

Enchanted Landscapes

Sally Horak, flute • Thomas Hundemer, French horn • Daniel Ley, piano

Program Notes by Jackson Harmeyer



Franz Doppler

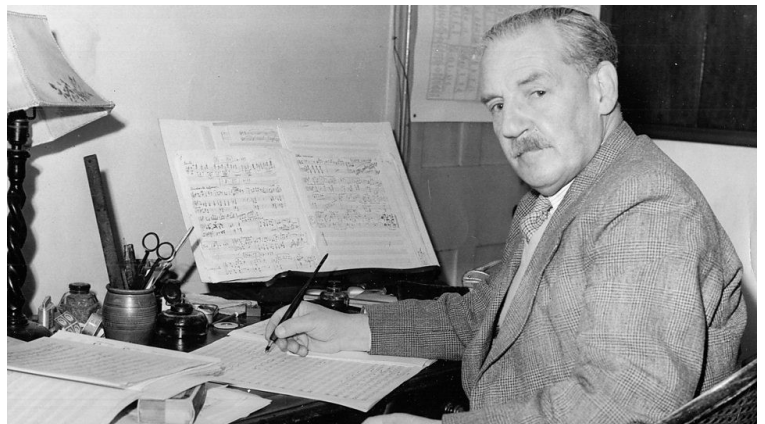
The young men, the Doppler brothers became Hungarian patriots in the turbulent 1840s, helping to establish that country's first symphony orchestra and fighting in its unsuccessful bid for independence from the Austrian Empire. In 1854, they met Franz Liszt – another hero of Hungarian nationalist art – who Franz Doppler assisted with the orchestration of six of his *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. The esteemed music critic Eduard Hanslick once praised the Dopplers, commenting that “from this very humble pipe... is brought out by this pair of flautist brothers a purity, composure, and assurance to which the most determined enemy of the flute cannot but give his lively interest.” Franz Doppler published his Opus 34 *Souvenir du Rigi* for flute, horn, and piano in 1876. Subtitled an *idylle*, the charming piece recounts a trip to Rigi, a mountain in the Swiss Alps, and its nearby resort town. The flute and horn each begin with extensive solos of their own; only later, do they play together and as partners in a call-and-response texture. Doppler's piece resounds in beauty, with the flute often suggesting birdcalls; overall, *Souvenir* gives the impression of a relaxing holiday spent outdoors amid nature.

The Pied Piper by British composer Gordon Jacob (1895-1984) takes its inspiration from the familiar fairytale. As recounted by the Brothers Grimm in their story “The Children of Hameln,” a strange man once appeared in the

Austrian composer **Franz Doppler (1821-1883)** was with his younger brother Karl regarded as one of the nineteenth-century's most talented flute virtuosos. While still children, the Dopplers became acquainted with the rich folk music traditions of many eastern European cultures as concert tours and also political upheavals took the brothers and their family wide and far. As

village of Hameln where he claimed with his fife he could rid the town of all its mice. Playing a tune on his fife, this Pied Piper lured all the mice into the River Weser where they drowned. When the townspeople refused to pay his fee, however, the Pied Piper used his enchanting fife to draw away all the children from the village, luring them into a cave, after which neither the children nor the piper were ever seen again. Jacob composed his piece in 1958. Its first movement depicts the piper's entrancing tune – his *Spell* – and is for solo flute. The second movement for solo piccolo is the *March to the River Weser* and tells of the procession of mice towards their imminent drowning. *March* echoes *Spell*, as if the mice overcome by the piper's tune have no choice but to duplicate the familiar musical material, albeit in a higher register and in a more playful mood. Jacob who had studied with Ralph Vaughan Williams and Charles Villiers Stanford is especially remembered for his wind band compositions. His skill at writing for wind instruments, nonetheless, also impresses in a smaller work like the one heard tonight.

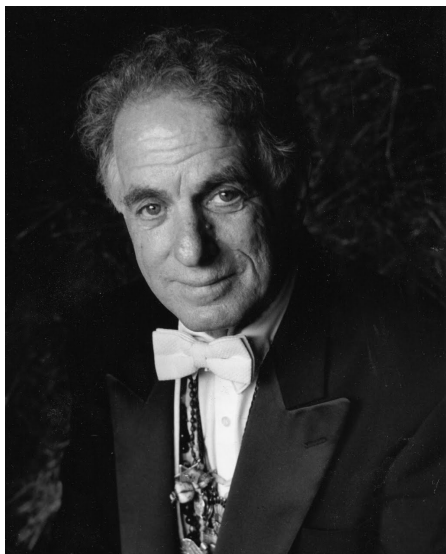
The composer and flautist **Katherine Hoover (born 1937)** grew up in West Virginia. She studied at the Eastman and Manhattan Schools, and has made her professional career in New York. Her composition *Kokopeli* for solo flute has sold over eleven thousand copies and is one of ten works of hers to have won the National Flute Association's Newly Published Music Competition. Her music has been applauded by John Corigliano, one of America's leading contemporary composers, as “fresh and individual... dazzlingly crafted.” Her piece *Summer Night*, Op. 34 was premiered by the New York Concerto Orchestra outdoors at Lincoln Center in July 1985. In its original version, this composition was for flute, horn, and string orchestra, although Hoover later made a



Gordon Jacob

chamber arrangement replacing the strings with piano. Hoover introduces each soloist individually, beginning with the horn and followed by the flute. She then transforms the material presented in these “soliloquies” into a lively dance for both musical partners. Hoover’s *Summer Night* has all the same magic of a warm summer evening, alive with fireflies, as does the more famous music Felix Mendelssohn created for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

The music of prolific American composer **David Amram** (born 1930) spans the classical, jazz, folk, and world music traditions. His composition *Blues and Variations for Monk* for solo horn was written in honor of the legendary modern jazz pianist Thelonious Monk who Amram worshiped as a young man and who later became a personal friend of his.



