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NEW YORK PROFILES

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LEON BOTSTEIN, *CONDUCTOR*

JULIA PERRY (1924-1979)
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Tonight's concert will run approximately 1 hour with no intermission.

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FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

NEW YORK PROFILES *By Leon Botstein*

The American Symphony Orchestra is honored and pleased once again to be part of the open-air concert programs in Bryant Park, right next to the glorious New York Public Library.

Today's concert addresses a habit to which we have become accustomed: assigning unique national characteristics to facets of our culture. It seems entirely understandable that people want to know what makes some music "American." The assertion of unique national characteristics to any music may be unpersuasive, misleading, unnecessary and even undesirable, but the habit is hard to break. So it is appropriate to ask: is there a distinctly American musical tradition in any of the many forms music takes, from the vernacular or so-called folk music that has existed over generations through oral transmission without being notated or written down, to music that participates in the largely European tradition of written musical notation—and its most amazing consequence, the blossoming of instrumental and vocal musician—that has generated and sustained the variety of forms and sounds we have come to term loosely as "classical" music?

Is there a truly American tradition of classical music and if so, what makes that music uniquely American? There are many possible answers. The European migration to North America brought with it European traditions of music-making, just as the European conquest in Mexico and South America brought with them traditions of sacred and secular music from Spain. In New England, the initial musical heritage came through England, but for most of the 19th century the prevailing body of immigrants came from German-speaking Europe and they brought German cultural traditions with them. Americans were also influenced by African musical traditions that came with slavery and developed in novel ways among the descendants of enslaved people. And then there were the musical traditions of the indigenous populations that lived on the continent before the arrival of Europeans. Additionally, various kinds of music evolved in the encounter between African and the Caribbean practices that found their way to the United States.

It is not surprising, therefore, that by the mid-19th century, a vibrant community of composers born and raised on the American side of the Atlantic came into being. These mid-19th century American composers sought to create a unique synthesis between European traditions and local American musical materials. One thinks of George Bristow (1825-1898) and William Henry Fry (1813-1864). They were succeeded by a later 19th-century generation of composers who studied abroad, primarily in German-speaking Europe. Among the most famous of these were John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), Edward MacDowell (1860-1908), Horatio Parker (1863-1919) and George Chadwick (1854-1931). Until the outbreak of the first World War in Europe in 1914, one can reasonably say that American "classical" music was heavily influenced by the musical practices of German-speaking Europe.

The waves of immigration from eastern Europe would challenge this Germano-centric aesthetic, though the Russian, Polish, and Czech traditions of classical music were themselves profoundly influenced by the dominance of the German. This is apparent in the founding of the first grand musical institutions in this country. When Carnegie Hall was opened in 1891 there was a debate about which world-famous composer should be invited to open New York's magnificent new concert hall. The choice fell on Tchaikovsky, a Russian and arguably the "official" composer of Tsar Alexander III. But a French composer, himself allied with German traditions, Camille Saint-Saëns, was also considered. And we should not forget that the first attempt at a national conservatory of music in America based in New York was undertaken with the condition that the leading Czech composer of the time, Antonín Dvořák, would become its director. When he arrived in the 1890s, he made the startling and influential prediction that what would distinguish American music from European music in the "classical" tradition would be the strength it drew from uniquely American sources, the music of the continent's indigenous population and the black descendants of enslaved people.

After World War I American composers turned away from Germany and chose to continue their studies in France, absorbing the flourishing French and Franco-Russian musical styles that dominated during the 1920s. Aaron Copland went to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger but his initial training was under Rubin Goldmark (nephew of the Viennese composer Karl Goldmark) whose ambition was to create "American" music rooted in central European traditions, just as George Bristow had done several generations before. The influence of the German musical heritage never totally vanished. Two of the composers on today's program, Norman Dello Joio

and Ulysses Kay, studied with the prominent 20th-century protagonist of the German tradition, Paul Hindemith, who emigrated from Nazi Germany and taught at Tanglewood and Yale.

