



About MR. TERRY MIZESKO

BORN: September 21, 1946 Morehead City, NC

The NC Symphony is delighted to feature the beautiful patriotic arrangement of AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL by the celebrated arranger, composer and former NC Symphony’s Principal Bass Trombone player. Here’s a little about Mr. Mizesko.

HIS CHILDHOOD

Mr. Mizesko was from a musical family where music was a pastime enjoyed by all. His Mom, who had two performance degrees from East Carolina University, was his personal accompanist and was also a church organist. His brother sang and taught himself guitar, and his sister sang and played the saxophone. His Dad, who had an outstanding voice, bought him a collection of ten albums – the Reader’s Digest FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS set, for which he attributes his love of classical orchestral music. This love grew into increased hours of practice on the trombone, cello and piano and to his beginning to compose in the tenth grade.

EDUCATION

Mr. Mizesko attended East Carolina University(ECU) in Greenville, NC where he studied composition and theory with Martin Mailman and Gregory Kosteck and studied trombone with Eugene Narmour. After graduating, he accepted a part-time position outside of Greenville teaching Choir and General Music for the first half of the year, and second thru eighth grades the second half of the year, which was a pivotal time for Pitt County which was just beginning integration. The next year he worked in Smithfield, Virginia where his skills of arranging were most beneficial when he found himself teaching General Music and five classes of chorus. These first years would be far different from his later years teaching trombone at St. Augustine’s College in Raleigh, Duke University in Durham, the University of NC at Chapel Hill and working with the NC Symphony.

WORKING WITH THE ORCHESTRA

In 1970, the NC Symphony was based in Chapel Hill, and would often set aside days throughout the season to hear interested musicians audition. Mr. Mizesko showed up for what he thought was an audition, and upon discovering that there was not one, offered to play anyway. His performance must have been most memorable because in 1971, their invitation for him to return and play resulted in a career that would span 46 years. Having already proven himself as an outstanding educator, directing became another of his gifts, conducting for the NC Chamber Players, the Governor's School Wind Ensemble, the Raleigh Youth Symphony, the Duke University Wind Symphony and as guest conductor for the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra Education Concerts.

PERFORMING

In the beginning, there was lots of traveling throughout the state, from Monday mornings through Friday evenings, with Symphony members returning home on weekends. Now they play most adult concerts on weekends, with most of the Education Concerts during the week. Symphony members average 175 concerts annually, covering much of the state. When in Raleigh concerts are most often at Meymandi Concert Hall at the Duke Center for the Performing Arts and the Koka Booth Amphitheatre in Cary. The orchestra has also appeared at Carnegie Hall in New York and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. among other places.

AS A COMPOSER

In his first year with the NC Symphony, the orchestra's assistant conductor, Jackson Parkhurst, encouraged him to write arrangements for the orchestra. One result was his FANTASY ON CHRISTMAS CAROLS. Then he began writing original compositions, one of which was the holiday favorite HATIKVAH from his "A Chanukah Celebration". When the Durham Symphony played this, Conductor William Curry complimented Mr. Mizesko by comparing his music to that of Samuel Barber who composed the beautiful "Adagio for Strings." Another of Mr. Mizesko's well-loved pieces is his APPALACHIAN LAMENT, a work for solo French horn and strings. For the CONCERTO FOR DOUBLE BASS, Mr. Mizesko collaborated with PRINCIPAL BASS Player Leonid Finkelshteyn which can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ud3f9C-57zU>

In 2005, Mr. Mizesko was commissioned to write for the US OPEN when in North Carolina. His 25 minute composition "SKETCHES FROM PINEHURST" tells the story of golf in Pinehurst beginning with its founder James Walker Tufts up until Payne Stewart's fatal plane crash after the 1999 Open. A compact disk (CD) of its premier by the NC Symphony was released in 2006.

Four other works were premiered in that same year---

"Sundays at Shackleford Banks" by the Triangle Youth Philharmonic

"Last Voyage of the Currituck", commissioned by the NC Symphony and performed at the Tall Ships Festival in Beaufort, NC

“The Divertimento for Clarinet and Strings” by Michael Cyzewski and the NC Symphony
and “A Little Dance Suite” commissioned and performed by the Canton Symphony Orchestra.

And these are but a few of his compositions. Mr. Mizesko has provided many arrangements for the NC Symphony Education concerts including Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy”, the Mexican folk song “De Colores”, and our own “Long Leaf Pine”. Even after his retirement in 2017 the NC SYMPHONY continues to perform his compositions and orchestrations for its classical, pops, and education concerts throughout the state.

We agree with Michael Graff who said “Mr. Mizesko’s most lasting mark on the NC SYMPHONY will not be the length of his tenure or even the skillful way he plays the bass trombone. Instead it will be something he wrote.” (“It Takes an Orchestra” from OUR STATE, December 2012)

FUN FACTS:

--- While with the NC Symphony, he’s played for every conductor except one, the founder Lamar Stringfield.

--- Mr. Mizesko has seen many of our state’s “spacious skies”-- born on the coast, loving the mountains and enjoying minor league baseball
(particularly the Durham Bulls and the Carolina Mudcats).

--- He enjoys great art, great dining and spending time with his wife, a violist with the NC Symphony, and their two children.