

# **Society of Musical Arts**

**Stephen Culbertson, Music Director**

## ***Concert Program***



**Sunday, March 5, 2023**

**4:00 P.M.**

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
414 East Broad Street  
Westfield, NJ 07090**

# Orchestra March 2023

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director

## FIRST VIOLIN

Michael Emery\*  
Concert Master  
Barbara Brandyberry  
Kelley Fahey  
Mira Franke  
Eugene Park  
Deidre Pasquarelli  
Ilona Wanner

## SECOND VIOLIN

Lillian Kessler\*  
Eugene Ehrlich  
Kelly Estrada  
Alexis Hartman  
Jessica Mennella  
Luba Schnable-Unger

## VIOLA

Roland Hutchinson\*  
Cynthia Killian  
Katherine Kolibas  
Janet Poland  
Peggy Reynolds

## CELLO

James Celestino\*  
Megan Doherty  
Colleen Helmacy  
Helen Kong  
Joe Orchard  
Ben Rabunski  
Cheryl Tedesco  
Fawn Wiener

## BASS

Bob Whiteley\*  
Ken Bannerman  
Matthew Hintz

## FLUTE

Emily Thomsen\*  
Gail Berkshire

## FLUTE 3/PICCOLO

Bruno Mayoria

## OBOE

Dick Franke\*  
Arlene Moskowitz

## ENGLISH HORN

Molly Raum

## CLARINET

Donna Dixon\*  
Theresa Hartman

## BASS CLARINET

Donald Ross

## BASSOON

Dominic DellAntonia\*  
Mary Schwartz

## FRENCH HORN

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Dana Bassett  
Linda Lovstad  
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\* Principal

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# **Society of Musical Arts**

**Stephen Culbertson, Conductor**

**Sunday, March 5, 2023**

**4:00 pm**

**PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

## ***Enchanted Places***

**Five Places for Orchestra  
(world premiere)**

1. *Antamara*
2. *Garden of Eden*
3. *Phlegethon*
4. *Viento de sur*
5. *Python Dance*

**Evan Schwartzman  
(b. 1955)**

**Shéhérazade**

1. *Asie*
2. *La Flute enchantée*
3. *L'indifferent*

**Maurice Ravel  
(1875 – 1937)**

Samantha Blosssey, soprano

**~~~ Intermission ~~~**

**Song to the Moon from Rusalka**

Samantha Blosssey, soprano

**Antonín Dvořák  
(1841 – 1904)**

**Third Symphony**

**Roy Harris  
(1898 – 1979)**

*This program is dedicated to the memory of  
fellow colleague and violinist Faye Darack.*

***Please join us for our next concert!***

**Sunday June 4, 2023 @ 4pm**

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**Mark your calendars, and see you here!**

# Meet our Artists for today's concert

## Samantha Blossey

A proud native of New Jersey, Samantha Blossey has performed in over two dozen roles from both opera and musical theater throughout North America and Europe. Ms. Blossey has appeared with Opera Delaware, Portland Opera (OR), New Jersey State Opera, Natchez Opera, Spoleto Festival of Music (Italy) amongst numerous others. Her solo experience extends onto the concert stage, musical theater, cabaret, and major oratorio works. In addition, you can catch Samantha several nights a year as an anthem singer for the New Jersey Devils at the Prudential Center.



## Evan Schwartzman



Evan Schwartzman, pianist and composer, retired after a thirty-year career in finance technology to resume his musical activities. As a pianist, he has given recitals as soloist and chamber musician in the NY metropolitan region. Mr. Schwartzman received a Masters in theory and composition from Rutgers University where his principal composition teachers were Philip Corner, Rolv Yttrehus and Robert Moevs. His principal piano teachers have been Cheryl Seltzer and Lisa Yui.

Mr. Schwartzman is also actively involved on the boards of multiple arts organizations.

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**SOMA wishes to acknowledge the recent passing of our  
colleague and fellow violinist Faye Darack.  
Our deepest sympathies to Sheldon and her family.**

# Program Notes

by Stephen Culbertson and Evan Schwartzman

## Schwartzman Five Places for Orchestra (2022)

*Five Places for Orchestra* started out life as a set of seven short pieces written for solo piano during the height of the pandemic lockdown in 2020, when the idea of traveling somewhere virtually was especially appealing. I subsequently transcribed all seven of them for orchestra. Each of today's five piano pieces has a brief epigraph that provides a clue about its character.

