

FROM THE NEW WORLD TEACHER'S GUIDE

Louisville Orchestra Presents:

FROM THE NEW WORLD



Friday, September 27, 2019 11AM
Teddy Abrams, conductor

Francis Scott KEY arr. SMITH	<i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>	2'	
Witold LUTOSLAWSKI	Fanfare for Louisville	2'	Link to Listen
Jacques IBERT	Louisville Concerto	12'	Link to Listen
Robert WHITNEY	Concertino I. Allegro II. Adagio III. Tempo di menuetto IV. Allegro vivace	13'	Link to Listen
Antonin DVOŘÁK	Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 'From the New World' I. Adagio – Allegro molto II. Largo III. Scherzo: Molto vivace IV. Allegro con fuoco	40'	Link to Listen

FROM THE NEW WORLD

The Star-Spangled Banner (1814)

Francis Scott Key (1780 – 1843) was a lawyer and amateur poet who found himself in an unlikely location during the seminal battle of The War of 1812. While negotiating the release of a physician who was being held on a British Navy ship, Key witnessed the bombardment of Fort M'Henry in the Baltimore harbor. Coming shortly after the destruction of Washington, D.C., the British traveled to Baltimore in an attempt to completely defeat the U.S. forces. While on the warship in the harbor, Key jotted down his impressions of the night and captured his ultimate relief when he saw the U.S. flag still flying over the fort as the sun rose. He shaped his words into a 4 stanza poem and it was published.

The poem, originally titled "Defence of Fort M'Henry," was celebrated for the stirring sentiments and phrases including "... the land of the free, and the home of the brave" and Key's brother-in-law Joseph H. Nicholson discovered that the rhyme scheme of the poem fit exactly with the tune of a popular British song written by John Stafford Smith titled "To Anacreon in Heaven."

With the tune, the poem became a popular patriotic song although it is widely acknowledged to be very difficult to sing. Despite this, "The Star Spangled Banner" was declared the national anthem in 1931 by a vote of Congress and the resolution was signed by President Herbert Hoover.

The complete 4-stanza lyrics:

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:
Tis the star-spangled banner, O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country, should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,

Fanfare for Louisvile (1986)

Witold Lutoslawski

Born 25 January 1913 in Warsaw, Poland

Died 9 February 1994 in Warsaw

Polish pianist.

When he died 25 years ago, Witold Lutoslawski was the senior statesman among Poland's composers. Along with his younger contemporary [Krzysztof Penderecki](#) (b. 1933), he led a 20th-century Renaissance in Polish music, drawing international attention to new music behind the Iron Curtain during the most stifling years of Communist rule.

Lutoslawski earned his reputation as a formalist. He retained it as a master orchestrator and daring experimenter over the course of a long and fruitful life. His career took some surprising turns, not only because of political upheaval in Poland, but also because he was open-minded. He shifted directions several times, continually exploring [Mico rhythms](#) (used extensively in jazz and pop music, this is the rhythmic element that gives jazz the "groove" or "swing" element and gives the "gliding" sense to some music of Michael Jackson and Snoop Dogg, for example) and [microtunes](#), the coloristic potential of various instrumental combinations, and the very process of music-making are some of the areas he addressed in his music.

Some of his early works, such as the popular Concerto for Orchestra (1950-54), embraced Polish folk music and suggested the influence of Hungarian composer and folk-music collector Bela Bartok in the use of ethnic music into a personal musical language. His middle-period works employed [serialism](#), the sequential use of all twelve tones in a scale), chance operations, and a re-thinking of tonality, but never at the expense of formal clarity. Late in life, he developed a new process he called "chain technique," with overlapping strands of musical material.

He wrote the Fanfare we hear in 1986 as a commission for the Louisville Orchestra to open the 50th Anniversary season. The LO performed the world premiere on September 24, 1986 at the Whitney Hall of the Kentucky Center. The Fanfare bursts out of the gate with a full-brass big chord in no familiar harmony, for little more than a minute, Lutoslawski keeps us on the edge of our seats with riveting brass and punctuating percussion.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Witold Lutoslawski (1913-1994)

Witold Lutoslawski's career was strongly affected by Poland's turbulent history in the mid-20th century. His father was executed in Moscow in 1918 when he was just 5 years old. He graduated from Warsaw Conservatory in 1937, at which point he had been a performing pianist and violinist for five years. When the Nazis invaded Poland in September 1939, Lutoslawski joined the Polish army, working at a military radio station. He spent much of the war pursuing ways to subvert Nazi cultural restrictions. With his countryman Andrzej Panufnik (1914-1991), he organized underground performances of music banned by the Germans – including the Polish-horn Frédéric Chopin.