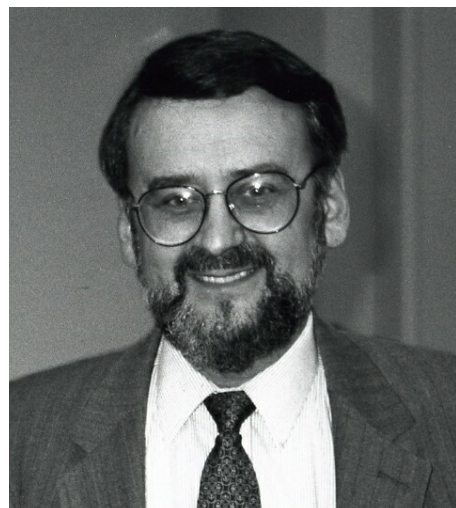
David Amram

Amram and Monk first met in November 1955 when Amram was only twenty-four years old and just beginning to make a name for himself playing French horn at jazz clubs. Monk was in the audience listening one night and was so impressed he asked a band member to introduce them. Amram recalls, “I almost fainted... I would have been afraid to even say hello to him,” but Monk invited

Amram over to his home and the two quickly became friends and began playing together. When Monk died in 1982, Amram decided to write *Blues and Variations for Monk* as a memorial. Those familiar with the music of Thelonious Monk can hear several quotations and allusions to the jazz pianist’s famous recordings. About four minutes in, a different reference is heard: a brief but telling quotation from Richard Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*. It is the famous horn call that symbolizes the saga’s hero Siegfried and that by association represents all heroes, Thelonious Monk included.

American composer and hornist **Jan Bach** (born 1937) is known for his humor and eclecticism, both of which are on prominent display in his *Four Two-Bit Contraptions* for flute and horn heard tonight. Bach composed his *Contraptions* in 1964 as a birthday gift for a former horn student of his, Nancy Booth Stringer, and her roommate, flautist Mary Delano Sholkovitz. Its dedicatees, unfortunately, never had the chance to play the comical work publicly, and instead its first performance was given at a young people’s concert by two high school musicians in 1966. The composer has remarked, “The work’s title, which generated the work’s content, is an obvious satirical jibe at another composing Bach, now decomposing, and his *Two-Part Inventions* for keyboard.” Like Johann Sebastian Bach’s inventions which give relative independence to the keyboardist’s two hands,

Jan Bach’s *Two-Bit Contraptions* also asks its two players to maintain independence from one another. In that they are rickety contraptions rather than brilliant inventions, Jan Bach also suggests his movements are made of lesser materials than those of his predecessor. The movement names – *Second Lieutenant*, *Calliope*, *Gramophone*, and *Pinwheel* – allude to the late nineteenth-century Americana this Bach impersonates, including bugle calls, a dandy waltz, and ragtime. Bach, whether or not he speaks honestly, has bemoaned, “to the composer’s eternal embarrassment, it remains his most frequently performed composition... particularly popular at the April Fool’s Day concerts that are becoming increasingly popular in this country.”



Jan Bach

Closing tonight’s program is a work by **Aaron Walters**, a young composer who received his bachelor’s degree from Ithaca College in 2014 and is currently pursuing his master’s at Belmont University in Nashville. Already Walters possesses an extensive catalogue of compositions, ranging from solo and chamber works to film scores and electronic projects. Of particular interest to Walters is modern dance: in addition to writing scores for modern dance recitals, he has recorded an album *Music (for dance)* and has worked as an assistant to the dance departments both at Belmont and at SUNY Brockport. His Trio for flute, horn, and piano was commissioned by Alex and Liz Shuhan, and performed as part of his senior composition recital in April 2014. The piece is in two contrasting movements, marked respectively *Quarter note = 160* and *Slowly, but still with groove*. The underlying texture of this Trio is minimalist with all the sweetness of a popular song. From this repetitive substructure, however, powerful melodies readily emerge in the flute and horn, while the piano is left to provide a driving chordal support. Although entirely acoustic, this Trio shows itself to have much in common with the ambient dance music Walters has created through electronic and electroacoustic means.

© Jackson Harmeyer 2017

Jackson Harmeyer is a composer, music scholar, and advocate of music. Jackson graduated *summa cum laude* from the Louisiana Scholars’ College located in Natchitoches, Louisiana in May 2013 after completing his undergraduate thesis “Learning from the Past: The Influence of Johann Sebastian Bach



upon the Soviet Composers.” As series director of the successful Abendmusik Alexandria chamber music series from May 2014 to April 2016, Jackson played a vital role in the renewal of interest in chamber music across Central Louisiana. This interest has encouraged the creation of the annual Sugarmill Music Festival and the new series Nachtmusik von BrainSurge, both of which Jackson remains active in as concert annotator and creative consultant. He also blogs at MusicCentral where he shares concert experiences, gives listening recommendations, posts interviews with contemporary composers, and offers insights into his own compositions. As a composer, he has worked to integrate a modern vocabulary into established classical forms in ways that are not only innovative but also engaging to the general listener. In fall 2016, Jackson began graduate studies in musicology at the University of Louisville where he also sings with the University Chorus and participates in the School of Music Composition Seminar.

*Read additional program notes by Jackson at
www.JacksonHarmeyer.com.*