

# AMERICA RISING

## *Fanfare for the Common Man (1942)*

Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* is his most recognized work, composed in 1942 at the request of Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conductor Eugene Goossens. Copland wrote: "During World War I, he (Goossens) had asked British composers for a fanfare to begin each orchestral concert. It had been so successful that he thought to repeat the procedure in World War II with American Composers." Goossens had suggested titles including *Fanfare for Soldiers*, writing "it is my idea to make these fanfares stirring and significant contributions to the war effort."

Copland entitled the piece *Fanfare for the Common Man* in reference to a speech given in 1942 by United States Vice President Henry A. Wallace upon the United States' entry into the war. In this now famous speech, Wallace proclaimed, "Some have spoken of the American Century. I say that the century on which we are entering, the century which will come out of this war, can and must be the century of the common man." Copland later echoed that sentiment by stating, "It was the common man, after all, who was doing all the dirty work in the war and in the army. He deserved a fanfare."

Surprised by Copland's choice of title, Goossens wrote to Copland, "Its title is as original as its music, and I think it is so telling that it deserves a special occasion for its performance. If it is agreeable to you, we will premier it 12 March 1943 at income tax time." Copland replied, "I am all for honoring the common man at income tax time."

*Fanfare for the Common Man* enjoyed instant success, and Copland later used it as the main theme of his Third Symphony's final movement. Its life did not end there, however. The piece has become an American cultural icon performed for presidents, the opening of the September 11 Memorial and Museum, to open sports events, and has been broadcast in space to wake the crew of the Space Shuttle Endeavor. It has also entered popular music culture through adaptations by the Woody Herman Orchestra, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and the band Styx.

Perhaps New Orleanian jazz trumpeter Terence Blanchard best describes *Fanfare's* impact on the listener:

It's a piece that feels like it was written by God. Whenever I hear it, it stops me in my tracks and makes me reflect on the goodness of man. And I know that sounds corny for some, but it really makes me think about how, at the end of the day, most people in this country are good, God-fearing people. Honestly, it could have been our national anthem.



**Aaron Copland** (1900-1990) is a name synonymous with American music. It was his pioneering achievement to break free from Europe and create concert music that is characteristically American. In addition to writing such well-loved works as *Fanfare for the Common Man*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*, Copland conducted, organized concerts, wrote books on music, and served as an American cultural ambassador to the world.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Copland set out for Paris in 1920 to study with luminary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. Among the many vital legacies of his stay in Paris were a growing interest

in popular idioms and the insight that there was as yet no American counterpart to the national styles being created by composers from Europe. He became determined to create, in his words, "a naturally American strain of so-called serious music." Upon his return to the United States, he advanced the cause of new music through lectures and writings, and organized the famed Copland-Sessions concerts.

As America entered Depression and then war, Copland began to share many of his fellow artists' commitment to capturing a wider audience and speaking to the concerns of the average citizen in those times of trouble. His intentions were fulfilled as his music found both popular success and critical acclaim.

Copland never ceased to be an emissary and advocate of new music. In 1951, he became the first American composer to hold the position of Norton Professor of Poetics at Harvard University; his lectures there were published as *Music and Imagination*. For 25 years he was a leading member of the faculty at the Berkshire Music Center (Tanglewood). Throughout his career, he nurtured the careers of others, including Leonard Bernstein, Carlos Chávez, Toru Takemitsu, and David Del Tredici. He took up conducting while in his fifties, becoming a persuasive interpreter of his own music; he continued to conduct in concerts, on the radio, and on television until he was 83.

Aaron Copland was one of the most honored cultural figures in the history of the United States. The Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Kennedy Center Award, the National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences "Oscar", and the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany were only a few of the honors and awards he received. In 1982, the Aaron Copland School of Music was established in his honor at Queens College of the City University of New York.

## *Lyric for Strings (1946)*

George Walker's career as a concert pianist, educator, and composer can best be described as trailblazing. He was the first African American to graduate from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, the first to perform as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the first to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 1996 for his composition *Lilacs for Voice and Orchestra*. At the time of his death, he was one of the most recognized and respected composers in American History.