Post-war Poland was a Stalinist puppet state. Performing and visual artists carried on amid a different type of cultural repression. Like most composers, Lutoslawski survived by pursuing two simultaneous paths. One was music that satisfied the authorities, complying with the official policy of socialist realism. These works earned him his living. The second category he called "serious" – works that more truly reflected his soul.

After the Communist authorities denounced his First Symphony in 1949 as "formalist," Lutoslawski largely withdrew from public concert life. For the next few years, he made a conscious effort to incorporate the rhythms and inflections of Polish folk music into his compositions. When Stalin died in 1953, Poland gradually moved into an era known as the "thaw," and Lutoslawski completely rethought his musical philosophy and compositional technique. Abandoning the folkloric element, he developed a vocabulary that used twelve-tone chords (sequential use of all twelve tones in a musical scale – using all the white keys and all the black keys on a piano one time before repeating any tone) in an essentially tonal style. In the 1960s, he experimented with limited aleatory, that is intentional use of chance or indeterminacy. (The term comes from Latin *alea*, which means dice.) In musical application, what is left to chance may be in the music itself or may be left to the interpreting performer(s).

From 1961 on, most of Lutoslawski's compositions incorporated some aspect of controlled aleatory, which the composer defined as "the technique of applying a limited degree of chance in realizing the rhythmic aspect of music."

Lutoslawski first used aleatory in *Jeux vénitien*s ("Venetian Games," 1961), an orchestral work that combined chance elements with fully prescribed passages, in a series of round-the refrains separated by episodes. This gives the musicians lines of notes to play without defined rhythms or note lengths, thus creating a sort of controlled chaos. Late in life he favored two-movement structures in which the second movement developed and intensified material introduced in the first. Lutoslawski said that to write music was to go "fishing for souls," searching for listeners like him, for whom his music would resonate somewhere deep inside them. It's a strikingly spiritual way of describing his supposedly abstract art. Today, he is revered as one of European music's 20th-century masters.

Louisville Concerto (1953)

Jacques Ibert

Born 15 August 1890 in Paris

Died 5 February 1962 in Paris

The French composer Jacques Ibert (pronounced ee-BARE) was a contemporary of the vibrant group known as *Les Six* (Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Germaine Tailleferre, Georges Auric, and Francis Poulenc) who dominated French music between the First and Second World Wars. *Les Six* set a goal of writing "French" music by rejecting the overt romanticism, hyper-emotionality, and chromaticism of composers such as Richard Wagner and the formalism of Arnold Schoenberg. Probably closer in spirit to Milhaud than the others, Ibert charged much of his music with wit and irreverence. *Escalates* ("Ports of Call"), which once enjoyed enormous popularity at symphony concerts in the U.S., remains Ibert's best known orchestral score.

Although Ibert composed extensively for stage and film, his best music is for orchestra. He was fascinated by the colors and timbres of wind instruments, which figure prominently in his writing. Two of his three concertos are for wind instruments and the third, for cello, features a chamber orchestra consisting of six solo winds plus a string quintet.

He wrote *Louisville Concerto* in 1953 at the request of Robert Whitney, Music Director, and the Louisville Orchestra. The piece was commissioned as part of the "First Edition" new music and recording initiative of the orchestra. Clearly not a concerto in the traditional sense (a solo instrument in a musical dialogue with the orchestral forces), this work shows off the entire orchestra – but it is not exactly a concerto for orchestra either. Rather, it is a concert overture on steroids, grown to 11 minutes' duration. The structure is a cross between *tondo* and variation, with a lugubrious episode thrown in for good measure. Discernant listeners will recognize several motives* that recur – sometimes transformed –between the vigorous section and the contrasting episodes.