What can be said to define, for composers and listeners, the distinctly American aspect of classical music written by Americans should not be limited to the varied regional, local and national musical practices that found their way into musical compositions. Beyond the use of folk tunes and melodies one has to consider that what has made music sound American is also the response in sound to the landscape of a country with a spatial and temporal expanse distinct from Europe, the sheer size of our cities and plains, mountains, rivers and lakes, and ultimately, the two great oceans on either side of the continent. Beyond the landscape, the distinct aspects of American language, its dialects and regional variations, many profoundly influenced by the languages that came with immigration also played their part. One must add as well the spiritual and ideological conceits that developed during the 19th century particularly after the Civil War, about what made America different. Most important among these conceits is perhaps the ideal of democracy, the diversity of its people and a concept of citizenship defined by law that is not tied to a specific ethnicity or place of birth. These factors have contributed to the perception of a distinctly American sensibility in music written by Americans in the so-called classical tradition.

All the works on today's program mirror these elements. Julia Perry studied with the Italian Luigi Dallapiccola and the great French pedagogue, Nadia Boulanger. Her music is a synthesis of her distinct heritage as a black woman in America and her encounter with European models. Ulysses Kay studied with Hindemith as did Norman Dello Joio. Crucial to Dello Loio's aesthetic was his heritage as a descendent of Italian musicians who had come to the United States. His father served as the director of music of St. Patrick's Cathedral here in New York City for 15 years. Henry Cowell trained at home in America but had a decisive encounter with European audiences as a young radical modernist and experimentalist. Among all the composers on today's program, Cowell was the most daring, iconoclastic, eclectic and, as Byron Adams, in his superb notes to this concert points out, profoundly steeped in uniquely American musical sources (as well as many from around the world)—including what we usually term folk music.

The music on today's program also reflects the influence of the national landscape. Norman Dello Joio's work was inspired by distinct places in New York City, from the Cloisters to Little Italy. And the most famous piece on today's program, Copland's Appalachian Spring *Suite*, is a direct response to a rural and regional landscape and includes dance rhythms and folk tunes including the famous "Simple Gifts." Henry Cowell's work goes further back to the legacy of the music that derived from England in the 18th century and was transplanted by the English settlement in New England in a special way that did not exist in England but became part of the American Protestant religious experience. Ulysses Kay's work is drawn from music written for a film about the challenges facing a young black man struggling against poverty and discrimination in the environment of Harlem.

Whether the inspiration of the composers on today's program led to compositions that seem abstract and without a narrative such as Julia Perry's, or are compositions constructed along a story line or in response to the visual dimensions of the environment, all the music from today's program speaks to that elusive spiritual aspect of what might make a piece of music sound distinctly American. The key spiritual commitment and conviction evident in all of these works and indeed the vocation of all of these composers is a commitment to democracy, freedom, and equality, and to an America that is not defined by one group, one religion, one cultural tradition, or one ideology.

In this sense, as Byron Adams notes, Henry Cowell was perhaps most determinedly committed to the freedom of the individual in the sense of Emerson's notion of self-reliance. Aaron Copland was profoundly an advocate of the link between democracy and social justice that was forged by Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. The celebration of pluralism was key to Norman Dello Joio's career as a composer. And Julia Perry and Ulysses Kay were resolute in their pride in the contributions to what defines American music made by the victims of involuntary immigration in slavery and by their descendants.

Today's program reminds us that music can play a unique function in promoting a politics of freedom, democracy, and empathy without demonizing groups, diversity or the continuous stream of immigration that has made America distinctive and great. A great Czech scholar of music, who died recently in his nineties, Jaroslav Mihule, arranged for the following inscription to be carved into his tombstone: "For every community music is a vital necessity and at the same time an island of freedom." The composers and their music on today's program make that point with an uncommon and perhaps uniquely American eloquence.

LEON BOTSTEIN, CONDUCTOR

Photo by Ric Kallaher

Leon Botstein has been music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra since 1992. He is also music director of The Orchestra Now, an innovative training orchestra composed of top musicians from around the world. He is co-artistic director of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, which take place at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, where he has been president since 1975. He is also conductor laureate and principal guest conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003–11. In 2018 he assumed artistic directorship of the Grafenegg Academy in Austria.

