BOULDER PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Michael Butterman, conductor

CU University Singers
Gregory Gentry, Director of Choral Studies

CU University Choir
David Kates, conductor

Boulder Ballet
Alex Davidson, choreographer

Frequent Flyers® Aerial Dance
Nancy Smith, choreographer

Saturday, November 2, 2013
Macky Auditorium, CU Boulder
6:30 pm Pre-Concert Talk
7:30 pm Performance

Mason Bates
*Rusty Air in Carolina*
(b. 1977)

Leonard Bernstein
Chichester Psalms
(1918 – 1990)

- Intermission -

Aaron Copland
Suite from “The Tender Land”
(1900 – 1990)

Aaron Copland
*Appalachian Spring*

Programs and artists are subject to change.
The use of cameras and electronic devices is strictly prohibited.
CU UNIVERSITY CHOIR AND UNIVERSITY SINGERS

University Choir of the University of Colorado at Boulder is a highly select undergraduate ensemble that has made numerous conference appearances and international tours over the years. The group has been invited to perform at the 2014 Colorado Music Educators Conference.

University Singers is a highly select chamber ensemble from the University of Colorado at Boulder. The group is comprised of graduate and undergraduate student singers who have an extensive background in choral singing.

Gregory Gentry is Director of Choral Studies at the University of Colorado where he administers the doctoral, masters and undergraduate choral conducting programs. As Phoenix Symphony Chorus Master (2005-2012), Dr. Gentry prepared the Phoenix Symphony Chorus for pieces including Puccini’s Messa di Gloria, the North American premiere of In Principio by Arvo Pärt, On the Transmigration of Souls and Nixon in China by John Adams, the world premiere of Mark Grey’s Enemy Slayer: A Navajo Oratorio and Golijov’s Ainadamar in collaboration with Dawn Upshaw and Kelley O’Connor. His collegiate choirs have performed at conferences for the American Choral Directors Association, National Collegiate Choral Organization, Society for American Music, Music Educators National Conference and College Music Society.

David Kates conducts the University Singers and teaches Choral Conducting at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Over his career, Dr. Kates has conducted choral-orchestral works with the Colorado Chamber Orchestra, the Boulder Philharmonic, the Littleton Symphony Orchestra and the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra. Recent performances of major works include Honegger’s King David, Vivaldi’s Gloria and Dvořák’s Te Deum.

BOULDER BALLET

The origins of Boulder Ballet begin with the Ballet Arts Studio, founded by former American Ballet Theatre dancer Larry Boyette and British dancer Barbara Demaree. The first performing company, Boulder City Ballet, was founded in 1982 by Barbara Demaree and Wanda Tierney. In 1985 the company changed its name to Boulder Ballet Ensemble, and in 1995 to Boulder Ballet. Since 1989, Boulder Ballet has enjoyed a partnership with the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra in presenting classical ballets complete with professional scenery, costumes, lighting designs, and casts of up to 100 dancers. The organization’s rich history includes bringing classic, contemporary, and uniquely theatrical ballet to an audience that stretches from Estes Park to Highlands Ranch, in venues from the 2,000-seat Macky Auditorium, to historic Boulder Theater in downtown Boulder, to outdoor amphitheaters throughout the Denver-metro area.

Artistic Directors since 2004, Ana Claire and Peter Davison have continued to build on the proud tradition of artistic excellence through innovation. They have challenged their dancers and enlightened their audiences with the versatile productions from the contemporary Stepping Out, to the classic The Nutcracker, to the timeless tale of Cinderella. Peter Davison’s own creative choreography is a mesmerizing synergy of dancers and unusual props. Peter’s innovation was recognized with the 2009 New York Ballet Builders Award, which resulted in Boulder Ballet’s New York premiere of his critically acclaimed Cirque D’Amour. With a profound respect for their art, the duo has expanded and refined the company’s season to over 20 performances reaching over 20,000 in the Denver-metro area and beyond.

Alex Davison, choreographer, began dance training at age seven in his father’s Boyz Dance classes, and the love he discovered for dance, juggling, mime, theater, and object manipulation has influenced his life ever since. Boyz Dance soon led to ballet with his mother, and the opportunity to spend summers studying on full scholarship at Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle and American Ballet Theatre in New York City. After winning the regional Grand Prix award in the Youth America Grand Prix competition, Davison would later return to New York and dance as one of the top ten male finalists from around the world.

