



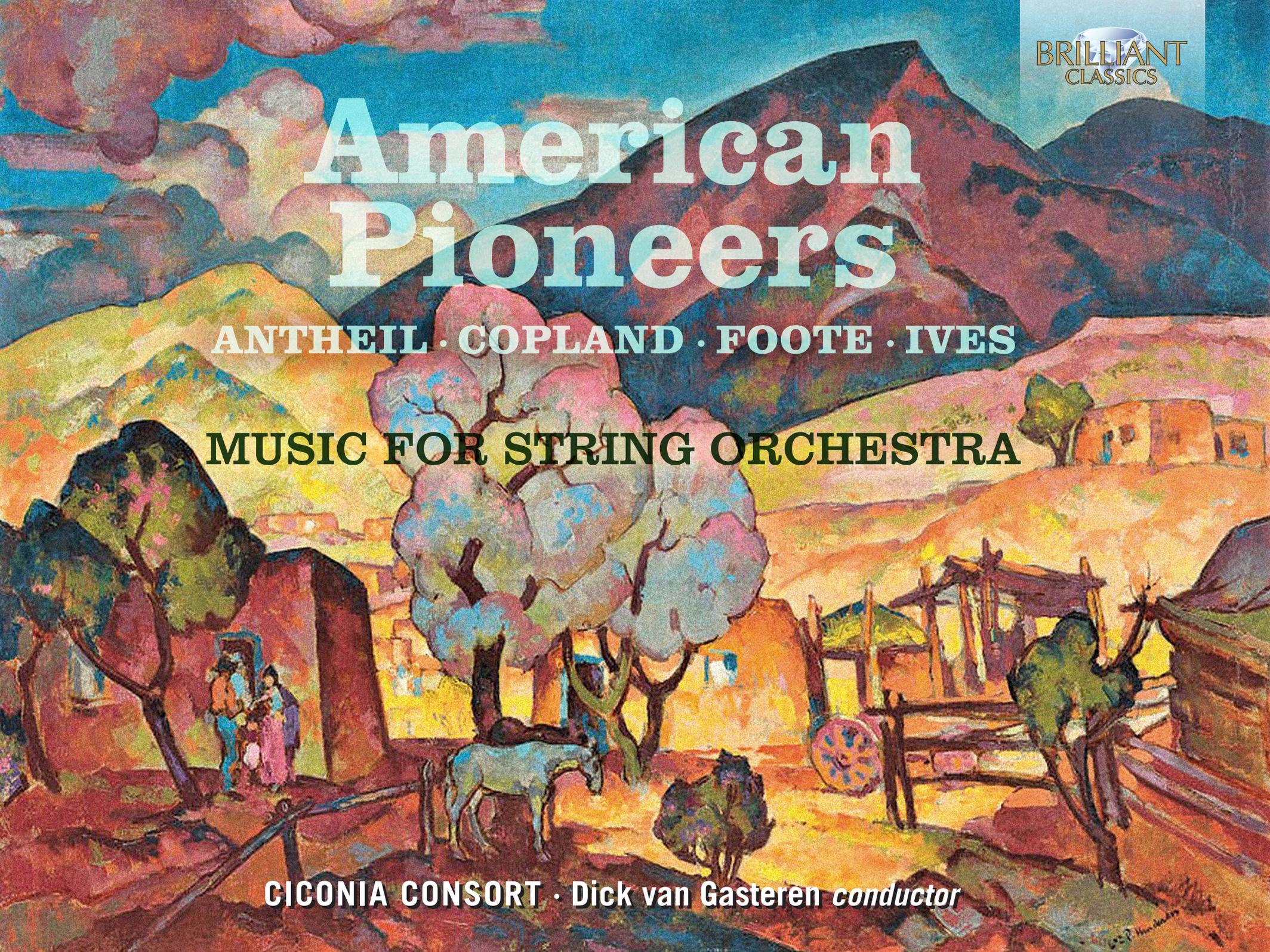
BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