Composed soon after Walker's graduation from Curtis, *Lyric for Strings* (1946) was originally the second movement of his String Quartet No. 1. He entitled the movement *Lament* and dedicated it to his recently deceased grandmother. Walker's inspiration for the work was the *Adagio for Strings* (1936) by fellow Curtis graduate Samuel Barber. *Lyric's* structure, sound, and instrumentation mirror the *Adagio for Strings* as does its fluid and dramatic alternation between lush harmonies and stark solo passages. *Lament* became so popular that Walker re-worked it for string orchestra and retitled it *Lyric for Strings* at the request of his publisher. It is Walker's most often-performed work, and until his death in 2018 was the one of the most frequently performed pieces by a living American Composer.



**George Theophilus Walker** (1922-2018) began his musical career on piano at age five. After showing great promise, he entered Oberlin School of Music at fourteen, where he graduated with honors in 1941. Walker then entered the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Rudolf Serkin, Gregor Piatigorsky, and William Primrose. In 1945, Walker became the first African American to graduate from Curtis. That year, he was the first African American instrumentalist to give a recital in New York's Town Hall and perform as a soloist playing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 1950, he became the first black musician to be signed by a major artist management company (National Concert Artists), which led to a seven-country tour of Europe in 1954. Upon the conclusion of his highly successful European tour, Walker enrolled at the Eastman

School of Music where he received a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in 1956. As a recipient of Fulbright and John Hay Whitney fellowships, he studied composition privately with Nadia Boulanger in Paris in 1957.

Walker's academic appointments include professorships at Dillard University in New Orleans, Smith College in Massachusetts, the University of Colorado, and the University of Delaware, where he held the first Minority Chair at that institution. He was appointed Chair of the Music Department, Rutgers University-Newark in 1975, and became a Distinguished Professor there in 1976 before retiring in 1992 to devote his energy to composition.

Over his career, George T. Walker published over 90 works including sonatas for piano, a mass cantata, songs, organ pieces, choral works, sonatas for cello, violin and viola, and works for brass and woodwinds. In 1996, Walker became the first black composer to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his work *Lilacs*, which was premiered that year with soprano Faye Robinson and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Among his many honors are Fulbright, Guggenheim, and NEA awards; seven honorary doctoral degrees, and the Aaron Copland Award from ASCAP.

#### Symphony No. 5, II. Molto lento

Carlos Chávez's Fifth Symphony was commissioned on 24 September 1952 by the Koussevitsky Music Foundation. Composed in September of 1953 and dedicated to the memory of Boston Symphony Music Director Serge Koussevitsky and his wife Natalie, it is also called the Symphony for Strings. Symphony No. 5 was premiered by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra in December of 1953 with Chávez conducting.

The Symphony for Strings is neoclassic in style and does not incorporate many of the indigenous elements that can be heard in Chávez's earlier works, such as the well-known Symphony No. 2, *Sinfonía India*. It reflects elements of Bartok, Schoenberg, and Varèse, whose works he introduced and championed in Mexico. In the second movement, Chávez experiments with rich sonorities in a manner demonstrating that he was as proficient at composing in the style of his European contemporaries as he was at adapting the indigenous music of Mexico into the symphonic form.



**Carlos Chávez** (1899-1978) was not only a composer but also a conductor, music theorist, educator, journalist, and founder and director of the Mexican Symphonic Orchestra. As the preeminent Mexican composer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chávez came to the forefront in the period after the Mexican Revolution, when a new search for national identity fostered an Indianist movement in the arts. His distinctive, often highly percussive music synthesized elements of Mexican, Native American, and Spanish-Mexican influence. He

was also influenced by modern European and American composers, especially Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg.

A prolific writer of music and music criticism, Chávez's oeuvre includes five ballets, seven symphonies, four concertos, a cantata and opera, and innumerable pieces for voice, piano, and chamber ensemble; he wrote two books (of which *Toward A New Music: Music and Electricity* became a major contribution and fundamental document of new musical thought) and more than 200 articles on music.