In its quirky dissonance, the music is sometimes reminiscent of Russian composer Igor Stravinsky in his neoclassical mode*. The atmosphere is almost always jazzy and upbeat, with an overwhelming sense of optimism and exuberance. There is a lot going on at once, with swooping upward gestures and a joyous cacophony. Ibert's mastery of the orchestra comes through loud and clear.

The score calls for woodwinds in pairs plus piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, triangle, field drum, tambourine, tam tam, glockenspiel, cymbals, bass drum, suspended cymbal, harp, and strings.

***Tondo** = a music structure consisting of a section of music that alternates a segment of music with other musical elements. A refrain and verse structure is a simple tondo, i.e. – A – B – A – B. The "Tondo with variations" will have a structure of A – B – A – C – A – D

****Tugals** = a music structure consisting of the presentation of a melody in one voice or instrument that is then presented in a second voice and overlaps the first (a simple figure is a "round" like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"). Complex figures can present many overlapping voices or instruments and are considered to be a highly developed compositional art.

motive = a short musical phrase

***neoclassical** = a 20th century style of music that reflects the structure, harmony, and melodic ideas that were originally popular in symphonic music in the 18th century (ex. music of V.A. Mozart, Joseph Haydn, and Beethoven) known as the "Classical Era."



ABOUT THE COMPOSER Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

Jacques Ibert was born in Paris on August 15, 1890. His mother, an accomplished pianist, provided violin, then piano lessons for Jacques, despite his father's wishes that his son follow in his business profession as a financier. From the beginning of his music study, Ibert was more interested in free improvisation on the piano than concentration on developing technique and repertory.

After graduating from secondary school in 1908, he delayed entering the Paris Conservatoire in order to help his father, whose family business had suffered financial setbacks. Finally, in 1911, Ibert entered the Paris Conservatoire for serious study as a musician. Among his classmates were Darius Milhaud and Arthur Honegger, with whom he would work later on several occasions as they became important and influential composers. His father, unhappy about his son's music studies, had withdrawn financial support, so Ibert earned his living by working as an accompanist, and by writing light piano pieces and popular songs under a pen name. His previous skill at improvisation became useful when he was employed as a pianist at silent movie theaters where he played music to fit the action on the screen. He later was to write over sixty film scores for sound movies including music for *Macbeth* (1948) for Orson Welles and a ballet for Gene Kelly in *Invasion to the Dance* (1952).

World War I interrupted Ibert's studies at the Conservatoire. He joined an army medical unit, and was decorated with the Croix de Guerre by the French government. After the war, he married Rosette Vebor, daughter of the painter Jean Vebor.

Shortly after returning to the Conservatoire, Ibert stood for the competition for the **Premier Grand Prix (Prix de Rome)**, the top composition prize. He won the prize the first time he entered, an unusual accomplishment. The prize allowed him to live up to three years in Rome at the Villa Medici with his expenses paid. During his stay at the Villa Medici, from February 1920 to May 1923 Ibert produced some of his best known works such as *La Balade de la Gaule de Reading* and *Escalates*.

Recognized as an able administrator, in 1937 Ibert was named Director of L'Académie de France à Rome, the first musician to hold this post. He was responsible for administrative duties and supervision of the Prix de Rome winners. He held the position until 1960, although World War II forced him to leave Rome for a few years. The war years were difficult for Ibert because the Nazi-supported Vichy government banned his music and he self-exiled to the south of France and then to Switzerland. He was readmitted to the music life of his country when General de Gaulle recalled him to Paris at the end of the war.

In 1955, Ibert was appointed General Administrator of the Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques nationaux (the combined management of Paris Opera and Opera Comique) where he served barely a year before retiring due to poor health. In 1956, he was elected to the Académie des Beaux Arts of the Institut de France, a society that honors the most accomplished artists in the country. He died February 5, 1962, and is buried at Passy Cemetery in Paris.

Concertino

Robert Whitney

Born in Newcastle-on-Tyne, England in 1904

Died 1986 in Louisville

Robert Whitney was an important figure in the Louisville Orchestra's history. When the orchestra was founded in 1937, he was its first conductor. Ten years later, he worked with Mayor Charles Farnsley to establish a program of commissioning, performing, and recording new works. This bold initiative made the Louisville Orchestra the first orchestra to form its own record label known as "First Edition." The goal of all First Edition recordings was to produce and distribute a recording of music that had never been recorded before. In the years the Louisville Orchestra created First Edition recordings, the music of many unknown composers was shared around the world for the first time. Whitney's musical and organizational efforts played a significant role in gaining the orchestra a proud international reputation.

