

The

BrassBand Bridge



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

June 1999 Issue 76

POST-CONTEST ISSUE 1999

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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/Web Page
619 Downing Rd
Libertyville, IL 60048
Telephone (847) 367-7961
Fax (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
Fax (606) 858-3921
E-mail ronald.holz@asbury.edu

Major Thomas H Palmatier,
Advertising Manager
5803 Gloucester Avenue
Springfield, VA 22150-3602
Telephone Home (703) 644-5739
Telephone Work (703) 325-1767
E-mail TPalmatier@aol.com

Bert L. Wiley
NABBA Membership Chair
P.O.Box 2438
798 Pressley Cr. Rd
Cullowhee, NC 28723
Telephone (828) 293-7469
E-mail bert@bernelmusic.com

Cpt. Beth Steele
NABBA Contest Controller
U.S.Army Brass Band
204 Lee Avenue
Ft Myer, VA 22211
Telephone (703) 696-3647
E-mail Steeleb@FMMC.army.mil

Official Journal of the



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Editor's Notes

There's a strange mixture of exhaustion and exhilaration at being involved in hosting one of the annual NABBA competitions and I'd like to publicly thank the members of the Illinois Brass Band for all that they did (as fundraisers, as equipment movers, as organizers of a huge logistical event, as individual band hosts, and for so many other facets) to make this event a success. We have an increased appreciation of previous hosts of this event, and wish all future hosts good luck! Also we were grateful to the various vendors that supported us and hope that everyone in attendance benefited from that. Remind them of that when you make a purchase!--it's invaluable to the organization and also to their continued support in the production of this magazine.

While on this subject please note that Advertising Manager Tom Palmatier has moved again and his new address and phone number in Virginia are listed both to the left and also in this issue under Advertising. Also Membership Chair Bert Wiley's telephone number has changed area code.

Shortly after you read this magazine the NABBA Board will convene in Columbus Ohio to elect several new board positions; the nomination form appears at the band of this issue. Also this will be the final time (at least in the near future)

that you will read a President's Podium from Ron Holz since he is stepping down as President. Ron's Presidency has been marked by continued growth in our organization, during which time he has been Bridge Editor, Contest Controller, NABBA98 host and New Recordings Reviewer, plus much else besides; a truly remarkable tenure.

A significant part of this issue is taken up with reviews from NABBA99, and since I was so busy with hosting I have been grateful to those who submitted reviews (from numerous angles) of the events; especially four of the six adjudicators who took time out of their busy schedules to make contributions. My apologies to those participating in the Championship Section, but no-one stepped forward to specifically review, and so there is a notable absence here. I did hear both Brass Band of Columbus and Sheldon Theatre Brass Band play their entire programs; both gave exciting and well-prepared performances that were well received by the audience. I also heard snippets of Central Ohio and Eastern Iowa. I knew once again it was going to be close!

Look out for details in this issue of NABBA Las Vegas in October! Happy reading and best wishes for your upcoming brass band activities.

Colin Holman,
Editor

Another wonderful NABBA weekend has come and gone. Our hosts, the **Illinois Brass Band** (headed up by the steering committee of Jeff Lyons, Lisa-Ann Barnes, Laura Smith, and Colin Holman) deserve the highest praise for all they did in our behalf.

Our adjudication team proved to be one of the most consistent in our organization's history: **Panel #1** Brian Burditt, Stephen Bulla, and Ronald Waiksnoris; **Panel #2** Bram Gregson, William Himes, and Steve Sykes.

Our NABBA staff ran a tight ship, so hats off to Captain Beth Steele (serving with me as co-controller), Major Thomas Palmatier (once again a great master of ceremonies), as well as behind-the-scenes individuals like Sara and Frank North, Louis Bourgois, Mike Swaffar, Carl Arends, and Joel Pugh.

In terms of numbers, a respectable sixteen bands competed, with high standards being maintained in all sections. Our Adult Technical Solo and Brass Ensemble Contests were at capacity; we had a good showing in both the Youth and Adult Slow Melody categories; but only four percussion ensembles showed up--3 in youth and 1 adult. Maybe next year this new category will reach its potential.

Having returned to the Controller's desk, I thoroughly enjoyed hearing all the bands once more, and I marveled at their musicianship, their camaraderie, and their self-sacrifice in making the effort to be present. We have so much of which to be proud. Our organization grows every year, and our music making also improves, yet we continue to be a supportive, nurturing fellowship. As you read

the various reviews, responses, and comments in this issue, reflect on what we are and what we have become.

We have achieved a great deal and we have much still to accomplish. At our awards ceremony we were able to honor Past President Tom Myers with a Lifetime Membership in NABBA for his outstanding service to NABBA as board member, board officer, and editor of the Bridge. While he could not be present, it was wonderful that his daughter, a member of the **Central Ohio Brass Band**, was able to accept it in his place. Thanks, Tom, for all you have done; even the banners we used again this year proclaimed your service and dedication to our organization.

As this is most likely my final "Podium" as your President, I express my sincerest thanks to all of you for your support of our NABBA administration and our efforts in your behalf. While I am not retiring from the Board, it is time for me to pass on the gavel, elections for new officers to be taken care of at our next Board meeting. In the four years I have been president I have been fortunate to see an amazing growth in the number and quality of our bands, a large increase in individual memberships, and, as a result, the beginning of a sound financial base on which NABBA can work. When I add to that 4 more years as vice president, and 11 years as Contest Chair out of the 12 I have served NABBA, I am overwhelmed by it all, and especially thankful to Paul Droste for encouraging me to get involved in this great organization.

To all of you my final admonition is to ask you to keep involved, keep in touch with your Board members, keep telling us about your achievements and your needs,

and keep making the best music you can possibly make!

NABBA Board of Directors Meeting and Board Nominations:

Our Summer Board Meeting will be held August 20-21, in Columbus, OH, site of NABBA 2000, the Hyatt in downtown Columbus serving as the conference hotel. NABBA 2000 is slated for April 14-15, 2000, with the **All-Star Bands** of Columbus serving as hosts.

If you have agenda items for consideration, would you please send these to me by July 15th? Further details about our board meeting were published in the most recent NABBA Bulletin, sent to all NABBA member bands and Board members.

We will have at least one opening on the Board of Directors and several current members will possibly seek renomination. The Nomination form is available both in this issue of the Bridge as well as with the recent Bulletin.

Ronald W. Holz

Send Your Band News & Concert Programs

Please send your concert programs and articles on recent activities to **THE BRIDGE**

**We want to read
about your band!**

Philip Smith, principal trumpet of the New York Philharmonic was recently the guest soloist on the final concert of the season by **Intrada Brass** (Bram Gregson). Philip was featured playing a new brass band transcription of Arutunian's *Trumpet Concerto* and the world premiere of Bruce Broughton's new brass band version of *Excursions for Trumpet and Band*. The band gave the first Canadian performances of Malcolm Arnold's *Fantasy for Brass Band* and Kenneth Downie's *Purcell Variations*. Canadian composers Douglas Court and Gary Kulesha were also represented with *Prelude on Laudes Domini* and *Romance for Brass Band* respectively [see review in this issue].

NABBA Board Member Dwight Vaught is a recipient of the 1999 Bush Leader-

ship Fellowship through the Bush Foundation in St. Paul, Minnesota. With the fellowship, Vaught will attend Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti, MI) in fall of 1999 to complete a Master of Arts degree in Arts Administration. The project also includes a 15-month internship with ARTRAIN, Inc. (Ann Arbor, MI), a national non-profit organization bringing unique arts experiences to rural communities. Dwight is a flugelhorn player with the Brass Band of Minot and is looking to continue his brass band performance in Michigan; anyone interested? You can reach Dwight by phone (701) 624-5239 or e-mail at dbvaught@minot.com

The **Commonwealth Brass Band** marked its 10th anniversary with a special June 2nd concert at the University of Louisville that featured solos by

four of the five founding members who are still active. John Albrecht played *Concerto for Trombone* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Langford); Quentin Sharpenstein, tuba, performed *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* (Butler and Gay); Jackie Amend, soprano cornet, presented *Concertino* (Sachse); and Bob Webb, cornet, played *Fairies of the Water* (Saint Jacome/Moreton). Music Director J. Jerome Amend is the other member with Commonwealth since its beginning in spring of 1989 as an outgrowth of brass ensembles at duPont Manual High School and the University of Louisville. A fifth soloist was David Centers, euphonium, who played *Fantasy on Swiss Airs* (Newsome) Other works included *Com-*

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Vernon Briggs, *Brass Band World Magazine*



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monwealth Brass Band March (Karrick) and two North America Brass Band Association contest pieces, *Paganini Variations* (Wilby), 1998, and *Sinfonietta* (Leidzen), 1999. The university performance was followed four days later with the band's third appearance at the annual Queen's Birthday Garden Party given by the Kentucky Branch of the English-Speaking Union. Commonwealth provided a variety of British music while the guests enjoyed "a festive English tea". After several champagne toasts to Queen Elizabeth II, the band accompanied the celebrants as they sang *God Save the Queen* and *America the Beautiful* (Ward/Himes). To close out a busy month, CBB made its first appearance, on June 20, at the annual "Tunes Among the Trees" concert series in Bernheim Forest, a nearby private preserve. Other performers in the Sunday-afternoon events were a pop-music duo, a jazz band and a bluegrass band. Included on the Commonwealth program was *A Pair of Sparkling Eyes* (Sullivan/Langford), Brian Cahill, cornet soloist, and *Blue John* (Kneale), Joe Spain, trombone soloist. Three sections were featured: cornet - with Cahill, Bob Webb, Dee Pratt, Andrew Scott, Samantha Chaney playing *Trumpet Blues and Cantabile* (James/Geldard); tuba -- with Quentin Sharpenstein, James Drake, Steve Lasher and Robert Coulter playing *Tyrolean Tubas* (Clark); and trombone - with Spain, John Albrecht, Jenny Hess, Mark Kersting and Charlie Rademaker - playing *The Irish Washerwoman* (Langford).

New NABBA member **The Southerners British Brass Band** is now recruiting for the 1999-2000 season, and will begin rehearsals on September 16, 1999. There are openings in all sections. Also, they are looking for a qualified individual with a genuine interest in brass banding to assume post of assistant director; must be someone with a good background in brass performance and/or education. E-mail NaplesbobT@aol.com or send written reply to Bob Thurston, 6720 Lone Oak Blvd., Naples, FL 34109

The **Chesapeake Silver Cornet Brass Band** has just completed its third year of existence. The year was highlighted by a standing room only annual concert at the University of Delaware performance for over 10,000 people at the July 4 celebration in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware and the completion of the band's first CD *Brass by the Bay*. Active participation in the band has grown to over 40 members from Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

St Louis Brass Band (Malcolm McDuffee). March 25, 1999; The Sheldon Concert Hall, St. Louis, MO, and March 28, 1999; Schoenberg Auditorium at Missouri Botanical Gardens, St Louis, MO. *Intrada from Suite in D for the Birthday of Prince Charles* (Tippett); *Death or Glory* (Hall); *In Memoriam, R.K.* (Howarth); *Li'l Darlin'* (Hefti/Sparke); *Wizard of Oz* (Arlen); *Presentation of the Silver Rose from Der Rosenkavalier* (R. Strauss/Weatherall); *Liberty Bell* (Sousa); *Nimrod from Enigma Variations* (Elgar/Wright); *Black & White Rag* (Botsford), Chris Treloar & Kriste Ludwig, xylophone soloists; *Misty* (Garner), Randy Holmes, flugelhorn soloist; *Stars & Stripes Forever* (Sousa); *Strike Up The Band* (Gershwin).

April 22, 1999; The Sheldon Concert Hall, St Louis, MO. *La Gazza Ladra Overture* (Rossini); *Old Comrades March* (Teike); *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Showboat* (Kern); *Pines of Rome* (Respighi/Snell); *Adagio* (Barber); *Army of the Nile* (Alford); *Impromptu for Tuba* (Barry), Steve Lawson, E flat bass soloist; *An American in Paris* (Gershwin); *Hands Across The Sea* (Sousa).

May 20, 1999; Sheldon Concert Hall, St Louis, MO. *Candide Overture* (Bernstein/Snell); *El Capitan* (Sousa); *Purcell Variations* (Downie); *Stardust* (Carmichael/Howe); *Pirates of Penzance* (Sullivan/D. Rimmer); *Bandology* (Osterling); *Hailstorm* (W. Rimmer), Jeff Binns, euphonium soloist; *Mr Lear's Carnival* (W. Hogarth Lear); *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* (Kaye&Prince/Woodfield); *Crimond* (arr. Weatherall); *Washington Post* (Sousa);

June 6th, 1999; Tower Grove Park, 55th Anniversary of D-Day Concert, St Louis MO. *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* (arr. Woodfield); *Glenn Miller Special* (Ashmore); *Dam Busters* (Coates); *Midway* (Williams); *633 Squadron* (Goodwin); *Cockleshell Heroes* (Dunn); *Normandy Veterans* (North); *Eagle Squadron* (Alford); *Theme from*

Schindler's List (Williams), Andy Tichenor, cornet soloist; *Armed Forces Salute* (Bulla); *St. Louis Blues March* (Handy).

June 17th, 1999; Bluebird Park, St Louis MO. *Strike Up The Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *Meet The Flintstones* (arr. Richards); *Black & White Rag* (Botsford/Snell), Chris Treloar and Kriste Ludwig, xylophone soloists; *Aspects of Lloyd Webber* (arr. Graham); *Riverdance* (Whelan/Farr); *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines* (Goodwin); *Summertime* (Gershwin/Snell), Mary Webber, soprano cornet soloist; *Hailstorm* (Rimmer), Jeff Binns, euphonium soloist; *Disney Spectacular* (Richards); *New York, New York* (Kander); *You Made Me So Very Happy* (Gordy/Wilson); *America*

The Beautiful Ward (arr. Weatherall); *Stars & Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

June 20th, 1999; Tower Grove Park, St Louis, MO. *Star Wars, Main Theme and Imperial March* (Williams); *Batman The Movie* (Elfman); *Titanic, My Heart Will Go On* (Horner), Bill Hammond, tenor horn soloist; *James Bond Collection* (Richards); *Star Trek-The Voyage Home* (Rosenman); *Mission Impossible* (Schiffirin); *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Williams); *Disney Spectacular* (Richards); *New York, New York* (Kander); *The Pink Panther* (Mancini); *Seventy-Six Trombones* (Wilson).