Chávez was trained primarily as a pianist and developed much of his compositional skills independent of instructors. Coming of age at the close of the Mexican revolution and during a time of renewed cultural nationalism, Chávez's investigation of indigenous cultures, native folk elements, and dance forms brought an unprecedented vigor and visibility to 20th-century Mexican music. A master of orchestration, Chávez's use of native instruments was inimitable with polyrhythms, cross-rhythms, syncopation, and numerous irregular meters often significant elements of compositional structure. Works such as the *Sinfonía de Antígona*, *Sinfonía India*, and a ballet for Martha Graham (*La Hija de Cólquide*) were celebrated for their remarkably distinctive and original sound.

Chávez received international attention as a composer largely through the efforts of Aaron Copland. After their initial meeting in the early 1930's, the two exchanged many letters as well as promoted each other's works in their respective countries. This exchange began with the Copland-Sessions series, which in Chávez's works were performed in New York, London, and Paris. Soon after, Chávez accepted a post in Mexico as music director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de México where he was then in the position to return the favor to Copland.

Chávez lectured as part of his appointment in 1958 to the Charles Eliot Norton Chair of Poetics at Harvard and served as director of the National Conservatory in Mexico. He organized and served as music director of the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico and conducted nearly every major orchestra in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. He was awarded honorary memberships in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and American Institute of Arts and Letters.

## *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman No. 1*

*Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman* is a series of six pieces composed by American composer Joan Tower between 1986 and 2014. Often viewed as the feminist counterpart to Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, these fanfares are clearly inspired by and pay tribute to Copland while each making a unique, colorful musical statement.

Identical in instrumentation to *Fanfare for the Common Man*, Tower's first *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman* is dedicated to conductor Marin Alsop. Tower writes that it is "for women who take risks and are adventurous." This fanfare was commissioned and premiered by the Houston Symphony, and was immediately embraced as an historic feminist musical statement. Tower's series of fanfares have been performed over 500 times and in 2014 were added to the National Recording Registry, having been judged "culturally, historically, or aesthetically important."

This performance is dedicated to the memory of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who was in every way an "Uncommon Woman."



**Joan Tower** (b. 1938) is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than 50 years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo, and Muir quartets; soloists Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, Paul Neubauer, and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Nashville, Albany NY, and Washington DC, among others.

Recent awards: in 2020 Chamber Music American honored her with its Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award; *Musical America* chose her to be its 2020 Composer of the Year; in 2019 the League of American Orchestras awarded her its highest honor, the Gold Baton. In 1990, Tower became the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for *Silver Ladders*. She is the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission of sixty-five orchestras. The Nashville Symphony and conductor Leonard Slatkin recorded that work, *Made in America*, with *Tambor* and *Concerto for Orchestra* for the Naxos label. The top-selling recording won three 2008 Grammy awards: Best Contemporary Classical Composition, Best Classical

Album, and Best Orchestral Performance. Nashville's latest all-Tower recording includes *Stroke*, which received a 2016 Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

From 1969 to 1984, she was pianist and founding member of the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players, which commissioned and premiered many of her most popular works. Her first orchestral work, *Sequoia*, quickly entered the repertory. Tower's tremendously popular six *Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman* have been played by over 600 different ensembles. She is currently Asher Edelman Professor of Music at Bard College, where she has taught since 1972.

### *Starburst* (2012)

Jessie Montgomery composed *Starburst* in 2012 for the Sphinx Virtuosi, a chamber orchestra comprised of eighteen of the country's top African American and Latinx classical soloists who are primarily prizewinners of the internationally renowned Sphinx competition.

The composer writes:

This brief one-movement work for string orchestra is a play on imagery of rapidly changing musical colors. Exploding gestures are juxtaposed with gentle fleeting melodies in an attempt to create a multidimensional soundscape. A common definition of a starburst: “the rapid formation of large numbers of new stars in a galaxy at a rate high enough to alter the structure of the galaxy significantly” lends itself almost literally to the nature of the performing ensemble who premiered the work, the Sphinx Virtuosi, and I wrote the piece with their dynamic in mind.



