

The Brass Band Bridge



Official Journal of the North American Brass Band Association, Inc.

November 1993 Issue 54

American Brass Band Composer: James Curnow



Most American wind players recognize James Curnow as one of America's leading composers in the concert band field. Until recently only members of The Salvation Army would have known of his remarkable contributions to brass band literature. Within the last ten years, however, James Curnow has produced a very diverse set of works for brass bands beyond the confines of his chosen denomination, and all his excellent Salvation Army pieces are now available to the general public. His output has not been restricted to large test pieces, although certainly works commissioned for brass band contests have enriched that genre. The "Selected List" provided at the conclusion of this brief article only begins to hint at his diversity, his ability to provide quality works in a wide range of technical demands. In recent years NABBA has chosen Curnow works for its own contests—with *Laude* on for Honors Section this year—and Curnow has served

as an adjudicator at our Championships and will do so again in 1994.

Background and Training

Curnow grew up in the rich brass band culture of The Salvation Army, receiving his first private lessons in composition and scoring during high school from Bandmaster Max Wood of The Royal Oak Corps Band of The Salvation Army. By the late 1960's some of his early efforts were being published by SP&S, the Army's main publishing firm in London, England. He received further guidance from Dr. Irwin Fischer, of American Conservatory, who taught composition at The Salvation Army's summer music camp, Central Music Institute, that Curnow attended as a young bandsman. Continuing to honor his religious and cultural roots, James Curnow still contributes to Salvation Army publications on a regular basis and currently serves as editor for The Southern Territory's highly successful *American Brass Ensemble Series*, and The Eastern Territory's *American Band Journal*, the latter duty just assumed in the Fall of 1994.

His formal training came at Wayne State (James Gibb) and Michigan State (Gere Hutchinson) though his compositional studies at first took second seat to his pursuit of degrees in music education. Not allowing the set music ed. curriculum to restrict him, he took as much extra study in composition, counterpoint, and orchestration as he possibly could handle. At Michigan State he also studied conducting with Harry

Begian and Euphonium with Leonard Falcone. After serving in various public schools and universities in the Detroit area his first long-term teaching appointment came in 1974, at Asbury College. In 1981 he moved on to The University of Illinois to become Assistant Director of Bands under Begian and served as Director of Bands there before deciding on a career of full-time composing and guest conducting.

After living in Atlanta for nearly ten years he and his wife, Marge, have moved back to Kentucky, in Jessamine County, just a few miles from Asbury College.

Current Status

National and then international recognition came to Curnow in the mid-to-late 1970's with an impressive series of awards for wind band works. To get an idea of his popularity in this field, Curnow holds commissions for concert band pieces through 1998, a date beyond which he just is not willing to commit! Combined with his fine skills on the podium, his success in this field has taken him all across the world—Australia, Japan, Europe—even before his string of brass band pieces gained him attention in that musical arena. There seems to be a good balance in Curnow's output of late, symbolically highlighted by the two CDs featured below—one for his wind band works published by Hal Leonard, produced Sony Corporation and recorded by one

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NORTH AMERICAN BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Member Band	50
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To join NABBA, please mail your name, address, telephone number, instrument, and band's name (if you play in one), plus annual membership dues, to —

Mr. Bert L. Wiley
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Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723

Moving?

The Brass Band Bridge cannot be forwarded because it is mailed third class. So, be sure to mail to Bert Wiley your old and new addresses, or your copy of the Bridge will be discarded by the U.S. Post Office, and you will miss the next issues!

Editor's Notes

I apologize for the late release of this "November" issue;—knew I was in trouble when the GABB tape entries, due December 1st, started to come in. Well, it has been that kind of Fall and, from those reports we are receiving, a very busy one for NABBA bands!

Several new features make their premiere this issue: American Brass Band Composers series, Band Bulletin Board, and Coming Events. Certainly NABBA bands will want to make fuller use of the latter two services in future issues. I hope that the profiles of our own brass band writers is enlightening as well as educational for us all.

All bands should have received in September the various contest guidelines. All contest music is available from Bernel and other music dealers. A special note to all bands in the Honors category. *Laude* (Curnow) can be played by bands with only three trombones. Simply follow the cues provided in the score and parts. Judges will be alerted to the fact that bands with three trombones may substitute the cued parts without any penalty.

NABBA continues to grow, with word in this issue of three new NABBA bands. Our Board has been strengthened—Bloomquist, Bulla, Gray, Hammond, and Sheehan. We approach the contest season in strong shape! A new listing of the Board of Directors is provided in this issue; they are your representatives. Contact them on matters that concern you! Certainly at the last Board meeting Raleigh the Board was very responsive to band input, leading to substantive changes and modifications in our contest procedures.

A brass band concert in Carnegie Hall, New York City? Informal reports reached me that the October program of **Black Dyke Mills Band**, with Philip Smith guest soloist, was a great success, the majority of the audience never having heard a brass band in a concert setting. Now that is progress for brass bands! See complete program later in this issue.