After graduating from Boulder High School, Davison attended the Miami City Ballet Summer Course at the personal invitation of
the company’s artistic director, renowned New York City Ballet dancer Edward Villella. While at the summer course, Davison was offered a full scholarship to study at the school’s year round program, which culminated in performances of Balanchine’s *Serenade* and *Four Temperaments*. Davison was then offered a spot in the Miami City Ballet as a company apprentice, performing in different cities around Florida and joining the company for a three-week tour to Paris in which he danced at the Théâtre du Châtelet. After returning to the States, Davison headed home to Boulder to take a break and heal from what had become a chronic back injury. Davison is pleased to be choreographing again for Boulder Ballet.

**FREQUENT FLYERS AERIAL DANCE**

Frequent Flyers® Aerial Dance is a professional performing arts company and school located in Boulder. Celebrating their 25th anniversary in 2013, Frequent Flyers’ critically acclaimed performances have reached over 150,000 audience members since 1988. In 2010, Frequent Flyers® opened a beautiful aerial studio for classes, private lessons, the Professional Training program, camps, rehearsals, Student Company, and outreach programs. Frequent Flyers’ youth programs include: Kids Who Fly for at-risk youth; the Student Company pre-professional program for ages 8- adult; lecture/demonstrations for schools; and Aerial Sci-Arts: Physics and the Low-Flying Trapeze for high school students. Frequent Flyers® is also home to the world-renowned Aerial Dance Festival bringing people from all over the globe to Boulder for a two-week immersion each August. Now in its 15th year, Frequent Flyers’ Festival was the first of its kind and is still the largest in the world. Frequent Flyers® has the only Aerial Dance Professional Training program in the country. Students wishing to pursue an M.F.A. in dance at the University of Colorado, Boulder, also have the opportunity to focus on aerial as part of their degree.

**Nancy Smith** is the founder and artistic director of Frequent Flyers® Productions, a 501(c)3 non-profit, since its inception in 1988 and the international Aerial Dance Festival since 1999. Ms. Smith has developed the Aerial Release Technique (A.R.T.), which she has taught around the U.S. Ms. Smith’s A.R.T. is the foundation for the Frequent Flyers’ teaching method. Dancers training with Ms. Smith gain mastery in the air and beautiful transitions from the ground to the air and back again.

Ms. Smith has received numerous awards and honors including “Women Who Light the Community,” the “Cutting Edge” Award from the Colorado Dance Alliance, the Boulder County “Pacesetters Award for Arts and Entertainment,” a Neodata Endowment Fellowship in Dance, and the “Arts Innovation Award” from the Colorado Federation of the Arts. Ms. Smith and colleague Jayne Bernasconi co-authored the first book on aerial dance, *Aerial Dance*, available from Human Kinetics. For more information: www.frequentflyers.org

**PROGRAM NOTES**

**MASON BATES (b. 1977)**

*Rusty Air in Carolina*

*The composer has provided the following notes:*

To begin with: I’m a Virginian. Perhaps to anyone in the Carolinas, the task of conjuring up the rich summer noise of the South and pairing it with orchestral textures should be a job for an authentic Carolinian. But the memories are so vivid from that summer in Brevard—where I spent several months at the music festival there as a teenager—that some sort of homage seemed necessary, so state pride will have to take a back seat.

Not only did the thick buzzing of cicadas and katydids always accompany the concerts there, but sometimes it was the music itself: on more than one occasion, I remember sitting on the porch of 100-year-old Nan Burt and listening to the sounds of summer while she told stories from her long life. This venerable lady was introduced to me by the assistant conductor at the festival, Robert Moody—who, a mere ten years older than me, would become a dear friend and collaborator. When Bob took the helm at The Winston-Salem Symphony and asked if I might write a new piece for him, perhaps his own return to the Carolinas inspired *Rusty Air*. Though he travels the world, he’s a Greenville boy.

