

Program Notes:

The Emerald Necklace is a chamber symphony in three movements that celebrates the connection between nature and humanity that has occurred for thousands of years in Jamaica Plain. The title corresponds to the name of the expansive park and waterway system designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of landscape architecture that begins at the Boston Common and runs through Jamaica Plain ending in Franklin Park. Commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra as part of their BSO in Residence Composers Project, *The Emerald Necklace* is scored for chamber orchestra with a duration of fifteen minutes.

The Emerald Necklace is divided into three distinct movements. The inspiration for each of the movements is derived from a concept used by Frederic Law Olmstead; Compression, Release and Surprise. The first movement “Compression” in a quick tempo begins with a heroic fanfare represents how man and machinery created the Jamaica way a major roadway on the Emerald Necklace by changing the raw elements of nature to create scenery that looks as if it always existed but in actuality was formed to look natural. Traveling this expansive roadway with its twists and turns lined by majestic trees creates for the traveler a magical and hypnotic experience.

The second movement “Release” in a slower tempo depicts evening at the majestic Jamaica Pond, a natural kettle pond formed by glaciers. The Jamaica Pond with its fairytale like beauty allows one to daydream of an earlier time when nature was pristine and undisturbed. This movement features solos played by alto flute, bass clarinet and english horn.

The third and final movement “Surprise” is inspired by very old arrowheads, tools and artifacts found at Spring Brook Village now part of the Arnold Arboretum. These artifacts dating from the Late Archaic Period show habitation by ancient peoples as early as 8000BC. I had the privilege of holding these magnificent artifacts in my hand and when I closed my eyes I envisioned the scene of a very active hunting party. The movement begins with a slow hypnotic drumbeat as the men of the tribe gathered inspiration and energy from the spirit world to aid them on their quest. The sighting of an animal darting interrupts this meditation and suddenly the entire band of men begin a fast chase through the forest. Slowly and strategically they work together until they circle in on their prey to make the final kill.