As a composer himself, Robert Whitney wrote several works for orchestra however this is his only work commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra. It was recorded on the First Edition records and distributed to more than 20,000 subscribers to the record service worldwide.

Whitney wrote a note for the work's premiere in March 1961.

My 'Concertino', as its diminutive title would indicate, is made up of four brief movements, simple and direct in style and light-hearted in character. A Polyphonic texture prevails and a liberal use is made of solo instruments somewhat in the concertante style. The whole piece harks back in spirit to an earlier time.

The opening Allegro is in the ancient ritornello form, the Adagio is a florid instrumental song, the Tempo di Minuetto makes a bow to the rococo and a lively rondo brings things to a conclusion.

The Concertino's only purpose, I fear, is to gratify the author's pleasure in indulging in the sheer fun of manipulating musical materials that have caught his fancy. These materials, as a matter of fact, have been in his mind for a long time but have only recently taken shape in this Concertino. He will be deeply gratified if any others share his pleasure in this indulgence.

Whitney's writing is skilled, humorous, firmly tonal, and entertaining. He offers plenty of cameo solos for the orchestra's principal players (such as the peppy initiative duet for flute and bassoon that opens the finale). This appealing work deserves to be heard and is a part of the Louisville Orchestra's proud heritage.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER Robert Whitney (1904-1986)

Robert Sutton Whitney was born in England and moved with his parents to Chicago as an infant. Both his English-born mother, Edith Stewart and American father, Robert Paul, were musicians, so Robert and his sisters were trained early in music. Whitney's father was a touring tuba player with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show and worked as a theater musician. As young musicians, Robert and his sisters Grace and Noree played chamber music in a weekly live performance for a Chicago radio station. A keyboard player, Whitney studied with Max Oberdorfer and the renowned organist Leo Sowerby who was on the faculty of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. IL. Though never gaining his degree, Whitney studied theory, composition, and orchestration under Arthur Old Anderson, also on the conservatory faculty.

In 1937 Whitney was selected from a group of young conductors who were training with Frederick Stock and Serge Koussevitzky at the Chicago Civic Orchestra (where he made his conducting debut in 1932) to come to Louisville and lead the newly formed Louisville Civic Orchestra (later re-named The Louisville Orchestra). Whitney was 32 years old when awarded the new position and brought his wife to Louisville. He left behind his position as the District Supervisor of the Chicago Federal Music Project and his growing local prestige as a conductor, composer, performer, and radio announcer.

This new orchestra, born in the 8th year of the Great Depression and on the heels of the most disastrous flood in Louisville's history, was an optimistic and enthusiastic group. Playing with more spirit than skill, the first concerts were none-the-less appreciated by audiences of the day.

By the mid-1940s, Whitney had built an organization that had the support of a Board of Directors and had hired a full-time administrator. Concerts were performed in pairs and reached audiences of more than 1,500 for each set. The orchestra personnel had grown to sixty-three players and Whitney was engaging guest artists as august as violinist Fritz Kreisler. Music Education concerts were started in 1941 and a chamber ensemble component was added as the Louisville String Quartet was founded to service the public schools. Whitney was dedicated to music education throughout his career adding "High School Matinees" and performances in schools throughout Louisville every year until his retirement.

The Louisville Plan – Changing Everything

The late 1940s saw the inception and execution of "the Louisville plan." Upon the suggestion of University of Louisville professor Gerhard Herz, Whitney and Louisville Mayor Charles Farnsley decided to try to completely change the relationship between musician, soloist, composer, audience. Herz observed that celebrity soloists like violinist Jascha Heifetz spent 24 hours in Louisville and left with an enormous fee in his pocket after playing one or two concerts. But the creative contribution of the composers was virtually uncompensated. Why not secure new compositions from great composers for the same fees that were producing those wonderful but ephemeral performances?

