

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The influence of folk music, music of the people, is evident throughout all times. In selecting the music for this concert, I focused on pieces that had been influenced by folk songs or dances.

Florence Price was a classical composer, pianist, organist, and music teacher. Born in 1887 in Little Rock, Arkansas, she is noted as the first African American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first to have a composition played by a major orchestra. The **"Juba Dance"** from her 2nd String Quartet is based on a characteristic African American antebellum dance and the rhythmic element of African music is heard throughout this lively movement.

Romanian composer, **George Enescu**, uses vivid Romanian rhythms, and an air of spontaneity in his music. As his **"Romanian Rhapsody No. 1"** progresses, the music becomes faster and livelier, culminating in a whirling dance. **Johannes Brahms** is also known for his use of folk melodies and gypsy tunes, especially in his Hungarian Dances. His most popular **"Hungarian Dance, No. 5,"** is based on a Czárdás melody by Bartfai-Emlék.

Czech composer, **Antonin Dvořák** utilized folk music in his compositions too, mostly from his homeland Czechoslovakia, but the **"American Quartet,"** written in 1893, was inspired by a trip to a small farming community in Spillville, Iowa. Here he captured the essences of an American community that was openhearted, untroubled, and straightforward, and he imbued the piece with the vastness of the Iowa farmland.

Diane Wittry, Music Director/Conductor