AMERICAN CLASSICS

Samuel JONES

Symphony No. 3 ‘Palo Duro Canyon’
Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra
Christopher Olka, Tuba
Seattle Symphony • Gerard Schwarz

Also available:

From left to right: Samuel Jones, Gerard Schwarz, Sandra Crowder, Christopher Olka

Photo: Larey McDaniel

8.559155 8.669012-13
Samuel Jones (b. 1935)
Tuba Concerto • Symphony No. 3 'Palo Duro Canyon'

In a distinguished career spanning more than five decades, Samuel Jones has enriched American musical life as a composer, conductor, and educator. His works encompass orchestral, choral, operatic and chamber repertoire, and have been widely performed by leading American orchestras and soloists.

Jones grew up in Indianola and Jackson, Mississippi, and graduated with highest honors from Millsaps College before earning Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in music composition at the Eastman School of Music, where he studied under Howard Hanson. In 1973 he was chosen to establish the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, serving as its founding dean for six years and also as professor of composition and conducting until 1997. Other posts have included conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic in New York and the Saginaw Symphony in Michigan.

Among the works Jones has composed for Seattle Symphony are Janus (for the opening of Benaroya Hall) and Chorale-Overture for Organ and Orchestra (for the Orchestra’s 100th anniversary) as well as the Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra (première in 2006) and the Concerto for Horn and Orchestra (première in 2008.)

Inspired by the visionary work of a world-renowned aeronautical engineer, Samuel Jones’ Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra (composed for the opening of Seattle Symphony’s centennial season in 2003), provides potent contrast. Marked Andante mosso – Adagietto, the second movement begins with a high sustained note in the violins, which is immediately followed and accompanied by a two-chord figure on the harp. Its 6/8 time signature imparts the classic rocking sensation of a barcarolle. The rocking figure recalls the two chords of the opening movement but without the angst found there. The prevailing serenity is shattered by an angular, strident and painful intrusion from the brass that evokes the impact of being confronted with tragic news. Near the movement’s end the tuba player has a solo that contains a brief alternation of major and minor thirds, suggesting both joy and pain, inherent ingredients of life itself.

Also available:

AMERICAN CLASSICS

Henri LAZAROF
Tableaux for Piano and Orchestra

WALTER PISTON
Symphony No. 4 • Three New England Sketches

Capriccio for Harp and String Orchestra
Gerard Schwarz

One of the leading conductors of his generation, Gerard Schwarz has a vast repertoire that includes a major commitment to American music. Schwarz has been Music Director of the Seattle Symphony since 1985, and also serves as Music Director of the Eastern Music Festival. Previously, he has been Music Director of New York’s Mostly Mozart Festival, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and New York Chamber Symphony, as well as Artistic Advisor to Tokyo Bunkamura with the Tokyo Philharmonic. His considerable discography of some 260 releases showcases his collaborations with some of the world’s greatest orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the London Symphony, Berlin Radio Symphony, Orchestra National de France, Tokyo Philharmonic, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, New York Chamber Symphony and the Seattle Symphony, among others. Born to Viennese parents, Schwarz has served on the National Council on the Arts. He has received two Emmy Awards, eleven Grammy nominations, six ASCAP Awards, and numerous Stereo Review and Ovation Awards. In addition, he holds the Ditson Conductor’s Award from Columbia University, was the first American named Conductor of the Year by Musical America, and has received numerous honorary doctorates, including from his alma mater, The Juilliard School. In 2002, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers honored Schwarz with its Concert Music Award, and, in 2003, the Pacific Northwest Branch of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences gave Schwarz its first “IMPACT” lifetime achievement award.

The concluding Largo—Allegro molto drew its specific inspiration from Crowder’s work with wind tunnels. As the composer has written: “One can clearly hear [the great propeller’s] acceleration as it groans toward its predetermined speed. Once there, the tube enters with a perpetuum mobile, illustrating musically the same swirls of air along a wing’s surface that Jim Crowder illustrated virtually in his work. But there are some turbulence that need to be smoothed, so we hear the wind tunnel decelerate, and the aeronautical engineer returns to the basement workshop in his home and listens to his favorite music — Wagner’s Ring — while he mulls over ways to improve the smoothness of the flow, forging new tools, like Siegfried, in the process.”

In “Symphony No. 1,” resulted from a commission by the Amarillo Symphony, which requested a piece that would be based on the famous Palo Duro Canyon, an impressive natural wonder that lies some twenty miles south of Amarillo in the otherwise flat and arid panhandle of Texas. The work’s première on 1st May, 1992, took place, in fact, at the outdoor Amphitheater of Palo Duro Canyon State Park; music director James Setapen conducted the Amarillo Symphony. A television program featuring the Third Symphony has subsequently been broadcast over more than 150 public television stations in the United States.