Send us **YOUR** programs! Share your story with other NABBA bands! Keep in touch. Have a fruitful, joyful Holiday season.

R.W. Holz

President's Podium

I am honored to be elected the fourth president of NABBA, succeeding Don Kneeburg, Paul Droste, and Perry Watson.

In the August meeting of the NABBA Board of Directors, we made several changes to the rules and procedures of the Championships. These actions respond to concerns voiced by many NABBA members within our member bands. It is clear that North Americans like head-to-head competition, and they want to be sure the competitions are fair and unbiased. So, we have reinstated the use of one required test piece (rather than a choice from among three) for each contest section, and we have also readopted the opaque screening of judges. While I believe our use of open judging in the last few years has resulted in completely unbiased adjudication and valuable comments that include the visual aspect of performance, many members have been uneasy about possible unconscious favoritism by judges who can see the competing bands. The adjudicators now will be unable to see the bands as they make their evaluations, returning the Championships to being as impartial as possible. Several bands said that with these changes, they would make every effort to compete in the 1994 Championships in Raleigh. We welcome their renewed involvement.

The Board discussed but did not make definitive decisions about regional competitions. If you have strong thoughts about regional competitions, please let me know in time for the Board meeting in April [See Board list for address/telephone].

Our program to encourage and sustain British-style brass bands in North America is working. I am very pleased that several Canadian brass bands have renewed their interest in NABBA (Most exciting is the selection of Toronto as site for our Championships in 1995).

As we work to expand the population of brass bands and strengthen NABBA and its leadership role, I greatly encourage your ideas and participation.

Sincerely

Thomas A. Myers, President



1994 Test Pieces

All Available through Bernel Music

Championship:
Variations for Brass Band
(Vaughan Williams)

Honors:
Laude
(Curnow)

Challenge/Open:
The Shipbuilders
(Yorke)

Youth:
Divertimento
(Ball)

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American Composer continued from page 1

of the world's finest wind ensembles, the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, and the other by deHaske featuring brass band pieces played by a great list of superb bands.

The commission is the primary motivator now for his work with "outside" brass bands, while his work for The Salvation Army continues to be a labor of love and spiritual nurture. Most recently he completed *Concertpiece for Cornet and Brass Band*, commissioned

by The Lucerne [Switzerland] Brass Band. He feels at home either in the field of programmatic pieces or in abstract composition, with the clarification that when writing for The Salvation Army the associated text is given major emphasis. The variation form or variation process has always appealed to him and some of his finest achievements come in this form. At the moment he is completing a wind band work based on a theme from Saint-Saëns' *Symphony #3* ("The Organ Symphony"); commissioned by The Norcross High School Band [Georgia]

in honor of a tragically-killed drum major who loved that piece.

Influences and Models

When asked about influences in his work, Curnow feels that he gained insight into brass band scoring primarily from the works of Eric Ball. Twentieth-century composers Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, and Aaron Copland are given places of honor in his own private study. Among current brass band writer's Curnow admires the recent efforts of Philip Sparke, Peter Graham, Edward Gregson, Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen [Norway], and Jan van der Roost [Belgium]. Confident about the future of brass banding, especially where the brass band community works in cooperation with, rather than in competition to, the wind or concert band scene, he delights in new ideas for brass composition and feels that composers should continue to challenge the top bands with complex and difficult works when appropriate. He joins other brass band composers in lamenting the time restrictions placed on brass band works, especially those written for contests.

Analysis

Curnow's brass band writing has provided us with a fine synthesis of the "brass choir block" approach of much American wind band scoring and the delicate chamber brass approach so often encountered in the best of Salvation Army sacred literature. He has not been shy in demanding a very active role for the percussion section, a section that, despite its more recent inclusion in contests, has either not been challenged or has been added seemingly as an after-thought by many brass arrangers. As a former virtuoso euphoniumist Curnow understands brass band playing and each of the brass band instruments. He rarely demands that which is truly unidiomatic for a particular instrument.