Mayor Farnsley seized upon this as a way to make his beloved city an essential center for arts, attracting industry and professional people whom he believed would make the city a better place for all. The commissioning plan was announced as Farnsley teamed up with the City of Louisville to make the city a prosperous and happy place. In 1948, Whitney was in New York City to solicit composers and the 1948-49 Season was announced with new compositions by Paul Hindemith, Darius Milhaus, Gian Carlo Menotti, Turina or Min, and finally a new piano concerto by either Arnold Bax or William Walton.

Robert Whitney's leadership of the Commissioning Project eventually led to the founding of the first record and distribution projection owned by an orchestra as "First Edition Records" began in 1953 with support from the Rockefeller Foundation. During Whitney's time as music director and conductor of the Louisville Orchestra, over 100 new compositions were commissioned and premiered by the Louisville Orchestra. In addition, he recorded nearly 190 new compositions in their "First Edition" and presented to the world.

In 1956, Whitney was named Dean of the school of music at the University of Louisville, a position he held until 1971. For years, he also held the music director position at the Louisville Orchestra but in 1967, Robert Whitney passed the baton of the Louisville Orchestra to Jorge Mester. Whitney conducted his final concert on 19 Nov 1983 at the age of 79 on the occasion of the opening of the Whitney Concert Hall at the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts. He passed away on 22 Nov 1986.

Whitney was acclaimed for his dedication to contemporary music; the orchestra was awarded "...ASCAP" in addition he was honored with the American Composers Alliance Leaf, the Ditson Award, the first Giovanni Martin Award from Balararme College (1952), and was recognized with honorary degrees from the University of Louisville, the University of Kentucky, and Hanover College.

Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")

Antonin Dvořák

Born 8 September, 1841 in Mühlnhausen, Bohemia

Died 1 May, 1904 in Prague, Czechoslovakia

Misunderstood masterpiece

"In spite of the fact that I have moved about in the great world of music, I shall remain what I have always been -- a simple Czech musician."

These words of Dvořák are uncannily apt when considering the familiar, beloved and misunderstood "New World" Symphony. Sketched and written between December 1892 and May 1893 when Dvořák had come to New York to head the new American Conservatory, the piece was ridiculed at its premiere because of its alleged incorporation of Native American tunes. The critics did acknowledge the symphony's individuality and its unique amalgam of Czech and American elements. In fact, Dvořák never intended to directly appropriate American Negro or Native American folk song. Some years later, in 1900, he wrote to his former student Oscar Nedbal (declaring of the "New World" Symphony: "I have only composed in the spirit of such American national melodies."

Connections to indigenous American music

Since his first visit to the United States, Dvořák had been intensely curious about the native music of the American Indian tribes. Late in 1892, through a scholarship student at the American Conservatory, Dvořák became acquainted with America's Negro spirituals as well. The young man, Henry Thacker Burleigh, played tinpani and double bass in the Conservatory orchestra, and eventually became the orchestra's librarian and Dvořák's copyist. Their interaction bore rich fruit. Innumerable critics have commented on the strong echoes of "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" in the first movement of the "New World" Symphony and of "Deep River" later in the work. In fact, as Dvořák's biographer Gervase Hughes has pointed out:

Folk-tunes often tended (one could put it no higher than that) to be based on a pentatonic scale -- C, D, E, G, A (or the equivalent) -- indigenous to Bohemia, Somerset, the Hebrides, Ireland and the Appalachians; furthermore the old pentatonic songs of the deep south of North America sometimes held rhythmic inflexions similar to those of Slav folk music. Dvořák had the pleasant sagacity to capitalize on these coincidences.

Initially, Dvořák was stimulated in the awareness of this music tradition by an article written by Louisville-based musicologist Mildred Hill (see previous article for detail). The result is a symphony with extraordinary and spontaneous emotional appeal. If the "New World" has its formal lapses, it amply compensates for them with rhythmic punch and a wealth of memorable, singable melodies that have made this symphony his most popular work.

The most famous movement is, of course, the delicious Largo, which opens with a startling series of chromatic modulations from distant keys: E major to D-flat major. The immortal "Going Home" melody is said to have been inspired by Dvořák's consideration of Longfellow's *Hiawatha* as a potential opera subject. He was drawn to the legend; nothing came of that project, but his mind was clearly churning with ideas stimulated by his exposure to Negro and Native American musical culture. His English horn solo has become one of the best known melodies in all of classical music.