Regarding the composition of this symphony the composer has written: “I wanted the piece to have many different layers — of sound and of meaning. I wanted it to conjure up an intuitive awareness of the long movements of time required for the creation of a canyon. I also wanted in some way to pay homage to the canyon theme, as if to remind us that human affairs come and go but the canyon (as a metaphor for the earth) preceded us and will endure long after us.”

A recapitulation ushers in the last section, which ends on a single F-sharp major chord. Theoda and truly the entire work, posits a number of existential questions. Again, as the composer has written, “The music can be felt as a journey from ancient prehistory through the relatively recent period of human habitation of the earth on toward the distant future…. In composing the coda… I was haunted by the feeling we
Christopher Olka

Principal tuba of the Seattle Symphony and Seattle Opera, Christopher Olka has had a wide and varied career in music before coming to Seattle. His orchestral experience includes performing with Seiji Ozawa’s Saito Kinen Festival Orchestra, as substitute tuba with the New York Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony, and New Jersey Symphony as well as principal positions with the New Jersey Pops and Aspen Festival orchestras. An active soloist and advocate of solo tuba literature, Olka has performed across the country in recital and master-class as well as soloing with orchestra, windband and various other groups including Seattle Symphony, Cascade Symphony, University of Washington Wind Ensemble, Brass Band Northwest, Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble, Rutgers University Wind Ensemble, and University of Central Florida Wind Ensemble and Orchestra. His education includes a Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School. During his undergraduate studies, Olka was the winner of the Music Teacher’s National Association (MTNA) Collegiate Artist Brass Solo Competition in 1996. He also won the Southeastern Regional MTNA Solo Competition twice and the Florida MTNA Solo Competition three times. Olka’s teachers have included Warren Deck (New York Philharmonic, retired), Joe Alessi (New York Philharmonic), and Abe Torchinsky (Philadelphia Orchestra, retired). Olka currently serves on the School of Music faculty at the University of Washington. He is proud to be a Yamaha Performing Artist.

Seattle Symphony

Seattle Symphony, founded in 1903, has been under the artistic leadership of Music Director Gerard Schwarz since 1985. In 1998, the Orchestra began performing in the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall in downtown Seattle. The Symphony is internationally recognized for its adventurous programming of contemporary works, its devotion to the classics, and its extensive recording history. Seattle Symphony has made more than a hundred recordings, garnered eleven Grammy nominations and received two Emmy Awards. From September through July, the Symphony is heard live by more than 315,000 people. For more information on Seattle Symphony, visit www.seattlesymphony.org.

The revolving members of the string sections are listed alphabetically.
all have had when we lie on our backs and contemplate the stars and through them the universe itself and the ancient mysteries: What does it all mean? What is our role in it? What lasts?

The symphony has divided its tonal universe into three equal parts. Music centered on D (which signifies the creative spirit of the universe). In the end, it is the F sharp which remains, floating, seemingly forever, over all.

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Seaattle Symphony

Photo: Yuen Lui Studio

The revolving members of the string sections are listed alphabetically:

The following is the list of string section members:

- Violin
  - Maria Latunoff, Concertmaster
  - John Weller
  - Simon James
  - Jennifer Bai
  - Mariel Bailey
  - Cecilia Poelchi Buss
  - Jun Liang Du
  - Ayako Gimo
  - Timothy Garland
  - Peter Kuman
  - Leonid Keylin
  - Mikhail Shmidt
  - Clark Story
  - Jeanne Wells Yablonsky
  - Arthur Zadinksy

- Cello
  - Joshua Roman
  - Susan Williams
  - Theressa Enders
  - Amos Yang
  - Walter Gray
  - Bruce Bailey
  - Roberta Hansen Downey
  - Vivian Gu
  - David Sabor

- Bassoon
  - Jordan Anderson
  - Jonathan Green
  - Jonathan Bursnait
  - Jennifer Godfrey
  - Nancy Page Griffin
  - Joseph Kaufman
  - Sandra Lambert
  - Ronald Simon

- English Horn
  - Steven Lowe
  - Scott Geff
  - Judy Kriewall
  - Zarothos Dikoumbourian-Eby

- Oboe
  - Ben Hausmann
  - Stefan Farkas

- Clarinet
  - Christoper Sereque
  - Laura DeLuca
  - Larry McDaniel

- E-Flat Clarinet
  - Stephen Fissel

- Bass Clarinet
  - Christopher Olka

- English Horn
  - Stefan Farkas

- Horn
  - John Cerminaro
  - Mark Robbins
  - Jeffrey Fair
  - Adam Isacone
  - Susan Carroll
  - Scott Wilson