His choice of musical ideas in major works tends to fluctuate between a short

A Selected Listing of Brass Band Works by James Curnow

- | | |
|---|---|
| An Australian Christmas—Suite [1] | Knoxville 1800 [1] |
| Andante—Cornet Solo (Gliere/Curnow) [1] | Laude [4] |
| Appalachian Mountain Folk Song Suite [3] | Legend in Brass [1] |
| Asburian, The—Festival March [2] | Lobe den Herren [1] |
| Blenheim Flourishes [3] | Lord's Command, The [2] |
| Brass Metamorphosis [1] | Masquerade for Brass [1] |
| Brass Miniatures [1] | New Covenant, The [1] |
| Call To Arms, The [2] | Procession of the Nobles (Rimsky-Korsakov/Curnow) [2] |
| Canto Religioso—Cornet Solo [1] | Psalm of Praise [2] |
| Come Thou Almighty King—Prelude [5] | Prelude on Finlandia [1] |
| Christmas Triptych [1] | Rhapsody for Euphonium and Band [3] |
| Concert Piece for Cornet and Brass Band [1] | River City Suite [3] |
| Cornet Caprice—Trio [1] | She's Like a Swallow—Altohorn solo [1] |
| Faith Is the Victory—Festival March [2] | Southern Spirit—Festival March [2] |
| Fanfare and Flourishes [1] | Toccata (att. Frescobaldi/Curnow) [1] |
| Fantasy for Trombone and Brass Band [3] | Tribute—Concert March [1] |
| Galop (Strauss/Curnow) [1] | Trittico [3] |
| Guardian of Our Way [2] | Two Fanfares [3] |
| Great Salvation War—Tone Poem [2] | Variations on Terra Beata [2] |
| Heritage of Freedom [5] | Washington Grays (Grafulla/Curnow) [1] |
| Holy, Holy, Holy [1] | |
| Jubilation! [1] | |

Publishers' Code:

1 DeHaske; 2 Rosehill; 3 SP&S London; 4 The SA-Chicago; 5 The SA-New York

This listing does not include over fifty sacred brass band compositions or arrangements by James Curnow published by The Salvation Army in Chicago, New York, or London. For further data check *Instrumental Music Index of Salvation Army Band Publications*, published by The Salvation Army Music Department, Central Territory, 10 W. Alconquin Rd, Des Plaines, IL 60016. (704)-294-2133.

original series of pitches in a given tonal mode [See the phrygian set that is the basis for *Brass Metamorphosis*—f, g flat, c, d flat, e flat] or motives derived from hymns or chorales [In *Laude*, the chorale "Lobe den Herren"; in *Trittico*, the American folk hymn "Consolation"]. He has a preference for rhythmic and melodic ostinatos, a love of canonic imitation, and is a master of building large, climactic masses of sound. Indeed, this latter characteristic can bring about frequent performance failure in his music when a conductor tries to "peak" a section or composition too soon. In Curnow's major works there always seems to be one more "mountain" to climb! One must conserve the energy. The conclusion of *Laude*, a test-piece this year at NABBA 94, is a case in point. When we finally hear the theme at measure 281, upon which the series of variations is based (never fully presented before this moment), the *fortissimo* tutti is not the last to be heard. Four more peaks are required: the bright brass at 293; the *rallentando* into the *finale-presto*; the *crescendo* into 323; and the last four bars! The skilled conductor must balance these with careful regard to the overall expressive and technical demands placed on his players throughout the work.

Not all of Curnow is brass bombardment! His lyrical moods are equally engaging. The euphonium solo in *Brass Metamorphosis*, measure 179, played over a low bass pedal and soft, shifting chords above in the altos, shows both a poetic poignancy and a careful regard for his motivic material. In *Laude*, a hymn of praise, the soloists in the band are frequently called upon for soft, expressive playing of a reflective and quietly intense nature, especially flugelhorn, cornet, and euphonium.

In *Trittico*, commissioned for the Swiss Brass Band Championships, we can find some of Curnow's finest recent writing for brass band. As the title implies, there is a tripartite structure—three large variations based on the folk hymn "Consolation" and a four-note pitch

series or cell that opens the work. The folk tune is based in the aeolian mode; the opening motive—f, b flat, f, e—has lydian mode implications. These two sources and their modal bases provide a polymodal chromaticism that inflects much of Curnow's recent scores. At the climax of the third variation, section 38, Curnow brilliantly leads into an aleatoric section during which the upper brass improvise rapid patterns on given pitches derived from the opening motivic series while the lower brass and percussion continue a rhythmic and melodic ostinato, also based on the opening idea. This leads to a ponderous, almost threatening statement of the opening motive in the low brass. The exultant finale that follows combines the complete hymn tune in augmentation with third variation melodic and rhythmic ideas. The work concludes with a majestic statement of quintessential Curnow, the rising fourths and fifths of his opening motive, finally resolving the harmonic tensions of the work in a majestic E Flat major chord. This is a powerful work, one that can be appreciated for its solid musical craftsmanship and for its hidden motivation, the associated text of the hymn that so clearly seems to embody James Curnow's philosophy: *Once more, my soul, the rising day salutes thy waking eyes; / once more, my voice, thy tribute pay to Him that rules the skies*. With that text in hand one can have some better understanding of the inspiration behind the contour of the original motive that unites the piece.

Analysis of a composer's style, insight into his background and training, even his motivations for writing—all of these things help us better understand the creative impulse and allow us to better perform a composer's music. Yet all that is for naught if a composer does not communicate to his audience. In conclusion of this short profile of Jim Curnow, let me add a very brief personal example that I hope will place this all in perspective. The Lexington Brass Band gave its first concert of the season just a week ago. In a note re-

ceived after the concert via our "mail-in" donation envelopes, a gentleman wrote: "All the selections were new to me, but I hoped Curnow's LAUDE would never end, but like all good things, it had to...." May we in the brass band movement continue to receive more excellent and stimulating music from James Curnow.