July 4th, 1999; Tower Grove Park, St Louis MO. *American Overture* (Jenkins); *An American in Paris* (Gershwin/Snell); *The Entertainer* (Joplin); *Summertime* (Gershwin), Mary Weber, soprano cornet soloist; *Themes From the New World Symphony* (Dvorak/Rimmer); *America* (Diamond); *American Patrol* (Meachum); *Variations On America* (Ives/Grossheider); *Camptown Races* (arr. Harvey); *Rhapsody on Negro Spirituals* (Ball); *Liberty Bell* (Sousa); *National Emblem* (Sousa); *America The Beautiful* (Ward/Weatherall); *Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band (Dr. Keith M. Wilkinson). April 10, 1999, First Congregational Church of Akron, Akron, OH. *The Red Shield* (Goffin); *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich/Wilkinson); *Morning Mood* (Grieg/Wilkinson), James Betts, cornet soloist; *Malaguena* (Lecuona/Freeh); *Bass in the Ballroom* (Newsome), Russ Tinkham, Eb tuba soloist; *March - Symphonic Metamorphoses* (Hindemith/Wilkinson); *A Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead); *Jubilance* (Himes), Eric Dina, cornet soloist; *Li'l Darlin'* (Hefti/Sparke); *Nicaea* (arr. Himes); *Nessun Dorma* (Puccini/Wilkinson), Adam Wilson, euphonium soloist;

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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.

The ad space can be used to sell your band's new recordings or just to tell people you're out there! Once a band's free ad appears, that band will go to the "end of the line," giving all member bands a chance to use available space. Send your "camera ready" ads, no larger than 3 1/2" by 4 1/2" to the Advertising Manager Maj. Tom Palmatier.

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Brass Band Programs

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Variations on "Maccabeus" (Norbury).

Commonwealth Brass Band (Jerome Amend and John Jones*). April 22, 1999; Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren, Elgin, IL. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *Light as Air* (Richards); *What a Friend We Have* (Freeh), Brian Cahill, cornet soloist; *Commonwealth Brass Band March* (Karrick); *Jerusalem* (Blake and Parry/Herbert); *Drink to Me Only* (arr. Langford), Jackie Amend, soprano cornet soloist; *Men of Harlech* (arr. Langford); *Because* (d'Hardelot/Richards), Bob Webb, cornet soloist; *Ravenswood* (Rimmer); **This Is My Father's World* (Shepherd/Himes); **Let Us Break Bread Together* (arr. Jordan); **Aspects of Praise* (Himes); *Sinfonietta* (Leidzen); *Open My Eyes* (Scott/Ball); *You'll Never Walk Alone* (Rogers).

June 2, 1999, University of Louisville. Also *Sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss/Pearce); *Star Wars* (Williams/Brice); *There's No Business Like Show Business* (Berlin/Richards); *Concertino* (Sachse), Jackie Amend, soprano cornet soloist; *Commonwealth Brass Band March* (Karrick); *Fairies of the Waters* (Saint Jacome/Moreton), Bob Webb, cornet soloist; *Trumpet Blues and Cantabile* (James/Geldard); *Sinfonietta* (Leidzen); *The Phantom Brigade* (Myddleton); *Concerto for Trombone* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Langford), John Albrecht, soloist; *Peace Like a River* (Bulla); *Finale from Symphony No. 4* (Tchaikovsky/Gordon); *Valdres March* (Hanssen/Meller); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards), Dick Lehman, percussion soloist; *I've Got Rhythm* (Gershwin/Fernie); *Death or Glory* (Hall); *Fantasy on Swiss Airs* (Newsome), David Centers, euphonium soloist; *Malaguena* (Lecuona/Freeh); *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* (Butler and Gay), Quentin Sharpenstein, tuba soloist; *Tyrolean Tubas* (Clark); *Paganini Variations* (Wilby); *March-Opus 99* (Prokofiev/

Brand).

June 6, 1999; Queen's Birthday Garden Party, Louisville, KY (John Jones, conducting). *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Handel); *Ravenswood* (Rimmer); *Melodies of Britain* (Wright); *Famous British Marches* (Langford); *The Phantom Brigade* (Myddleton); *Men of Harlech* (arr. Langford); *God Save the Queen*; *Rule Britannia*; *America the Beautiful* (Ward/Himes); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa); *Cross of Honour* (Rimmer); *March of the Peers* (Sullivan); *British Bandsman* (Broadbent).

June 20, 1999; Bernheim Forest, Claremont, KY (John Jones conducting). Also *Sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss/Pearce); *Star Wars* (Williams/Bryce); *There's No Business Like Show Business* (Berlin/Richards); *A Pair of Sparkling Eyes* (Sullivan/Langford), Brian Cahill, cornet soloist; *Trumpet Blues and Cantabile* (James/Geldard); *March of the Cobblers* (Barratt and Siebert); *Bess, You Is My Woman* (Gershwin/Dover), Robert Coulter, tuba soloist; *Valdres March* (Hanssen); *The Irish Washerwoman* (arr. Langford); *Men of Harlech* (Langford); *Miller Magic* (Stephens); *March-Opus 99* (Prokofiev/Brand); *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Handel); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards), Dick Lehman, percussion soloist; *Three Blind Mice* (Lotter/Wright); *Fantasy on Swiss Airs* (Newsome), David Centers, euphonium soloist; *Rap So Dee Rag* (Golland); *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* (Butler and Gay/Sparke), Quentin Sharpenstein, tuba soloist; *Tyrolean Tubas* (Clark); *Music of George Gershwin* (arr. Sharpe); *Cross of Honour* (Rimmer.)

Motor City Brass Band (Craig Strain). February 9, 1999; Nardin Park United Methodist Church, Farmington Hills, MI. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich); *In the Mood* (Garland/Strain); *American Civil War Fantasy* (Bilik/Himes); *A Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead); *Miller Magic* (arr. Stephens); *The Cham-*

pions (Willcocks); *Motown Plus One* (arr. Strain); *Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

February 21, 1999; Southfield Centre for the Arts, Southfield, MI. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich); *Jump, Jive an' Wail* (Prima/Strain); *In the Mood* (Garland/Strain); *Big Band Bash* (Huff/Strain); *Miller Magic* (arr. Stephens); *This Cat's on a Hot Tin Roof* (Setzer/Strain).

Spokane British Brass Band (Richard Strauch). March 9, 1999; The Met, Spokane, WA. *St. Denio* (Cheyne); *Suite in B flat* (Jacob); *Jerusalem* (Parry/Hanmer); *Trombone Concerto* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Langford), Dave Matern, trombone soloist; *Padstow Lifeboat* (Arnold); *Gymnopedie No. 1* (Satie/Renton); *Londonderry Air* (arr. Iveson), Dave Matern, trombone soloist; *Dance of the Russian Sailors* (Gliere/Dodd).

NCSU British Brass Band (Dr Robert Petters and Dr. John Fuller). February 28, 1999; Stewart Theatre, NSCU, Raleigh, NC. *Fanfare for NABBA* (Curnow); *God Save the Queen* (Watson); *Star-Spangled Banner* (Sousa); *Music for Greenwich* (Gregson); *Rhapsody for Trombone* (Langford), Matthew Weingarten, trombone soloist; *Concert Prelude* (Sparke); *Little Suite* (Arnold); *American Civil War Fantasy* (Bilik/Himes).

Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman). April 10, 1999; Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Warrenville, IL. *Brass Presentation* (Moren); *Let's Face the Music and Dance* (Berlin/Richards); *Brillante* (Graham), John Meling and Tom Runte, euphonium soloists; *Concerto for Brass Band* (Ellerby); *Georgia on my Mind* (Carmichael/Morrison), Mike Harloff, flugelhorn soloist; *Aberystwyth* (Merritt);

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And the Band Played On (Ward & Palmer/Richards); *Hora Staccato* (arr. Richards); *The Whistler* (Green/Holman), Lisa-Ann Barnes, xylophone soloist; *Temptress for Trombones* (arr. Harvey), Rob Barnes, Brian Byrne, and David Oakley, trombone soloists; *Castell Coch* (Powell); *In the Mornin'* (Ives/Holman), Sarah Holman, mezzo-soprano soloist.

Festival City Brass (Wayne Becker). March 6, 1999; United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay, Whitefish Bay, WI. *Now Thank We All Our God* (Cruger/Becker); *When Jesus Wept* (Schuman/Becker); *Rhapsodic Variations on Laude* (Curnow); *Suite to the Chief Musician* (Himes); *Nicaea* (Himes); *His Eye Is On The Sparrow* (Bulla), Tom Matzen, flugelhorn soloist; *Take My Hand, Precious Lord* (Dorsey/Becker); *Selections from Jesus Christ Superstar* (Webber/Bryce); *Gospel Music* (arr. Becker).

Smoky Mountain Brass Band (Mark Clodfelter). April 18, 1999; Performing Arts Center, Waynesville, NC. *Under*

the Double Eagle (Wagner); *Four Sixteenth-Century Dances* (arr. Fernie); *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Gershwin/Fernie); *Light Cavalry* (von Suppe); *Procession of the Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Ashmore); *Thunder and Lightning Polka* (Strauss); *Music of the Night from Phantom of the Opera* (Webber/Himes); *Batman-The Movie* (Elfman/Catherall).

May 30, 1999; Lipinsky Auditorium, UNCA, Asheville, NC. *Under the Double Eagle* (Wagner); *Four Sixteenth-Century Dances* (arr. Fernie); *Thunder and Lightning Polka* (Strauss); *Washington Post* (Sousa); *Light Cavalry* (Suppe); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin); *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Gershwin); *Armed Forces Salute* (Bulla); *Music of the Night from Phantom of the Opera* (Webber/Himes); *National Emblem* (Bagley).

Chesapeake Silver Cornet Brass Band (Charles E. Hockersmith). February 6, 1999; University of Delaware, Newark, DE. *Fanfare to precede La Peri* (Dukas); *Second Suite in F* (Holst); *Light Walk* (Gott); *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson), Michael Jones, Gregg McCauley and David Murray, cornet soloists; *Star Dust* (Carmichael), Chas Engel, trombone soloist; *Amazing Grace* (arr. Himes); *Floral Dance* (Moss); *The Champions* (Willcocks).

SASF Brass Band (Ron Holz). March 27, 1999; Vineville North Baptist Church, Macon, GA. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *The Pioneers* (Anderson); *Come Thou Fount* (Campbell); *Majesty* (Downie); *St Columba* (Griffin); *Big Little Light* (W. Broughton); *Exeter Temple* (Condon); *Fantasia for Piano and Brass Band* (Steadman-Allen), Timothy Campbell, piano soloist.

Lexington Brass Band (Ron Holz and Skip Gray). April 11, 1999; Lexington Opera House, Lexington, KY. *Star Wars* (Williams/Bryce); *Panache* (Dewhurst),

Dave Henderson, euphonium soloist; *The Best of Bond* (arr. Barry); *Tara's Theme from Gone with the Wind* (Steiner/Catherall); *Jerusalem* (Parry), Terry Everson, cornet soloist; *Star Trek-First Contact* (Goldsmith/Barry); *A Disney Spectacular* (arr. Richards); *Singin' in the Rain* (Brown/Fernie); *Far and Away* (Williams/Harper); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *Batman--The Movie* (Elfman/Barry).

University of Illinois Brass Band+ (Peter Griffin) and the **Macomb Brass Band#** (Bruce Briney). April 17, 1999; Assembly of God Church, Macomb, IL. +*Chequerboard* (Langford); +*KNUFanfare* (Goble); +*Padstow Lifeboat* (Arnold); +*Pantomine* (Sparke), Kenneth Steinsultz, euphonium soloist; +*Serenade* (Bourgeois); +*Trumpet Blues and Cantabile* (James & Mathias/Geldard); +*The Year of the Dragon* (Sparke); #*Keystone Celebration* (Cheetham); #*River City Serenade* (Sparke); #*Death or Glory* (Hall); #*Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott* (Bach/Faust); #*Trittico* (Curnow); ++*Finale from Firebird* (Stravinsky/Gordon).

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.

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Current Releases Reviewed in Alphabetical Order By CD Title. Reviews by Ronald W. Holz (unless otherwise noted).

Best By Farr, Volume 2. Eikanger-Bjorsvik Musikklag (Ray Farr). Doyen CD 077. TT 64:52. Program: *Brassmen's Holiday* (Armengol/Farr); *Adventures In Brass* (Farr); Cornet Solo--*Rhapsody on Norwegian Folk Songs* (Condon/Farr), soloist Jane Westervik; *Dog Breath Variations* (Zappa/Farr); Flugel Horn Solo--*Over the Rainbow* (Arlen/Farr), soloist Gry Rian; *On the Town* (Bernstein/Farr); Soprano Cornet Solo--*On With the Motley* (Leoncavallo/Farr), soloist Frode Rydland; Tuba Solo--*Largo al Factotum* (Rossini/Farr), soloist Stale Johansen; *Colonel Bogey* (Alford/Farr); *Softly, Softly* (Fry/Farr); Trombone Solo--*We've Only Just Begun* (Nichols/Farr), soloist Tove Haukas; *One Voice* (Manilow/Farr); *Finale from Symphony #1* (Mahler/Farr). The title pun aside, there is no disputing Ray Farr's contribution to brass band culture as arranger, composer, and conductor. In this second volume featuring his music an excellent Norwegian band that he directs provides a splendid variety package of his arrangements, transcriptions, and original compositions. Among the surprises is the Condon *Rhapsody on Norwegian Folk Songs*, which Farr scored for band from the manuscript solo/piano copy. An uncomplicated work, the *Rhapsody* is given a fine performance by both band and soloist. A transcription of a portion of a Mahler symphony would not be my first choice for projects bands just have to try, yet there is much to admire in both the exciting playing and in Farr's adaptation of the *Finale from Symphony #1* (about 9 minutes worth). Perhaps an even better splendid 'failure' if you want to call it that is his scoring of Frank Zappa's *Dog Breath Variations*. I was left unconvinced, yet also impressed by his craft and the band's noble attempt to make the cross-over. Much more successful is the three-movement suite he

has arranged from Bernstein's *On the Town*, something to offer up instead of the ubiquitous West Side Story suites that brass groups have tackled so frequently. The remaining program features fine solo playing, especially the tuba soloist, and a good sampling of light music of the kind that Farr handles so well -- pop tunes, short classical transcriptions, and his own original short compositions. For a clever updated version of *Colonel Bogey*, which includes Malcolm Arnold's additions used in the film *Bridge Over the River Kwai*, try Ray Farr's. This is well-produced album with much to enjoy and study.

