



AMERICAN CLASSICS



JACK GALLAGHER

Symphony No. 2 'Ascendant' **Quiet Reflections**

London Symphony Orchestra • JoAnn Falletta



Jack Gallagher (b. 1947)

Symphony No. 2 'Ascendant' · Quiet Reflections

Undertaking this second disc for Naxos with JoAnn Falletta and the London Symphony Orchestra was a great pleasure. I have admired the LSO since purchasing in 1964, as a senior in high school, their iridescent recording of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* conducted by Eugene Goossens. The color and vitality of Stravinsky's magical score performed by the LSO seemed intoxicating, kindling in me an admiration, passion, and enduring love for the sound world of the symphony orchestra.

As a young trumpet player in the late 1960s, I performed for two seasons in New York with the Orchestra of the National Orchestral Association conducted by John Barnett and Leon Barzin. In the course of the NOA's three-to-four weekly rehearsals at New York's City Center, weekly broadcasts over WNYC-FM in New York, and eight performances at Carnegie Hall, I was thrilled to perform such magisterial repertoire as Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 10*, Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*, Holst's *The Planets*, Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2* and, in rehearsal, many others including Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 5*, Mussorgsky-Ravel's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.

During this time, I hoped it might prove possible, some day, for me to compose for this grand medium. Thanks to the generosity of my parents, I had begun to study composition, counterpoint and orchestration with the distinguished American composer Elie Siegmeister. But as a novice, I felt far removed from the lofty goal of composing for orchestra. Now, 45 years later, I feel honored that the *Symphony No. 2 'Ascendant'* has been brought to life by the LSO conducted by Ms. Falletta.

Symphony No. 2 was composed between 2010 and 2013. In traditional four-movement format and lasting 63 minutes, it seeks an expansiveness of discourse possible, perhaps, only to an extended work. Thematic connections link material among the movements. Additional integrating gestures, such as initiating each movement with

prominent material for the horns, are employed throughout.

The opening movement, marked *Boldly*, is the lengthiest, embracing, in 868 measures, a sonata form of broad proportions. Principal elements include an abrupt ascending flourish in horns leading to an upward-leaping motive (one referent for the work's subtitle) in woodwinds accompanied by swirling figurations in strings and brasses. The second subject, a lyrically "exotic" statement marked *Buoyantly; gently*, is played by the solo oboe and harp. Imitative polyphony in the brass initiates the exposition's conclusion.

Following a brief slowing of the tempo, the development revisits the opening material and is succeeded by a turbulent episode, based on the movement's initial gesture, for trombones, tuba and agitated unison strings. Three trumpets sound an affectionate homage to *Petrouchka* prior to a persistently rising, overlapping, sustained brass passage. During the recapitulation, all elements, in varied form, are heard, with three segments of coda interpolated at various points. Ultimately, a soaring statement of the second theme, in cellos and horns, leads to a fourth, final, coda. The movement concludes robustly with a reference to the opening motive in the brass.

The second movement is a *scherzando* outlining a freely palindromic structure of ABCD E DBA. Sections are connected by short *ritornelli*. Within this scheme, "C" is a minimalist-inspired development of the *scherzando's* opening motive: it is omitted in the movement's second half. "E," the movement's structural center, is a brief fugato based on the *ritornello's* inversion. The sportive nature of these devices seeks to affirm the movement's playful quality.

Marked *Slowly*, the third movement is an extended aria in three-part form. Above a quietly murmuring background, first violins intone a broad, disjunct rising motive whose initial melodic interval, varied with each iteration, recalls the upward-leaping gesture heard at the

opening of the first movement. Murmurs in the winds erupt into florid solos for flute and clarinet prior to a codetta and transition. The middle section features plaintive solos for oboe and flute before culminating in a climactic outburst – itself a fragmentation of the work's opening motive – for brass and timpani sounded against turbulent figurations in winds and strings. A short transition returns to the quiet opening material, marked by a new countermotive in the first violins. In a second climactic episode, the florid wind solos of the first section are rendered passionately by the strings, underpinned by a *cortège*-like timpani *ostinato*. The coda's final *diminuendo*, punctuated by the scraping sound of a fading *guiro*, concludes the movement.

