

"We believe the music of David Maslanka deserves to be heard and it is our privilege to bring it to a wider audience with this recording."

We made this statement in 2003, introducing our Transformations recording of Maslanka's *Symphonies Nos.* 4 & 5, and we still hold it to be true. Six years later, Maslanks'a vital creative voice speaks even more emphatically to our troubled times in a powerfully direct manner, and continues to invite reflection and response. Our experiences in the rehearsal and performance of his music are rewarding beyond our imagination and propel our ensemble forward in the process.

We hope you will enjoy these performances of David Maslanka's works by one of the premier ensembles of St. Olaf College — the 90-member St. Olaf Band. Founded in 1891 as the St. Olaf Cornet Band, the St. Olaf Band has been acclaimed over the decades for its superb musicianship. The ensemble celebrated its centennial year with a tour of Great Britain, becoming the first college music organization to perform at the famed Aldeburgh Festival. It was also the first American collegiate band to make a European concert tour, traveling to Norway under the baton of F. Melius Christiansen to perform for King Haakon and capacity crowds in 1906. The band has subsequently toured abroad several times, as well as annually throughout the United States. Memorable performances include invitations to the national conventions of the Music Educators National Conference (2004), the American Bandmasters Association (1997) and the College Band Directors National Association (1987). The band recently toured Norway (2005, 1996), Mexico (2004) and Britain and Ireland (2000), and took a study tour of Japan in January 2010.

The St. Olaf Band, through generous support from the Miles Johnson Endowment, co-commissioned Maslanka's *Symphony No. 5, Symphony No. 7, Symphony No. 8*, the clarinet concerto *Desert Roads* and *David's Book*, his percussion concerto.

Timothy Mahr was appointed as conductor of the St. Olaf Band in 1994, replacing Miles H. Johnson, who retired after 37 years as band director. The innovative programming and inspired performances of today continue the legacy of Johnson's artistic vision and hard work.

Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1946, David Maslanka attended the Oberlin College Conservatory where he studied clarinet with George Waln and composition with Joseph Wood. He spent a year at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, and did graduate work in composition at Michigan State University with H. Owen Reed. He has served on the faculties of State University of New York at Geneseo, Sarah Lawrence College, New York University, and Kingsborough College of the City University of New York. A member of ASCAP, he now lives in Missoula. Montana.

Maslanka's compositions have been performed throughout the United States, in Canada, Japan, Australia and numerous European countries. He has received three National Endowment for the Arts Composer Awards, and five residence fellowships at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. In addition he has received grants from the State University of New York Research Foundation, the University of Connecticut Research Foundation, the American Music Center, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. Maslanka's compositions are published by Carl Fischer, Inc., Kjos Music Company, Marimba Productions, Inc., the North American Saxophone Alliance, and OU Percussion Press. His works have been recorded on the CRI, Mark, Crest, Umass, Novisse, Klavier, Cambria, St. Olaf Records and Albany labels.

Maslanka's works for winds and percussion have become especially well known and many are considered standards of the wind band repertory. They include, among others, A Child's Garden of Dreams for symphonic wind ensemble, Concerto for Piano, Winds and Percussion, the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th symphonies, Mass for soloists, chorus, boys chorus, wind orchestra and organ, and the two Wind Quintets. He has composed wind concerti with wind ensemble for flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, two horns, trombone, marimba and percussion. Percussion works include Variations of "Lost Love" and My Lady White for solo marimba, and three ensemble works: Arcadia II: Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble, Crown of Thorns and Montana Music: Three Dances for Percussion. In addition, he has written a wide variety of chamber, orchestral and choral pieces.

Maslanka's style is characterized by a very contemporary blend of heart-felt lyricism and rhythmic drive, coupled with an uncanny and remarkable ear for musical sonorities. Particularly in his well-known and acclaimed works for wind band, the music is notable for its poetry, warmth and spiritual quality. Inspiration is frequently drawn from such fascinating sources as the dreams of a young girl as recorded by psychologist C.G. Jung (A Child's Garden of Dreams), the work of African writer Ahmadou Kourouma (Tears) and the poetry of Richard Beale (A Litany for Courage and the Seasons, Mass).



Symphony No. 7 (2004)

Sarah Miller '07, piano

Symphony No. 7 was commissioned by a large consortium of college and university band programs, of which St. Olaf College was a participant through funding from the Miles Johnson Endowment Fund.

Maslanka provides the following notes for this monumental work:

I am strongly affected by American folk songs and hymn tunes, and I think of the Symphony as "old songs remembered." With one exception, all of the tunes are original, but they all feel familiar. The borrowed melody is from the 371 Four-Part Chorales of J.S. Bach. Each song has a bright side and a dark side, a surface and the dream underneath. Each is a signal or call that evokes an inner world of association.

