



Past & Present  
June 16 & 17, 2023

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Concertino for Trumpet and Orchestra

Adolphus Hailstork (b.1941)

Contemporary American composer Dr. Adolphus Hailstork's prolific career spans five decades and more than 250 works written for almost any iteration of musical ensemble imaginable: symphonies, operas, cantatas, concertos, chamber music and more. Hailstork's Concertino for Trumpet and Orchestra (originally trumpet and organ) was written in 2015; the world premiere takes place June 16, 2023 in New York City. Rebecca fell in love with Hailstork's music when she performed his brass trio "Ghosts in Grey and Blue" in 2021. "Ghosts...." was written in 2011 as a meditation on the legacy of the Civil War on its one hundred fiftieth anniversary.

Hailstork's Concertino for Trumpet is neoclassical with the three movements acting as a large ABA form. With a nod to Bach, Hailstork crafts a contrapuntal dialogue between trumpet and orchestra, featuring repetition throughout to keep things grounded. Though the composer offers no program or storyline, Rebecca is excited to share a plethora of emotions throughout the work: a conversation between aggressive anger and bubbling excitement in the allegro first movement, passionate, reminiscent longing in movement two, lento, and the triumphant, exuberant return of the A theme in movement three, allegro.

— *Rebecca Steinberg*

## Concerto for Bass Trombone

Jay Krush (b.1953)

As a working tuba player, I have spent a substantial portion of my life sitting next to bass trombonists, and I have always admired the skill and dedication of those who devote such attention and marvelous artistry to an instrument that is, quite frankly, even more of an unknown to the general public than the tuba. I had been thinking about the need for another concerto for this instrument and mentioned my interest in

composing a piece to Blair Bollinger, noted bass trombonist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He, to my delight, offered to play the piece at the upcoming US Army Trombone Workshop if I could complete it in time. It was done three intensive months later and premiered by Mr. Bollinger with Major James Keene conducting the US Army Orchestra. A little later, a version with wind ensemble accompaniment was created, which was premiered with Mr. Bollinger and the Temple University Wind Symphony, conducted by Dr. Emily Threinen. Those performing forces recorded the work for BCM&D Records.

The Concerto is in three movements, and unlike many of my pieces, it is pure music with no visual or narrative content. The upbeat first movement, with its propulsive mallet percussion, originated in a summer moment when two cars, windows open and radios blaring, passed each other, one playing a violin concerto, the other something Latin with lots of marimbas. Most of the ideas for the expansive second movement came during long walks with a dear friend and her dog in a local nature preserve. For the third movement, I was thinking of the juggler's routine where they keep different

sizes of plates rotating on top of sticks. In this case, lots of different rhythmic divisions of “three” over music which is predominantly in “two”. There is a lyrical melody as well, which I think of as the “smell the roses” theme; that no matter how much spectacular technique we muster, one of our main goals is to produce beauty.

The Concerto is dedicated to Blair Bollinger, and is, by extension, a fan letter to bass trombonists everywhere.

— *Jay Krush*

## **Symphony No. 11 in G Minor, Op. 103 “The Year 1905”**

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)

On a cold morning in January 1905, thousands of peaceful, unarmed protesters gathered outside the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. The crowd intended to petition Nicholas II to address their poverty and brutal working conditions, but the Czar had fled the city in advance of the demonstration. In his absence, the people grew restless. Troops opened fire, and hundreds died. One of the survivors was Dmitri

Shostakovich's father, and the composer was born the following year. The Bloody Sunday massacre, as it came to be known, was a frequent topic of conversation in the Shostakovich home. The 1905 Revolution marked the beginning of a period of political transformation in Russia, culminating in the February and October Revolutions in 1917 and the establishment of the Soviet Union.

In 1955, Shostakovich announced that he was writing a symphony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. However, work on the project stalled, and he completed the Eleventh Symphony in 1957. The premiere was timed to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution that fall.

The symphony, which lasts about one hour, unfolds in four continuous movements. To convey the program, Shostakovich makes extensive use of revolutionary songs that would have been immediately recognized by contemporary Soviet listeners. *The Palace Square* establishes a mood of icy, uneasy stillness. Shostakovich quotes two songs popular among political prisoners: "Listen!", played by a flute duet, and "The

Arrested Man,” which portrays a dialogue between a prisoner and a sympathetic guard. *The Ninth of January* begins with quiet rumblings in the low strings and builds to a searing climax. After a moment of repose, the sudden crack of drum shots and ensuing chaos signal the start of the massacre.

The third and fourth movements capture contrasting responses to the atrocity. *Eternal Memory* begins with the violas playing the mournful tune “You Fell as Victims,” written to commemorate the Bloody Sunday dead. The orchestra snaps to attention with a sharp brass fanfare at the beginning of *The Tocsin (The Alarm Bell)*, which heralds the coming storm through quotations from several revolutionary songs. “Rage, Tyrants” originated in Ukraine and was popularized in the 1905 Revolution. (During the Soviet era, Ukrainians who opposed the Soviet government also sang the song, interpreting the “tyrants” as Russian communists.) “Whirlwinds of Danger,” another well-known tune, was originally written and sung by Poles who resisted Russian annexation in the nineteenth century.

Officially, Shostakovich claimed that the Eleventh Symphony was about the events of 1905, and about the events of 1905 only. But the parallels to contemporaneous events are hard to miss. The year before Shostakovich completed the piece, Soviet troops had killed thousands of protesters during the Hungarian Uprising. The lyrics from the songs Shostakovich quotes in the finale speak to the timeless desire to resist oppression, whether in 1905, 1956, or 2023:

*Rage, you tyrants, and mock at us*

*Threaten us with prison and with chains*

*We are stronger than you in spirit, though you trampled on our bodies*

*Shame! Shame! Shame on you, you tyrants!*

*Malevolent whirlwinds blow around us*

*Dark forces press down on us with hate*

*We have engaged in the fateful struggle with our enemies*

*The fate that awaits us is still unknown*

*But with pride and courage we will raise*

*The battle standard of the workers' cause*

*The standard of the great struggle of all peoples*

*For a better world, for holy freedom!*

**— Mark Seto**