

# Society of Musical Arts

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director

## *Concert Program*



**Sunday, March 6, 2016**

**4:00 P.M.**

**Maplewood Middle School  
7 Burnet Street  
Maplewood, New Jersey**





This program is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts and administered by the Essex County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs.



SOMA gratefully acknowledges our grant from Essex County DCHA in the amount of \$1,220 for the year 2016.

# Orchestra November 2015

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director

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on September 22, 2015



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# Society of Musical Arts

Stephen Culbertson, Conductor

Sunday, March 6, 2016

4:00 pm

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

## *Water Music, revisited*

### **Vltava (The Moldau)**

**Bedřich Smetana**

*Allegro comodo non agitato* The Source of the Vltava, Hunt in the woods  
*L'istesso tempo, ma moderato* Country Wedding  
*L'istesso tempo* Mondschein; Moonlight dance of the nymphs  
*Poco piu mosso* St. John's rapids  
*Piu moto* The broad flow of the Vltava

### **Sea Pictures, Op. 37**

**Edward Elgar**

1. Sea Slumber-Song
2. In Haven
3. Sabbath Morning at Sea
4. Where Corals Lie
5. The Swimmer

Katy Sumrow, mezzo-soprano

### **Intermission**

### **The Swans at Pungo Lake** (New Jersey Premiere)

**Kenneth Frazelle**

### **On the Waterfront**

**Leonard Bernstein**

*Symphonic Suite from the film (1955)*

**Join us for our next concert!**

Sunday, June 5, 2016

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# Program Notes

by Stephen Culbertson

## **Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)**

### **Vltava (The Moldau)**

During the heyday of his career in Prague, Smetana was primarily known as an opera composer and regarded in his homeland as the father of Czech music – though Dvořák succeeded him in that role during the next generation. But after his initial great success, Smetana suffered a number of setbacks – personally with the deaths of family members, professionally by engaging in the musical politics of the provincial capital, and in his deteriorating health which led to deafness and dementia. Fortunately, Smetana's masterpiece *Ma Vlast* (My Homeland), a series of six symphonic poems, was written during this difficult period. Though often performed as a full-evening complete set, the six movements were conceived and premiered separately. *Vltava* has become the most popular movement and the one most-often performed by itself. In Smetana's own account:

The composition describes the course of the [river] Vltava, starting from the two small springs, the Cold and Warm Vltava, to the unification of both streams into a single current, the course of the Vltava through woods and meadows, through landscapes where a farmer's wedding is celebrated, the round dance of the mermaids in the night's moonshine: on the nearby rocks loom proud castles, palaces and ruins aloft. The Vltava swirls into the St John's Rapids; then it widens and flows toward Prague, past the Vyšehrad, and then majestically vanishes into the distance, ending at the Labe (Elbe).

## **Edward Elgar (1857-1934)**

### **Sea Pictures, Op. 37**

Elgar is very familiar to SOMA audiences: we have previously performed two major symphonic works: *Enigma Variations* and *Cello Concerto*. Elgar originally wrote the songs for a high voice, but transposed them down for the English contralto Clara Butt, who premiered them in 1899 dressed as a mermaid (!) with Elgar conducting. The text of the songs can be found on pgs 8-9.

**Kennith Frazelle (b. 1955)**  
**The Swans at Pungo Lake**

Kennith Frazelle's distinctive voice blends structural and tonal sophistication with a lyric clarity. He has been influenced not only by his study with the great modernist Roger Sessions, but also by the folksongs and landscape of his native North Carolina. The composer's works have been commissioned and performed worldwide by some of today's most prominent artists and ensembles, such as Yo-Yo Ma, Dawn Upshaw, Odetta, Emanuel Ax, Jeffrey Kahane, Paula Robison and many others.

*From the program notes from the premiere:*

For its 75th Anniversary season, the North Carolina Symphony commissioned six composers to create musical "Postcards" to portray various sites in the state. Frazelle chose Pungo Lake, a desolate location near the coast, where tens of thousands of tundra swans and snow geese spend the winter. North Carolina's tidewater wetlands are the winter home of the majority of the world's eastern tundra swans, which nest in Alaska.

In the work, Frazelle explores sweeping helix patterns the thousands of birds form as they gather in and above a large field just before sunset, their white bodies electrified by the brilliant late-day light. The thunderous beating of thousands of wings and the loud drone of the birds' honking are also portrayed.

The piece begins with spacious, undulating music in the marimba, strings and muted brass, suggesting the flat, open landscape. An oboe solo presents a second theme, which gains momentum as more and more lines enter, forming soaring, dancelike shapes. Eventually an accumulation of bird sounds and the thwacking of wings occurs in the entire orchestra, only to fade to the opening spaciousness as the birds disappear.

**Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)**  
**On the Waterfront, Symphonic Suite from the Film**

Bernstein, arguably the greatest musicians of the 20th Century, wrote his first and only film score in 1954. Perhaps that's why he lost out to Dmitri Tiomkin for the Academy Award (remember, this was before *West Side Story* or his tenure as conductor of the NY Philharmonic). The film, a critical (8 Oscars) and commercial success, remains a classic: Brando's "I coulda' been a contender" and Eva Marie Saint's debut perhaps overshadowed one of the all-time great film scores.

The symphonic suite contains almost all of the important music from the film. We hear the brutality of life on the docks, the tender love scenes, the tension of the brothers cab ride, and the fight leading up to the concluding triumph of good over evil. Quintessentially American music!

# Elgar: Sea Pictures, Op. 37

## 1. Sea Slumber-Song

by Roden Noel (1834 - 1894)

Sea-birds are asleep,  
The world forgets to weep,  
Sea murmurs her soft slumber-song  
On the shadowy sand  
Of this elfin land;  
"I, the Mother mild,  
Hush thee, O my child,  
Forget the voices wild!  
Isles in elfin light  
Dream, the rocks and caves,  
Lull'd by whispering waves,  
Veil their marbles bright.  
Foam glimmers faintly white  
Upon the shelly sand  
Of this elfin land;  
Sea-sound, like violins,  
To slumber woos and wins,  
I murmur my soft slumber-song,  
Leave woes, and wails, and sins,  
Ocean's shadowy might  
Breathes good night,  
Good night!"

## 2. In Haven (Capri)

by Caroline Alice Elgar (1848-1920)

Closely let me hold thy hand,  
Storms are sweeping sea and land;  
Love alone will stand.

Closely cling, for waves beat fast,  
Foam-flakes cloud the hurrying blast;  
Love alone will last.

Kiss my lips, and softly say:  
Joy, sea-swept, may fade to-day;  
Love alone will stay.

## 3. Sabbath Morning at Sea

by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

The ship went on with solemn face;  
To meet the darkness on the deep,  
The solemn ship went onward.  
I bowed down weary in the place;  
For parting tears and present sleep  
Had weighed mine eyelids downward.

The new sight, the new wondrous sight!  
The waters around me, turbulent,  
The skies, impassive o'er me,  
Calm in a moonless, sunless light,  
As glorified by even the intent  
Of holding the day glory!

Love me, sweet friends, this Sabbath day.

The sea sings round me while ye roll  
Afar the hymn, unaltered,  
And kneel, where once I knelt to pray,  
And bless me deeper in your soul  
Because your voice has faltered.

And though this sabbath comes to me  
Without the stoled minister,  
And chanting congregation,  
God's Spirit shall give comfort. He  
Who brooded soft on waters drear,  
Creator on creation.

He shall assist me to look higher,  
He shall assist me to look higher,  
Where keep the saints,  
with harp and song,  
An endless sabbath morning,  
An endless sabbath morning,  
And, on that sea commixed with fire,  
And that sea commixed with fire,  
Oft drop their eyelids raised too long  
To the full Godhead's burning.  
The full Godhead's burning.

## 4. Where Corals Lie

by Richard Garnett (1835-1906)

The deeps have music soft and low  
When winds awake the airy spry, [spray]  
It lures me, lures me on to go  
And see the land where corals lie.

By mount and mead, by lawn and rill,  
When night is deep, when moon is high,  
That music seeks and finds me still,  
And tells me where the corals lie.

Yes, press my eyelids close, 'tis well,  
But far the rapid fancies fly  
The rolling worlds of wave and shell,  
And all the lands where corals lie.

Thy lips are like a sunset's glow,  
Thy smile is like a morning sky,  
Yet leave me, leave me, let me go  
And see the land where corals lie.



## 5. The Swimmer

*by Adam Lindsay Gordon (1833-1870)*

With short, sharp violent lights made vivid,  
To southward far as the sight can roam;  
Only the swirl of the surges livid,  
The seas that climb and the surfs that comb.  
Only the crag and the cliff to nor'ward,  
The rocks receding, and reefs flung forward,  
Waifs wreck'd seaward and wasted shoreward,  
On shallows sheeted with flaming foam.

A grim, gray coast and a seaboard ghastly,  
And shores trod seldom by feet of men –  
Where the batter'd hull and the broken mast lie,  
They have lain embedded these long years ten.  
Love! Love! when we wandered here together,  
Hand in hand through the sparkling weather,  
From the heights and hollows of fern and heather,  
God surely loved us a little then.

The skies were fairer, the shores were firmer–  
The blue sea over the bright sand roll'd;  
Babble and prattle, and ripple and murmur,  
Sheen of silver and glamour of gold.