- Sunday night church services from my youth. Mrs. Smith played the piano. The opening piano solo is marked "enthusiastically" in the score. A dream travels to a far place.
- II. In the manner of an American folk song, with a setting that might have come out of the 19th or early 20th centuries.
- III. A ferocious fast music, unrelenting, determined to get a grip on chaos. Toward the end a fractious quote of the Bach Chorale melody Du Friedensfurst Herr Jesu Christ (Prince of Peace Lord Jesus Christ).
- IV. A simple song of peace and healing.

Recorded live on February 6, 2006, in Skoglund Center Auditorium, St. Olaf College

A Child's Garden of Dreams (1981)

- There is a desert on the moon where the dreamer sinks so deeply into the ground that she reaches hell.
- II. Drunken woman falls into the water and comes out renewed and sober.
- III. A horde of small animals frightens the dreamer. The animals increase to a tremendous size, and one of them devours the little girl.
- IV. A drop of water is seen as it appears when looked at through a microscope. The girl sees that the drop is full of tree branches. This portrays the origin of the world.
- V. An ascent into heaven, where pagan dances are being celebrated; and a descent into hell, where angels are doing good deeds

A Child's Garden of Dreams was commissioned by John and Marietta Paynter for the Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble. It was composed in the summer of 1981 and premiered by Northwestern in 1982. It was inspired by the dreams of a young girl that were highlighted in the writings of the great Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung. Maslanka selected five of the twelve dreams as motifs for the movements of this composition.

The following is from Man and His Symbols by Carl Jung:

A very important case came to me from a man who was himself a psychiatrist. One day he brought me a handwritten booklet he had received as a Christmas present from his 10-year-old daughter. It contained a whole series of dreams she had when she was 8. They made up the weirdest series of dreams I have ever seen, and I could well understand why her father was more than just puzzled by them.

Though childlike, they were uncanny, and they contained images whose origin was wholly incomprehensible to the father... In the unabridged German original, each dream begins with the words of the old fairy tale: "Once upon a time."

By these words the little dreamer suggests that she feels as if each dream were a sort of fairy tale, which she wants to tell her father as a Christmas present. The father tried to explain the dreams in terms of their context. But he could not do so because there appeared to be no personal associations to them ... The little girl died of an infectious disease about a year after that Christmas ... The dreams were a preparation for death, expressed through short stories, like the tales told at primitive initiations ... The little girl was approaching puberty, and at the same time, the end of her life.

Little or nothing in the symbolism of her dreams points to the beginning of a normal adult life. When I first read her dreams, I had the uncanny feeling that they suggested impending disaster. These dreams open up a new and rather terrifying aspect of life and death. One would expect to find such images in an aging person who looks back on life, rather than to be given them by a child. Their atmosphere recalls the old Roman saying, "Life is a short dream," rather than the joy and exuberance of its springtime. Experience shows that the unknown approach of death casts an adumbratio (an anticipatory shadow) over the life and dreams of the victim. Even the altar in Christian churches represents, on one hand, a tomb and, on the other, a place of resurrection — the transformation of death into eternal life.

Recorded live on February 8, 2005, in Skoglund Center Auditorium, St. Olaf College



Timothy Mahr and David Maslanka, Composer Residency, St. Olaf College, 2001.



Mother Earth (2005)

Praise be You, my Lord, for our sister, MOTHER EARTH,

Who nourishes us and teaches us,

Bringing forth all kinds of fruits and colored flowers and herbs.

- St. Francis of Assisi

Mother Earth was commissioned by and is dedicated to Brian Silvey and the South Dearborn High School Band of Aurora, Indiana.

Recorded live on October 22, 2007, in Skoglund Center Auditorium, St. Olaf College

Give Us This Day (2005)

Maslanka provides the following program note:

The words "Give us this day" are, of course, from the Lord's Prayer, but the inspiration for this music is Buddhist. I have recently read a book by the Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh (pronounced "Tick Not Hahn") titled For a Future to be Possible. His premise is that a future for the planet is only possible if individuals become deeply mindful of themselves, deeply connected to who they really are. While this is not a new idea, and something that is an ongoing struggle for everyone, in my estimation it is the issue for world peace. For me, writing music and working with people to perform music are two of those points of deep mindfulness.

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Music makes the connection to reality, and by reality I mean a true awakeness and awareness. *Give Us This Day* gives us this very moment of awakeness and aware aliveness so that we can build a future in the face of a most dangerous and difficult time.

I chose the subtitle "Short Symphony for Wind Ensemble" because the music isn't programmatic in nature. It has a full-blown symphonic character, even though there are only two movements. The music of the slower first movement is deeply searching, while that of the highly energized second movement is at times both joyful and sternly sober. The piece ends with a modal setting of the choral melody *Vater Unser in Himmelreich (Our Father in Heaven)*, no. 110 from the *371 Four-Part Chorales* by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Recorded live on November 14, 2009, in Skoglund Center Auditorium, St. Olaf College



Symphony No. 8 (2008)

- moderate/very fast/moderate/very fast
- II. moderate
- III. moderate/very fast/moderate/very fast

Maslanka shares the following score note:

Symphony No. 8 is in three distinct movements, but the musical layout suggests a single large-scale panoramic vista.

