

NAXOS

# WIND BAND CLASSICS



## KENNETH FUCHS

### Point of Tranquility

Christina's World • Rush • Forever Free

Greg Case, Alto Saxophone

United States Coast Guard Band • Adam Williamson



Kenneth  
**FUCHS**  
(b. 1956)

**Point of Tranquility**

- |          |   |              |
|----------|---|--------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Discover the Wild (Overture for Band)</b>  | <b>4:49</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Point of Tranquility<br/>(Idyll for Band After a Painting by Morris Louis)</b>   | <b>10:19</b> |
| <b>3</b> | <b>From the Field to the Sky<br/>(Celebration Fanfare for Brass and Percussion)</b> | <b>5:05</b>  |
|          | <b>Rush (Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Band)</b>                                  | <b>14:59</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>I. Evening: (Cadenza – Adagietto)</b>  | <b>7:28</b>  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>II. Morning: (Cadenza – Allegro)</b>   | <b>7:31</b>  |
|          | <b>Greg Case, Alto Saxophone<br/>Jeffrey Renshaw, Guest Conductor</b>               |              |
| <b>6</b> | <b>United Artists (Fanfare-Overture for Band)</b>                                   | <b>5:40</b>  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Christina's World<br/>(Idyll for Band After a Painting by Andrew Wyeth)</b>      | <b>13:46</b> |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Forever Free (Fanfare-Overture for Band)</b>                                     | <b>4:26</b>  |

Recorded at Leamy Hall, United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut, USA,  
June 2013 to November 2018

Producer and engineer: Ian Dobie

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Booklet notes: Kenneth Fuchs

Cover: *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, 2018, acrylic on canvas,  
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## **Kenneth Fuchs (b. 1956) Discover the Wild • Point of Tranquility • From the Field to the Sky Rush • United Artists • Christina's World • Forever Free**

My first exposure to musical composition was through band music, starting when my high school band director, Bentley Shellahamer, encouraged me to compose original music for band. My undergraduate composition teacher, Alfred Reed, was considered a master band composer, and I learned from him how to compose and orchestrate effectively for symphonic winds. I continued my graduate studies in composition at The Juilliard School with Vincent Persichetti, one of America's leading symphonists, who composed an enduring body of works for band. Throughout my career I have composed band works in various forms; this recording features a selection of these works.

*Discover the Wild* is cast in the form of a three-part overture. The principal musical elements include a motive based upon the interval of the perfect fourth robustly stated in unison at the outset by four French horns. A lyrical theme characterized by the interval of the perfect fifth follows. These musical elements are taken up in various melodic and harmonic combinations by the entire band and form the basis for musical development throughout the remainder of the composition. The work is dedicated to Bentley Shellahamer.

Morris Louis, along with his contemporaries Helen Frankenthaler and Kenneth Noland, became one of the leading figures of Color Field painting. During the 1950s Louis adopted a technique of thinning acrylic resin paints to the consistency of stains that he poured on unprimed canvas. He manipulated the canvas to control the flow of paint, creating layered veils of transparent color. His painting *Point of Tranquility* (see <http://morrislouis.org/paintings/large/du274>) provided the inspiration for this musical composition. The work begins with a series of muted brass chord progressions that emerge from a hushed texture to set the sonic tone of the work. These harmonies, accompanied by undulating rhythmic figures in the woodwinds and percussion, form the basis of the modal harmonic language from which the entire work evolves. The exposition begins with an arching melody first sung by the flute, oboe, and a muted trumpet, which

is then intoned by other woodwind and brass instruments. The development section unfolds with a series of episodic variations combining the harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic motifs in various instrumental choirs and colours. The coda follows with fragments of music from the exposition and development scattered throughout the ensemble as the work glides to a point of tranquil repose.

