

**POST-CLASSICAL ENSEMBLE &
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

present

**COPLAND AND
THE COLD WAR**

AT THE DAVIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

BENJAMIN PASTERNAK, PIANIST

ANGEL GIL-ORDÓÑEZ, MUSIC DIRECTOR, POST-CLASSICAL ENSEMBLE

JOSEPH HOROWITZ, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, POST-CLASSICAL ENSEMBLE

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ROBBIE HAYES

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**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, DAVIS
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

DEREK GOLDMAN

This performance will run approximately 120 minutes with a 15 minute intermission.



FEATURING

Benjamin Pasternack

**Mike Mitchell
Clark Young
Patrick Warfield**

GU Concert Choir

Commentary by

Host/Producer

Pianist

**as Aaron Copland
as Senator Joseph McCarthy
as Roy Cohn**

C. Paul Heins, Director

**Angel Gil-Ordóñez
Joseph McCartin
Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett
Patrick Warfield**

Joseph Horowitz

PROGRAM

Copland

The Cat and the Mouse (1920)

Copland

Piano Variations (1930)

Copland

The City (1939) - excerpts from the new Naxos DVD
Cinematography: Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke
Script: Lewis Mumford
Narrator: Francis Guinan
Post-Classical Ensemble conducted by Angel Gil-Ordóñez

INTERMISSION

Copland

"Into the Streets May First" (1934)
Audience sing-along

Joseph McCartin on the Popular Front and the Red Scare

Selections from Copland's testimony before the McCarthy Subcommittee

Copland

Piano Fantasy (1957)

Post-Concert Discussion

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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

AARON COPLAND

himself a pianist, composed prolifically and significantly for piano. In fact, his keyboard output felicitously traces his striking stylistic odyssey – and also his shifting political orientation.

Of the piano works we hear tonight, *The Cat and the Mouse* (1920) is the earliest Copland composition still widely played. This “Humoristic Scherzo” depicts a cat stalking and disposing of its prey, precedes Copland’s studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris (1921-24) – and therefore predates the formative influences to come of France, and of Stravinskyan modernism.

The *Piano Variations* (1930), coming a decade later, is pure Copland: a bracing wake-up call; a new American sound; skyscraper music of steel and concrete. Its angular rhythms and dissonant tonal shards vibrate with the intensity and nervous energy of Copland’s New York. No previous American had achieved such concise freshness of style. At the same time, it is a kind of music that confounded audiences – and Copland reacted with concern to their consternation. Of the “job of the forties,” he wrote: “the radio and phonograph have given us listeners whose sheer numbers in themselves create a special problem,” one whose solution was “to find a musical style which satisfies both us and them.”

The reorientation Copland espoused was pursued in lectures and broadcasts for layman, and by the books *What to Listen for in Music* (1939) and *Our New Music* (1941). It was equally embedded in such well-known works as *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Rodeo* (1942), and *Appalachian Spring* (1941). And, seeking a “new audience,” Copland was impelled to compose for film. As an overture to Hollywood, he composed his first (and best) film score for a distinguished documentary shown daily at the 1939 World’s Fair: *The City*, with a script by Lewis Mumford. Mumford’s message was that the frantic modern city cancels the quality of life earlier achieved in rural America – and recapturable in planned communities of modest size. As an aspect of Copland’s oeuvre, the film both brandishes his “populist” style in an acutely sardonic mode, and suggests how his

burgeoning social conscience shaded into the realm of “Popular Front” activities bonding with Soviet Russia. (The communal scenes of happy workers remind my wife of the propaganda films she saw growing up in Communist Hungary.) At tonight’s concert, we sample Post-Classical Ensemble’s new Naxos DVD presenting *The City* with a freshly recorded soundtrack.

Copland’s activities as a fellow-traveller on the left peaked with his award-winning worker’s son “*Into the Streets May First*.” Composed for the *New Masses*, it sets a poem by Alfred Hayes reading in part: “Up with the sickle and hammer, comrades!” Copland never included “Into the Streets” in his catalog; during the McCarthy era, he publicly disowned it as “the silliest thing I did.”

