



SEPTEMBER 11, 2010—HEROIC PORTRAITS PROGRAM NOTES

Jeff Tyzik ***Bravo!Colorado***

Bravo!Colorado is a programmatic composition inspired by my visits to Colorado. Over the past 16 years, I have had the great opportunity to conduct the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra at the Bravo Music Festival held in the Vail Valley. I was fortunate to meet President Gerald Ford and First Lady Betty Ford on many occasions and I composed this suite in their honor after learning of President Ford's passing.

In *Majestic Mountains*, I recall seeing the Rockies up close for the very first time. The mountains seemed to go on forever and that is reflected in the melody that is played and echoed in the brass section and timpani. The melody in the strings is meant to depict the expansive view that unfolded before me. The brass section is also the musical "stone and granite" of the Majestic Mountains.

On my very first visit to Vail, I took a hike up in the mountains and was amazed at how beautiful and quiet it was. There were beautiful wildflowers and birds. It was so peaceful. I've also spent serene moments in the Betty Ford Alpine Garden in Vail. *Alpine Garden* is dedicated to Betty Ford. The wildflowers, birds, wind, peace and serenity are all reflected in the music.

On drives through Glenwood Canyon, I would stop and watch the whitewater rafters along the river. After a good rain, I loved to watch the turbulent yet beautiful rushing water in the gorge. I've never had the courage to go rafting so *Whitewater*, with its twists and turns and high energy, is my musical fantasy about racing down the river over the rapids.

Jeff Tyzik

I'm so thrilled to have my friend Michael Buttermann conducting my composition, and especially in Colorado. Bravo!

About Jeff Tyzik

Jeff Tyzik has earned a reputation as one of America's foremost pops conductors. A consummate musician, Tyzik is recognized for his brilliant arrangements, original programming and engaging rapport with audiences of all ages. Celebrating his 15th season as Principal Pops Conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, during the 2008/09 season, Tyzik also began a new role as Principal Pops Conductor of the Oregon Symphony and continues to serve as Principal Pops Conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his titled posts, Tyzik is highly sought after as a guest conductor across North America, with recent guest appearances including the Boston Pops, the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. Tyzik holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the Eastman School of Music. He lives in Rochester, New York, with his wife, Jill. For more information about Jeff Tyzik, please visit www.jefftyzik.com.

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Fanfare for the Common Man

Tonight's presentation of Copland's iconic work features an original work of photochoreography by guest artist James Westwater. Commissioned in honor of the citizens of Boulder County on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Macky Auditorium, this musical/visual synthesis celebrates the volunteers and staff who make possible the good deeds of eleven local non-profits: Boulder County AIDS Project, Boulder Shelter for the Homeless, Care Connect Boulder County, Carriage House Community Table, Community Foundation, Imagine!, Intercambio, Neck-Lace 4 Life, Providers Advancing School Outcomes, Sister Carmen Community Center, and Turning the Wheel. Scored for brass and percussion.

In the late 1930s, Aaron Copland began to seek a way to draw people back into the concert hall, develop new audiences and energize orchestral music. Copland abandoned his earlier austere style for a new "simple" approach, which often quoted folk music and used an approachable musical language in an effort to remedy the problem. He often incorporated jazz-inspired rhythms and elements of popular songs to express his ideas and attract new listeners. To many people, Copland's style defines Americanism in music. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his *Fanfare for the Common Man*, a work that is familiar to practically everyone. However, most listeners do not realize that this piece was the result of a commission from a British conductor.

In early 1942, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conductor Eugene Goossens invited 17 leading composers to submit fanfares to be performed at subscription concerts throughout the upcoming season. World War II had just begun and Goossens wanted to do his part to arouse patriotic sentiment. Each fanfare would honor some aspect of the war effort, usually showcasing a branch of the military or an ally.

Of the fanfares, only Copland's has earned a lasting place in the repertoire. Beginning with assertive, almost aggressive, percussion, the work soon introduces the familiar upward-reaching theme in the brass. Probably the most striking element in this short work is the overwhelming feeling of nobility that Copland conjures not for an exalted leader or nation, but for ordinary citizens. Copland described his fanfare as a work to bring honor to "the common man, who, after all, was doing all the dirty work in the war and in the army." The importance of this stirring miniature cannot be overestimated, as Copland included a reworked version of the fanfare in the finale of his Third Symphony, composed to celebrate the end of World War II.

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Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Lincoln Portrait

This work received its premiere on May 14, 1942, by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra with Andre Kostelanetz conducting. It is scored for two piccolos, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, celesta, harp, and strings.

Tonight's performance will be accompanied by "The Eternal Struggle," commissioned by the Orlando Philharmonic and the Akron Symphony Orchestra.