*From the Field to the Sky* was commissioned by Daniel W. Boothe, then Commander and Conductor of the United States Air Force Band of Flight, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. The work is dedicated to the National Museum of the United States Air Force, the world's largest military aviation repository, with more than 350 aircraft and missiles on display. Boothe suggested composing a celebratory work for brass and percussion that would capture in sound our nation's storied military heritage, from the valiant work of soldiers defending our country on the ground to the unrivaled superiority of United States armed forces in the air. *From the Field to the Sky* is cast in one movement in three sections. The work is unified by a ceremonial fanfare theme characterized by upward-aspiring intervals of the perfect fourth, major second, and minor seventh. A cadence played on the field drum—an instrument characteristic of military life-and-drum corps—appears as a rhythmic motive throughout. These elements provide the basis for musical development during the work's vigorous opening and closing sections—*Nobilmente*—and a contrasting lyrical middle section—*Tranquillo*.

*Rush (Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Band)* was commissioned by Ryan Janus, then principal saxophonist of the United States Air Force Academy Band (located at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs), and a consortium of 37 saxophonists and ensemble conductors throughout the United States. The work, composed in versions for both orchestra and band, is composed in two movements, each about seven minutes in duration, connected by an extended cadenza for the saxophone soloist. The first movement ("Evening"), which begins with

a short cadenza that introduces the thematic material of the work, is a rhapsodic *Adagietto* with transparent textures. The second movement (“Morning”), which begins with an extended cadenza that introduces blue notes into the harmonic language, is cast in the form of a jazz-inflected passacaglia. The full ensemble begins the *Allegro* section with a series of syncopated chords, and the soloist then intones the passacaglia theme proper. The ensemble takes up the theme and with the soloist weaves an elaborate tapestry of ten variations based on the theme and the syncopated chords. The soloist concludes the concerto with a bravura display.

*United Artists* was commissioned by Larry H. Lang, then Commander and Conductor of the United States Air Force Academy Band. The work was conceived for band from the orchestral original and is a bright and energetic score, celebrating the vibrant sounds inherent in the wind medium. The principal musical element of the composition is a four-note motive—the intervals of a descending perfect fourth, an ascending major sixth, and an ascending minor second—stated forcefully at the outset by the entire ensemble. This motive is extended and taken up in various melodic and harmonic combinations by the players and provides the basis for musical development and transformation throughout the remainder of the composition.

Andrew Wyeth’s haunting image of Christina Olson, resting solitary in an open field, her back to the viewer, her body twisted toward the family homestead, provided the inspiration for this musical composition. It is her world of sea and pasture, of yearning for home, and a sense of loss and fulfillment, that I have attempted to evoke in music. *Christina’s World* begins with a brief introduction of two mysterious and hushed trill-chords that set the sonic tone of this work. These minor and major thirteenth chords, made up of seven different pitches each, form the basis of the modal harmonic language from which the entire work evolves. The exposition begins with Christina’s theme, a long and twisting melancholy melody sung by the flute, oboe, and a muted trumpet. The principal intervals of the melody include a minor second up and down, a perfect fifth down, and a minor seventh

up. This is followed by Christina’s hymn, a brief chorale presented by the English horn, French horn, baritones, and tubas. The development section begins to unfold with an undulating sixteenth-note figure in the flutes and clarinets. This figure, made up of a minor second and a perfect fifth up, is contemplative, suggesting the passage of time. This figure reappears in various formations throughout the section, and during its entire length, all instruments of the ensemble sing Christina’s theme and hymn in various choirs and combinations. The coda is buoyant, pulsating with optimism, and the work concludes in a triumphant fulfillment of all the musical materials, affirming the force of nature, will, home, and the power of the spirit.

*Forever Free* was commissioned by the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, André Raphael, Music Director, to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the State of West Virginia. Maestro Raphael suggested that I compose a work incorporating indigenous elements of the state’s musical heritage, capturing in musical sound the robust spirit of West Virginia citizens and the celebratory atmosphere surrounding the year-long commemoration of the state’s 150th anniversary. He also suggested that the orchestral version of the work be transcribed for symphonic band, thereby making it accessible for performance by high school and college students throughout the state during the sesquicentennial year. *Forever Free* is cast in one movement in three sections. The title is inspired by the state motto, “Montani semper liberi”, usually translated as “Mountaineers forever free”. The work is unified at the outset and closing by a ceremonial fanfare theme characterized by an upward-aspiring scalar figure based on the state song, *West Virginia Hills*. An arching lyrical theme accompanied by a militaristic snare drum and timpani cadence emerges from the majestic opening measures, elaborating further on characteristic melodic details of the state song. All of these elements are then deployed in various instrumental combinations, providing the basis for musical development and culminating in a buoyant fugato based on the melody of *West Virginia Hills*.