Copland’s constant intent was to direct contemporary American listeners to new and American works, rather than the canonized European masters. His frustration was great. In 1941, he went so far as to write: “Very often I get the impression that audience seem to think that the endless repetition of a small body of entrenched masterworks is all that is required for a ripe musical culture. . . . Needless to say, I have no quarrel with masterpiece. I think I revere and enjoy them as well as the next fellow. But when they are used, unwittingly perhaps. To stifle contemporary effort in our own country, then I am almost tempted to take the most extreme view and say that we should be better off without them!”

In fact, Copland could not counteract the American “culture of performance,” with its fixation on the “world’s greatest” conductor (Arturo Toscanini), pianist (Vladimir Horowitz) and violinist (Jascha Heifetz), all foreign-born. With such non-tonal serial works as the *Piano Quartet* (1940) and *Piano Fantasy* (1957), he effectively ended his compositional search for an idiom satisfying “both us and them.” The latter composition (which we hear), Copland’s most extended composition for solo piano, is in the opinion of his biographer Howard Pollack “possibly Copland’s most challenging work.”

Copland once commented that he opted for serial composition – composing, that is, with a fixed sequence of pitches after the fashion of Arnold Schoenberg’s 12-tone rows – because he “needed more chords.” The result, in the *Piano*

POST-CLASSICAL ENSEMBLE

Fantasy, is music more dissonant than the Copland we know best. At the same time, there are tonal tendencies not to be found in the 12-tone music of Schoenberg, Webern, and other hard-core practitioners. Copland's way of here using a 10-note series in fact has little in common with Schoenberg's precise methodology. And the music still sounds like Copland.

The 30-minute *Piano Fantasy* may be regarded as the final installment in a Copland solo piano triptych also including the *Piano Variations* and the *Piano Sonata* (1939-41). Each work is longer than the one before it. In effect, the Sonata distends the taut *Piano Variations* into a three-movement slow-fast-slow structure. That template is still loosely in place in the *Piano Fantasy*, though the sections proceed without formal demarcation or pause. In part one, declamatory music – a magnificent heraldic opening – dissipates to delicate music. Section two (as in the Sonata) is an ABA scherzo – with driving outer sections and skittish middle. A reprise of the declamatory beginning comes next, than a stately conclusion of gathering energy and intensity, infiltrated by recollections of earlier themes. A final climax yields a pacifying coda.

This evening's pianist, Benjamin Pasternack (whose 2003 Naxos recordings of the *Piano Variations*, *Piano Sonata*, and *Piano Fantasy* is a landmark in the Copland discography) comments: "What makes the *Fantasy* so great is Copland's ability to maintain coherence and unity over the long haul – the piece's integrity as a soundscape. I compare it to the Liszt Sonata for its long arching continuity – the feeling that a tremendous distance has been covered – coupled with tremendous psychological depth and variety. In fact, it's a kind of summation of the composer's personality."

A fresh perspective on this interesting Copland tale has been offered by such young music historians as Elizabeth Crist and Jennifer deLapp Birkett, who have investigated the impact of the Cold War on Copland's abandonment of his populist agenda. Tonight's concert explores how Copland's brush with Senator Joseph McCarthy may have impelled him toward of a more esoteric compositional style.

Joseph Horowitz
Artistic Director, Post-Classical Ensemble

called by *The Washington Post* "a welcome, edgy addition to the musical life of Washington," was created by Angel Gil-Ordóñez and Joseph Horowitz in 2001, and made its official debut in May 2003. "More than an orchestra," it breaks out of classical music, with its implied notion of a high culture remote from popular art. Its concerts regularly incorporate folk song, dance, film, poetry, and commentary in order to serve existing audiences hungry for deeper engagement and to cultivate adventurous new listeners. The ensemble made its sold-out Kennedy Center debut in fall 2005 in *Celebrating Don Quixote*, featuring a commissioned production of Manuel de Falla's sublime puppet opera *Master Peter's Puppet Show*. In 2008-09, it performs at Strathmore, the Harman Center in downtown D.C., the Kennedy Center, and Georgetown University, with which it has initiated an ambitious educational partnership. The Ensemble's concerts have been nationally distributed both by National Public Radio and WFMT Chicago.