American Pioneers

ANTHEIL · COPLAND · FOOTE · IVES

MUSIC FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

CICONIA CONSORT · Dick van Gasteren *conductor*



American Pioneers

Arthur W. Foote (1853-1937)

Suite in E Op.63

for string orchestra (1907)

- | | |
|----------------------------|------|
| 1. Praeludium | 3'41 |
| 2. Pizzicato and Adagietto | 8'35 |
| 3. Fuge | 4'56 |

George J.C. Antheil (1900-1959)

Serenade

for string orchestra (1948)

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 4. Allegro | 3'36 |
| 5. Andante molto | 9'09 |
| 6. Vivo | 4'33 |

Charles E. Ives (1874-1954)

7. **Hymn: Largo cantabile**

for string orchestra (1904) 3'11

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

8. **Appalachian Spring**

Ballet for Martha Suite
version for 13 instruments
(1943-44) 26'01

Ciconia Consort *The Hague String Orchestra*
Dick van Gasteren *conductor*

The album 'American Pioneers' was recorded in 2020 to commemorate the historic 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers leaving the Netherlands for America, following an 11-year stay in the city of Leyden. The influence of the Founding Fathers on the United States should not be underestimated. Nine of its presidents have descended from the Pilgrims, including George Bush and Barack Obama.

The pioneering theme is reflected in Ciconia Consort's choice of composers and their music. Arthur Foote was one of the first significant classical composers in the new country. However, his work still mainly sounds 'European' and seems a continuation of the traditional style of Brahms and Schumann. Aaron Copland was a pioneer in creating a true 'American sound' like no other. His ballet, *Appalachian Spring*, tells the story of a pioneer family in the American countryside. George Antheil was a pioneer and rebel in his whole being, always looking for new inventions (also outside of music). Charles Ives is considered an avant-garde composer, who in his own original way sought to express the American spirit and traditional folk music in his work.

Arthur William Foote (1853-1937) was an American pianist, organist, composer and pedagogue. He was educated at the New England Conservatory and Harvard College, where he studied with John Knowles Paine, and was a member of the so-called 'Second New England School' or 'Boston Six'. He was one of the first generation of composers to be educated primarily in the United States, along with Paine, Parker and MacDowell. Foote received the first Masters degree in music to be awarded by an American university.

Whilst travelling in Europe, Foote attended some of the first performances of Richard Wagner's *Ring Cycle* at Bayreuth in 1876. He wrote: "What a revelation there was in the new and strangely beautiful harmonic structure." Foote admired the music of Brahms and Wagner and promoted performances of their music.

In 1878 Foote was appointed organist of the First Church in Boston (Unitarian), remaining there for 32 years. He was also a founder of the American Guild of



Recording: 6-9 July 2020, Paleiskerk, The Hague, The Netherlands

Recorded and edited by Peter Arts (Arts Music Recording)

Cover: Lucero's place, springtime, (ca. 1920), by William Penhallow Henderson (1877 - 1943)

Photos: Elisabeth Beelaerts van Blokland (p.7), Funda Musical Venezuela (p.9)

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Organists. As an active music teacher he wrote a number of pedagogical works, including *Modern Harmony in its Theory and Practice* (1905), written with Walter R. Spalding.

Foote's music can be considered as 'conservative romantic' and 'European in German tradition'. In his *Suite in E Major for String Orchestra* his devotion to church and organ music is also evident.

George Johann Carl Antheil (1900-1959) was an American avant-garde composer, pianist, author and inventor. He was of Polish descent and studied composition in New York with Ernest Bloch. In 1922 he left for Europe. When in Paris he was admitted to the 'Groupe des Six', a group of artists at the heart of musical and artistic innovation and whose members included Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso, and the great Igor Stravinsky.

