

# WEST OF THE PECOS

*David Diamond (1915–2005)*

## **Rounds**

Allegro, molto vivace

Adagio

Allegro vigoroso

*Aaron Copland (1900–1990)*

## **Concerto for Clarinet, Strings, and Harp**

**David Shifrin, clarinet**

Slowly and expressively

Cadenza

Rather fast

## INTERMISSION

*William Grant Still (1895–1978)*

## **Mother and Child, for string orchestra**

*Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)*

## **String Quartet No.12, Op.96, "American" (arr. Sarah Darling)**

Allegro ma non troppo

Lento

Molto vivace

Finale: Vivace ma non troppo

*You have questions, we have answers!*

*Please join A Far Cry near the stage immediately after the performance for a discussion with David Shifrin and the Criers about this evening's program.*



# ORCHESTRA UNBOUND

Feels like fireworks. Sounds so much better.

We're ready for you—eighteen instrumentalists who explore a realm of music between chamber ensemble and symphony orchestra. Coached by Donald Palma, a founding member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, our repertoire includes music you've never heard before, as well as favorite classics—and performances are free. We're self-conducted, fearless, and passionate.

FEBRUARY 13, 7:30 PM | NEC'S JORDAN HALL

**Piazzolla:** *Four, For Tango*

**Overton:** *Symphony for Strings*

**Walton:** *Sonata for String Orchestra*

APRIL 19, 7:30 PM | NEC'S JORDAN HALL

*Including*

**Schreker:** *Intermezzo, Op. 8 and Scherzo*

**Schoenberg:** *Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4 (1943 version)*

Donald Palma, Artistic Director

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° *Project STEP student (Dvořák only)*

Δ *NEC Prep student (Dvořák only)*



**A FAR CRY** stands at the forefront of an exciting new generation in classical music. According to The New York Times, the self-conducted orchestra “brims with personality or, better, personalities, many and varied.” A Far Cry was founded in 2007 by a tightly-knit collective of 17 young professional musicians, and since the beginning has fostered those personalities. A Far Cry has developed an innovative process where decisions are made collectively and leadership rotates among the “Criers.” For each piece, a group of principals is elected by the members, and these five musicians guide the rehearsal process and shape the interpretation. Since each program includes multiple works, this multiplicity of leaders adds tremendous musical variety to the concerts.

A Far Cry’s omnivorous approach has led the group to collaborations with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Jake Shimabukuro, Urbanity Dance, and Roomful of Teeth. By expanding the boundaries of orchestral repertoire and experimenting with the ways music is prepared, performed, and experienced, A Far Cry has been embraced throughout the world with hundreds of performances coast to coast and across the globe, and a powerful presence on the Internet. In October 2014, A Far Cry launched its in-house label, Crier Records, with the album *Dreams and Prayers*, which received critical acclaim and a GRAMMY nomination. The second release, *Law of Mosaics*, followed in November 2014 and has also garnered much critical attention, including many 2014

Top-10 lists, notably from The New Yorker music critic Alex Ross and WQXR's Q2 Music, which named A Far Cry as one of the "Imagination-Grabbing, Trailblazing Artists of 2014."

The eighteen Criers are proud to call Boston home, and maintain strong roots in the city, rehearsing at their storefront music center in Jamaica Plain and fulfilling the role of Chamber Orchestra in Residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Collaborating with local students through an educational partnership with the New England Conservatory, A Far Cry aims to pass on the spirit of collaboratively-empowered music to the next generation.



#### DAVID SHIFRIN

One of only two wind players to have been awarded the Avery Fisher Prize since the award's inception in 1974, Mr. Shifrin is in constant demand as an orchestral soloist, recitalist and chamber music collaborator.

Mr. Shifrin has appeared with the Philadelphia and Minnesota Orchestras and the Dallas, Seattle, Houston, Milwaukee, Detroit and Phoenix symphonies among many others in the US, and internationally with orchestras in Italy, Switzerland,

Germany, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. In addition, he has served as principal clarinetist with the Cleveland Orchestra, American Symphony Orchestra (under Stokowski), the Honolulu and Dallas symphonies, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and New York Chamber Symphony. Mr. Shifrin has also received critical acclaim as a recitalist, appearing at such venues as Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall and Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and the 92nd Street Y in New York City as well as at the Library of Congress

in Washington D.C. A much sought after a chamber musician, he has collaborated frequently with such distinguished ensembles and artists as the Tokyo and Emerson String Quartets, Wynton Marsalis, and pianists Emanuel Ax and André Watts.

