

## INSTRUMENTALISTS

### Violin I

Barbara Vaughan,  
Concertmistress  
Susan Cutlip  
Amanda Fish  
Rachel Glenister  
Barbara Horn  
Paul Navratil  
Dianne Tewksbury

### Violin II

Scott Lehmann  
Cheryl Bayline  
Doretta Gladysz  
Molly Haynes  
Mary Lou Morrison  
Jennifer Phipps  
Katlyn Solarek  
Stephanie Wilcox  
Johanna Wolfe

### Viola

Saeko Russell  
Don Shankweiler  
Barbara Gibson  
Barbara Glenister

### Cello

Sondra Boyer  
Cathleen Hammel  
Sara Harkness  
Becca Herman  
John Lenard  
Jena Mitchell  
Jennifer Morenus  
Aramis Ruiz  
Alex Simmons  
Lynelle Solarek

### Bass

Fred Wengrzynek  
Liz Davis-Porter  
Charles Seivard

### Flute

Marissa Bedard  
Joan D'Auria  
Sandra Rosado

### Oboe

Althea Madigan

### Clarinet

Rick Bennett  
Shirley Roe

### Bassoon

Peggy Church  
Bill Clark

### Alto Saxophone

Karen Lendvay  
Carol Sweet

### Tenor Saxophone

Joe Tomanelli

### Baritone Saxophone

Laurie Semprebou

### Horn

Virginia Eurich  
Laura Michaels  
Kurt Scimone  
Lawrence Womack

### Trumpet

Sam Eurich  
Bob Lemons  
Ed Pitkin

### Trombone

Kevin Tracy

### Euphonium

Ross Koning

### Tuba

Josh Murphy

### Percussion

Joel Glenister  
Tara Holm  
Larry Mallon

# WILLIMANTIC ORCHESTRA

David H. Vaughan, Conductor

## HOLIDAY CONCERT

7:30 P.M., Saturday, 03 December 2011  
Shafer Auditorium, ECSU, Willimantic

## PROGRAM

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov	Polonaise from <i>Christmas Eve</i>
Francesco Manfredini	<i>Concerto for the Holy Nativity</i>
	Pastorale (Largo) – Largo – Allegro
	Barbara Vaughan & Paul Navratil, violins
Vladimir Rebikov	Selections from <i>The Christmas Tree</i>
	<i>March of the Gnomes</i>
	<i>Dance of the Clowns</i>
Peter Tchaikovsky	<i>Waltz of the Flowers</i> from <i>The Nutcracker</i>
John Cacavas	<i>Christmas Music for Orchestra</i>
Irving Berlin	"White Christmas"
Leroy Andersen	<i>Sleigh Ride</i>

## PROGRAM NOTES

Polonaise from *Christmas Eve* Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)

The libretto for Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *The Night Before Christmas* (1895) derives from a goofy story (1832) of the same title by Nikolai Gogol. In Russian folklore, the devil roams about on the night before Christmas making trouble—in this case between a pair of peasant sweethearts, leading *her* to demand the impossible of *him*: the Tsarina's slippers. This he manages by turning the tables and forcing the devil to fly him to St. Petersburg, where the Tsarina graciously complies with his request. In the opera, this stately Polish dance introduces the festive scene at the Tsarina's palace.

*Concerto for the Holy Nativity* Francesco Manfredini (1684–1762)

Born in the northern Tuscan city of Pistoia, Manfredini studied violin and composition in Bologna. After a dozen years in the employ of the Prince of Monaco, he returned to the city of his birth to serve as *maestro di cappella* at its cathedral from 1724 until his death. His many oratorios and sacred works have been lost. This concerto, the last of a set of 12 published in 1718 as Op. 3, is among the small number of instrumental works that survive. Its first movement is a pastorale in 12/8 time, very similar in character to the one in *Messiah* (1741) by Manfredini's nearly exact contemporary, George Friedrich Handel (1685–1759). This musical form evokes the music of shepherds; it originated in Italy, where they traditionally came to town on Christmas morning playing pipes and shawms.