THE GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CONCERT CHOIR

is an SATB choral ensemble that performs sacred and secular works from all periods of music history. The Choir performs one major concert each semester (collaborating frequently with other campus ensembles and local artists) and at special ceremonies throughout the year. Auditions are required. The Concert Choir is open to students, faculty, and staff, as well as members of the University community.



BENJAMIN PASTERNAK

Pianist Benjamin Pasternack's recordings include two Copland CDs on Naxos, featuring the *Piano Concerto*, *Piano Variations*, *Piano Sonata*, and *Piano Fantasy* – “The sheer explosion of ideas, coupled with an astonishing array of keyboard variety, hold the attention completely... Playing of razor-sharp clarity and precision,” commented MusicWeb International. Pasternack was for many years closely associated with the Boston Symphony, with which he has appeared as soloist on numerous occasions, including Seiji Ozawa's final tour with the orchestra as music director. In association with Joseph Horowitz, he has taken part in American music festivals featuring music by Dvorak and Arthur Farwell, and Ferruccio Busoni's *Indian Fantasy* for piano and orchestra. He next appears with Post-Classical Ensemble in “A John Adams Snapshot,” April 22, 2009, at the Harman Center for the Arts.

ANGEL GIL-ORDÓÑEZ

is the former associate conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Spain, and has conducted throughout Europe, the United States, and Latin America. In the U.S., he has appeared with the American Composers Orchestra, Opera Colorado, the Pacific Symphony, the Hartford Symphony, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the National Gallery Orchestra in Washington, D.C. Abroad, Mr. Gil-Ordóñez has been heard with the Munich Philharmonic, Solistes de Berne, at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, and at Bellas Artes National Theatre in Mexico City. In summer 2000, he toured the major music festivals of Spain with the Valencia Symphony Orchestra in the Spanish premiere of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*. Born in Madrid, he worked closely with Sergiu Celibidache for more than six years in Germany.

Mr. Gil-Ordóñez has recorded four CDs devoted to Spanish composers, in addition to Post-Classical Ensemble's Virgil Thomson CD/DVD on Naxos. Mr. Gil-Ordóñez also holds the positions of director of orchestral studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and music director of the Wesleyan Ensemble of the Americas. In 2006, the King of Spain awarded him the country's highest civilian decoration: the Royal Order of Queen Isabella.

JOSEPH HOROWITZ

has long been a pioneer in classical music programming, beginning with his tenure as artistic advisor for the annual Schubertiade at New York's 92nd Street Y. As executive director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, resident orchestra of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, he received national attention for “The Russian Stravinsky,” “American Transcendentalists,” “Flamenco” and other festivals exploring the folk roots of concert works. Now an artistic advisor to various American orchestras, he has created more than three dozen interdisciplinary music festivals since 1985. Called “our nation's leading scholar of the symphony orchestra” by Charles Olton, former president of the American Symphony Orchestra League, Mr. Horowitz is also the award-winning author of seven books dealing with the institutional history of classical music in the United States. *Classical Music in America: A History* (2005) was named one of the best books of the year by *The Economist*. A former *New York Times* music critic, Mr. Horowitz writes regularly for the *Times Literary Supplement* (UK). He also contributes frequently to scholarly journals. Last season, he inaugurated the New York Philharmonic's “Inside the Music” series, writing, hosting, and producing a presentation on Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony. His *Artists in Exile: How Refugees from War and Revolution Transformed the American Performing Arts*, was published by HarperCollins in 2008 and will appear in paperback this spring. His Web site is josephhorowitz.com.

CAST & CREW BIOS

MARGARET BONNELL (Associate Technical Director) joins the Georgetown family after spending two years working freelance at theatres in the DC area. Previously she had spent time working for various regional and community theatres in upstate New York, Maine and Alaska. She also toured with *Up with People* (cast C, 2000.)

