



KANSAS CITY
SYMPHONY
Classical Series

Sunday, April 18, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts
Michael Stern, *conductor*

AARON COPLAND

Suite from *Appalachian Spring*
(1944 original orchestration)

JEROD IMPICHCHAAACHAAHA' TATE *Shakamaxon*

I. Remembrance
II. Moccasin Game

The 2020/21 Season is generously sponsored by

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JASON SEBER, *David T. Beals III Associate Conductor*

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Stirling Trent,
Acting Associate Concertmaster

Chiafei Lin,
Acting Assistant Concertmaster

Gregory Sandomirsky ‡,
Associate Concertmaster Emeritus

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Betty Chen

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Susan Goldenberg*

Tomoko Iguchi

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Kristin Velicer, *Acting Associate Principal*

Minhye Helena Choi,
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Nancy Beckmann

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Jessica Nance, *Acting Associate Principal*

Duke Lee, *Acting Assistant Principal*

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Kayla Burggraf

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Raymond Santos, *Principal*

Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair

Silvio Guitian, *Associate Principal*

John Klinghammer

E-FLAT CLARINET

Silvio Guitian

BASS CLARINET

John Klinghammer

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Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair

Thomas DeWitt, *Associate Principal*

Maxwell Pipinich

CONTRABASSOON

Thomas DeWitt

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Roger Oyster, *Principal*

Porter Wyatt Henderson,
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Adam Rainey

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Frank Byrne Chair

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* Non-Rotating Musician

^ New Member

‡ On Leave of Absence

AARON COPLAND**Suite from *Appalachian Spring* (1943-44)****24 minutes***Flute, clarinet, bassoon, piano, four violins, two violas, two cellos and bass*

Modern dance pioneer Martha Graham had been leading her own troupe for 15 years when Erick Hawkins, a member of the company and Graham's future husband, wrote to arts patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge to propose a commission for Graham to choreograph. Coolidge was so enamored of Graham's work that she suggested three commissions with music by Paul Hindemith, Darius Milhaud and Aaron Copland.

"The fate of pieces is really rather curious ... you can't always figure out in advance exactly what's going to happen to them."

Aaron Copland

Copland was no stranger to the world of dance, having won admiration for his scores for *Billy the Kid* (1938) and *Rodeo* (1942), so a new \$500 commission from Coolidge to write a ballet for Graham was unsurprising and indeed welcome. Copland and Graham had considered a collaboration as early as 1941 but settling on a subject took time. It was not unusual for Graham to provide composers with voluminous notes on her scenarios for the work, but this appears not to have caused Copland undue concern. They exchanged much correspondence, shaping the dramatic contours that allowed each to move forward with the project. The following description was offered at the premiere:

"Part and parcel of our lives is that moment of Pennsylvania spring when there was 'a garden eastward in Eden.' Spring was celebrated by a man and woman building a house with joy and love and prayer; by a revivalist and his followers in their shouts of exaltation; by a pioneering woman with her dreams of the Promised Land."

The Pennsylvania setting seemed comfortable to Graham as she had spent much of her childhood near Pittsburgh. Copland gave less thought to the setting and referred to the work in progress simply as his "Ballet for Martha". Indeed, he did not even know the title of the work until shortly before its premiere. He later described Graham's selection of the name *Appalachian Spring* as somewhat happenstance, recounting her response to his query about the title:

"She said, 'Appalachian Spring.' 'Oh,' I said, 'What a nice name. Where'd you get it?' She said, 'Well, it's the title of a poem by Hart Crane.' 'Oh,' I said. 'Does the poem have anything to do with the ballet?' She said, 'No, I just liked the title and I took it.' And over and over again nowadays, people come up to me after seeing the ballet on stage and say, 'Mr. Copland, when I see that ballet and when I hear your music, I can just see the Appalachians.' I've begun to see the Appalachians myself a little bit."