Mr. Botstein is also active as a guest conductor and can be heard on numerous recordings with the London Symphony (including a GRAMMY-nominated recording of Popov's First Symphony), the London Philharmonic, NDR-Hamburg, and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Botstein has revived numerous neglected operas, creating once-in-a-lifetime experiences for concertgoers and global audiences. Including rare repertoire such as Schoenberg's massive *Gurre-Lieder* and the accompanying short-film, which documented the monumental undertaking, Strauss's first opera, *Guntram*, and the U.S. Premiere of Sergei Taneyev's final work, *At the Reading of a Psalm*. His recording of Paul Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the ASO was named one of the top recordings of 2015 by several publications, and his recent recording of Gershwin piano music with the Royal Philharmonic was hailed by *The Guardian* and called "something special...in a crowded field" by *Musicweb International*.

Mr. Botstein is the author of numerous articles and books, including *The Compleat Brahms* (Norton), *Jefferson's Children* (Doubleday), *Judentum und Modernität* (Bölau), and *Von Beethoven zu Berg* (Zsolnay). He is also the editor of The *Musical Quarterly*. For his contributions to music he has received the award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Harvard University's prestigious Centennial Award, as well as the Cross of Honor, First Class from the government of Austria. Other recent awards include the Bruckner Society's Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer's music and the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society. In 2011 he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

JULIA PERRY
A Short Piece for Small Orchestra
Born March 25, 1924 in Lexington, KY
Died April 24, 1979 in Akron, OH

Composed 1952
Premiered in 1952 in Turin, Italy
Conducted by Dean Dixon
Performance Time: Approximately 6 minutes

PERRY

In a 1986 article, the celebrated African-American composer Olly Wilson observed that many Black composers create "works which, on the face of it, are indistinguishable in general musical style from works written by their non-black contemporaries." He continues by noting that such "works exhibit the general musical characteristics of their time." Wilson contrasts these pieces with "compositions which contain musical qualities which are clearly derived from traditional African-American musical practices." For Julia Perry (1924-1979), both impulses existed side-by-side. On the one hand, she composed scores, such as her Stabat Mater for contralto and string orchestra (1951), in a neo-classical style that exemplified the aesthetic of the mid-20th century. On the other, Perry's Tenth Symphony (1972), subtitled *Soul Symphony*, includes what Helen Walker Hill calls "musical references to black idioms—jazz, rhythm and blues, gospel."

Perry's career trajectory was remarkable. Born in Lexington, Kentucky, and raised in Akron, Ohio, she was the daughter of a doctor who was also an amateur pianist. She studied both violin and voice as a child. She matriculated at Westminster Choir College, where she earned a Master of Music degree in 1948. In 1951, she attended the Tanglewood festival as a pupil of the distinguished Italian modernist composer Luigi Dallapiccola, with whom she studied in Florence. During her time in Italy, she competed her heartrending Stabat Mater. In 1952, Perry took composition lessons from Nadia Boulanger at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France; her Viola Sonata won the Prix Fontainebleau. During the 1950s and 60s, she was awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships; her music was published by several prestigious firms; and she repeatedly returned to the MacDowell Colony. *Homunculus C.F.* for percussion, piano, and harp (1961) is one of her most innovative scores. Perry referred to the piece as a "musical test-tube baby," but critic Bernard Jacobsen lauded it as evincing Perry's "sensitive ear and purposeful rhythmic sense." In 1965, the American Academy of Arts and Letters awarded her a grant to record *Homumculus C.F.* on the Composers Recordings, Incorporated, label (CRI), which had previously released a recording of her Stabat Mater.