Boulder Baroque. The Boulder Brass (Thomas Blomster). Allen Music Co. AMCD 61739. TT 60:54. Program: *Fantasie in C major* (J.S. Bach/Allen); *Lord Fitzwilliam Suite* (Byrd/Allen); *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (Bach/Allen); *Air from Suite #3* (Bach/Allen); *Fugue in G minor* (Bach/Allen); *Ciaccona in F minor* (Pachelbel); *Contrapunctus IX* (Bach/Allen); *Come Sweet Death* (Bach/Allen); *Jesu, Meiner Seele Wonne* (Bach/Allen); *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* (Bach/Allen). Boulder Brass is a brass choir made up of a total of four trumpets, 2 horns, four trombones, a euphonium, and 2 tubas (no percussion used on this disc). The personnel is drawn from orchestral professionals and university brass professors from within the state of Colorado conducted by Thomas Blomster. All the arrangements are by a member of the tuba section, Michael Allen, who both produced the album (released through Bernel Music) and who has all the arrangements available for sale. While restricted to the Baroque era (with a little William Byrd from the late sixteenth century thrown in for good measure), the album does not lack variety and the quality of the music never fails, even in the lesser known chaconne by Pachelbel. Allen has a good grasp of what can be achieved with the limited timbre available to him. It is interesting

to see that later arrangers still do not improve upon, but only imitate the success of Erik Leidzen in his two most successful Bach arrangements, done both for brass and wind ensemble way back in the 1930s, *Come Sweet Death* and *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. The playing throughout is first rate, and the group is given a fine, spacious sound on the disc. Recommended!

Hymns and Marches. Brighthouse and Rastrick Band (David Hirst). Doyen CD 056. TT 72:49. M=March; H=Hymn Tune Arrangement. Program: M--*Punchinello* (Rimmer); H--*Lloyd* (Steadman-Allen); M--*Arnhem* (Kelly); H--*Hyfrydol* (Steadman-Allen); M--*Simoraine* (Barraclough); H--*Praise My Soul* (Childs); M--*Under the Double Eagle* (Wagner); Euphonium Solo--*Little Prayer* (Glennie/Childs), soloist David Childs; M--*Viva Birkenshaw* (Rimmer); H--*The Day Thou Gavest* (Wilby); M--*Death or Glory* (Hall); M--*Imperial Echoes* (Safroni); H--*Old Hundreth* (Vaughan Williams); M--*The Champions* (Wilcox); H--*Aberystwyth* (Steadman-Allen); *March Lorraine* (Ganne); M--*Crimond* (Richards); M--*Thin Red Line* (Alford); H--*Hursley* (Steadman-Allen); M--*Tiger's Tail* (Thurban); Cornet Solo--*Nightfall In Camp* (Pope), soloist Graeme McCulloch; M--*Gladiator's Farewell* (Blankenburg); M--*Honest Toil* (Rimmer). David Hirst and the 1998 National, European, and All England Champions, Brighthouse and Rastrick, offer an excellent package of traditional marches and hymn tune settings that will prove to have very wide appeal. In just a few weeks I hope to be attending the Whit Friday contests in the Saddleworth area, so this delightful album was like a preview of what I will hear as each band makes its mad dash through many villages in search of march and hymn tune performance prizes. The choices for marches and hymn tunes are

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decidedly British but not exclusively so. The dynamic range, both in terms of recording and performance, is all that you would want. Marvelous contrasts, excellent phrasing and tone control, exhilarating playing on the marches, soothing lyric sounds on the hymns! The package includes a compact, informative essay by Alan Jenkins on both genres, as well as good notes on the band and the conductor. By providing a disc that showcases two musical forms in which the brass band can be said to be

unequaled in the banding community Brighouse and Rastrick have done a great service in this well-played program. Enjoyable disc that I strongly recommend.

On A Hymnsong. New York Staff Band (Ronald Waiksnoris). Triumphonic TRCD 4060. TT 77:14. Program: *March-Courageous* (Norbury); *Cornet Solo-When I Remember* (Catherwood), soloist Gordon Ward; *Symphonette* (Bulla); *Hymn for Diana* (Turrin); *Band Chorus-A Heart Steadfast* (Mack); *On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss* (Holsinger/Gott); *Solemn*

Procession (Strauss/Rayment); *March-The Outriders* (Pearce); *Abide With Me* (Burgmayer); *Euphonium Solo-Euphony* (Redhead), soloist Aaron VanderWeele; *Overture-The Barber of Seville* (Rossini/Norbury); *Londonderry Air* (Bearcroft); *Band Chorus--Shine On Us* (Smith/Mack); *Romans 8* (Steadman-Allen). Just prior to their spring 1999 tour of Europe (the first since 1968) the New York Staff Band has released an excellent program of great emotional range and spiritual depth. The typical NABBA member might initially be most attracted to Stephen Bulla's three-movement suite in homage to the late Sir Dean Goffin, *Symphonette*. Like Stravinsky using Pergolesi's music in his neoclassic, ballet score *Pulcinella*, Bulla uses many of the principal tunes, harmonies, and motives of Goffin's classic *Rhapsody in Brass* as the basis for the work. This is more than pastiche, however, for he also weaves other material, original or derivative, into the symphonic web to create a fascinating new, test-piece like work. The band plays so well here, and in a classically refined way, too, something very evident in their handling of Rayment's rescoring of Richard Strauss's *Solemn Procession*, another personal favorite. Rayment deserves credit for his good program notes, for works like *Romans 8*, as marvelous as such SA tone poems can be in terms of sheer musical interest, rely on a clear linguistic line that many listeners can only share if they are supplied with the associated words, thoughts, and scriptures. The band's soloists hold forth with good authority and the band chorus makes a much stronger contribution than in recent years. Several new players and new assignments have strengthened the band, their new soprano cornetist, Stewart Dalrymple, being the finest example. The band plays with controlled restraint, yet is capable of great emotional power

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and dynamic force. As most bands are not nearly as good on their tour records as they are when on tour, with this band playing so well, they should have a real triumph once again in Europe. While this is primarily a program with a sacred slant, so much of this music will appeal to any brass enthusiast -- from the two spirited marches, to the lush hymn arrangements (and *Hymn for Diana!*), to the two classical transcriptions (Rossini and Strauss) and especially the large-scale, or more lengthy works included -- *Symphonette*, *Euphony*, and *Romans 8*. The subtitle of the final piece says it best -- a brass celebration! Highly recommended.

Pastoral. Hendon Band (Stephen Cobb). SP&S CD 121. TT 62:08. Program: *Prelude-St. Denio* (Ayma); *Come, Beautiful Christ* (Phillips); *Canadian Folk Song Suite* (Calvert); *People Need the Lord* (Fettke/Davies); *Since Jesus* (Ballantine); *Rhapsody for Cornet and Band* (Bowes), soloist Michael Wilson; *Symphonic Variations-I Know a Fount* (Rive); *Vocal Solo-Draw Me Nearer* (Krommenhoek), soloist Roger Cobb; *I'll Follow Thee* (Phillips); *A Pastoral Symphony* (Redhead); *March-Minneapolis IV* (Soderstrom). When Stephen Cobb is not leading his superb International Staff Band, he gets to lead a wonderful corps band, Hendon, from a suburb of London. To understand the stature of this local band, they will represent the British Territory of the SA at the July 2000 International Congress in Atlanta, GA. They are known for their imaginative festival programs as well as for their consistent, faithful musical ministry week in and week out. Their title, therefore, underscores their mission, for Salvation Army bands do have a pastoral role, one made evident through the carefully chosen program of sacred music presented on this fine disc so well-produced by SP&S. While large even for SA stan-

dards (I think about 40 members) the band is well under control in sound, intonation, and general style. Four large-scale works provide the pillars of the disc, and for me the greatest interest, as they are so carefully presented: Morley Calvert's ever-fresh *Canadian Folk-Song Suite*; Ray Bowes' Delius-like *Rhapsody for Cornet and Brass Band* (based on a simple Christmas song by his friend, Terry Camsey); Dr. Thomas Rive's masterpiece *I Know a Fount*, and Robert Redhead's warm-hearted *Pastoral Symphony*. Most SA bands love to play the opening theme of *I Know a Fount*, one of the finest examples of brass band scoring and arranging ever produced. The symphonic variations that follow, modelled as they are on Elgar in both structure and scoring style, are a real test of a band's musicianship. Combined with the musical (not necessarily technical) difficulty of the work is the quiet close with which it ends, after the majestic return of the tune. Can't play to the gallery with that piece! Rive was a musicologist and expert on the music and polyphony of the Spanish Counter-Reformation composer Tomas Luis de Victoria -- it shows throughout all his too few works for brass band. The fine reading of *Pastoral Symphony* supplied here includes movements 1, 2 and 4. Redhead has composed a personal statement about the role of the pastor within a body of believers, and achieves a musically coherent form by uniting well-known songs like *Majesty*, *Be Glorified*, *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God*, and *Break Thou the Bread of Life* with an original theme seemingly derived out of the opening hymn prelude on *Southport* ('To serve the present age my calling to fulfill'). The closing march, *Minneapolis IV*, is the clincher, underscoring Cobb's wonderful rhythmic control and ensemble in bands he leads. It brings this fine album to a rollicking and joyful close. Enjoy this fine band and good music.

Trouble in the Air. Central Band of the

Royal Air Force (Robert Wiffin). Obrasso 867. TT: 65.21. Program: *Stadt Langenthal* (Broadbent, ed. Woodfield); *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* (Raye-Pryce/Woodfield); *Young World* (Urs Heri); *Trumpet Concerto* (Woodfield), James Watson, trumpet soloist; *Pops for Band* (Richards/Woodfield); *Sabre Dance* (Khachaturian/Woodfield); *That's A Plenty* (Pollack/Richards/Woodfield); *Western Folk* (arr. Woodfield); *Triumph* (Heusser/Woodfield); *Spiritual Sounds* (arr. Fernie); *Singin' in the Rain* (Brown/Fernie); *Anything Goes* (Porter/Fernie); *Trouble in the Air* (arr. Fernie).

The contents of this recording showcase the compositions and arrangements for concert band of Ray Woodfield and Alan Fernie, and the selections are all of a lighter musical idiom which should ensure a wide listening audience. There are arrangements of several standards from the jazz, orchestral and musical theater world, but the items that caught my attention were the marches by Derek Broadbent and Hans Heusser which, understandably, the band responds to well. Woodfield's fourteen-minute *Trumpet Concerto* is a three movement work following the traditional structure and full of cornet idiomatic writing that perfectly suits James Watson. It's not a particularly depth work--not easy either, but would be well received by audiences. The first movement has a catchy main theme and flashy cadenza; the second movement has elements of the Victorian ballad in its lyricism, and the finale is scherzo-like with brief references back to the main theme of the first movement. Watson plays it with panache. The CD notes are limited to a history of the ensemble and a biography of conductor and soloist; nothing on the music. But the CD makes for easy listening as well as promoting some possibilities for lighter concert fare.

[Reviewed by Colin Holman]

It's hard not to have a sense of bias when viewing a weekend of brass band activities, the annual central focus of NABBA, that I personally had a stake in organizing. But by all accounts the weekend can be considered a complete success; star soloists to entertain, fine consistent judging, a competition under one roof, two fabulous receptions, great music making from all the competing bands, smooth organizing both in front and behind stage and a terrific Gala Concert by the Chicago Band of the Salvation Army to round everything off. This year for variety, several members were kind enough to provide reviews of specific events, but the adjudicators and back-stage staff also provide a unique perspective to the events.

FRIDAY DAY NIGHT CONCERT: ILLINOIS BRASS BAND

Reviewed by Ronald W. Holz

Our able hosts launched into their Welcome Concert via Bertrand Moren's scintillating opener, *Brass Presentation*, by which we were introduced in a most effective manner to the various sections of the band as they ran, galloped, sauntered, or leapt onto the stage. The program continued to unfold in a brilliant, festive manner, one designed to feature a wide range of talent from within the band, as well as some top-flight guest soloists. Most of the items were what would be called 'light music,' a wise choice on the eve of a contest, as no doubt many in audience had much on their minds, in addition to trying to figure out the acoustics of the hall! The large percentage of solo features was a decided advantage in that regard, as the band quickly captured the audience and kept them fully engaged during the 80-minute program. Illinois soloists included the dynamic euphonium duo of John Meling and Tom Runte on Graham's *Brillante*, Lisa-Ann Barnes as the bemused xylophonist in Green's *The Whis-*

tlar (whistlers in the band remaining anonymous), and two sections stepped out front for some bravura playing, the cornets in *Hora Staccato* (arr. Richards) and the trombones in *Temptress for Trombones* (arr. Harvey). All acquitted themselves very well and demonstrated the depth of this hat-trick winning championship band. Our guest brass soloists were in top form. Brett Baker showed both his velvety, lyrical melodic styles and his technical prowess on two well-chosen, and widely contrasting items, *Thoughts of Love* (Pryor/Wilkinson) and *Street Scenes* (Newman/Drover). His stylistic flexibility was a joy to behold! Stephen Sykes, who wowed us in Red Wing, returned to the NABBA stage primed to give us another great combination of great tuba playing and funny high-jinks -- a first-rate entertainer. Can we ever forget his pyrotechnics and brass slapstick on his own amazing novelty, *Carnival Cocktail* (Arban/Sykes)? The musical highlight for me, and I think for many in the audience, was the set of Charles Ives' songs arranged for mezzo-soprano and brass band by Colin Holman and performed so elegantly by his wife, Sarah Holman. The band did an excellent job of not overpowering this wonderful, rich, yet lyric voice. This polished presentation gave just the right touch of class to the light mood of the program. We in the brass band scene should explore more fully combinations for vocal soloists and band. These well-crafted transcriptions did justice to the original and in the hands of fine performer like Sarah Holman, they live again so clearly and linger in our minds for long time. The program concluded with the finale from Martin Ellerby's *Concerto for Brass* and thus, in essence, this movement symbolized and summarized the entire effort of the band, that of a joint effort, a united ensemble of talented musicians who can play with great intensity, sensitivity, and brilliance. The audience greeted their gracious hosts with enthusiasm and admiration from the

beginning to end. It was just the right way to begin the weekend!