TOBIN D. CLARK (Production Manager/Associate Producer) has been designing and teaching for 20 years. For Georgetown he designed the lights for Nadine George-Graves' *Anansi the Story King*, images and video for Derek Goldman's workshop of *Right as Rain* and lights and sound for the Arena Stage/Georgetown workshop collaboration of Moises Kaufman's *33 Variations*. He was the lighting designer for Perseverance Theatre's *Macbeth* at the National Museum of the American Indian. Before joining the Georgetown staff Toby was the resident designer and technical director for St Albans and the National Cathedral Schools. Prior to moving to the DC area Toby spent 13 years living and designing in Juneau, Alaska. Toby thanks his beautiful wife, Anita, and his three children Bianca, Rowan and Cameron, who never cease to amaze him.

JENNIFER DELAPP-BIRKETT (Commentary) is a musicologist based in the Washington area who studies the impact of Cold War politics on concert music of the 1950s. The author of an award-winning dissertation, "Copland in the Fifties: Music and Ideology in the McCarthy Era" (University of Michigan, 1997), she has published articles on Aaron Copland, and has presented her research at numerous national and international music conferences. Since 1997 she has taught musicology at George Washington University, Catholic University of America, the University of Maryland (1999-2006), the University of Iowa, and Bowling Green State University. She is presently writing a book on Aaron Copland and the Second Red Scare.

ROBBIE HAYES (Technical Director) serves as the Technical Director for the Theater and Performance Studies Program and the Davis Performing Arts Center. He has been the Lighting Designer for *The Race*, *Wisconsin Death Trip*, *Trees and Ghosts*, *Big Love*, *Eurydice*, *Gospel at Colonus*, *The Skin of our Teeth*, *Dream Boy*, *Right as Rain*, *Sleep*, and *Dr. Korczak and the Children*. He has been the Scenic Designer for *Anansi*, *Stuff Happens*, and *Dr. Korczak and the Children*. DC Design credits include scenery for *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, *This Storm is What We Call Progress*, and *The Skin of our Teeth* (Rorschach Theatre where he is a company member) *As American As*, *Neglect*, and *Getting Out* with Journeyman Theater, *Scenes from the Big Picture* and lighting for *The Drunkard* (Solas Nua), and *Crumble* (*Lay me down Justin Timberlake*) with Catalyst. Chicago area designs include work with Light Opera Works, Northlight Theatre, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Porchlight Music Theatre, Teatro Vista, A Red Orchid Theatre, Empire Theatre, and many others.

JOSEPH MCCARTIN (Commentary) is an Associate Professor of History at Georgetown University. An expert on twentieth century U.S. labor, social and political issues, he is the author of *Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations* (1997), co-author, with Melvyn Dubofsky, of *American Labor: A Documentary Collection* (2004), and co-editor, with Michael Kazin, of *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal* (2006).

MIKE MITCHELL (Aaron Copland, COL '09) is a Junior in the College. His most recent roles at Georgetown include Tony Blair in *Stuff Happens* and Juror 8 in *12 Angry Men*. He thanks all involved in this wonderful production for their talent, hard work, and friendship.

PATRICK WARFIELD (Roy Cohn) is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Georgetown. He holds a Ph.D. in musicology from Indiana University and an undergraduate degree in clarinet from the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Wisconsin. His dissertation (from 2003) is on the early career of the bandmaster, composer, and author John Philip Sousa. Dr. Warfield has published on Sousa in *19th-Century Music Review* and *American Music*. He has presented research on Sousa and music in nineteenth-century Washington, D.C. at meetings of the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music, the International Conference on Nineteenth-Century Music, and the Congress of the Internationale Gesellschaft zur Erforschung und Förderung der Blasmusik. At Georgetown, Dr. Warfield teaches classes on American popular music including surveys of rock,

jazz, blues, and rap. Before coming to Georgetown Dr. Warfield served on the faculties of Towson University and the Peabody Conservatory. He has also delivered lectures for the Smithsonian, the Washington National Opera, and the Chicago Symphony.

CLARK YOUNG (Senator Joseph McCarthy, COL '09) is senior in the college, is thrilled to be participating in this event. Clark has appeared as Walt in *Wisconsin Death Trip*, George W. Bush in *Stuff Happens* and most recently as an ensemble cast member in *The Race*.

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