So girt with tempest and winged with thunder,  
And clad with lightning and shod with sleet,  
And strong winds treading the swift waves sunder  
The flying rollers with frothy feet.  
One gleam like a bloodshot sword-blade swims on  
The sky line, staining the green gulf crimson,  
A death stroke fiercely dealt by a dim sun,  
That strikes through his stormy winding sheet.

O, brave white horses! you gather and gallop,  
The storm sprite loosens the gusty reins;  
Now the stoutest ship were the frailest shallop  
In your hollow backs,  
on your high arch'd manes.  
I would ride as never man has ridden  
In your sleepy, swirling surges hidden,  
To gulfs foreshadow'd through straits forbidden,  
Where no light wearies and no love wanes,  
No love, where no love, no love wanes.



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## Katy Sumrow Granieri - Mezzo-Soprano

Katy Sumrow Granieri was born in Gdansk, Poland and raised in Warsaw as well as six years stationed with her family in NYC. Upon return to Poland she graduated from Chopin School of Music in Warsaw in Solo Voice. She received a contract as artist of the chorus with the Polish National Philharmonic under the direction of Prof. Henryk Wojnarowski and toured performing in Europe. In 2002 she became a founding member of Baroque ensemble "Buccina Cantorum" and recorded a CD "Music of the Italian Baroque."

Currently she resides in NJ and is a member of the New Jersey State Repertory Opera and has performed in: *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il Trovatore*, *L'Elisir D'Amore*, *Don Pasquale*, opera concerts *Dazzling Divas*, *Mistaken ID's*, *Villains and Victims*, *April in Paris*, Jodi the Juggler in children's opera *Sid the Serpent who wanted to Sing*, *Shakespeare and Opera-Perfect Together* as well as title role in the opera *Carmen*. Upcoming performances include the role of Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* April 2, 2016 and *A Tribute to the Ladies of Opera* May 14, 2016.

For more information and to hear some of her songs please visit Katy's website (<http://www.katysumrow.com>).

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and  
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acknowledge with sadness  
the passing of our long-time member

**Elizabeth McGilvray**

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# Stephen Culbertson

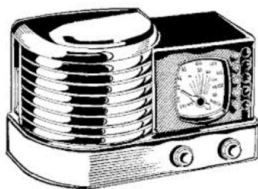
## *Conductor*

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director for the Society of Musical Arts, has conducted over 35 orchestras, opera productions, and ballet companies, ranging from major to community level, in Europe and the United States. Major engagements include a Spoleto USA debut on the 20th-Century Perspective Series and a new production of Prokofiev's Cinderella for the San Joaquin Ballet in California. In recent seasons, Culbertson has appeared with the Montclair Chamber Orchestra and Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. He has served as Music Director of the Sussex County (New Jersey) Community Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Bergen (New Jersey) Philharmonic Orchestra. With the latter two orchestras, he conceived and conducted a series of family concerts for the community to great acclaim. He served on the board of Unity Concerts of NJ and was its Artistic Director for the 2002-3 season. Culbertson's most recent activities include leading the New Jersey Reading Orchestra and serving as interim Music Director at the Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair.

After graduating from University of the Pacific in his native California, Culbertson was awarded a scholarship to study at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki (Finland) with famed conducting teacher Jorma Panula. During his five-year stay, he studied the works of Sibelius with the composer's son-in-law, Jussi Jalas, and conducted most of Finland's major ensembles: The Finnish National Opera, the Helsinki Philharmonic, The Finnish Radio Orchestra, The Vaasa and Tampere Operas, and the Oulu Philharmonic. In addition to conducting, he gained valuable experience (not to mention much-needed income) by singing in a number of professional choruses, including the Finnish Radio Choir, Savonlinna Opera Chorus and the Helsinki Festival production of Britten's Church Parables.

Culbertson introduced Finnish audiences to works by Copland, S.R. Beckler, John Forsman and many others. He introduced local listeners to American music by writing a six-hour series of radio programs entitled A History of American Music for the Finnish Broadcast Corporation. As a guest conductor, Culbertson has worked for the Netherlands Opera and appeared in Czechoslovakia (with the Košice State Philharmonic), Italy, Hungary, and England. Culbertson has been a strong advocate of American music as both a conductor and a publisher. In 1993, he co-founded Subito Music Publishing and became its President in 1997. From 1987 to 1992, he was director of the rental and publications departments for G. Schirmer, Inc., where he supervised the music preparation of, among others, John Corigliano's opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* (for the Metropolitan Opera) and *Symphony No. 1* (for the Chicago Symphony).

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The Society of Musical Arts (SOMA) was founded in 1981 by Dr. Samuel Applebaum, New Jersey's world famous master teacher of the violin. We are continuing Dr. Applebaum's objectives to provide an opportunity for both amateur and professional string musicians to play baroque and classical music in a chamber orchestra and to present free public concerts with multi-generational appeal to the residents of Essex and surrounding counties.

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*Laura Papparatto*, President



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