Ronald W. Holz

Two Recent CDs of Curnow Music

Brass Band Works Published by DE HASKE Music publishers.

The Music of James Curnow. Brass Band Soli Deo Gloria (Jan de Haan), *Brighthouse and Rastrick* (Jan de Haan), *Yorkshire Imperial Band* (David Hirst), *Desford Colliery* (Jan de Haan). DHM 10.002-3. TT 74:23. Program: *Washington Grays* (Grafulla/Curnow), *Jubilation, Sanctus* (Schubert/Curnow), *Concertpiece for Cornet, Altohorn Solo—She's Like the Swallow, Prelude on Finlandia, Toccata* (Frescobaldi/Curnow), *Knoxville 1800, Ragtime for Horns, Brass Miniatures, Fanfare Prelude on Lobe den Herren, Cornet Solo—Canto Religioso, Galop—Op. 20* (Strauss, Sr/Curnow), *Holy-Holy-Holy, Fanfare and Flourishes, The New Covenant*.

Wind Band Works Published by Hal Leonard Music

The Music of James Curnow. Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra (Yasuhiko Shiozawa and Frederick Fennell). Sony SRCR 9307. TT 69:05. Program: *Rejouissance—A Mighty Fortress, Symphonic Triptych, Psalm Tune Variations, Ceremonial Flourishes, Partita for Band, Capriccio and Cavatina, Dublin Sketches, Spoon River Saga, Fox River Festival, Where Never Lark or Eagle Flew*.

Both recordings are superbly performed by outstanding brass and wind musicians. They are available from Curnow Music Service: 606-885-3696.

Band Bulletin Board

For Sale:

Getzen Aeterna Soprano Cornet/Silver; like new \$500.00 OBO

Boosey&Hawkes 927 Sovereign Cornet/Silver; medium-large bore, like new \$700.00 OBO

Getzen Eterna Flugelhorn/Silver, 4-valve; good condition \$500.00 OBO
20 turn-of-the-century style band uniforms. Very dark blue wool, gold cuffs and collars. Reasonably good condition; \$30.00 each plus shipping, or make an offer

CONTACT: Bob Croft 602-957-6206

For Sale:

Yamaha compensating euphonium (if price is right) very little use.
CONTACT: 704-293-9312

Wanted:

4-valve flugelhorn in good condition.
CONTACT: 704-293-9312

Request for Concert Promoters

The British Nuclear Fuels Band will be touring the United States this coming July, 1994. Any persons or band interested in sponsoring a program within the dates July 24—29 please contact **A.P. Blackledge**, Tour Coordinator. Telephone 011-44-772-762000; Fax 011 44-772-725-920. Or write BNFL Band, Springfield Works, Salwick Preston, Lancashire PR4 0XJ England [Tentative schedule: July 24, Seattle; July 25, Denver, July 26, Pittsburgh; July 27, Washington DC; July 29, Wilmington; July 29, New York City].

Vacancy Announcement:

Euphonium

The United States Army Band (Pershing's Own) announces auditions for Euphonium in March 1994 [exact date TBA]

The applicant must demonstrate excellent sight-reading skills, soloistic ability and a knowledge of concert band and/or British brass band repertoire. Applicants for this position will be expected to pass the Army's physical examination and meet other standards required to enlist in the Armed Forces. Please send a resume and a cassette tape. Tape must include examples of technical proficiency in a variety of musical styles. Send materials no later than January 31, 1994 to:

The United States Army Band
Attn: Master Sgt. Judy Cohen
P.O. Box 70565

Washington, DC 20024-1374
For further information on the position call: 703-696-3643/0509

Complimentary CD for All NABBA Members

The United States Army Brass Band will release their latest CD, a live recording from last year's Gala Concert. This outstanding program included solos by the Childs Brothers and Phil McCann. The CD is entitled *Sunburst*, after Jim Horsay's march premiered that night. Each NABBA member will receive complimentary copy. If you would like Army Band recordings for your school, civic organization or public library, send a request to: The Army Band, ATTN: Public Affairs, P.O. Box 70565, Washington, DC 20024-1374; FAX 703-696-3904.

Recent Brass Band Concerts: Music Listed in Concert Order

Black Dyke Mills Band (James Watson). Carnegie Hall, New York City. October 17, 1993. With Philip Smith, guest cornet soloist; Robert Childs, Euphonium; James Watson, trumpet.

