



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

3 p.m., April 4, 2026
Paul Davenport Theatre
Simone Luti, *conductor*

Suite for Strings

O Waly, Waly

Dashing Away with the Smoothing Iron

John Rutter

(b. 1945)

Outdoor Overture

Aaron Copland

(1900-1990)

El sombrero de tres picos (The Three-Cornered Hat), Suite No. 1

Manuel de Falla

(1876-1946)

Intermission

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43

Allegretto

Tempo andante, ma rubato

Vivacissimo

Allegro moderato

Jean Sibelius

(1865-1957)

PROGRAM NOTES

Composed in 1973, **Suite for Strings** by British composer John Rutter is a lively and engaging work that reflects his love of melody and English musical traditions. Though Rutter is best known for his choral compositions, this suite shows his skill in writing idiomatically for string orchestra. The third movement, built on the familiar tune “O Waly, Waly” (often known as “The Water Is Wide”), provides a lyrical melody, warm harmonies and flowing lines. The final movement, *Dashing Away with the Smoothing Iron*, brings the suite to a spirited close with its quick tempo, bright character, and humorous charm.

Outdoor Overture by Aaron Copland was written for the High School of Music and Art in New York City. Copland sought to create a work that young musicians could perform while still capturing a bold and distinctly American musical voice. The piece opens with a broad, noble theme that evokes a sense of openness and optimism, often associated with the American landscape. Throughout the overture, Copland contrasts lyrical passages with vigorous, spirited sections, showcasing the full range of the orchestra.

Outdoor Overture reflects Copland’s signature style—clear textures, strong rhythms, and a sense of wide, open space. Both celebratory and expressive, it remains a staple of the concert band repertoire and a vivid example of American music in the 20th century.

El sombrero de tres picos, Suite No. 1, by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla is drawn from his 1919 ballet of the same name. Set in rural Spain, the story centers on a miller and his clever wife, who outwit a lecherous magistrate represented by the “three-cornered hat.” The music vividly captures the color and energy of Spanish folk traditions.

Suite No. 1 includes three movements: Introduction, Afternoon, and Dance of the Miller’s Wife (Fandango). The suite moves from atmospheric and mysterious opening textures to lively, rhythmically charged dances. Full of wit, charm, and vibrant energy, this suite is a brilliant orchestral showcase and a celebration of Spanish musical style.

Composed between 1901 and 1902, **Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43** by Finnish composer Jean Sibelius is one of his most beloved and widely performed works. Written during a period of growing national identity in Finland, the symphony has often been associated—though not explicitly by the composer—with a spirit of resilience and quiet patriotism.

The first movement begins with a gentle, pastoral idea that gradually unfolds into a more expansive and energetic musical landscape. The second movement introduces darker, more dramatic material, often interpreted as a sense of struggle or tension. A restless, scherzo-like third movement follows, driving forward with urgency before leading directly into the triumphant finale. The final movement is marked by a simple and noble theme that grows in power and intensity, culminating in a grand conclusion. The journey from the humble musical landscape of the first movement to the grand conclusion of the last movement shows the emotional depth and powerful message in this symphony. Sibelius’s Symphony No. 2 stands as one of the most celebrated orchestral repertoires to date.

Program notes by Tasman Tantasawat

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Flutes

Grace Zhu *
Yiping Zhang (*also as Piccolo*)*
Darren Wo (*also as Piccolo*)

Oboes

Mateo Zapata*
Ashlyn Black*
Pauline Dizon (*as English Horn*)

Clarinets

Finn Inglis*
Kaitlyn Chambers

Bassoons

Yaron Felter-Gonen*
Siodhachan Morehead

Horns

Chrysa Balaka*
Kai Church
Lela Burt
Sasha Gorbasew

Trumpets

Matthew Usher*
Rex Mulder*
Toshi Kawabe

Trombones

Amy Jordaan*
Max Zhang*
John Lau (*as Bass Trombone*)

Tuba

Daniel Montaseri

Percussions

Cora Robison
Matthew Cinquina
Owen Bastarach

Violins

Yanet Campbell**
Alex Matwijiw*
Helen Faucher
Julian Trippel
Erin Van Dyke
Yuyin Chen
Jerry Ma
Zisen Zhou
Frank Su
Cordelia Poon
Brett Trampleasure
Clara Martin
Ashley Lo
Charlotte Usprich
Yongxuan Wu
Haiyue Yang
Kate Roberge
Khloe Wang
Cyr Cyr
Jayden so
Deion Liu
Theodore Chow

Violas

Tasman Tantasawat*
Cian Diamond*
Yining Yang*
Lincoln St John
Yifan Liu
Maria Camila Lopez
Lexi White
Olivia Cardillo
Stella Shin
Grace Wright

Celli

Abigail Greenland*
Isaac Lee*
Felicity Ngo
Nicholas Lago
Kara Lim
Jason Too
Thomas Gadd
Charlotte Montgomery-Seto

Double basses

Adela Montgomery*
Joshua Guttormson
Thomas Locke

Keyboard

Lauren Esch

** Concert Master

* Principal

A warm welcome to high school student string performers from the following schools listed along with their string teachers:

Saunders S.S. - Igor Saika
London Central S.S. - Imraan Haq
Laurier S.S. - Christian Abrams
Woodstock C.I. - Sarah Baigent

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