By the mid-1960s, however, Perry's reputation went into eclipse, due in large part to her race and her gender. Repeated bouts of illness and financial insecurities led her to return to Akron in 1966, where she taught French and German in a local high school, languages that she knew in addition to her fluent Italian. In 1967, she was engaged for a single academic year as a professor at Florida A&M University, a historically Black college. Although she suffered a stroke in 1970 that paralyzed her right side, she trained herself to notate her scores with her left hand, and with incredible determination she completed her final works, including two orchestral symphonies, before her death in 1979. Soon after her passing, her achievements slipped into obscurity, only to be re-assessed and revived in the twenty-first century. Her music is now celebrated and programmed with increasing frequency.

Premiered in Turin, Italy, in 1952 under its original title *A Short Piece*, Perry later retitled this score *Study for Orchestra*. She subsequently revised this score twice. The second and final revision was performed in early May 1965 by William Steinberg conducting the New York Philharmonic. *A Short Piece* was the first work by an African American woman to be played by the Philharmonic. That concert series opened with Perry's score, continued with the symphonic poem drawn by Stravinsky from his opera *Song of the Nightingale*, and concluded with Van Cliburn playing Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto. Sadly, most of the reviews of *A Short Piece* were patronizing at best.

Perry's *A Short Piece* begins abruptly with three distinct motifs: a rapid upward scale scored for trumpet; a terse, angular theme announced by strings, woodwinds, and horn; and a powerful syncopated figure in the lower brass. Perry makes effective use of the xylophone throughout this first section. These three motifs return twice in a ritornello-like manner that neatly articulates the five-part formal design adapted from sonata rondo form. As in a sonata-rondo, the rest of the piece is derived from these contrasting ideas. This tense, vigorous music is transformed into a reflective, quiet passage for flute and strings. The three initial motifs are then expanded by the woodwind section and strings before Perry recalls the opening in its original guise and develops it through a kaleidoscopic succession of variations that once again employ brass and xylophone. This lively, contrapuntal section gives way to a poignant ruminative section also derived from the main themes, featuring flute, oboe, and solo violin. The opening material then returns in a dramatic fashion, and the piece ends with the themes compressed into a gripping coda.

COWELL

HENRY COWELL
Hymn and Fuguing Tune No. 10
Born March 11, 1897 in Menlo Park, California
Died December 10, 1965 in Woodstock, NY

Composed 1955
Premiered on September 10, 1955 in Santa Barbara, CA
Conducted by Leopold Stokowski
Performance time: Approximately 8 minutes

Henry Cowell (1897-1965) was a protean and idiosyncratic composer. The British musicologist Peter Dickinson declared that Cowell "was one of the pioneers of American music." Early in his career, Cowell explored the experimental timbral possibilities of the piano, most famously in *The Banshee* (1925), in which the performer plays exclusively on the piano's interior strings. The title of this evocative work—a "banshee" is an unquiet, keening spirit in Celtic mythology—reflects Cowell's own Celtic heritage. His father was a poet from County Clare in Ireland and his mother, who was born in the United States, was a labor activist and feminist. Cowell was born in Menlo Park, then a rural enclave in California, and he was initially self-taught in music. His anarchist parents sang folk songs with conviction, and trips to San Francisco exposed Henry to a variety of music, including traditional music of Indonesia, China, and Japan. By 1903, however, his home life deteriorated when his parents divorced. Three years later, the cataclysmic San Francisco earthquake further disrupted his childhood. His mother fled the chaos, taking Henry with her. After an unhappy and indigent period of wandering, both mother and son returned to Menlo Park in 1910; the teenaged Henry took on whatever labor he could find, including farming, janitorial work, and selling flower bulbs at the local train station.