He has received three Grammy nominations and his recording of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, performed in its original version on a specially built elongated clarinet, was named Record of the Year by Stereo Review.

In addition to the Avery Fisher Prize, David Shifrin is the recipient of a Solo Recitalists' Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, an Avery Fisher Career Grant and the Concert Artist Guild Virtuoso Award in 2016. He was given an Honorary Membership by the International Clarinet Society in 2014 in recognition of lifetime achievement and at the outset of his career, he won the top prize at both the Munich and the Geneva International Competitions.

Mr. Shifrin performs on a MoBA cocobolo wood clarinet made by Morrie Backun in Vancouver, Canada and makes his home in Connecticut.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND EDUCATION WITH A FAR CRY

One of our goals at A Far Cry is to teach young musicians how to imagine and develop different ways of performing and functioning as a entrepreneurial ensemble. We intend to empower the next generation of musicians to think critically and listen to each other “in the music.” With these ends in mind, we foster many relationships with community partners and educational institutions across the United States. Tonight we are pleased to highlight three of our ongoing educational initiatives based in Boston.



### PROJECT STEP

We are incredibly lucky to be participating in a year-long residency with Project STEP, a comprehensive string training program for children from underrepresented communities. This residency includes weekly coachings

and mentoring sessions from Criers, plus concert previews and masterclasses for the entire Project STEP community.

In addition, Criers have been coaching the Project STEP Honors Quartet this season, and this ensemble presented a pre-concert performance at Jordan Hall before this evening’s concert. (We hope you were able to join us for this at 7:30 p.m.!) In addition, Project STEP student Noah Kelly joins A Far Cry onstage tonight to perform with the Criers for Dvorak’s American Quartet.

### NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY ENTREPRENEURIAL MUSICIANSHIP FELLOWSHIP

Open exclusively to NEC string students, this fellowship offers the opportunity to gain a 360 degree view of the A Far Cry chamber orchestra, including all aspects of administration, rehearsal and performance. The AFC Fellows not only have the opportunity to rehearse and perform one subscription concert with the

ensemble, they also attend meetings, work directly with A Far Cry's Executive Director, and participate in one or more of the organization's musician-run committees. Through an intensive interaction with the group, the AFC Fellow will learn all aspects of managing and performing in a collaboratively-empowered ensemble, and contribute positively to the growth of A Far Cry.

We are excited this year to welcome 4 Fellows: Kathryn Nottage, bass, BM '17; Alyssa Wang, violin, MM '18; Eunghee Cho, MM '18; and Reina Murooka, violin, MM '18.

### **NEC PREP/A FAR CRY COLLABORATIVE COMPETITION**

Our competition at NEC Prep offers registered students ages 13-20 the opportunity to collaborate with A Far Cry on one chosen piece per season. The competition seeks to recognize talented young chamber musicians and inspire deeper communication through musicianship. The winner is invited to rehearse and perform with A Far Cry as a member of the ensemble, experiencing first-hand the sensitivity and discipline necessary to work effectively as a self-conducted group.

This year our chosen piece was our original arrangement of Dvorak's String Quartet Op. 96, "American." Our winners are Ian Hsu, violin, 17; and Grace Kim, viola, 17 (who is joining us on stage this evening). Our runners-up are Nathaniel Abreu, cello, 15; and Sean Diehl, violin, 16.



**This is your shovel.  
The music is your earth.  
Dig in.**

**DAVID DIAMOND (1915–2005)  
ROUNDS FOR STRING ORCHESTRA**

In 1944 America was in the grips of World War II. Dimitri Mitropolous, the renowned conductor, wrote to David Diamond, “These are distressing times. Most of the difficult music I play is distressing. Make me happy.” Diamond’s response was *Rounds*.

Diamond was born in Rochester, New York, and went on to study at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and in Paris with the legendary Nadia Boulanger. He, in turn would teach as a member of the composition faculty of the Juilliard School. For a time, his music was performed frequently, championed by Leonard Bernstein, amongst others, including Virgil Thomson who wrote in *The New York Herald Tribune*, “Composers, like pearls, are of three chief sorts, real, artificial and cultured. David Diamond is unquestionably of the first sort; his talent and his sincerity have never been doubted by his hearers, his critics, or by his composer colleagues.”