Two Selections from *The Christmas Tree* Vladimir Rebikov (1866–1920)

Rebikov was born in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia, far from European Russia. Educated in Moscow and Berlin, he was also something of an outsider in Russian musical life, experimenting with whole-tone scales, polytonality, parallel chords, rhythmic speech, and other unconventional devices. None of this experimentalism is apparent in these pieces from his chamber opera *The Christmas Tree* (1900), based loosely on Hans Christian Andersen's tale, "The Little Match Girl" (1845). Outside a house in which children can be seen through a window dancing around a lighted tree on Christmas Eve, a poorly-dressed girl begs to no avail. Beseeking her dead mother to come for her, she lies down and falls asleep. Transported in a dream to a palace where a prince seats her on a throne before an enormous Christmas tree, she is entertained by a procession of gnomes, dancing clowns and Chinese dolls until, warm and happy, she is led by her mother up a staircase into the starry sky. Back in this world, snow falls on her freezing body lying beneath the window, now dark.

*Waltz of the Flowers* Peter Tchaikovsky (1840–93)

Like Rebikov's opera, Tchaikovsky's last ballet *The Nutcracker* (1891) follows a girl from reality to fantasy on Christmas Eve, as the nutcracker Clara has been given comes to life, defeats the Mouse King, and is transformed into a prince who carries her off to the Land of Sweets to be entertained. However, the story on which it is based, E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" (1816), can't compete with Andersen's tale for darkness, and the ballet's scenario does not dwell on its disquieting aspects. The famous *Valse des Fleurs* is among the dances staged for Clara in Act II. Tchaikovsky's brilliant score betrays nothing of his troubles at the time. His long-time financial backer and confidant, Nadezhda von Meck, had recently broken off the relationship, pleading poverty; his sister Sasha died just as Tchaikovsky began working on the ballet; and its

scenario failed to inspire him, leading the composer to doubt his artistic powers. In May 1891 Tchaikovsky confessed that "writing the ballet has cost me an effort because I could feel a decline in my powers of invention," adding later that "this work has tired me out (I think the old man is beginning to be played out)."

*Christmas Music for Orchestra* John Cacavas (b.1930)

A native of South Dakota, Cacavas studied music and composition at Northern State and Northwestern, after which he was welcomed into the Army as an arranger for the U.S. Army Band in Washington. After his discharge, he worked in New York as composer and arranger for major music publishers. In 1973, having spent several years in London establishing himself as a film composer, he settled in Beverly Hills (where he still resides) to work full-time in television and film. In the course of his long career, Cacavas has composed and arranged a vast amount of music (including some 2,000 works for school instrumental and choral ensembles), written several books, appeared as guest conductor with numerous orchestras, and served in professional organizations such as the Composers Guild of America. *Christmas Music for Orchestra* is a medley of traditional carols.

"White Christmas" Irving Berlin (1888–1989)

Berlin (then "Israel Baline") emigrated from Russia to New York with his parents at age 5. The family struggled financially, and to spare his mother the expense of bringing him up after his father's death, Berlin ran away from home at age 14, supporting himself largely by singing—for spare change outside caberets, for tips as a waiter—and song-writing. His hit song "Alexander's Rag-time Band" (1911) brought him national attention, and for the next 50 years he enjoyed phenomenal success as a song-writer and composer for Broadway and Hollywood. "White Christmas" (1941) was written for the film *Holiday Inn*, starring Bing Crosby as an entertainer who retires from the New York stage to run a country inn open only for holidays. The film was no more than a vehicle for Berlin's songs, one for each holiday: "Easter Parade", "Let's Say It With Firecrackers", "Plenty To Be Thankful For," and "White Christmas." He was especially proud of "White Christmas," modestly describing it as "not only the best song I ever wrote, [but] the best song *anybody* ever wrote." It was inspired by a recollection of being in Los Angeles—which can't put on a proper winter—over the holidays, wishing he were back in New York. The orchestration is by Robert Russell Bennett.

*Sleigh Ride* Leroy Anderson (1908–76)

Born in Cambridge (MA) to Swedish emigrés, Anderson began composing in high school. He studied composition at Harvard, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in music, but switched fields to Scandinavian languages after failing to win a fellowship that would have allowed him to study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Music remained Anderson's passion, however, and as extracurricular musical activities claimed more of his time and interest, he quit his doctoral program to work as a professional arranger. His big break came in 1936, when the Boston Pops asked for an arrangement of Harvard songs, leading to commissions from Arthur Fiedler for encore pieces. Most of his best-known works—including *Sleigh Ride* (1948)—were written in the decade after World War II, when he served as the Pops' *de facto* Arranger and Composer. His light and tuneful pieces, which sound so unlabored, were the product of a good deal of labor; Anderson was a careful craftsman, who often spent several months writing and re-writing a short piece.

{Notes by S. K. Lehmann}