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Native American Dance Group



Matthew Bassett, Guest Artist
BPO Timpani Principal

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Conductor's Corner:

Good afternoon and welcome to our
Drums!, Drums!, Drums! Concert!!!

As you may have guessed, our concert today is an exploration of spiritual rhythm and the world of percussion.

We are honored to have as our guests, The Indigenous Spirit Dancers and esteemed percussionist, Matthew Bassett, from the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Our progressive concert continues with an arrangement of George Gershwin's I Got Rhythm which features our principal clarinetist, Lynn Price.

Our next selections, both composed in the 21st century are very powerful and moving.

Raise the Roof features Matthew Bassett as our timpani soloist. Timpani concertos are not a very common thing!!! It is truly our pleasure to present such an unusual piece.

Our concert concludes with a piece called Supermaximum. The composer, Kenji Bunch, uses the members of the orchestra as percussionists with extended techniques not often heard from a symphony orchestra. It is a very exciting piece.

We invite you to sit back and enjoy this most unusual and invigorating concert.

Cheers,

Bryan Eckenrode

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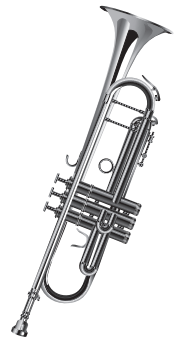
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Gymnasium at 1:30 pm

Amherst Symphony Orchestra
Bryan Eckenrode, Conductor
Guest Artist: Matthew Bassett, Timpani Soloist
Auditorium at 3:00 pm

I Got Rhythm

George and Ira Gershwin
Arr. Charles Sayre

Raise the Roof (2003)

Michael Daugherty

Matthew Bassett, Timpani Soloist

*Please remain seated while the orchestra stage is re-set.
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Supermaximum (2013)

Kenji Bunch

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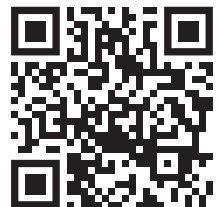
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BRYAN ECKENRODE, Conductor/Cellist

Conductor/cellist, Bryan Eckenrode, graduated cum laude from SUNY at Stony Brook and holds a Master of Music degree from SUNY at Buffalo.

Eckenrode is conductor and music director of the Warren Philharmonic

Orchestra in Pennsylvania and the Chautauqua Regional Youth Symphony, the Prelude Strings Orchestra, and the Young Artists' Orchestra of Jamestown. He is also conductor of the Amherst Symphony. He has been guest conductor with the Western New York Chamber Orchestra. He was guest conductor of the Genesee Symphony and the Cheektowaga Symphony. He was also conductor of the Zone 1 Area All State Orchestra. Eckenrode served as the program coordinator for Artpark's Music in the Woods series.

He is currently principal cello with the Western New York Chamber Orchestra and has performed with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Erie Philharmonic, and with Ars Nova.

He is principal cello with the Bach and Beyond Festival and records with the International Baroque Soloists. He was principal cellist with the British Columbia (Canada) Mozart Festival Orchestra and the Southern Tier Symphony. He is a member of the Lexington String Quartet, and the chamber groups Voci d'Amore and Camerata.

He can be heard on the CDs of many artists, including Ani DiFranco, 10,000 Maniacs, Sixpence None the Richer, Seven Day Faith, Them Jazzbeards, John and Mary, and Alison Pipitone: not only as a cellist, but as a bagpiper and flutist. He has recorded the sound tracks of film scores for several silent movies being distributed on commercial DVD by the Turner Broadcasting Network. He has performed twice at Lincoln Center in New York and recorded the sound track for the PBS special – The Siege of Fort Erie – A Glorious Battle. He was bagpipe soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic for their successful Memorial Day Pops Concerts. He has been principal cellist with The Most Arts Festival held at Alfred University. He was recently inducted into the Sigma Alpha Iota for his distinguished contribution to the arts.

Eckenrode is an adjunct professor at Canisius College, Buffalo State College, Jamestown Community College, and director of the string department at Villa Maria College. Eckenrode is on the music faculty at the renowned Nichols School in Buffalo. He is married to the internationally acclaimed soprano, Cristen Gregory.

GUEST DANCERS:

The Indigenous Spirit Dancers, Native American Dance Group



The Indigenous Spirit Dancers is a Native American Dance Group that was formed & created by Martin Jimerson, Jr. in 2018. Members of the group are all members of the Haudenosaunee Iroquois Confederacy. We are a Cultural Outreach Dance group who are dedicated to educational performances of the Indigenous Peoples, showcasing traditional songs & dances and storytelling,



We travel to various public schools, colleges, casinos, public events and other locations. We have performed at all three Seneca Casinos, Ganondagan, M & T Bank Events, Buffalo History Museum, Canalside, Darien Lake, Buffalo Sabres, Buffalo Bandits, Buffalo Bisons, schools.