In 1914, Cowell enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, studying composition with the head of the music department, musicologist and composer Charles Seeger. Two years later, Seeger suggested that Cowell move to New York and study at the Institute of Musical Art (later The Juilliard School). This was not successful—Cowell found the pedagogy there dry and uninspiring, so he soon left. By this time, however, Cowell had begun to employ such novel avant-garde techniques as atonality, polyrhythms, tone clusters, and chords made up of dissonant intervallic combinations. After a 15-month stint in the Army ambulance corps, Cowell became an evangelist for ultra-modern music. He made his formal American debut as pianist and composer at Carnegie Hall on February 4, 1924, becoming a notorious figure virtually overnight. In 1927, Cowell made the first of three literally riotous tours of Europe as a pianist, mostly playing his own music. During a concert at Leipzig's Gewandhaus, several enraged members of the audience came onstage and threatened Cowell with physical violence. During these tours, he impressed such leading modernist composers as Anton von Webern, Alban Berg, and Béla Bartók. Returning to New York, Cowell lectured for many years at the New School for Social Research and held a position at Columbia University. In 1927, he founded a quarterly publication entitled New Music, which championed the works of Charles Ives, Carl Ruggles, Ruth Crawford, Conlon Nancarrow, and Edgard Varèse. In 1941, Cowell married ethnomusicologist Sidney Hawkins Robertson, who proved to be an ideal collaborator. After her husband's death in 1965, she worked tirelessly to promote his legacy.
An eclectic composer, Cowell was fascinated with Indian ragas, Chinese court music, and Javanese gamelan. In the later stages of his career, however, Cowell increasingly turned to American folk music as well as the eighteenth-century colonial sacred music by hymnodists like Thomas Billings and Justin Morgan. As Dickenson pointed out, "Some of his most personal works belong to the American nationalist tradition." In an obituary tribute to Cowell, musicologist Gilbert Chase observed, "No American composer had a more thorough knowledge of—and love for—the folk and traditional music of the United States." Chase further noted, "His series of Hymns and Fuguing Tunes (some of which were incorporated into his symphonies) were the most important manifestations of his feeling for America's musical past."

From 1944 to 1964, Cowell composed 18 numbered Hymns and Fuguing Tunes for ensembles of various sizes and instrumental combinations. In contrast to his earlier, rebarbative avant-garde compositions, Cowell's Hymns and Fuguing Tunes are tuneful and tonal with piquant modal inflections. He based these compositions on the melodies that appear in such colonial American hymnbooks as James Lyon's *Urania or a Choice Collection of Psalm-Tunes, Anthems and Hymns*, published in 1761. While the form of an 18th-century Protestant hymn is clear to most listeners, a "fuguing tune" can be explained as a piece of sacred choral music in which harmonic sections alternate with passages of imitation. (A fuguing tune is not whatsoever like a fugue by J. S. Bach or George Frideric Handel; it is a form unique to the American colonies.) Cowell never slavishly followed the 18th-century format; he once described his hymns and fuguing tunes accurately as "something slow followed by something fast." For example, his Hymn and Fuguing No. 10, scored for oboe and strings, begins with a flowing theme that avoids the rigidity of early American hymnody. The fuguing tune that follows is freely contrapuntal with elegant voice-leading: it is far more sophisticated musically than any of the foursquare fuguing tunes by colonial singing-masters such William Billings or Supply Belcher.

ULYSSES KAY
"Joys and Fears" from the soundtrack to *The Quiet One*
Born January 7, 1917 in Tucson, Arizona
Died May 20, 1995 in Englewood, NJ

Composed 1948
Premiered on Novemer 19, 1948 in New York, NY
Conducted by Ulysses Kay
Performance Time: Approximately 10 minutes

African-American composer Ulysses Kay (1917-1995) was born in Tucson, Arizona, nephew of the famous jazz cornetist and band leader Joe "King" Oliver. Although he played with dance bands in high school, Kay's musical career eventually diverged sharply from that of his uncle. Kay's family was musical. As he remembered, "My life seemed always to have been involved in music … My mother played the piano and apparently was concerned about me and music." He further recalled, "I started piano about seven … when I was eleven or twelve, I inherited my brother's violin, and I was in class lessons." Starting as a liberal arts major at the University of Arizona, he soon switched to music and proved to be a gifted pupil. Kay was awarded a scholarship to the Eastman School of Music, where he earned a Master of Arts degree and studied composition with Howard Hanson and Bernard Rogers. It is clear from his later development as a composer that Kay was primarily influenced at Eastman by Rogers, who had studied with Nadia Boulanger and Frank Bridge, and who embraced the French neo-classic aesthetic in his own music. Among Rogers's other pupils were John La Montaine, William Bergsma, and David Diamond. Kay's experience at Eastman was formative: "I heard my first orchestral works performed publicly—an invaluable experience."

