

# The North Cobb Wind Symphony 2020 GMEA Conference Performance Program Notes

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## Mt. Everest, Rossano Galante

Comprised of robust brass melodies, sweeping woodwind lines, and rhythmic ostinato, this composition captures the epic grandeur and beauty of Everest, the highest mountain on earth.

## Acadiana, Frank Ticheli

The composer writes, "The word Acadiana refers to a region comprising much of the southern half of the state of Louisiana, where Cajun culture and heritage are most predominant. **Acadiana** honors that heritage, and completes a trilogy of Cajun inspired works I have composed for concert band over a twenty-five year period. The trilogy, comprised of *Cajun Folk Songs*, *Cajun Folk Songs II*, and the present work, draws from personal childhood memories growing up in South Louisiana, and captures in music my lifelong love of Cajun music and culture."

*Acadiana* is composed in three movements. The first is a bright and lively dance that makes use of two different Cajun rhythmic features: 1) *un valse in deux temps* (a waltz in two times), a Cajun dance rhythm that alternates between triple and duple meters; and, later in the movement, 2) a lively Cajun two-step dance.

The second movement, composed in memory of the victims of Hurricane Katrina, serves as the emotional heart of the entire work. It is constructed as a set of six variations on an ancient Cajun ballad, *La fille de quatorze ans*, (The fourteen-year-old-girl). The melody, which doesn't appear until about ninety seconds into the movement, is first stated by the piccolo and tuba four octaves apart from each other. As the variations unfold, the music slowly grows in volume and speed, finally bursting out into a wildly chaotic climax. Amidst this chaos, several old Cajun folk songs make short, cameo appearances, and combine with original music to create a complex, frenzied texture that reminds me of some of the wonderful melodic pastiches of American composer Charles Ives. The energy eventually collapses into dark and powerful sustained brass chord, which in turn slowly gives way to a final, prayer-like statement of the melody.

Beginning without a pause, the final movement is an exalted dance that makes use of a variant on an old Cajun folk melody whose origins are clouded by history (as is the case with so many folksongs). The tune may have first appeared in the folksong *Jeunes gens campagnard* (Young Country Gentlemen); however, many years later, in the late 1920s, a variant of the tune was used for the song *Allons a Lafayette* (Let's go to Lafayette). My own melodic variant is quite removed from either of these ascendants, while still upholding their inherent joie de vivre. From beginning to end, the finale is an exuberant celebration of life. As is the trilogy itself.

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## **Song for Lyndsay, Andrew Boysen**

***Song for Lyndsay*** was commissioned by Jack Stamp at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. It is an expansion on a short and unnamed piano piece that Boysen wrote for his wife, Lyndsay, in 2005.

The wind piece is larger in length and scope than the source material; in the score, Boysen describes it as “a very personal work ... more than anything else a simple love song dedicated to Lyndsay and what she has meant in my life.”

The piano piece is used as a starting point, and the material in the winds is either based on or a direct quotation of it. Lyrical in nature, solo horn and solo flute are prominent throughout; this scoring is deliberately and symbolically used because Boysen plays the horn and his wife plays the flute.

## **Diamond Tide, Viet Cuong**

A 2010 article published in Nature Physics details an experiment in which scientists were able to successfully melt a diamond and, for the first time, measure the temperature and pressure necessary to do so. When diamonds are heated to very high temperatures, they don't melt; they simply turn into graphite, which then melts (and the thought of liquid graphite isn't nearly as appealing or beautiful as liquid diamond.) Therefore, the addition of extremely high pressure—40 million times the pressure we feel on Earth at sea level—is crucial to melt a diamond.

The extreme temperature and pressure used in this experiment are found Neptune and Uranus, and scientists therefore believe that seas of liquid diamond are possible on these two planets. Oceans of diamond may also account for these planets' peculiar magnetic and geographic poles, which do not line up like they do here on Earth. Lastly, as the scientists were melting the diamonds, they saw floating shards of solid diamond forming in the pools—just like icebergs in our oceans. Imagine: distant planets with oceans of liquid diamond filled with bergs of sparkling solid diamonds drifting in the tide...

These theories are obviously all conjecture, but this alluring imagery provided heaps of inspiration for *Diamond Tide*, which utilizes the “melting” sounds of metallic water percussion and trombone glissandi throughout.

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**Folk Dances, Dmitri Shostakovich, arr. H. Robert Reynolds**

Composed in Shostakovich's light-hearted style, this single-movement work is filled with the joy and exuberance of the Russian people. The many folk melodies are combined in a string so that musical energy abounds and the spirit of folk dances can easily be imagined. This popular wind band work by the Soviet-era composer Dmitri Shostakovich was originally composed in 1943 as the third movement, *Dance of Youth, of My Beloved Country*, Op. 63. It was first arranged for Russian bands by Mark Vakhutinskii in 1970 and edited for American bands by H. Robert Reynolds nine years later.