Queensbury (Kaye); *The Force of Destiny* (Verdi/Wright); *Cornet Solo—Jubilance* (Himes); *Cornet Duet—Quicksilver* (Graham); *Variations on an Enigma* (Sparke); *Toccata from Symphony #5* (Widor/Sparke); *Variation XVIII* (Rachmaninoff/Harvey); *Broadway Brass* (Including arrangements of Berlin, Webber, Hammerstein, and Bernstein); *Euphonium Solo—Grandfather's Clock* (Traditional); *Bill Geldard Suite* (Tribute to Ted Heath, Opus One, Memories of You, Hot Toddy, South Rampart Street Parade).

Sunshine Brass Band (K.D. Kneeburg). 1993 Fall Concert Series. September 19, 1993. Polk Theatre, Lakeland FL. *The President* (German); *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *The Holy Boy* (Ireland/Wilson); *Beethoven's Beano* (Snell); *Men of Harlech* (Langford); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Fernie); *Canadian Folk Song Suite* (Calvert); *Charlie Is My Darling* (Langford); *The Girl I Left Behind* (Langford); *One Voice* (Manilow/Farr); *Those Magnificent Men...Flying Machines* (Goodwin/Farr); *Let's Go!* (Woodfield).

Lexington Brass Band (Ron Holz and Skip Gray). November 21, 1993. Central Christian Church, Lexington, KY. Vincent DiMartino, cornet soloist; Dale Warren, trombone soloist; Michael Rintamaa, organist. *The Impresario* (Cimarosa); *Concert Piece for Trombone and Band* (Guilmant/Steadman-Allen); *Cornet Solo—Rule Britannia* (Hartman); *Laude* (Curnow); *Fugue from Symphony IV* (Ives/Holz); *Warragul: The Path of Progress* (McKimm); *Concert March—Their Finest Hour* (Bourgeois); *Elsa's Procession* (Wagner/Himes). *Alford* (Ball).

Salt River Brass Band (Ralph Pearce). "Potpourri," with Chris Mallet, Guest Euphonium soloist. October 3, 1993. Chandler Center for the Arts, Phoenix

Brass Band News

AZ. *Fanfare from Zarathustra* (Strauss/Pearce); *Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Sousa); *Procession of the Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Curnow); *Forgotten Dreams* (Anderson/Brand); Euphonium solo—*Harbour Light* (Bearcroft); *Pavane* (Faure/Langford); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *Maple Leaf Rag* (Joplin/Curnow); Euphonium solo: *Carnival of Venice* (Arban/Clarke); *Praise* (Heaton); *Reverie* (Downie); *Treasures from Tchaikovsky* (arr. Coles).

Wenatchee British Brass Band (Duane Mikow). "Kidz Konzert," with Student brass musicians and the Columbia Youth Choir. October 17, 1993. Wenatchee HS Auditorium. *A Disney Fantasy* (Richards); *Nick Nack Paddiwick* (Hall); *Send in the Clowns* (Sondheim/Bryce, with Bob Hougham Soprano cornet); *Wizard of Oz* (Arlen/Ball); *Serenade* (Mozart/Anon); *Themes from E.T.* (Williams/Peberdy); *Pink Panther Theme* (Mancini/Barnett); *Mary Poppins* (Sherman/Wright); *Little Suite for Brass* (Arnold); *Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Under the Sea* (Menken/Nowak).

Imperial Brass (Brian Bowen). Concert at Imperial Music Center, South River NJ; November 7, 1993. *Carnival Day* (Langford); *Chelsea Bridge* (Strayhorn/Drover); *Tramp-Tramp-Tramp* (Goldman); *Barn Dance & Cowboy Hymn* (Sparke); *Over the Rainbow* (Arlen/Richards); *Vivat Regina* (Mathias); *Buglers' Holiday* (Anderson); *Excerpts from Italian Symphony* (Mendelssohn/Goffin); *April in Paris* (arr. Freeh); *On the Mall* (Goldman); *Daisy Bell* (Langford); *A Summer Scherzo* (Langford).

Though we do not have all the details, word has been received that new bands are starting this Fall in:

Springfield, IL
Eau Claire, WI
Frederick, MD

In the latter town John Slezak, who already has a high school brass band, is starting an adult brass group.

Triangle Brass has had a busy Fall starting with their first concert series: October 24 in Hillsborough NC; October 29 in Chapel Hill, NC—part of the *Southeast Brass Conference*; and November 17, Raleigh, NC. Membership changes saw the departure of soprano cornetist Richard House (to Arizona State for graduate school) but also some very fine additions. Triangle Brass is serving as co-host with **North Carolina State British Brass** for the 1994 Championships in Raleigh. [Connie Varner]

Junior Varsity All-Stars: A message to you from Jamie Hoover!

He had to leave Columbus in order to attend college early. He misses all his friends in the group and wishes to be remembered to them. You can reach him at Mary Baldwin College, 5-0294, Staunton, VA 24401.