After finishing his matriculation at Eastman, Kay received a scholarship to study with Paul Hindemith at Tanglewood. Impressed by Kay's potential, Hindemith arranged for him to study with him at Yale University. Kay testified to Hindemith's rigor as a teacher who "insisted we write away from the piano … it was just fantastic because almost everybody comes up banging things on the piano." Shortly afterwards, Kay enlisted in the Navy and played in the Navy band, gaining invaluable experience by composing and arranging for that ensemble. After completing his military service, Kay studied with Otto Luening at Columbia University and lived in Rome from 1946 to 1953, having won both a Fulbright Scholarship and the prestigious American Prix de Rome.

Musical lexicographer and musicologist Nicholas Slonimsky aptly identified salient characteristics of Kay's style: "a melodic line full of intervallic tension; rich polyphony, almost 'Netherlandish' in its clarity in complexity; vibrant harmonic progressions strongly supported by an imaginatively outlined bass; sonorous instrumentation with dynamic rises and falls in artful alteration; an energetically pulsating rhythm." All of these traits are found in the "Joys and Fears" movement from the suite that Kay extracted from his score to the 1948 documentary film *The Quiet One*. Directed by Stanley Meyers on location in Harlem and using non-professional actors, *The Quiet One* deals with the obstacles faced by a young African-American man who is tempted to fall into a life of crime. As film critic Bosley Crowther wrote in *The New York Times*, the film "views with a clear and candid eye in searching about for the torment of a so-called delinquent child … it illustrates the problem with compassion but utter clarity." At the conclusion of his review, Crowther lauded the "truly poetic commentary, written by James Agee … and a fine musical score by Ulysses Kay." The film was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature at the twenty-first Academy Awards, but lost to *The Secret Land*.

Kay subsequently composed music for four films and eight television documentaries, including *FDR: From Third Term to Pearl Harbor* and a WNYC Film Unit Production entitled *New York: City of Magic*, both composed in 1958. In addition to these scores, Kay completed five operas, including *Jubilee* (1976) and *Frederick Douglas* (1964); orchestral works such as Fantasy Variations (1963) and *Harlem Children's Suite* (1973); choral music, such as *Inscription from Whitman* (1963) and *A Lincoln Letter* (1953) for unaccompanied chorus; three string quartets; and several art songs. All of these compositions evince neo-classical poise coupled with an individual and expressive style. Kay's careful attention to detail and orchestration are evident throughout his work.

In 1953, he was appointed as editorial advisor and later as music consultant for Broadcast Music, Incorporated, a post that he occupied until 1968, when he joined the faculty of Herbert H. Lehmann College, CUNY. Twenty years later, he retired at the rank of distinguished professor of music. Ulysses Kay garnered many honors over the course of his career, including six honorary doctorates, a Fulbright, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as election to both the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Institute of Arts and Letters.

COPLAND

AARON COPLAND
***Appalachian Spring* Suite**
Born November 14, 1900 in Brooklyn, NY
Died December 2, 1990 in Sleepy Hollow, NY

Composed in 1944
Premiered on October 4, 1945 in New York, NY
Conducted by Artur Rodziński
Performance Time: Approximately 23 minutes

Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, one of America's greatest patrons of the arts, commissioned scores from a disparate number of distinguished composers. Her list of sponsored composers included Rebecca Clarke, Bohuslav Martinů, Samuel Barber, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky, and Francis Poulenc; she particularly admired the British composer Frank Bridge, to whom she provided a handsome annuity. Coolidge did not limit her patronage to strictly musical projects, however: one of her most renowned artistic commissions was the ballet *Appalachian Spring*, which brought together the composer Aaron Copland (1900-1990) and the pioneering dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (1894-1991).