**Jessie Montgomery** (b. 1981) is a violinist, composer and music educator from New York City. She holds a Bachelor's degree from the Juilliard School in Violin Performance (2003) and a Master's Degree in Composition for Film and Multimedia at New York University (2012).

In 2012, she became a member of the acclaimed Catalyst Quartet, described by the New York Times as “invariably energetic and finely burnished...performing with earthly vigor.” She has received commissions from the Albany Symphony, the Joyce Foundation, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and

the Young People's Chorus of NY. She has recently become a collaborator with Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad Ensemble.

Since 1999, Jessie has been affiliated with The Sphinx Organization, which supports the accomplishments of young African-American and Latino string players. Jessie was also Composer-in-Residence with the Sphinx Virtuosi, a string orchestra which toured her music for 3 seasons. A review of her debut album, *Strum: Music for Strings* (2015) describes her eclectic style: "The album combines classical chamber music with elements of folk music, spirituals, improvisation, poetry and politics, crafting a unique and insightful new-music perspective on the cross-cultural intersections of American history."

As the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation, her works are frequently performed around the world. Montgomery's music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, language, and social justice, place her as one of the most relevant interpreters of 21<sup>st</sup>-century American sound and experience. In 2020, the New York Philharmonic selected Jessie to be a featured composer in their "Project 19," the largest women-only commissioning initiative in history to mark the centennial of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

### *Blooming (2017)*

*Blooming* for Wind Quintet is one movement of a collective composition with Valerie Coleman, commissioned by Imani Winds in tribute to the life and legacy of African American poet Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-2000) on the occasion of her centenary. *Blooming* is inspired by the closing lines of Brooks' "The Second Sermon on the Warpland," written in 1968 as part of "In the Mecca."

*It is lonesome, yes. For we are the last of the loud.  
Nevertheless, live.  
Conduct your blooming in the noise and whip of the whirlwind.*





**Courtney Bryan**, a native of New Orleans, La, is “a pianist and composer of panoramic interests” (New York Times). Her music is in conversation with various musical genres, including jazz and other types of experimental music, as well as traditional gospel, spirituals, and hymns. Focusing on bridging the sacred and the secular, Bryan's compositions explore human emotions through sound, confronting the challenge of notating the feeling of improvisation. Bryan has academic degrees from Oberlin Conservatory (BM), Rutgers University (MM), and Columbia University (DMA) with advisor George Lewis, and completed an appointment as Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University. Bryan is currently an Assistant Professor of Music in the Newcomb Department of Music at Tulane University, and the Mary Carr Patton Composer-in-Residence with the Jacksonville Symphony. She was the 2018 music recipient of the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts, a 2019 Bard College Freehand Fellow. Courtney is a 2019-20 recipient of the Samuel Barber Rome Prize in Music Composition and a 2020 United States Artists Fellow.

Bryan’s work has been presented in a wide range of venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Miller Theatre, The Stone, Roulette Intermedium, La MaMa Experimental Theatre, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Gallery of Art, Blue Note Jazz Club, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Bethany and Abyssinian Baptist Churches, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and Ojai Music Festival. Her compositions have been performed by the Jacksonville Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, International Contemporary Ensemble, La Jolla Symphony & Chorus, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. She has two recordings, *Quest for Freedom* (2007) and *This Little Light of Mine* (2010) and has a third recording in progress, *Sounds of Freedom* (2020). Bryan is currently writing an opera, *Awakening*, a collaboration with the International Contemporary Ensemble, Charlotte Brathwaite, Helga Davis, Cauleen Smith, Sharan Strange, Sunder Ganglani, and Matthew Morrison, which will premiere in 2021.