**Kenneth Fuchs**

## United States Coast Guard Band

The United States Coast Guard Band is the premier band representing the United States Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. The 55-member ensemble is based at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. In addition to performing concert tours around the nation, the band has also played in the former Soviet Union, Canada, England, Japan, and Taiwan. In 2008, the Coast Guard Band became the first premier American military band to perform a concert tour of Japan. Concerts are free and open to the public and include a broad spectrum of music, from wind ensemble classics to swinging jazz charts. [www.uscg.mil/community/band/](http://www.uscg.mil/community/band/)



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard

## Adam Williamson

Commander Adam Williamson serves as the seventh director of the United States Coast Guard Band, carrying out the band's missions of promoting public goodwill through the highest level of musical performance and supporting official Coast Guard functions. Williamson is responsible for the overall presentation of all Coast Guard Band activities, for maintaining the world-class stature of the 55-member ensemble, and for supporting hundreds of engagements annually. Williamson originally joined the Coast Guard Band as tenor saxophonist in 2003 and was a featured soloist on multiple occasions, including the band's 2007 Southeast Tour and at notable venues such as Carnegie Hall and Boston's Hatch Shell. As a member of the Coast Guard Band Saxophone Quartet, he performed concerts and conducted masterclasses extensively throughout the United States and abroad. Williamson served in the saxophone section for ten years before being named director. As the leader of the sole official musical representative of the Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard, Williamson provides musical guidance for official functions and creates musical programs to advance the Coast Guard's public affairs missions. In his time as director, Williamson has led the Coast Guard Band in performances for President Trump, President Obama, members of Congress, Department of Homeland Security secretaries, and Coast Guard leadership. The Coast Guard Band performed for the 2015 National Tree Lighting in Washington, D.C., and marched in the 2017 Presidential Inaugural Parade. Williamson is committed to supporting music education, and during his tenure has expanded the Coast Guard Band's outreach programs, now reaching more than 14,000 students in Connecticut and Washington, D.C. He created the *American Composers Series* recordings to capture the musical language, sound, and aesthetic of living American composers, so far recording the works of Kenneth Fuchs and Jess Langston Turner. His endeavour to engage a worldwide audience has led to extensive use of online and social media platforms, enabling the Coast Guard Band's concerts and outreach activities to be broadcast to millions around the globe. Williamson earned musical degrees from the State University of New York at Potsdam, studying saxophone with Timothy McAllister. He began graduate studies at Indiana University with saxophonist Otis Murphy. He attended the Hart School at the University of Hartford, where he studied instrumental conducting with Glen Adsit and Edward Cumming.



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard

## Jeffrey Renshaw



University of Connecticut Emeritus Professor Jeffrey Renshaw, from 1993 to 2017 conducted and directed the University Wind Ensemble and taught undergraduate and graduate conducting. Renshaw is a champion of new music, having conducted more than sixty world premieres with new music ensembles, wind ensembles, and orchestras. In 1996, at the request of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, Renshaw and the University Wind Ensemble performed at Carnegie Hall in a tribute to Morton Gould. Renshaw has had more than thirty articles about conducting and repertoire published in professional journals. He is an accomplished arranger, and his music has been recorded by the Eastman Wind Ensemble on the CBS/Sony Masterworks label and is published by Ludwig Music Publishers and Counterpoint Music Publishing. His performances and arrangements have been broadcast throughout Europe, Australia, Japan, the Netherlands, and in the United States on WGBH Boston's *Art of the States* and National Public Radio's *Performance Today*. Renshaw received his master of music and doctor of musical arts degrees in conducting from the Eastman School of Music, where he also served as assistant professor of conducting and ensemble coordinator.

