toth-Cseplo

Timpani

Caleb McCree

Percussion

Jin Dai
Eli Kim
Makena Mailer
Chance Park
Seven Swinford

Keyboard

Derek Hamersly

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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