

## Program Notes

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Sometimes one can uncover a hidden gem, especially with a little detective work. I knew I wanted to play something new to me for this Oktubafest recital. After some casual Google searching, I discovered a charming tuba sonata by **Jonathan D. Green** with the moniker “When We Were Giants.” I could not locate physical copies through publishers or interlibrary loan. Trying to avoid a dead end, my last remaining option was to track down the composer and communicate with him directly. *Plot twist:* the composer is now the president of Susquehanna University! I expected my email to be lost in the daily deluge of emails Green receives. Imagine my surprise when he replied to me the next day with a warm greeting and PDF versions of the music. About the title, Green said, “I think the title popped into my head while writing the piece and reflecting on what tubas can represent in music. I was surely thinking about Fafner and Fasolt in Wagner’s *Ring*, even though the Dragon is more directly tied to the tuba.”

Composer and flutist **Nicole Chamberlain** has led a varied career after earning degrees in music composition and digital media at the University of Georgia. Her compositions are influenced by storytelling and visual imagery from her former day job as a web animator and designer. Many of her pieces call for extended techniques that play an important role in the melody. As a Powell Flutes Artist, Chamberlain has performed her music for audiences around the world. She balances her time composing, teaching students, and performing. *Catawampus* for Tuba and Piano was completed in July 2023. Funding for this commission was generously provided by a Washington Artist Trust Grant. About the work, Chamberlain says, “The word *catawampus* is most known as a term for something that is off balance visually, but it is also a word used for an imaginary, wild, and fierce animal. *Catawampus* is a fantastic word to use for the tuba, which can be all those things. This piece not only showcases the tuba’s character range and surprising agility, but it also breaks away from the expectation of being an instrument relegated to oom-pahs.” This premiere performance is dedicated to Sophia Tegar and Sarah Miller, two dear friends who first exposed me to Chamberlain’s engaging music!

**Bruce Broughton** is a ten-time Emmy award-winning composer known for his film and TV scores, including *Silverado* (1985), *Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey* (1993), and *Tiny Toon Adventures*. He is a member of the Board of Directors for the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). Broughton composed his well-known Sonata for Tuba and Piano in 1976, and since then it has become a staple of the tuba repertoire. Tubist Kent Eshelman (Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at Baylor University) approached Broughton in 2011 to gauge Broughton’s interest in composing a new work for tuba. He was eager to take on the project, and the result is this fast-paced, six-minute work that displays moments of virtuosity, lyricism, and relentless intensity.

An accomplished composer and educator, **Cedric Adderley** enjoys a multi-faceted career and maintains an active artistic schedule around the United States and abroad. Many of his original compositions are featured on commercial recordings, including *Distinguished Music for the Developing Band* and *The Adderley/Holliday Piano Duo Project*. Ensembles throughout the country and worldwide continue to program his music. As a trumpeter and vocalist, Adderley has performed with acclaimed artists such as Ray Charles, Olivia Newton-John, and Louie Bellson. He currently resides in Greenville, South Carolina and serves as the president of the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities. Adderley noted his approach to writing this work by stating, "This Impromptu for Tuba and Piano explores a variety of musical moods ranging from dark and ominous to joyful and exuberant. It is a wonderful display of melodic inventiveness and rhythmic interest utilizing creative exchanges between the tuba and piano throughout the composition. After a mysterious introduction, a brisk allegro section provides an unrelenting presentation of energy and vitality that characterizes much of the piece."

**Gary Kulesha** is one of Canada's most visible musicians. Although he is best known as a composer, he is active as a conductor and pianist as well. His first professional compositions date from his early teens, and several of his pieces are frequently performed by a variety of ensembles. Kulesha's *Divertimento for Brass Quintet (No. 1)* was written when he was 17. It continues to be programmed and recorded by quintets. His *Sonata for Horn, Tuba, and Piano*, written when he was 22, has been included on three professional recordings. Early in his career, Kulesha became affiliated with the Canadian Brass and worked as a composer and arranger for them. *Three Complacencies* from 1978 was originally written for bass clarinet and tuba. Each movement lasts approximately one minute and features distinct styles and interplay between the instruments. After performing Barbara York's *Conversations for Bassoon, Tuba, and Piano* last year with my dearest friend Jacqui Wilson, I just *had* to ask her to play this duet with me tonight.

An early pioneer of tuba ensemble music was Connie Weldon at the University of Miami. She established many other "firsts" in her career, most notably as the first woman to play tuba in a major American orchestra when she joined the Boston Pops in 1955. After completing her undergraduate and graduate degrees, Weldon performed with the North Carolina Symphony. She later received a Fulbright fellowship and moved to Amsterdam to study with Adrian Boorsma, principal tubist of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. For a time during her studies, she was the orchestra's acting principal tuba. Upon returning to the United States, she played with the Kansas City Philharmonic, but after two seasons she decided to return to the University of Miami (her beloved alma mater) to teach the tuba studio. She remained on the faculty until her retirement in 1991. This Suite for Three Tubas by **Roger Jones** was published in 1992 and celebrates Professor Weldon's long, storied career.