- Trumpet
  - David Goudin
  - Geoffrey Bergler
  - Richard Pressley

- Trombone
  - Christopher Olka

- Bass Trombone
  - Michael Crusoe

- Tuba
  - Christopher Olka

- Timpani
  - Michael Crusoe

- Percussion
  - Randolph Baunton
  - Michael Clark
  - Ron Johnson

- Harp
  - Valerie Muzzolini

- Keyboards
  - Kimberly Russ
  - Joseph Adam
Gerard Schwarz

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Symphony No. 3 was inspired by the Amarillo Symphony, which requested a piece that would be based on the famous Palo Duro Canyon, an impressive natural wonder that lies some twenty miles south of Amarillo in the otherwise flat and arid panhandle of Texas. The work’s première on 1st May, 1992, took place, in fact, at the outdoor Amphitheater of Palo Duro Canyon State Park; music director James Setapen conducted the Amarillo Symphony. A television program featuring the Third Symphony has subsequently been broadcast over more than 150 public television stations in the United States.

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A recapitulation ushers in the last section, which ends on a single F-sharp major chord. The coda, and truly the entire work, poses a number of existential questions. Again, as the composer has written, “The music can be felt as a journey from ancient prehistory through the relatively recent period of human habitation of the earth on toward the distant future.... In composing the coda... I was haunted by the feeling we
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Among the works Jones has composed for Seattle Symphony are *Janus* (for the opening of Benaroya Hall) and *Chorale-Overture for Organ and Orchestra* (for the Orchestra’s 100th anniversary) as well as the *Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra* (première in 2006) and the *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra* (première in 2008.)

Inspired by the visionary work of a world-renowned aeronautical engineer, Samuel Jones’ *Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra* was given its première in 2006 by soloist Christopher Olka with Gerard Schwarz and the Seattle Symphony. The concerto is the result of a commission from the Seattle Symphony with a grant from Sandra Crowder in memory of her late husband, James P. Crowder. Crowder was an aeronautical engineer for The Boeing Company, esteemed for his work in flow visualization, i.e., making it possible to see the motion of air as it flows over solid surfaces at high speed. Crowder’s work with wind tunnels is reflected in the final movement of the work. Additionally, Crowder was an avid patron of the symphony and the opera, and an enthusiastic amateur tuba player.

On the genesis of this concerto for an uncommon solo instrument, the composer has written: “The tuba has amazing range, agility, and versatility, and in the hands of a master performer it can command the stage on an equal footing with any instrument. I wanted to write a piece that would exhibit all this to the fullest extent, and that would spotlight [Seattle Symphony Principal Tubist] Chris Olka’s great artistry at the same time as it made an apt memorial to Jim Crowder’s life and work.” Jones, whose instrument is piano, nevertheless had an insider’s knowledge of brass instrumental performance, having played the euphonium in high school and college.

The opening movement, *Andante con moto*, presents an ascending tuba theme pitted against a swaying two-chord accompanying figure. One hears a fierceness redolent of *Mars* from Holst’s *The Planets*, creating a sense of relentless motion and inexorability. A secondary theme, which incorporates a hymn from Jones’ *Chorale-Overture for Organ and Orchestra* (composed for the opening of Seattle Symphony’s centennial season in 2003), provides potent contrast. Marked *Andante mosso — Adagietto*, the second movement begins with a high sustained note in the violins, which is immediately followed and accompanied by a two-chord figure on the harp. Its 6/8 time signature imparts the classic rocking sensation of a barcarolle. The rocking figure recalls the two chords of the opening movement but without the angst found there. The prevailing serenity is shattered by an angular, strident and painful intrusion from the brass that evokes the impact of being confronted with tragic news. Near the movement’s end the tuba player has a solo that contains a brief alternation of major and minor thirds, suggesting both joy and pain, inherent ingredients of life itself.
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Symphony No. 3 ‘Palo Duro Canyon’
Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra
Christopher Olka, Tuba
Seattle Symphony • Gerard Schwarz
Samuel Jones is a sensitive musician with great imagination, and he is a real craftsman. These works should be part of the core of the great American repertoire” (Gerard Schwarz). Of his Symphony No. 3, Jones writes: “I wanted to capture in music that magical moment which everyone experiences when they first see the flat, treeless high plains fall dizzyingly away into the colorful vastness of the Palo Duro Canyon itself.” His Tuba Concerto, which Schwarz regards as “the finest solo work for that instrument ever produced”, was composed for the performers on this disc to showcase the instrument’s amazing range, agility and versatility and to spotlight Christopher Olka’s great artistry.