The title is reflective of the style, a round where the violins open and the low strings echo in return, and the music accomplishes its charge with aplomb: it is unabashedly exuberant throughout. *Rounds* became Diamond’s most well known work, and for good reason: we could all use a little happiness from time to time.

**AARON COPLAND (1900–1990)  
CLARINET CONCERTO**

Benjamin, “Benny,” Goodman was born into poverty in a working class immigrant neighborhood of Chicago about which Jane Addams lamented, “The streets are inexpressibly dirty, the number of schools inadequate, sanitary legislation unenforced, the street lighting bad, the paving miserable and altogether lacking in the alleys and smaller streets...Hundreds of houses are unconnected with the street sewer.” Nonetheless, his father

prioritized music, and enrolled Benny in clarinet lessons affordably offered at their local synagogue. The rest, as they say, is history. After becoming the “King of Swing,” in the jazz world, and taking that art form to its first concert outing in Carnegie Hall, he decided to return to his classical training. In April of 1938 he released a recording of the Mozart Clarinet Quintet in A major with the Budapest Quartet and embarked on taking formal lessons again at the age of forty—a true testament to his thirst for learning and expansion of musical vocabulary. He also began commissioning classical composers for music to perform: Béla Bartók, Malcolm Arnold, Morton Gould, Francis Poulenc, and Aaron Copland.

It was 1947 when Goodman approached Copland, who had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Appalachian Spring* just two years prior, to write a clarinet concerto for him. A year later it was delivered to Goodman, who was uncertain about his ability to pull off the difficult technical passages of the work. Copland made some changes, but it still took until 1950 for Goodman to perform it—and even then, he did it on radio with the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Fritz Reiner. The public premiere took place a few weeks later with clarinetist Ralph McClane and the Philadelphia Orchestra led by Eugene Ormandy.

## **WILLIAM GRANT STILL (1895–1978)**

### **MOTHER AND CHILD**

During his tenure at the National Conservatory of Music in New York City, Dvorák’s students included a large number of talented African American musicians and composers whom he encouraged unreservedly, believing that they were the heart of the “American” sound. One of them, Maurice Arnold Strothotte gained Dvorák’s utmost respect as “the most promising and gifted” of his pupils. Other students included Will Marion Cook and Henry Thacker Burleigh. These young composers all blended the sounds of spirituals and plantation songs with the great European classical traditions, and while they experienced certain levels of success for the art they produced, they also met with resistance.

William Grant Still was born in Woodville Mississippi in 1895—the year Dvorák departed from New York to return to Europe. An early tragedy robbed him of his father when he was only three months old, but when his mother re-married, it was to a good man who treated Still like his own son, taking him to performances, purchasing records, and generally encouraging his musical interests. He would go on to enroll at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree at Wilberforce University (pacifying his mother's wishes for medical school), and eventually studied composition with George Whitfield Chadwick (who, incidentally, would be appointed Director of New England Conservatory in 1897), and Edgard Varèse.

After collaborating with some of the biggest stars of the blossoming jazz scene in New York City, including Fletcher Henderson's band, Still commenced on a set of "firsts": the first African American to conduct the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the first African American to have his opera performed by the New York City Opera, the first African American to conduct the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra. His sizeable musical output includes five symphonies, eight operas, and musical arrangements for films including *Pennies from Heaven* (starring Bing Crosby), and *The Lost Horizon*.

*Mother and Child* was originally a movement from Still's Suite for Violin and Piano, composed for the husband and wife violin and piano duo of Louis and Annette Kaufman. All three movements of the suite were inspired by the visual arts of African American sculptors and painters. *Mother and Child* drew from the work of Sargent Claude Johnson (1888–1967). It was premiered in Jordan Hall on March 14, 1944.

## ANTONÍN DVORÁK (1841–1904) STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR OP. 96 (“AMERICAN”)

Dvorák’s time in the United States from 1892 to 1895 was musically fruitful, with a new symphony, string quartet, string quintet, and cello concerto added to his oeuvre, but not always easy or pleasant. He adapted, but was never at ease in the urban hustle and bustle of New York City. Furthermore, it was a financially troubled visit. After renewing his contract as Artistic Director and Professor of Composition at the National Conservatory of Music, his sponsor, Jeannette Thurber (president of the Conservatory) found she was unable to pay his salary due to economic difficulties. There was, however, one “ideal spot” (the composer’s description) during his tenure Stateside: a small town in Iowa with a large Czech community called Spillville, where he spent one summer. It was there that he wrote one of the chamber pieces that would become a favorite of many: the String Quartet in F major op. 96 (“American”). Inspiration came quickly for Dvorák, having completed the full sketch of the quartet in only three days, and completing it in two weeks.

