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For immediate release

Ouachita's Wind Ensemble performance featured on composer David Maslanka's website

By Rachel Bruton

October 23, 2018

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—A Ouachita Baptist University Wind Ensemble's performance of "Heart Songs" was featured recently on the website of the song's composer, David Maslanka. The performance was featured as part of the Maslanka Weekly, which highlights "excellent performances of David Maslanka's music from around the web."

"Our performance was chosen, not because we submitted it, but because someone heard it and thought it was outstanding," said Wind Ensemble Director Dr. Craig Hamilton, Ouachita's Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music and director of bands. "It lets our students and faculty know that others are listening to our performances and recognizing them as important."

"It is a great honor for Dr. Hamilton to be recognized in this way and to have our Wind Ensemble featured on the website for everyone to see and hear," added Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of Ouachita's School of Fine Arts. "We have incredible instrumentalists at Ouachita who continue to provide outstanding performances. I'm glad they can have the recognition they deserve."

According to the website, Maslanka is well known for his compositions for wind ensembles, solo instruments, piano, orchestral and choral pieces. More than 50 of his 150 works are for wind ensembles, including eight symphonies, 17 concertos, many concert pieces and a mass. The composer also served on the faculties of several universities, including the State University of New York and New York University. Maslanka wrote as a freelance composer from 1990 until his death in 2017.

Maslanka had written that "the title of 'Heart Songs' comes from the image of watering the tree of life with the blood of the heart. It is my hope with this music to provide a substantial and deeply-felt piece for young players."

The Ouachita Wind Ensemble features student musicians in all classifications. Over the years, the ensemble has performed at state, regional and national meetings. Since its founding in the late 1990s, the ensemble has toured throughout the U.S. and Europe and recorded several CDs.

"As performers, you want to give a true performance of what the composer intended—of artistic integrity, if you will," Hamilton said. "Being selected as a featured performance by the composer's website means that your performance not only met the criteria for artistic integrity, but it is held up as a model for others who perform the work."

The Wind Ensemble's 2014 performance of "Heart Songs" can be viewed at davidmaslanka.com/maslanka-weekly-best-of-the-web-grade-3-music-for-wind-band/.

For more information about Ouachita's instrumental program, visit obu.edu/band or contact Dr. Craig Hamilton at hamiltonc@obu.edu or (870) 245-5137.