## *Impressions, Suite for Chamber Orchestra (2008)*

In 2008, Brazilian American composer Clarice Assad was selected to be the Featured Composer for the New Century Chamber Orchestra, a nineteen-member conductorless string ensemble from the San Francisco Bay area. Music Director, violinist Nadja Solerno-Sonnenburg, was familiar with the young composer's talents, having toured as a trio with guitarists Sérgio and Odair Assad (Clarice's father and uncle) since 2003. In 2004, Salerno-Sonnenburg commissioned Assad to compose a violin concerto, which was premiered at the Cabrillo Music Festival. Assad's collaboration with New Century Chamber Orchestra included commissions for three works: *Impressions, Suite for Chamber Orchestra (2008)*, *Suite for Lower Strings (2009)*, and a violin concerto entitled *Dreamscapes (2009)*.

Assad writes of *Impressions, Suite for Chamber Orchestra*:

The piece begins with a Theme and Variations movements, which showcases the five individual sections of the orchestra. Each variation has its own musical language and style, setting distinct soundscapes that are contrastingly derived from one single idea. In Fusion: Danca Brasileira, I bring in my own inherent Brazilian musical background, integrating the joyful rhythms and peculiarities of my country's musical styles into a classical environment. Affection: Slow Waltz was inspired by witnessing the obvious mutual connection between the orchestra. Precision: Perpetual Motion was inspired by my impressions of the orchestra's flawless proficiency and impeccable artistry.



**Clarice Assad** (b. 1979) is one of the most widely performed Brazilian concert music composers of her generation. The recipient of numerous honors and awards, amongst them an Aaron Copland Award and several ASCAP awards in composition, Assad holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Roosevelt University in Chicago, and a Master of Music degree from The University of Michigan School of Music.

A powerful communicator renowned for her musical scope and versatility, Assad is a significant artistic voice in the classical, world music, pop and jazz genres. A Grammy nominated composer, celebrated pianist and inventive vocalist, she is renowned for her evocative colors, rich textures, and diverse stylistic range. As an innovator, her award-winning Voxploration Series on music creation, songwriting and improvisation has been presented throughout the United States, Brazil, Europe and the Middle East. With her artistic talents sought after by

artists and organizations worldwide, the multi-talented musician continues to attract new audiences both onstage and off.

With over 70 works to her credit, Clarice Assad's commissions include works for Carnegie Hall, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Orquestra Sinfônica de São Paulo, Chicago Sinfonietta, San Jose Chamber Orchestra, the Boston Youth Orchestra, the Bravo! Vail Music Festival, Queen Reef Music Festival and the La Jolla Music Festival. Her compositions have been recorded by percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, cellist YoYo Ma, violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and oboist Liang Wang. Assad's music has been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony, Queensland Symphony, and the Orquestra Sinfônica de São Paulo. Ms. Assad has served as a composer-in-residence for the Albany Symphony, the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, New Century Chamber Orchestra, and the Boston Landmarks Orchestra.

### *American Fanfare* (1985)

Hailstork composed his *American Fanfare* in 1985 as an entry for a competition to commemorate the opening of the American Arts wing at the Virginia Fine Arts Center. Since its premier, *American Fanfare* has been performed by the Alabama Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, and Dallas Symphony. Hailstork's instrumentation is inspired by Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* and contains blues-flavored material in its middle section.



**Adolphus Hailstork** (b. 1941) holds a Bachelor of Arts from Howard University, a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from Michigan State University. He continued his studies at The American Institute at Fontainebleau studying with Nadia Boulanger.

He has served as professor at Youngstown State University as well as professor of music and Composer-in-Residence at Virginia's Norfolk State University. He is currently a professor of music and Composer-in-Residence at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

Hailstork is of African American ancestry and his works blend musical ideas from both the African American and European traditions. He is a Fulbright scholar and was named a Cultural Laureate of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1992. His works have been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Boston Symphony, and New York Philharmonic.

Recent commissions include *Rise for Freedom*, an opera about the Underground Railroad, by the Cincinnati Opera Company, and *Set Me On A Rock (re: Hurricane Katrina)*, for chorus by the Houston Choral Society (2008). He is currently working on his Fourth Symphony and *A Knee on the Neck (A Tribute to George Floyd)* for chorus and orchestra.

Program Notes by Dr. Sarah M. Schettler, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra,  
Second Flute