

The

# BrassBand Bridge



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

June 1998 Issue 72

## POST-COMPETITION ISSUE 1998

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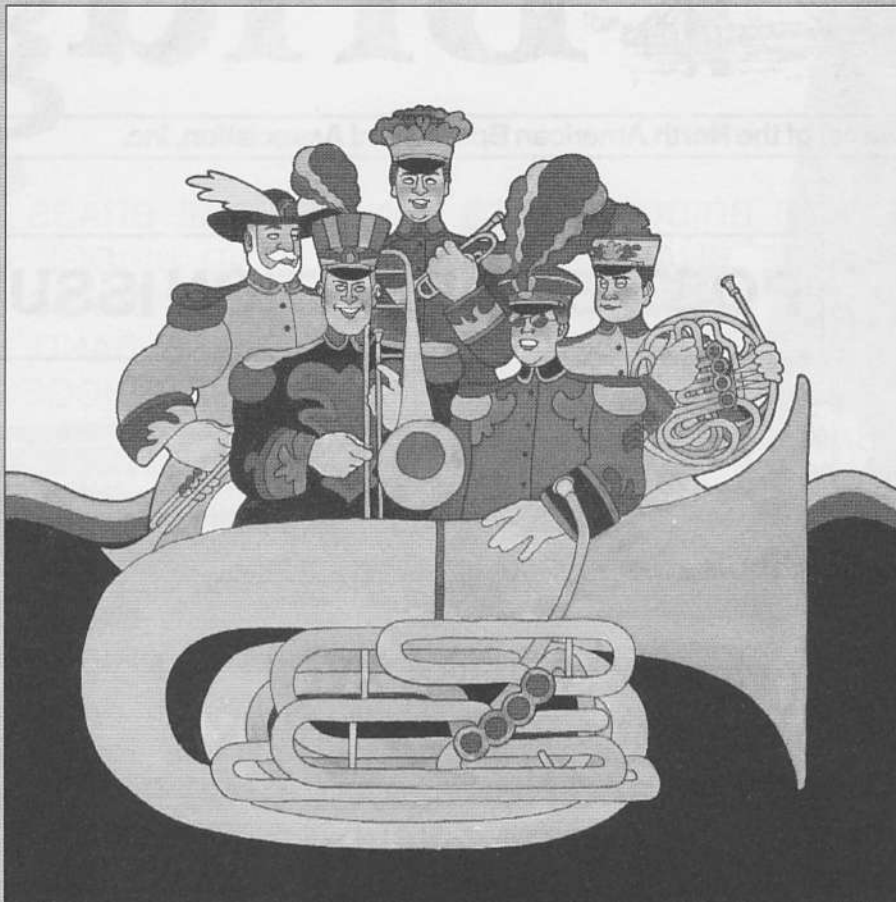
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## Editorial Staff

**Colin W. Holman, Editor**  
**The Brass Band Bridge**  
31 Joseph Lane  
Glendale Heights, IL 60139  
Telephone (630) 665-4213  
E-mail colin.w.holman@juno.com

**George Foster, Production Support**  
619 Downing Rd  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
Telephone (847) 367-7961  
Facsimile (847) 367-7240  
E-mail gfosibb@wwa.com

**Ron W. Holz,**  
**New Recording/Book Reviewer**  
Asbury College Music Department  
Wilmore, KY 40390  
Telephone (606) 858-3511, Ext. 2246  
Facsimile (606) 858-3921  
E-mail ronald.holz@asbury.edu

**Major Tom Palmatier,**  
**Advertising Manager**  
c/o The U.S. Continental Army Band  
10 Bernard Road  
Fort Monroe, VA 23651  
Telephone (757) 727-2860  
Facsimile (757) 727-4052  
E-mail palmatit@monroe.army.mil  
(address only effective until 7/15/98)

**Bert L. Wiley**  
**NABBA Membership Chair**  
P.O. Box 2438  
798 Pressley Cr. Rd  
Cullowhee, NC 28723  
Telephone (704) 293-7469  
E-mail bernel@wcu.campus.mci.net

**NABBA Contest Controller**  
**CPT Tim Holtan**  
U.S. Army Band  
204 Lee Avenue  
Fort Myer, VA 22211-1199  
(703) 696-3647, 3643, 3570 (w)  
Fax (703) 696-3904  
E-mail holtant@mcnair-emh2.army.mil

## Official Journal of the



**NORTH AMERICAN BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION, INC**

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*The Brass Band Bridge* welcomes news, communications, photographs (preferably black and white), new advertisers and scholarly articles on all aspects relating to, and for the benefit of brass bands in North America. Scholarly articles should include footnotes and bibliography where appropriate. Materials may be edited for inclusion, and may be submitted in writing, via e-mail, facsimile or on 3.5" floppy discs (IBM compatible, if possible, please). Publication and advertising deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July and October.

## Editor's Notes

Many of us are all recovering from another weekend of exciting music making as NABBA XVI brought together superb organization, fine soloists, wonderful brass bands, and a terrific and unique gala concert all hosted and coordinated by the Lexington Brass Band headed by Ron Holz and Skip Gray. Thank you to everyone involved, organizers and participants alike, for making it such a memorable weekend of brass band fellowship and camaraderie. The weekend's activities receive extensive coverage in this issue, and I am particularly indebted to those of you who agreed to review the various sections of the competition.

The organization required to host such an event is enormous, and because of successful hosting in recent years of competition weekends, each one has got better in its own unique way. For those of you anxious to get going on plans for next year (it's never too soon) there's a short article included in this issue for you to peruse regarding NABBA XVII. We look forward to seeing many NABBA members come to Chicago, and as daunting as the hosting process is, the entire Illinois Brass Band organization is excited about the prospect of planning such an event.

One of the special moments for me of

NABBA XVI was ceremoniously receiving from Tom Myers, past editor of the *Bridge*, a complete set of magazines from 1980 to the present. I've enjoyed getting a new perspective on the organization, reading every magazine from cover to cover; and I have a renewed respect for so many important people who have pioneered NABBA over the past fifteen plus years. Everyone recognizes the work that Dr. Paul Droste has unselfishly accomplished and inspired. It was fitting for him to be specially recognized during NABBA XVI and a feature article appears in this issue also to commemorate that special event.

I am of course especially proud of the achievements of the Illinois Brass Band, becoming only the second group to win the Championship Division three times in succession: but no groups came through unscathed in this year's top division with the challenges of the test piece being as great as in any year.

If your band representative has an e-mail address, please forward it to me. It's really the quickest way for us to remain in contact so that you can share all your accomplishments with others involved in North American brass banding.

Happy reading and best wishes for your upcoming brass band activities.

Colin Holman, Editor

NABBA 98 proved to be the largest championships in our history. Over 700 performers, nearly 1000 delegates, and 20 participating NABBA bands! The performance level was very strong, with great gains in all areas. Our Solo/Ensemble contests reached their full potential this year, in fact, so successful that if we have further growth in the area, we will have to place restrictions on the number of entries - what a great problem to have.

One of the most important aspects of the weekend was the premiere of four new bands - Collegiate All-Stars, Cuyahoga Valley, Prairie, and Tri-State - all of whom acquitted themselves well and one of which won their category! Read the reports in this issue that will give a fine overview of the complete weekend. For the first time I could not hear all the bands and found myself just getting snatches of nearly every band, mostly backstage, so I found myself in the peculiar position of not being able to discuss the results of the adjudications! A blessing to be the impartial host. I do know that I thoroughly enjoyed every band I heard.

On behalf of the Lexington Brass Band, Skip Gray, and myself, I express our sincere appreciation for the wonderful support we received from all bands and delegates. Your words of encouragement and then thanks after the event were very gratefully received. We really do have a supportive organization.

I want to pay special tribute to Captain Timothy Holtan for his excellent work as our Controller over the past three years. He will need to step down from the position now due to his heavy assignments with the U.S. Army, but we hope it will not be an end to his NABBA involvement. I will be working with a

newly assigned Controller, to be named in the near future, and I will be serving with that person as Co-Controller at NABBA 99 in much the same way as Captain Holtan and I worked together three years ago. Special thanks, too, to Tim's crew: Tom Myers, Carl Arends, Sara North, and Deb Priest, for once again given superb direction to the contest. Special thanks to Tom Myers, who donated several lovely display banners that can be used at each contest! I must also give kudos to Major Thomas Palmatier for once again serving as a truly outstanding announcer. What a fine job he did - Lexington Brass nearly sold out of their T-shirts and Hats!

NABBA would like to again thank Boosey & Hawkes and Yamaha Corporation for their continued support of our Championships, in particular their financial support for the cash awards given in our Solo and Ensemble Contest.

What an honor it was to pay tribute to Paul Droste on Friday night, when NABBA saluted him for all his many years as a guiding force in our development with a Life Time Membership: Two-term President of NABBA, long-standing Board Members, leading Yamaha Workshop clinician that has planted so many new NABBA bands, his great success in providing a model performing group - the BBC - these things and so much more. It was appropriate that he conducted the SASF Brass Band in a piece entitled The Pioneers, for he has indeed been one of our best pioneers!

Our NABBA Board of Directors meeting was mostly focused on future NABBA conferences. NABBA 99 was reconfirmed for the Chicago area, April 23-24 (Illinois Brass Band as host), and full details will be sent to all NABBA member bands directly after our August

meeting. NABBA 2000 was granted to Columbus, OH, with the All-Star Brass Bands organization to serve as host. The Board also is committed to find concrete means for providing viable conferences and contests for our Western members who are so frequently denied the opportunity of full involvement due to the vast distances bands would have to cover in order to attend NABBA.

Agenda items for our August Board meeting - either contest issues or test-piece suggestions - should be sent to me by no later than July 15th. We spend a great deal of time on contest issues at our August Board. Help us make NABBA the very best organization for all concerned.

We have several Board positions that need to be filled. The latest NABBA Bulletin details which members are completing their two-year term. The Nomination form, which is due by July 1, 1998, is also supplied in this issue of the Bridge.

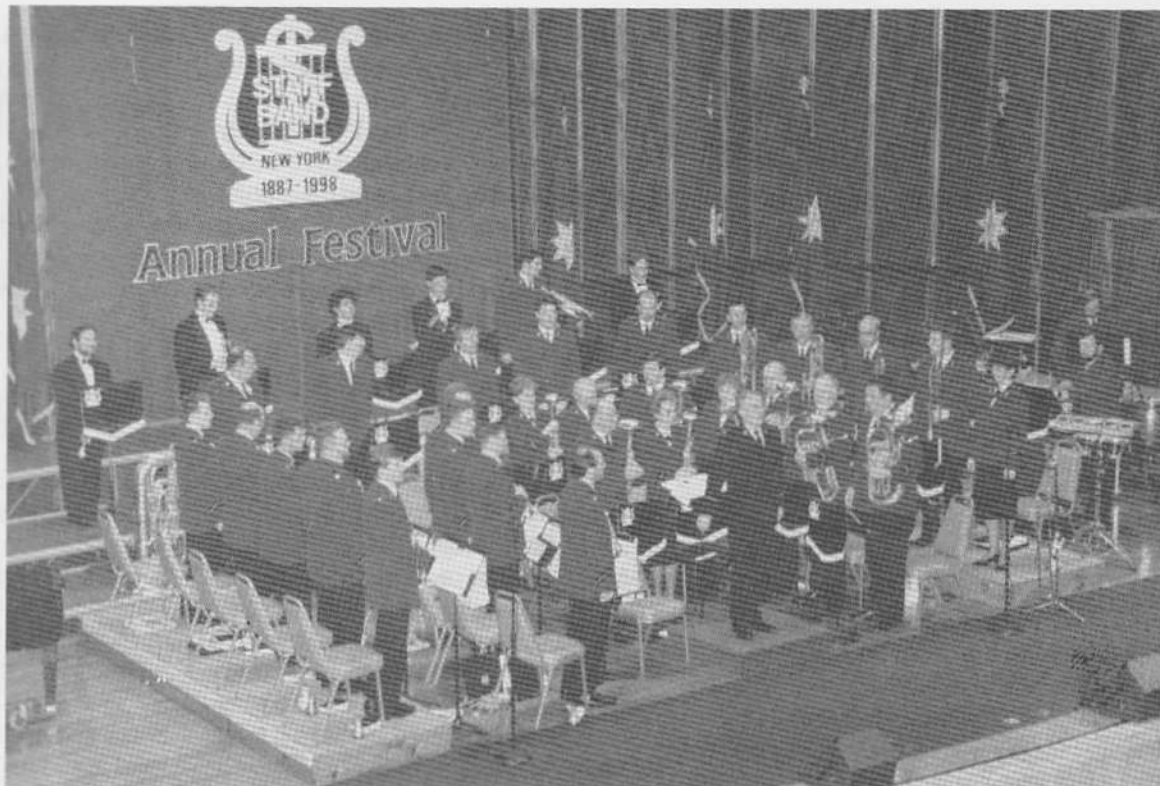
Finally, I hope that you all have great summer seasons. We have several great regional festivals that NABBA is helping sponsor, particularly Eastern Iowa's Grand Celebration and Tri-State Brass Band and Hot Dog Festival, both on the third weekend in June, Saturday the 20th. The Great American Brass Band Festival will featured the Lexington Brass Band (June 12-14) this year as the NABBA group and another NABBA band, The Southern Territorial Band (Richard Holz) has been selected as the Salvation Army band for the weekend. Have a wonderful summer and please keep in touch

Ronald W. Holz, President



The **Atlantic Brass Band** (Richard E. Holz) recently performed a concert with principal trumpet of the New York Philharmonic Philip Smith to an audience of almost 700 (see Band Programs). Also in the audience were Philip's wife and his parents who made a surprise visit from Clearwater FL. The Atlantic Brass Band is one of the newer NABBA groups with professional membership drawn from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra, the U. S. Army Band and many leading Salvation Army musicians.

The **Illinois Brass Band** (Colin Holman) performed two spring concerts at the First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville and at Gary United Methodist Church in Wheaton IL. They recently released a new CD entitled *Championship Brass* which includes their live performances from NABBA XIV and XV. This summer they will undertake a brief tour of Illinois and are one of the featured bands to play at the **Grand Celebration of Brass Bands** in Cedar Rapids IA. In August they are a featured group alongside



NYSB Celebrate 111 years with the Julliard Trumpeters

an international array of musicians to be performing at the prestigious Grant Park Music Festival.

**Motor City Brass Band** (Craig Strain) has a very busy concert schedule booked for this summer. Ray Murphy (E flat bass) has booked thirteen performances during the months of June, July and August with details available on the band's website <[mcbb.org](http://mcbb.org)> The band's "British Connection" recently increased from 3 to 4 with the arrival of Keith Morton (E flat bass) formerly of Derby, England (Derby Central SA Band) and now living in Fenton, MI. Keith Wilkinson returned to Detroit again this year to conduct a pre-contest tuneup of MCBB, being very careful not share all his secrets, since his new NABBA band **Cuyahoga Valley Brass** was "one of the competition" at NABBA XVI. Wilbur Jones (E flat soprano cornet) participated in the adult slow melody competition in Lexington, accompanied by former "First Lady" of MCBB and founding member Julie Aren. Now that Wilbur has led the way, it is expected that

the band will be well represented in this program in NABBA 99. Stewart Hay (cornet) has organized a brass band festival which will be held at the Southfield Civic center in November. Stewart and MCBB will host the **Dearborn Heights and Royal Oak Salvation Army Bands** and the **Weston Silver Band** of Toronto. While modest by NABBA standards, this event may hint at his long range goal of hosting NABBA 20??.

The **New York Staff Band** (Ronald Waiksnoris) recently celebrated 111 years of service with its Annual Festival concert at the Centennial Memorial Temple in New York with the Julliard Trumpets. Following an opening fanfare, the band played *High Council* (Steadman-Allen), *Trumpet Call* (Kenneth Downie) featuring Julliard trumpeter Michael Baker in an impeccable performance, and *Variations on America* (Charles Ives). The Julliard Trumpets impressed the audience with *Sextet for Six Trumpets* (Dennis Horton). This was followed by the

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NYSB Chorus singing *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* and the band's moving presentation of *Hymn* (Joseph Turrin), a new meditation in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales. Ray Steadman-Allen's *Romans 8*, a musical paraphrase of scripture that incorporates well-known hymns *Be Thou My Vision* and *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* stunned the audience of 1200 at its powerful conclusion. The band and audience brought the special evening to a close with *Give Thanks*, demonstrating that NYSB is alive and well and continuing its outstanding traditions as it moves into its 112th year!

NYSB Music Director Ronald Waikschoris was also recently privileged to be an adjudicator in the Third and Championship Divisions at this year's Brass Band Championships in Norway where he comments that the standards and competitive spirit and cooperation were excellent. Somewhat like NABBA, the style of competition is a required piece, and one own choice work. The test piece in the *Elitedivisjon* was Elgar Howarth's *Hymns at Heaven's Gate* and the winning band on this occasion Sandefjord Brass Symposium conducted by Gareth Pritchard.

**Renaissance Brass** has appointed Charles Musgrave, a tenor horn player with Salt River Brass, as their permanent conductor. The band's membership is comprised of many outstanding retired musicians from the Sun City Arizona area and the band welcomes new members at any time. One of the band's senior members is Charles R. Bubb Jr who, at 85 years young, is their repiano player and was principal trumpet of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra when Pierre Monteux was conductor! Also in the cornet section is Tom Herrick (same age as Charles) who was the publisher of the *Downbeat* magazine in his youth. The band's most recent

concert (see Band Programs) was well attended and also successful financially.

The **Triangle Youth Brass Band** (Randy Guptill) gave their inaugural performance in November 1997 (see Band Programs) in a joint concert with the **Triangle Brass Band** (Michael Votta) and the **NCSU British Brass Band** (Robert Petters/John Fuller). The three groups combined in a thrilling finale of *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral*. TBB travelled to Atlanta GA to perform at the Southern Music Conference in December 1997 and then played a concert in January 1998 at Campbell University on the Fine Arts Series to an enthusiastic and appreciative audience. More recently they collaborated with new age artist, composer and pianist Michael Allen Harrison in a benefit concert for the Triangle Land Conservancy. As part of Harrison's performance, he was joined by members Jill Worley (horn) and Michael Votta (clarinet). April sees the TBB and the TYB in performance with Steve Sykes from England for a week of workshops and clinics.

