



Rudi E. Scheidt  
School of Music

*presents*

# A CHILD'S GARDEN OF DREAMS

*featuring*

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

## Wind Ensemble

Albert Nguyen, conductor  
William Plenk, guest conductor  
Elise Blatchford, guest soloist

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DECEMBER 6, 2023 | 7:30 PM

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SFPAC PLOUGH HALL

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music  
Kevin Sanders, Director  
College of Communication and Fine Arts  
Ryan Fisher, Interim Dean

# PROGRAM

***Petals Of Fire***

**Zhou Tian**  
(b. 1981)

William Plenk, guest conductor

***The Lark Ascending***

*Romance for Solo Flute and Winds*

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**  
(1872-1958)

Transcribed by William H. Silvester

Albert Nguyen, conductor  
Professor Elise Blatchford, flute soloist

***A Child's Garden Of Dreams***

**David Maslanka**  
(1943-2017)

**No. 1** – *There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.*

**No. 2** – *A Drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.*

**No. 3** – *A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.*

**No. 4** – *A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.*

**No. 5** – *An ascent into heaven, where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell, where angels are doing good deeds.*

# UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS WIND ENSEMBLE

Albert Nguyen, conductor

## **Flute**

Catherine Balsamo\*  
Olivia Remak  
Mackenzie Saylor  
Delara Hashemi  
Phoenix Farris

## **Oboe**

Ty Matthews\*  
Jalen Gales  
Jesus Salazar

## **Bassoon**

Christina Hazell\*  
Charles Bridges  
Julian Rice

## **Clarinet**

Fernando Martinez\*  
Evan Erickson  
Des Taylor  
Emily Ward  
Summer Moates  
Pia Luna Victoria  
Ian Greer

## **Bass Clarinet**

Austin Kennedy

## **Contra Bass Clarinet**

Amanda Roesch

## **Alto Saxophone**

Caleb Allen\*  
Andrew Stine

## **Tenor Saxophone**

Matthew Meyers

## **Baritone Saxophone**

C. Joanie Dyer

## **Double Bass**

Kedrick Cottrell

## **Harp**

Marian Shaffer\*\*

## **Horn**

Jimmy Rhine\*  
Cooper Mapes  
Rhys Roberts  
Madeline Miller

## **Trumpet**

Tyler Helms\*  
Lacey Peschel  
Yiming Zhang  
Benjamin Shaffer

## **Trombone**

Dylan Mashburn\*  
Cassidy Shiflett-Cockrell  
Nathan Hiers

## **Bass Trombone**

Jasmine Lockwood

## **Euphonium**

Sophia Rivera\*  
Andrew Jennette

## **Tuba**

Bryson Harding\*  
Christopher Gilchrist

## **Percussion**

Dwight Van de Vate\*  
Mario Shaw  
Susannah Clabough  
Daniel Padron  
Overton Alford  
Jacob Bross  
Christian Davis

## **Organ**

Erin Duke\*\*

## **Piano**

Diego Parra

\*denotes principal player

\*\*denotes guest musicians

# PROGRAM NOTES

***Petals of Fire***

**Zhou Tian  
(b. 1981)**

*Petals of Fire* is a fierce and colorful rhapsody inspired by American artist Cy Twombly's 1989 painting of the same title. Part of the work was adapted from a movement of my Concerto for Orchestra. I've always been interested in learning how artists mix different styles and techniques to create a unique, new look. Inspired by Twombly's attempt to combine text and color to express himself visually (literally, words are part of his painting, much like what Chinese painters did during the Song dynasty), I, as a composer, wanted to create a fusion of musical styles, harmony, and timbre, using a large wind ensemble. In a way, everyone in the ensemble is a "petal": together, the fire glows, disappears, and dances...

*Petals of Fire* was commissioned by Michigan State University Wind Symphony and Director of Bands Kevin Sedatole for the 2017 CBDNA National Convention.

