



AS FALLING LEAVES

THE VIRGINIA CHAMBER PLAYERS
IN CONCERT

PERFORMING MUSIC OF
ADOLPHUS HAILSTORK

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Adolphus Hailstork received his doctorate in composition from Michigan State University, where he was a student of H. Owen Reed. He had previously studied at Manhattan School of Music under Vittorio Giannini and David Diamond, at the American Institute at Fontainebleau with Nadia Boulanger, and at Howard University with Mark Fax.

Dr. Hailstork has written numerous works for chorus, solo voice, various chamber ensembles, band, and orchestra. Among his compositions are: *Celebration* which, in 1976, was recorded by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra; *Out of the Depths*, which won the 1977 Belwin-Mills Max Winkler Award presented by the Band Directors National Association; *American Guernica*, awarded first prize in a national contest sponsored by the Virginia College Band Directors in 1983; and *Mourn Not the Dead*, which received the 1971 Ernest Bloch Award for choral composition. In 1995 the chamber work *Consort Piece* was awarded First Prize by the University of Delaware Festival of Contemporary Music.

In 1990 a consortium of five orchestras commissioned a piano concerto that was premiered by Leon Bates in 1992. In addition, Dr. Hailstork was commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music to write *Festival Music* for the Baltimore Symphony. Other significant

performances by major orchestras (Philadelphia, Chicago and New York) have been led by leading conductors such as Lorin Mazel, Daniel Barenboim and Kurt Masur. In 1999, the composer's second symphony (com-

missioned by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra), and his second opera, *Joshua's Boots* (commissioned by the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and the Kansas City Lyric Opera), were premiered. In 2002, James Conlon conducted Hailstork's oratorio *Done Made My Vow* at the renown Cincinnati May Festival.

Currently, Dr. Hailstork is Eminent Scholar and Professor of Music at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

As Falling Leaves

"They did not commit suicide; they were already dead – and they knew it." That was my first thought when I heard about the people who, when trapped on the upper floors of the World Trade Center on September the eleventh, two thousand and one, chose to leap



to their death rather than to be incinerated in the two thousand degree inferno surrounding them. It was a final life choice. In this composition, actually a tone poem for flute, viola and harp, I wanted to reflect the thoughts of a person facing that gruesome choice. First would come recognition of the horrible reality of their situation – raging fire on one side, and, on the other, vast space outside a shattered window, hundreds of feet in the air above the pavement. In the brief time remaining, there might be memories from the dance of life: love, family – and thoughts of the small child who, later that night, would ask, “Where is...?” The time to let go approaches. The leap into space is the final choice.

This composition was commissioned by the Virginia Chamber Players, specifically for Debra Cross, flautist, Beverly Baker, violist, and Barbara Chapman, harpist. The structure of the piece is that of a suite of movements organized into five main sections: I Prelude; II Life Dances; III A child will ask “Where is...?”; IV Final Dance; V Postlude.

Sanctum

Sanctum was written for violist Beverly Baker, whom I hold in high esteem as a performer and as a person.

Sanctum is the third of my “cathedral” pieces (the other two being *Songs of Isaiah* for chorus and orchestra and *Sonata da Chiesa* for string

orchestra). These works reflect my memories of my early years as a chorister at the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany, New York. Specifically, *Sanctum* reflects the contrast between the turbulence of the outside world and the search for serenity within the walls of the cathedral. The work is divided into six sections: 1. Viola introduction; 2. Piano enters and the two instruments share ideas that are mostly turbulent in character; 3. Intricate florid writing that includes improvisation on the part of both performers; 4. A slow serene melody over quiet chords in the piano; 5. A final agitated outburst, before, finally, settling into a; 6. Tranquil coda.

Arabesques

The *Arabesques* for flute and percussion were written for Debra and Rob Cross. Debra commissioned the piece in 1991, as a surprise 10th wedding anniversary present for Rob.