**Watership Brass** (Zander Grieg) are

having quite a busy time preparing for their forthcoming tour of the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. Boosey & Hawkes sponsored a sell out concert at the newly refurbished Corn Exchange, which raised a substantial sum towards their travelling costs, with Sheona White (horn) as a guest soloist who was "a delight to accompany."

The band will arrive in Toronto on the 22nd October, and return to the UK on the 1st November.

Sounds of brass band music will once again echo through the Cedar River valley on Saturday, June 20 at the **Fourth Annual Grand Celebration of Brass Bands** at Ushers Ferry Historic Village in Cedar Rapids. The restored, turn-of-the-century village is the perfect venue for this day-long event featuring four brass bands. This year joining the host **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** will be the **Illinois Brass Band** of Libertyville IL, the **Scioto Valley Brass and Percussion Company** of Columbus OH, and a youth band, the Cedar River Brass Ensemble of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. At the end of the day members of all the bands will come

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Triangle Youth Brass Band in action

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together in an exciting grand finale, an ending not to be missed! Ushers Ferry Historic Village is a restored village giving visitors a sense of what it was like to live in a small Midwest town back a hundred years ago. Houses, businesses, a church and schoolhouse surround the large park in the center of town. In the middle of the park is a large bandstand, large enough to hold a brass band. Knowledgeable volunteers, who help the visitor understand the hardships and fun of life in the early 1900s, staff all the buildings.

The tentative schedule for this year's Grand Celebration of Brass Bands is:  
 11:30 Scioto Valley Br. & Percussion  
 12:30 Illinois Brass Band  
 1:30 Eastern Iowa Brass Band  
 2:30 TBA  
 3:30 Cedar River Brass Ensemble  
 4:00 Illinois Brass Band  
 5:00 Scioto Valley Brass & Percussion  
 6:00 Eastern Iowa Brass Band  
 7:00 MASS BAND

For more information please contact: David DeHoff, 890 Parkview Dr., Marion, IA 52302-2754. Phone 319-377-8681 or visit the Eastern Iowa Brass Band at their website at: <http://soli.inav.net/~eibb>.

**The Woods Manufacturing Co. Ltd. Brass Band** (David Druce) wound up 1997 in grand style with three well attended Christmas Concerts in three fine churches. Since the concerts were fundraisers the sponsoring organizations did very well. A highlight of the final concert was Richard Batten (trombone), an England-based member of Woods Brass, performing *Proclamation*. More recently, an eleven-piece contingent from Woods Brass participated in the annual Norfolk Virginia Azalea Festival Tattoo. In three entertaining five minute performances on April 23 and 24, Woods gave rousing renditions of *Czardas*, with attitude sup-

plied by euphoniumist Dean Tronsgard, and *Polecat Polka*, their signature tattoo crowd pleaser. Guthrie Woods, their sponsor, put in a special cameo appearance. A special thank-you goes to Dan Moynihan, their Albany New York member, for joining them for the event. Woods' band manager, Janice Larose, was invited to represent Woods Brass and perform with the Young Ambassadors Brass Band on their European Tour this April. Janice reports having a fantastic time playing with this superb organization of young musicians. Details in the next issue of *The Bridge*.

Woods busy schedule means that they are presently making plans for a street party, a wedding, another Tattoo and a Christmas CD in conjunction with a Children's Choir. The band will also perform at the Halifax International Tattoo 1998 as the Woods Mfg International Brass Band, with players from the U.S., Canada, UK, Denmark, Germany; the names are still coming in! They have about 57 players so far give or take a few and there's still room for more, especially on horn (french or tenor). Contact Janice Larose at IMCEAMS-SSC\_HQA2K1\_larosej@pwgsc.gc.ca (work) or janice07@sprynet.com (home)

Woods also offer this proposal: if anyone would like to participate but cannot because of July 4 commitments, a swap could be arranged. Several Woods members can't do Halifax because of the time involved but would love to perform in your band if it would free you up. If you are interested, and your band master agrees, please mention this to Janice.

The details for a commitment to the Halifax Tattoo are as follows:  
 Dates: June 24 through July 7.  
 Return home: July 8.

If you wish to participate, you will have to provide the following information

- Complete home address
- Phone #

- Fax # (if applicable)
- Coat size (men's Blazer)
- Waist
- Inseam
- Smoker/Non-smoker
- Preferred instrument / double (if applicable)

You will need to bring:

- Black shoes (no running shoes)
- White shirts (for 7 night shows)

There are laundry facilities on each floor of the accommodation (University residence building)

- Black socks
- any personal items you need.

Woods will provide you with:

- Coat
- Hat
- Trousers (Grey flannels)
- Rehearsal Jackets
- and the Infamous Woods Ties!! (The hats and ties were most wanted by all the other bands at their first appearance)

The tattoo organizers provide you with a welcome/information package with many sight-seeing and "things to do". This package also contains coupons and special deals about what's available for you to do while in Halifax. You should have most days off during the second week with only the night shows. This would be the best time to plan day trips.

\*\*\*\*\*

Due to an editorial error in the Brass Band Bridge (March 1997), please note that the Hannaford Street Silver Band were NOT slated to appear at this year's **McMaster/Yamaha Low Brass Workshop**. However, Curtis Metcalfe (euphonium) of HSSB is one of the clinicians and soloists booked for the event. The Editor apologizes for any misunderstanding caused by this incorrect announcement.



Current Releases Reviewed in Alphabetical Order

Reviews by Ronald W. Holz (unless otherwise noted)

**Bergensiana. Bergen Military Band** (Helge Haukas). Doyen DOY CD 070. TT 58:01. Program: *Fanfare and Chorale* (Hovland); *Saxophone Solo--In Heaven* (Grieg/Brevik), Soloist Rene Wiik; *Bridal March* (Forde); *Norwegian Artists Carnival* (Svendsen/Godfrey); *Horda Rhapsody* (Aamodt); *Summer Evening* (Aamodt); *Folkdance* (Hurum); *Cornet Solo--Romance* (Hansen), Soloist Svein Henrik Giske; *Bergensiana* (Halvorsen/Nilsen)

The Bergen Military Band provides an excellent introduction to a cross-section of Norwegian composers and wind band compositions/arrangements in this well-played and well-designed recording. Tracing its' history back to at least the late eighteenth century, the band has chosen to survey pieces from three phases of Norway's and, especially, Bergen's, musical past: 1) Major nineteenth century composers: Grieg, Svendsen; 2) Transitional composers and active bandmasters of the early 20th century: Woldsal, Hansen, Halvorsen, Aamodt; and 3) Contemporary writers: Hovland, Forde, Hurum. The band plays cleanly, with good balance between the principal brass, woodwind, and percussion choirs. The sound reproduction is excellent and the disc booklet provides informative notes in both Norwegian and English. I enjoyed the entire program, from traditional marches, pot-pourri selections, or rhapsodies, to more advanced, 'art music.' Personal favorites included Tom Brevik's imaginative arrangement of a late Grieg work, sensitively played by both band and saxophone soloist, Hurum's Folk Dance scored just for woodwinds, Aamodt's evocative, short tone poem Summer Evening, and Forde's delightful Bridal March, a piece that

seems a whimsical blend of styles - Latin, New Orleans shuffle, Rock, and Norwegian folk elements! The cornet playing by Giske on Hansen's Romance is also another highlight, demonstrating what a fine school of players have been developed on this instrument in Norway in recent years. In a day when many wind band compact discs are aimed at an academic audience, this well-conceived album offers up just the right blend of styles and accessible literature without compromising quality.

**Champions. Brass Band of Columbus** (Paul Droste and Les Susi). Blimp Recording BRCD 02. TT 60:10. Program: *Fanfare from La Peri* (Dukas); *The Champions* (Wilcox/Broadbent); *I Saw the Light* (Susi); *Prelude on 49th Parallel* (Vaughan Williams/Douglas); *The Victors' Return* (Rimmer); *Concertpiece for Cornet* (Curnow), Soloist Dan King; *Fanfare and Allegro* (Williams/Jenkins); *Holy, Holy, Holy* (Curnow); *'Neath the Flag* (Marshall); *Euphonium Solo--Party Piece* (Sparke), Soloist Joel Pugh; *April in Paris* (Duke/Susi); *Come Sweet Death* (Bach/Leidzen); *God and Country* (Himes); *Pastime with Good Company* (Henry VIII/Roberts); *Grandioso* (Seitz); *Russian Christmas Music* (Reed/Leppla).

In their second full-length CD the BBC show their continued mastery of a wide range of styles and demonstrate secure technical precision in their ensemble playing. Most of the recording was completed at Dublin Coffman High School, where several NABBA Championships have been held. This has resulted in drier recording than I prefer, but one that gives well-balanced pick up to the full range of the band. The final item, *Russian Christmas Music*, is recorded in a local church. What stands out to me is the excellent way this band plays marches - so clear, so rhythmically precise, so dynamically engaging! The marches run the gamut - contest marches, an old SA classic (George

Marshall's *'Neath the Flag*), a college rouser (*Grandioso*), and Bill Himes' Cotton Bowl Parade effort, *God and Country*. Yet the band is equal to the challenge of the lyric, as well. Their tone is restrained and rich on the short Vaughan Williams' transcription, and their stagger-breathing and phrasing on *Come Sweet Death* is a revelation, a performance also marked by correct balance between the mellow and bright choirs that Leidzen's, indeed all great, brass band scoring, demands. Their soloists are in good form. Dan King plays with great accuracy on the Curnow work, but I wish he had been given just a bit more presence and volume in order to let him fully shine. Both band and soloist really sparkle on this gem, however! Joel Pugh gives you a full, characteristic euphonium tone on Sparke's *Party Piece*, my only criticism being that the prelude to the party (first portion of the work) is not carefree enough - a bit slow and serious. He more than makes up for it in the lively, and technically challenging second part. Associate conductor Les Susi has given the band some popular arrangements in recent years that are both crowd pleasers and well-adapted for brass in the proper styles. Joined with Roberts' popular *Pastime with Good Company*, these items make for a good program contrast and have been judiciously placed within the order of play. The two large-scale works come from the American wind band repertoire, beloved chesnuts by Williams and Reed, each effectively arranged especially for the BBC. BBC Percussionist Marty Jenkins wrestled with Clifton Williams' exciting *Fanfare and Allegro* and came up with a very satisfactory adaptation that really flatters the BBC's impressive tone and balance. David Leppla's (former member of the BBC) well-known treatment of *Russian Christmas Music* receives the finest recorded performance I have heard, complete with large pipe organ; this reading is to be preferred to

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that done by the splendid Brass Band of Battle Creek. I just wish the entire album had been recorded in that church, for we really hear the BBC to best effect on this final, and glorious climax to good recording. This a great band, with every section in fine shape! I cannot end my review, however, without making special notice of three BBC sections that really impressed me: alto horns, trombones, and percussion. Congratulations BBC for another fine program of good brass band music!

*Collage.* **Angie Hunter**, Euphonium, and Uwe Zeutzhem, Piano. Bernel CD 10003. TT 65:32. Program: *Pantomime* (Sparke); *The Swan* (Saint-Saens); *Symphonic Variants* (Curnow); *Original Fantasie* (Picchi/Mantia); *Down in the Glen* (Gordon and Conner); *Concerto* (Bourgeois); *How Great Thou Art* (unattributed).

Angie Hunter won the first Leonard Falcone International Euphonium/Bari-tone Horn Competition in 1986. In this solo album she fully maintains 'top-of-pack' performing skill that gained her that recognition. The recording was completed in Germany where Hunter serves as a music teacher at the German Bible Institute. Her formal training in euphonium performance was taken at Bowling Green State University and the University of Illinois; her teachers have included Kenley Inglefield, Brian Bowman, Fritz Kaenzig, and Abbie Conant. She has great versatility and technical facility; above all, she produces a lovely sound in all registers, but the sound and pitch are especially fine in the altissimo or very high range. The accompanist, Uwe Zeutzhem, plays masterfully; he is a true artist in this role. In one of its first commercial ventures, Bernel Recordings has a winner, a production that does full justice to both soloist and pianist, with wonderful balance and presence. What I really applaud in this recital is the

unhurried, spacious interpretations of the large-scale standard works. Hunter's readings are well-paced, and virtuosity is rightfully in second place, though make no mistake - she is a virtuoso performer. Euphonium players will be pleased to have a good version of the very difficult Curnow *Symphonic Variants* in the piano accompaniment version, for that is the way most players will get a chance to play this tour-de-force for euphonium. The other two major works - Picchi *Fantasie* and the three-movement Bourgeois *Concerto* - also are given very respectful, careful treatments that can be good models for developing advanced players. I found this disc to be a very pleasant surprise, because I had not heard of Angie Hunter prior to getting the review copy. Place this disc along the Steven Mead solo series as models of their kind in euphonium literature and performance.

*Fanfares, Preludes, and Themes.* **Black Dyke Band** (James Watson). DeHaske Brass DHR 3.026-3. TT 67:27. Program: *Fanfare for a Jubilee* (Hadermann); *Duet from Lakme* (Delibes/Curnow), Soloists Matt Baker (cornet) and Steve Drury (flugel); *Symphonic March: Tribute* (Curnow); *Prelude on Laudes Domini* (Court); *Intrada Festivo* (Bulla); *Prelude and Celebration* (Curnow); *The Last Spring* (Grieg/Curnow); *Concertante* (Bulla); *Prelude on a Hymn of Praise* (Curnow); *Consensus* (Van der Roost); *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Curnow); *Diogenes* (de Haan); *Concert March: Arsenal* (Van der Roost).

This disc is intended to provide model performances of new music from the DeHaske and Curnow Music Press brass band catalogs. In general, the CD pro-

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## Brass Band Programs

**Atlanta Brass Band** (Richard E. Holz). March 9, 1998; Salvation Army Atlanta Temple, Atlanta GA. *Prelude for an Occasion* (Gregson); *Concertpiece for Cornet* (Curnow), Philip Smith, cornet soloist; *Sarabande pour le Piano* (Debussy/Richard Holz); *Golliwog's Cakewalk* (Debussy/Himes); *Trumpet Call* (Downie), Philip Smith, trumpet soloist; *They Shall Be Mine* (Catherwood), Philip Smith, cornet soloist; *Chalk Farm 2* (Gregson); *March* (Weber/Head); *Georgian Song* (Balakirev/Pearce), Philip Smith, cornet soloist; *Londonderry Air* (Redhead); *The Victors* (Broughton), Philip Smith, James Thompson, Fred Mills, cornet soloists; *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson), Philip Smith, James Thompson, Fred Mills, cornet soloists; *The Appian Way from The Pines of Rome* (Respighi/Graham).

**Brass Band of Minot** (James D. Thornton). October 12, 1997; McFarland Auditorium, Minot ND. *Fanfare/Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Thornton); *Dance of the Tumblers from The Snow Maiden* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Ashmore); *Adagio* (Barber/Gordon); *Pineapple Poll* (Sullivan/Mackerras/Brand); *Entry of the Gladiators* (Fucik/Langford); *Moon River* (Mancini/Morrison); *Elation Suite* (Davis); *Amazing Grace* (Himes); *Malaguena* (Lecuona/Freeh). November 23, 1997; McFarland Auditorium. *Fanfare/Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Thornton); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa); *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral* (Wagner/Himes); *Yellow Ribbon Patriotic Medley* (arr. Goodman); *March and Procession of Bacchus* (Delibes/Horton); *Fanfare for the Common Man* (Copland/Thornton); *O Holy*

*Night* (Adam/Bulla), Chris Beehler, soprano cornet soloist; *Petite Suite de Ballet* (Ball); *Armed Forces Medley* (arr. Thornton).

February 1, 1998; McFarland Auditorium, Minot ND. *Fanfare/Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Thornton); *March to the Scaffold from Symphonie fantastique* (Berlioz/Snell); *Deep Harmony* (Parker/Newsome); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* (Liszt/Rimmer); *Bravura* (Duble); *Czardas* (Monti/Trevarthen), Avis Veikley, xylophone soloist; *Dem Bones* (arr. Langford), Joe Alme, Paul Rider, Penny Stetson, Curt Kumpf, trombone soloists; *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Gershwin/Fernie); *Waltzing Matilda* (arr. Langford).

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March 8, 1998: McFarland Auditorium, Minot ND. *Fanfare/Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Thornton); *Unter Dem Grillenbanner* (Lindemann); *Anitra's Dance* from *Peer Gynt* (Grieg/Drover); *Polovtsian Dances* from *Prince Igor* (Borodin/Ashmore); *Largo* from *New World Symphony* (Dvorak/Langford); *The Great Gate of Kiev* from *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Mussorgsky); *Dance of the Hobgoblins* (Eisenberg); *Loch Lomond* (arr. Drover); *Puttin' On The Ritz* (Berlin/Snell); *Lara's Theme* from *Dr. Zhivago* (Jarre/Broadbent); *Action Front* (Blankenburg).

April 26, 1998: McFarland Auditorium, Minot ND. *Fanfare/Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Thornton); *Sheep May Safely Graze* (Bach/Swancott); *Four Scottish Dances* (Arnold/Farr); *On the Steppes of Central Asia* (Borodin/Hendricks); *Kenilworth* (Bliss); *Procession of the Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Curnow); *Love Theme from Scheherazade* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Langford); *Valiant* (Broadstock); *Colonial Song* (Grainger/West); *Radetsky March* (J. Strauss II/Ryan).

**Buffalo Silver Band** (William Weikert, guest conductor). North Presbyterian Church, Williamsville NY. *Fanfare for NABBA* (Curnow); *Children of the Regiment* (Fucik); *West Country Fantasy* (Langford); *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Williams/Forster & Dye); *The Girl With The Flaxen Hair* (Debussy/Brand); *Americana Suite* (Trevanthen); *America the Beautiful* (Himes); *Old Panama* (Alford); *My Fair Lady Selections* (Lerner/Duthoit).