None of the Places have a physical location in this world. *Antamára* is theoretically somewhere in Central America, *Garden of Eden* is biblical, *Phlegethon* is one of the rivers of Hades, *Viento del sur* imagines a South American country where a fictional dance was banned during a non-existent epidemic, and *Python Dance* refers to a fictional bit of pottery discovered at a fictional dig somewhere in the Near/Mid East.

### 1. Antamára: Summer Afternoon

Before the canal was completed, Antamára was a thriving commercial town on the overland trade route. On certain summer afternoons, intimations of its past glories are recalled as the sun pierces the ruined bell tower of the church. A cloud of stinging flies and a brief thunderstorm pass, disturbing our slumber.

### 2. The Garden of Eden

*canticum supra ferro papilio*

### 3. A Boat on the Phlegethon

A swift boat ride down a river of fire!

### 4. Viento del sur

During the epidemic of 1889, the *manacambó* — an imaginary, obsolete dance — which required close contact with one's partner, was banned by the authorities.

## 5. Python Dance

Scholars speculate that the recently unearthed potsherds from the famous dig at Qumros Arbiiyat depict the so-called "Python Dance," which required celebrants to gyrate frantically while holding aloft a large snake.

—ES

## **Ravel Shéhérazade, Three poems of Tristan Klingsor (1903)**

(see following pages for text/translation)

Ravel had a taste for the exotic (i.e, enchanted) places and sounds: Iberia, Greece, the Far East, and Madagascar are all featured in his works. His song cycle *Chants populaires*, consisting of arrangements of songs in Spanish, French, Italian, Hebrew, Scottish, Flemish, and Russian is an early example of what we could now call multiculturalism.

*Shéhérazade* was originally conceived by Ravel to be an opera based on the Sinbad episode of *Arabian Nights*. The opera was unfinished, except for the overture. It is said he then reworked some of the material, but from my perspective, the overture does not have much (if anything) in common with the songs.

Tristan Klingsor (1874-1966) is a pseudonym for the poet Arthur Justin Léon Leclère, part of Les Apaches, a bohemian group in Paris that also included Ravel. To me Klingsor's poetry is quite obtuse, but it challenged Ravel to create a ravishing musical setting – I think we can all agree with that!

## **Dvořák Song to the Moon (18xx)** —text following

*A rusalka* is a mystical fairy-like creature. We won't get into the the fairy-tale plot. Suffice it to say that of Dvořák's 9 operas, it is by far his most famous scene.

Rusalka has fallen in love with a human and wants to become human herself (bad idea!). It gets worse from there, so let's just enjoy this amazing aria.

### **Harris Third Symphony (1939)**

As American culture came of age in the late 19<sup>th</sup> early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, we saw, not only the search for “The Great American Novel” but also longing for “The Great American Symphony.” (Music was always behind the other arts). Various composers post-WWII vied for the position (Hanson, Schuman, Thomson, Diamond, et. al.), with Copland’s Third Symphony (with it’s *Fanfare for the Common Man* motif) probably winning. But of Harris’ 16 symphonies, the third is a very close second. Like Copland, he came from humble beginnings and was largely self-taught in his early years. Copland recommended him to study in Paris with Boulanger, which he did joining a long line of Americans of various styles. He had no time for Boulanger’s neo-classical aesthetic (Stravinsky and others), but created and developed his own voice.

His eclecticism combined elements of plainchant (opening cello melody), Renaissance polyphony (brass double choirs), American folk music and hymns, spirituals as well as traditional Western classical music forms. Hence, it can be truly called “profoundly American”.

In my opinion, Harris’ work remains one of the masterpieces of mid-20th Century American music.