As his compositions and performances invariably resulted in a riot, he purposely presented himself as an 'enfant terrible'. In his book *Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony*, Ezra Pound describes Antheil's compositions as "the only ones that have given the music truly innovative impulses". Pound wrote this in response to the premiere of *Ballet Mécanique*, with which Antheil established his reputation. The piece was originally scored for 16 specially synchronized player pianos, two grand pianos, electronic bells, xylophones, bass drums, a siren and three airplane propellers. Once again the premiere in Paris ended in a riot.

From 1923 to 1927 Antheil was a member of *De Stijl*, a Dutch art movement of which Piet Mondriaan and Gerrit Rietveld were also members. In 1933 he returned to the United States. Thereafter he spent much of his time creating music for movies and television, resulting in his style becoming more tonal. A few years later he moved to Hollywood where, besides writing scores for movies, he continued to compose music for concert halls. Antheil's later works were in a more romantic style. Here we perceive the influence of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, as well as American music, including jazz. His work *Serenade for String Orchestra*, dates from this period.

Charles Edward Ives (1874-1954) was an American avant-garde composer. His father taught him harmony and counterpoint with an open-minded approach to theory, which encouraged him to experiment in bitonal and polytonal harmonisations. Charles Ives became a church organist at the age of 14 and wrote various hymns and songs for church services.

He continued his studies at Yale University with Horatio Parker. Ives' unconventionality disconcerted Parker, though Ives eventually did produce a series of 'correct' compositions for him. After graduating, and afraid of having to make too many compromises in his musical expression, Ives decided not to make a professional career in music. Instead, he became an insurance clerk. In 1907 he founded the highly successful insurance partnership of Ives & Myrick, which he headed until his retirement. In his spare time he composed, unhindered by critics' judgment. After suffering several heart attacks he wrote his last piece, the song "Sunrise", in August 1926.

Ives loved the melodies of Stephen Foster, patriotic songs, gospel, hymns and cabaret. His music is intimately related to American culture and experience, especially those of New England. His compositions — with integrated quotations from popular tunes, hymns, barn dances, and European classical music — are frequently works of enormous complexity, freely employing sharp dissonance, polytonal harmonies and polymetric constructions, experimental tone clusters, aleatoric elements and quartertones.

His music was largely ignored during his early life. Later in life the quality of his work was publicly recognized, and he came to be considered an 'American original'. In 1947 he received the Pulitzer Prize for his *Third Symphony (The Camp Meeting)*.

Aaron Copland (1900-1990) was an American composer, pianist, conductor and pedagogue. He was the son of a Jewish couple who emigrated from Lithuania and Poland. After a musical education with Rubin Goldmark, Copland travelled to Paris where he studied for three years with Nadia Boulanger. Her eclectic approach to music inspired his own broad taste and it was there that his urge to write authentic American music arose. In the decade that followed he incorporated a range of styles in his work that included jazz, folk and the music of Latin America.

By 1933 he began to find ways to make his starkly personal language accessible to a wider audience. The slowly changing, open harmonies in much of his music are typical of what many people consider to be the sound of American music, evoking the vast American landscape and pioneering spirit. He is best known for the works he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s. These were written in a deliberately accessible style which he labelled his 'vernacular' style. Works in this vein include the ballets *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*.

Appalachian Spring was commissioned by choreographer and dancer Martha Graham. The story tells of a 19th century spring celebration by the American Pioneers following their building of a new Pennsylvanian farmhouse. The ballet, which won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1945, contains some of the composer's most familiar music, particularly his set of variations on the Shaker hymn *Simple Gifts*. In the same year he received the *New York Music Critics' Circle Award* and in 1950 Copland won the Academy Award for Best Music in the film *The Heiress*.

For nearly four decades Aaron Copland achieved a distinctive musical characterisation of typical American themes in an expressive and modern style.