**Cuyahoga Valley Brass** (Keith Wilkinson). April 4, 1998; First Congregational Church of Akron, OH. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *Hinemoa* (Wood); "Bring Him Home" from *Les Miserables* (Schonberg/Wilkinson), Marcia Kline, soprano cornet soloist; *Amazing Grace* (Himes); *Invictus March*

(Himes); "All I Ask of You" from *Phantom of the Opera* (Lloyd Webber/Graham); *Rhapsody in Brass* (Goffin); *Norwegian Dance No. 2* (Grieg/Wilkinson); *All Through the Night* (Langford); *French Military March* (Saint-Saens/Wilkinson).

**Illinois Brass Band** (Colin Holman). March 8, 1998; First Presbyterian Church, Libertyville, IL, and March 22, 1998; Gary United Methodist Church, Wheaton, IL. *Star-Spangled Banner* (arr. Himes); *Praise* (Heaton); *Laude* (Curnow); *Clear Skies* (Ball), Amy Nelson, cornet soloist; *Contest Music* (Heaton); *Jazz* (Wilby); *Death or Glory* (Hall); *Tam O' Shanter* (Wright); *Amazing Grace* (Himes); *Sonata*, first movement (McKay), Brian Byrne, trombone soloist; *Riverdance* (Whelan/Farr).

**North Carolina State University British Brass Band#** (Robert Petters/John Fuller), with the **Triangle Brass Band+** (Michael Votta/David Rockefeller) and the **Triangle Youth Brass Band\*** (Randy Guptill). November 19, 1997; Stewart

Theatre, North Carolina State University, Raleigh NC. *Valdres\** (Hansen/Moller); *Music for Greenwich\** (Gregson); *All Through the Night\** (arr. Langford); *Selections from Danserye\** (Susato/Iveson); *Tribute for Brass Band#* (Scearce); *Marche Militaire Francaise#* (Saint-Saens/Kenyon); *Partita#* (Gregson); *Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare+* (Strauss/Palmatier); *Folk Dances+* (Shostakovich/Hanson); *The Year of the Dragon+* (Sparke); *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral\*+ #* (Wagner/Himes).

**North Carolina State University British Brass Band** (Robert Petters/John Fuller), with the Pipes and Drums of NCSU. March 1, 1998. *Fanfare for N.A.B.B.A.* (Curnow); *God Save the Queen* (arr. Watson); *Star Spangled Banner* (arr. Sousa); *The Prizewinner* (Sparke); *Napoli* (Bellstedt/Brand), Zeb Treece, soloist; *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. Marcia LaReau); *March to the Scaffold*

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## Brass Band Programs

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from *Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz/Snell); *Invictus March* (Himes); *Moorside Suite* (Holst);

**Renaissance Brass** (Charles Musgrave). March 24, 1998; Willowbrook United Methodist Church, Sun Cites, AZ. *Men of Harlech* (Langford); *Rhapsody on Sea Shanties* (Langford); *Poem from At Twilight* (Fibich/Pearce), Lori Hefner, flugelhorn soloist; *Three Blind Mice* (arr. Douglas); *Amazing Grace* (Himes); *A Disney Fantasy* (Richards); *Trumpet Voluntary* (Purcell/Jakeway); *South Pacific Selection* (Rodgers/Wright); *Amparito Roca* (Texidor/Winter); *Waltzing Matilda* (Langford); *Marching With Sousa* (Langford).

April 28, 1998; Congregational Church of Sun City, AZ. *Men of Harlech* (arr. Langford); *My Heart Will Go On* (Horner/Barry), Stephanie Sowter, tenor horn soloist; *Amazing Grace* (Himes); *Shine, Jesus, Shine* (Kendrick/Phillips); *Oh My Beloved Father* (Puccini), Ed White, euphonium soloist; *Three Blind Mice* (arr. Douglas); *A Disney Fantasy* (Richards); *NABBA Fanfare* (Curnow); *March of the Cobblers* (Barratt and Siebert); *Clog Dance* (Arcangelo/Charleson); *South Pacific Selection* (Rodgers/Wright); *Amparito Roca* (Texidor/Winter); *Marching With Sousa* (Langford); *Deep River* (arr. Broughton).

**Sheldon Theatre Brass Band** (W. Larry Brentzel). March 14, 1998; Hastings, MN, and April 25, 1998; Sheldon Theatre, Red Wing MN. *French Military March* (Saint-Saens/Wilkinson); *Pantomine* (Sparke), Brian Borovsky, euphonium soloist; *Ticket to Ride* (Lennon & McCartney/Fernie); *Variations on an Enigma* (Sparke); *Toccata in D minor* (Bach/Farr); *Washington Grays* (Grafulla/Curnow); *Blue John* (Kneale), Jeff Ilse, trombone soloist; *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini* (Rachmaninov/Snell); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson/Barsotti), Lance Paulson, Jim Bowen and John Mundy, cornet soloists; *Tara's Theme* (Steiner/Catherall); *Riverdance* (Whelan/Farr); *The Floral Dance* (Moss/Broadbent).

**Spokane British Brass Band** (Richard Strauch and Richard Evans, guest conductors). March 1, 1998; The Met, Spokane, WA. *Rule Britannia* (Arne/Brand); *First Suite* (Holst/Herbert); *Sounds from the Hudson* (Clarke), Thomas Gause, cornet soloist; *Concertino in E flat* (Sachse/Glover and Lewis), Thomas Gause, cornet soloist; *I Vow to Thee My Country* (Holst/Sparke); *Post Horn Galop* (Koenig); *Marching Song* (Holst/Wright);

*Onward! Christian Soldiers* (Sullivan/Fernie); *Finale from Trumpet Concerto* (Hummel/Twitchings), Thomas Gause, cornet soloist; *Dat Dere* (Timmons/Taylor), Thomas Gause, cornet soloist; *Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again* (Lloyd Webber/Bulla); *The Dam Busters* (Coates/Dawson).


**Triangle Brass Band** (Michael Votta). December 5, 1997; Southern Music Festival, Atlanta GA. *Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare* (Strauss/Palmatier); *Colonial Song* (Grainger); *The Year of the Dragon* (Sparke); *All Through the Night* (arr. Langford); *Little Suite for Brass* (Arnold); *Youth Dance* (Shostakovich/Hanson).

January 26, 1998; Campbell University, Buies Creek, NC. *Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare* (Strauss/Palmatier); *Comedy Overture* (Ireland); *All Through the Night* (Trad. arr. Langford); *Youth Dance* (Shostakovich/Hanson); *Mercury March* (Van der Roost); *Little Suite for Brass* (Arnold); *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. La Reau); *Seventy-Six Trombones* (Willson/Duthoit).

March 27, 1998; The Carolina Theatre, Durham NC. *Little Suite for Brass* (Arnold); *Music for a Festival* (Sparke); *Plantagenets* (Gregson); *Youth Dances* (Shostakovich); *Summertime* (Gershwin), Michael Allen Harrison, soloist;

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The University of Kentucky in Lexington was the host of NABBA XVI on April 17 and 18. The Singletary Center for the Arts proved to be a fine facility to handle the large number of participants and delegates, and there was no shortage of helpful staff available at all times to provide assistance where required. Events got quickly underway on the Friday afternoon with the various solo and ensemble competitions which all ran smoothly and in a timely fashion, as did the band competitions on Friday night and all day Saturday. The NABBA Board of Directors met Friday afternoon to tackle immediate business items, and the Reading Band was well attended during the early evening hours. The vendors and exhibitors present were supported throughout the event and a spectacular Gala Concert rounded out the weekend's activities. For the performers, the greatest test became not just the preparations of the performances and the challenging test pieces themselves but making quick and last minute adjustments to the exceptionally live acoustic present in both the Recital and Concert Halls. Certainly the back stage staff did everything they could to maintain an efficiently run event and to ensure that the participants were able to give of their best. The international line-up of adjudicators were Bram Gay (England), Ray Tizzard (Canada) and James Hile (U.S.).

## ADULT TECHNICAL SOLOS

*Reviewed by Michael Solms*

The 1998 Adult Solo Technical Competition showcased a record twenty performers. They came clad in everything from sweat pants to tuxedos and played instruments from cornets to marimbas. Technical soloists are a hardy lot. Of course they have to display flying fingers, awesome range and extraordinary articulation. To reach the highest level;

however, they also have to find the music amidst all the notes. This group's success can perhaps be best reflected by how often my notes contain comments like "great tone" and "wonderful phrasing". Adjudicator Bram Gay had no lack of fine performances from which to choose.

Terry Everson served as host, announcer, furniture mover, finder of lost marimbas, and sometime accompanist. His energy and good humor kept things running smoothly. All the competitors were reassured by his presence at the lectern, if only because it meant they would not have to compete against him.

Contest winner Brian Meixner, a euphonium player from the Lexington Brass Band, played *Fantasy* by Phillip Sparke. This was perhaps the toughest piece attempted during the contest and Brian was well up to the task. His tempos were rapid but he never lost the musical line of the piece and displayed tremendous dynamic range and control. His ability to articulate clearly throughout the piece was very impressive. This was a well-deserved win for the "home team".

The wonderful cornet solo *Clear Skies* by Eric Ball was the choice of runner up Amy Nelson from the Illinois Brass Band. Amy played with a beautiful, clear tone that was secure in all registers. She met the technical challenges of the music while maintaining the energy and drive that allow the "exultant" character of the piece to come through.

Third place finisher Tony Zilincik, of the Central Ohio Brass Band, played the first movement of the *Concerto for Bass Tuba* by Vaughan Williams. Tony played with great style and flair and a big, warm tone, especially in the low register. This piece might not require the sheer finger speed of some of the others but does demand range, control, clarity and musicality. Tony's performance was confi-

dent and engaging.

Only two players, Tom Gabrielson and Sean Anderson, played from memory. Although it is not a requirement for a fine performance, it does help the artist communicate with the audience. Sean and Tom helped prove this point with expressive and involving performances.

The reviewer's special award for technical merit (a highly unofficial prize) goes to trombonist Rob Barnes of the Illinois Brass Band. Rob played *Elegy for Mippy II* by Bernstein, a piece that requires the performer to tap his or her foot along with the music. He was able to shift from right foot to left foot and back in awe-inspiring fashion. He played the trombone extremely well too. Another special mention goes to cornetist Rick Perez who, in addition to his expressive playing, was our "best dressed" competitor. His tuxedo was a nice gesture of respect toward the audience and the competition.

**Results:** 1. Brian Meixner (euphonium, Lexington Brass Band), 2. Amy Nelson (cornet, Illinois Brass Band), 3. Tony Zilincik (tuba, Central Ohio Brass Band)

*Michael Solms is a member of the Scioto Valley Brass and Percussion*

## ADULT SLOW MELODIES (program choices listed only)

**Results:** 1. Dennis Mondracek (cornet, Eastern Iowa Brass Band); *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms* (arr. Hunsberger). 2. Phil Klickman (tenor horn, Illinois Brass Band); *Intrada* (Ketting). 3. Brian Byrne (trombone, Illinois Brass Band); *Sonata for Trombone* (McKay).

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## YOUTH SOLOS (program choices listed only)

**Results:** 1. Matt LaFontaine (All Star Brass and Percussion); *Napoli* (Bellstedt/Simon). 2. Andrew Rice (All Star Brass and Percussion); *Concerto* (Rimsky-Korsakov). 3. Keith Smith (All Star Brass and Percussion); *Carnival of Venice* (Arban/Goldman).

## ADULT AND YOUTH ENSEMBLES

Reviewed by Louis Bourgois

The Ensemble Competition, Adult and Youth Sections, featured a diverse Classical, Romantic, and contemporary repertoire (including ragtime and New Orleans style jazz), as well as several sacred selections. Instrumentations were equally diverse, including standard mixed brass quartets, quintets, and sextets, as well as ensembles that featured the brass band choirs, particularly the cornet sections and euphonium and bass sections. The adjudicator was Dr. James Hile, former Director of Bands at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, presently instrumental music director at Highland Park High School, in Highland Park, Illinois.

The First, Second, and Third Place winning programs of the Adult Section were in order: The Four Horsemen Tuba Quartet performing *Quartet for Tubas* (Frank Payne); Lexington Brass Sextet performing *Two Movements from Der Freischütz* (Carl Maria von Weber/David Henderson); and The Front Row performing *Variants with Solo Cadenzas* (William Schmidt).

**Results:** 1. Four Horsemen Tuba Quartet, 2. Lexington Brass Sextet, 3. The Front Row (Illinois Brass Band).

The First, Second, and Third Place win-

ning programs of the Youth Section were in order: All-Star Tuba Quartet performing *When Tubas Waltz* (David Werden); All-Star Cornet Sextet performing *Hornpipe from Water Music* (Handel/Olcott), and *Badinage* (Ciofari).

**Results:** 1. All-Star Tuba Quartet, 2. All-Star Cornet Sextet, 3. Carmenes Felicitis

*Louis Bourgois is the bass trombonist with the Lexington Brass Band*

## READING BAND

Reviewed by Ronald W. Holz

Unless otherwise noted, the instrumentation supplied for each item follows the traditional British brass band scoring. Most British publishers supply only treble clef versions for all parts except bass trombone; most publishers follow this scheme, but exceptions are noted. Items marked with \* do not require percussion. I have given broad performance level indications as follows: VE very easy; E easy, M moderate, MD moderately difficult; D difficult; ED extremely difficult. Timings listed are approximate.

**A. Curnow Music (DeHaske), 2025-L**  
Leestown Rd, Lexington, KY 40511.  
(606) 233-7424.

1. *Sanctus* (Franz Schubert, adapted James Curnow). E; 4 minutes. An ideal tone-building piece that also helps develop good phrasing, dynamics, and sectional clarity. This is the complete version of the famous Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) from *German Mass in F*. You could delete the extended repeat and still have an effective work. Not only ideal for band training, but also for concert and worship use.

2. Duet for Bb Cornet and Flugelhorn: *Duet from Lakme* (Leo Delibes/James Curnow). Solos: MD; Band: M; 4:45

minutes. Originally for two operatic sopranos, this operatic duet set in exotic India comes off very well for this combination of slightly contrasting timbres, like coloratura and mezzo sopranos. The rhythmic flow mimics the waltz, but with frequent rallentandi that will call for expressive interpretation and good communication between all concerned. The solo parts call for long, sustained lines. The accompaniment is not difficult but is thinly scored. In the mid portion of the work the key and chromatics will require careful attention. This will be a very effective change of pace solo feature.

3. Symphonic March: *Tribute* (James Curnow). M; 3:10 minutes. The adjective 'symphonic' helps clarify Curnow's approach to the classic march form, with less reliance on old formulas, other than a clear division between principal parts. The trio features a fine tune in B flat minor, which is the dominant minor of the opening E flat minor, a nice twist, when one expects the subdominant. The symphonic motive that links the entire work is announced boldly in the opening measures and is hardly absent for long in this well-constructed and dynamic work. The composer wrote the work for the excellent Manger Musikklag Brass Band of Bergen, Norway, and has intentionally combined American and European march styles in the process of paying 'tribute' to this fine ensemble. Quintessential Curnow and a quality piece.

**B. Obrasso, CH-4537 Wiedlisbach,**  
Baselstrasse 23c, Switzerland. 032-636-37-27.

1. *Fanfare For a New Age* (Goff Richards). M; 1:25 minutes. The short fanfare unfolds in three contrasting parts: 1) A festive, declarative dialogue between full band and timpani; 2) a slower and majestic, yet lyrical, middle tune; 3) return of

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the faster tempo, but a more condensed and transformed portion of #1. Solid percussion will be essential. This will be a pleasingly different fanfare or concert opener that is only of moderate technical demand.

2. *Hollywood!* (Goff Richards). MD; 8:30 minutes. The well-respected arranger of this pot-pourri style selection says that Hollywood "depicts the varying moods of Slapstick Comedy, Romance, the Western and Contemporary action Drama... Perhaps the names of Chaplin, Monroe, Wayne, and Ford will spring to mind during the performance." Richards does not so much quote Hollywood themes as suggest them (less copyright problem!) in this somewhat long-winded work. You will need to wrestle with quite a detailed score and with many stylistic shifts. At NABBA we found that the work could be excerpted, especially the last half. You'll need a good set-player and secure players in all sections. I was not convinced by this one, but it might be just the ticket on the thematic concert.

3. *St. Louis Blues March* (W.C. Handy/ Alan Fernie). M; 2:15 minutes. Alan Fernie adapts this American classic quite well for British-style brass band. No real problems here, but I do want to point out that this arranger uses dotted-eighths and sixteenth note patterns to indicate swing - a very common practice with British publishers, who evidently think their bands can not read swing notation easily. In this arrangement, while the opening live has written out swing triplets, the dotted pattern soon occurs, but with no indication in the score whether to play it straight or not! Bands unfamiliar with the original may want to get hold of a good recording of that before interpreting this good adaptation.

Other Obrero scores received: *Singin'*

*in the Rain* (Brown/arr. Alan Fernie); *The Best of Bond* (Darrol Barry); *Southern Gospel Song: Trouble in the Air* (arr. Alan Fernie). The two Fernie arrangements are of moderate difficulty and require a drum set player. The same observation about swing notation mentioned above for St Louis Blues holds true here as well. Both are just slightly over two minutes in length and should not present any problems to most NABBA bands, who should have a good handle on these styles in any event. The Best of Bond unites four Bond movie themes in a compact selection of about 6 minutes length and of moderate difficulty: The original James Bond Theme, From Russia with Love, Goldfinger, and You Only Live Twice. Transitions are concisely drawn, mostly using the James Bond Theme music, though the return of the opening 6/8 fanfare at the work's close seems a bit abrupt. Should prove a popular score.

C. Novello/R.S. Smith/Studio, 77-79 Dudden Hill Lane, London NW10 1BD England; 011-44-181-459-6194. Note that Studio Music is now handling (distributing) the Novello and R. Smith catalogs!

1. *Solemn Music* (H. Walford Davies/ Bram Gay). Four cornet parts, no repiano. M; 4:00 minutes. This majestic score was recently used to test the stamina of lower section bands in some British regional contests. Marked *lento*, *molto espressivo*, this haunting tune will challenge the best bands, but all groups could make good use of this work that has had funeral-memorial associations in Great Britain, but will sound like a good late-Edwardian nostalgia to Americans. Rich scoring and interesting color combinations make this a great training piece, as well.

