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INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

presents



PAUL LEWIS
COMPOSER-IN-
RESIDENCE

MAY 1-3, 2014





WELCOME TO THE COMPOSER-IN- RESIDENCE EVENTS

Michelle Roberts,
Instrumental Music Director, MBHS

IT IS MY SINCERE PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU to the Composer-in-Residence events at Montgomery Blair High School. During this weeklong project, internationally renowned British composer Paul Lewis has graciously donated his time to work with our students in the classroom, conduct our Symphonic Orchestra students at a concert, present an illustrated lecture, and perform a cabaret with his wife Sharon Elizabeth. Please be sure to read about each of the individual events in detail listed in the program.

So, how did we get here? It all started with a repertoire selection – a composition that I chose for the Symphonic Orchestra to learn during the spring 2013 semester. After listening to many works by various composers I found myself drawn to one particular composition, *Suite Navarraise*, by a composer named Paul Lewis with whom I was unfamiliar. Although the piece was quite challenging, it seemed the ideal fit for my Symphonic Orchestra class. The class performed *Suite Navarraise* at the Montgomery County Public Schools District II

High School Orchestra Festival. Immediately following our performance MCPS Fine Arts Coordinator Mr. Rick Penix approached me and suggested that I should contact the composer.

Not knowing what to expect, I attempted to contact Mr. Lewis shortly after the festival in March 2013 via an email to his publisher, Goodmusic Publishing in the United Kingdom. I immediately received a warm response and email address for Mr. Lewis from the publisher – but before I could write to him, he had already written to me! I emailed both Mr. Lewis and the publisher a recording of our festival performance.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Thursday, May 1, 7:30 PM
AFI Silver Theatre

“The Music of Paul Lewis”
MBHS Symphonic Orchestra

Friday, May 2, 9:00 AM
Blair Auditorium

“Memoirs of a Media Composer”
Illustrated lecture with Paul Lewis

Saturday, May 3, 1:00 PM
McGinty’s Public House

“The Cabaret” featuring Sharon Elizabeth and Paul Lewis



Mr. Lewis spent a considerable amount of time and provided his comments throughout the recording. I made the composer's interpretive changes with the Symphonic Orchestra, and we performed the piece again at the Maryland State High School Orchestra Festival. Upon seeing a video of the Symphonic Orchestra's final performance of *Suite Navarraise* at the spring concert, Mr. Lewis and his publisher gave their permission for me to post that performance on the Internet to share with others. The Symphonic Orchestra's performance of *Suite Navarraise* can be seen and heard by visiting www.youtube.com, key words: **Suite Navarraise**.

Near the end of last school year, Mr. Lewis agreed to meet the Symphonic Orchestra students via Skype and speak directly with them from his home in the United Kingdom. He complimented the students on their performances, shared information about his life as a composer, and answered questions asked by individual students. Mr. Lewis also introduced us to his wife, soprano Sharon Elizabeth Lewis, who is accompanying him on this trip.

One year ago, in April 2013, Mr. Penix nominated me for a Wolf Trap Grant for High School Performing Arts Teachers. As soon as I learned of the nomination, I knew that I wanted to work with Mr. Lewis in commissioning a work for our Symphonic Orchestra. Not only did Mr. Lewis agree to the commission,

he later agreed to fly to the United States with his wife to conduct at the word premiere of its performance. A proponent of music education, Mr. Lewis is also presenting a lecture, sharing his knowledge and experience with all interested students in the school and the community.

***“Salute the Silents!”* and the Composer-in-Residence program** with the students of Montgomery Blair High School is the culmination of a one-year journey. It is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome Mr. Paul Lewis and Mrs. Sharon Elizabeth Lewis – and you – to Montgomery Blair High School's Composer-in-Residence events.

~Michelle Roberts





THURSDAY, MAY 1

“THE MUSIC OF PAUL LEWIS”

Paul Lewis, Conductor

Michelle Roberts, Instrumental Music Director

PROGRAM

English Suite for String Quartet (2001)

1. March
2. Meditation
3. Jig
4. Jaunt

Rosa Mundi (String Orchestra 2004)

Suite Navarraise (String Orchestra 2003)

- I. Arrivée à Pau
- II. Berceau d'un Prince
- III. Le Vert Galant

INTERMISSION

A Flirtation of Fiddles for Four Violins (2009)

1. First Meeting
2. Getting Sentimental
3. That Old Infernal Triangle
4. Moving On

Three Snippets for String Quartet (2014)

- I. Flourish
- II. Love Song
- III. Dislocated Rag

***Salute the Silents!*
(String Orchestra 2014)
*World Premiere***

1. Ride 'Em Cowboy!
2. The Vamp
3. The Villain
4. The Heroine
5. Slapstick Strings



FROM THE COMPOSER...

