



Wausau
Symphony & Band
2021-2022


A season of composers and their stories

THE WAUSAU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

UNDER THE DIRECTION
OF DANIEL LARSON

**MADE IN
AMERICA**

**NEW AND OLD
WORKS BY AMERICAN
COMPOSERS**



Featuring
Symphony N^o 1
by Florence Price



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MADE IN AMERICA

Wausau Symphony Orchestra

October 17, 2021

First Presbyterian Church, Wausau

The Entertainer Scott Joplin
(c. 1868-1917)
Arr. Bill Holcomb
& Carson Rothrock

Symphony No 1 in E minor Florence Price
I. Allegro Ma Non Troppo (1887-1953)
III. Juba Dance
IV. Finale

INTERMISSION

Festival Overture Emma Lou Diemer
(b. 1927)

Love Theme from St. Elmo's Fire David Foster
(b. 1949)
Arr. Bob Cerulli

American Civil War Fantasy Jerry H. Bilik
(b. 1933)

Promenade Leroy Anderson
(1908-1975)

Hoe-Down from "Rodeo" Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

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Musicians of the Wausau Symphonic Orchestra

Violin I:

Joanna Johnson *
Janet Hilts
Mary K. Cywinski
Meghan Oselka

Violin II:

Jeffrey Erdman
Jessica Wenzel
JuliAnn Sklow
Naomi Dawson
Robin Mueller
Carrie Scheinost

Viola:

Lane Solverud
William H. Weinmann

Cello:

Elizabeth Gubler
Katie LaPorte
Rachel Best

Bass:

Annie Martin

Flute:

Paula Clark
Margaret Higginbotham

Oboe:

Arin Lemke
Louis Pradt

Clarinet:

Lisa Phalen
Judy Kafka

Bassoon:

Emalyn Nikstad
Carolyn Sienko

Horn:

Hershel Webb
Andrew Slembariski

Trumpet:

Kevin Short
Dale Osterbrink
Stan Smith

Trombone:

Martie Pahriss
Steve Herring
Frank Slembariski

Tuba:

Paul Smith

Percussion:

John Asmus
Mary Kate Domres

Program Notes

Scott Joplin, the “King of Ragtime”, was born in Texas in 1868. He grew up in Texarkana, Arkansas. In the 1880’s, he ventured out on his own to make a living as a musician. He was greatly influenced by ragtime music after attending the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893. He moved to Sedalia, Missouri, in 1894, and a year later, published the first of over 100 ragtime piano works, “The Maple Leaf Rag.” He moved to St. Louis in 1901, and later, to New York City in 1907, teaching, publishing, and performing. In 1916, he made several piano rolls for the player pianos that were popular at that time.

In 1973, Marvin Hamlisch used several of Joplin’s compositions in the Oscar-winning score for the film, *The Sting*, including “The Entertainer.”

Florence Price is the first African American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first to have a composition played by a major symphony orchestra. Her works included 4 symphonies, 4 concertos, as well as choral works, art songs, chamber music, and solo instrumental pieces. She was active as a composer, pianist, organist, and music teacher.

Florence Beatrice Smith was born in Little Rock, Arkansas to a mixed race family. Her father was the only African American dentist in the city, and her mother was a music teacher. She quickly showed signs of musical brilliance. Her first piano performance was at age four, and her first composition was written at age eleven.

She married Thomas Price in 1912, but after financial difficulties and an abusive relationship, she divorced her husband in 1931 and moved in with another African American composer, Margaret Bond for a time. Through this relationship, she was able to connect with other great artists who helped aid Price’s future success as a composer. Both Price and Bond were recognized with first prize awards in 1932 for the Wanamaker Foundation Awards. Florence received first prize for her Symphony No. 1 in e minor, and third prize for her Piano Sonata. Margaret received first prize in the song category for piece entitled “Sea Ghost”.

In 1933, the arts advocate and music critic, Maude Roberts George, arranged for Florence Price’s Symphony No.1 to be featured in a program devoted to “The Negro in Music”, performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the “Century of Progress World’s Fair.” It was George’s underwriting that made Florence Price the first African American woman to have her music played by a major U.S. Symphony Orchestra. A program was presented later that same season that was dedicated entirely to works by Florence Price.

Emma Lou Diemer was born in November, 1927, in Kansas City, MO. She was born into a family of educators and musicians. She played piano and began composing at a very early age, and became organist at her church at age 13. She studied composition at Yale and Eastman, and studied in Brussels on a Fullbright Scholarship. Emma Lou Diemer has taught composition, and has been an active keyboard performer (piano, organ, harpsichord, synthesizer) and composer of many commissioned works for keyboard, orchestral, and choral works. The Festival Overture was written for the schools in Arlington, Virginia, 1961.

David Foster may not be an American composer (born in British Columbia), but he has worked in the American music industry throughout his life. After living in Toronto, he moved to Los Angeles in 1974, where he began his career as a composer, keyboardist, music executive, and producer. He has collaborated, performed, and co-written hit songs with such artists as George Harrison, Chuck Berry, Earth, Wind, and Fire, the Tubes, Kenny Loggins, Kenny Rogers, Boz Scaggs, and Chicago (co-writing songs like “Hard to Say I’m Sorry”, and “You’re the Inspiration”, with Peter Cetera).

In 1985, he composed the score for the film “St. Elmo’s Fire”. The hit song, “Man in Motion”, hit number 1 on the top 100 Billboard charts in September, 1985. While instrumental film pieces don’t always make the charts, the “Love Theme” featured today went to number 15 on the US pop charts.

