important in large scale compositions; indeed, coherence is at the heart of what makes a symphony a symphony. Motives, themes and even long passages may recur in varied contexts, reflecting their core identities yet becoming transformed, as though seen “through a glass, darkly,” “glass” referring to an ancient mirror, likely of polished metal - a mirror that does not reflect a perfect image but rather through which one sees “darkly.” Musical mirrors appear in everything from melody and harmony to rhythm and form, at both small scale and large. Composers have long been fond of using mirroring techniques, including repetition, palindromes, retrogrades and inversions; sculpting forms that recall ideas in a new light; or creating tonal plans with balanced architecture. Further, a performance by a conducted ensemble might be thought of as the functioning of a series of mirrors, reflecting musical ideas from composer to score to conductor to musicians to audience. But like a game of telephone, the music is altered and shaped in subtle ways along the journey from composer to listener, with a multitude of interpretations factoring into the resultant sound.

While my first symphony was programmatic in nature, being dedicated to three influential teachers all of whom died early, this symphony is more in the tradition of absolute music, that is, without programmatic narrative. However, having stated that, I will also suggest that the music is expressive, and a listener is of course free to conjure their own interpretive narrative. Like many symphonies, there is a degree of struggle and resolution, which might lead to associations with the quoted text from Corinthians.

Cast in a three movement fast-slow-fast structure, the symphony focuses on a few central musical ideas - motives, melodies, chords, rhythms - and for some reason the number five, all of which are used throughout the work, transforming into ever new reflections of the initial musical impulses. Mirrors, small and large, abound.
The term Chimera comes from ancient Greece and refers to a mythological fire-breathing female monster composed from the head of a lion, body of a goat, and tail of a serpent. It more generally describes a monster made from various animal parts, an organism consisting of different genetic compositions, or a fanciful mental illusion or fabrication. My flute and piano piece Chimera was written for and inspired by my friends and colleagues Conor Nelson (flute) and Thomas Rosenkranz (piano), and was commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard.

Unremembered is an hour-long, thirteen-part (five parts heard here tonight) song cycle originally for seven voices, chamber orchestra, and electronics by composer Sarah Kirkland Snider, inspired by poems and illustrations by writer and visual artist Nathaniel Bellows. Four years in the making, the studio recording of Unremembered was released on New Amsterdam Records in September 2015, and featured vocalist Padma Newsome (Clogs), DM Stith, and Shara Nova (My Brightest Diamond), and the Unremembered Orchestra (includes members of ACME, Alarm Will Sound, ICE, The Knights, So Percussion), conducted by Edwin Outwater (Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, San Francisco Symphony.)

A meditation on memory, innocence, and the haunted grandeur of the natural world, Unremembered recalls strange and beautiful happenings experienced during a childhood in rural Massachusetts: a houseguest takes sudden leave in the middle of the night; a boy makes a shocking discovery on a riverbank; a girl disappears in woods behind a ranging farm; ghosts appear with messages for the living. Through Bellows’s moving words and images and Snider’s vivid, fraught, astonishing score, the cycle explores the ways in which beguiling events in early life can resonate in—and prepare us for—the subtler horrors that lie beyond the realm of childhood.

It is a great honor to write and dedicate a piece to the Bowling Green State University and their Wind Symphony. I write this in a spirit of friendly comradeship, for the cause we all have at heart. It is a piece written for the Heartland, but it is also written for America.

America is unlike any other nation on earth, and Americans are exceptional. They vote and pay taxes. They serve in our military. They are united against a common foe.

But terrorists and extremists have gathered strength and spread to every region of the earth, and endanger people with the most destructive weapons known to humanity.

We need to protect ourselves and our freedom. Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction.

These radicalized masterminds continue to threaten our freedoms and attack our brave soldiers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who were affected.

Never Forget. Never Remember.