Referred to by Leonard Bernstein as the "Dean of American Music," Aaron Copland reveled in his role as its elder statesman in the later years of his life. Although he came from a working-class immigrant family, Copland's training was unsurpassed. After early studies in New York, he sailed to France in 1921 for intense lessons at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau just outside Paris. Among the distinguished faculty, noted pedagogue Nadia Boulanger's reputation stood above all others, teaching generations of American composers from Copland to Philip Glass. His return to the United States in 1925 was marked by the triumphant premiere of his *Organ* Symphony at a New York concert.

Barely in his twenties at the time, Copland used harmonies that were often dissonant and abrasive, making him somewhat of a renegade among American composers. Although he was highly respected in his field, Copland was still unsatisfied that his music did not reach a wider audience like that of George Gershwin or Irving Berlin, both of whom were from similar backgrounds. By 1938, largely following the model of Mexican composer Carlos Chávez, he had devised a new populist style that enlivened concert music with a more popular style.

Just after the Pearl Harbor attacks in December of 1941, conductor Andre Kostelanetz suggested that Virgil Thomson, Jerome Kern and Aaron Copland each compose a work based on the life of an American icon. Copland first considered Walt Whitman, but Kostelanetz steered him away from the poet, as Kern had already begun composing his *Portrait for Orchestra of Mark Twain*. (Thomson's offering was entitled *The Mayor La Guardia Waltzes*.) Copland immediately turned to Lincoln.

Concerned about the Herculean task of portraying the 16th president through music alone, Copland decided to include a narrator who would recite excerpts from Lincoln's letters and speeches. The composer unified the music by quoting several American songs, including the folk tune "Springfield Mountain" and Stephen Foster's "Camptown Races." The combination is a highly effective piece of Americana.

Despite its sincere Americanism, *Lincoln Portrait* became the source of great controversy in late 1952. Because of Copland's support of the "common man," his past sentiments had sometimes echoed those shared by organizations created to protect workers in the United States and abroad – among them, the Friends for Russian Freedom and the American-Soviet Music Society. He had been friends with several socialists in the 1930s and had supported his friend and fellow composer Dmitri Shostakovich at the World Peace Conference in 1949. After the 1952 election, *Lincoln Portrait* had been chosen to be performed as part of President Eisenhower's inaugural celebration, but a few conservative congressmen – most notably, Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy and Illinois Representative Fred Busbey – objected to the work's inclusion and labeled Copland as a suspected communist. He was blacklisted and ordered to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Because of Copland's crime of guilt by association, this overtly American work was pulled from the festivities. If anything, this controversy helped Copland's career and *Lincoln Portrait* has never left the repertoire.

The work is in three sections. Copland stated that the opening was meant to suggest "the mysterious sense of fatality that surrounds Lincoln's personality." The middle section is more brisk, suggesting "the background of the times he lived" and quoting Stephen Foster's "Camptown Races" throughout. The final section introduces the narrator. Copland wrote, "My sole purpose was to draw a simple but impressive frame about the words of Lincoln himself." The result is a stirring gem of Americana.

TEXT

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history." That is what he said. That is what Abraham Lincoln said.

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation. We, even we here, hold the power and bear the responsibility." [Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1862]

He was born in Kentucky, raised in Indiana, and lived in Illinois. And this is what he said. This is what Abe Lincoln said.

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves and then we will save our country." [Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1862]

When standing erect he was six feet four inches tall, and this is what he said.

He said: "It is the eternal struggle between two principles, right and wrong, throughout the world. It is the same spirit that says 'you toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation, and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle." [Lincoln-Douglas debates, October 15, 1858]

Lincoln was a quiet man. Abe Lincoln was a quiet and a melancholy man. But when he spoke of democracy, this is what he said.

He said: "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy." [Manuscript, August 1, 1858]

Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of these United States, is everlasting in the memory of his countrymen. For on the battleground at Gettysburg, this is what he said:

He said, "That from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion. That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain. That this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth." [Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863]

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James Westwater ***The Eternal Struggle***

In anticipation of Lincoln's bicentennial, Christopher Wilkins, conductor of the Orlando Philharmonic and the Akron Symphony, asked me to create a new piece of symphonic photochoreography set to Aaron Copland's classic, *Lincoln Portrait*. I was honored by the request and both challenged and humbled by the prospect of such a weighty undertaking.

To create the new piece of photochoreography, I listened to Copland's work, carefully noting the character of the music and the feelings and thoughts it evoked in me as the music progressed. Next I reviewed more than 10,000 historic photographs in the Library of Congress collection to identify images of appropriate subjects that I thought would both depict the themes of the piece and fit the character of the score.

As I viewed many of the photographs of that era, I felt a definite connection with the people in those pictures—the *real* people who actually lived that horrific experience where 620,000 combatants died! Our common humanity permeated their faces.

As fate would have it, I also have a direct connection with the subject matter of the piece; my great, great grandfather and namesake, James Westwater, was a stationmaster on the Underground Railroad in Columbus. Risking imprisonment, fines and worse under the Fugitive Slave Law, James and his co-workers on “the road” helped an estimated 50,000 slaves reach freedom in Canada.