NABBA 99 READING BAND: NEW MUSIC FOR BRASS BANDS

Reviewed by Ronald W. Holz

Unless otherwise noted, the instrumentation supplied for each item follows traditional British brass band scoring. Most British publishers supply only treble clef versions for all parts except bass trombone, with exceptions noted. 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 or taken from recorded performances.

A. Egon Publishers Ltd. Royston Road, Baldock, Herts SG7 6NW, England. Telephone 011-44-1462-894-498.

March: *Service Above Self* (Ray Steadman-Allen). M; 3:20 minutes. While the title might indicate a SA piece, this is intended for all brass bands, its origins related to joint efforts between SA and contesting bands. Americans might be amused by the quick reference to *Listen to the Mockingbird* during the second strain, to which the SA has a 'sanctified' text. The scoring is first rate, as one expects from Ray Steadman-Allen. In the formal design he plays with both traditional expressive devices usually encountered in brass band marches as well as inserting a unique sequence of musical events. A good, moderate-level march filled with some nice surprises..

Capriccio (Kenneth Downie). MD; 13:53 minutes; This test piece was chosen for the 2nd Division 1998 of the British National Brass Band Championships. Downie's program note gives us a good

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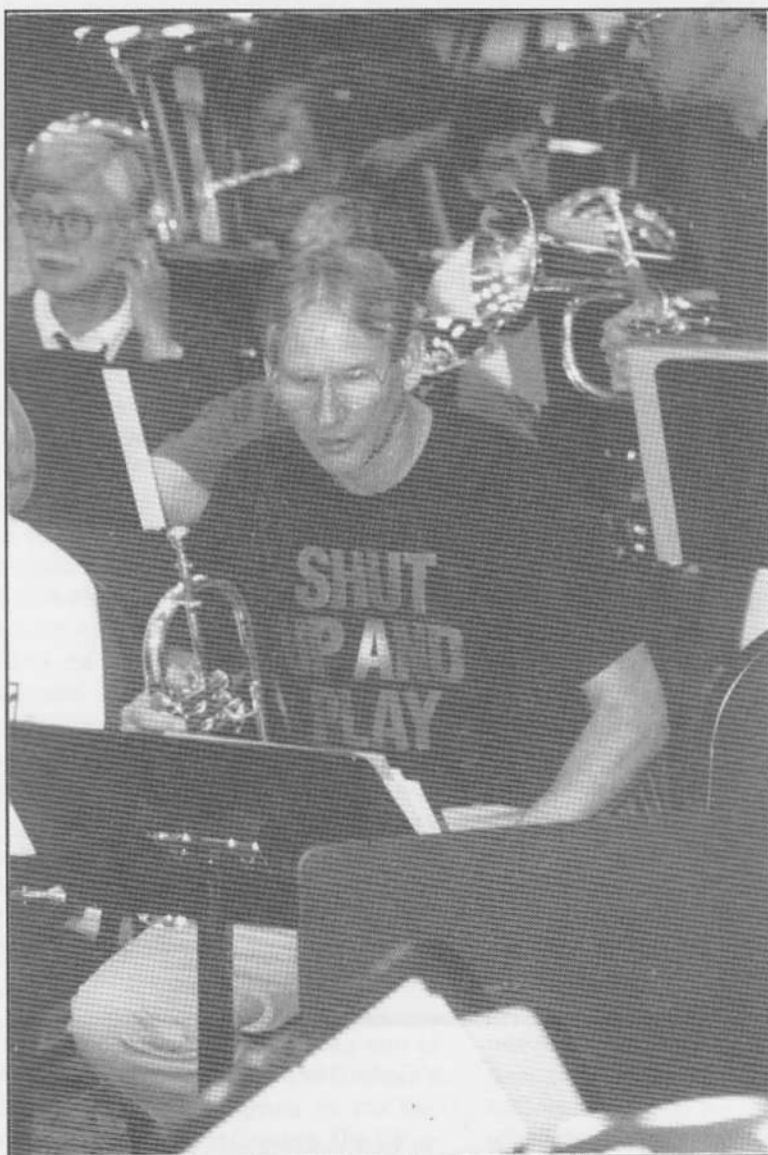
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overview of this very playable work: "As its title suggests, the music is capricious in nature having themes of sharply contrasting styles, but it is not as free in form...having many of the characteristics of Rondo, with the main theme regularly recurring and subsidiary themes being developed. The boisterous, rhythmic nature of the opening and principal idea is offset by subsequent themes which are variously song-like, humorous, regal, and playful.. Nothing is serious for very long and the music is intended to be a light-hearted and hopefully enjoyable experience for listeners and players alike."



Reading Band: the T-shirt says it all!

B. The Salvation Army - Atlanta, 1424 Northeast Expressway, Atlanta, GA 30329; Telephone (404) 728-1383; E-mail usasouth@aol.com

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 are supplied in all appropriate keys and clefs. Provides full score and piano part/reduction. Sixteen items are released each year, four in each of four grades, and each grade will include either a B flat or E flat solo feature (Also available with piano accompaniment). Bill Himes demonstrated right from the start how flexible this series is, by having just a small chamber group play the beginning of his arrangement, followed the entire band later in the piece.

I'm Living On the Mountain (William Himes). E; 2:14 minutes. Grade 4 in the AIES, this short but effective piece takes the form of a 'Dixieland quick march' that also alternates with a big-band swing. Calls for competent drum set player, but otherwise this crowd-pleasing piece should be read and learned quickly by all our bands.

B flat Solo: *Peter, Go Ring Them Bells* (Stephen Bulla). VE; 1:50 minutes. Grade III for both soloist and band, this cut-time version of the well-known spiritual sits so very well for both large and small brass ensemble. The soloist part is quite straight-forward. Very useful for Pops programs or festive church services.

Moses (James Cheyne). M; 2:34 minutes. Grade IV, this swing feature caused a few minor reading problems in the early going but the group soon settled in and really enjoyed it. There is an open solo section for the first cornet, though a written out solo is supplied. Very effective arrangement, with some witty references to Henry Mancini and friends, I think all our bands would like this short sparkler.

C. Gramercy Music. PO Box 41, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 5HF England; Telephone 011 44-161-486-1959; E-mail info@gramercymusic.com
Suite: *Cry of the Celts* (Ronan Hardiman/Peter

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Graham). D; 18:26. Made famous by Yorkshire Building Society Band's excellent CD of the same name, this five-movement suite can also be excerpted quite easily. The pieces are drawn from the sequel to *Riverdance*--The Lord of the Dance, by Ronan Hardiman. At NABBA we featured the slow second movement, a beautiful alto horn solo on the tune *Suil a Ruin*, which should present few problems for any NABBA band, as well as the third movement, *Breakout*, which is indeed more difficult! You'll need fine percussion to pull this and the final movement off. The first movement, *Nightmare*, is also quite challenging. Movement 4, *Lament*, takes the form of an elegiac duet for two euphoniums, of moderately easy level. The finale, movement 5, is entitled *Victory*, and is a wonderful setting of what Americans know as the Shaker tune *Simple Gifts*, but also known as *Lord of the Dance*. While not easy, this movement should prove useful to nearly all of our bands. So, whether you want to tackle the entire suite or play excerpts,

I highly recommend this excellent arrangement by Peter Graham!

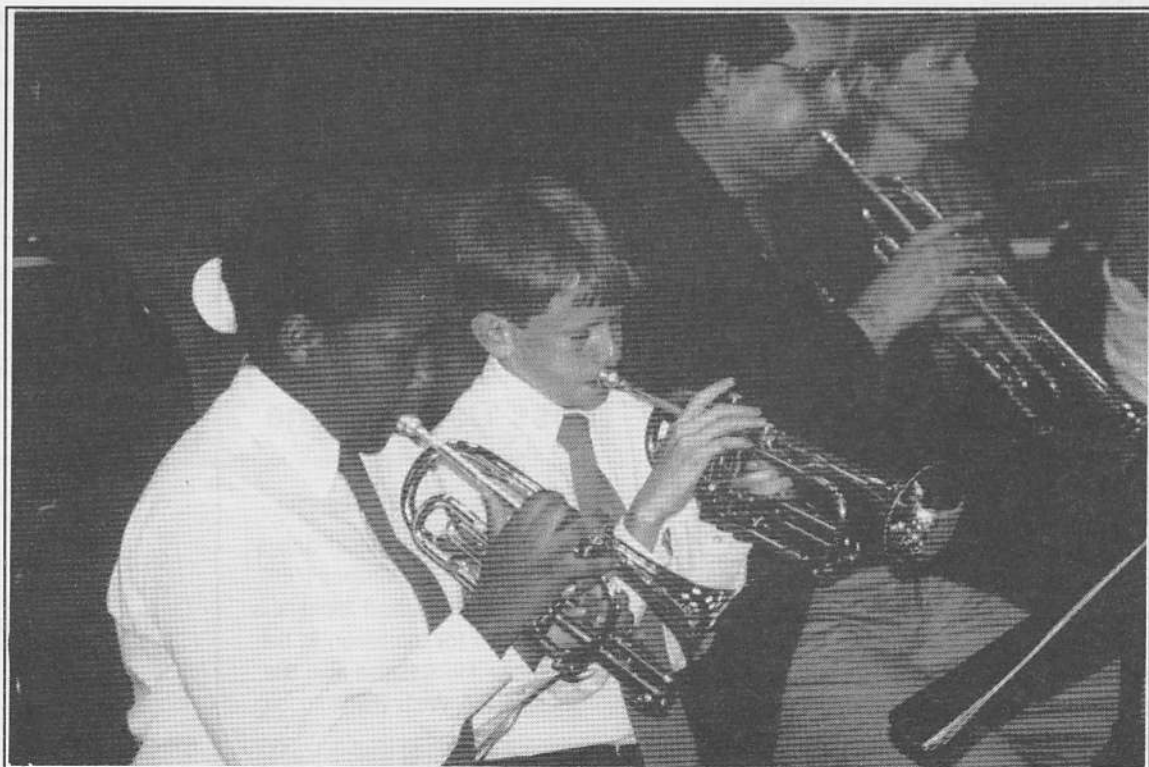
Euphonium Solo: *The Holy Well* (Peter Graham). Solo MD; Band M; 2:30 minutes. As he did for his grand tune from the test piece *The Essence of Time* (A Time for Peace), Peter Graham has supplied a gorgeous setting of his main tune from the recent test piece, *On Alderley Edge*, the central music of which is called *The Holy Well*, music that provides the means of resolution and transfiguration in that wonderful and difficult tone poem. Your soloist will need good sustaining power and good control of the mid to upper range of the instrument, though the part is not excessively high. The scoring sets the soloist in excellent relief, with a chamber ensemble approach causing some challenge to the band. This is a lovely addition to the lyric solo repertoire for euphonium and brass band.

D. The Salvation Army - New York, 440 West Nyack Rd, West Nyack, NY 10994; Telephone (888) 488-4882 or (914) 620-7200; FAX: (914)

620-7751. The first two items come from the two most recent Christmas issues of American Brass Band Series (Christmas 1998 and 1999), which 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 third piece is a special release in a new series entitled *Triumphonic Collection* (Primarily normal brass band scoring, and in this case calling even for Repiano Cornet)

March: *Christmas Rejoicing* (William Gordon). M; 2:27 minutes. This is the title tune from the New York Staff Band's recent Christmas CD. Think of this more as a festive, upbeat carol medley than as a traditional march. It has all the pizzazz and flare you would expect from one of Bill Gordon's scores. Very playable -- NABBA bands will love this and the entire Christmas issue.

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Reading Band brings together players from all bands and all ages

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Prelude: Noel Nouvelet (Kevin Norbury). MD; 3 minutes. A charming, elegant setting of a traditional French carol, this arrangement will call for careful preparation and study by the conductor, though it is not a difficult read. A pedal point drone, with soft percussion, is the basic frame in which the tune is presented and varied through a series of tonal and textural changes. This will be a delightful change of pace on your next Christmas Concert.

Hymn for Diana (Joseph Turrin). MD; 5:39 minutes. Turrin's tribute to the life and work of the late Princess Diana goes well beyond a mournful tombeau -- it also expresses, in Turrin's own words, "a touch of optimism and grace" which should reflect a universal sense of gentleness and peace -- hallmarks of her public image. An original chorale forms the basis of the work, which gradually builds to a moving climax that recalls the bells of the memorial service in Westminster Abbey. In contrast to the chorale, Turrin also inserts a waltz-like theme, which also provides the basis of the quiet and gentle coda of the work. While not technically demanding, there are many musical hurdles to overcome in this powerful work (Recorded on the new NYSB *On a Hymnsong* CD reviewed in this issue).

E. Performance Music. The Brasshouse, 8 Elmbridge Way, Sedgley, Dudley West Midlands DY3 1SH, England. Telephone 011-44-1902-664-475; FAX: 011-44-1902-664-238; E-mail perform@brasshouse.u-net.com. Four equal B-flat cornet parts; two euphonium parts.