Structurally the first movement is the strongest: its rhythmic profile manifests itself in one form or another in all of the succeeding movements. Dvořák wrote a true scherzo for this symphony rather than the Czech *furiant* he favored in so many other large instrumental works. And in his finale, he incorporates quotations from each of the preceding movements to cyclically unify the symphony.

The score calls for woodwinds in pairs, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER Antonin Dvořak (1841 – 1904)

Antonin Dvořák (ANN-tow-neen d(ə)-VOK-zhah(h)k) was born near Prague in central Bohemia (now the Czech Republic). Dvořák's father was a butcher and innkeeper (professions that had been in his family for generations) but many in his family were also amateur musicians. As the first born (of nine surviving children), it was expected that Dvořák would carry on the family business, but early on it became apparent that music was Dvořák's true calling. Dvořák studied violin with a local music teacher but when the family moved to a larger town, he began studying with Antonin Liehmann who taught him harmony, as well as the organ. At age 16, Dvořák moved to Prague to study at the organ school and earned a little money playing viola in local orchestras including many for the opera.

This gave him access to some of the great operatic repertoire as well as an opportunity to play under the direction of Richard Wagner. He also gave piano lessons on the side and ended up meeting his future wife Anna while teaching her older sister Josefina, (he actually was in love with Josefina but the affections were not returned).

Dvořák began composing in the early 1860s but his first success came in 1873 with a hymn *The Heirs of the White Mountain*. He married Anna in 1873, and in 1875 he received a state scholarship for promising impoverished young artists. Included on the jury was Johannes Brahms, who was an established and successful composer at the time. Brahms saw much promise in the young composer and not only did they become friends, but Brahms also got his own music publisher interested and Dvořák's music became available outside of Bohemia. His next works would cement his national and international reputation: these included the *Sixteen Dances* (1878 and 1880), *String Sextet* (1879), the *Violin Concerto* (1879), his setting of *Stabat Mater* (1880), *Symphony No. 5 in D Major* (1880) and *Symphony No. 7 in D Minor* (1885). By 1889, Dvořák was teaching at the Prague Conservatory as well as conducting throughout Europe and Russia.

In 1892 Dvořák was offered a teaching position at the National Conservatory of Music in New York City with a starting salary of \$15,000 (quite large for the time). In addition to supporting his family, his goal was to discover and embrace American folk music (as he had done with Czech folk music). In 1893, he was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to compose *Symphony No. 9 in E Minor*. From the "New World," influenced and inspired by Native American music and African-America spirituals, *Symphony No. 9* was premiered at Carnegie Hall on December 16, 1893 and each movement was greeted with thunderous applause.

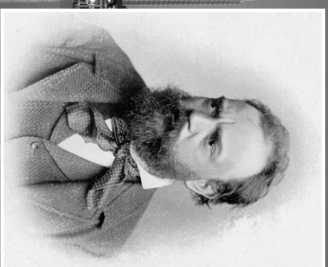
Through early 1898, he stayed in America composing several string works including his Cello Concerto in B Minor. He and his family returned to Europe in April 1898 and by October, he had resumed his teaching at the Prague Conservatory. Composer Johannes Brahms tried to convince Dvořák and his family to move to Vienna, Austria, but Dvořák could not leave his beloved country. His final years were spent receiving much acclaim. The reason for Dvořák's death on May 1, 1904 remains a mystery as there was no autopsy and no official cause of death (although he had been ill for a few weeks prior to his death). Ultimately, his compositional legacy in America was profound and inspired other composers to explore new directions in the creation of American classical music.



Jeanette Thurber



Mildred Jane Hill



Antonin Dvořák

Finding an American Sound How a Louisville woman influenced symphonic music history

Since the founding of our country, there have been efforts to define an “American School” of symphonic music. Early American composers, such as Boston’s William Billings (1746-1800), Supply Belcher (1751-1836), and Samuel Adams Holyoke (1762- 1820), created mainly choral and church music. As the social structure developed to support musical endeavors after the turn of the 19th century, musicians in New England, particularly Boston and New York, emerged as leading American composers of instrumental music. In the late 1800s, a group known as the “Boston Six,” composers Arthur William Foote (1853- 1937), George Whitefield Chadwick(1854-1931), Amy Beach (1867-1944), Edward MacDowell(1860-1908), John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), and Horatio Parker (1853-1919) wrote music that was regarded as “first-rate” and strongly reflected the European traditions of symphonic and chamber music.

