

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023 8:00 PM // ANN ARBOR, HILL AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

**Sinfonietta** for orchestra

**Leoš Janáček**

1. Allegretto
2. Andante
3. Moderato
4. Allegretto
5. Andante

**Filharmonie Brno**  
**Brass from the U-M Symphony Band**  
**Dennis Russell Davies, *conductor***

**Humoresk** for organ and orchestra

**William Bolcom**

**Christian Schmitt, *organ***  
**Filharmonie Brno**  
**Dennis Russell Davies, *conductor***

Intermission

**Glagolitic Mass**

**Leoš Janáček**

cantata for soloists, mixed choir, organ and orchestra on an Old Slavonic mass text

1. Introduction
2. Kyrie (Gospodi pomiluj / Lord Have Mercy)
3. Gloria (Slava / Glory to God)
4. Credo (Věřuju / I Believe)
5. Sanctus (Svet / Holy, Holy)
6. Agnus Dei (Agneče Božij / Lamb of God)
7. Postludium / organ solo
8. Intrada (Exodus)

**Abigail Rethwisch, *soprano***  
**Nancy Maultsby, *mezzo-soprano***  
**Daniel Stein, *tenor***  
**Benjamin Sieverding, *bass***  
**Christian Schmitt, *organ***  
**UMS Choral Union**  
**Filharmonie Brno**  
**Dennis Russell Davies, *conductor***

## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

**Sinfonietta** for orchestra

### **LEOŠ JANÁČEK**

Born July 3, 1854 in Hukvaldy, Austrian Empire (now Czech Republic)

Died August 12, 1928 in Moravská Ostrava, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic)

Leoš Janáček is the world's most frequently performed Czech opera composer and belongs to most frequently performed opera composers at all. Although in terms of age Leoš Janáček is more part of Antonín Dvořák's generation, his music is some of the most expressive to be found in the 20th century, placing this composer among musicians two generations his junior. Janáček's life and work are closely connected with the city of Brno, where he lived from childhood and where his tireless work as a composer and organizer contributed greatly to the development of Brno's cultural life.

Well-known to Czech and also foreign audiences, the five-movement *Sinfonietta*, Janáček's last completed symphonic work, is a musical celebration of Brno to which it is dedicated (as well as the no-less-famous *Glagolitic Mass*). However, it is primarily an expression of the incredibly vitality of the seventy-two-year-old composer: a tragic shadow or even the idea of death, so frequent in Janáček's works, does not appear here at all, and the focus of its dramatic line is—in the central third part—the most impressive portrayal of a love experience imaginable, and this time without the fateful subtext which accompanies the erotic element in the rest of Janáček's works.

A characteristic tension emerges early on, in the rough unrest of the opening brass and tympani fanfare, brought to a stunning take off, growing in a kaleidoscope of the second movement with a stunning nocturne image juxtaposing melodic Moravian dance themes and unexpected dive gradations—and discharging into the final climax of the third movement. The laconic scherzo is a cabinet example of a mono-thematic composition, more than illustrative in its economy. Tension escalated by unexpected expressive contrasts in the conclusion is then accompanied by nature images in the finale, and again increases in its anxiety twists and turns (with Janáček's typical E-flat clarinet sound) to an escalated moment when the liberating intro fanfare returns. However, this time it triumphantly carries over the sound of the rest of the orchestra, whose counterpoint of the jubilant four-tone motif pushes the effect of the familiar melodies to dazzling new positions.

The first performance was in Prague on 26 June 1926, together with the *Glagolitic Mass*, under Václav Talich.

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**Humoresk** for organ and orchestra

### **WILLIAM BOLCOM**

Born May 26, 1938 in Seattle, Washington, USA

National Medal of Arts, Pulitzer Prize, and Grammy Award-winner William Bolcom is an American composer of chamber, operatic, vocal, choral, cabaret, ragtime, and symphonic music. He joined the faculty of the University of Michigan's School of Music in 1973, was named the Ross Lee Finney Distinguished University Professor of Composition in 1994, and retired in 2008 after 35 years. Bolcom won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1988 for *12 New Etudes for Piano*, and his setting of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* on the Naxos label won four Grammy Awards in 2005.