PAUL LEWIS was born into a musical family in Brighton in 1943. He is best known for his many television scores – over 150 series and one-offs from high drama with Orson Welles, Peter O'Toole and Christopher Lee, to the Emmy Award-winning worldwide children's hit comedy *Woof!* by way of Benny Hill and Monty Python! Overseas sales of many of these programmes have made his music familiar the world over.

He is also a prolific composer of orchestral and chamber works, several of which are in leading exam syllabuses and many of which have been recorded on CD alongside the music of other English composers such as Vaughan Williams, Holst and Delius.

In recent years, Paul has conducted concerts of his own music in New Zealand and in Turkey with the Izmir State Symphony Orchestra. He also conducted and presented *The English Idyll*, an evening of romantic English string music including the première of his *Rye Festival Suite* for strings and harp, on the opening night of the Fortieth Anniversary Rye Arts Festival in Sussex.



He spent six months in Napier, New Zealand, playing the piano for a season of his soprano wife Sharon Elizabeth's one-woman Art Deco cabaret shows and working on his autobiography.

Last year, Paul's seventieth birthday year, saw premieres of his *Norfolk Suite* for strings in the English Music Festival in Oxfordshire and *The Sunken Ballroom*, a mini tone poem inspired by the decaying wreck of the West Pier, Hove, commissioned for the twentieth anniversary of the Sussex Symphony Orchestra, in Arundel Cathedral.

He has recorded *Legends of Rotorua*, a work mixing European and native Maori instruments for CD release in 2014 and is currently recording a CD of his solo harp music with international virtuoso Gabriella Dall'Olio.

Paul and his wife live in a beautiful Tudor house in Sussex, England.

Paul Lewis

www.paullewiscomposer.com



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

English Suite for String Quartet

English Suite was originally written for string quartet but is also published in a version for string orchestra. The work reflects the composer's love of the English countryside, uses folksong-like material, and sits firmly in the tradition established by Holst and Vaughan Williams. Paul Lewis is of the opinion that every English composer should write a work for string orchestra.

This suite is in four movements: March, Meditation, Jig and Jaunt.

Rosa Mundi (String Orchestra)

"Whilst composing this piece to assuage the sadness of parting from a loved one, a single flower of my favourite rose blossomed in my garden – the only one to do so that year." P.L.

Suite Navarraise (String Orchestra)

Suite Navarraise was written after a holiday in the French Basque region, and was inspired by the birth there in 1553 of Henri de Navarre, later Henri IV of France. In the final stages of pregnancy, his mother made a long and arduous journey to the ducal seat of Pau, singing all the way to the unborn child to imbue him with her spirit. In *Arrivée à Pau*



we hear flourishes as the procession approaches, and a folksong-like melody as the mother-to-be arrives, still singing. *Berceau d'un Prince* refers to the ancient turtle shell, preserved in the château at Pau, which was Henri's cradle. *Le Vert Gallant*, the Green Gallant, was the nickname, highly suggestive in colloquial French, given to Henri as he grew into an enthusiastic womanizer. Appropriately, the movement is marked "Allegro Vigoroso!"

A Flirtation of Fiddles for Four Violins

A Flirtation of Fiddles is a jazzy, fun work written originally for flute quartet. Flirtation has always been one of my favourite pastimes, so the piece is possibly, even probably, autobiographical.

First Meeting is playful and provocative, while *Getting Sentimental* is inspired by numerous pop ballads from my teenage years, the last 1950s and early 1960s. *That Old Infernal Triangle* is, of course, three-in-a-bar and depicts the muddle of moods likely to be experienced by those trapped within. If getting sentimental and that old infernal (eternal) triangle are the sometime

consequences of a flirtatious first meeting, then moving on is often the only solution, so the final movement, *Moving On*, although outwardly bright, has overtones of wistful melancholy.

This then is music with a moral: Beware! Flirtation can be dangerous – it may not be as innocent as it seems!