The subtitle “American” that became attached to the quartet has something of a double meaning; it not only identifies the land of its conception, but also an assignment. Dvorák had been invited to the National Conservatory for a specific reason: to decipher the answer to the question, “What is ‘American’ Music?” After all, the bedrock of concert music was Europe, and to be considered “serious,” a young artist had to spend time studying abroad with the great masters, absorbing the great tradition. Mrs. Thurber, seeing Dvorák as a composer who successfully fused his native Czech sonorities with the broader European concert music tradition, concluded he would be ideal for explaining how one finds a “national” sound profile, and how one could teach that method in the conservatory classrooms of the United States (not only forming a musical “identity,” but keeping talent at home, so to speak).

The following scenario documents that when Dvorák arrived, searching for “possible basic material for a characteristic style,” he “asked Henry Thacker Burleigh, a black student at the National Conservatory, to sing him spirituals and plantation songs from

the South and he asked the music critic Henry Krehbiel for transcriptions of Amerindian melodies...In many newspaper articles and interviews he expressed his belief that a national American style could be based on such traditional elements, among which he included pentatonism in the melodic line, a flattened leading note, plagal cadences, drone accompaniment, rhythmic ostinato and strongly syncopated rhythms.”

People groups tend to maintain their culture through food and music, wherever they are, under almost any circumstances. For Dvorák, infusing his music with Czech idioms was partially a political statement of maintaining and encouraging Czech culture as the people struggled for independence from Empire (for that reason, his music was sometimes avoided and not performed in Vienna). It may strike the reader that what Dvorák sought out in America was the music of individuals who had suffered forced displacement and slavery. Additionally, what he describes are the building blocks of what we think of as America’s great art form: jazz, a style of music that was born out of African musical traditions grafted into a new world. Jazz, that relies on the strength of the individual expressing the fullness of self, supported by group toward a larger goal, each, in time, taking a turn to speak and sing and add to the art of musical conversation.

It’s not the elements of music alone that can have any nationalistic fervor, but that those elements are found in the folk music of the inhabitants of the land, and are imbued with deep sentiments, memory, and love of place. It is that feeling that makes the music of a people. Is there anything more American than a Czech man campaigning for his own freedoms coming to a country across the ocean to meet with people from various walks of life—including the grandson of a freed slave and son of a German immigrant?

*Program Notes by Kathryn J Allwine Bacasmot. Kathryn is a pianist/harpsichordist, musicologist, music & cultural critic, and freelance writer. She is a graduate of New England Conservatory, and writes program annotations for ensembles nationwide.*

## DONORS

Thank you for your support of A Far Cry. We truly appreciate your gifts and your generous hearts! This list, compiled on March 3, 2017, includes gifts made since January 1, 2016.

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Andrew Sanchez  
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Joy Wang  
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*A special thank you to our network of Crier volunteers, and to those generous hosts who house our guest musicians.*

*If you would like to learn more about housing a musician—or other volunteer opportunities—speak to any Crier or contact us at: [info@afarcry.org](mailto:info@afarcry.org)*

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Ticket sales provide only a fraction of our operating budget—our many donors help us bring our unique brand of classical music programming to Boston communities and to the world. We couldn't do this without you! Thank you for your continued generosity.



# GET INVOLVED WITH A FAR CRY

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**Ticket sales provide only a fraction of our operating budget—we need your help to continue bringing our unique brand of classical music programming to Boston communities and to the world! Become a Town (or Hamlet or Intergalactic) Crier today.**

**Your gift is tax-deductible.  
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## ONLINE

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*All of the Criers take part in the administration of A Far Cry. Individual Criers work within the Marketing, Development and Operations committees, and all Criers participate in artistic planning.*

# A FAR CRY — 10



JOIN US AS  
WE CELEBRATE  
OUR TENTH  
ANNIVERSARY  
SEASON!

A COLLABORATION WITH  
THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE

FRIDAY / MAY 26 / 8PM  
NEC'S JORDAN HALL

featuring  
KINAN AZMEH, clarinet  
SANDEEP DAS, tabla  
WU MAN, pipa  
JOSEPH GRAMLEY, percussion



FOR MORE INFO AND TICKETS: [WWW.AFARCRY.ORG](http://WWW.AFARCRY.ORG)