Salt River Brass Band gave, in addition to their "Potpourri" concert with Welsh virtuoso Chris Mallet listed above, several other concerts this Fall: November 14—*In London Town*, with the Mesa Caledonian Pipe Band; December 19—*Holiday Brass*, with Guest trumpet soloist Jim Benitez, Principal Trumpet in Malmo, Sweden, formerly of the Phoenix Symphony. This band was also featured in the September issue of *Mouthpiece*, the journal of The New Zealand Brass Bands Association, in a Boosey & Hawkes profile.

The **Army Brass Band** (Captain Tom Palmatier) opened their twelfth season with an October program that proved

to be both challenging and entertaining. After opening with *Knight Templar* (Allen), the band launched into the *Finale from Tchaikovsky's Symphony #4*. The combination of flurries of notes and raw power elicited a huge response from the full house. Next up was Concertmaster Allan VanPatten, who tackled Joseph Turrin's tricky cornet solo *Caprice*. After his well-earned bows he was joined on *Duet for Two Cats* by Master Sergeant Bill Medearis. The first half closed with Philip Sparke's *London Overture*. This work received such an enthusiastic response from both audience and band alike that it is sure to be programmed in the future.

Jim Curnow's *Legend in Brass* opened the second half followed by the conducting premiere of The Brass Band's new Enlisted Director, Master Sergeant Paul Wilhoit. It was then that the concert took an unexpected turn. The Army Chorale's resident diva, Staff Sergeant Beverley Benda, had suitably impressed the audience with her coloratura on Puccini's *Una voce poco fa*, only to return to the stage attired as Minny Mouse. The Band's adaptation of Langford's *Disney Fantasy* featured costumed actors in all manners of wolves, apes, pigs, and bears. This brought forth the first of three thundering, standing ovations from the audience. The concert closed with *Procession to the Minster from Lohengrin*, a piece as demanding musically as it is of the players' endurance.

On December 2 **The Army Brass Band** will join forces with The Army Herald

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The Brass Band of Columbus is in the process of recording its first CD; initial cuts sound great! Look for further de-tails in upcoming issue of *The Bridge*.

The Wenatchee British Brass Band's "Kidz Konzert" [Program listed above] was a great success in having local high school musicians from several school join the band on their last three items. One tragic aspect of the day was that Andy Duggan, a 16-year old B Flat bass player from Moses Lake High School, was killed in a car accident on the way to the concert. Andy had anticipated joining **Wenatchee British Brass**.

Imperial Brass and **Atlantic Brass** will be giving a joint concert on November 20th. **Imperial** will be featured again at the April 9th *New York Brass Conference*.

New Music Reviews

Three new releases (1993) have been received from Rosehill Music. They range from a short arrangement of a TV theme song to a contemporary treat-ment of the battle of good and evil.

A Year in Provence is the theme song of a popular British TV show of the same name. It was composed by Carl Davis and arranged for brass band by Darrol Barry. The musical style is marked "jo-vial" (very French) and is meant to portray the spirit of this part France. The tune bounces along in 6/8 time and lasts almost three minutes. It has a pleas-ant melody line and no real technical demands other than some arpeggios in the accompaniment. There is limited appeal if the audience is not familiar with the TV show, but the tune is nice and the arrangement would be a good contrast to longer and heavier num-bers.

The American Dream was written by Elgar Howarth for the American visit by the **Grimethorpe Colliery Band** back in 1976. There are some interesting ef-fects—lots of muted passages and muted tremolos—in the accompani-ment. The melody stays in 3/4 time, but there is a contrasting duplet counter melody in the solo horn part. The overall musical effect is unabash-edly impressionistic with some abso-lutely beautiful sounds contained in the scoring.

The challenge to the performers is to sustain both the notes and phrases in the Lento tempo, and to sustain the musical interest throughout the five minutes of playing time. *American Dream* is a worthy piece but it will demand thorough rehearsal and a con-trolled performance to be successful.

One of Elgar Howarth's most interest-ing pieces is *The Bandsman's Tale*. It was written as a retirement gift for a mem-

ber of a Salvation Army band and is loosely based on the *Founder's Hymn* ("O Boundless Salvation"). Howarth acknowledges the influence of Stravinsky and one is immediately re-minded of *The Soldier's Tale* (*Histoire du soldat*, 1918). The battle of good versus evil is portrayed musically in this piece. A Salvation Army band member is con-fused by and torn between the easy, slick music of the world and the "spiri-tual" familiarity of the *Founder's Hymn*. This conflict continues throughout the piece, and is highlighted by fragments of the hymn and jazzy effects, some covered by an optional electric piano. The piece ends with a free-form, exult-ant cadenza. You don't have to be a Salvationist to understand and appre-ciate this piece. If you like Stravinsky and want to play a really interesting and different piece of music, then *The Bandsman's Tale* is for you.

Both *The Bandsman's Tale* and *The Ameri-can Dream* are expertly recorded by **Britannia Building Society Band** (Howard Snell), on Doyen CD 011.