Despite early progress, the project was beset with delays, forcing postponement of the premiere for a year. Harold Spivacke, music division chief of the Library of Congress,



worked behind the scenes to keep everything moving forward. The premiere was eventually slated for October 30, 1944, Coolidge's 80th birthday, and would take place in the 511-seat Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress. The modest size of the orchestra pit dictated the small ensemble of 13 instruments. The set designed by Isamu Noguchi was spare and practical, focusing attention on the dance and easily transported for touring. The all-star cast included Graham, Erick Hawkins, Merce Cunningham and May O'Donnell. The premiere was highly successful and *Appalachian Spring* garnered rave reviews at subsequent performances in Boston and New York, heralding a brilliant future for both the choreography and the music.



**Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins dancing the premiere of
Appalachian Spring on October 30, 1944**

The Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, Music Division

While Copland's music has a folk quality, he noted that "the Shaker tune 'Tis the Gift to be Simple' is the only folk material actually quoted in the piece. I felt that 'Simple Gifts' was ideal for Martha's scenario and for the kind of austere movements associated with her choreography." Indeed, Copland's use of the melody spurred its popularity rather than the other way around. He later remarked, "My research evidently was not very thorough, since I did not realize that there have never been Shaker settlements in rural Pennsylvania!"

Copland described the structure of the work as follows:

1. Very slowly. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.
2. Fast. Sudden burst of unison strings in A-major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.
3. Moderate. Duo for the Bride and her Intended—scene of tenderness and passion.
4. Quite fast. The revivalist and his flock. Folksy feelings—suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.
5. Still faster. Solo dance of the Bride—presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.
6. Very slowly (as at first). Transition scenes reminiscent of the introduction.
7. Calm and flowing. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer-husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title “The Gift to Be Simple.” The melody borrowed and used almost literally is called “Simple Gifts.”
8. Moderate. Coda. The Bride takes her place among her neighbors. At the end the couple are left “quiet and strong in their new house.” Muted strings intone a hushed prayerlike chorale passage. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.

The music won the 1945 Pulitzer Prize in Music and came to a broader audience through Copland’s arrangement of the ballet as a suite for full orchestra, premiered by the New York Philharmonic in October 1945. The full orchestra suite is the version heard most frequently today but Copland observed, “In time, I have come to think that the original instrumentation has a clarity and is closer to my original conception than the more opulent orchestrated version.” He was also mindful about the allure of nostalgia and noted, “I have often admonished orchestras, professional and otherwise, not to get too sweet or too sentimental with it.” *ETW*

AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)

A multi-faceted musician, Aaron Copland was a composer, teacher, writer and conductor, earning the informal title “Dean of American Composers”. Showered with awards and accolades later in life, Copland’s early years were unremarkable by comparison. Born to immigrant parents in Brooklyn, New York, Copland and his four siblings helped out in the family shop, H.M. Copland’s, where they lived above the store. His mother arranged for music lessons and Copland began writing songs when he was 8 years old. He studied deeply and decided to become a composer at age 15. Formal lessons in harmony, music theory and composition followed with Rubin Goldmark.



He took full advantage of New York City's musical resources, regularly attending performances by the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Symphony.

Copland's life changed radically in 1921 when he went to Paris to study at the Fontainebleau School of Music. Initially he studied with composer Paul Vidal but quickly switched to Nadia Boulanger, a brilliant teacher with whom so many famous and incredibly varied musicians studied, including Leonard Bernstein, Quincy Jones, Astor Piazzolla, Philip Glass, Elliott Carter, Walter Piston and Darius Milhaud. He worked with Boulanger for three years amidst the heady milieu of 1920s Paris. Writers such as Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce and Gertrude Stein frequented the cafes as did artists Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall and Salvador Dali. The intellectual atmosphere was rarified, with Marcel Proust, Jean-Paul Sartre and André Gide holding forth, and the musical environment was similarly invigorating with musicians such as Igor Stravinsky, Erik Satie and Cole Porter contributing their talents to the lively scene. Copland avidly sought out the latest music and soaked up the many influences, including jazz.