The finale is marked *Slowly – Energetically – Fast – Moderately – Fast*. A *misterioso* introduction, featuring trilling high strings and harp, leads to colloquies, recalled from the preceding movement, in the horns. Pulsating triplets in woodwinds, interrupted by solos in the trumpet and bassoon, yield to an energetic transition, succeeded by the *Fast* main body of the finale.

The first theme begins with a sternly vigorous statement, based on the opening horn colloquy, in the strings. Secondary themes include a repeated-note motive in the woodwinds, a syncopated motive heard first in strings, an arch-shaped theme played by the solo clarinet, and a broad reappearance of the colloquy-motive in the brass. Near the middle of the movement, agitation yields to a slower, gentle chorale heard in woodwinds and reiterated by pianissimo strings and harp. Emergent brass and timpani signal a return to the discord and vigor of the fast material, during which three of the movement's prominent themes are superposed. In a final peroration, the chorale, restated climactically by the brass, gradually dissipates and re-gathers energy for the celebratory coda.

"Ascendant" refers, in addition to the upward-leaping gesture at the work's opening, to elevated aspirations of the human spirit. My hope is that an ethos of striving may be perceived as central to the work. Scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, two percussionists, harp and strings, the

symphony is dedicated to the loving memory of my parents, Ethel L. and John J. Gallagher, and to my twin grandsons, Jack and Thomas Junker.

Quiet Reflections (formerly, *A Quiet Musicke*), completed in 1996, was composed for the 80th anniversary season of the Wooster (Ohio) Symphony Orchestra, Jeffrey Lindberg, Music Director. Following the composition of *Proteus Rising from the Sea* – an aggressive, energetic work commissioned and recorded by the Air Force Band of Flight in Dayton, Ohio – it aspires to inhabit an entirely different sound world. Gently lyrical in design, *Quiet Reflections*, a twelve-minute narrative in one movement, endeavors to evoke a sense of longing for past tranquility, calm and serenity.

The work, in three-part form, begins with a tolling bell punctuating a soliloquy for solo horn. A wistful motive in strings and winds is followed by a reflective second theme, marked *religioso*, in the strings. The middle section is in two episodes. The first begins with a *habanera*-influenced *ostinato* in the harp and violins, joined by woodwinds and culminating in a brief passage for trombones and timpani. The second episode follows a link in the solo bassoon with passages for clarinets, solo trumpet, and horn. An abridged return of the calm material from the beginning marks the last section. The reappearance of the horn and bell are followed by a final statement of the *religioso* theme in the strings, after which the work fades quietly.

Dedicated to the Wooster Symphony Orchestra, Jeffrey Lindberg, Music Director, *Quiet Reflections* was first performed 11th February 1996 at The College of Wooster by the WSO with the composer as guest conductor.

I am grateful to conductor JoAnn Falletta, the London Symphony Orchestra, producer Tim Handley, engineer Phil Rowlands, assistant engineer James Walsh, the genial staff of Blackheath Concert Halls, Concert and Recordings Manager of the London Symphony Mark Stevens, Philip Rothman of New York City Music Services for elegant music preparation of *Symphony No. 2*, and at Naxos, Edith Lei and Chairman Klaus Heymann.

Jack Gallagher

London Symphony Orchestra



The London Symphony Orchestra, Resident at the Barbican Centre, is widely regarded as one of the world's leading orchestras. The LSO works with an enviable family of artists, including Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas and Daniel Harding, and has long-standing relationships with some of the leading musicians in the world. The Orchestra enjoys residencies in New York, Paris and Tokyo, in addition to regular tours around the globe. The LSO is set apart from other international orchestras by the depth of its commitment to music education through LSO Discovery, reaching over 65,000 people each year and offering people of all ages opportunities to get involved in music-making. The Orchestra is a world-leader in recording music for CD, film and events, and was the Official Orchestra of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Ceremonies. LSO Live is the most successful label of its kind and recordings are available worldwide on CD, SACD and online.