Main Title (John Morton). MD; 7:30 minutes. The composer had some difficulty coming up with a name for this emotional work -- and I think if it had a more programmatic reference it might

connect better with bands and audience! We could only read the last of the three sections, of movements of the work, which takes the form of a free-form fughetto. There are many surprising effects throughout the score, written in a rather modern chromatic, though tonal style. The entire work is marked by sudden contrasts and stylistic shifts giving a very eclectic manner. I would like soon to be able to read the entire work, a very different kind of piece, so as to give it a fuller and fairer evaluation.

F. SP&S The Salvation Army -- London, 117-121 Judd Street, King's Cross, London, WC1H 9NN, England; Telephone 011-44-171-387-7814; FAX 011-44-171-383-3420. The following two items come from a four-item Festival Series set, FS 547-550, March 1999. The other two pieces are a new euphonium solo by Ivor Bosanko called *My Unchanging Friend* and a rock-style setting by Martin Cordner of Ian Robinson's praise chorus.

Festival Prelude: His Glory Proclaim (Iain Raynor). MD; 2:45 minutes. Three hymn tunes serve as the basis of this short, uptempo prelude, the main one

being the lesser known Was Lobet ('O worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness'), while reference is also made to Praise My Soul the King of Heaven and Lobe den Herren ('Praise to the Lord the Almighty'). Marked *allegro vivace*, dotted-quarter-note equals 112, the piece rollicks along in quick 6/8 time. The intended mood is that of praise and adoration. I felt that perhaps too much was attempted in too little time, but the arranger has a good grasp of scoring for the brass band and provides some rather effective passages that are quite brilliant. This would prove to be useful a fine program opener for a SA band, or as a Prelude - Postlude items for any NABBA band that plays in a church service.

Salem Variations (Brian Bowman). MD; 8:00 minutes. Brian Bowen's craftsmanship is fully evident in this unique set of variations on a tune that few in America will know, unless they grew up in the SA -- Mothers of Salem -- the reference being that of the biblical Salem (When mothers brought their children to Jesus), not Massachusetts! However, this music does not tell a story or refer beyond itself -- it is, in essence, absolute music, a rather interesting contribution to SA literature. The hymn tune appears at first within the context of an opening polonaise-like fanfare, but will be later heard to better effect as a cornet solo in an interior variation. I am glad to see a very playable festival-level work that many bands can handle printed in this series. Interestingly, I also see the work having much more appeal to concert brass bands rather than to SA bands who keep a close tab on their evangelical mission. Worth a reading by all bands!

G. Rosehill Music, Harold Charles House, 64a London End, Beaconsfield, Bucks. HP2 2JD, England; Tel: 011-44-1494-674-411;

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Publicize your future band concerts in the **Brass Band Bridge** and on the **NABBA Web Page**

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E-mail: bb@britishbandsman.com

The Irish Blessing (Joyce Bacak/Stephen Bradnum). E; 2 minutes. This simple but effective arrangement of the well-known choral setting by Joyce Eilers Bacak can serve a wide variety of functions, from a superb warm-up piece, to an excellent encore to a concert. The work begins quietly as a quartet for flugel, solo horn, first baritone, and euphonium. The second verse involves the full band; this leads to a majestic, fortissimo climax, after which the opening quartet returns with an echo of the final phrase, which is then restated on an even softer level by the full band. Very effective short work.

CHALLENGE SECTION

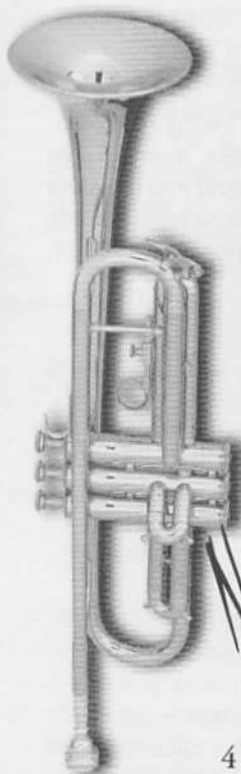
Reviewed by George Foster

Once again the Challenge Section was one of the most competitive in the NABBA Championship. And for the second year in a row an outstanding new brass band has entered the brass band scene and won the Challenge Division with the **Prairie Brass Band** doing the honors last year. Six bands were entered this year having lost two bands from this section to the Honors Section in 1999. The entrants listed in playing order were: **Motor City Brass Band**, **Sunshine Brass Band**, **Varsity All-Star Brass Band**, **NCSU Brass Band**, **Saint Louis Brass Band**, and **Festival City Brass Band**. It was great to see Festival City back in the Championship having last entered in 1991. Sunshine Brass Band

was entered last year and this year after a long lay off after being one of the earlier brass bands formed at the emergence of the brass band movement. The test piece for this year was *A Moorside Suite* by Gustav Holst. All bands did a credible job of playing this brass band standard; not the most technical of brass band compositions but a very musical piece that still requires great attention to detail. The most aggressive programs were played by the Festival City Brass Band and Saint Louis Brass Band who both chose to play a program that included a second test piece. Festival City played *Laude* by James Curnow that was the test piece in the Honors Section in 1994. Saint Louis played

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Members from the host Illinois Brass Band provide leadership and soloists during the Reading Band

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Hinemoa by Gareth Wood that was the Challenge Section test piece last year. Motor City Brass Band also played a rather difficult program which included James Curnow's *Fanfare and Flourishes* and *Festive Overture* by Dmitri Shostakovich. All of the bands played well and it is quite surprising to see the rapid development of quality brass bands in North America. This section really demonstrates how quickly a good band can form and play very well. While all of the bands played the test piece well it was quite clear that the new band in the group, the Saint Louis Brass Band, was a bit better on this particular day. The band was formed in September of 1998 by Robin Weatherall and Malcolm McDuffee. It is outstanding to see this kind of progress in just eight months and is a signal that they should become one of the best in North. They started off with a pop selection and wonderful arrangement by Goff Richards of *Strike Up the Band*. The only comment I can make about their performance is that the cornet section sounded a little bright but that is to be expected at this time in their development. It usually takes a period of time

for the trumpet players, which most bands start with, to become cornet players. Second place went to Motor City with their fine overall presentation. It must also be said that the North Carolina State University Group does an outstanding job of getting the college kids in for a few months of brass banding and working up a program to present at the Championship. I enjoyed hearing again the excellent William Himes arrangement of *American Civil War Fantasy*. Sunshine Brass Band played *Festival March* by William Himes and *Meditation* by James Curnow in addition to the test piece. The Varsity All-Star Brass Band played the march *El Albanico* (arr. J. Ord Hume), *The Last Spring* (Grieg/Steadman-Allen) and *Joy in My Heart* (Steadman-Allen). In terms of the hall acoustics I thought the hall may have aided those bands with a little brighter sound. In addition the air-conditioning noises did wipe out some of the subtleties of the music played. Congratulations to all six of the bands for presenting such fine brass band playing. We hope they all will return for another chance in Columbus in April

2000. I hope all members of all of the bands find playing in the Championship the wonderful experience that I do. If so they will be back next year. It is a special feeling to work up new music and play your best at the Championship. We hope to see all of the bands again next April.

HONORS SECTION

Reviewed by
Tom Palmatier

As I settled in to review the Honors Section, I had already been treated to a Challenge Section in which the competition had been fierce and there had been much good playing. I'm sharing my notes from the Honors Section as the performances occurred.

First to enter the field of competition was the **All-Star Brass and Percussion**, directed by Eric Aho, host of NABBA XVIII in April 2000. As always, the All-Stars looked very focused and business-like on stage. They opened with *Service Above Self* by Ray Steadman-Allen. Some nice dynamic shaping followed the brassy opening, al-

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though within a relatively small dynamic range. As they move into the trio, I thought I'd prefer a bit more timbral and dynamic contrast to the opening strains. Some of the fanfare figures are a bit muddled, but overall this band has so far shown good intonation and a nice full sound. Toward the end of the march, the loud playing (more on that later) tended to spread the sound and the intonation wandered a bit. After a pause, which seemed a bit longer than most, the band launched into the test piece, Erik Leidzen's *Sinfonietta*. The first movement showed the same traits revealed in the opening march: some fine playing, solid technique, and a narrow dynamic range a bit on the loud side. The trombones in particular are at times overly enthusiastic, producing quite a lot of edge, even at lower dynamic levels. In the diaphanous second movement, some shakiness appeared as the parts became more exposed and fatigue began to set in. The third movement was solidly played but never captured the true feeling of a scherzo because of the lack of dynamic contrast which should be even a bit overplayed to get a more playful feeling. Staccatos were a bit long and heavy. The fourth movement saw the band continuing to play solidly but the finale lacked some of the punch it should have had because the listeners were a bit desensitized by the lack of any truly soft passages to contrast with the fortississimo closing. After another lengthy pause, the All-Stars finished up with Jim Curnow's *Jubilation*. The band clearly seemed to enjoy this piece. They showed some nice shaping of phrases and really played with a sense of "jubilation." The All-Stars started off the Honors Section with some very strong playing, solid technique, and straightforward interpretations. My principle negative impression was there had been not been a true pianissimo in their performance.

Next up were Anita Cocker-Hunt and the

Cincinnati Brass Band. From the first chord, the difference from the All-Stars was striking. While the All-Stars played with a wide open and sometimes rollicking feel, Cincinnati sounded controlled and even a bit subdued; less raw power is evident but the sound is a bit better blended. Their opening selection, *Triptych* by Philip Sparke revealed an extremely well developed sense of ensemble. Several solo passages were weakly handled - it seems this is not a band of superstars but is a very well rehearsed group that plays together. The sense of reserve is apparent in all aspects of *Triptych*. They always stopped just shy of really opening up in volume and also held back from stretching emotional moments to their maximum potential. The center section of *Triptych* was beautifully played but the band never really recaptured its "groove" as it went back to the tempo of the opening section. This showed a danger in programming two big pieces. Not only is physical fatigue a factor, so is mental fatigue. It's tough to maintain a mental edge over the span of a longish piece and it seemed like Cincinnati was just a bit out of focus. Ms. Hunt tried to pull the band together and they finished in good form. The opening of the first movement of *Sinfonietta* did not show the nuance and shaping I expected from this band. Also, the louder sections did not provide the fire and "pop" that would be a good compliment to the band's lovely blended sound. It was during this movement that the band started to coalesce however. They seemed to have settled down and were ready for some serious playing. The second movement's nice E-flat Bass solo is followed by piano eighth note figures in the cornets. Cincinnati had the same problem as the All-Stars, too loud and not well controlled. I can't help but wonder why these figures aren't played tight into the stands to veil the sound while giving the players a bit more secure feel. The third movement may have been where Cincinnati started to show its

strength. The attention to the dynamic shaping was superb. A bit more "pop" on the acute accents would have made this movement a true joy. The fourth movement was very deliberate and measured with a high degree of rhythmic clarity. To my ears, Cincinnati had a slim lead over the All-Stars. Their test piece was just a bit stronger, especially in the third and fourth movements. Much depended however, on the sound at the judges' locations and in their individual tastes. The biggest difference between the bands was in the homogeneity of timbre and the range of dynamics. Both bands had acquitted themselves well and were in the hunt, but neither had really "nailed it to the wall."

Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer, conducting) opened with Gilbert Vinter's *James Cook - Circumnavigator*. How they fared in the scoring for the choice piece would boil down to how the judges balanced level of difficulty and execution. While there was some wonderful playing of this difficult work, it seemed a couple of "woodshedding" sessions away from being contest-ready. Prairie survived their trip around the world and began the first movement of *Sinfonietta*. Some unclear passages presaged a rough ride, but the band showed the first true staccato I'd heard in the Honors Section and had a fiery approach. Some lack of continuity in the cascading runs foreshadowed what would be apparent in the second section. After an E-flat Bass solo that showed nice playing but some unusual breathing points, the movement seemed a bit choppy. Handoffs of lines between sections just didn't flow. The treacherous third movement showed a need for a bit more clarity, as the band seemed to lose their rhythmic focus. This same feeling continued in the fourth movement. Prairie is a superb band with some fine players. Their performance

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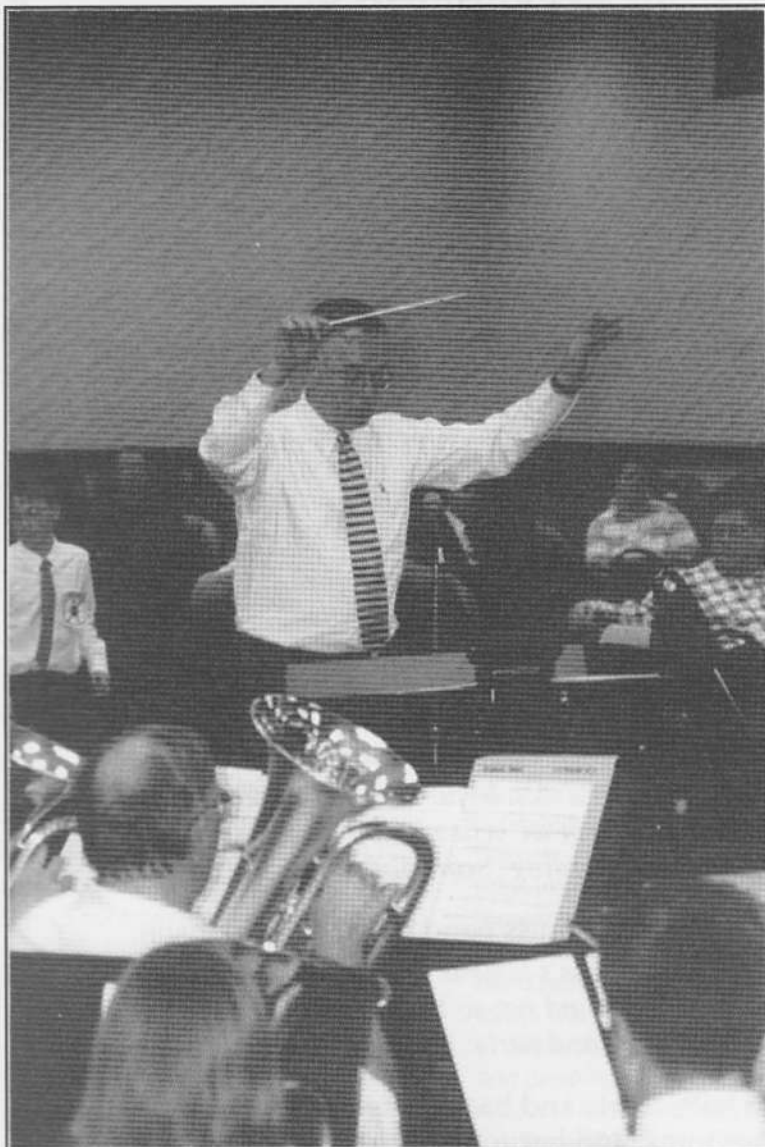
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Ron Waiksnoris leads the Reading Band

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showed their great potential but they just seemed several weeks of rehearsals away from being ready to compete. At this point, I still had Cincinnati in the lead closely followed by the All-Stars.