Program notes by the composer

***The Lark Ascending***  
***Romance for Solo Flute and Winds***

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**  
**(1872-1958)**

*The Lark Ascending*, which Vaughan Williams composed in 1914, is indebted both to English folk song and to the composer's reading of the work of the English novelist and poet George Meredith. For much of his life, Vaughan Williams lived near Dorking, Surrey, not far from Meredith's beloved Box Hill, where the poet died, crippled and nearly deaf, in 1909. Vaughan Williams originally wrote *The Lark Ascending* as a short romance for violin and piano. The autograph is prefaced by lines from Meredith's poem, "The Lark Ascending." When Vaughan Williams enlisted in the army in 1914, after the outbreak of World War I (he was forty-one at the time), he set the score aside. The experience of serving in the war -- he was an orderly with the Royal Army Medical Corps in France and then an officer -- seems only to have heightened his nostalgia for a simpler time and for a world that no longer existed. It isn't surprising then, that shortly after he came home in 1919, he picked up *The Lark Ascending*, lovingly fine-tuned it, and eventually orchestrated it as a touching souvenir of a time gone by. Even the song of the lark itself, which Vaughan Williams suggests in the flourishes of the solo violin, is now a rare thing, the bird's population in decline and much of its natural habitat irrevocably spoiled.

*The Lark Ascending* is one of the supreme achievements of English landscape painting. In a single sweep of velvety pastoral writing, Vaughan Williams extols the untroubled joys of nature, the call of the lark, and, particularly in the animated middle section, the genial folk music of earlier times.

Vaughan Williams prefaced his score with these lines from Meredith's poem:

*He rises and begins to round,  
He drops the silver chain of sound,  
Of many links without a break,  
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.  
For singing till his heaven fills,  
'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up,  
Our valley is his golden cup  
And he the wine which overflows  
to lift us with him as he goes.  
Till lost on his aërial rings In light,  
and then the fancy sings*

*Program Note by Phillip Huscher*

## **A Child's Garden Of Dreams**

**David Maslanka  
(1943-2017)**

*A Child's Garden of Dreams* was commissioned by and is dedicated to John P. Paynter and Marietta Paynter and the Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble. The first performance was given on February 26, 1982, in Pick-Staiger Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, John P. Paynter conductor.

The following is from *Man and His Symbols* by Carl Jung:

*"A very important case came to me from a man who was himself a psychiatrist. One day he brought me a handwritten booklet he had received as a Christmas present from his 10-year-old daughter. It contained a whole series of dreams she had had when she was eight. They made up the weirdest series of dreams I have ever seen, and I could well understand why her father was more than just puzzled by them. Though childlike, they were uncanny, and they contained images whose origin was wholly incomprehensible to the father... In the unabridged German original, each dream begins with the words of the old fairy tale: 'Once upon a time...' By these words the little dreamer suggests that she feels as if each dream were a sort of fairy tale, which she wants to tell her father as a Christmas present.*

*The father tried to explain the dreams in terms of their context. But he could not do so because there appeared to be no personal associations to them... The little girl died of an infectious disease about a year after that Christmas... The dreams were a preparation for death, expressed through short stories, like the tales told at primitive initiations... The little girl was approaching puberty, and at the same time, the end of her life. Little or nothing in the symbolism of her dreams points to the beginning of a normal adult life. When I first read her dreams, I had the uncanny feeling that they suggested impending disaster.*

*These dreams open up a new and rather terrifying aspect of life and death. One would expect to find such images in an aging person who looks back on life, rather than to be given them by a child. Their atmosphere recalls the old Roman saying, 'Life is a short dream,' rather than the joy and exuberance of its springtime. Experience shows that the unknown approach of death casts an 'adumbratio' (an anticipatory shadow) over the life and dreams of the victim. Even the altar in Christian churches represents, on one hand, a tomb and, on the other, a place of resurrection — the transformation of death into eternal life."*

I selected five of the twelve dreams as motifs for the movements of this composition:

**No. 1** - There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.

**No.2** - A Drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.

**No.3** - A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.

**No. 4** - A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.

**No. 5** - An ascent into heaven, where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell, where angels are doing good deeds.