D. Rosehill Music, Harold Charles House, 64a London End, Beaconsfield, Bucks. England, HP9 2JD; 011-44-1494-674-

411.

1. Duet: *Arabesque* (Joseph Turrin). Soloists: D; Band: MD. 4 minutes. This item was reviewed by Paul Droste in the last issue (March 1998) of the Bridge, p. 30.

E. The Salvation Army - New York, 440 West Nyack Rd, West Nyack, NY 10994; (914) 620-7441. This series - American Brass Band Series - calls for 9 or more players [3 cornets, 2 altos, 2 trombones, euphonium, and bass, plus percussion], but "optional" parts like flugel, soprano, bass trombone, and baritone are provided and do add color. Bass clef and F horn parts available. The following items are published in set of five Christmas items (other arrangements by Ray Bowes and Stephen Bulla), American Brass Band Journal 176-180.

1. *Fanfare Jubiloso* (James Curnow). M; 1:40 minutes. Fragments of seven Christmas carols and an original fanfare motive that opens the work are combined in a program opener ideal for the festive season: Joy to the World, The First Noel, Westminster Carol, O Come Little Children, Good King Wenceslas, Deck the Halls, and Jingle Bells. Percussion parts are important, but not difficult. Highly recommended for your next Christmas program.

2. *Shepherd's Surprise* (Kenneth Downie). M; 2 minutes. An effective treatment of the carol Shepherd's Shake Off Your Drowsy Sleep, Downie's score takes the shape of a short scherzo filled with interesting rhythmic variation - metric shifts and hemiola abound. Looks easier than it is, but well worth the effort and a very different kind of short Christmas concert item.

3. March: *On Christmas Day* (Stephen

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Bulla). M; 2:20 minutes. This is my favorite among this good set of five Christmas items. Three carols are used in quite clever fashion to shape a very lively concert march. I Saw Three Ships gets transformed from 6/8 to 4/4, is fragmented, and then serves as the basis for the first half of the march. It then undergoes augmentation, becoming the full, main tune of the trio, to which Bulla adds as a counterpoint in the works' finale the Swedish carol When Christmas Morning Brightens. Should become a classic along side such works as Christmas Joy (Leidzen) and The Carollers (Holz).

Additional New York SA music received: American Band Journal 172-175. Four items: Quick March: *Friends Forever* (Robert Redhead); B flat or E flat Cornet Solo: *When I remember!* (David Catherwood); Song Arrangement: *Lord of All Hopefulness* (Kenneth Downie); Song Arrangement: *Tis So Sweet* (Harold Burgmayer). The Redhead march is a delightful mix of styles - a Caribbean version of the Lord's Prayer for the second strain and a Canadian music camp theme song in the trio (Montreal's Lac L'achigan). The Catherwood solo is a moderately difficult setting of an old SA chorus, the kind of quick solo that is ideal as an encore or as short crowd pleaser. Burgmayer's setting of *Tis So Sweet To Trust In Jesus* is simple and to the point, though some of the harmonies will need careful tuning. The gem to this set is Downie's elegant, beautiful setting of the Irish melody Slane, associated in this setting with the text *Lord of All Hopefulness*. This is a more difficult piece, especially for the first cornets. The International Staff Band (Stephen Cobb) recorded this short gem on their 1996 CD *Partita*.

**F. The Salvation Army - Atlanta**, 1424 Northeast Expressway, Atlanta, GA 30329; (404) 728-1383. These items are

from the American Instrumental Ensemble Series (formerly American Brass Ensemble Series) edited by James Curnow. The arrangements may be played by a group as small as a quartet (with 5th part optional and two percussion parts), or by a full brass band, concert band, or orchestra. Parts supplied in all appropriate keys and clefs. Provides full score and piano part/reduction. Each year 12 pieces are published, four in each four grades. One solo is included in each grade, alternating each year between an E Flat or B Flat/C solo instrument. The Lexington Brass Band featured two of these works in their Midwest program to great effect and positive critical response.

1. *Simple Gifts* (James Curnow). VE; 2:20 minutes. While marked in 4/4, Jim Curnow's fine arrangement of this Shaker Hymn flows better in a slow 2/2. The move into augmentation at the close of this short piece is just another example of Jim's superb ability to write quality music for lower graded bands. All these arrangements sound impressive, by the way, with full brass band.

2. *Vesper Hymn* (Douglas Court). E; 2 minutes. One of the very first marches of SA band literature in the earlier 1900s

was based on this same old hymn tune. Doug Court first presents the tune in 'double-time' - in eighths, rather than quarters - and this gives the tune new life. It returns to full note values at the close, being combined well with the original material of the introduction. This is a good study in contrasting articulations, one in which the band will wrestle with a wide variety of marcato articulations and a more cantabile, leggiero style that must not become a full legato, and therefore blemish the rhythmic flow of the march.

3. *Fanfare Prelude on St. Theodolph* (Stephen Bulla). VE; 1:40. It is remarkable how Bulla makes a musically interesting setting out of a simple fanfare figure in quarter notes and the Bach chorale labelled St Theodolph. Cautionary note to experienced bands - watch out not to distort the low register lines you must play in these pieces well suited to a beginner band! As is also true in the other arrangements, full use of the percussion section really helps this arrangement reach its full potential.

**G. The Salvation Army - Chicago**, 10 W.

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## NABBA XVII

April 23-24, 1999

Pheasant Run Resort,

St Charles IL

For further information contact:

**The Illinois Brass Band**

31 Joseph Lane

Glendale Heights, IL 60139

Telephone (630) 665-4213 E-mail [colin.w.holman@juno.com](mailto:colin.w.holman@juno.com)

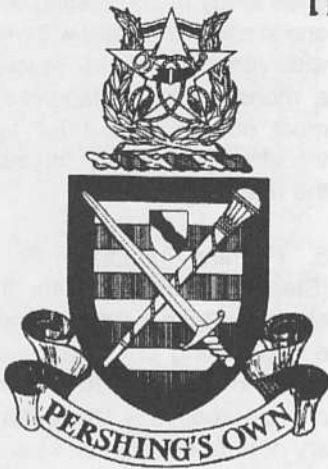
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Algonquin Rd, Des Plaines, IL 60016; 847-294-2133. The following items come from the new four-item American Festival Series #20-23 edited by William Himes. No repiano cornet (Solo, first, and second cornet parts)

1. *Hornpipe: Allegro Deciso*. G.F. Handel/Gordon Collins. M; 2:15 minutes. The famous 3/2 Hornpipe from The Water Music Suite is here transposed from D Major to an appropriate band pitch, B Flat. The horn antiphonal response is written for a mid-ranged choir of baritones, trombones, and euphoniums. Most NABBA bands will read this

down quite easily, with only the soprano, solo and first cornets having some technical hurdles to leap over. Getting the style light enough, however, may be another problem. Collins rightfully retains only timpani and side drum percussion. Should be a very useful concert item.

2. Trumpet Solo: *Blessed Assurance* (Stephen Bulla). Solo: D; Band: MD; 5:30 minutes. The soloist uses flugelhorn for the mellow first half and then B flat trumpet for the dramatic, and breathtaking finale in this piece especially arranged for Philip Smith. The band accompaniment has some pitfalls to be overcome, but if you have a dynamic soloist with both rich low register on the flugel, and a powerhouse lead style on the trumpet, this wonderful hymn setting is a one you have got to try. Good luck!

3. *Star Spangled Banner* (arr. William Himes). MD; 1:35 minutes. I first heard this at the Great American Brass Band Festival as played by the U.S. Army Brass Band under Tom Palmatier. For those tired of straightforward (read boring) readings of our national anthem, this is an arrangement that does for the new millennium what Leidzen's effective setting did a generation ago. Himes interweaves a fanfare figure of five notes with an imaginative reharmonization of the melody. After the first bold statement of the fanfare motive in the low brass, the anthem enters quietly, marked tranquillo. The music becomes more and more animated as the fanfare theme takes on more and more of an insistent role. The glorious ending is capped by final re-statement of the motive, this time in the upper cornets and percussion. While this is essentially the anthem preceded by a two-bar intro, this may not be the version to use when you are encouraging an audience sing-a-long! Being in the high key (for this anthem) of B flat, this is best suited for a great concert or civic occasion. One word of caution - if you


buy this splendid arrangement, please take the time to really learn it well - it is not an easy arrangement. So many bands could self-destruct on this one without very careful preparation.

H. Performance Music. The Brasshouse, 8 Elmbridge Way, High Arcal Sedgley Dudley, West Midlands DY3 1SH; 011-44-1902-664-475. This publisher will supply a free cassette of their most recent publications. The following three arrangements call for four equal Bb cornet parts (no repiano), two separated euphonium parts, and two Eb and Bb bass parts, though these are essentially the same part. Percussion required: Drum set only for all three.

1. *Super Nova* (John Morton). No soprano cornet. E; 1:55 minutes. John Morton has designed this work to be played by as few as 13 players, though full band is ideal: 4 cornets, flugel, 2 horns, 1 baritone, 1 euphonium, 3 trombones, 1 bass (Eb or Bb), plus drum set - in essence a brass band-small big band! The fairly easy arrangement consists of an animated 10-measure introduction, a 32-bar bozza nova tune, a contrasting middle section, and the return of the opening tune, followed by a graceful fade away. Each section gets interesting lines. Ideal for developing bands.

2. Trombone Section Feature: *'Bone Idle* (John Morton). M; 2:50 minutes. A whimsical, intentionally humorous and old-style shuffle for trombone section and band. Like the Obrasso arrangements, it seems dotted-eighths and sixteenths are intended to be played as swing rhythms here. Trombones alternate between unison and three-part harmony, and with no particularly difficult passages to conquer. Very much in the 'light entertainment' vein, complete with


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continued from page 19

big drum bangs on unexpected beats, and a flippant cornet bugle-call at the end. Also playable by the same smaller combination listed in #1.

3. Alto Section Feature: *March Americana* (John Morton). M; 2 minutes. This requires full band, unlike #1, and #2. The piece unfolds like an old-time rag-style march, with lots of syncopations of the old college-fight-song variety, and thus evoking an era, and thus the title is appropriate. There is one soli passage for the horns - unison runs - that will need some drill, but otherwise it will be a matter of getting them to play out enough or soften the band! Something to feature your alto section, especially if you want a gay-90s feel.

L. Bernel Music, PO Box 2438, Cullowhee, NC 28723; 704-293-7469. Provides treble and bass clef parts for trombones and tubas

1. Trumpet Solo: *Chiapenecas* (Rafael Mended/Keith Wilkinson). Solo: MD; Band: M; 2:00 minutes. This is the famous Mendez setting of a Mexican folk song that moves in a gentle one-to-a bar 3/4 time. The scoring is effective and understated. The final portion features a gradual accelerando, and eventual vivace, that will take some time to coordinate. A real fine, short solo item.

2. Overture: *Barber of Seville* (Giacomo Rossini/Keith Wilkinson). D; 6:50 minutes. This is a dandy transcription that will challenge all of our bands, but not one beyond their reach. Wilkinson is quite faithful to the original (especially in not overdoing the percussion). The Reading Band had fun with this, although nearly a 'train wreck' in one or two spots. Only the trombones escape a workout. Have a good time with this one.

Other Bernel Scores received:

*Schmucke Dich, O Liebe Seele* (arr. R.R.Trevarthen); Alto Horn Feature: *Mr. Sandman* (Ballard/David Henderson). Dick Trevarthen has taken a lovely old German Lutheran chorale by Johann Cruger (dating from 1649) and scored it for the lower two-thirds of the brass band: Alto horns (1 part), Baritones (1 part), 3 Trombone, euphoniums, E flat and B flat Bass, no percussion. He gets some interesting color combinations throughout this slow-moving, somewhat somber arrangement. The short piece ends majestically at fortissimo level. The title freely translates Prepare yourself, o my soul (to meet Him). Mr. Sandman is a very difficult alto horn feature arranged by David Henderson for the Brass Band of Battle Creek. The tempo is marked "as fast as the Tenors please" or at least half note equals 120! There is a gag written into the arrangement that provides for a running battle between the altos and the trombones (which can be cut) as to who is in control of the main tune (trombones keep interrupting with I'm Getting Sentimental Over You). The band must be able to play in a wide variety of styles, from light swing, to old-style foxtrot (slower mid-section of piece), to double-time swing, to BeBop-like licks. What a fun, and very difficult chart. Should you have the altos (tenors), go for it!

## YOUTH SECTION

Once again the Youth Section was carried by the JV All-Stars but this year with a new conductor at the helm, Ken McCoy making his NABBA debut. The band chose materials well, and seemed well prepared and confident for the occasion. Their opening march *Men of Ohio* (Fillmore) was spirited and lively, though the tempo was unsteady and the band was grappling with the acoustic, many details being unfortunately lost. An effective arrangement of *The Navy Hymn* followed with nice legato phrasing. Jim Parker's *Musket, Fire and Drum* revealed talent across the entire band with some

particularly confident soprano cornet playing. Though the tempos seemed a little rushed, the band tackled the test piece, three movements from Ray Steadman-Allen's *The Journeymen*, with gusto. The end chair players all acquitted themselves well in the first movement, and there was good contrast of mood in the second. A brisk and lively opening to the fourth movement of the suite (the third was omitted) led to a confident conclusion. In a most touching tribute, the band paid homage to their principal cornet player who died unexpectedly on April 6, his instrument and case being placed on his seat throughout the entire performance. Peter would have been proud.

Results: Junior Varsity All-Stars (Ken McCoy), 261.

## EXHIBITION SECTION

The Exhibition Section was created last year for band's wishing to participate without prizes, competition, or points; for comments only. Only one band chose to enter this year, the SASF Band with Ron Holz as conductor. Their entire program was distinguished by clean controlled playing.

James Curnow conducted his own *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs* to open the program. Although it's easy to get the impression that this medley would be just as effective with one or two fewer modulations, the band showed how to pace the performance that interweaved energetic rhythms, familiar hymn tunes and inspirational themes. Kenneth Rawlins march *Ransomed of the Lord* followed, played with character and spirit and maturity of sound. SASF showed that they could handle both technical challenge and the great art of broad cantabile in Eric Ball's suite *The*

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*This is the third of a series of articles submitted by brass band conductors on the subject of warmups and other related miscellaneous matters. In the first article tubist Steve Sykes outlined his approaches to rehearsal, and NABBA Vice-President presented a detailed approach to rehearsal discipline. In the second, NABBA conductors Paul Droste and John de Salme shared their thoughts on the subject. There are as many ways to warmup a brass band as there are conductors and the following is intended as an opportunity to share ideas and to strengthen the movement. All comments are written with the understanding that they can be flexible to a number of situations and adjusted as necessary. Every NABBA conductor has been contacted by mail and asked to submit an article on the subject. Here, the Editor and conductor of the Illinois Brass Band shares some ideas.*

I may never forget hearing the BNFL Band (now JJB Sports Leyland) under Richard Evans give their first concert of their 1994 U.S. tour in Libertyville IL. The band had been two days off the plane, still a little jet-lagged and certainly tired from some sight-seeing; yet with minimal and apparently rather random individual warmups they sat down, and without warning began their rehearsal with an Alford march that was staggering for its sound, dynamic control and unbelievable intonation.

Most of us can only dream of such a scenario. But the fact is, that as conductors, we are in the business of brass band training and teaching, and setting the standards and atmosphere for a rehearsal and ultimately for a performance. I find that I am trying to constantly refine what we (the Illinois Brass Band) do in preparation for a constructive rehearsal, and successful performance. And on the rehearsal nights (and at concert venues) when things don't go quite according to plan, rather than blame

## Illinois Brass Band

June 6, 1998	7.30 p.m. Hannibal, MO
June 7, 1998	11.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. Peoria, IL
June 7, 1998	6.30 p.m. Bloomington, IL
June 14, 1998	6.00 p.m. Mundelein, IL
July 4, 1998	11.00 a.m. Barrington, IL
July 19, 1998	1.00 p.m. Taste of Antioch, IL
July 19, 1998	6.00 p.m. Butler Park, Libertyville, IL
August 16, 1998	4.00 p.m. Grayslake, IL
August 20, 1998	8.00 p.m. Wilmette, IL

## Lexington Brass Band

June 13-14, 1998	TBA Great American Brass Band Festival, Danville, KY
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## Motor City Brass Band

June 20, 21, 1998	12:30 p.m. Northville Art Fair Gazebo
June 28, 1998	7:00 p.m. Taylor Heritage Park
July 1, 1998	8:30 p.m. Southfield Civic Center
July 16, 1998	7:30 p.m. Dearborn Civic Center
July 23, 1998	7:00 p.m. Livonia Greenmede Village
July 25, 1998	6:00 p.m. Waterford Founders Festival
July 29, 1998	7:30p.m. Southfield Berg Road Gazebo
August 4, 1998	7:30p.m. Oakland Community College
August 8, 1998	3:00p.m. Allen Park
August 20, 1998	7:30p.m. Birmingham Shain Park
September 19,20, 1998	1:30p.m. Northville Victorian Festival

## Eastern Iowa Brass Band

June 20, 1998	All day; Grand Celebration of Brass Bands, Ushers Ferry Historic Village, Cedar Rapids, IA
August 2, 1998	Time TBA Hooverfest Celebration, West Branch, IA
September 12, 1998	5.00 p.m. Buzzard's Glory Quarry, IA
October 15, 1998	7.30 p.m. High School Auditorium, Marshalltown, IA
November 15, 1998	Time TBA Centerville, IA

## Grand Celebration of Brass Bands

June 20, 1998	Cedar Rapids IA, June 20, 1998
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individuals, I keep returning to myself and trying to define what I could have done better at the beginning of the rehearsal that would more effectively set the tone for the next two and a half or three hours together.

Firstly there needs to be a clear understanding that 1) an effective ensemble warmup can only begin when individual warmups are completed; 2) when the rehearsal begins, it is a time for focused

concentration on the task at hand; 3) players can be best prepared when the conductor is first to be prepared.

Typically I leave all individual warmups to the responsibility of the individual. It all depends on the weather, how much other playing the individual has done that day, or that week, how that individual

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player is feeling, and the instrument. Once the rehearsal begins, then the conductor should set the pace.