Commonwealth Brass Band took the stage and offered *Aspects of Praise* by adjudicator and Gala Concert conductor, William Himes. From the very beginning, the intonation was troubling and distracted from some good playing. A lovely euphonium solo and some excellent dynamic contrast was negated by the band never really finding a "groove" rhythmically and by continued suspect tuning.

Sinfonietta opened with some of the nicest phrasal shaping of the day. The falling cascades of notes were a bit shaky and marred some otherwise lovely moments. The second movement brought the best execution of the treacherous cornet figures aforementioned but still showed a greater need to connect lines as they were handed off between sections. More *rallentando* at the end of the second movement would have set up the third movement more effectively. The trombone tutti interlude was beautifully shaped but was again harmed by suspect intonation. The fourth movement brought some rhythmic wobbliness and more intonation problems that contrasted with some moments of brilliance. All in all, Commonwealth had more lovely moments than anyone but needed more time spent on some details and attention to intonation to be in the hunt.

In past years, the Honors Section always seemed to contain one or more bands that should have been taking a chance on the Championship Section. This year, the four bands in the Honors Section were well matched to the category. None of the four clearly manhandled the competition and yet all four were clearly up to the task of performing well in this section. The strategy of programming and meticulous preparation of the pieces would contribute to bringing home the trophy. I thought this was a very close section, much of which would have depended on a judge's personal preferences. As the section ended I had it as Cincinnati, All-Stars, Commonwealth, and Prairie (the last two being almost too close to call).

GALA CONCERT Reviewed by Colin Holman

Bill Himes was involved in nothing short of a marathon effort during NABBA99, having adjudicated all weekend and then leading the Chicago Staff Band of the Salvation Army in a Gala Concert as enjoyable as any staged by NABBA. Bill's ability to not only direct a fine performance but to maintain his composure during the musical and physical antics of guest soloist Steve Sykes AND also to be able to compere in such a spontaneous and sincere fashion made for a wonderful climax to the events of the weekend.

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The Chicago Band were fully up to the task at hand playing a concert of music that exhibited their strength in technique and musicianship. Opening with the vigorous march *Hillcrest*, composed by the grandson of the first conductor of the CSB, the ensemble then continued with Norbury's *Gaudete!* Described by Bill Himes as "Riverdance meets Christmas" the work effectively blends the melodies of three medieval carols in an energetic fashion. Then came the emotional high point of the concert with Himes' testimony on his inspiration behind his latest work, *Caprice for Cornet and Band*. The solo feature incorporates an old gospel song "Jesus is all the world to me" and was a favorite chorus of Joshua Olson to whom the work was dedicated. This young man was not only the nephew of the outstanding cornet soloist Randy Cox, but had also died at the tender age of 12 in February of this year. Randy Cox did justice to the dedication and to the music in a bravura display of both technical assurance and musical sensitivity.

The band put to test its versatility in William Broughton's *Deep River* (a la Count Basie) and stretched its musical muscle in Kenneth Downie's *Purcell Variations* (last year's testpiece for the Honors Section). Following the presentation of the various awards to soloists and bands came several solo features. The cornets were featured in Steve Bulla's *Concertante*, projecting from the back of the band. Heard at the Gala Concert in Columbus in 1996, I enjoyed hearing this wonderful music again, one of three movements that features a different section of the band; this one made its tribute to J. S. Bach in a glorious and impressive way.

Then on came Steve Sykes to play another memorable performance. It's hard to put into words his contribution

and it was even harder for the band to maintain their concentration and composure during a performance of such brilliance and sheer uproarious hilarity, but they did! The Ellerby concerto was composed for Steve, and his performance was definitive; a work that showcased his superb bel canto tone in the gorgeous slow section and his virtuosity in the fast section following. We all had a taste of this work in Red Wing two years ago but on this occasion it was wonderful to hear it in its complete form. Only someone of Steve's entertaining abilities could have the entire audience spontaneously singing *Edelweiss* (what? at a brass band competition?!!) and only he could play his own version of Monti's *Czardas* with such stunning command of the instrument, the CSB just keeping up with him.

Bill Himes brought the evening festivities to a close with his own arrangement of the *American Civil War Fantasy*. Although we've played and conducted this work many times, I think we all heard new subtleties and colors previously unrealized in this rendition. And then at the close of the performance it was simply worthy congratulations all around and the chance to enjoy an incredible reception laid on by the Pheasant Run Resort and to muse on the weekend as a whole. Thank you Chicago Staff Band and Bill Himes for your fabulous contribution to a great weekend of brass band activity.

Program: *Hillcrest* (B. Broughton); *Gaudete!* (Norbury); *Caprice for Cornet* (Himes), Randy Cox, cornet soloist; *Through My Savior's Merit* (arr. Condon); *Deep River* (W. Broughton); *Purcell Variations* (Downie); *Concertante for Cornets and Band* (Bulla); *Tuba Concerto* (Ellerby), Steve Sykes, tuba soloist; *Czardas* (Monti/Sykes), Steve Sykes, tuba soloist; *American Civil War Fantasy* (Bilik/Himes).

JUDGE'S COMMENTARY

Ron Waiksnoris

The 17th championship gathering of the North American Brass Band Association was a special event in so many ways. Hats are off to the organizational skills of the NABBA Board of Directors and particularly to the members of the Illinois Brass Band who hosted the event.

Rainy weather did little to dampen the spirits of the sixteen competing bands or the vast array of soloists and ensemble competitors

The Pheasant Run was excellent; nice restaurants, a heated swimming pool, New Orleans inspired theme areas and beautifully laid out receptions on Friday and Saturday nights gave a festive atmosphere to the contest scene. The only flaw was the concert hall itself with less than stellar acoustical properties. You can't have everything and what the hall lacked in sound characteristics, the organizers gave back in program content.

The Friday night concert featured the **Illinois Brass Band**. This was as entertaining a program as one could hope for. With a day of contesting ahead, most would agree that some razzamatazz was in order for the welcome concert. There was plenty of fun and excitement, and a real lesson in how to mix light and serious music into a tasty hour and a bit of programming. The IBB doesn't lack for technique or energy, so their imaginative program worked wonderfully. The guest soloists were particularly notable. The two British brass band stars lived up to expectations with Brett Baker displaying a warm fluid trombone approach, and Steve Sykes dazzling the crowd with his mastery of the tuba. The other star of the evening was mezzo-soprano Sarah Holman singing the music of Charles Ives

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with band accompaniment. This was wonderfully successful programming.

Prior to the evening festival, soloists and ensemble competitions were held. Along with Steve Sykes it was my pleasure to adjudicate the Adult Technical Soloists Competition. There was some fine playing throughout the afternoon, but enough unusual choices in repertoire to consider selecting a list of acceptable solos for this event. I didn't have the privilege of hearing the ensembles, but seeing the various winners I would have to say that this was successful in attracting young people which is always the life-blood of this type of organization.

Saturday morning came early as the Challenge Section began competing at 8.30 a.m.! The bands were up to the task for the most part, with a number of fine performances. Most notable were the winners, **St. Louis Brass Band**, who displayed excellent sound and expert musical direction.

The Honors Section competed after a short lunch break and it would be fair to say that all the bands in this category found Erik Leidzen's *Sinfonietta* to be a challenge. The variety of approaches all tended to give speed the edge over clarity and musicality. However, the **Cincinnati Brass Band** was once again in fine form winning this section. Perhaps they will be looking at the Championship Section down the road.

It was a pleasure to come out from behind the adjudicators booth and listen to the Championship Section bands compete. Robert Redhead's *Isaiah 40* was enough of a test that when the *Brass Band of Columbus* gave a competent reading, the audience responded with a standing ovation. The own choice portion of the championship programs were varied and interesting. Stephen Bulla's

new *Earth, Fire and Water* was introduced by the **Sheldon Theater Brass Band** with the composer on hand to enjoy the performance and the **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** took the audience on an exciting ride in George Lloyd's *English Heritage*. Throughout the Championship Section there was a full house and a feeling of support and camaraderie.

The grand finale was the gala concert presented by the **Chicago Staff Band**. Bandmaster Himes had his troops well prepared as they demonstrated a wide variety of Salvation Army music and clearly portrayed the Army's mission to spread the Gospel. Bandmaster Himes and guest soloist Steve Sykes were far better than Abbott & Costello and Laurel & Hardy put together. Their musical wit and outright comedic slapstick routines left the audience breathless from laughter and pure glee.

Special mention should be made of the various vendors who were on hand and who supported the event with advertising in the weekend program.

As with all events the results can be debated, but there can be no debating the success and real excitement created at this event. If your band hasn't attended a NABBA contest before, I highly recommend that you plan to participate in Columbus next year. If it's half as good as the Chicago event, it will be worth your while.

JUDGE'S COMMENTARY

Steve Bulla

Looking back on this year's event gives me new hope for the North American brass band movement. Although the numbers seem to grow slowly, each band seems to make greater strides in technical proficiency each year. That was very enjoyable to observe. As a

judge, I was grateful that we were able to split into teams and concentrate on our assigned sections - as opposed to doing it all in earlier years. This seems to be a solid improvement in practicality.

To my observations, the extensive host duties were carried out in a professional manner and the advance preparations were evident throughout the weekend. Thanks to our friends with IBB for their hard work.

If I were to make two general musical criticisms, it would be about style and intonation. Those two details seem to vex the majority of performances that I heard, and in every competing section. With the abundance of CDs that are available, there should be no excuse for cold and lifeless interpretation or phrasing. Listen to the top section British bands. And tuning problems never go away - those same top bands work very hard at the same notes. Perhaps it's just a higher priority for some more than others.

Finally, it's good to see a sense of community surfacing through the framework of this competition. The geographic distances keep many bands apart from each other normally, so the interaction during the weekend seems to help many see what others are doing, and even generate self-improvement goals for next year's performances. I believe the future looks good for NABBA.

JUDGE'S COMMENTARY

Brian Burditt

The 17th annual NABBA Championship was held this year (April 23-24/99) at the Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois. It was my pleasure to be one of the adjudicators for this busy and excit-

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ing weekend - an experience I thoroughly enjoyed.

The weekend began on Thursday evening with an adjudicator's meeting. It was indeed a pleasure to work with the fine group of adjudicators who had been brought on board for this significant event. Each, in their own right, was one of the leading proponents of brass bands in North America. At the meeting all of the details necessary for a smooth operation and an accurate, objective, consistent and meaningful adjudication were gone over with a fine tooth comb. This time together provided us all with a definite framework in which we would be expected to work.

Friday was solo and small ensemble competition day. I was assigned to the adult slow melody competition and found this quite delightful. The quality of the soloists was worthy of note as all were well prepared and performed admirably. The competition was run in a timely and professional manner.

On Friday evening the **Illinois Brass Band** were the guest band for the Welcome Concert - and what a concert it was. The band's brilliant performance left no doubt as to why they have been winners of the Championship Division for the past three years. A welcome feature of the NABBA Competition is the appearance of guest performing artists. This year Brett Baker (trombone) and Steve Sykes (tuba) dazzled us all with their artistry and musicianship.

Saturday began with an early morning breakfast meeting to ensure that all was in readiness for the band competitions. While I was specifically involved in the Honors and Challenge Divisions, I had the opportunity of hearing the bands entered in the Championship Division as well.

In all divisions the standard of performance seemed higher than my previous experiences with NABBA several years ago. The level of difficulty of the test pieces in all divisions is definitely on the rise and it is perhaps for this reason that the performance standards of most bands is keeping pace. Having said that, it was interesting to note the high degree of proficiency displayed by the band in the "remainder of program" portion of the competition. It was obvious that serious consideration was given to choice of repertoire and the pieces were well rehearsed and convincingly performed.

In preparing for the NABBA Championship I could not help but wonder about the concept of sound that the various bands might have. In the past, I think it is fair to say that some of the bands had developed more of a brass choir or concert band approach. I was pleased to hear that all bands were moving towards that exciting and sonorous sound truly unique to the brass band.

The Gala Concert on Saturday evening featured the Salvation Army **Chicago Staff Band** (Bandmaster William Himes), guest artist Steve Sykes and, of course, the much awaited awards presentation. The band constantly displayed their flexibility and virtuosity in a well received evening of musical excellence. As for the amazing Mr. Sykes, he was just that - amazing.

I cannot finish this report without extending a sincere word of appreciation to Ron Holz and his NABBA staff and Colin Holman and the members of the Illinois Brass Band for a first class event.

JUDGE'S COMMENTARY

Bram Gregson

"It is not hard to compose, but it is wonderfully hard to let the superfluous

notes fall under the table" (Johannes Brahms). I thought of this when I read the score of *Isaiah 40* for the first time. We all know why all those notes are still on the table but nevertheless "so many notes, so few fingers" also came to mind. I need not have been concerned. The five bands in the Championship Section seemed not in the least bit intimidated! The multiplicity of the notes, together with numerous changes in time signature coupled with a formidable twenty-bar accelerando were accommodated with facility. Alas, the Pastoral was not as successful and the desired atmosphere was not evoked as often as one would have liked. However, the performances were of a high standard with kudos to the Brass Band of Columbus who *almost* convinced me to include the Barber *Adagio* in my next season with Intrada Brass!