Paul E. Droste

NABBA

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The 1993 Summer Brass Band Workshops

For the eighth consecutive year NABBA and Yamaha Corporation of America have co-sponsored a series of five summer brass band workshops. Perry Watson led these workshops for the first four years, and Paul Droste has been the clinician for the past four years. Yamaha sends a complete set of brass band instruments to each clinic site, and also covers the expenses of the clinician. Each workshop participant pays a fee to NABBA that covers a one year membership.

The first 1993 workshop was held on June 1-3 at Fort Monroe, VA. It was hosted by Sgt. David Witt and The US Army Continental Band. The brass section of the band was temporarily changed into a British-style brass band. The workshop covered three days and culminated in a public concert at Fort Monroe. Several adults from the Norfolk area also took part in the workshop and the concert.

The second workshop was held on June 18-19 at The University of Toledo in Toledo, OH. The hosts were Steve McConaughy, a former member of The Ohio State University Marching Band, and Bernie Sanchez of UT. Many of the participants are members of local community bands.

The third workshop took place at Fort Walton Beach, FL on July 9-10. It was hosted by Ernest Hebson, Band Director at Fort Walton Beach High School. Several of the adult participants were band directors, and they brought their students to the workshop.

Workshop number four was held at The University of South Dakota, located in Vermillion, on July 30-31. The host was Richard Bogenrief, a former member of The US Army Brass Band. This area has a tradition of community bands and the players, both



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adults and college students, were outstanding. An interesting feature of this area is The Shrine To Music Museum, which contains one of the world's most comprehensive collections of musical instruments.

The last of the five workshops was hosted by David Leppla, Director of Bands at Purdue University, on August 20-21. A majority of the participants were from the Purdue "All American" Marching Band. A visitor from New Zealand also attended the workshop.

The workshops averaged 20 participants each, gaining over 100 new members for NABBA. It is hoped that five brass bands will be formed as a result. The workshop coordinators from Yamaha are Gary Marsh, Market Manager for Brass and Woodwinds, and Jay Wanamaker, Director of Marketing. NABBA owes a large debt of gratitude



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to these men, and the entire Yamaha Corporation, supporting these workshops.

For information on scheduling a 1994 Summer Brass Band Workshop, please contact Paul Droste, 1310 Maize Court, Columbus, OH 43229 (Phone and Fax: 606-888-0310).

Paul Droste [August, 1993]

Brass Band Recording Reviews

Christmas Splendor in Brass. The Chicago Staff Band (William Himes). The Salvation Army, Chicago. JCTD 0018. TT 45:30. Program: *Intrada* (Downie), *Once In Royal David's City* (Himes), *The Joy of Christmas* (Redhead), *Carol of the Bells* (Bulla), *Joyful, Joyful* (Beethoven/Ballantine), *Go Tell It* (Gott), *O Come All Ye Faithful* (Himes), *The Spirit of Christmas* (Cook), *Three Kings Swing* (Himes), *O Come To My Heart* (Himes), *Christmas Triptych* (Curnow), *Sweet Chiming Christmas Bells* (Himes), *Deck the Halls* (Gott), *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* (Himes), *Christmas Celebration* (Bulla).

This is another gem in a series of **Chicago Staff Band** Christmas recordings; I loved their Christmas Short and Suite cassette from several years back. Lots of fine arrangements, many supplied by Bandmaster William Himes, fill this solid release, including a good variety

of styles, both traditional and contemporary. The playing is solid, as one would expect; the recording slightly drier than some British releases—very “straightahead” pick up. The band demonstrates good mastery of the various styles offered and also provides a fine dynamic range. The music recorded is a mixture of Salvation Army pieces and items published by other brass band publishers, including deHaske and Hope Music. While the majority of the tunes are short miniatures, special merit must be given to the Redhead and Curnow suites, Joy of Christmas and Christmas Triptych.

Rhapsody In Brass: Masterworks for Brass Band, Volume I. Black Dyke Mills Band (James Watson). Polyphonic QPRL 061D. TT 64:02. Program: *The Frogs of Aristophanes* (Bantock/F. Wright), *Academic Festival Overture* (Brahms/D. Wright), *Rhapsody In Brass* (Goffin), *Prometheus Unbound* (Bantock), *Symphonic Suite* (Lucas), *Resurgam* (Ball).

What an excellent idea—fine performances of standard brass band literature gathered together in a series! With this first effort Polyphonic has certainly hit the mark. Here are several neglected treasures, especially those by Sir Granville Bantock, a British composer from the earlier part of this century. My first musical memory and, by the way, brass band listening experience that I can remember, was his overture *The Frogs of Aristophanes*, recorded on three 78rpm discs, Paxton label (Fairey Band, Harry Mortimer—I still have those records!). While *Resurgam* and the title tune have been widely recorded the others have been infrequently played, more is the shame, for they are worthy pieces. The Bantock works deserve an honored spot among those lyrical pieces that give the brass band literature its unique flavor. I had only known the Lucas *Symphonic Suite* via the score; I now would like to program it! Most of these pieces are in the range of our NABBA Honors Section bands, representing a period in brass band music when the technical demands were not

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so insurmountable. James Watson and **Black Dyke** provide careful readings, such as one would expect in such a model volume of works from the period 1933—1960. Highly recommended!