Although we have several hymn collections in the band library, we've been using the *Salvation Army Tune Book for Congregational Singing* (London: Salvationist Publishing, 1931) for the past several years. There are plenty of hymns (541) to choose from, and although the partbooks often vary considerably from the "tunebook" itself, there has been no end to the variety in which the hymns can be manipulated. I suspect that our rehearsals like many other bands on a Thursday night are often difficult to jump start because of the timing; it's toward the end of the week, members are tired, sometimes agitated. Focusing their minds away from distractions of work and family is rarely easy. Simply playing a hymn tune for the sake of doing so can be deadly; it achieves little unless right from the first moment there is a musical focus and purpose.

To my ears and mind, sound, pitch and ensemble always are placed on the highest priority in initial warmups. Once a hymntune is selected (I prefer ones with little rhythmic interest) and read through for familiarity, then the dissection begins.

Here are some suggestions. They are not intended to be all inclusive but can be added to or taken away from as necessary, according to the demands of your concert music.

1) Play the hymn tune in sections (duets, trios, quartets etc) for more careful focus on blend and intonation. When members are not playing, they should be listening intently. In my experience, the most effective aural focus occurs when it is placed on the lowest section voice, or the lowest ensemble voices. If you

sense that focus or blend is being lost, use the cadences to refocus attention; draw them out to abnormal lengths if necessary to make your point.

2) Play the hymn tune at a variety of dynamic levels: don't tell the band; just conduct them (but plan it in your mind first!).

3) Play the hymn tune at a variety of tempi: There's no question that the slower the tempo, the greater the benefit, but playing hymns very quickly can yield some surprising results too. They are great for bands and conductors alike to practise *accelerandi* and *rallentandi*.

4) Play the hymn tune with various articulations: Try all legato; all staccato; legato on 1 and 3/staccato on 2 and 4 or vice versa; or blend, so for example, all low brass are legato and all upper brass are staccato. Use the hymns to emphasize semi-staccato, or different styles of articulation (accents, or diaphragm attacks, e.g.).

5) Play the hymn tune with altered rhythms. We had great fun, for example, playing many traditional hymn tunes with swing rhythms in preparation for our performance of Philip Wilby's *Jazz* at NABBA XVI. But if your band needs help double tongueing, have them (everyone, including tubas!) play sixteenth notes in certain rhythmic patterns or fast triplets to practise triple tongueing. Or have the tubas and bass trombone play on the beat while everyone else plays off the beat (hymntune in the style of a polka)-then swap!

Some day we are going to get brave and work on playing hymns in a variety of transpositions; but Rome wasn't built in a day either. My comments here are skewed quite strongly toward the brass players. The Salvation Army hymn books have rudimentary percussion parts, to say the least. It's helpful for the conduc-

tor to let the percussionists know what the rehearsal is going to be, so they don't lug out all four timpani only to find they will need two (or worse yet, none at all). Hopefully they'll be set up fairly quickly and the percussion members can be actively involved with these hymn tune exercises very effectively (mallet instruments can play melody lines; non-pitched percussion can gently help reinforce rhythmic integrity).

With long rehearsals, it's good to pace your time. Know what you wish to accomplish and how long you are going to spend trying to achieve it. Balance time between full ensemble work and individual or sectional work. Chances are that if problems cannot be corrected in a short period, then the individuals are not ready. Set time aside, and when your time is up, move on!

Once I am satisfied with the preparations and warmup to a rehearsal, we usually tune from concert B flats starting at the *bottom* of the band, and working our way around with the upward bell instruments first, then proceeding to the forward pointing instruments. Of course it goes without saying that as a rehearsal or performance progresses the listening progresses along as well, and adjustments have to be made.

In general I've discovered that this approach helps the players be drawn into an active role in rehearsal. It's so easy to play a passive role in a hymn tune when it is read at face value and making every player think about the music in a fresh and creative fashion has helped enormously in our band's development over the last several years. It's fun and it's educational! Finally, a few minutes warming down at the end of a rehearsal, especially a long one, doesn't do any harm either.

*In the final issue on the subject, NABBA President Ron Holz contributes, together with California conductor Gonzalez Viales.*



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*Pilgrim Way*, though this appeared to be the most exposing work of those selected. Again, fine sound and tasteful ensemble phrases were hallmarks of the performance.

At this point, Paul Droste was honored with his Lifetime Membership of NABBA award, and both the band and the audience had the honor watching Dr Droste conduct the band in their final item in typical fashion. James Anderson's *The Pioneers* was conducted briskly, economically and effectively and the band responded appropriately.

## CHALLENGE DIVISION

Reviewed by Alan Black

The test piece for this section was Gareth Wood's *Hinemoa*, commissioned for the 1980 National Brass Band Championships of New Zealand to commemorate one hundred years of contesting in that country. Inspired by a Maori epic, there were a record nine entrants in this section, all who left distinctive individual impressions with each performance. In reviewing the Challenge Section of the competition, I have decided not to play the role of judge! That has already been done by others more competent than myself. Instead I offer my impressions and overall view of the event.

My first reaction to the contest in general was "What an enormous venue the University of Kentucky presented." In particular, the Singletary Center was revealed to be a great location. It is a credit to the supporters of the first band to play, Cincinnati (who drew #1 for the second year running) that even at the early hour of 8.00 a.m. there were over 80 people in the auditorium.

The band that followed, the Varsity All-Star Brass, certainly added to that num-

ber. What a delight it was to see and hear these young players perform. The intensity that they brought to the platform was a delight to behold. Their presentation in every respect was achieved with a maturity that belied their years. Even the change of players was accomplished with little fuss. The entire performance proceeded with the smoothness of a well-oiled machine.

Talking of change, the NCSU British Brass Band who played third even changed conductors; they also seated their members in a different pattern, and sang themselves in tune. It certainly was a different approach from the traditional.

The Brass Band of the Tri-State in their traditional uniforms looked great. They too, like a number of other bands, had a surplus of players and changed seating a couple of times. I must confess that I still cannot altogether accept the rule that allows the changing of players in mid performance. I am aware of all the reasons that it is allowed, but for the bands that don't have a surplus of players, it places them in my opinion at a disadvantage. The playing field ceases to be a level one. I'm sure that this will continue to be debated continuously.

Next we heard a band with only two percussionists. In a piece like *Hinemoa* that might be considered a little cavalier, but the Prairie Brass Band played their set extremely well. When they had finished I wrote in my notes "is this the winner?" In fact it turned out that they were. Well done to you all. I look forward to your continued NABBA participation.

When I compared the program of the Commonwealth Brass Band with the one played by the eventual winner, I asked myself "why did Commonwealth choose to play, in addition to the set test piece, music that to my knowledge is high on the scale of difficulty?" The band played quite well but there were times

when it sounded and looked like hard work.

The remaining bands presented workmanlike performances, delightful to listen to. Keith Wilkinson's newly formed Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band gave a clean and highly polished presentation in their first NABBA competition (one of three "rookie" bands in this section). In particular the return of Sunshine Brass under conductor Paul Gansemer after an eleven year absence was especially gratifying. I well remember the days of Karen Kneeburg; a talented lady who can best be described as having the stature of about 5ft and the presence of 6ft 8ins.

I enjoyed listening to the Challenge Section, the competitiveness of the bands, being in the Singletary Center and the obvious care taken by our hosts to ensure the smooth running of the event. As a transplanted Brit, I am always impressed when the British flag is flown correctly (though I couldn't check out Tom Myers shirt—he didn't remain in one spot long enough for me to do so)! And my congratulations to all the staff for a job well done and a great day.

**Results:** 1. **Prairie Brass Band** (Dallas Niermeyer), 270; 2. **Commonwealth Brass Band** (Jerome Amend), 269; 3. **Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band** (Keith Wilkinson), 268; 4. **Cincinnati Brass Band** (Anita Cocker Hunt), 265; 5. **Motor City Brass Band** (Craig Strain), 261; 6. **North Carolina State University British Brass Band** (Robert Petters), 241; 7. **Varsity All Stars** (David Sellers), 239; 8. **Sunshine Brass Band** (Paul Gansemer), 238; 9. **Brass Band of the Tri-State** (David Miller), 223.

Alan Black is President of the Weston Silver Band and a member of the NABBA Board of Directors

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## HONORS DIVISION

The **All-Star Brass and Percussion** were the only entrant in this year's Honors Division, and it has been a long time since this section was so sparsely populated. Whether this was a result of the challenging test piece, or the scheduling, or any number of other reasons, Eric Aho lead the youth band in a performance of great maturity.

No one could have been brassed off by their opening choice, Robert Hall's *Death of Glory March*, played with tasteful dynamic contrasts, great character and just the right pulse to make it work. The band's sound was excellent throughout. The performance of Kenneth Downie's difficult test piece *Purcell Variations* was impressive for its musical touches, imaginative ideas and subtleties. The music was played with energy and grace, and was well organized, shaped and executed. There was sympathetic dialogue between the soloists, and again the band's rich pliable sound came through. The band concluded their program with a work of great dramatic impact, William Alwyn's overture *The Moor of Venice*. The various moods required were well portrayed and the tragic turbulent characters spoke with authority. The testing element here was unquestionably the stamina required and the breadth of sound that was sustained showed the band more than equal to the task. This was another impressive performance from this ensemble who played as confidently as I have ever heard them.

**Results: 1. All-Star Brass and Percussion** (Eric Aho), 272.

## CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION *Reviewed by Thomas Palmatier*

I've written this review as sort of a running

narrative giving my impressions as the competition progressed in how I thought bands stacked up. What you are reading are the notes I made as bands played, without the benefit of hindsight. As you'll see, my opinions have differed a bit from those of the judges. Having had the great privilege of serving as a NABBA adjudicator, I can tell you there is a completely different perspective that comes from listening with only the score as visual input, as opposed to being an audience member who is not following a score. Therefore, my review is to be taken in that light -- as that of an audience member without scores.

First to take the stage was the Sheldon Theatre Brass Band under the baton of W. Larry Brentzel. They launched right into the test piece, *Contest Music* by Wilfred Heaton. My initial impression during the first movement was the band was a bit top-heavy in sound. They had clearly worked on dynamic contrast but the difference between fortissimo and pianissimo was not quite as dramatic as I think is required to win this very demanding section. Early on, the band showed some good rhythmic clarity and a nice sense of lyricism. Delicato and staccato were interpreted a bit blandly, more lightness and pizzicato style is needed.

A fine trombone solo was accompanied by a somewhat mushy accompaniment. As the band moved into the treacherous second movement, some pitch discrepancies began to take their toll - both cornets and trombones had some nervous moments with intonation. The band doesn't sound like they really like or "get" the second movement yet. It comes across as a series of vignettes, not as a cohesive whole. Will other bands be able to make this rather abstract movement flow a bit more? Sheldon Theatre recaptured a bit of their stride during the third movement, regaining some rhythmic clarity. They show

good energy without overblowing. Their other selection, *Variations on an Enigma* by Philip Sparke again displayed a good rhythmic approach. I would prefer a bit more flowing style in horns and flugelhorn; they keep their rhythmic intensity, but don't really soar. A beautiful euphonium solo is again saddled with some mushy accompaniment. The band seems to enjoy each other's playing so much they lose their focus when a soloist really shines. This work came to a really stunning conclusion with great power and breadth.

My impression of this band is they don't quite have the depth in all of their sections to win in the Championship Division. They did however, set a high standard for the bands that followed, but definitely left the door open.

Next to perform was the Collegiate All-Star Brass Band led by Eric Aho. The All-Star's presence in this section is a first and shows the incredible progress these groups are making in building a brass banding tradition in Ohio. They opened with *Gavorkna Fanfare*, displaying good power and depth of sound, but the rhythmic figures needed more definition. During the percussion interlude, the tempo sagged noticeably so that the recapitulation was a bit slow.

The first movement of *Contest Music* again showed a need for more rhythmic definition. I'd also like to hear fatter punctuating chords with more attention to balance. This band really works hard at dynamic contrast - they really sell the dynamics! However, balance at fortissimo keeps this from being as effective as it could be. They showed a very nice delicato until the end of the movement when the tonguing got a bit "thunky," perhaps a function of fatigue. The treacherous solo cornet line in the

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second movement was bravely played and gave way to the E-flat soprano solo. Despite a few chips, this young lady has a gorgeous sound and is a player to keep an eye on. The second movement exposed some of the lack of maturity in some of the solo chairs - not a criticism, just an observation and a weakness this band will soon overcome. The All-Stars' continuity during the second movement seemed a bit better than did Sheldon's. The third movement showed some nice lyric shaping but was overall a bit limp rhythmically. The band needs some metronome work and concentration on keeping the subdivided beat driving.

The All-Stars closed their program with *Excerpts from The Firebird*. Again, they just lacked the rhythmic drive and aggressiveness to make this really swing. The transition to the Berceuse was a bit ragged and continued in the chords underneath the trombone solo which were not together. I must admit that I did not care much for this arrangement or some of the interpretation. The solos were a bit over the top, the "harp glissandos" too slow and articulated, and the tremolos too pulsated. Having half of the players sustain the pitch and/or adding marimba rolling on the chords would help the tremolos--a very difficult effect to achieve. As the music built in the 7/4 section, the chords were not together and some of the tempo choices were a bit different than in the original music.

Overall, the Collegiate All-Star Brass Band proved they undoubtedly belong in this section but are not yet ready to challenge for the banner.

Next up was the Illinois Brass Band, opening with *Contest Music* and the contrast was immediately apparent. There was great rhythmic definition and a terrific delicato approach. At the outset they did not unload with the power I'm

expecting and save something for later. Soon they do unload and now it is clear why conductor Colin Holman has tried to keep the band on a leash. At fortissimo the band gets a bit "blatty" and balance is distorted. Overall, Holman and the band are show great faithfulness to the score and attention to detail. My observations of the second movement were brief: "The mind is willing but the heart just isn't there." Like Sheldon Theatre, IBB didn't seem to like this movement and it came across as labored, not lyrical. The tempo of the third movement seemed a bit slow - we'd see if the judges penalize for that! The movement was clean but lacked drive and excitement. Tubas overblew a little. Frankly, the performance of the test piece, while admirable, seemed to be less than this band was capable of. We would see if others could take advantage of this!

IBB's second piece, *Jazz: Symphonic Dances for Brass Band* by Philip Wilby was in stark contrast to *Contest Music*. They sounded like they played "Contest Music" because they had to (they did) but played *Jazz* because they wanted to. Despite some pitch problems, this was a thrilling performance of a heavy-weight piece. IBB was now leading the pack. However, a really top-notch performance of the test piece could defeat them.

John de Salme next led the Eastern Iowa Brass Band in a performance of *Glemdene*. I've struggled with a kind way to describe this rendition, but suffice it to say it was very shaky. The too quick tempo never settled in and this march's lilt and lyricism did not come through. A loss of tempo just before the trio highlighted the rhythmic problems. It would be interesting to see how the band would recover from this very weak start.

During the first movement of *Contest Music* EIBB settled down and started to show what they could do. They showed

nice lyricism and some good precision, but not quite the crisp sparkle of IBB. Their fortissimo was great, nicely balanced and full; the delicato was delicate. The trombones overbalanced a few times but overall, EIBB showed the polish and control they are well known for. To this point we'd heard some good E-flat soprano cornetists. The All-Stars' had a nice sound, IBB's had great drive and accuracy, but EIBB's soprano continues to show us how to have power, accuracy, and a sweet and floating sound. To my ears, EIBB gave us the most convincing second movement yet. The third movement opened very slowly in both tempo and mood. The movement seemed to wander and never captured the fire to contrast with EIBB's lovely second movement. I sensed a missed opportunity with a somewhat lifeless third movement!

EIBB closed their program with *James Cook - Circumnavigator* by Gilbert Vinter. This is terrific program music, well executed - a nice balance of power and delicacy. As EIBB's program came to a close, it seemed a bit long; I wondered if they went over time. I also wondered if the judges would forget the weak opening march and be seduced by the lovely second movement in *Contest Music*.

Drawing number four were Dr. Paul Droste and Les Susi with the Central Ohio Brass Band. They opened with *Blenheim Flourishes* by James Curnow. In this spirited opener, COBB showed some nice, clean cornet playing; effective phrase shaping and a good balance of lines made this a great start. COBB had thrown down the gauntlet.

The first movement of *Contest Music* showed this band lacked the raw power of IBB. Trombones had a tendency to overbalance, and some lack of rhythmic

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accuracy and clarity hurt the effort. However, COBB showed a good balance between energy and lyricism in this movement. Throughout the second movement, the band seemed to be fighting intonation (sometimes more successfully than others) and entrances. Accordingly, it never really flowed - the band seemed to be really working at this movement. The third movement opened with Susi setting a good tempo and controlling it well. After a while, the band's rhythmic concentration seemed to waver and things became a bit muddled. As the movement came to a close, intonation became a bit dicey. COBB played the test piece well enough to be in the mix but certainly did not take charge. They closed with *Circius* by Torstein Aagard Nilsen. Opening furiously, the piece stayed balanced and focused. Like IBB with *Jazz*, COBB seemed to really delight in *Circius* and they nailed it. I felt their test piece was not as strong as IBB's so COBB was still back in the pack on my scorecard. The plot continued to thicken!

Then the Atlantic Brass Band took the stage. A new conductor and many new personnel were present from the last time I saw ABB compete at NABBA. They opened with *Praise* by Wilfred Heaton. Despite some dicey cornet intonation, this march had great rhythmic feel, fine dynamic contrast, and a fat but controlled sound. ABB's cornets are very "trumpety" - I wondered how adjudicator Bram Gay would feel about that! Conductor Salvatore Scarpa showed great technique and clearly had this band under control. As they launched into *Contest Music*, the cornet pitch did not improve. However, the movement had good clarity and excitement. It seemed as if the second movement was turning out to be the real crucible, the place where bands could succeed or fail. While ABB's trombone intonation and blend

was very good at the opening, not all attacks and releases in this movement were together. The band sounded like they were a few rehearsals away from really being ready. Their E-flat soprano cornet had a much different approach; to my ears a bit over the top. Overall, this was a very different second movement from what we had heard. If IBB took a "Bergian" approach, ABB was definitely "Mahleresque." As did a few other bands, ABB held back on the tempo of the third movement. It just did not have the consistency of rhythmic subdivision. As the dynamics opened up the band seemed more comfortable again. They like to blow and the fortissimo re-energized them. ABB took a different approach lyrically and tonally - again we would see what the judges think about it. Although I enjoyed this approach, I'm not sure it was faithful to the score, something that's expected in brass band competition. Regardless, watching Scarpa at work was a real pleasure.