Now a few words of advice for another event I adjudicated, The Adult Brass Ensembles. I felt that some of the ensembles did not take this too seriously. There was a lack of preparation resulting, I assume, from insufficient rehearsal time. It was evident, also, that there was inadequate mental preparation and, as a consequence, stage presence, composure and tuning were often less than desirable. After all, it is a competition, so why not give it your best shot?

It was a great weekend capped by two enjoyable concerts by the Illinois Brass Band and the Chicago Staff Band, and virtuoso solo performances by Brett Baker and Steve Sykes, both splendid ambassadors for the British brass band movement.

The organizational skills and tireless efforts by the host Illinois Brass Band ensured the success of the event.

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I am impressed by the progress being made by NABBA bands. Their enthusiasm is obvious and the congeniality surrounding the competition is heart-warming. Long may it continue!

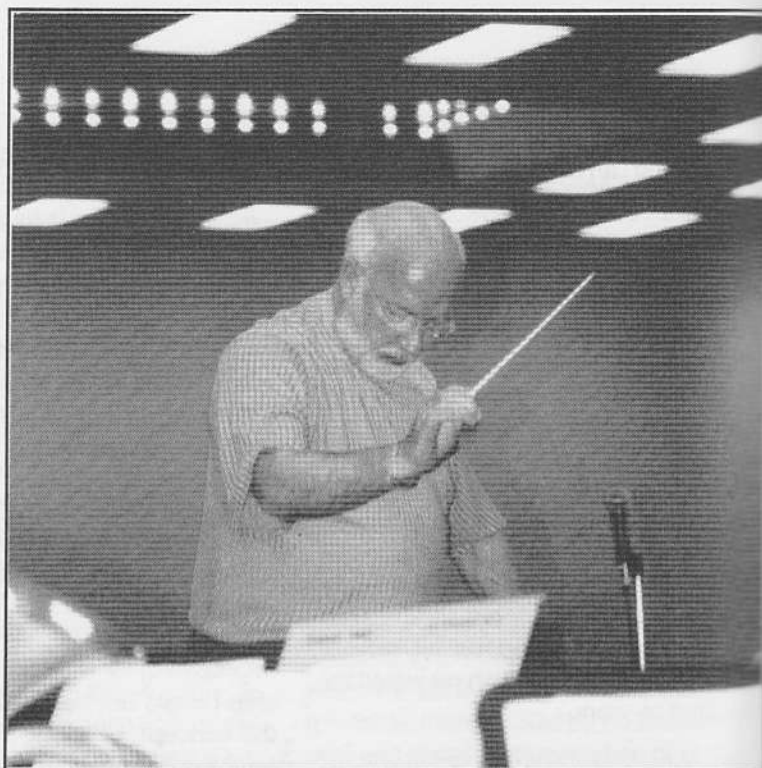
STAFF COMMENTARY

Tom Palmatier

Sitting backstage during NABBA '99, as I have done for the last few championships, gave me a unique opportunity to observe the competition. In no particular order, following are some thoughts about the competition and what they mean for the future of NABBA.

First, the organizational ability, desire to please, and consistent friendliness of our hosts, the Illinois Brass Band, set the tone for the whole weekend. Despite the pressures of performing for adjudicators in a competitive setting, all of the bands appeared relatively relaxed and unhurried as they approached the stage. That and the fact that the day went amazingly close to schedule indicated our hosts had truly created an environment that assisted the bands in focusing on the task at hand. The second thing I noticed was the relative discomfort of the conductors with the performance stage. The stage was actually quite a good performing environment. Bands could hear themselves well and the sound projected to the audience was basically what was heard on stage. Unfortunately, the bad experiences many of us have had with hotel ballrooms and the fact it didn't look like a concert hall led some conductors to not "trust" the room. Thirdly, it seemed like the section groupings were quite accurate. There were few, if any cases where bands clearly belonged one section up, or one section down. Bands had done a good job of selecting the section appropriate to their abilities and/or experience level. This resulted in a very competitive contest and shows bands have an accurate assessment of where they stand.

Indeed, even though most astute observers were probably able to "pick" the winners, there were no cases where a band clearly dominated the section. This is due in part to the test pieces, which truly



Bram Gregson at NABBA99

tested the bands, as evidenced by no one really producing a definitive performance of the test piece. As the Music Committee approaches the task of selecting music for next year, they should consider if the test pieces should be slightly "above" the ability of the bands to really stretch them, or if it should be within their range to truly master. I don't know the right answer but members should take the opportunity to let their views be known to the board. It's your contest - let us know your feelings.

Each of the ten years I have been to NABBA contests, there has been a steady upward trend in quality of performance. This year, what struck me were two cases where bands performed significantly better than they have in recent years. The young men and women from the **North Carolina State University British Brass Band** turned in their strongest performance in years - bravo to them and Dr. Petters. The **Atlantic Brass Band**, a NABBA power over a decade ago, showed a great improvement over last year. If their progress continues they will be a future contender for the crown in the Championship Section.

Finally, in this collection of unrelated observations is one that I am most gratified to make. It's clear that the competition is the centerpiece of NABBA. During my early involvement with NABBA I was most uncomfortable with the competition aspects, feeling it distracted from the music and the satisfaction that should come from

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the music alone. However, having gone through the crucible of competition I saw most clearly how important it is and what a powerful motivator it can be to achieve a higher level of musical performance. That's exactly what I observed at NABBA '99. The forum of the competition provided the impetus to strive for musical excellence, but competitiveness did not seem to hinder or harm the act of musical creativity. The level of good sportsmanship is something we should guard zealously. While brass banding in the United Kingdom provides much for us to emulate the overly competitive atmosphere and occasional poor sportsmanship is something we should not aspire to. Happily, it seems NABBA's on the right path in that regard.

STAFF COMMENTARY

Sara North

Have we all considered that we are, at least in some part, musical junkies? Every year this NABBA member gets in the car to leave NABBA competitions and speculates as to how many people question why a person who doesn't seem to be competing, EVER, keeps coming to NABBA competitions. What the musicians do, what the families of musicians do, what the hosts do, what all of the support people do is born of such love and passion for the 'fine' part of our lives that we have room to pat ourselves on the backs. But let's face it, NABBA is also a musical 'fix'.

The members of NABBA need to rest assured that their board really does make an effort to HEAR complaints and concerns. In an effort to broaden the scope of possible participation in competition, the solo and ensemble venues are offered. This alto (oops, tenor) horn player has harbored a quiet hope of participating in that manner, but has always known that nerves would be, shall we say, a definite difficulty. For the first year this writer was actually able to get to competition soon enough to assist (not by competing) and observe a part of the solo and ensemble competition. Helping out in the slow melody competition venue was a very different experience than staffing the Saturday event. It has always seemed that we all take our NABBA very seriously, and the afternoon bore out that theory. In

NABBA 99 Results

Championship Section Winners:

Brass Band of Columbus

Honors Section Winners:

Cincinnati Brass Band

Challenge Section Winners:

St Louis Brass Band

Youth Division Winners:

Junior Varsity All-Stars

Youth Solo Winner:

Keith Smith (All Star Brass and Percussion)

Adult Technical Solo Winner:

Amy Nelson (Illinois Brass Band)

Adult Slow Melody Winner:

Kevin Cramer (Sunshine Brass Band)

Youth Brass Ensemble Winner:

Fudge&Friends (All Star Brass and Percussion)

Youth Percussion Ensemble Winners:

Estamos Enfuego (All Star Brass and Percussion)

Adult Brass Ensembles:

Prairie Brass Quintet (Prairie Brass Band)

Full details on the NABBA Web Page www.nabba.org

the case of judging the slow melody arena, the difficulty of that judge's task was beyond description because there was, of course, an enormous variety of literature and interpretation. The most common thread for the performers seemed to be, interestingly, the exquisite pain of nervousness. Well, at least my personal concern with that issue made more sense and gained lots of credibility!!

Please, performers, do not misinterpret these comments. The willingness to go the extra miles that committing, preparing and

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performing in these venues displays is a part of the musical fix that we seek. This day gave many a chance to polish the part of themselves that is 'fine', the artfulness within. On Friday, every performance given was also a gift of an artful 'self'. Clearly, the addition of the solo and ensemble competition has added a desirable dimension for many participants, artists and listeners alike!

Hopefully, in this and past years, competition participants have attended at least part of the Reading Band sessions. These sessions serve a variety of valuable purposes. Expanding our

knowledge of available literature need always be a part of our quest for musicality. As a musical 'junkie', I remember wishing that the reading sessions would not end. (Easy for a non-competing 'junkie to wish) The chance to get out our horns and sit down to 'play' (sorry, no other word came to mind) with other musicians is always genuinely joyous. As importantly, the opportunity to meet other NABBA 'junkies' is presented at these reading sessions. Time spent in conversing about common concerns, practices, concerts, etc., benefits us all. We are pioneers in American Brass Banding (although those of us who live in lesser populated areas are definitely on more difficult turf) and if we won't be each other's 'support group' then? Incidentally, DID you make any new NABBA acquaintances this year?

Are you a member of a band that has accepted the enormous responsibility of hosting a competition? If yes, does that then make following competitions less stressful in a number of ways? Do you have an increased understanding of the difficulty in coordinating all of that activity? Have you become more tolerant of the fact that every site will offer its own difficulties as well as strengths? By now, the majority of attendees understand that Saturday has a comfortable 'rhythmic flow', (within the context of a whole lot of 'jangling musical nerves') following a now familiar outline of the 'normal' competition day. Enormous accolades go to the members of IBB for their attention to every detail concerning Saturday's event(s). The day ran extremely smoothly from a purely mechanical point of view. From a musical point of view, the move toward 'pushing the envelope' as far as difficulty is concerned is pressing ahead. Musicians who haven't attended competition for some time would be quite surprised. There have been, and are, those who question the validity of time spent in preparing test pieces of this difficulty. However there is personal growth in accepting uncomfortable challenges and meeting the occasion. That challenge, and the pride from the challenge 'well done' is undoubtedly part of our musical 'fix'. Well done, musicians, it was a glorious day!

Every year, the Gala Concert is another musical gift that participants receive from our hosts. This year,

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Guest soloist Steve Sykes

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YOUTH COMMENTARY

Kay Korting

IBB generously chose to offer two such gifts, in the form of Friday and Saturday night's concerts. Thank you so much! Not being able to compete had to offer conflicting ramifications to these band members and the concert was a perfect solution to that dilemma, as well as offering a means to support their purse for the weekend. (Yes folks, Chicago is expensive for those who live there as well, and IBB put themselves 'waaaaay' out on a limb in order to invite us to their home.) One can only suppose that the British 'roots' which we enjoy are the source of the humor which seems to be an integral part of these concerts. Naming names might be dangerous, but surely concert attendees came away with the same sense of satisfaction that is derived not only from WONDERFUL solo and ensemble presentations, but also the release of laughing at ourselves and the interplay on stage. WELL, even purists need 'entertainment value'! Perhaps part of the 'fix' is that we know we're not going to get that humor at home!

Collectively, NABBA Competitions have grown in several arenas. Adding solo and ensemble opportunities and a somewhat regular Friday evening routine are components in this process. The organization needs to refine a method of passing on the knowledge that 'hosting' provides. If there are 'mysteries' about certain methods or processes, it is hoped that people will just ASK for information! How WAS your weekend? If you heard new music, met new people and were consistently WOWED by quality musical offerings, yes, including your own, than you came away satisfied, and feeling that you had received your 'musical fix' and a chance to enhance, at least a bit, the 'artfulness' in your soul.

I am sixteen years old, live in Columbus, Ohio, play the cornet, and I'd like to share some understanding of what it's like for the teens of NABBA and All Star Brass Bands to participate in North American brass band competitions.

The season for us is a giant whirlwind that sweeps into our lives in the beginning of winter. We don't have guaranteed positions in any of the three All Star bands; we each come from different middle and high schools and have to "fight" for our places in one of the three All Star bands. We are graded by the talented staff of the All Stars and given a chair, unbeknownst to us until our first rehearsal. Every year, every band is different. We don't have the luxury of knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses going into each practice; our playing shifts over time, and so do our personalities, which affects how well we mesh as a band.

The first rehearsal is a cascade of talking-- usually mostly about forms, rules, and instrument rentals (another aspect: we don't have the luxury of owning our instruments, and most of the players play a wood ensemble instrument like trumpet every weekday at school). We get to know each other again, find out what people did over the summer, and how well people's marching bands did at various contests around Ohio. That is the first week of nineteen; two hours, and we haven't even played yet!

In the following weeks we go to practice one evening a week for two hours or more. We sight-read a number of pieces; we know what we'll be playing at contest for a few months. After the initial weekly wave of practices, we go to our first weekend together as a group in the secluded hills of southern Ohio for a quiet time to get to know each other and

the music we play. At the end of this weekend, our parents show up to take us home, and we play our first concert as a group for them. Usually, that is the halfway point in our season.

After weeks of more practice, the three All Star groups converge in one building on a weekend afternoon in a concert for our parents and sometimes our school band directors. By this time we know what we are playing and are starting to wear down on the rough notes, the bad tuning, and the wrong rhythms. There are usually three weekend concerts, with a few practices in between to work out the kinks in the system. The last concert at home is our most important: our adjudication concert where everything comes together, and we know if the pieces will 'work' or not.

A week after this concert, (some time in April, only six months after the bands form) we're on buses to our destination, NABBA Championships, each band to a bus. Jokes abound, and there are outbursts of elation and sometimes pain whenever anyone brings up the subject of wanting to watch Monty Python and the Holy Grail, the all-time favorite and frequently overplayed video of many teens. We pause at least every few hours; our first major stop is at a University near our destination where we disperse for lunch, play for the professors there, and receive yet more comments on what we can do to polish our pieces. I can tell you from experience that this is the time when the members of the band bond the most. Ironically, the bands usually disperse for the summer a week later after their last meeting back at home.