Guest Artist:

Matthew Bassett, BPO Timpani Principal



Matthew Bassett became Principal Timpanist of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2009. Highlights of Mr. Bassett's career include serving as principal timpanist for the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra; performing as concerto soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, and the Canton Symphony; and participating in the U.S. premiere performance of *Four4* by John Cage with the composer in attendance. Since 1993, he has been principal timpanist with *Apollo's Fire* (The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra). Matt can be heard on many commercial recordings with the Buffalo Philharmonic, *Apollo's Fire*, and the Cleveland Orchestra.

In addition to his orchestral work, Mr. Bassett maintains a busy schedule of solo and chamber performance. He has performed solo and collaborative recitals focusing on both classics of the percussion/timpani repertoire and premiere performances of new music. Recent appearances include the Buffalo Brass Choir, Buffalo Chamber Players, and "Informally Formal" recital series at Canisius College.

Mr. Bassett has taught percussion to students for over 25 years. He has arranged music for percussion ensemble and has written several practice manuals for his students. Mr. Bassett frequently presents clinics and masterclasses and is a Pearl Drums, USA Concert Artist for Adams Percussion. Presently, he maintains a home teaching studio.

Mr. Bassett operates a home business repairing percussion instruments, timpani mallets, and calfskin timpani heads. Matt resides in Buffalo with his daughter and his partner Kathleen Bassett, a music educator, choral conductor, and vocal soloist.

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AUDREY C. HURD

Audrey C. Hurd, a celebrated member of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra for 46 years, passed away on July 16, 2022.. She was a dedicated volunteer for the Amherst Symphony Orchestra, as a musician, Association Board Director and Women's Committee Past-President.



Having grown up in Amherst in a “family of strings”, both her mother and sister played violin while Audrey chose cello,. She played cello while at Eggert Road Elementary School until graduation from Amherst High School and continued to play during her four years at Albany State Teacher's College. For the balance of her career in the Buffalo City High Schools, Audrey was a firm believer in music education of youth and spearheaded the ASO School Outreach Program for many years. The program allows musicians to visit an area school each year to demonstrate their instruments, along with the students designing the Holiday Concert program cover and being invited to attend the ASO annual Family Concert.

The Amherst Symphony and the Amherst Symphony Association gratefully acknowledges the grant from the **AUDREY HURD GUEST ARTIST PROGRAM**. This gift enables us to cover Guest Artist expenses for the annual Family Concert.

This year, the ASO is privileged to have Audrey Hurd's family honor her with the first **AUDREY C. HURD ANNUAL \$3000 STRING SCHOLARSHIP** for graduating high school musicians, specific to violin, viola, cello and bass.

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PROGRAM NOTES

by Claudia Staines

Supermaximum

Kenji Bunch
1973 -

Kenji Bunch is an American composer and violist who is known, according to the Oregon Arts Watch “..for amalgamating traditional American musical forms... and European-based classical music.” His body of work runs the gamut from jazz to bluegrass to hip hop. The piece we’ll enjoy this afternoon, “Supermaximum” was commissioned by the Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music, performed first as a work for string orchestra in 2011, and the arranged for full orchestra two years later.

“Supermaximum” is inspired by and stems from a long, painful journey from West African work songs to generations enduring first slavery, then Reconstruction, and the Jim Crow South. The music is a reflection of how oppressed peoples can turn art into spiritual, even physical, survival even in horribly cruel conditions. Even the term ‘supermaximum’ refers to these conditions as it refers to the highest possible level of secure incarceration in American prisons, where it is estimated that 38% of the population is African-American.

The musical composition “Supermaximum” begins with the unhitched rheum of chain gang work - the highly co-ordinated swinging of axes and clanging of hammers. From this beginning, listeners and musicians move from a harsh reality to a state of grace. As the piece draws to an end, we will hear another iteration of chain gang elements, but perhaps now with a hopeful resolve.

