



AMERICAN CLASSICS



Gregory

FRITZE

Overtures and Symphonies

London Overture • A Day in Valencia

Waterplace Park • Sinfonía de Valencia

A photograph of the London skyline at night, featuring the illuminated Big Ben clock tower and the Houses of Parliament, with the River Thames in the foreground.

London Symphony Orchestra
Rafael Sanz-Espert

Gregory Fritze (b. 1954)

Overtures and Symphonies

Gregory Fritze is a prize-winning composer and Fulbright Scholar. His compositions have been performed more than a thousand times in 26 countries, and he has written over a hundred compositions for orchestra, band, chamber ensembles and soloists. He was on the composition faculty at Berklee College of Music for 36 years, serving as chair of that department for 14 years. Over the years he has taught over twelve thousand music students, many of which have become successful composers and/or performers around the world. During his tenure at Berklee he also played tuba in various orchestras and brass ensembles, and was principal tubist with the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra for 33 years. He was also principal conductor of the Boston Brass Ensemble for 14 years, and he has performed in brass groups as performer or conductor over a thousand times. His Fulbright activities were his research on compositions for wind instruments by Spanish composers. He has continued to be an advocate for Spanish music and has given lectures on this subject many times around the world.

Fritze was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1954 and started learning piano at age six and tuba at age ten. He began his studies in composition with James D. Craig at the age of 16, and went on to study composition with John C. Adams and jazz composition with Everett Longstreth at Boston Conservatory, while also studying tuba with F. Chester Roberts. He continued his composition studies with Thomas Beversdorf, John Eaton and Frederick Fox at Indiana University, where he earned his Master's Degree. At Indiana he also studied tuba with Harvey Phillips and Jazz Composition with David Baker.

This is the eighth album of Fritze's compositions. Several of his compositions have also been included in other compilation albums.

London Overture (2022)

London Overture was composed especially for the London Symphony Orchestra for this recording. It is a programmatic trip through the city of London with many of its various districts, characteristics and moods. From the opening measures the listener hears the hustle and bustle of central London's business district with the crowded streets of people rushing around in all directions and the traffic – sometimes moving and sometimes stopping suddenly. Then one walks through a more tranquil and “cool” area of the city, represented by the horns, then cellos and violas. A brass fanfare announces our arrival at Buckingham Palace, with all the pomp and circumstance. We then travel to an old distinguished area with centuries-old architecture where we hear a fugue in Baroque style. The excursion continues through one of the world's most diverse and exciting cities, to the end of the overture.

The instrumentation is: piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, claves, crotales, tam-tam, suspended cymbal, glockenspiel, snare drum, xylophone, triangle, crash cymbals, harp, and strings.

A Day in Valencia (2022)

A Day in Valencia is a four movement symphony showing a programmatic portrayal of the city of Valencia, Spain during a 24 hour period. The first movement, *Sunrise over the Mediterranean*, portrays the listener waking up before sunrise with a soft open-string “G” long note in the violins. After a few seconds, the texture starts to build with slow-moving chords in the strings, duos in the flutes alternating with clarinets and scales in the harps. A vision starts coming together – a shimmer of the water as the sky changes from dark to light through a cascade of various colors. Soon, a crescendo shows the brilliance of the sun as it rises with a loud *forte* G major chord. The sunshine continues with the start of a new day represented by scales in the strings culminating with the horn melody moving to the final ending on the same G major chord.

The second movement, *Workday*, is in rondo form (A–B–A–C–A), with the “A” sections subtitled *Work to Live*. Here the listener can imagine a factory where everybody is hard at work. It starts in 5/4 meter with the timpani and features the horn. The B section is entitled *Laughing with Friends at Almuerzo*, representing the morning time when friends meet for a snack and a drink at a local bar. This is depicted by various soloists – contrabassoon, violin, piccolo, and bassoon. The *Almuerzo* ends with a canon that portrays three retired gentleman telling jokes – played by contrabassoon, double bass, and tuba. After another *Work to Live* period of work it is time for the C section, *Lunch with the Family* – a more tranquil part featuring several expressive soloists – flute, horn, oboe, and clarinet. The final return of the *Work to Live* section ends with a brief reprise of the first movement in a “sunset”.