The title of the piece, *The Eternal Struggle*, comes from Lincoln's own words contained in the narration for *Lincoln Portrait*. “It is the eternal struggle between two principles, right and wrong, throughout the world....” Though most of *The Eternal Struggle* deals with Lincoln, slavery and the Civil War, another very significant theme is a legacy of conflict: the ongoing struggle for freedom, justice and equality. I included photographs from the civil rights movement toward the end of the piece to emphasize the connection between what Lincoln and others began—and what continues today.

Reflecting on *The Eternal Struggle*, I'm reminded of a quote attributed to the great thinker and leader, Mahatma Gandhi—words that could have been echoed by Martin Luther King, Jr. “If there is a loser, the battle isn't over.” The struggle for freedom, justice, equality, fairness and peace will continue until we truly learn to treat *everyone* with tolerance, respect, kindness and love. In such a world there will be no “losers.” We will *all* be “our Brothers' keepers”—true friends together in the “family of Man.”

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 (Eroica)

Born December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany

Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

The work was premiered in a private concert at Prince Lobkowitz's Vienna palace in late 1804. It was first performed publicly on April 7, 1805, at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna with Beethoven conducting. It is scored for pairs of woodwinds, three horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

When the French Revolution exploded in 1789, Beethoven resided in his birth city of Bonn. As an artistic and politically aware young man, he was attuned to the revolutionary cause because of the large number of French refugees passing through the city. The triumph of the common man over aristocratic oppression is a theme that resounds in much of Beethoven's music.

Probably the most familiar story of the composer's association with this cause centers on his *Eroica* Symphony. The work was originally to be dedicated to Napoleon – an idea first suggested to him in 1798 by General Bernadotte, the French ambassador to Austria. Prior to crowning himself Emperor on May 18, 1804, Napoleon was widely regarded as a champion of the peasant and as an advocate of the rights of man. The *Eroica* Symphony was completed in the spring of 1804 and was destined to be the *Bonaparte* Symphony until Beethoven heard of Napoleon's egotistic and tyrannical accession to the throne. The traditional tale, as recorded by Beethoven's pupil Ferdinand Ries, recounts that the composer ripped apart the title page.

“In this symphony Beethoven had Bonaparte in mind, but as he was when he was First Consul. Beethoven esteemed him greatly at the time and likened him to the greatest Roman consuls. I as well as several of his more intimate friends saw a copy of the score lying upon his table with the word ‘Bonaparte’ at the extreme top of the title page, and at the extreme bottom ‘Luigi van Beethoven,’ but not another word. Whether and with what the space between was to be filled out, I do not know. I was the first to bring him the intelligence that Bonaparte had proclaimed himself Emperor, whereupon he flew into a rage and cried out: ‘Is he then, too, nothing more than an ordinary human being? Now he, too, will trample on all the rights of man and indulge only his ambition. He will exalt himself above all others, become a tyrant!’ Beethoven went to the table, took hold of the title page by the top, tore it in two, and threw it on the floor. The first page was rewritten and only then did the symphony receive the title *Sinfonia eroica*.”

Reis was mistaken about the addition of the title *Sinfonia eroica*, as musicologists know that this description was not attached to the work until its publication two years later. At the same time, the dedication was changed to, “Composed to Celebrate the Memory of a Great Man.”

While *Eroica* (Heroic) describes the subject of Beethoven's work, it could also refer to the revolutionary character of his music. Lasting nearly twice as long as any other symphony to date, this work shatters any premise of Classical style. The symphony opens with two accented fortissimo E-flat major chords, violent stabbing the silence and leaving no doubt as to the tonality of the work. The unpredictable mammoth first movement unfolds with a triadic theme in the lower strings, giving way to a long and stormy transition section. The clarinets and oboes present the lyrical second theme. To close the exposition, Beethoven introduces yet another melody, this time in the guise of a codetta. The development section is longer than

most entire first movements of Beethoven's time. New material again turns up and extensive fragmentation of the previous themes fills this section. Harmonic clashes and seemingly wrong notes occur freely. After the customary recapitulation, Beethoven launches an enormous coda, lasting nearly as long as the entire symphony to this point and acting as a second development section.

The funeral march, in rondo form, is military in nature with its dotted rhythms, and resembles the music of French Revolution composers. The lively scherzo begins with pianissimo strings and shifting rhythmic patterns. The rousing trio features a noble fanfare played by three horns.

The finale is a theme and variations drawn from Beethoven's own ballet, *The Creatures of Prometheus*. The 12 variations span nearly every style of the day and grow in complexity as the movement progresses. The central fugue is proof of Beethoven's mastery of contrapuntal technique and provides increasing tension. The coda is a triumphant final statement of heroism – both historical and musical.

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