An early advocate of Copland's music was longtime Boston Symphony Music Director Serge Koussevitzky. In 1924, he commissioned Copland to write an organ concerto featuring Boulanger as soloist. The resultant *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* helped launch his professional career.

Back in the U.S., Copland interacted with a wide range artists and musicians exploring the notion of "American" art and music. The young composer sought to incorporate this aesthetic in his music but with scant past examples for guidance, he sought inspiration in American popular music and jazz. His abstract tendencies led him away from this path but the genres made a lasting impact in his use of syncopation and vibrant rhythms.

Copland began teaching classes at The New School in New York City in the late 1920s and also wrote articles for the *New York Times* as well as several journals. The onslaught of the Great Depression and rising tides of populism prompted him to reevaluate his compositional style, seeking to broaden the accessibility of his music to larger audiences. This coincided with extensive travels in Europe, Africa, and Mexico. Notable successes of this new approach included *El Salón México* (1936) and the ballet *Billy the Kid* (1938). Hollywood beckoned and he completed film scores for "Of Mice and Men" and "Our Town" in 1939.

Copland's works from the 1940s are among his most famous and beloved today. They include ballet scores for *Rodeo* (1942) and *Appalachian Spring* (1944), *Lincoln Portrait* (1942), *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), his *Third Symphony* (1946) and his film score for "The Red Pony" (1949).

Following a 1949 trip to Europe, Copland became interested in the twelve-tone technique developed by Arnold Schoenberg and the even more radical serialism of Pierre Boulez, who was among the most avant-garde of post-war composers. He began applying the technique, filtered through his own sensibilities and voice. The result was still Coplandesque but rather gnarled and thorny. He traveled widely in the 1950s and eagerly explored the latest compositional trends, hoping to refresh his own style.

Copland was caught up in the anti-communist fervor of the 1950s due to his leftist views. Many members of the musical community came to his defense and the investigation did not seriously impede his career or damage his reputation even though it posed a significant danger.

Beginning in the 1960s, Copland began conducting more frequently, considered by several orchestral musicians to be more natural at it than most composers. He programmed works by many contemporary composers as well as his own compositions, advocating strongly for new music. Inspiration for composing waned so he set about recording his music, documenting his concept of works that had become staples of the orchestral repertoire.

Eventually, his health started to decline and Copland retreated to his home at Cortlandt Manor, New York. He died shortly after his 90th birthday, leaving a rich legacy of compositions, recordings, books and encouragement for new music, particularly American music. *ETW*



JEROD IMPICHCHAAACHAAHA' TATE

Shakamaxon (2008)

28 minutes

Shakamaxon is the historic Lenape Indian village that bordered the current city of Philadelphia. It was there, under an old elm tree, that Chief Tamanend was a signatory to the 1682 treaty between William Penn and the Lenape Indians. The old elm tree blew down in a storm in 1810, and is now the location of a park named Penn Treaty Park. Dedicated to Sharon Nolte and the descendants of Chief Tamanend, *Shakamaxon* is a remembrance of that old village and the tree under which the treaty was signed.

The first movement, "Remembrance," is the composer's imagining of sitting under the historic tree and feeling the presence of the village's original ancestors. Fragments of an old Lenape lullaby are heard throughout this movement. The second movement, "Moccasin Game," is very energetic and rhythmic and abstracts Lenape Skin Dance and Moccasin Game music. In both games, the beat is kept by hitting sticks together or on logs. This imitation is heard when the players use wooden dowels to strike their strings. Moccasin games can be very intense and have always fostered healthy competition within American Indian and Canadian Indian communities. This movement is meant to depict the natural banter of the game, and to honor the determination and perseverance of the Lenape people.

Shakamaxon was commissioned and debuted by the Philadelphia Classical Symphony in 2008.