In 1942, Erick Hawkins, the principal male dancer in Graham's troupe, suggested to Coolidge that she sponsor a collaboration between Graham and Copland. At the time, Copland was living primarily in Los Angeles, where he wrote music for films such as *Of Mice and Men* (1939), *Our Town* (1940), and *The North Star* (1943). He had previously enjoyed major successes with two ballets that drew on American folksongs: *Billy the Kid* (1938), choreographed by Eugene Loring, and *Rodeo* (1942), for which he worked with choreographer Agnes de Mille. During this period, Copland had moved away from his earlier modernist style that incorporated elements of jazz, exemplified in his Piano Concerto (1926); atonality, as in his severely dissonant Piano Variations (1930); and Stravinskian rhythmic complexity, as heard in the Short Symphony (1933). Copland's leftward shift in his political affiliations during the 1930s led him to seek out a wider and more eclectic audience and to embrace a more readily accessible style. As he wrote in 1939, "I began to feel an increasing dissatisfaction with the relations of the music-loving public and the living composer … It seemed to me that we composers were in danger of working in a vacuum." Copland's more comprehensible idiom is evident in his film scores and ballets, but it reached its apex in *Lincoln Portrait* for narrator and orchestra (1942), in which he quoted a folk song, "On Springfield Mountain" as well as Stephen Foster's "Camptown Races."

Unlike the genial and witty Copland, Graham was an imperious figure who stamped all of the projects that she undertook with her own serious imprimatur. Her working relationship with Copland was no different from her other collaborations with leading composers such as William Schuman and Carlos Chávez. Gian Carlo Menotti, who wrote the score for Graham's ballet *Errand in the Maze* (1947), recalled Graham's idiosyncratic methods: "She worked against the music; it was a challenge, not something to interpret." As her friend and colleague Agnes de Mille noted, "She was … revolutionary in creative arts. She had an instinctive feeling for music."

It took eleven months for Graham and Copland to agree on a scenario for their ballet. Copland's working title was simply "Ballet for Martha." Shortly before the premiere, Graham decided on the title "Appalachian Spring," which she found in *The Bridge*, an epic cycle of poems by the American poet Hart Crane. Crane's poem was inspired by New York City's iconic Brooklyn Bridge. Graham's scenario concerned a newlywed couple—the Husbandman and The Bride—and the blessing of their new home by a Revivalist, his Followers, and a Pioneering Woman.

Copland delivered the score to Graham in January 1944. In response to the music, Graham modified the scenario and began to create the choreography. She engaged the sculptor Isamu Noguchi to create the decor; the costumes were designed by Edythe Gilfond. As stipulated by Coolidge, Copland originally scored the music for a chamber ensemble of 13 players to fit into the restricted space of the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress. Copland did not attend any of the rehearsals at Graham's request; the first time he saw *Appalachian Spring* was at its premiere on October 30, 1944. *Appalachian Spring* was an immediate success with audiences and critics alike. Writing in *The New York Times*, dance critic John Martin observed that "Aaron Copland has written a score of fresh and singing beauty." That same year, Copland's music for Appalachian Spring was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music.

In 1945, Copland expanded the original chamber orchestra version to full orchestra, fashioning a suite of eight continuous sections drawn from the complete ballet. The quiet, evocative opening is succeeded by a joyous allegro. The scenes that follow the opening begin with a tender dance for the newlyweds, moving through fiddling tunes for the Revivalist preacher and his Followers to an ardent dance for The Bride herself. After a brief recall of the opening music, the suite reaches a climax with a set of variations on the Shaker tune "Simple Gifts"—which Copland had modified to give the melody a culminating point—that can accurately be dubbed "American Baroque" due to the way in which the Shaker tune is extended and ornamented. The majestic final variation is succeeded by exalted hymnic music depicting the married couple in their home.

