

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of the East Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

www.nga.gov

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

COVER: Currier and Ives (publishers), *The Gallant Charge of the 54th Massachusetts (colored) Regiment: On the Rebel Works at Fort Wagner, Morris Island, near Charleston, July 18th, 1863, and the Death of Colonel Robt. G. Shaw*, 1863, hand-colored lithograph, Boston Athenaeum, Gift of Raymond Wilkins, 1944



The Seventy-second Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,975th Concert

National Gallery of Art Orchestra
Andrew Earle Simpson, guest conductor

Ciné-concert

Presented in honor of
*Tell It with Pride: The 54th Massachusetts Regiment and
Augustus Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial*

January 12, 2014
Sunday, 6:30 pm
East Building Auditorium

Admission free

Program

Silent Films with Music by Andrew Earle Simpson

Drummer of the 8th

Directed by Thomas Ince, 1913

The House with Closed Shutters

Directed by D. W. Griffith, 1910

The General

Directed by Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman, 1926

The piano used in tonight's ciné-concert has been provided by the Shadd Piano Company of Washington, DC. Founded in 2002 by Washington-native Warren M. Shadd, the company is the world's only African American-owned piano manufacturer. With production and development facilities in China, Germany, and Italy, Shadd Piano Company owns several important and innovative patents. These include assistive technology, invented by Warren Shadd, that enriches the lives of piano students who have neurodevelopmental disabilities. Other members of the extended Shadd family who have had an impact on American music are Marie and James Shadd, who were active as jazz pianists and band leaders in the early and mid-1900s, respectively, and Grammy Award-winning singer Shirley Horn (1934–2005). One of the Shadd ancestors who figured significantly in African American history was abolitionist Mary Ann Shadd (1823–1893), the first female African American lawyer.

The Musicians

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1943, the National Gallery of Art Orchestra began with a small cadre of musicians drawn from the National Symphony Orchestra. Gradually growing in numbers, the Gallery orchestra eventually reached the size and status of a large chamber orchestra. The ensemble has undertaken the full range of chamber and symphonic repertoire and has frequently presented first performances of works by American composers, most notably the 1953 premiere of Charles Ives' *Symphony no. 1* under the direction of Richard Bales; the 1990 premiere of Daniel Pinkham's *Symphony no. 4* under George Manos; and the 2007 premiere of John Musto's *Later the Same Evening: An opera inspired by five paintings of Edward Hopper*, under guest conductor Glen Cortese. Other guest conductors who have appeared with the orchestra in recent years include Bjarte Engeset, Philippe Entremont, Vladimir Lande, George Mester, Otto-Werner Mueller, and José Serebrier.

ANDREW EARLE SIMPSON

Composer, pianist, and organist Andrew Earle Simpson is ordinary professor and head of the division of theory and composition at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music of the Catholic University of America. A composer of opera, silent film, orchestral, chamber, choral, dance, and vocal music, he specializes in multi-faceted, intimate connections with literature, visual art, and film. Resident film accompanist at the National Gallery of Art and house accompanist at the Library of Congress' Mount Pony Theater in Culpeper, Virginia, Simpson is also the keyboard artist for the Cantate Chamber Singers. He was heard recently at the Gallery as pianist for the National Gallery of Art Vocal Ensemble's program of music by Arthur Sullivan and other British composers in honor of *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Art and Design, 1848–1900*. His chamber, choral, and silent film music has been recorded on the Albany, Athena, Capstone, Fleur de Son Classics, and Naxos labels, and his silent film scores have been broadcast on the Turner Classic Movies Channel. More information about Andrew Earle Simpson is available at www.andrewesimpson.com.

Program Notes

Since its birth in the 1890s, film has almost always been accompanied by music in various ways. In the silent film era, for example, most films never received specifically created scores. Rather, the choice of music tended to be left to the artistic staff on hand in each local theater. Film studios developed musical aids called “cue sheets,” essentially thumbnail guides that suggested potentially appropriate music to accompany each scene, or “cue.” Music publishers worked hand-in-hand with the studios by producing volumes of sheet music that contained numerous interludes suitable for a wide variety of situations: chases, love scenes, moments of danger, etc. Performers would then use the cue sheets and compiled sheet music to pull together enough tunes to fill the time. In a few cases, however, particularly for especially lavish productions, so-called “special scores” were created to accompany one particular film. These “special scores” were most often compilations of existing repertoire by established classical masters, with perhaps a few moments of new music linking the borrowed passages together. Still another type of film accompaniment was pure musical improvisation: sometimes a performer would have seen a film before playing for it, but more often he or she would be working with it at first sight.

Tonight’s ciné-concert, a collaboration between the National Gallery of Art film and music departments, features two different film accompaniment techniques. The two shorts at the beginning of the program are accompanied by piano improvisations; *The General* is accompanied by an original orchestral score, written especially for this event. About these techniques, Andrew Earle Simpson writes:

Although I enter into these kinds of scores using previously crafted concepts, ranging from phrases to melodies, developed while watching the films ahead of time, the improvisations upon these concepts necessarily vary with each performance. The score for *The General*, however, is different. It is a fully written-out, newly composed, original orchestral score, designed with the intent of tracking the action and emotion of the film as closely as possible, from beginning to end. Ultimately, the goal of both of these types of accompaniment is to support the image on the screen. The ideal, to my mind, is to create music that will be a partner to the film, neither dominating it nor being dominated by it, but rather amplifying its natural abilities to express emotion and to tell a story. The finished product should provide a seamless aesthetic experience, more powerful in the combination of art forms than either could be on its own.

With improvisation as live accompaniment, there is flexibility. The artist can respond in the moment to a surge of emotion, a laugh from the audience, or even a broken film reel. There is, in theory, infinite space for any and all variation, and infinite possibility for change. With a fully notated score such as my new one for *The General*, there is almost no margin for error: the conductor must remain synchronized with the film, and synchronize the orchestra with it as well. Human beings speed up and slow down, and variation in tempo is a natural part of musical performance. But a film runs at a single, constant pace, and the challenge—and the thrill!—is to perform with expression while still tracking the screen.

Drummer of the 8th concerns the heroism of an underage youth who volunteers to serve in the Union Army as a drummer boy. *The House with Closed Shutters*, in contrast, is a tale of cowardice and its terrible consequences: a young Confederate soldier flees his duty at a critical point, only to have his place taken by his sister.

Deservedly one of the best-known and best-loved films of the silent era, Buster Keaton's *The General* is based on an actual incident that took place in 1862. The film casts Keaton (1895–1966) as Johnnie Gray, a young Southerner who wants to enlist in the Confederate Army. His application is denied, however, on the grounds that his job as a railroad engineer makes him too valuable as a civilian. A year later, his locomotive, the "General" of the film's title, is stolen by Union spies. Johnnie pursues them, and the centerpiece of the film is his quest to find his beloved locomotive and aid the Southern cause. Keaton performs his own stunts throughout the film in a delightful series of wild chases that provide ample opportunity for rollicking music and much laughter.

Codirected by Keaton and Clyde Bruckman (1894–1955), *The General* was released in 1926. The recent restoration of the film used in tonight's ciné-concert was funded by the Film Foundation and Cohen Media.

Program notes by Andrew Earle Simpson

Upcoming concerts at the National Gallery of Art

David Geringas, cellist

Music by J. S. Bach, Corigliano, Geringas,
and other composers

January 19, 2014
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court



Dali String Quartet

Music by Efrain Amaya, Brahms,
and other composers

January 26, 2014
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court



Wolfgang Holzmair, baritone
Russell Ryan, pianist

Schubert: *Schwanengesang*

February 2, 2014
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court