JEROD IMPICHCHACHAHA' TATE
(b. 1968)

From an early age, I was saturated with music and theatre from both of my parents. My father, Charles, is currently a Tribal and Special District Judge in Oklahoma. He is also a classically trained pianist and vocalist who was heavily involved with opera and musical theatre performances throughout his college career. He continues vocal and theatrical performances to this day. As a child, I listened to his performances of Bach and Rachmaninoff, which had a decisive influence on my decision to be a pianist. My mother, Patricia, was a professor of dance and professional choreographer and spent her entire career in the theatre. Throughout my childhood, I spent evenings and weekends at my mother's rehearsals and performances for dance concerts, musicals and ballets. She was also the first person to commission music from me for her original ballet entitled *Winter Moons*. *Winter Moons* is based on American Indian stories from the Northern Plains and Rocky Mountains and provided my first opportunity to express myself as an American Indian through the fine arts.



While attending Northwestern University as a piano major, I studied with Donald Isaak, who was a truly unique teacher. Not only was he a master of piano technique and interpretation, he was an orchestral thinker in his playing. He profoundly influenced the way I listen to music. After graduating from Northwestern with a bachelor's degree, I went to the Cleveland Institute of Music to begin a master's degree, where I studied with Elizabeth Pastor. I added composition to my curriculum and began studies with Donald Erb. While completing my degree work, I began composing works based on traditional Chickasaw and other American Indian music.

In 1994, I was invited to participate in the first convention of American Indian composers, in Boulder, Colorado, where my double bass concerto entitled *Iyaaknasha'* was performed. At the convention, I met a Comanche composer from Oklahoma City named David Bad Eagle Yeagley. Dr. Yeagley expressed his vision of American Indian classical composers following the same path as other American Indian artists — abstracting traditional materials into contemporary expression. Dr. Yeagley's words compelled me to convey the same vision to audiences abroad, and to deliver the message to other American Indians that classical composition is an arena starving for their participation.

As my musical path has evolved, it has become equally important to help young American Indians find a voice in classical composition. In fact, I believe American Indians have a natural ability to represent themselves musically and intelligently in the classical fine arts. I am currently composer-in-residence for the Chickasaw Summer Arts Academy. I was also

composer-in-residence for the Grand Canyon Music Festival's Native American Composer Apprentice Program and the American Composers Forum/Joyce Award community outreach program. All three programs provide classical composition instruction for American Indian students and feature their works in public performances.

I find an unyielding source of strength, love and support from my family and my grandmother, Juanita Foshi' Keel Tate, who gave me the name Taloa' Ikbi (the Chickasaw description for a composer), encouraging me to continue the vision. With this vision burning in my heart, I am dedicated to spending my life looking for American Indian solutions in classical music composition.

Impichchaachaaha' means "high corncrib" and is my inherited traditional Chickasaw house name. A corncrib is a small hut used for the storage of corn and other vegetables. In traditional Chickasaw culture, the corncrib was built high off the ground on stilts to keep its contents safe from foraging animals.

Chickasaw house names are the equivalent of European surnames. In the 1800s, many Chickasaws used their European surnames and their Chickasaw house names interchangeably. I would have been formally addressed as either Jerod Tate or Jerod of Impichchaachaaha'.

Im + pichchaa + chaaha'
Im = implies "his"
pichchaa = corncrib or silo
chaaha = to be tall or high up
The entire translation means "his high corncrib."

An underlined vowel indicates a nasal pronunciation of that vowel. An apostrophe indicates a glottal stop (abrupt stop of the air). A double consonant (chch) sounds like only one, as in the word apple. A double vowel means a slight elongation of that vowel. "I" is pronounced like the word picnic. "A" is pronounced like the word father.

Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate

Learn more about Jerod at:

<https://www.arts.gov/stories/blog/2019/art-talk-composer-jerod-impichchaachaaha-tate>



Program notes written by AJ Harbison (AJH) and Eric T. Williams (ETW).