Partita: Masterworks for Brass Band, Volume II. The BNFL Band (Richard Evans). Polyphonic QPRL 062D. TT 57:43. Program: *A Salford Sinfonietta* (Darrol Barry), *Sinfonia For Brass—Maorina* (Butterworth), *The Journeymen* (Steadman-Allen), *Chorale and Toccata* (Bulla), *Partita* (Sparke).

In volume two of this series the label "masterworks" is used in the context of a set of pieces chosen for the 1994 Areas Contest of the Boosey and Hawkes National Championships, all five sections! Several of these pieces still have wet ink on the parts, so they are not really in the same category as those recorded in Volume 1 (See above). Nonetheless Polyphonic again provides both a major educational piece as well as a solidly recorded program of good brass music. Sparke's *Partita* is the real challenge of the lot, both in music and technique. Bulla takes the famous

Palestrina "Victory" hymn as the basis of for an interesting piece written for the Dutch National Brass Band Championships. The other three works could fill out brass band programs quite nicely, the Barry and Steadman-Allen pieces on the lighter side, the Butterworth a somewhat more abrasive piece and perhaps more difficult to program. **BNFL Band**, which will be touring in America later this year (See Band Bulletin Board), has been playing and recording at a very consistently high level lately; no exception here!

Master Brass, Volume IV (Highlights of the 1993 All England Masters Brass Band Championship and Gala Concert). **Brighouse and Rastrick Band** (Allan Withington), **Besses O' Th' Barn** (Paul Hindmarsh), **Sun Life Band** (Bryan Hurdley). Polyphonic QPRL 060D. TT 64:48. Program: *Sun Life—Overture to Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart/Hazelgrove), *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Dukas/Bourgeois); **Besses O' Th' Barn—Pandora** (Damare) [Roger Webster, cornet soloist], *The Spider and the Fly* (Britten/Barry), *Grand March from Aida* (Verdi/D. Wright); Brighouse and Rastrick—*English Heritage* (Lloyd), *Blue Rondo a la Turk* (Brubeck/Edwards), *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan/Langford), *Festival Overture* (Shostakovich/Kitson).

Of all the recent "live" recordings that I have been receiving I give this one highest marks. My principal reason lies in the fact that you get to hear substan-

tial offerings by three of the best bands at the event without the, pardon the expression, massed band fodder that frequently gets added to these "highlights" productions. If you could name a series of classic chestnuts I would be least inclined to transcribed for brass band the Mozart and Dukas listed above would be on it. Somehow **Sun Life** comes real close to convincing me that it can be done! Roger Webster offers up a great reading of *Pandora*. **Besses** gives one very traditional warhorse—the Verdi march—and one unusual work by Britten that has been skillfully arranged by Darrol Barry. The best playing comes from **Brighouse and Rastrick**, winners in Cambridge that day in May, 1993. While I still prefer the David King—**Black Dyke** recording of *Lloyd's English Heritage* I can see why the judges gave the banner to **Brighouse** that day! The final cut provides yet another adaptation of the Shostakovich *Festive Overture*, this time scored by Kitson. Polyphonic continues to come out with excellent live recordings of these significant brass band events; one can really keep pace with at least some aspects of what is happening back in the brass band fatherland through these delightful recordings.

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Two New York Staff Band Videos

The New York Staff Band (Ronald Waiksnoris) taped two TV video programs last November which were featured on a nationwide cable release. These two videos are now available at the reasonable cost of \$10.00/tape. Each program is just under thirty minutes in length. *The Bright Brass Sounds of Christmas* offers seasonal arrangements while *Music of a People* provides patriotic music for both brass and male chorus. As early efforts in this type of production, these tapes can provide a real learning experience in the complex art of filming a brass band in action, as many who have entered our Video Contest can attest. While Bandmaster Waiksnoris only had the band for several weeks when these tapes were made one can see that this fine staff band is in good hands. For further information or copies, write to:

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Winter/Spring 1994

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March 6: *Song of the Shows* 3:00 P.M.

April 10th: *Carnival Time*

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Lexington Brass Band

February 13: *Philip Smith, guest soloist*; 8:00 P.M.

Singletary Center for the Arts, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY. Free admission (Donations requested)

March 28th: *Classic Pops Extravaganza*; 7:30 P.M.

Weisiger Theater/Norton Center for the Arts, Centre College Danville, KY. Free Admission (Donations requested)

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The United States Army Brass Band

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March 17-18: *West Virginia MENC Conference*

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Tennessee Tech/Cookville TN

Sat. 16th: 7:30 P.M.

David Libscomb Univ/Nashville TN

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