Meanwhile in New York City, Wealthy socialite, social activist, and music lover **Jeanette Thurber** (1850-1946) was inspired to found this country’s first music conservatory. She believed passionately that a nation needed to cultivate its own distinctive music and started “The National Conservatory of Music of America” in 1894 to train musicians. Her innovative thinking shaped the course of American music throughout the 20th century even though her institution lasted only 25 years.

With an instinct for publicity, in 1892 she invited the renowned Czech composer **Antonin Dvořák** to head her conservatory and he served there until 1895. Thurber’s choice was based on the composer’s popularity with music lovers and on his reputation as an advocate for using folk music (or indigenous music) as a basis for orchestral concert music. This reflected Thurber’s own belief in the importance of developing an American style of music. While in America, Dvořák composed his Symphony No. 9, “From The New World,” inspired by the music he learned about while in the United States. It is considered one of the great masterpieces of symphonic music.

The Louisville Connection

Mildred Jane Hill (1859-1916) was an American composer and musicologist who was born and reared in Louisville, KY. Her influence on music cannot be overstated for two reasons. She is known to have composed the tune that became “Happy Birthday to You,” and she was the inspiration behind the composing of the “New World” Symphony by Dvořák. As a musicologist, Hill was fascinated by songs sung by street vendors as they used music to get attention to their wares. She also collected “Negro” songs from people in isolated areas in Central Kentucky by noting both the melodies and the words. Writing under the name “Johann Tonsor,” Hill had an article published in the journal *Music* that advocated for the musical world to take notice of “Negro Music” as the basis of constructing a distinctly American music. It is conclusively known that Antonin Dvořák both read and was deeply influenced by this article.

“To one who has passed his childhood in the South, no music in the world is so tenderly pathetic, so wildly, uncouthly melancholy, so fraught with an overpowering *heimweh* (homesickness), as that of the negroes...When he hears one of these quaint old airs, he needs but to close his eyes and the potent spell of music revivifies the past. Old memories, that he had deemed forgotten, rise as if obedient to the voice of enchantment.” *Negro Music* by Johann Tonsor, Dec issue *Music*, 1892.

Connecting the dots

How to use this concert experience in the classroom

Music

Responding

Anchor Standard: #7 – Perceive and analyze artistic work

- Essential Under-standing: Individuals’ selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, under-standing, and purposes.
- Essential Question: How do individuals choose music to experience?
- Essential Under-standing: Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.
- Essential Question: How does under-standing the structure and context of the music influence a response?

Anchor Standard: #8 – Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

- Essential Under-standing: Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.
- Essential Question: How do we discern the musical creators’ and performers’ expressive intent?
- **Anchor Standard: #9** – Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- Essential Under-standing: The personal evaluation of musical work(s) and performance(s) is informed by analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.
- Essential Question: How do we judge the quality of musical work(s) and performance(s)?

Connecting

Anchor Standard: #11 – Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

- Essential Under-standing: Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians’ creating, performing, and responding.
- Essential Question: How do the other arts, other disciplines, contexts, and daily life inform creating, performing, and responding to music?

HAVPA

Purposes and Elements of Music

Anchor Standard(s)

- AS7 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- AS8 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- AS9 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Performance Standards

- MU:Re7.1.E1a Apply criteria to select music for specified purposes, supporting choices by citing characteristics found in the music and connections to interest, purpose, and context.
- MU:Re7.2.H1a Compare passages in musical selections and explain how the elements of music and context (social, cultural, or historical) inform the response.
- MU:Re8.1.H.1a Explain and support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical selections, citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, context (personal, social, and cultural), and (when appropriate) the setting of the text, and outside sources.
- MU:Re8.1.E1a Evaluate works and performances based on personally- or collaboratively-developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context.

Essential Questions:

How does the intended purpose of a musical performance affect its creation and interpretation? How are the elements of music used to create music?

Learning Targets:

I can identify and explain how the purposes of music are specific to its intent, culture and time period. I can identify, describe, and analyze the elements of music in a musical performance.