The work uses electronics to bring the white noise of the Southern summer into the concert.
hall, pairing these sounds with fluorescent orchestra textures that float gently by. “Nan’s Porch” begins at dusk, while the katydids make their chatter. Three orchestral clouds—each inhabiting a different harmony, register, and orchestration—hover in the heavy air, and they ultimately begin to meld together when the cicadas start their singing. The climax of this movement sends us into “Katydid Country,” when the ambience of the first movement evolves into a bluesy, rhythmic tune. The clicks of the katydids become a beat track over which the orchestra, in a smaller, more chamber setting, riffs on a simple tune inspired by old-time blues. It is said that katydids are loudest at midnight, and as the work reaches its central point, the rhythmic katydid music at last finds its melody. Soaring in the strings over the last breaths of the blues tune, this long-lined melody moves us into “Southern Midnight.” The three distinct textures from the opening return, but now each is brought to life by a phrase of the melody. At the close of this lyrical section, we hover in that strange space between night and day, when only the singing of the first bird alerts us to the approaching dawn. But it is a hot, Southern dawn, both sparkling and heavy, with the air made rusty again by the buzzing cicadas. The bluesy tune begins to creep back into the middle register, while above and below figuration buzzes about in different tonalities.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918 – 1990)
Chichester Psalms

Undoubtedly, Leonard Bernstein’s greatest popular success was the musical West Side Story, written in collaboration with lyricist Stephen Sondheim and choreographer Jerome Robbins. In 1964, riding on the wave that had followed West Side Story (and Candide a few years earlier), the composer decided to create a new musical based on Thornton Wilder’s play, The Skin of Our Teeth. He took a year-long sabbatical from his conducting duties with the New York Philharmonic to devote his energies to this project. Working from June until December, Bernstein and his collaborators (lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green, along with Jerome Robbins) eventually decided to abandon the project and Lenny lamented the wasting of such valuable time. Much of the play’s music was quite good, so the composer returned to these melodies when a surprise project arose to occupy the second half of his sabbatical.

Bernstein’s friend Cyril Solomon convinced Dr. Walter Hussey, the dean of Chichester Cathedral, that Lenny would be willing to compose a work for the 1965 Three Choirs Festival in which Chichester’s choir was joined with those of Winchester and Salisbury to form a festival chorus as they had done annually since about 1700. Hussey agreed that a new choral work by Bernstein would be a welcome addition to the festival, but warned that the seventy-five men and boys of the chorus occupied most of the stage area, leaving little space for an accompanying ensemble. As a result, Bernstein utilized diminished forces of strings, percussion, two harps, and added trios of trumpets and trombones. There was literally no space for a woodwind section. Lenny had just one request – the text must be in Hebrew.

Musically, Chichester Psalms is almost completely derived from Bernstein’s music to Wilder’s play, with the notable exception of the bellicose second section of the middle movement, which was drawn from music he scrapped from the “Rumble” scene in West Side Story. The work is cast in three movements, each of which states the complete text of a Hebrew Psalm, interrupted by lines of commentary drawn from another Psalm. Chichester Psalms opens with festive and sober music to summon the revelry and awake the celebrants. The familiar Psalm 108, “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord,” springs forth with a Broadway-tinged brazenness that displays the chorus and orchestra to great advantage. This feeling of jollity prevails throughout most of the remainder of the first movement. Perhaps most touching is the poignant juxtaposition of texts in the second movement. Bernstein sets Psalm 23, “The Lord is my Shepherd,” as a solo for boy alto – a sound as beautiful as it is innocent. Chorus sopranos and altos join, only to be interrupted by the tenors and basses singing a bellicose verse from Psalm 2, “Why do the nations rage?” Eventually the two combine in a chilling counterpoint before the boy alto returns to complete his Psalm. The final movement reintroduces the motto theme in a dissonant string meditation. The texts, Psalms 131 and 133, are expectant pleas for peace and contentment. Reminiscent of Mahler in its intensity, the work ends with a feeling of careful optimism, not to a future without strife, but one beaming with hope.

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TEXT TRANSLATION

Part I
Psalm 108, verse 2
Awake, psaltery and harp!
I will rouse the dawn!

Psalm 100, entire
Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before his presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord, He is God.
It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.
For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting.
And His truth endureth to all generations.

Part II
Psalm 23, entire
The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures,
He leadeth me beside the still waters,
He restoreth my soul,
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness,
For His name’s sake.
Yea, though I walk
Through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me.
Thy rod and Thy staff
They comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
In the presence of mine enemies,
Thou anointest my head with oil,
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

Psalm 2, verses 1-4
Why do the nations rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord and against His annointed.
Saying, let us break their bonds asunder,
He that sitteth in the heavens
Shall laugh, and the Lord
Shall have them in derision!