### 1. Asie, Asie, Asie,

Vieux pays merveilleux des contes de nourrice  
Où dort la fantaisie comme une impératrice,  
En sa forêt tout emplie de mystère.  
Asie, je voudrais m'en aller avec la goëlette  
Qui se berce ce soir dans le port  
Mystérieuse et solitaire,  
Et qui déploie enfin ses voiles violettes  
Comme un immense oiseau de nuit dans le ciel d'or.  
Je voudrais m'en aller vers des îles de fleurs,  
En écoutant chanter la mer perverse  
Sur un vieux rythme ensorceleur.  
Je voudrais voir Damas et les villes de Perse  
Avec les minarets légers dans l'air.  
Je voudrais voir de beaux turbans de soie  
Sur des visages noirs aux dents claires;  
Je voudrais voir des yeux sombres d'amour  
Et des prunelles brillantes de joie  
En des peaux jaunes comme des oranges;  
Je voudrais voir des vêtements de velours  
Et des habits à longues franges.  
Je voudrais voir des calumets entre des bouches  
Tout entourées de barbe blanche;  
Je voudrais voir d'âpres marchands aux regards louches.  
Et des cadis, et des vizirs  
Qui du seul mouvement de leur doigt qui se penche  
Accordent vie ou mort au gré de leur désir.  
Je voudrais voir la Perse, et l'Inde, et puis la Chine,  
Les mandarins ventrus sous les ombrelles,  
Et les princesses aux mains fines,  
Et les lettrés qui se querellent  
Sur la poésie et sur la beauté;  
Je voudrais m'attarder au palais enchanté  
Et comme un voyageur étranger  
Contempler à loisir des paysages peints  
Sur des étoffes en des cadres de sapin,  
Avec un personnage au milieu d'un verger;  
Je voudrais voir des assassins souriants  
Du bourreau qui coupe un cou d'innocent  
Avec son grand sabre courbé d'Orient.  
Je voudrais voir des pauvres et des reines;  
Je voudrais voir des roses et du sang;  
Je voudrais voir mourir d'amour ou bien de haine.  
Et puis m'en revenir plus tard  
Narrer mon aventure aux curieux de rêves  
En élevant comme Sindbad ma vieille tasse arabe  
De temps en temps jusqu'à mes lèvres  
Pour interrompre le conte avec art. . . .

### 1. Asia, Asia, Asia!

Ancient, wonderful land of nursery stories  
Where fantasy sleeps like an empress,  
In her forest filled with mystery.  
Asia, I want to sail away on the schooner  
That rides in the harbour this evening  
Mysterious and solitary,  
And finally unfurls purple sails  
Like a vast nocturnal bird in the golden sky.  
I want to sail away to the islands of flowers,  
Listening to the perverse sea singing  
To an old bewitching rhythm.  
I want to see Damascus and the cities of Persia  
With their slender minarets in the air.  
I want to see beautiful turbans of silk  
Over dark faces with gleaming teeth;  
I want to see dark amorous eyes  
And pupils sparkling with joy  
In skins as yellow as oranges;  
I want to see velvet cloaks  
And robes with long fringes.  
I want to see long pipes in lips  
Fringed round by white beards;  
I want to see crafty merchants with suspicious glances,  
And cadis and viziers  
Who with one movement of their bending finger  
Decree life or death, at whim.  
I want to see Persia, and India, and then China,  
Pot-bellied mandarins under their umbrellas,  
Princesses with delicate hands,  
And scholars arguing  
About poetry and beauty;  
I want to linger in the enchanted palace  
And like a foreign traveller  
Contemplate at leisure landscapes painted  
On cloth in pinewood frames,  
With a figure in the middle of an orchard;  
I want to see murderers smiling  
While the executioner cuts off an innocent head  
With his great curved Oriental sabre.  
I want to see paupers and queens;  
I want to see roses and blood;  
I want to see those who die for love or, better, for hatred.  
And then to return home later  
To tell my adventure to people interested in dreams  
Raising – like Sinbad – my old Arab cup  
From time to time to my lips  
To interrupt the narrative artfully. . . .



## 2. La Flûte enchantée

L'ombre est douce et mon maître dort  
Coiffé d'un bonnet conique de soie  
Et son long nez jaune en sa barbe blanche.  
Mais moi, je suis éveillée encore  
Et j'écoute au dehors  
Une chanson de flûte où s'épanche  
Tour à tour la tristesse ou la joie.  
Un air tour à tour languoureux ou frivole  
Que mon amoureux chéri joue,  
Et quand je m'approche de la croisée  
Il me semble que chaque note s'envole  
De la flûte vers ma joue  
Comme un mystérieux baiser.

## 3. L'indifférent

Tes yeux sont doux comme ceux d'une fille,  
Jeune étranger,  
Et la courbe fine  
De ton beau visage de duvet ombragé  
Est plus séduisante encore de ligne.  
Ta lèvre chante sur le pas de ma porte  
Une langue inconnue et charmante  
Comme une musique fausse. . .  
Entre!  
Et que mon vin te reconforte . . .  
Mais non, tu passes  
Et de mon seuil je te vois t'éloigner  
Me faisant un dernier geste avec grâce,  
Et la hanche légèrement ployée  
Par ta démarche féminine et lasse. . .