As a pianist Bolcom has performed and recorded his own work frequently in collaboration with his wife and musical partner, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris. Cabaret songs, show tunes, and American popular songs of the 20th century have been their primary specialties in both concerts and recordings. Their 25th album, *Autumn Leaves*, was released in 2015. In 2018, nine world premieres of Bolcom works commemorated William Bolcom's 80th birthday.

*Humoresk* was commissioned by the newly-formed and already-eminent American Composers Orchestra, based in New York City, with Dennis Russell Davies as music director and (occasionally) conductor. It was premiered at Lincoln Center, Alice Tully Hall, on December 3, 1979; the soloist was organist, harpsichordist, and composer Anthony Newman. As Bolcom in January 1982 said, “the terms were: a piece for organ and orchestra (with Anthony Newman as soloist—he also had a large work played on the same program)—and that was all. I had a short time within which to write the piece, and I did not know Anthony Newman’s keyboard work very well. I decided then to write a piece, humorous in nature, with popular dance rhythms of a sort of Cuban-disco flavor—those extremely noisy places with a disturbing silence in the interior of all that sound—and I wrote the piece *around* that silence but never *in* it for very long.”

© [www.williambolcom.com](http://www.williambolcom.com), William Bolcom

**Glagolitic Mass**, cantata for soloists, mixed choir, organ and orchestra on an Old Slavonic mass text

**LEOŠ JANÁČEK**

Born July 3, 1854 in Hukvaldy, Austrian Empire (now Czech Republic)

Died August 12, 1928 in Moravská Ostrava, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic)

The older Janáček became, the more progressive and youthful his music was. It came from a man who was full of energy and strength. Apparently, he started to write the *Glagolitic Mass*, his most important sacred work, in 1920, when the Archbishop of Olomouc asked him to compose a Mass. Janáček opted for a setting of the Old Church Slavonic, rather than the Latin, text, probably because in 1920 the liturgical use of Old Church Slavonic language was permitted. What is more, Janáček spent his childhood at the Brno’s Augustinian abbey, a centre of the Cyril and Methodius cult. Janáček began to sketch the work, but soon abandoned it and returned to it only in summer of 1926. The premiere took place a year later, on 5 December 1927, in Brno under the baton of Jaroslav Kvapil. The concert was a great success, as shown by a contemporary critic, who particularly appreciated the distinctive setting of the mass text, which Janáček “tackled in his own way: completely without tradition, indeed against tradition.”

The *Glagolitic Mass* is, without doubt, one of the crowning achievements of 20th-century sacred music and in fact of all sacred music. Despite the fact that the composer dedicated it to a Catholic Church dignitary, its spiritual dimension transcends the Catholic doctrine, testifying rather to the composer’s way of thinking, which tended towards a peculiar form of pantheism.

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## TEXTS (TRANSLATIONS)

### LEOŠ JANÁČEK

**Glagolitic Mass**, cantata for soloists, mixed choir, organ and orchestra on an Old Slavonic mass text

#### **Kyrie**

Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

#### **Gloria**

Glory to God in the highest  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
Almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

#### **Credo**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible:  
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father,  
by whom all things were made.  
Who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven.  
He was incarnate by the Holy Ghost out of the Virgin Mary. I believe.  
He was crucified also for us; he suffered and was buried.  
And he rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures.  
And ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father.  
And the same shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead.  
Of whose kingdom there shall be no end.  
I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and life-giver,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who, with the Father and the Son, together is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
And I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church,  
I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.  
And I await the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the coming age. Amen.

**Sanctus**

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

**Agnus Dei**

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.