Part III
Psalm 131, entire
Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty,
Neither do I exercise myself
In great matters or in things
Too wonderful for me to understand.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and forever.

Psalm 133, verse 1
Behold how good,
And how pleasant it is,
For brethren to dwell
Together in unity.

AARON COPLAND (1900 – 1990)
Suite from The Tender Land

Described by Leonard Bernstein as the “Dean of American Music,” Aaron Copland was approached in 1953 by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II about writing an opera to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the League of Composers. They told the composer that his new work was to be broadcast live on NBC Television – a part of the agreement that was never honored. Copland agreed and the resulting work would become his only full-length opera. For The Tender Land, Copland collaborated with Erik Johns, a dancer-turned-librettist who also served as Copland’s secretary. The two men admired the strikingly stark photographs of Depression-era farmers taken by Walker Evans and published in James Agee’s book, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men. It was from these images that they created the simple story that drives the opera.

In short, the plot involves the Moss family, farmers in a small Midwestern town. Laurie, the oldest daughter, is a senior in high school and wants to escape her meager upbringing. When two drifters suddenly appear in the community, the Moss family has no idea how much two strangers can change their lives. Laurie immediately falls for one of them. Not realizing that there are rumors of a pair of troublemaking outsiders in the area, Grandpa Moss hires the men as farm workers. Laurie
prepares to elope with her newfound love. However, even though the two laborers are quickly cleared of any wrongdoing, they sneak out of town without her to avoid scrutiny. At the end of the opera, the heartbroken and determined Laurie leaves the farm alone, realizing that she cannot hope for a better life unless she actively seeks opportunities.

After the 1954 premiere, Copland compiled a three-movement suite from his score, but was careful to point out that “it does not represent a digest of the dramatic action of the opera, but proceeds from the second act to the first in a three-movement sequence.”

The first movement, “Introduction and Love Music,” is some of Copland’s most affecting music, with its interweaving string and woodwind lines interspersed with wistful comments from the horn.

Copland’s second movement, “Party Scene,” is drawn from Laurie’s graduation party. It opens with a rapid, dissonant orchestral outburst in 2/4 time. The lively, happy music is marked by the fiddling of square dance music, including the famous excerpt entitled “Stomp Your Foot Upon the Floor.”

A stirring finale, “The Promise of Living,” combines Copland’s hymn-like music with a folk song entitled “Zion’s Walls” and ends the suite in a soaring anthem to simple life and family devotion.

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AARON COPLAND (1900 – 1990)
Ballet for Martha (Appalachian Spring)

In 1943 Aaron Copland was in Hollywood writing the music for his fourth film, The North Star—an irresistible piece of wartime propaganda with a stellar cast and a screenplay by Lillian Hellman, created to build a sense of trust among the American people for our Soviet allies—when Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge contacted him with a commission for a new ballet for the renowned dancer-choreographer Martha Graham. Copland agreed to compose what would be his fourth ballet.

Once Coolidge, Copland, and Graham agreed on the terms, all that remained to be determined was the subject. In time, the two collaborators settled on the story, as told by a program note in the published score:

“…a pioneer celebration in spring around a newly-built farmhouse in the Pennsylvania hills in the early part of the last century. The bride-to-be and the young farmer-husband enact the emotions, joyful and apprehensive, their new domestic partnership invites. An older neighbor suggests now and then the rocky confidence of experience. A revivalist and his followers remind the new householders of the strange and terrible aspects of human fate. At the end the couple [is] left quiet and strong in their new house.”

Copland was aware of the small stage and pit in the Coolidge Auditorium at Washington’s Library of Congress. Because of these limitations, the work was scored for a compact chamber ensemble of just thirteen instruments. The version performed this evening is the suite that Copland arranged a few months later to be played by full orchestra. For this version, the composer removed just one ten-minute block of music from a single location in the score, resulting in a sense of continuity seldom found in such suites.

Despite the rural atmosphere often attributed to this music, Copland used only one pre-existing melody – the familiar “Simple Gifts,” heard near the end of the ballet. Perhaps most interesting of all is that the title of the work did not come about until the day before the performance. Martha Graham stumbled across the exhortation “O Appalachian Spring!” in Hart Crane’s epic poem “The Bridge,” and it seemed to fit perfectly. The official title of the score remains Ballet for Martha.

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