JoAnn Falletta



JoAnn Falletta serves as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic and Virginia Symphony and is the Principal Guest Conductor of the Brevard Music Center of North Carolina. She has guest conducted over a hundred orchestras in North America, and many of the most prominent orchestras in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa. Recipient of the Seaver/National Endowment for the Arts Conductors Award, winner of the Stokowski Competition, and the Toscanini, Ditson and Bruno Walter conducting awards, Falletta has also received twelve ASCAP awards and served on the U.S. National Council on the Arts. A champion of American music, she has presented over five hundred works by American composers including 110 world premières. Her Naxos recordings include the double GRAMMY® Award-winning disc of works by John Corigliano and GRAMMY® nominated discs of works by Tyberg, Dohnányi, Fuchs, Schubert, Respighi, Gershwin, Hailstork and Holst.

www.joannfalletta.com

Jack Gallagher

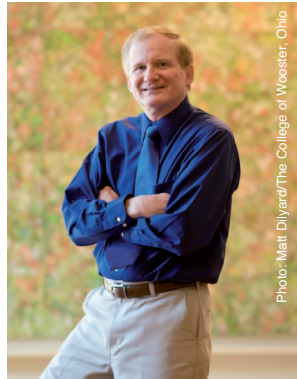


Photo: Matt Dilyard/The College of Wooster, Ohio

Jack Gallagher is the Olive Williams Kettering Professor of Music at The College of Wooster in Ohio. He holds doctoral and master's degrees in composition from Cornell University and the bachelor's degree *cum laude* from Hofstra University. He studied composition with Elie Siegmeister, Robert Palmer and Burrill Phillips, participated in seminars with Karel Husa, Thea Musgrave and Ned Rorem, and in masterclasses with Aaron Copland, George Crumb and William Bolcom. His compositions are included on fifteen compact discs on the Musical Heritage Society, Capstone, Vienna Modern Masters, Summit Records, Promuse, Altissimo! and ERM labels. Publishers include Editions Bim, Lawson-Gould, Kalmus/Ludwig Masters Publications and Manduca Music Publications. Gallagher's awards include recognition from the Ohio Arts Council, the Charles Ives Center for American Music, Meet the Composer, the Yaddo Corporation, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, The College of Wooster Henry Luce III Award for Distinguished Scholarship, and other organizations. As a producer, his recording for TNC Records of Messiaen's *Oiseaux exotiques* with pianist Angelin Chang, conductor John McLaughlin Williams and the Cleveland Chamber Symphony won a 2006 GRAMMY® Award in the classical category "Best Instrumental Soloist Performance with Orchestra." More information about his music may be found at: www.JackGallagherMusic.com

Jack Gallagher's first Naxos disc *Orchestral Music* (8.559652) with the LSO conducted by JoAnn Falletta was awarded five stars by both *BBC Music Magazine* and *Audiophile Audition*, which found his *Symphony in One Movement: Threnody* "truly a work of genius." Hailed as "fresh and exuberant" by *Gramophone*, which noted its "explosions of sound and colour," the work was described as "brilliantly orchestrated" by *National Public Radio*'s "Deceptive Cadence."



Photo: April Gallagher

Engineer Philip Rowlands, producer Tim Handley, conductor JoAnn Falletta and composer Jack Gallagher



Photo: James Walsh

JoAnn Falletta and the London Symphony Orchestra's recording session on 3rd September, 2013

Jack
GALLAGHER
(b. 1947)

Symphony No. 2 'Ascendant'
(2010-13)

62:58

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| 1 Boldly | 20:49 |
| 2 Playfully | 9:33 |
| 3 Slowly | 16:20 |
| 4 Slowly – Energetically – Fast –
Moderately – Fast | 16:16 |
| 5 Quiet Reflections (1996) | 12:10 |

WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

London Symphony Orchestra
JoAnn Falletta

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Jack Gallagher continues his association with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by JoAnn Falletta with *Symphony No. 2 'Ascendant,'* a robust, colorful work of dramatic contrasts and expansive architecture that seeks to express the aspirations and strivings of the human spirit. *Quiet Reflections* is a calm, serenely lyrical meditation which evokes a sense of longing for past tranquility. Gallagher's previous Naxos release *Orchestral Music* (8.559652) with the LSO conducted by JoAnn Falletta was awarded five stars by *BBC Music Magazine* and hailed as "fresh and exuberant" and for "its explosions of sound and colour" by *Gramophone*.

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Playing
Time:
75:08