*Rhapsody of British Sea Chanties* closed ABB's program. They played some nice lines but didn't really "connect all the dots." This choice of work just didn't quite show enough for the Championship section. A really strong closer might have put them in the hunt. It was great to see the ABB back - a good band that clearly likes to play. While I did not think that 1998 was their year, they could well make things tight next year!

In the anchor slot was the Brass Band of Columbus under the baton of Dr. Paul Droste. They opened with *Gaudete* by Kevin Norbury. The eerie and plaintive opening contrasted with others' high octane openings and it worked. As the piece progressed, BBC showed a real rhythmic vitality but also a polished sheen to their sound. Despite a few minor glitches, it seemed like BBC sensed the door was open and they were prepared to enter and claim the banner. BBC's first movement of *Contest Music* was the

best yet - a good balance of "fire and ice." Delicatos were clear and balanced, rhythmic precision and their polished sound made this movement a terrific start. Their second movement showed yet another approach, I'll call this one "Brahmsian." Not as romantic as ABB's and not as austere as IBB's. The movement was restrained and yet cohesive, and quite lovely. In the third movement, BBC was clean and proper. They executed the score faithfully but just didn't show drive or a sense of abandon. With a bit more pizzazz, this would have been a marvelous performance of the test piece. Perhaps another missed opportunity? Even with the reserved approach in the third movement, I felt BBC was clearly in the lead at this point.

BBC closed with the "Finale from Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4." The opening flourish was brilliant but didn't flow from section to section. I love transcriptions - I never do a program without one. However, it's vital that whatever type of ensemble performs a transcription attempts to reproduce the style and effect of the original music. Again, I struggle with a diplomatic way to say it, but this sounded more like marching band than orchestra. It was clean, brilliant, powerful, impressive, and just not very effective musically. Too bad, because in the first two pieces I thought this was the best I'd ever heard BBC play and with their track record, that's saying a lot. However, I suspected having a less than convincing closer might hurt them. The real question would be the relative weighting given by the judges to BBC's very strong test piece and super opener against their closer.

I left the Championship Section wondering how the judges would weigh some things, namely: Would IBB's spectacular *Jazz* counterbalance their good but

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not great test piece? How much would EIBB's very shaky opening march count against them and their second movement count for them? How would ABB's trumpet-like sound and perhaps overly romantic interpretation sit with the judges? Would BBC's great test piece outweigh their treatment of the Tchaikovsky? My ranking as I left the hall was BBC in 1st with IBB a close 2nd, and EIBB a bit back in 3rd. However, like everyone else, I'd have to wait until intermission of the Gala Concert to find out!

**Results:** 1. **Illinois Brass Band** (Colin Holman), 286; 2. **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** (John de Salme), 263; 3. **Brass Band of Columbus** (Paul Droste), 261; 4. **Central Ohio** (Les Susi/Paul Droste), 258; 5. **Collegiate All-Stars** (Eric Aho), 257; 6. **Sheldon Theatre Brass Band** (W. Larry Brentzel), 253; 7. **Atlantic Brass Band** (Salvatore Scarpa), 252.

## GALA CONCERT

The weekend's events all came to a glorious climax with the **Lexington Brass Band** providing an aural and visual feast of music as they joined forces with the **University of Kentucky Trumpet Ensemble** (Terry Everson) and the **Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra** (George Zack) at the Singletary Center Concert Hall. With Tom Palmatier continuing his MC duties in such a professional and endearing fashion, the concert flowed smoothly and was a refreshing variety of musical color, its function not only being to entertain the near capacity audience but also to inspire similar ventures between brass bands and orchestras around the country.

Concert selections in the first half were taken from the finest brass band literature available. The concert was given a lively opening with Philip Sparke's newly published *Jubilee Overture*, showing

LBB's well-coordinated, bright, brisk and full sounding ensemble. [As a traditionalist; I thought it might have been nice to have had the national anthems of the U. S. and Canada in recognition of the NABBA membership]. Peter Graham's *Hinode* (Sunrise) was given a beautiful rendition with its incorporation of Japanese melodies and its inspiration owing more than a little to Respighi's *Pines of the Appian Way* in the work's shape. The *Ellington Fantasy*, written for the band's recent highly acclaimed performance at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic and inspired by Ellington's compositional genius seemed to read more successfully here than in Chicago, the hall's brighter acoustic certainly lending itself to this music. It was conducted by the arranger Richard Domek. The first half climaxed with Stephen Bulla's most impressive *Images for Brass* which unites elements of the Star-Spangled Banner and the Navy Hymn "Eternal Father Strong to Save" in an effective four movement symphonic suite composed in 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima. The programmatic elements left a strong impression on the audience who responded very enthusiastically to the outstanding rendition given by the band under the expert leadership of Ron Holz. The audiences' ovation was well deserved.

The LBB lost no opportunities to display the breadth of their soloists. Terry Everson stunned the audience with a breathtaking performance of Turrin's *Escapade*; James Willett gave a solid performance of the first movement of Gregson's *Tuba Concerto* and the LBB sensitively accompanied David Henderson's characteristically beautiful performance (without taking too many risks) of Philip Sparke's *Song for Ina*.

Following the announcement of the competition results, the second half of the concert was one of sumptuous sound and grand resources with the various

conductors expertly handling the enormous musical resources. Holz conducted excerpts from Verdi's *Aida*, James Curnow conducted his own *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*, Skip Gray led the forces in Meyerbeer's *Coronation March* (the only item which seemed to overcompensate for the hall's acoustic) and George Zack concluded the evening with the ever-popular *1812 Overture*. And it was Ron Holz who was responsible for the modern scorings of the brass band portions of the Verdi, Meyerbeer, and Tchaikovsky items. For the *Olympic Fanfare*, the LBB transposed their parts (which were not written out) up a whole step as the orchestral version is in C, and the brass band version in B flat.

The Lexington Philharmonic proved to be a well-disciplined ensemble. The only scepticism I had before the performance was in terms of balance; would this be a brass band simply blowing loudly to try to match the sounds of a 70+ member orchestra? Positioning the staging such that the LBB were at the back of the hall on risers helped; the LBB's superb intonation throughout enriched their contribution, and no doubt the lively acoustic played its part. My scepticism quickly faded to sit back and enjoy with the large audience a wonderful evening of music making come to a close. [Anyone wishing to pursue a venture of this kind with their local orchestra and wishing details of the brass band parts should contact Ron Holz directly]

**Program:** *Jubilee Prelude* (Sparke); *Escapade* (Turrin), Terry Everson, piccolo trumpet soloist; *Hinode* (Graham); *Concerto for Tuba*, 1st mvt (Gregson), James Willett, tuba soloist; *Ellington Fantasy* (Ellington/Domek); *Song for Ina* (Sparke), David Henderson, euphonium soloist; *Symphonic Images* (Bulla); *\*Triumphal March and Ballet Music from Aida* (Verdi); *\*Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Curnow); *\*Coronation March from La Prophete* (Meyerbeer); *\*1812 Festival Overture* (Tchaikovsky).



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vides just that, allowing the listener to get a solid idea of much fine music from one of the best "stable" of writers in the field. Standout items include several works read at this year's NABBA Reading Band, including Jim Curnow's symphonic march *Tribute* (which sports an unusual minor melody in the trio) and Curnow's fine transcription from Delibes' opera, *Lakme*. In the latter duet we get to hear principal cornet Matt Baker show us why he is such an ideal, new-style lead voice for this great band. While we are on Curnow's contribution, I want to commend to you his fine transcription of Grieg's elegiac melody, *The Last Spring*. It is equal to or better than the old SA Festival Series version by Ray Steadman-Allen, which was in its own right a marvelous work of scoring. Two other works were read last year at NABBA - *Intrada Festivo* (Bulla) and *Prelude and Celebration* (Curnow), both generating great interest. All the original pieces on this disc are solidly crafted works in what I would label as the conservative contemporary mainstream. Four of them are good concert openers of the fanfare-prelude form. Stephen Bulla's *Concertante* will be a very welcome addition, a three-movement suite that challenges specific sections in each portion of the work: 1) cornets; 2) quartet of flugel, alto, baritone, euphonium; 3) trombones. Each movement is based on a Bach chorale, and the style is decidedly neo-classical. Might it work as a NABBA test at the Honors level? Jacob de Haan's *Diogenes* also impressed me as a possible Youth Section work, an 8-minute piece divided into three contrasting sections of a great appeal, the final section reminding me of Dave Brubeck's innovative metric studies on the famed *Time Out* album. I commend this album for the survey of literature provided; I cannot whole-heartedly commend the performances, something I thought I would not be saying about a James Watson-led Black Dyke Band. My impression is


that product was rushed in production and that the band and conductor had very little time to digest the music. The results are very mixed; some pieces played very well, some pieces just not performed with the rhythmic precision and ensemble you expect from this band, nor with the interpretive insight you expect from James Watson. On top of that, the soprano cornet player is allowed to overplay constantly, something that really detracts from the generally excellent ensemble sound. I have always said in this journal that the highest standards will be expected of the very best bands. Yet I still think this is a valuable product. Bear my caveats in mind and use this recording to learn some fine new music,

most written or arranged at a moderate technical level that all our NABBA bands can handle.

**Premiere. Symphonic Brass** (Tijmen Botma). DeHaske Classical DHR 5.005-3. TT 49:38. Program: *Prelude to a New Age* (Brosse); *Cortege from Mlada* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Crees); *Verset de Pachelbel* (Ares); *The Golden Drop Tune* (Brosse); *Capriccio* (Curnow); *Suite for Brass Quintet* (Devreese); *Oxford Intrada* (de Haan); *Five Carols for Brass* (Bulla); *God Rest You Merry Gentlemen* (Bulla); *Music For a Solemn Occasion* (Segers).

The title refers to the debut of this professional-level brass choir, Symphonic Brass, drawn from outstanding Dutch orchestral musicians. What a joy to listen to these fine players! They are an excellent group that is here given very fine pickup that fully flatters their impressive sound. The group is dedicated to the commissioning of new works for brass choir and the album showcases recent efforts in that field as well as other good music from the DeHaske brass catalog. At its largest, the brass choir fields 6 trumpets, 4 horns, 4 trombones, 1 euphonium, 2 tubas, and 4 percussion. The most forward-looking of the brass choir pieces would be the majestic and eclectic *Music for A Solemn Occasion* by the Belgian composer Jan Segers. I found Jan de Haan's short and festive *Oxford Intrada* (based on the carol *Adeste Fidelis*) particularly attractive. Several chamber works are also included. The pieces for traditional brass quintet scoring are Curnow's *Capriccio*, Devreese's *Suite*, and both Bulla Christmas carol features. *Capriccio* shows us an unusually whimsical Jim Curnow. The fugal transcription, *Verset de Pachelbel*, is scored for a brass quartet of two trumpets and two trombones, while Brosse's delightful *The Golden Drop Tune* is scored


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for trumpet quartet or trumpet choir. The opening work, *Prelude to a New Age* (also by the Belgian composer Dirk Brosse), combines mainstream with Third Stream as jazz, rock, and neo-classic symphonic styles blend in an interesting mix that seems like homage to Leonard Bernstein. Speaking of homage, Devreese's four-movement *Suite for Brass Quintet* might be laying a wreath at the grave of Igor Stravinsky, especially in the second movement, *Caricatures* (The other movements' titles are 1) *Sketches*; 3) *Chorale*; and 4) *Masks*) - another of my favorites on the disc. Finally, but not lastly, Stephen Bulla's carol arrangements should prove very popular and very playable by a wide range of groups. *Five Carols* is arranged in a slightly more traditional fashion, while *God Rest You* is a short, swing-style adaptation. Brass enthusiasts will revel in this excellent recording, performance, and music in a handsome package that provides valuable information about the pieces, composers, performers, and availability of the music

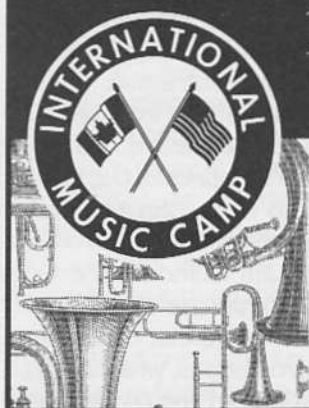
*Sparke: Music Composed by Philip Sparke. Britannia Building Society*

(Howard Snell), *\*Manger Musikklag* (Bjorn Sagstad), *+Eikanger-Bjorsvik Musikklag* (Howard Snell). Doyen. DOY CD 049. TT 70:14. *Partita*; *A London Overture*; *Euphonium Solo--Pantomime*, Soloist Nicholas Childs; *\*Harmony Music*; *\*The Vikings*; *+Variations On an Enigma*.

If you already have the Polyphonic release dedicated to the music of Philip Sparke, *Cambridge Variations: The Music of Philip Sparke, Volume 1*, you will be happy to know that there is no duplication on this new release by Doyen that features seven popular test pieces by one of the most gifted and prolific writers for brass band. All seven pieces were written in a productive five-year period, 1984-89, and all have already found a solid place in the standard repertoire. Two of the performances recorded here - *Harmony Music* and *A London Overture* - are live, contest-winning achievements. The sound engineers have done a good job of balancing three different bands in a multitude of locations, the live performances being previously released on the Doyen label. Philip Maund has written a fine essay on the music and the composer, thoughts which

clearly help us define the nature of Sparke's musical gifts. What strikes me time and time again in listening to the works of Sparke is his facile scoring for brass; he writes so well for the instruments and he gains wonderful timbral combinations. Equally, his lyric gifts are considerable and not hackneyed. Combine these three facets with his careful control of tempo and rhythm and you begin to see what makes his test pieces "work." Three technically assured bands share the disc, allowing for some interesting comparisons between the two excellent Norwegian bands and the always first-rate Britannia Building Society Band, which has recently regained its historic Fodens (Courtois) label. Howard Snell, no mean brass scorer himself, is an ideal choice as the principal conductor for the album, though young Bjorn Sagstad seems to have done wonders with Manger in their brilliant, if slightly edgy (live recording, remember) winning performance in the very difficult *Harmony Music*. Nick Childs is in great form and offers the short version of *Pantomime* (just over 5 minutes as opposed the complete 8-minute

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version), reminding me of his appearance at the Great American Brass Band Festival several years ago, in 95 degree heat, when each time he played *Pantomime* it seemed to get shorter - and of course faster! I was glad that the producers chose to start off the program with *Partita*, for I think it is the best in this fine bag of tunes, so to speak, both in terms of compositional craft and audience appeal. Knowing it the least of the seven, I found as I studied it carefully that I was renewed in my positive assessment of this unassuming man's achievements. Getting a hold of this disc will most likely do the same for you and provide you with some great brass band playing as well.

**Sporting Brass. JJB Sports Leyland Band** (Richard Evans). Polyphonic. QPRL 092D. TT 44:59 *Grandstand* (Mansfield/Pearson); *Pop Looks Bach* (Fonteyn/Wilkinson); *I Vow To Thee My Country* (Holst/Sparke); *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Williams/Forster & Dye); *Mack and Mabel* (Herman/Wilkinson); *Out of the Blue* (Bath); *Champions* (Davis/Sparke); *Gonna Fly Now* (Conti/Briggs); *Summon the Heroes* (Williams/Thornber); *Nessun Dorma* (Puccini/Snell); Russell Gray, cornet soloist; *The Trap* (Goodwin/Barry); *Abide With Me* (Monk/Siebert); *Match of the Day* (Stoller/Relton); *Capriccio Espagnol* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Wilkinson).

It was appropriate for the BNFL Band of old to release a thematic CD inspired by and dedicated to its new sponsors JJB Sports. The CD is a collection of sports themes and anthems that will have popular appeal in the UK, and was a delightful trip down memory lane for me, but will it be so meaningful to North American audiences? In general, the music selected has been skillfully arranged (including several items from the hand of Keith Wilkinson: *Mack and Mabel* have

never sounded so well!), and the band handles the technical challenges with skill. The hallmark is always precision and accuracy, and the recording is well balanced in its production. The band also plays the lighter styles of music with ease. The dangerous tendency with snappy TV themes is that once they've been heard, the only thing left to do is to repeat or modulate. And if you don't have knowledge or nostalgia for these short themes, then I can see the listener growing tired quickly, despite the wonderful playing of the band. I hope I'm proved wrong. Certainly some familiar items make the recording. Holst's *I Vow To Thee My Country* is given a sensitive reading until the final presentation which somehow lacks the breadth needed to bring the music to an effective climax. John Williams' Olympic Themes are given accurate and abrupt readings. The only solo feature is the superb (now recently departed) Russell Gray who shows such tasteful musicianship throughout, but then allows self promotion to get the better of him by playing the high D at the end instead of leaving Puccini alone and letting the ensemble have the final word. There are fourteen tracks but this is a shorter than usual length CD (less than 45 minutes). With the fine form that JJB Sports Leyland Band are in (at the top of their league, unquestionably, for skill and entertainment), I could not help but think that we have something important to learn from here. How about a NABBA band producing a CD with a similar slant? Monday Night Football might never be the same again. But it might also be a way to get NABBA band music into a few more living rooms too.

[Reviewed by Colin Holman]

**True North Brass. True North Brass Quintet** [Stuart Laughton and Raymond Tizzard, trumpets; Joan Watson, horn; Alastair Kay, trombone; Scott Irvine, tuba] Opening Day ODR9313. TT 61:01. Program: *Ceremonial Fanfare* (Irvine);

*Ontario Pictures* (Cable); *Ho Ro My Nut Brown Maiden* (Pattison); *Czardas* (Monte/Kay); *Morning Song* (Irvine); *Don't Get Around Much Any More* (Ellington/Kay); *Divertimento* (Kulesha); *La Rose Nuptiale* (Lavalee/Cable); *Stardust* (Carmichael/Kay); *Cousins* (Clarke/Tizzard); *St Anne Fugue* (Bach/Irvine); *Clarinet Polka* (Irvine); *The True North* (Irvine).