Ciconia Consort, The Hague String Orchestra, is a Dutch string orchestra consisting of twenty young musicians under the leadership of Dick van Gasteren. The orchestra was founded in 2012 and its home base for concerts is the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) in The Hague. Their concerts are predominately of a thematic nature and often combined with other disciplines such as: theatre, literature and science. Concert programs regularly touch upon contemporary social issues. The orchestra has built up an extensive repertoire, performing music from all style periods, with an emphasis in late-romantic and modern works. Apart from the well-known works

for strings, the orchestra has also revived quite a few forgotten masterpieces, Dutch premieres and world premieres, such as Willem Mengelberg's *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra* and Willem van Otterloo's *Prelude, Dance and Epilogue* for clarinet and string orchestra. Little known compositions like *Symphonie n° 1 pour orchestre à cordes* of Jaques Castérède and *Sur les flots lointain* of Charles Koechlin have been recorded by Ciconia Consort on the album *French Music for String Orchestra*. This debut-album, released in December 2018 on the 'Brilliant Classics' label, has received worldwide critical acclaim. Ciconia Consort has collaborated with soloists such as Lavinia Meijer, Peter Gijsbertsen, Paolo Giacometti, Pieter Wispelwey and scientists and writers as Pieter Waterdrinker, Maarten van Rossem, Rosita Steenbeek and Willem Otterspeer. The orchestra has been heard on Dutch radio in programmes such as *Avondconcert*, *Vrije Geluiden*, *Muziekfabriek* and *Muziekwijzer*, and seen on television in *Podium Witteman*.



Since its founding in 2012, **Dick van Gasteren** has been Ciconia Consort's conductor and artistic director. Van Gasteren is also regular guest conductor of the Orquesta Simón Bolívar, performing symphonies by Schumann, Bruckner and Mahler, amongst others. Moreover, he regularly conducts other Venezuelan orchestras from 'El Sistema' such as Juan José Landaete and Teresa Carreño. As professor at the Conservatorio Inocente Careño de Venezuela, he gives lessons and masterclasses in orchestral conducting to talented young students.

Dick van Gasteren studied cello, orchestra conducting, art history and law. He received his cello lessons from Anner Bijlsma at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, and he studied orchestral conducting with Jan Stulen.



He continued his study with Bernard Haitink in London, whom he later assisted during the 'Mahler Festival Amsterdam' in 1995. Van Gasteren was a laureate of the conductor masterclass of the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and the Wiener Meisterkurs. His concert programme conducting credits include the Limburgs Symfonie Orkest, Noordhollands Philharmonisch Orkest, Nürnberger Symphoniker, and Wiener Klangforum Orchester. He has also earned a reputation as an opera conductor, performing operas such as *Othello*, *Don Pasquale*, *Elektra* and *Die Fledermaus* with the Oldenburgisches Staatstheater. At the Royal Theatre, The Hague, he has conducted Constant van de Wall's Dutch-Indonesian opera *Attima*.

Dick van Gasteren has presented two episodes of the popular Dutch children's educational television series 'Het Klokhuis' which were centred on the profession of conducting. His book *Over jeugdorkestenen de didactiek van het dirigeren* (On Youth Orchestras and the Didactics of Conducting) was published in Dutch by Walburg Pers in October 2010. It has subsequently been translated into Spanish and now serves as teaching material for 'El Sistema' conductors in Venezuela.

- First violin:** Emmy Storms, Stephan Nieuwesteeg, Stella Zake, Caitlin Ensor, Marieke Koster, Novilé Maccinaité, Sergio Aparicio Rodríguez
- Second violin:** Emma Rhebergen, André Felipe Lima, Burcu Ramazanoğlu, Eva de Vries, Manuel de Almeida Ferrer
- Viola:** Lotus de Vries, Madi Luimstra, Blanca Sanchez Salvador, Kardelen Buruk
- Violoncello:** Jobine Siekman, Laura Roura Foxà, Remco Woutersen, Teodora Nedyalkova
- Double bass:** Daniel Gracio Carias, João Pedrosa Marcelino
- Flute:** Liset Penning
- Clarinet:** Annemiek de Bruin
- Bassoon:** Suzanne van Berkum
- Piano:** Daan Kortekaas