The third movement, *An Early Evening Walk*, is an aria for solo tuba, and a tribute to the late tubist Harvey Phillips. Often thought of as the greatest tubist of the 20th century, he would often play his favorite chorale by J.S. Bach, *Come Sweet Death*. A short excerpt of this chorale is presented before the final phrases of the aria, accompanied by harp and cello.

The fourth movement is *Late Night at a Fiesta*. After a short introduction, the solo violin plays the jubilant fiesta melody which continues with different instruments. A reprise of the introduction from the first movement leads to another sunrise, punctuating the end of the 24 hour period and the start of another day.

The instrumentation is: piccolo, two flutes, alto flute, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, claves, vibraphone, crotales, tam-tam, marimba, suspended cymbal, glockenspiel, wood block, xylophone, triangle, four tenor drums and crash cymbals, two harps, piano, celeste, and strings.

Waterplace Park (2012)

Waterplace Park was commissioned by the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra at the request of music director Larry Rachleff, who asked for a piece composed solely for orchestral winds, brass and percussion to be performed by the Philharmonic on 23 March 2013. On 9 July 2019, *Waterplace Park* was performed at the Palacio de la Música, in Buñol, Spain as part of the WASBE (World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles) Composition Competition, where it was awarded Second Prize.

In composing *Waterplace Park*, I wanted to write a fun and jovial piece showcasing the different colors and textures of the woodwind, brass, and percussion sections of the orchestra. I also wanted to feature five instrumentalists who are not usually seen as soloists – bass clarinet, marimba, bass trombone, piccolo, and timpani. The piece is programmatic in nature in that it depicts five people on their way to a popular meeting place in Providence called Waterplace Park. Each solo instrument has its own thematic melody with a distinctive personality. After a brief opening by the entire ensemble the mischievous bass clarinet and marimba walk towards the park talking about their favorite cartoons from childhood. After a short interlude by the double reed choir, the hopeful, romantic bass trombone walking alone contemplates a “lost love”. After another interlude the piccolo and timpani provide a picture of a married couple arguing about domestic chores that still need to be accomplished. All five arrive at the park at the same time and they exchange their previous conversations. Here all five themes are presented together in counterpoint.

The instrumentation is: piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, claves, vibraphone, crotales, tam-tam, marimba, suspended cymbal, glockenspiel, snare drum, wood block, xylophone, triangle, four tenor drums, and crash cymbals.

Sinfonía de Valencia (2023)

Sinfonía de Valencia is a symphony depicting four areas in Valencia, Spain, starting with *Los Castillos* (“The Castles”). The first time I lived in Spain it was in the small town of Buñol, about 40 kilometers from Valencia. Our apartment was in the area of town called Plaza del Castillo, near an 11th-century castle.

The second movement, *La Tomatina*, is a depiction of a local festival that has been celebrated in Buñol for over one hundred years. Thousands of people crowd into the main street of town to throw tomatoes at each other for about one hour at midday.

The province of Valencia is on the coast of the Mediterranean with a coastline topography of plains. About 20 miles from the coast is a mountain range which is not very high, but is very dramatic. I start the third movement with a *Pastoral* which highlights the string sections including solos for violin and cello. The woodwind and brass sections are also highlighted with various solos. There is a transition to the *Las Montañas* section as if we were climbing up to the top of the mountain. The mountains of Valencia are not extremely tall, but have been a symbol of Valencia for centuries. Since they are hard to climb, a sense of pride and accomplishment follows the ascent to the top. An excerpt of the Valencian hymn is presented before the final statement.

The instrumentation is: piccolo, two flutes, alto flute, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, claves, vibraphone, crotales, tam-tam, marimba, suspended cymbal, glockenspiel, snare drum, wood block, xylophone, triangle, water gong, four tenor drums and crash cymbals, harp, piano, celeste, and strings.

Both symphonies on this album were previously composed for the orchestra-hybrid ensembles of Valencia, which is known for its many strong music societies. I have been fortunate to have been commissioned by several societies to compose for these unique ensembles. Arranging these two symphonies enables them to be a part of the regular symphony orchestra repertoire.

I would like to dedicate this album to my late father, Carroll Fritze, who was a mathematics teacher and later became a Lutheran minister. He was also a singer who would sometimes sing solos with the church choir. His support of my musical activities, especially when I was very young will always be appreciated.