With grateful thanks to percussionist Andrew Ziemba for his insightful contribution on “Supermaximum” for these Notes



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I Got Rhythm

Music: George Gershwin
1898 - 1937
Words: Ira Gershwin
1896 - 1983
Arr: Charles Sayre

The jazz standard “I Got Rhythm” was composed by the Gershwin brothers in 1928 as a slow song, but in 1930 it was re-arranged for the musical “Girl Crazy,” which also produced such hummable songs as “Embraceable You” and “But Not For Me”. Ethel Merman sang the song in the original Broadway production to the delight of the composer who apparently told Merman to never take a singing lesson, ever.

Rhythm is what the song is about, what lies at its soul. The chord progression found within it, called ‘rhythm changes’, has become the foundation for many jazz tunes, used by countless jazz and pop musicians. Hugely popular with singers for nearly a century, the song features in the 1951 film “An American in Paris” with Gene Kelly; it has been recorded by Judy Garland, Ella Fitzgerald, and many others; it was used in “Mr Holland’s Opus” as a try-out song for a high school Gershwin revue; and in the American Film Institute’s “100 Years... 100 Songs” list, “I Got Rhythm” finished at #32.

As a composing team, the Gershwins relied on George coming creating the melody first, before passing the work on to his lyricist brother. However, with this song, Ira struggled to find a way to make the words meet the urgency, the beat of the song. Eventually, and unusually for him, he chose to leave most of the lines unrhymed. Ira said that it was “...a bit daring for me who usually depended on rhyme insurance.”

There has been some dispute about the melody of “I Got Rhythm”, an issue raised by William Grant Still, who asked questions about some very strong similarities between the Gershwin song and Still’s Symphony No. 1. Certainly, the appropriation of music written by African-American composers, who were generally struggling to make their living with their art, by composers such as Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Hoagy Carmichael, has long been a subject for debate.

Today however, what we all can celebrate is a glorious song with which we are all familiar, a song that will find the beat in your mind and heart as you listen.

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Raise The Roof**Michael Daugherty**
1954 -

Drums have often been associated with religious rites in geographical diverse areas like Siberia, South Asia, and through much of Africa. Anthropologists believe drumming developed for communication with the gods using music. Archaeologists have found drums in the same digs as flutes and other instruments, buried with high-ranking or religious leaders, people who would have the time and dedication needed to develop the 'communication' skills.

In a December 2019 story from Psychology Today, a comprehensive study of people who had studied music showed different instruments help different parts of the brain to develop. Professional drummers' motor co-ordination is far superior to untrained individuals, as they are able to manage different rhythms with two hands. Most of the rest of us cannot. Also, MRI tests on drummers' brains show less activation during motor tasks. The researchers say they don't understand why this happens but believe it might be due to 'sparse sampling', a phenomenon also found in highly intelligent people. That's the sort of thing that will keep the parents of beginning drummers from throwing out the sticks!

Composer, pianist and teacher, Michael Daugherty had almost no chance not to be a musician, as his father was a drummer, his mother an amateur singer, and his paternal grandmother a pianist for silent films. Even his four younger brothers are in the music industry in some fashion.

Daugherty apparently taught himself how to play the piano around the age of 8 but he learned jazz and rock & roll drums from his father and uncle. Later, Daugherty went to the University of North Texas College of Music where he studied jazz and music composition. Although he played jazz piano for the Two O'Clock Lab Band while at school, it was a performance of a Samuel Barber piano concerto which persuaded him that his musical future lay (mostly) in composition.

In 1981, Daugherty met Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood, and later in 1982, while in Germany, he had the chance to study composition with György Ligeti. Both men gave him much the same advice: find a way to combine

cont.

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American popular music with concert music, Ligeti adding he should also use “computer music”. To this day, as a composer but very much also as a teacher, Daugherty champions contemporary music.

“Raise the Roof” is proof of Daugherty’s belief in this genre. Commissioned by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in 2003, this remarkable piece gives the timpani the spotlight, something that just does not happen in most compositions. According to the composer’s own notes, the timpanist will showcase “...the rare opportunity to play long expressive melodies, and a tour de force cadenza.” This afternoon should prove to be a lively, pulsing performance for orchestra and audience alike.

The Author’s Note

I have no rhythm. I can neither jump rope nor waltz, although my clumsiness is less noticeable when I polka. Perhaps it is because of my sad lack of rhythm that I am fascinated by the drums. They are exciting, energizing, and loud, which is always in my key. Tom Althouse said once that “Life follows a rhythm and we hold the drum”... but he never watched me dance.



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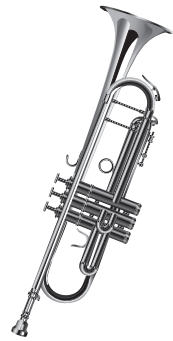
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