I began the composition process for this symphony with meditation, and was shown scenes of widespread devastation. But this music is not about the surface of our world problems. It is a response to a much deeper vital creative flow which is forcefully at work, and which will carry us through our age of crisis. This music is a celebration of life. It is about new life, continuity from the past to the future, great hope, great faith, joy, ecstatic vision, and fierce determination.

The old is continually present in the new. The first movement touches the Gloria from my *Mass:* Glory to God in the highest, whatever that may mean to you: the power of the universe made manifest to us and through us.

The second movement is a large fantasia on the old Lutheran chorale melody *Jesu meine Freude* (Jesus My Joy). The life of Christ is one powerful image of the high creative: being willing to be broken to receive the new; giving oneself up entirely so that a new idea can be born. The old form of the organ chorale prelude underlies this movement — new language out of the old.

The third movement is a music of praise and gratitude for all that is. It can be traced to the very end of the favorite old hymn tune *All Creatures of Our God and King* — the part with the joyous descending major scale where all the bells ring out. I recently used this tune for a set of variations in a piece called *Unending Stream of Life*, a name which could also be a fitting subtitle for this new symphony.

St. Olaf College joined many other college and university band programs in a consortium to commission Symphony No. 8. Participation was funded by the Miles Johnson Endowment.

Recorded live on April 19, 2009, in Skoglund Center Auditorium, St. Olaf College

Dr. Timothy Mahr

A professor of music at St. Olaf College, Dr. Timothy Mahr conducts the St. Olaf Band, teaches courses in composition, music education and conducting, and supervises instrumental music student teachers. He is a past president of the North Central Division of the College Band Directors National Association and has served on the Board of Directors of the National Band Association and the Minnesota Band Directors Association. Active across the nation as a guest conductor and clinician, Mahr has also appeared professionally in Norway, Canada, Mexico, Thailand, Japan and Singapore. He has conducted over twenty all-state bands, as well as at the Southeast Asia International School Music Festival in Bangkok, Thailand. Active in the community band movement, he is the principal conductor of the Minnesota Symphonic Winds, an ensemble featured at the 2008 Midwest Clinic in Chicago, and a 2009 recipient of the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Silver Scroll Award.

Mahr's compositions are performed worldwide and many have been published. The first recipient of a commission from the American Bandmasters Association Commissioning Project, Mahr has composed works for the Music Educators National Conference, the United States Air Force Band, the American School Band Directors Association and the Kappa Rappa Psi/Tau Beta Sigma National Intercollegiate Band. He received the 1991 ABA/Ostwald Award for his work *The Soaring Hawk*.



St. Olaf: Music and Much More

St. Olaf College, founded in 1874, is a four-year, co-educational liberal arts college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The college's 3,000 students are drawn to Northfield, Minnesota, from nearly every state in the United States and from 30 countries. They enjoy a 300-acre campus renowned for its beauty and award-winning architecture. A student-faculty ratio of 12.8 to 1 encourages individual learning and teaching, while the diverse backgrounds of the students foster opportunities for cultural and educational exploration.

It is through St. Olaf's music ensembles that many people hear, literally, about the college. Regularly broadcast nationwide on public television and radio, the college's Christmas Festival is the most widely known musical event at the college. The acclaimed music program at St. Olaf provides a rich array of areas in which to study and perform. With eight choirs, two orchestras and two bands of the highest quality, as well as dozens of smaller ensembles, more than one-third of St. Olaf students are involved in music.

The music department has more than 70 faculty members, including many recognized artist-teachers, published authors, commissioned composers, leading church musicians, and conductors of All-State ensembles and music festivals. They perform in concerts and recitals around the country, as well as alongside prestigious ensembles such as the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Minnesota Opera.

Christiansen Hall of Music, one of the finest facilities of its kind in the United States, houses Urness Recital Hall, Halvorsen Music Library, three spacious rehearsal rooms, classrooms, practice rooms, faculty studios, an electronic music studio and a piano technician's workshop. Skifter Hall, adjacent to the music building, houses a recital hall with a Dobson three-manual tracker organ and seven newly renovated organ practice spaces featuring one digital and six pipe organs. Boe Memorial Chapel, recently renovated aesthetically and acoustically, is a frequent site for concerts and contains a new Holtkamp organ with four manual divisions in the chancel and two manual divisions in the gallery, all playable from consoles front and back.

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Inner Visions

The Music of David Maslanka

DISC 1 (64:24)

- 1-4. Symphony No. 7 (33:17) Mvt I (10:10) Mvt II (7:08) Mvt III (8:09) Mvt IV (7:50)
- 5-9. A Child's Garden of Dreams (31:07) Mvt I (4:28) Mvt II (3:46)
 - Mvt III (3:21) Mvt IV (10:25) Mvt V (9:07)

DISC 2 (58:38)

- Mother Earth (2:53)
- Give Us This Day (15:40)
- 3-5. Symphony No. 8 (40:05) Myt I (13:38) Mvt II (14:00) Mvt III (12:27)

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