Jerry H. Bilik is an American composer, arranger, songwriter, conductor, and director of stage productions. While attending the University of Michigan, he studied with Tibor Serly (a student of Bela Bartok). He is a prolific composer of concert band and orchestra music for schools and community organizations.

The American Civil War Fantasy was composed in 1961. The Fantasy presents a portrait of the times leading up to the war, sounds of conflict and battle, and concluding with a vision hope and peace.

Leroy Anderson was described by another great American composer, John Williams, as “one of the great American masters of light orchestral music.” Many of his short, light concert pieces were premiered by the Boston Pops Orchestra, under the direction of Arthur Fiedler.

While serving in the US Army in WWII as a translator and interpreter, he continued to compose. In 1945, he wrote “The Syncopated Clock” (later, the theme song for “The Late Show”, 1951) and “Promenade”. Other famous works that were great successes were “Bugler’s Holiday”, “The Typewriter”, “Blue Tango”, “Plink, Plank, Plunk” (the theme song for “I’ve Got a Secret”), and his ever popular, “Sleighride” (written in August, 1946 – the first orchestral piece to reach number 1 on the Billboard Pop Music Chart!).

Aaron Copland is considered by his peers and critics as the “Dean of American Composers.” Born in Brooklyn, New York, he was the youngest of five children in a Russian Jewish immigrant family. He was exposed to a variety of early 20th century artists while studying in Paris, and brought a distinctly American character to his compositions.

He is best known for his works from the 1930’s and 1940’s, written in a more populist or vernacular style. Some of these works include his ballets “Appalachian Spring”, “Billy the Kid”, and “Rodeo” – where we extract the “Hoe-Down” from.

“Rodeo” was commissioned from a classic ballet company Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo with Agnes de Mille as choreographer. Its precedent setting American Western theme was wildly popular with the audience at the premiere in 1942 – they say there were 22 curtain calls! Hoe-Down begins with the fiddles tuning up, a light accompaniment, and the dance begins. After a lively energetic dance, the tempo begins to slow, and the dancers and musicians need to have a short break. Just a moment later, the musicians begin again with the main theme, and the piece ends with a rousing upbeat finish!

Daniel Larson

Director of Wausau Symphony Orchestra



Daniel was raised in a musical family – all had a love of singing, and his mother was the first piano teacher for all three children. Daniel graduated from UWSP in 1984 with a Bachelor Music Degree in Vocal Music Education, and a minor in Piano and Organ. After four years as a Vocal and General Music instructor in Marion, Wisconsin, Daniel joined the Wausau School District as a Vocal Music instructor in 1989. In 1993, he joined the faculty at Horace Mann Middle School, and where he taught until he retired in 2020. In 1994, he completed a Master of Education Degree from Marian University, Fond du Lac, WI.

Daniel has accompanied and directed pit orchestras for a number of musicals for Wausau Community Theater, Mosinee Community Theater, Central Wisconsin Children’s Theater, and Wausau East End Players. He currently works as musical director/accompanist for Tommy’s Playhouse, Summer Theater Company (Hazelhurst), Summer 2017 – present, and has been the music director for numerous musical productions over the years.

From 2001 - 2011, he collaborated with Janne Dean, founder and artistic director for Allegro Dance Theater. This collaboration resulted in 5 original scores that he composed for her ballet company (Beauty and the Beast, The Ugly Duckling, Cinderella, The Little Mermaid, and Pinocchio). It was during this time he began working as conductor of the Wausau Symphony (2004).

Daniel has served as conductor for the River Valley Harmonizers in Wausau, and the Central Wisconsin Master Chorale in Stevens Point. He remains an active member of the Wisconsin Choral Directors’ Association, where he served on the board of directors for 6 years. He also has served as accompanist for Honors Choirs for WCDA conventions for the past 3 years.

Daniel is an active church musician (Organist, First English Lutheran Church, 1990 – present) and jazz musician. He performs solo piano and with his trio at a variety of venues in Wausau and Central Wisconsin.

Joanna Johnson

Concertmistress of the Wausau Symphony Orchestra

Raised in the traditional eighteenth-century style of Scottish Fiddling, Joanna Johnson is coming to light as a fiddler and composer with individuality steeped in her family heritage. She is the 2017 US National Scottish Fiddle Champion and has also received several awards for her original compositions in the Scottish Style. A native of Central Wisconsin, Joanna began playing the violin at age 7 and almost immediately dived into Scottish Fiddling as well. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music with a Violin Concentration from Crown College in Minnesota.



Joanna is a violinist in the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra and Concertmaster of the Wausau Symphony. She is also a fiddler, singer, and composer for MPK Christian Celtic Band with whom she performs regularly. She has studied both classical violin with Steven Bjella at the University of Stevens Point and Scottish fiddling with US National Scottish Fiddle Champions Dr. Melinda Crawford and Dr. John Turner. Joanna teaches private violin and fiddle lessons in person and online and joined the faculty of the Jink and Diddle School of Scottish Fiddling in Valle Crucis, North Carolina in 2018. Joanna's performances incorporate both well-loved traditional tunes and brand new melodies, sweeping one across the rugged landscape of the Scottish highlands to the youthful shores of America and beyond!

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17
4 PM



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New and old works by American composers,
featuring Florence Price's Symphony No. 1

DEC
5
4 PM



Fanfare Jubilee

A celebration of wind band music by female composers

JAN
16
4 PM



Strings Attached

An evening of jazz with guest vocalist Janet Planet

FEB
20
4 PM



The Tale of 'Rip Van Winkle'

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24
4 PM



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