NORMAN DELLO JOIO
New York Profiles
Born January 24, 1913 in New York, NY
Died July 24, 2008 in New York, NY

Composed 1949
Premiered in 1949 in La Jolla, CA
Conducted by Dr. Nikolai Sokoloff
Performance time: Approximately 18 minutes

DELLO JOIO

Norman Dello Joio (1913-2008) summed up an important tenet of his work when he wrote, "Music that is 'good' is that music which in any form or style fulfills its purpose well and realizes to a high degree the potential of an original idea." His vision of what makes for "good" music is exemplified by his own impressive oeuvre, which includes operas, ballets, large choral works, symphonic music, chamber music, piano music, and songs. All of his works, whether written for amateurs or professionals, children or adults, reflect a high degree of compositional technique and are consistently compelling and inventive.

Dello Joio was born in New York City. His father Casimiro was an Italian immigrant who worked as an organist and as a repetiteur at the Metropolitan Opera. Dello Joio's godfather was Pietro Alessandro Yon, an organist and composer who served as director of music for New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral from 1928 until his death in 1943. The teenaged Dello Joio studied with Yon, and at the tender age fourteen was appointed as organist at Star of the Sea Catholic Church. Music for the Catholic liturgy—Gregorian chant and 16th-century polyphony—had a major role in shaping Dello Joio's style. He revered what he lauded as "the great choral literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance." Unsurprisingly for the son of an opera coach, Dello Joio's expert choral music, along with his well-crafted instrumental music, is rooted in the expressive potential of the human voice. Both his Catholic faith and the centrality of vocal music are reflected in Dello Joio's moving *Symphony: The Triumph of St. Joan* (1952), which Martha Graham choreographed in 1955 for her ballet *Seraphic Dialogue*s.

Dello Joio continued his musical training at the Institute for Musical Art (1936) and the Juilliard Graduate School (1939-41), where he studied with the Dutch-born American composer Bernard Wagenaar. In 1941, he became one of Paul Hindemith's pupils at the Berkshire Music Center and then at Yale University. Hindemith was an exacting pedagogue, but he reinforced Dello Joio's instinct to remain true to his lyrical style. Dello Joio later paid tribute to his teacher's sage advice: "Hindemith insisted that I be disciplined and I hated it at the time." Dello Joio further recalled that Hindemith told him, "You have this Italianate kind of heritage … Don't shy away, don't try to sound modern [merely] to sound modern."

After completing his studies, Dello Joio's compositional achievement and reputation continued to grow throughout the late 1940s and 50s. His acclaimed orchestral score, Variations, Chaconne and Finale (1947), won the New York Critics Circle Award for the best orchestral piece performed during that year's concert season. This eloquent orchestral work was followed by his magisterial Third Sonata for piano (1947), for which he reworked part of the Variations, Chaconne and Finale. Two years later he composed a highly successful ballet score for Martha Graham, *Diversion of Angels*. His eloquent *Meditations on Ecclesiastes* for string orchestra (1956) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music. Dello Joio composed a great deal of choral music, such as *To Saint Cecilia* for chorus and brass (1958) and *Prayers of Cardinal Newman* for chorus and organ (1960). In addition, he wrote several scores for television. In 1965, he won an Emmy Award for his music for the NBC documentary *The Louvre*; the composer subsequently excerpted several sections from this work for a concert band suite, which continues to be one of his most popular compositions.

In 1949, Dello Joio paid tribute to the city of his birth by composing a suite for full orchestra entitled *New York Profiles*. Following in the footsteps of Respighi's multi-movement tone poem *Fountains of Rome* (1916), Dello Joio musically describes four places in New York. The first movement, entitled "Prelude: The Cloisters," employs the style of Gregorian chant to evoke the eponymous museum devoted to European art of the medieval period that is located in upper Manhattan and governed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This contemplative music is followed by a cheeky scherzo called "Caprice: The Park" that conjures up children frolicking, singing, and playing games. By contrast, the third movement, "Chorale Fantasy: The Tomb," is a solemn and dark-hued funeral march. The subject of this movement is Grant's Tomb, which the composer makes clear through muted-trumpet quotations from "Taps" and, near the end, the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The last movement, given the title "Festal Dance: Little Italy," is a whirling tarantella during which the main themes of the preceding three movements are recalled and transformed during a scintillating coda.

Program notes by Byron Adams, *Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Musicology, University of California, Riverside*

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