Three Snippets for String Quartet

Three Snippets for String Quartet is a short entertainment piece and concert stocking-filler lasting only six and a half minutes. Originally written for saxophone quartet, the three movements are: *Flourish*, a march-like fanfare with a hint of toy soldiers, a deeply-felt *Love Song* as an unexpectedly emotional core, and *Dislocated Rag* to finish with a smile – ragtime with recurring 7/8 bars thrown in to trip up the dancers! *Dislocated Rag* is based on the composer's music for the 1984 mystery film *The Case of Marcel Duchamp* about the famous French Dadaist artist.

Salute the Silents! (String Orchestra)

Paul Lewis grew up hearing stories of his mother and three of her siblings playing in silent movie picture-house orchestras in their teens. He has taken the family full circle by composing new instrumental scores for silent films long and short, performing them in England, Italy and New Zealand.

The present work is a celebration of some of the genres and character types most popular in the days of the silents.

1. Ride 'Em Cowboy!

Early Westerns contained a great deal of high speed galloping about, even though some of the lead actors had never ridden a horse before the cameras rolled! An interlude describes a cowboy on a reluctant steed that just doesn't want to get going.

2. The Vamp

Actress Theda Bara began a fashion for films about dangerous, predatory women who passed the time of day (and night) seducing weak-willed men and separating them from their money and their wives before leaving them high, dry and ruined when their money was spent. This is a slinky, suggestive movement starting in blues tempo and continuing with an up-beat section as the vamp swings into action!

3. The Villain

The opening portrays the pantomime-style silent movie villain often seen in Charlie Chaplin films: of towering build, bad-tempered, with bushy eyebrows, long black beard and glowering countenance. In the fast section, we encounter the type of villain who pursued the hapless heroines of such popular weekly cliffhanger serials as *The Perils of Pauline* and *The Hazards of Helen*.

4. The Heroine

Fragile, delicate, innocent and oh so pretty – the heroine of so many



silent movies, the kind often serenaded by Chaplin with his fiddle, hence the solo violin theme. The movement begins with eight bars of harmony but no melody: an affectionate reference to Lewis's mother Phyllis's first job in a movie house at the age of fourteen. She was told to play the violin solo in the big love scene, but so mesmerized by the film was she that when the scene came she stood watching the screen transfixed, the violin dangling beside her in one hand and the bow in the other, and didn't play a note! (The manager sacked her and threw her out in the interval!)

5. *Slapstick Strings*

Silent slapstick – chases and madcap stunts performed with breath-taking precision and an apparent disregard for safety. The musical action is interrupted by a galumphing section: could that be Laurel and Hardy putting in an appearance? The action gets dafter and after a chaotic section, the music hurtles towards a helter-skelter conclusion.

“Salute the Silents!” was commissioned by Michelle Roberts, Instrumental Music Director, Montgomery Blair High School, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. This commission was made possible due to the generous support of Wolf Trap Grants for High School Performing Arts Teachers.





MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA

Violin

Kiyoon Ko, concertmaster

Quinn Tai, principal 2nd

Ji Hyuk Bae

Eric Chen

Richard Chen

Annie Fang

James Gao

Haena-Young Lee

Nayman Leung

Juliana Lu-Yang

Daniela Toni

Jeong-Yoon Wu

Viola

Stephan Loh, principal

Audrey Maynard

Haein Son

Richard Wang

Cello

Rosa Choe, principal

Noah Fang

Simin Li

Bass

Joe Agger, principal

Alex Mangiafico

Eli Parry-Giles





ABOUT THE MBHS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DIRECTOR

Michelle Roberts

MICHELLE ROBERTS

received a bachelor's degree in music education (instrumental music) and a Bachelor's Degree in music performance (bass trombone) magna cum laude from the University of Maryland (*Go Terps!*). She also earned joint certification from **Berklee Music and Propellerhead Software** as a Specialist in "*Music Creation Using Reason*" software.

In 2013, she was awarded the **Maryland Music Educators Association Outstanding Music Teacher Award** for Instrumental Music.

Presently in her eighth year teaching at Montgomery Blair High School, Ms. Roberts directs the **Honors Symphonic Orchestra, Honors Symphonic Band, and two Jazz Bands**. She also teaches the school's Music Technology course, is the faculty sponsor for the **Tri-M Music Honor Society** chapter, and directed the Marching Band for seven years.

With Ms. Roberts as advisor, MBHS Tri-M Chapter 4407 received the third place award for *Chapter of the Year* in 2013-2014.