This is a double debut album, for it is the recording premiere by an outstanding new Canadian brass quintet in which this group provides "...[a] recital of original material and newly arranged pieces recorded for the first time..." (from the disc booklet notes). Canadian music takes first place in the repertoire and most of the album is written or arranged by talented members in the quintet. In addition, each member gets to shine in a solo item at least once in the album. Great players, great recording, a diverse and demanding program handled with seeming ease! Two of the players are just outrageously gifted in the technique department. Trombonist Alastair Kay on *Czardas* and tubist Scott Irvine on *Clarinet Polka* are truly 'outrageous,' in the positive sense of that slang expression. The hornist, Joan Watson, really sings on the second movement of Howard Cable's *Ontario Pictures*, Point Pelee. The trumpet players, including Ray Tizzard who served as one of our NABBA judges this year, step forward on a number of occasions and also take up cornets from time to time so as to provide just the right timbre, such as on the nineteenth-century overture *La Rose Nuptiale* by Lavallee (the man who wrote *O Canada*). By the way, in the middle of that overture Kay delivers his own cadenza that is a show stopper! This is a well-thought out program, just over an hour in length. You get more than 'something for everyone' - you get a fine

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introduction into Canadian music at the hands and talents of five remarkable people. Remember that trumpeter Stuart Laughton was a founding member of the Canadian Brass and knows a great deal about how a brass quintet should interact with its audience. I would like to point out the Canadian aspect of the album (partially funded by a government grant) because this musical culture has much to offer us. *Ontario Pictures*, by one of Canada's leading lights in the band field, Howard Cable, is also scored for brass band (recorded by Hannaford Street Band which Ray Tizzard directs) and wind band. So much should be played by all

our NABBA bands, for we are the North American B.B.A. I hope Scott Irvine and Alastair Kay, if they have not done so already, will turn their hand to arranging or composing for brass band. Irvine's *Morning Song*, a work of lyric-epic sweep, along with the two short tone portraits that frame the recital, points to great promise for such ventures. Another emerging Canadian, Gary Kulesha, has written a particularly fine quintet, *Divertimento*, an early work from 1977 which also bodes very well for future achievements. Some of the finest playing of this great recording comes on Irvine's transcription of the Bach great

Fugue in E flat, subtitled "St Anne" due to the resemblance of the subject to the hymn tune, *St Anne*, associated with the text "O God Our Help In Ages Past." The quintet tackles the three successive fugal expositions with the right combination of grandeur and restraint that makes for a compelling and moving listening experience. Hats off to True North Brass - they are truly a fine ensemble. I highly recommend this disc.

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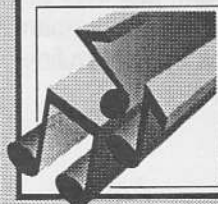
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*At NABBA XVI Paul Droste was awarded a honorary Lifetime Membership to NABBA in recognition of his outstanding work for brass bands in North America.*

Dr. Droste is a native of Cleveland, OH. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Ohio State University, a master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a DMA in Euphonium Performance from the University of Arizona. His teaching experience in instrumental music covers all levels from beginners to university graduate students. He directed bands and orchestras in the public schools. Dr. Droste joined the faculty of Ohio State University School of Music in 1966 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 1992. He served as director of the Ohio State University Marching Band for fourteen seasons.

Dr. Droste founded the Brass Band of Columbus in 1984. As their director, they have won an unrivalled seven first place awards in NABBA Championships. He has served two terms as President of NABBA. Dr. Droste is a brass band clinician for Yamaha and is responsible for starting several new brass bands throughout the United States. He has made many contributions to the *Brass Band Bridge* including an extensive tenure as New Music Reviewer.

Dr. Droste was the first American to adjudicate at the annual contest of the New Zealand Brass Band Association. He received a research leave-of-absence from OSU to study brass bands and euphonium performance in England in the spring of 1984. He has recorded two albums of euphonium solos. In 1989 Dr Droste was elected to membership of the American Bandmasters Association. He has received awards from the Salvation Army and several local musical organizations.

He continues his active career as a private brass teacher, euphonium soloist, clinician and brass band conductor. As the Educational Director of Colonial Music, he recruits beginning students for school band programs.

*I asked him to pen some thoughts about his experiences.*

*What is your first memory of brass bands?*

My first experience with an all-brass band was when I joined the Ohio State University Marching Band in 1954. The OSUMB is somewhat modeled on the British style,



playing a few British marches along with the usual football music. My first memory of hearing a British-style brass band was in 1956 when The International Staff Band came to Columbus. I was paying a lot of attention to the euphonium section, but remember the smoothness and mellowness of the band sound. This concert was also the first time that my (future) wife and I were in the same room. She also attended the concert, but we were not acquainted at that time.

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*How were you introduced to NABBA?*

I attended NABBA Championships II (in West Chester, PA), in April, 1984. I asked Perry Watson if I could sit with the judges as I was scheduled to judge my first brass band competition in New Zealand in May. I spent most of the day looking over the shoulders of Roy Newsome and Bill Himes. At the end of the day I knew the difference between a typical British sounding band, and the emerging American brass band sound. Perry Watson recruited me for the NABBA Board at that time.

*What NABBA experience(s) have you valued the most?*

The informal contacts that are made at the NABBA Championships and the Board Meetings have been very valuable to me. These are wonderful opportunities to exchange ideas about literature and conducting techniques, and to second-guess the adjudicators at the end of the day. Many of these informal contacts have developed into long-lasting friendships.

*Who has influenced you most as a brass band conductor/musician?*

I cannot pick any one person or band. My OSU Marching Band Director, Jack Evans, remains a mentor to this day. The influences of The Salvation Army bands are very strong, and I thank Ron Holz, Jim Curnow, Steve Bulla, Bill Himes and many others for leading me in this direction. OSU hosted The National Band of New Zealand three times in Columbus and each time I was blown away with their sound and virtuosity (and their beer-drinking capacity). In 1986 I spent several weeks in England and heard rehearsals and concerts by many top bands. Geoffrey Brand continues to be a major influence, and my newest mentor is Keith Wilkinson, who offered many insights during the preparation of *Contest Music*.

*What was your most memorable NABBA performance with the BBC? and why?*

The BBC started to compete in 1986 (Indianapolis) and we shocked the audience and the judges with our opener, *Russlan and Ludmilla Overture*. Never again could the BBC sneak up on anyone. Our First Place finish gave us some fame and publicity in Columbus and was a real boost for a new band.

*What do you believe was your most important legacy as NABBA President?*

When I succeeded Perry Watson at President in 1987, NABBA started to become a little less British and a lot more North American in its viewpoints. The Board spent a lot of time revising and fine-tuning the contest format. The size and scope of *The Bridge* grew noticeably under Tom Myers, whose arm I twisted to become Editor. The *Bridge*, under succeeding editors Ron Holz and Colin Holman, is now a major musical journal.

*What did you not accomplish as NABBA President that you wished you could have?*


NABBA has always been a shoe-string organization financially. Attempts have been made to find a commercial sponsor for NABBA, or even a contest sponsor, but without success. Many of NABBA's pet projects, such as commissioning test pieces and holding many regional events, have been delayed because of inadequate financing.

*Where do you see NABBA going in the next ten years?*

NABBA has fifteen years of success upon which to build. Most of the growing pains are gone. It must continue to hold high level competitions, sustain the level of *The Bridge*, and recruit new bands and members. No organization stands still; it goes forward or retreats. It is necessary to keep The Yamaha/NABBA Summer Brass Band Workshops going. Unfortunately, these workshops have dropped from five per summer to one or two. These workshops were responsible for starting many new brass bands, some of which are now participating in the NABBA Championships.


*What changes would you like to see in NABBA?*

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I would like to see NABBA develop a series of Regional Festivals so that all areas of North America can have access to a live NABBA event. NABBA should also encourage non-competitive bands to exist and be a part of NABBA events. It would be nice if NABBA could contribute seed money to bands willing to host the Championships.

*Do you have favorite repertoire selections (or composers) that you keep returning to?*

I like hymn settings, especially those by Jim Curnow, and major pieces by Philip Sparke, Edward Gregson, and Wilfred Heaton. I wish that my favorite composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, had written more works for brass band. My

concert programs almost always include a Sousa (or American) march, a hymn setting, a euphonium solo, and a barn-burner at the end.

*I was thinking about the enormous growth in the brass band movement stemming from Columbus and what the movement would be like on this continent if every city had 5-10 bands in NABBA!! Why is Columbus OH such a fertile ground for brass bands, and how can other metropolitan areas learn from your experiences in seeding so many bands?*

Columbus was a city ripe for the development of brass bands, perhaps because of the popularity of the OSU Marching Band. There is never a shortage of brass players in Columbus. When enough

brass players cannot get into one of the existing bands, they start their own. The success of the youth bands is due entirely to Eric Aho. Many music educators dream of starting a youth brass band. Eric not only had the dream, but the organizational skills and personal commitment to make these dreams into reality. In essence, it boils down to one person being willing to take a few risks and convince others that this is a worthwhile musical activity. I think that it entirely possible for others to duplicate what has been done in Columbus.

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## CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION

1983	Smoky Mountain British Brass Band (Richard Trevarthen)
1984	Gramercy British Brass of NY (John Lambert Jnr)
1985	Gramercy British Brass of NY (John Lambert Jnr)
1986	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1987	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1988	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1989	WRAL British Brass Band (Jack Stamp)
1990	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1991	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1992	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Les Susi/Paul Droste)
1993	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1994	Hawthorne City Brass Band (Ken MacDonald)
1995	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)
1996	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)
1997	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)
1998	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)

## HONORS SECTION

1983	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)
1984	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)
1985	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)
1986	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)
1987	WRAL British Brass Band (David Reed)
1988	WRAL British Brass Band (Jack Stamp)
1989	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Steve Wright)
1990	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Al Stang)
1991	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Jon Woods/Paul Droste)
1992	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)
1993	Sheldon Theatre Brass Band (W. Larry Brentzel)
1994	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)
1995	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)
1996	Dominion Brass Band (Thomas Palmatier)
1997	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)
1998	All-Star Brass and Percussion (Eric Aho)

## CHALLENGE SECTION

1986	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)
1987	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Steve Wright)
1988	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)
1989	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)
1990	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Joel Pugh)
1991	Milwaukee British Brass Band (Wayne Becker)
1992	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
1993	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
1994	*****no entries
1995	Buffalo Silver Band (Michael Russo)
1996	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)
1997	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)
1998	Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer)

## Testpiece

<i>Sinfonietta in Three Movements</i> (Gordon Langford)
<i>Entertainments</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
<i>Vizcaya</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
<i>Ballet for Band</i> (Joseph Horovitz)
<i>Connotations</i> (Edward Gregson)
<i>Symphony of Marches</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
<i>Plantagenets</i> (Edward Gregson)
<i>Introduction, Elegy and Caprice</i> (Morley Calvert)
<i>Aspects of Praise</i> (William Himes)
* <i>Connotations</i> (Edward Gregson)
* <i>Firestorm</i> (Stephen Bulla)
<i>Variations for Brass Band</i> (Ralph Vaughan Williams)
<i>The Essence of Time</i> (Peter Graham)
<i>Trittico</i> (James Curnow)
<i>The New Jerusalem</i> (Philip Wilby)
<i>Contest Music</i> (Heaton)

<i>Little Suite for Brass</i> (Malcolm Arnold)
<i>A Suite for Switzerland</i> (Roy Newsome)
<i>The Shipbuilders</i> (Peter Yorke)
<i>A Barchester Suite</i> (Derek Bougeois)
<i>Hinemoa</i> (Gareth Wood)
<i>Trilogy for Brass Band</i> (Joseph Turrin)
<i>A Moorside Suite</i> (Gustav Holst)
<i>Variations on "Terra Beata"</i> (James Curnow)
<i>Canticles in Brass</i> (Stephen Bulla)
* <i>Pageantry</i> (Herbert Howells)
* <i>Aspects of Praise</i> (Himes)
<i>Laude</i> (Curnow)
<i>Tournament for Brass</i> (Ball)
<i>Diversions on a Bass Theme</i> (Lloyd)
<i>Endeavour</i> (Sparke)
<i>Purcell Variations</i> (Kenneth Downie)

<i>Little Suite for Brass</i> (Arnold)
<i>A Malvern Suite</i> (Sparke)
<i>Three Haworth Impressions</i> (Langford)
<i>Cityscapes</i> (Bulla)
<i>Suite in B flat</i> (Jacob)
<i>Partita</i> (Gregson)
<i>A Downland Suite</i> (Ireland)
<i>Three Haworth Impressions</i> (Langford)
<i>Partita for Band</i> (Wilby)
<i>Chorale and Toccata</i> (Bulla)
<i>American Variations</i> (Fernie)
<i>Hinemoa</i> (Wood)

\*testpiece selected from a list of choices



# Fifteen Years of NABBA Competitions: Role of Honor

## OPEN SECTION

- 1996 Woods Manufacturing Brass Band (David Druce)
- 1997 Northwinds British Brass Band (Milton Potter)
- 1998 \*\*\*no entries

## Testpiece

- Chorale and Toccata* (Stephen Bulla)
- American Variations* (Alan Fernie)

## YOUTH SECTION

- 1987 Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
- 1988 Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
- 1989 \*\*\*no entries
- 1990 Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
- 1991 Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
- 1992 Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)
- 1993 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)
- 1994 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)
- 1995 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)
- 1996 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)
- 1997 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)
- 1998 Junior Varsity All-Stars (Ken McCoy)

- Music for Greenwich* (Edward Gregson)
- Appalachian Mountain Folk Song Suite* (James Curnow)

- English Country Scenes* (Eric Ball)
- Petite Suite de Ballet* (Eric Ball)
- Wheatlands* (Bram Wiggins)
- Little Suite for Brass* (Malcolm Arnold)
- Divertimento* (Eric Ball)
- Legend in Brass* (James Curnow)
- Suite from Kantara* (Kenneth Downie)
- Key West* (Darroll Barry)
- The Journeymen* (Ray Steadman-Allen)

## SOLO AWARD

- 1983 Ann Buckner (cornet), Smoky Mountain Brass Band
- 1984 Ron Williams (euphonium), Weston Silver Band
- 1985 Kris Dahlin (soprano cornet), Bloomington Brass Band
- 1986 Marc Gordon (euphonium), Sunshine Brass
- 1987 James Ketch (soprano cornet), WRAL British Brass Band
- 1988 Robert T. Snyder Jr (trombone), NCSU British Brass Band
- 1989 Joan DeHoff (soprano cornet), Eastern Iowa Brass Band
- 1990 Scott Heath (euphonium), Ohio Collegiate Brass
- 1991 Jack Tedrow (euphonium), Sheldon Theatre Brass Band
- 1992 David Laird (tuba), Atlantic Brass Band
- 1993 James Frank (soprano cornet), Allegheny Brass Band
- 1994 Scott Heath (euphonium), Ohio Collegiate Brass
- 1995 Julie Vish (soprano cornet), Ohio Collegiate Brass
- 1996 Adam Wilson (euphonium), Heidelberg Brass Band [Youth Section]
- Diana Herak (euphonium), Central Ohio Brass [Adult Slow Melody]
- Niles Denning (tuba), Buffalo Silver Band [Adult Technical]
- 1997 Kevin Baker (trombone) [Adult Slow Melody]
- Anthony Zilincik (tuba), Central Ohio Brass Band [Adult Technical]
- 1998 Matt LaFontaine (euphonium), All Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Section]
- Dennis Mondracek (cornet), Eastern Iowa Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody]
- Brian Meixner (euphonium), Lexington Brass Band [Adult Technical]

## ENSEMBLE AWARD

- 1997 Ozark Mountains Brass Sextet
- 1998 Four Horsemen Tuba Quartet [Adult Section]
- All-Star Tuba Quartet [Adult Section]

When asked by Doug Field, the energetic promotion and publicity manager for Bram Gregson's **Intrada Brass**, to review their concert on April 11, 1998 at the Meadowvale Theatre, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, my first thought was, "Is a reviewer the same as a critic or are there different standards for the two? My Funk and Wagnalls says; "critic: A skilled judge of literary, theatrical, or other artistic creations" and "reviewer: One who reviews: especially, one who critically reviews." Well, I can live with either of those definitions but what are the criteria by which to review the concert?

My first criteria is whether or not the audience and I enjoyed the evening. On that basis the program was a resounding success. Intrada's growing audience appreciated the variety of the items ranging from Arnold to Wagner, from *Connotations* to the hymn tune *French*. Especially enjoyable was the relatively unusual programming, for brass band concerts, of a pianist as guest soloist.

Leslie De'Ath, perhaps better known in the music world as an accompanist than a soloist, skillfully and artistically played Percy Grainger's *Handel in the Strand*, arranged for brass by Robert Schramm; the Scherzo from Litoff's *Concert Symphonique*, arranged by Denis Wright; and the "Nocturne" from Edward Gregson's *Concertante for Piano and Band*, all accompanied with sensitivity and excellent volume control by Intrada. The deeply introspective "Nocturne" based on Ray Steadman-Allen's hymn "Esher" was perhaps slightly marred by intonation problems in the band but was nevertheless very moving. Mr. De'Ath also played Brahms *Intermezzo in A major* and, in memory of his father Stan, Sinding's *The Rustle of Spring*. As an encore he rippled his way through Schubert's *E flat major Impromptu*.

Other featured soloists from the band were: David Robertson, cornet, in Goff

Richard's arrangement of *The Londonderry Air*; Robert Miller, euphonium, with Peter Graham's arrangement of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Variations from Song and Dance*; and flugel horn Paul Stevenson, who put down his soprano cornet to play *Misty* arranged by Darrol Barry. All the soloists played with sound technique and well developed sound, giving us a good idea as to why the band as a group does so well. Steve Brown, Julia Myers and John Avery joined with David Robertson to play the Binge *Cornet Carillon*, proving to be a well matched team.