## 2. The Enchanted Flute

The shade is pleasant and my master sleeps  
In his conical silk hat  
With his long, yellow nose in his white beard.  
But I am still awake  
And from outside I listen to  
A flute song, pouring out  
By turns, sadness and joy.  
A tune by turns languorous and carefree  
Which my dear lover is playing,  
And when I approach the lattice window  
It seems to me that each note flies  
From the flute to my cheek  
Like a mysterious kiss.

## 3. The Heedless One

Your eyes are soft as those of any girl,  
Young stranger,  
And the delicate curve  
Of your fine features, shadowed with down  
Is still more seductive in profile.  
On my doorstep your lips sing  
A language unknown and charming  
Like music out of tune...  
Enter!  
And let my wine comfort you ...  
But no, you pass by  
And from my doorway I watch you go on your way  
Giving me a graceful farewell wave,  
And your hips gently sway  
In your feminine and languid gait...



## Rusalka's Song to the Moon

Silver moon upon the deep dark sky,  
Through the vast night pierce your rays.  
This sleeping world you wander by,  
Smiling on men's homes and ways.  
Oh moon, ere past you glide, tell me,  
oh where does my loved one bide?  
Tell him, oh tell him, my silver moon,  
Mine are the arms that shall hold him,

That between waking and sleeping he may  
Think of the love that enfolds him,  
Light his path far away, light his path,  
Tell him, oh tell him who does for him stay!  
Human soul, should it dream of me,  
Let by memory waken'd be.  
Moon, oh, do not wane!

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## Stephen Culbertson

### *Conductor*

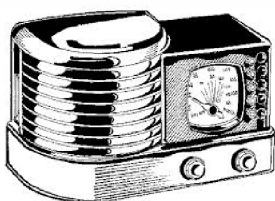


Stephen Culbertson, Music Director for the Society of Musical Arts, has conducted over 35 orchestras, opera productions, and ballet companies, ranging from major to community level, in Europe and the United States. Major engagements include a Spoleto USA debut on the 20th-Century Perspective Series and a new production of Prokofiev's Cinderella for the San Joaquin Ballet in California. In recent seasons, Culbertson has appeared with the Montclair Chamber Orchestra and Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. He has served as Music Director of the Sussex County (New Jersey) Community Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Bergen (New Jersey) Philharmonic Orchestra. With the latter two orchestras, he conceived and conducted a series of family concerts for the community to great acclaim. He served on the board of Unity Concerts of NJ and was its Artistic Director for the 2002-3 season. Culbertson was recently named Artistic Director and Conductor of the Ridgewood Symphony.

After graduating from University of the Pacific in his native California, Culbertson was awarded a scholarship to study at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki (Finland) with famed conducting teacher Jorma Panula. During his five-year stay, he studied the works of Sibelius with the composer's son-in-law, Jussi Jalas, and conducted most of Finland's major ensembles: The Finnish National Opera, the Helsinki Philharmonic, The Finnish Radio Orchestra, The Vaasa and Tampere Operas, and the Oulu Philharmonic. In addition to conducting, he gained valuable experience (not to mention much-needed income) by singing in a number of professional choruses, including the Finnish Radio Choir, Savonlinna Opera Chorus and the Helsinki Festival production of Britten's Church Parables.

Culbertson introduced Finnish audiences to works by Copland, S.R. Beckler, John Forsman and many others. He introduced local listeners to American music by writing a six-hour series of radio programs entitled A History of American Music for the Finnish Broadcast Corporation. As a guest conductor, Culbertson has worked for the Netherlands Opera and appeared in Czechoslovakia (with the Košice State Philharmonic), Italy, Hungary, and England. Culbertson has been a strong advocate of American music as both a conductor and a publisher. In 1993, he co-founded Subito Music Publishing and became its President in 1997. From 1987 to 1992, he was director of the rental and publications departments for G. Schirmer, Inc., where he supervised the music preparation of, among others, John Corigliano's opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* (for the Metropolitan Opera) and *Symphony No. 1* (for the Chicago Symphony).

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# **Society of Musical Arts**

## **who we are**

The Society of Musical Arts (SOMA) was founded in 1981 by Dr. Samuel Applebaum, New Jersey's world famous master teacher of the violin. We are continuing Dr. Applebaum's objectives to provide an opportunity for both amateur and professional string musicians to play baroque and classical music in a chamber orchestra and to present free public concerts with multi-generational appeal to the residents of Essex and surrounding counties.

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*Laura Papparatto*, President



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