I would also like to show my appreciation to my wife Linda for her continued support of my musical activities, especially during the past two years in preparation for this album. Her added assistance to producer Jonathan Allen was especially appreciated.

I would also like to thank Dario Sotelo Calvo, assistant conductor, Natalia Montañés, conductor's assistant and percussion manager, Jonathan Allen, producer, Jonathan Stokes, recording engineer, Elsa Roch, music copyist; Mario de Sa, LSO orchestra manager; Simon Wall, videographer and Laima Ariauskaite, photographer, and the excellent musicians who worked on this project.

Gregory Fritze

London Symphony Orchestra



Photo: John Davis

The London Symphony Orchestra believes that extraordinary music should be available to everyone, everywhere – from orchestral fans in the concert hall to first-time listeners across the world. The LSO was established in 1904 as one of the first orchestras shaped by its musicians. Since then, generations of remarkable talents have built its reputation for uncompromising quality and inspirational performances. Through LSO Discovery, its pioneering learning and community programme, the orchestra shares inclusive opportunities with performers, creators and listeners of all ages. Much of this work is based in LSO St Luke's, the orchestra's venue on Old Street, which is also one of the most versatile and sought after venues for performance and studio recording. The orchestra's own record label, LSO Live, was the first of its kind and brings to life the excitement of live performance through its catalogue of over 200 acclaimed recordings and an extensive programme of filmed broadcasts. Including its famed work in the studio, the LSO has made more recordings than any other orchestra – over 2,800 projects to date across film, video games and bespoke audio experiences – many of which have been decorated with honours from the Emmys, GRAMMYs, Oscars, Golden Globes, BAFTAs and BRITs, as well as the Mercury Prize. The LSO is resident orchestra at the Barbican in the City of London, and is able to extend its reach far beyond the concert hall through touring, digital partnerships and recorded collaborations with a genre-busting roster of world-class artists, continually connecting people everywhere to the power of great music.

www.lso.co.uk

Rafael Sanz-Espert



Conductor Rafael Sanz-Espert was born in Valencia, Spain, where he attended the Conservatorio Superior de Música. As a young virtuoso he was one of the first to record an album for saxophone solo in Spain, and he began his professional career playing alto saxophone in the Banda Municipal de Valencia, a position he held for over ten years. During this time he also started to conduct for local Valencian music societies, establishing himself as one of the most dynamic and expressive conductors on the international wind music scene. In 2002 he began his tenure as principal conductor of the Banda Municipal de Música de Bilbao, a position he held for ten years. He then moved to a similar position in Madrid for five years, and subsequently to Valencia for five years. He has conducted over a thousand concerts, and his guest conducting activities have spanned four continents, with performances in South America (Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional del Paraguay), North America (The U.S. Army Orchestra), Africa (Orquesta Sinfónica de Tenerife) and throughout Europe.

Gregory
FRITZE
(b. 1954)

Overtures and Symphonies

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| 1 | London Overture (2022) | 8:46 |
| | A Day in Valencia (2022) | 28:30 |
| 2 | I. Sunrise over the Mediterranean | 5:17 |
| 3 | II. Workday | 10:03 |
| 4 | III. An Early Evening Walk | 4:09 |
| 5 | IV. Late Night at a Fiesta | 9:01 |
| 6 | Waterplace Park (2012) | 9:51 |
| | Sinfonía de Valencia (2023) | 28:43 |
| 7 | I. Los Castillos | 8:34 |
| 8 | II. La Tomatina | 7:36 |
| 9 | III. Pastorale y las Montañas | 12:33 |

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

London Symphony Orchestra Rafael Sanz-Espert

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AMERICAN CLASSICS

Prize-winning composer Gregory Fritze has written over a hundred compositions for a variety of forces, and is also a greatly admired teacher. The four works on this album share programmatic perspectives. The city of London is evoked in a celebratory overture full of vitality, diversity and pageantry; the two symphonies reflect Fritze's immersion in the warmth, landscape and festive excitement of the city of Valencia; and the overture *Waterplace Park*, a popular meeting place in Providence, Rhode Island, is a jovial piece that features five unusual instrumental soloists.

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Playing
Time:
75:55