A member of NafME and MMEA, Ms. Roberts serves on the MMEA Student Composition Committee, has participated on Music Technology panels at MMEA conferences, and has presented at the MCPS New Educator Orientation.

In February 2014, for the second time, her Symphonic Orchestra class demonstrated/performed at the MMEA In-Service Conference. She has also served as a mentor teacher for three college student interns.

Ms. Roberts is a freelance bass trombonist who performs with the Montgomery Low Brass and Market Street Big Band.

Reach her at
Michelle_Roberts@mcpsmd.org.



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FRIDAY, MAY 2

“MEMOIRS OF A MEDIA COMPOSER”

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE BY PAUL LEWIS

PROGRAM

“Memoirs of a Media Composer” is an anecdotal account of Paul Lewis's media composing career. **Join him as he recounts the huge changes that have taken place in the television industry** from the ‘60s, through the Golden Age of British television, to today.

You'll enjoy a rare first-hand account of the working methods in the ‘60s and ‘70s, as he details the sometimes unusual and unexpected ways in which he was commissioned – **and inspired.**

It's a world beyond belief to anyone who wasn't there at the time!



SATURDAY, MAY 3
MCGINTY'S PUBLIC HOUSE
"THE CABARET"

FEATURING SHARON ELIZABETH
AND PAUL LEWIS,
with the MBHS Jazz Bands

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

SHARON ELIZABETH is an entertainer and singer who performs popular opera, to cabaret, and everything in between! Her emotive, passionate performances, bright natural personality and beautiful soaring vocal ability have led her to be called "The People's Soprano."

She enjoys a career full of variety around the globe. Whether performing on the concert stage, film soundtrack recordings, television, radio guest spots, fundraising events, or in seasons of her various one-woman shows, she sings with utter conviction in whatever genre she chooses.

Sharon Elizabeth enjoys performing as her alter ego 'Forget-Me-Not', a beguiling flapper from the 1930s. Her invention has sparked a passion for popular songs from this glamorous period, not to mention a growing collection of vintage clothes and accessories!



In her research, she has been excited to discover many rarely heard banned and risqué songs of the period, resulting in her latest one-woman show, "Forget-Me-Not Wear the Trousers," which has received rave reviews.

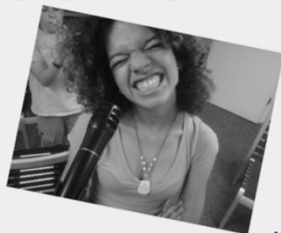
"You transported me into another world, which was so nostalgically evocative that I lost for a while all sense of where I was or when or how!" said one of her many fans.

With the world premiere of "Salute the Silents!" it seemed only fitting that Forget-Me-Not should make an appearance accompanied by composer Paul Lewis at the piano. She will delight you with a fun and entertaining cabaret show filled with transatlantic connections honoring the musical heritage of both America and Great Britain in the Art Deco era.

www.sharonelizabethsoprano.com



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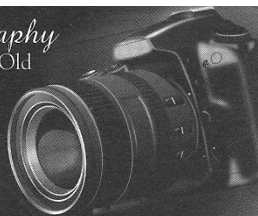
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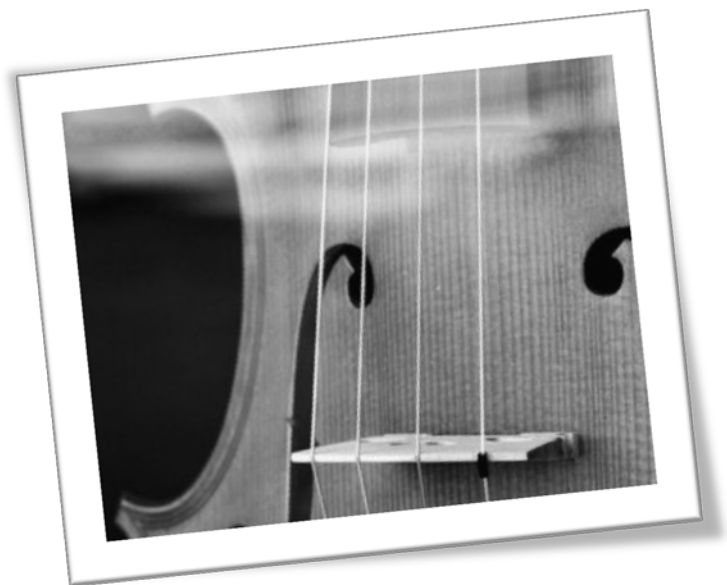


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