*Program notes by the composer*

# MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

## ALBERT NGUYEN, conductor

Albert Nguyen is the Director of Bands and Head of the Conducting Area at the University of Memphis. He currently holds the Pearl Wales Professorship in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the University of Memphis in the areas of teaching, creative activity, and service. Dr. Nguyen's responsibilities include overseeing all aspects of the University Bands program, conducting the Wind Ensemble, leading the graduate wind conducting program, and serving as the Executive Director of the University of Memphis Summer at the Scheidt Program. Ensembles under Dr. Nguyen's direction have performed at the CBDNA Southern Regional Conference, the TNMEA All-State Conference, and Internationally in Austria and Italy. As a conductor and clinician, he has worked with ensembles and students throughout the United States, including the Mid-South as well as California, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Texas. For his contribution to the University of Memphis's educational, research, outreach, and service missions, Dr. Nguyen was a recipient of the First Tennessee Professorship.

Dr. Nguyen began his professional teaching career as the Director of Bands at Morrilton High School in Morrilton, AR. He holds the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Education from Arkansas Tech University and the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts in wind conducting from The University of Texas at Austin. He is a member of Kappa Kappa, Psi, Tau Beta Sigma, Phi Beta Mu, and serves the College Band Directors National Association as a member of the Diversity Committee.

# MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

WILLIAM PLENK, guest conductor

Dr. William Plenk is Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands for the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis. In this role, he oversees the UofM Marching Band and Pep Band, conducts the Symphonic Band, and teaches music education courses. Dr. Plenk also serves as Associate Director for Academic Programs, administering undergraduate curriculum and advising for the School of Music. Outside of the University, Dr. Plenk is active as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He has worked with concert bands, marching bands, and drum corps from across the United States, Singapore, and Japan, including a three-season tenure with the Tenrikyo Aimachi Marching Band from Nagoya, Japan. Dr. Plenk has presented or conducted at the CBDNA Western/Northwestern and Southern Division Conferences, as well as the CBDNA National Athletic Band Symposium.

Before arriving in Memphis, Dr. Plenk served as Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Nevada, Reno, developing the athletic band program into one of the most respected in the region. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was Conductor of the UCLA Symphonic Band, Associate Conductor of the UCLA Wind Ensemble, and Associate Conductor of the UCLA Brass Ensemble. He also received a Master of Music degree in tuba performance from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Music degree in tuba performance from Ithaca College.



# MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

ELISE BLATCHFORD, flute soloist

Praised by the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* for her “superb command of color and nuance,” Elise Blatchford is the Associate Professor of Flute at the University of Memphis Scheidt School of Music in Tennessee.

A chamber musician, soloist, orchestral musician, and teacher, Ms. Blatchford is a flutist who embraces the independent, the experimental, and the DIY. As a founding member of the new music woodwind quintet The City of Tomorrow, Ms. Blatchford won first prize at the 2011 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and received a Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning grant in 2014. The quintet tours nationally and has enjoyed residencies at Yale, Tufts, Vermont College of Fine Arts, and Williams College. Ms. Blatchford has appeared with the International Contemporary Ensemble in New York and at the Banff Centre for Creativity in Alberta, Canada.

As a recitalist, Ms. Blatchford frequently programs music of the 20th and 21st centuries, and has been an invited guest at venues across the U.S., including the Dame Myra Hess Series at the Chicago Cultural Center, Yale University, the University of Oregon, and Virginia Tech.

Also at home in the traditional orchestra world, Ms. Blatchford served as Guest Principal Flute for the Memphis Symphony Orchestra's 2018-19 season. She has performed with the Oregon Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, IRIS Orchestra, and the YOA Orchestra of the Americas. With YOA, she toured extensively throughout South America, the Caribbean, and mainland China, made an appearance at Carnegie Hall, and recorded with Philip Glass.

Ms. Blatchford holds degrees in flute performance from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the San Francisco Conservatory. A Powell Artist, she performs on a 14K gold handmade Powell flute.