Intrada contributed to our enjoyment with their varied selection of music. They began the program with the *Prelude to Act III of Lohengrin* arranged by Denis Wright; later played "The Shepherd's Song" from *Songs of the Auvergne*, arranged by Goff Richards; and concluded the first half with Malcolm Arnold's *Little Suite for Brass*. The second half began with a scintillating rendition of Michael Kenyon's arrangement of Saint-Saens' *Marche Militaire Francais*; continued with Eric Ball's Salvation Army classic *Songs of the Morning* and concluded with Edward Gregson's 1977 National Band Championships testpiece, *Connotations*. As an encore the band played the hymn tune *French*, a fitting benediction for an Easter season concert.

After determining that both the audience and I appreciated the music, my next criteria was "Why?" My conclusion was that the high standard of technical skills of the players; the tight, cohesive and rhythmic style; the generally high level of tuning; and the interesting and, at times, unique interpretations of the music by Bandmaster Bram Gregson all contributed to the success of the program. I was particularly interested by the slow tempi of both the first movement of *Songs of the Morning* and *French*. It does us good to listen to different interpretations

of such familiar music. In addition, dynamics were scrupulously observed from *pp* to *ff* creating musical interest, so important with the color spectrum of the brass band. Mention must also be made of Paul Stevenson on soprano. Although electing to use a trumpet for this concert, he provided artistic playing, always within the context of the music and balanced with the ensemble. Other soprano cornet players would have benefited from hearing how this young man added to the music with musical taste and skill.

My final criteria always has to be what could be changed for the better? The major potential for improvement clearly lies with the hall. Unfortunately the Meadowvale Theatre, designed for the spoken word, robs the music of overtones and resonance so that the richness of sound and the blend of which this band is capable were generally lost. Perhaps next season's possible move to a prestigious downtown Toronto location will remedy this problem. More rehearsal time would also help solve the very occasional less than pristine playing and strengthen the band so they could finish as strongly as they started. *Connotations* suffered from being the last item. Perhaps in future works with such demands should be programmed earlier in the evening. One last quibble; personally I would like to have heard more presence and a better sectional sound from the trombones, particularly at volume markings below forte. Perhaps the hall and my seat's location both caused the trombones' work to be less prominent than I would have liked.

Such minor complaints aside, this was a most enjoyable evening. Bram Gregson, Doug Field and all the members of Intrada are to be congratulated for the achievement of forming a new brass band of this skill level and for embarking on a very

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ambitious season of programs with such outstanding guest soloists. Let us hope that in the future, larger audiences will hear and appreciate this group.

*David Buckley is Associate Conductor and Principal Trombone, Burlington Concert Band, Principal Trombone, Weston Silver Band and Principal Organizer of The McMaster-Yamaha Low Brass Workshops*

## New Music for Brass Band

### Studio Music

*A Christmas Triptych* (arranged by Cecil Bolton), 1997. 2:45; 2:30; 1:45 minutes. Moderately easy. Short score. Percussion includes the optional use of "Latin toys" in the third movement.

This three movement set based on three English carols, Christmas Bells, Whence is this Goodly Fragrance, and The Holly and the Ivy, is likely to find itself in many Christmas programs in the future. All three are very playable with good scoring and interesting effects. The first, Christmas Bells, stays in safe keys throughout, despite four modulations. There are numerous bell effects interspersed, canonic ideas, and brief references to "Rudolph." In the second movement the key to success is in skillful phrasing and controlled legato playing in this wonderful expressive melody. The Holly and the Ivy could be spiced up by the additional percussion *ad lib* but the arrangement works fine as is. After a short intro for percussion there are seven verses presented with some interesting pedal tone effects and another series of modulations that bring the Triptych to a climax.

*Cruella De Vil* from '101 Dalmations' (Mel Leven, arranged by John Moss, transcribed by Darrol Barry), 1997. 4:30 minutes. Moderately easy. Full score. Percussion includes Kit, timpani, bells, temple blocks and cabasa.

This is the song from the Disney classic that recently underwent a revival but not in cartoon form. The song is scored for brass band much in the same way as it appears in the film, in a relaxed swing style, with the theme being taken mostly by the solo cornets, but with a chorus for low brass and a short flugelhorn solo. Good percussion and an understanding of the swing style helps the arrangement, but the technical demands are few, and the parts never leave the staff. Most bands will be able to read this through the first time, and as with most of Darrol Barry's arrangements, the writing is well done and effective. Certain to be popular with younger audiences, but also a good number to have the more mature members of the crowd tapping their feet to.

*Hercules Soundtrack Highlights* (Alan Menken, arranged by Calvin Custer, transcribed by Darrol Barry), 1997. 7:45 minutes. Moderate. Full score. Three percussion parts.

This is a medley from the Walt Disney film Hercules and includes the following: The Gospel Truth I; One Last Hope; Go The Distance; Zero to Hero; Go the Distance (reprise). In fact this set is as much a suite as it is a medley and although the selections work well as a group, they could also be played as (short) individual items as necessary. The first song is a fast gospel with lots of

rhythmic interest; the second selection in the style of a quickstep; the third a slower ballad, and the fourth selection is a fast rock number. Anyone who has played or conducted any Calvin Custer arrangements knows that they do not always fall under the fingers as easily as one might think. The three percussion parts are crucial to the individual idiom of each selection (and without them there would be a number of empty measures). The solo cornets are pushed along, often in the upper half of their register, and at the end in octaves up to a high D (though fortunately doubled in the soprano cornet for the faint of heart). The middle of the band has plenty to keep it busy and rhythmic stability at the bottom is essential. Although you might have to work hard to make the ending convincing, anyone who knows the music from the film will enjoy these soundtrack highlights immensely.

*And The Band Played On* (Ward and Palmer, arranged by Goff Richards), 1997. Moderately difficult. 3:45 minutes. Short score. Solo cornets have four individual parts. Percussion includes kit, glockenspiel, vibraphone, xylophone, and timpani.

Written for the Sellers Engineering Band, this is an impressive arrangement of this well known song, full of typical Goff

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## New Music for Brass Band

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Richards mannerisms. There are a number of characteristics similar to his well known arrangement of Berlin's *Let's Face the Music and Dance*. The theme is stated in a number of different presentations and requires smooth transitions by the conductor. Most of the difficulties lie in the rapid scale passages that all members are required to negotiate with agility. It is an effective lighter concert piece with no excessive range demands, but does require a full complement of percussion to achieve its potential. Highly recommended for top bands and those willing to stretch themselves in jazz idioms.

*Four Dances from The Nutcracker* (Tchaikovsky, arranged by Philip Sparke), 1997. Moderately difficult. 3; 1:30; 3:30; 2 minutes. Short score. Includes three percussion parts.

The four dances selected from the Tchaikovsky classic in this suite are the March, Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy, Arabian Dance and Trepak. Of course, the timing for each movement will depend largely on the band's technical facility, and since this suite was commissioned by the Brass Band of Battle Creek, you'll expect everyone to be kept quite busy. Actually Sparke has arranged the selections in good keys (concert F, d, f, and F respectively) so that all the awkward moments lie about as comfortably as they could. The scoring in the March is about what we would expect, with most of the rapid moving sixteenth notes appearing in the cornets and euphoniums. The Sugar Plum Fairy is evoked through use of harmon mutes (tubes in) and glockenspiel; the E flat bass is the hobgoblin. There is an optional cut (the harp glissandi) which you will want to avoid if possible. Muted passages are also used to great effect in the Arabian Dance and the challenge, as always, is to get the quintuplets to speak together. The Trepak is a romp from beginning to end, and the euphoniums

### The September 1998 issue of **THE BRASS BAND BRIDGE**

will include new music reviews, NABBA band news, programs from June--August 1998, the continuing series on brass band warm-ups and brass band concert dates for June-August 1998. Please ensure all items are sent to the Editor and received by July 15, 1998.

and tubas have to be particularly nifty on their feet. This will be a great suite to feature every Christmas; the band will enjoy the challenge and the audience will love the results.

#### Rosehill Music

*Red Earth* (Roland Wiltgen), 1993. Difficult. 11:45. Full score. Percussion includes xylophone, bells, tam tam, wind chimes, vibraphone, glockenspiel, temple blocks.

*Red Earth* was commissioned as the testpiece for the European Brass Band Championships in 1995 and the composer is a native of Luxembourg. Its inspiration is taken from the composer's native soil, "--a land of forsaken iron mines, smelting factories, metal workers . . ." It is structured in the form of a one movement symphony, though the

four movement structure is clearly evident. Although there are no impossible technical hurdles in this work, there is a very equal distribution of musical challenge between all players (including percussion). The idiom is tonal but chromatic and there is also some distinctive unison and ensemble work. Like all good test pieces, everyone has a chance to shine, and there are solo moments for all instruments. The work is based upon a four note motto which is heard at the outset, and even the first measure could be the cause of extended rehearsal to "get it together." A long carefully crafted crescendo brings the work to its climactic ending. The work will be more difficult to execute than perhaps the notes on the page appear, but it would suit the very best Championship bands well, and would probably make a wonderful NABBA test piece.

*Unholy Sonnets* (Philip Wilby), 1996. Difficult. 13:00. Full score. For solo voice and brass band. Text by Mark Jarman.

Where to begin? *Unholy Sonnets* is an appropriate title for this work which, like most of Wilby's writing, has something distinctive and individual to say. The scarcity of real repertoire for solo voice and brass band makes this initially attractive, and although Wilby is non-specific, a tenor is the most appropriate solo voice, with the possibility that a competent mezzo could handle the role. There are four songs in what is essentially a song cycle: 1) Time to admit my altar is a desk, 2) Two forces rule the Universe, 3) There was a pious man, and 4) If God survives us, will His Kingdom come? Generally Wilby has set the text well, with only the occasional moment that will create an extreme challenge for the singer. The balance between voice and band is also well considered, and a

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judicious performance will have the voice clearly at the forefront. Text painting examples abound and are most effective. The scoring is pure Wilby; flickers of color, vague rhythms, and contrasts between music that is highly driven and that which pulsates with emotion. The voice also contrasts arioso/declamatory writing with moments requiring agility. In the first three songs, the voice has the final say, but it is the band that concludes the fourth song. Texts inappropriate to church settings are marked to be omitted. The first and third songs require technical security from the band; the second and fourth, great control in soft and sustained playing. It's unlikely that this music is going to receive many (or any) performances in a church setting. Yet the constantly probing and provoking nature of the text and the uniqueness of the cycle make this a work that I would want to return to and perform someday in the right situation and with the right soloist.

### Wright & Round

*Century* (Philip Harper), 1998. Moderately difficult. 10 minutes. Full score. Subtitled "An evocation of yesterday, and dreams for tomorrow."

Commissioned for the Aveley Band (Championship Section), the work is divided into three sections: 1) Birth and Beginnings, leading to aspirations for greatness 2) Regenerations, bringing times of bleakness and uncertainty as well as happiness and success, and 3) The Future, unveiling untold history. The program sounds like the history of many brass bands in the U. K. As one might expect, Birth and Beginnings starts slowly and softly with percussion and the band enters gradually over a pedal B flat sustained in tubas and timpani. Straussian fanfare figures lead to Regenerations, where a number of ostinati dictate the character while others tackle in turn a rather awkward angular theme. Hopefully there won't be bleakness and uncertainty when bands tackle this! This leads to a series of exposed cadenzas for E flat bass, euphonium, solo horn, and cornet: all stretch the range. Then follows a stringendo into The Future and there is a climactic finale which draws together fragments from previous themes. Since the final section is short, apparently the composer doesn't have the ability to predict too far! There are lots of interesting ideas incorporated into the work, but there is also a sense that the ideas are a little formulaic. The orchestral style writing and technical challenge may well appeal to many North Ameri-

can bands, but the means used to communicate the spirit of the work many not necessarily break the cultural barriers.

*Dimitri* (Rodney Newton), 1998. Moderately easy. 3 1/2 minutes. Full score. Flugelhorn solo. Two percussion parts requiring vibraphone and glockenspiel.

Rodney Newton has arranged this lyrical theme from the George Siougas film for Simon Stonehouse and the Williams Fairey Band. After a four measure introduction, the flugelhorn enters with the theme of four four-measure phrases that emphasizes the characteristic middle register of the instrument. There is only one high A in the solo but there are a couple of sustained high Gs. Nevertheless this should be well within reach for most NABBA flugelhorn players, and with a need for more solo repertoire for this instrument, this item would be a welcome change of pace and color in concert program. In addition it will give the entire band the opportunity to concentrate on beautiful sounding and well-tuned playing. The trombone parts are unusually sparse, as are the back row cornet parts. This might also be the time to give the "front row" a rest in the concert

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### Free Ad Space Available for NABBA Member Bands!

The *Brass Band Bridge* offers a free Quarter Page Ad on a first come, first served basis to member bands. The ads will only be used if there is unused space available in the *Bridge* and the Editor reserves the right to revise the ad to fit the available space.

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## New Music for Brass Band

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and have the back row play their parts instead.

*Gaudete* (arranged by Rodney Newton), 1998. Moderate. 2 1/4 minutes. Full score. Four percussion parts.

This is a short and snappy version of an old traditional hymn tune with an enlarged percussion section. The hymn theme appears in all sections, including a big solo for the timpani which requires considerable agility on the pedals. A opening fanfare is somewhat reminiscent of one from *Carmina Burana*. Lots of parallel harmonies give the band a chance to focus on balance and rhythm, especially in the unison passages. If the

instrumentation is in place and the band can handle the constant shifting of meter (3/4, 4/4, and 5/4) this piece makes a playable and very impressive opening item, especially when taken a couple of notches faster on the metronome than that suggested (quarternote=144). This is a most enjoyable piece, composed for the Williams Fairey Band

*Paintings: Canvases from East Anglia* (Derek Broadbent), 1998. Full score. 4; 5; 3 minutes. Commissioned by the East Anglian Brass Band Association for the Sixtieth Annual Spring Festival, 1998.

The first and most immediately attractive feature of this new score is that the three paintings on which the three-movement brass band suite is based are included in color plates on the front page. The View Near The Coast (Thomas Gainsborough) is musically painted in three sections, a lilting pastoral in 12/8 "Calm Seas Glistering" followed by an uneasy passage mostly in 5/8 "Peaceful Folk Resting" and concluding with "Storm Clouds Threatening" in 2/4. The eighth note stays constant throughout and the skill is in making the transitions smoothly. Most of the rapid sixteenth note music comes in a series of slurred scale passages. The second movement Travelers (Sir Alfred J. Munnings) is more in the manner of an intermezzo with some repetitious rhythmic ideas being contrasted with a broader more expansive melody. The painting is of "Romany horses 'neath sunny autumn skies tread gently through the peaceful countryside." A brief cornet solo brings the movement to a close. In the third movement, William Wollaston (Gainsborough) "a musician of note who played the one-keyed flute," the only direct reference is in a short soprano cornet solo. But the entire movement is very much in the style of an eighteenth-century dance with two short percussion solos. Although the tempo is not fast, clarity and

agility are the hallmarks of this movement. In general it may seem that the idiom overall is rather unassuming. In fact it is not altogether dissimilar to that of the lighter concert items composed by William Rimmer, despite the fact that this was written only very recently. But the music would be good material for training, in the concert hall or in the contest field. This would be an ideal piece for any Challenge Section band to program at NABBA, but the demands are such that a band at any level would benefit from having it in the library and programming it. Though there aren't any big solos, Derek Broadbent has scored effectively and everyone should enjoy playing this delightful suite of program pieces.

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Statement of nominee's background and brass band experience (or attach vita)

I agree to my name being placed in nomination for a position as Member-at-Large on the North American Brass Band Association, Inc., Board of Directors. If elected, I agree to serve at least three years, attending as many NABBA functions as I possibly can, attending at least one board meeting a year, and will fulfill committee work and other assignments as may be required. I will hold valid membership in NABBA throughout my three-year term on the Board.

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## Preliminary Details for NABBA XVII

NABBA 99 will be hosted at the Pheasant Run Resort in St Charles IL. The Pheasant Run Resort property includes the following function spaces ***in a single location:***

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Within Pheasant Run there are several restaurants, social facilities, and Resort facilities available to all guests. The NABBA event will have complete access to all areas of the Resort (with the excep-

tion of the Mega Center on the Friday and Saturday morning and the Dinner Theater for the entire weekend).

Chicago O'Hare International Airport is approximately 50 minutes drive from the Pheasant Run Resort. Chicago Midway airport is approximately one hour from the Resort. The Resort is located close to major highways. A shuttle service from both airports will be available for a nominal fee arranged through the Resort. The Resort also has shuttle service to key locations within the area. Rental cars will not be required if bands stay on property. The Resort is located about two miles east of downtown St Charles, a beautiful small historic city on the Fox River. It is located within one mile of further shopping and restaurant facilities. The Resort has 470 rooms, many with views across DuPage County and the DuPage County Airport which is located nearby. The negotiated room

rate is competitive or cheaper than other area hotels. Facility convenience is a major attraction in the booking of Pheasant Run.

The booking fee for the space to be paid by the Illinois Brass Band is directly related to the number of rooms filled. Therefore, ***we cannot recommend highly enough for NABBA bands to house themselves at the Resort.*** Staying on-site will be convenient, cost-effective and will encourage camaraderie. Bands considering attending NABBA 99 should establish initial contact with Colin Holman so that updates on information can be forwarded as efficiently as possible. E-mail [colin.w.holman@juno.com](mailto:colin.w.holman@juno.com) Following the excellent example set by the LBB this year, a NABBA 99 Web Page is under construction containing all the necessary information. Looking forward to welcoming you to Chicago!

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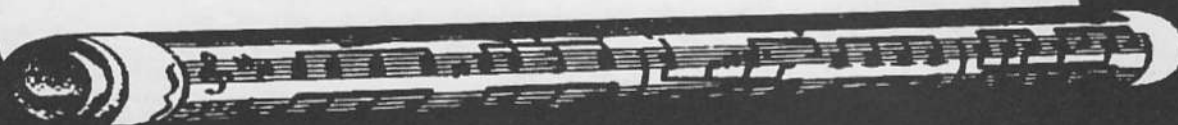
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