The work has five movements and a coda: 1. Flute solo; 2. Vibraphone solo; 3. An angular, disjointed movement for both. Almost an argument(?), ending with a less than exact quote of a famous flute solo; 4. A short, happy dance for flute and xylophone. It ends abruptly, with the main motive from the first movement. A short interlude leads to: 5. An exotic dance for flute and marimba. The coda unites material from the opening solos.

String Quartet No. 1

String Quartet No. 1 was finished in March 2002 as one of a set of new works I wrote for an all-Hailstork chamber concert on May 1, 2002. This work is dedicated to the Virginia Chamber Players, specifically Vahn Armstrong and Amanda Gates Armstrong, violins; Jennifer Snyder, viola; and Michael Daniels, cello.

These fine musicians are at this time (March 2002) the first desk players with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. When I heard that they would be the string quartet for the concert, I realized it was simply too good an opportunity to pass up. That is why I wrote this piece.

All of the material of the work was derived from the melody of the second movement – the Adagio. That movement is an elaborated transcription of a song I wrote for the choir at the Unitarian Church of Norfolk where I serve as Choir Director. The first movement is in sonata form but without a return of theme two in the recapitulation. That particular theme is used as the introduction to the second movement. Movement three is a Scherzo. The Trio of this movement tries to be mellow, but it keeps being interrupted by a sudden outburst of energy. The Finale of the quartet is a Rondo that begins as a light dialogue between the two violins. Eventually everyone joins in as the piece drives to a close with the theme that

opened movement one.

Two Romances

These *Two Romances* are dedicated to violist Beverly Baker (viola section leader of the Virginia Symphony) and conductor, JoAnn Falletta. Although I sketched the pieces during the 1980's, I had put them aside because of their old fashioned lyricism. Years later, when Beverly told me that she and JoAnn had discussed a possible orchestral setting of my other work for Beverly (Sanctum), I suggested these two pieces instead. So, with Maestra Falletta's interest, and Beverly's encouragement, I polished them up for performances.

The *Two Romances* are simple, straightforward, tranquil pieces in ABA form. In the first one, the flute and violins present a pastoral theme, which is then taken up by the viola. A repeated figure in the harp beings the middle section. Finally, the opening motive returns in greatly lengthened note values in the violins.

After a short introduction in the violins and harp, the solo viola enters with the main melody of *Romance No. 2*. Bassoon and oboe solos begin the middle section which develops motives from the main theme. The introduction returns, with darker harmonies and orchestration, but, gradually, the coloring lightens, and the piece closes with the same delicacy that concluded the first movement.

The *Two Romances* exist in two versions, one for orchestra, the other for chamber ensemble. Also, the viola solo with piano reduction is suitable for recital performance.

Instrumentation

Orchestral Version	Chamber Version
Flute	Flute
Oboe	
Clarinet	
Bassoon	
Horn	
Harp	Harp
Solo Viola	Solo Viola
Strings	2 Violins
	Viola
	Cello

—Adolphus Hailstork

VIRGINIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Vahn Armstrong, violin
Amanda Gates Armstrong, violin
Beverly Kane Baker, viola
Jennifer Snyder, cello
Debra Wendells Cross, flute
Barbara Chapman, harp
Robert W. Cross, percussion
Charles Woodward, piano

The Virginia Chamber Players present quality chamber music, with an emphasis on American and unrecognized repertoire, to critical acclaim. Formed in 1992 by principal players of the Virginia Symphony, the players have performed with artists Andre-Michel Schub, Richard Stoltzman, Nathaniel Rosen, Paul Neubauer, Robert McDuffie, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Paul Tobias and others. They are featured annually at the Virginia Arts Festival, Old Dominion University's F. Ludwig Diehn Concert Series and have been heard on NPR's Performance Today.

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Virginia Chamber Players

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915 BROADWAY, ALBANY, NY 12207
TEL: 518.436.8814 FAX: 518.436.0643 WWW.ALBANYRECORDS.COM

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TEL: 01539 824008

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