## Greg Case

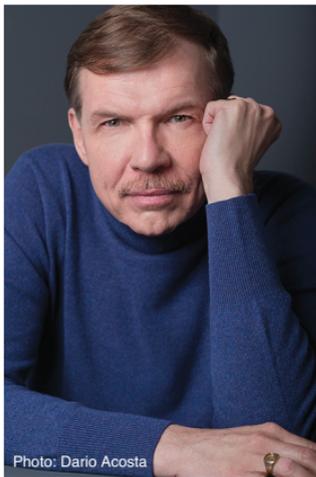


Greg Case is co-principal saxophonist of the United States Coast Guard Band and has been a member since 1997. He has been a frequent soloist with the band throughout the country and a regular jazz soloist with the Coast Guard Swing Band, Dixieland Band, Big Band, and Jazz Combo. As a member of the Coast Guard Saxophone Quartet, he has performed at the conferences of the World Saxophone Congress, North American Saxophone Alliance, and Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. He also is a founding member of the Element Saxophone Quartet, winning medals at both the 2004 and 2006 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. He performs with the Hartford Jazz Orchestra and the Goodspeed Opera Company. Since 2003, he has served as instructor of saxophone at the University of Connecticut, where he teaches applied study in classical and jazz saxophone as well as saxophone quartet. He has co-commissioned concertos by Kenneth Fuchs, Libby Larsen, and Lewis Spratlan. Case holds a master of arts degree in jazz studies from New York University and a bachelor of music degree in classical saxophone performance from Indiana University. His teachers include Eugene Rousseau, George Garzone, and Ralph Lalama.

This recording was made possible through the generosity of the Office of Global Affairs at the University of Connecticut.

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## Kenneth Fuchs



Kenneth Fuchs's fifth album with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by JoAnn Falletta won the 2018 GRAMMY® Award for Best Classical Compendium. The award capped thirty years of musical collaboration between Fuchs and Falletta and fifteen years recording five albums with the LSO for Naxos American Classics. The first album (8.559224), released in 2005, was nominated for two GRAMMY® Awards. The second (8.559335) was released in 2008 and featured music for horn. *Musicweb International* stated, "Fuchs's distinctive voice is evident from the outset, and his flair for orchestral colours and sheer lyricism shine through". The third album (8.559723), released in 2012, was nominated for a GRAMMY® Award. *BBC Music Magazine* stated, "Kenneth Fuchs writes tonal orchestral music of great imagination. He's a master of orchestral writing". The fourth disc (8.559753), recorded at Abbey Road in 2013 and released in 2014, featured baritone Roderick Williams in a program of vocal music based on texts by Don DeLillo, John Updike, and William Blake. *Gramophone* magazine wrote, "Fuchs claims his own expressive warmth and colour ... The performances are exemplary, from baritone Roderick Williams's commanding artistry to the bold, fresh playing of the London Symphony Orchestra under JoAnn Falletta's sensitive direction." The album's principal work, *Falling Man* (text by Don DeLillo, adapted by J.D. McClatchy), was presented as a monodrama in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of 9/11 by the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City. The fifth Naxos album included three new concertos—for piano, saxophone, and electric guitar—and an orchestral song cycle. In 2013, Naxos

released a disc of Fuchs's chamber music (8.559733) including *Falling Canons*, *Falling Trio*, and *String Quartet No. 5 "American"*. *Gramophone* stated, "Few composers have gained as much mileage—or found greater range—than Fuchs's 'Falling' works, which open and close this collection". Albany Records released the highly successful disc *Kenneth Fuchs: String Quartets 2, 3, 4* performed by the American String Quartet. *The American Record Guide* stated, "String quartet recordings don't get much better than this". Fuchs's music is performed worldwide and has achieved significant global media exposure through audio broadcast, downloading, and streaming. Fuchs serves as Professor of Music Composition at the University of Connecticut. At the University of Miami, where he received his bachelor of musical arts degree, Fuchs studied with acclaimed band composer Alfred Reed and performed flute and piccolo under renowned band conductor Frederick Fennell. He received his master and doctor of musical arts degrees in composition from The Juilliard School, where his teachers included Milton Babbitt, David Diamond, and Vincent Persichetti.

For complete information, see:

[www.kennethfuchs.com](http://www.kennethfuchs.com)  
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Cover image: *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, 2018, acrylic on canvas, 46 in. x 64 in.

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