When we finally do get to the Contest and our hotels in the evening, we relax for a bit before going to practice for that night

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for an hour or two. It's coming down to the wire, and the excitement of Contest is taking over. This is what we have been practicing for since November; this is what we have been looking forward to since the year before.

We don't train to play for the community very much; we don't have the luxury or the experience to do that very much. We have been training for this singular event, and there is nothing that will stand in our way. The mentality of "Oh, even if we don't do well at NABBA Championships, we can still have another concert and get better" is non-existent. There is one shot; one chance. This is a different band from the previous year, and this is that band's one moment to shine.

When it finally comes down to the moment when an All Star band is playing

their concert before the NABBA judges, the other two bands are there along with all the staff and the parents from all the bands. No one in the crowd is ever disappointed.

After each of the bands have played, we huddle back to our hotel rooms and dress up in the Gala Concert clothes we've brought. After we have all dressed in our finest, we head to the Gala Concert to wait for the news of the placings. Everyone believes that each of the bands have a shot at a good placing, and many times when the intermission arrives during the concert, we are rewarded for our efforts. Many times, we are not. But that's the way it goes.

We know that we're underdogs in our categories just because of our age. That does not mean we play like underdogs. We want to win and play well not only for ourselves, but for each other. In the top

band, All Star Brass And Percussion, the performance and the effort is for the Seniors of the band; this is their last chance for the experience, and it should be their best. For Contest, each of us strives for some sort of perfection in our parts; we strive to blend and weave with each other in the delicate dance of musicianship. It is a very difficult dance to learn, and some day I hope I will be as versed as my mentors. It will take a long time, I know, but I (and we, the All Stars) are willing to learn.

In the All Stars, we somehow learn about more than music through our teachers. Much of what we learn as musicians applies to our everyday lives. I have tried to tell non-musical people about being an All Star, and it is hard to come up with the right words to describe it. I'm sure that talent, spirit, and pride are the words that come to mind the most.

1999 Western Regional Brass Band Festival: NABBA Las Vegas has a date!!!

The new Cashmen Theater has been booked for October 30, 1999 and the **Las Vegas Brass Band** will host NABBA Las Vegas! Now that the date has been set the work begins. Las Vegas is one of the best convention cities in the nation. The cost of getting there is relatively inexpensive and rooms are not as expensive as found in the rest of the USA. With the lure of gambling the casinos have kept the price of rooms and meals to a minimum. One can have a fabulous meal for around \$10.00 at the casinos and great rooms are well under \$100.00 a night. Also flights to Las Vegas are very fair when booked early enough. We have already made arrangements for groups of over 10 to receive special rates on several of the airlines. Preliminary plans are for arrival on October 29 with departure on October 31. All day and evening of October 30th will be taken up with activities of the NABBA Las Vegas Brass Band Festival. Now that the date has been set be sure to check your emails for updates and you can direct queries to me:

Ralph P. Hotz, Telephone (602) 583-6020
E-mail rphotz@worldnet.att.net

The season finale on Saturday, May 8, 1999 at the Glenn Gould Studio, Toronto of the ambitious **Intrada Brass** (Bram Gregson) concert season proved to be outstanding and fully up to the expectations of the near capacity audience. Guest soloist Philip Smith, as expected, lived up to his reputation as one of the world's great trumpet players. And Intrada matched him note for note with outstanding accompaniments and most interesting solo presentations.

Smith played the *Concerto for Trumpet* by Alexander Arutyunyan, the first Canadian performance of the brass band arrangement; Bruce Broughton's *Excursions for Trumpet and Band*, a world premiere; and *Share My Yoke*, an Ivor Bosanko arrangement of the Joy Webb song. Smith invited David Robertson, principal cornet of Intrada, to join him for an encore, the brilliant duet *Arabesque*, composed by Joseph Turrin for the Childs Brothers. David teamed up well with Philip in a scintillating performance. It is difficult to avoid gushing in commenting on Phil Smith's playing. His sound is warm and colorful in all ranges and dynamics; his technique is flawless again through the full spectrum of the instrument; and it is all melded together with artistry of the highest subtlety. And yet the presentation is the utmost in simplicity, seemingly produced with no effort or

strain. His brief Bible based comments prior to playing *Share my Yoke* were heartfelt and gave an insight into how he finds the personal strength to function at the very top of his profession. What a joy to listen to a truly great artist at the peak of his powers!

Intrada's solo portion of the program was well chosen to present the possibilities inherent in the brass band format. The music was interesting and free from the narrowly technical demands often a part of brass band pieces. This is not to say that the music did not make technical demands, but they were in service of the music, not as a demonstration of technical brilliance. From their first number, Canadian Douglas Court's *Prelude on "Laudes Domini"*, to the finale, Ken Downie's *Purcell Variations*, the band played with good style, excellent rhythm and dynamics and, most importantly, confidence and conviction. This may have been the most challenging program yet played by Intrada and they met the challenge with flying colors. The playing of the trombone section was as good or better than I have heard them with good teamwork, drive and intensity, all well matched by the rest of the ensemble.

Because of the requirements of the Glenn Gould Studio, the program had to be played without an intermission, placing

great stamina demands on the players which led to the minor intonation problems sometimes present in the centre of the band, none of which seriously deterred from the fine music making. Intrada also played the *Fantasy for Brass band* by Malcolm Arnold, its first Canadian performance; Gary Kulesha's *Romance for Brass Band*; *Covenant* by Bruce Broughton; and Joseph Turrin's *Hymn for Diana*, also a Canadian first. Composer Bruce Broughton was in attendance and must have been gratified both by the warm applause for him from the capacity audience, but more so for the brilliant interpretation by the band and soloist of his *Excursions for Trumpet and Band* and for the band's outstanding presentation of *Covenant*.

Intrada and Bram Gregson, along with the members of their board are to be congratulated for this concert and for the progress they have made both musically and organizationally during their brief life. This is after all a completely amateur band but their performances are very, very close to the professional standards set by The Hannaford Street Silver Band. We look forward with much interest to their next season.

David W. Buckley.

NOTE: NEW NABBA RENEWAL DATE!!

March 1

This date holds for all members and member bands

ALL Registrations at NABBA will be based on Secretary Bert Wiley's Listing. Be sure you and your band are renewed

You may be charged a registration fee at NABBA if you are not registered by that time.

New members registering during the year will be eligible for back issues of the Bridge where available

Contact Bert Wiley at:

P.O. Box 2438,

789 Pressley Cr. Rd,

Cullowhee, NC 28723

Telephone: (828) 293-7469; E-mail bert@bernelmusic.com

The fifth annual McMaster Low Brass Workshops were held in Hamilton, Ontario, on April 9 and 10, 1999, and the addition of U.M.I. and Long and McQuade Music as sponsors along with the continuing support of Yamaha Canada and Lakeshore Music of Burlington has broadened the scope of the workshops, giving a more varied display of instruments and also giving access to different clinicians. Yamaha are to be thanked for their participation in this event for the first five years of its existence and for their willingness to give up their name in the title. This kind of co-operation is a good omen for the continuing success of the workshops as they enter their second five years.

Clinicians this year included John Marcellus, a Benge trombone artist, who brought along the entire Eastman Trombone Choir; Don Harry, a Yamaha tuba artist, the tuba player of the Buffalo Philharmonic and tuba teacher at Eastman; Alastair Kay, a King trombone artist and the Director of Brass at Humber College as well as lead trombone in the

Boss Brass; Jerry Johnson, a Yamaha bass trombone artist and the bass trombone in the Boss Brass and the Hannaford Street Silver Band; Robert Miller, euphonium with the Salvation Army Canadian Staff Band and the Intrada Brass; and Marc Donatelle, principal trombone with the New Hamilton Orchestra.

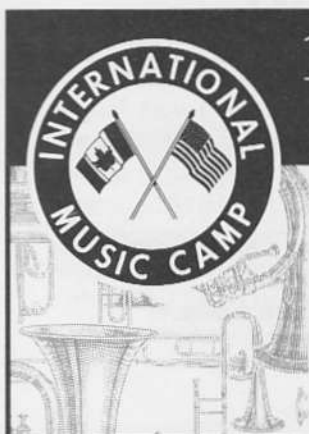
Throughout the day on Saturday the clinicians provided an outstanding series of clinics and workshops beginning at 9:00 a.m. with warm-ups led by Al Kay and concluding at 5:00 p.m. with three trombone choirs and a tuba euphonium choir so everyone got a chance to try out what they had learned throughout the day. The mock audition clinic proved to be one of the highlights of the day. Three volunteers, 2 tubas and a trombone, along with three conscripted trombones from Eastman played for a panel composed of Don Harry, John Marcellus, Jerry Johnson and Marc Donatelle. The wisdom imparted by the panel was priceless and useful for all in attendance, whatever their playing level. Al Kay as-

sisted by John Marcellus, Rob Somerville, Jerry Johnson and a few others demonstrated their jazz skills and entertained everyone through the lunch hour. Jerry Johnson in his trombone choir managed in only one hour to introduce a bunch of tied-to-the-notes players to the beginnings of improvisation, give us an ear training exercise and provide some ensemble playing practice. Other clinics for all the low brass instruments focused on many and varied aspects of playing, practising and performing.

The workshops began with the Antal Dvorak Trombone Soloist Competition on Friday afternoon. The winner was Brad Ritson, a student of Frank Harmantas at the University of Toronto with Alex Eddington coming second. Brad received his prize of a Yamaha Silent Brass System at the evening concert and played the Guilman *Morceau Symphonique* with which he had won the contest.

The Friday evening concert also featured

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1999 International Brass Band Camp July 31-August 3, 1999 • International Music Camp

At the International Peace Garden on the US-Canadian border near Dunseith, North Dakota

Guest Brass Band Conductor - Dr. Paul Droste

Full Group Rehearsals • Sight Reading • Ensembles
Private Lessons with Artist Instructors • Grand Finale Concert

Brass Band Workshop

\$110 (US Funds) for tuition, meals and lodging.
\$10 (US Funds) per private lesson.

For More Information Contact:
Joe Alme, Director,
International Music Camp
1-701-263-4211

NABBA
NORTH AMERICAN BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Don Harry as tuba soloist along with the Eastman Trombone Choir. Don astounded the audience with his artistry in the Bach *Cello Suite No. 5* and, accompanied by the trombone choir, the Vaughan Williams *Tuba Concerto*. The Eastman ensemble began the evening with *Four Preludes* by Shostakovich and, after intermission played *Mood Indigo* honoring the year of the Duke, the Saint-Saëns *Adagio* and Grieg's *Landerkennug*, opus 31. A good start to the workshop demonstrating both outstanding solo playing and great ensemble work.

The Saturday evening Gala Concert featured John Marcellus and Alastair Kay as soloists, the Slide Rule Trombone Ensemble and The Hamilton Symphonic Brass. Marcellus, an American playing in Canada, gave the program an international flavor when, using a British-recorded piano accompaniment on a CD by Warwick Music, he played a composition by the Frenchman Ferdinand David, *Concertino for Trombone*-- not a bad four nation parley! John switched to his jazz

mode in the second half with Michael Davis' *Code Red*, also using CD accompaniment. Al Kay, accompanied by the Hamilton Symphonic Brass conducted by David Buckley, played the delightful ballad *Laura* in the first half and Pryor's *Air Varie* after intermission. All solo items were very well received by the near capacity audience.

The Slide Rule Trombone Ensemble, a group of sixteen pros, semi pros and students from the Golden Horseshoe area who played their first concert in Toronto last December, played the *Pilgrim's Chorus* from *Tannhauser*, Bach's *Passacaglia in C minor*, Elizabeth Raum's *Processional Fanfare* and the "Double Fugue" from Mozart's *Requiem*. This group, conducted by young conductor Misha Rohac, showed a high level of artistry and skill along with great endurance.

Slide Rule joined with members of the Brass Choir to end the first half with Gabrielli's *Sonata XX a 22* arranged for five antiphonal choirs by Marc Donatelle. With one choir on stage, two choirs at either side of the auditorium and two in

the balcony, the glorious sounds filled the room and surrounded the audience. The sixteen trombones also joined the brass to play the chorale in Michael Allen's arrangement of *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*.

The Hamilton Symphonic Brass, all working professionals from the Golden Horseshoe region, opened the evening with the *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* and closed the program with *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a tour de force when played by a brass choir. These two Michael Allen arrangements gave the brass players a chance to play familiar music with a fresh face. The players enjoyed the challenge and the audience enjoyed the music.

Comments were very positive with the most common being a request for dates for next year. It looks as though this event is well on the way to becoming a part of the musical scene in this area for many years.

David W. Buckley

New Music for Brass Band

Rosehill Music

A Little Prayer (Evelyn Glennie, arranged by Robert Childs), 1999. Easy. 2:00. Full score. Two separate percussion parts.

Evelyn Glennie wrote this miniature in 1994 as a chorale for marimba, and then requested that Robert Childs score the work for brass band. The work remains in concert B flat throughout its brief duration and only the euphoniums and tubas play continuously; thus it would provide some welcome relief both aurally

and physically for everyone. The simply melody which falls consistently in two measure phrases appears first in the flugelhorn, tenor horn and euphonium and climaxes two thirds of the way through the piece. Rhythmically simple, the music has a charming naivete about it, yet would also be useful as a training tool for good quality sound, balance and intonation, so the difficulty level of "easy" could be misinterpreted. It can be heard in the recording *Hymns and Marches* by **Brighouse and Rastrick Band** (David Hirst) Doyen CD 056 reviewed in this issue.

Whistle Down the Wind (Andrew Lloyd

Webber, arranged by Ray Farr), 1999. Easy. 3:45. Full score.. Two separate percussion parts; one requires drum set.

This title song from the musical has been set by Ray Farr in an immediately engaging manner. The low brass and percussion provide the underpinning for an arrangement that begins after a brief introduction with a short cornet solo. Throughout the ideas are effectively doubled with some nice counterpoint in the euphonium part. Lower cornets and trombones have harmonic lines that re-

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quire cup mutes. Whether playing a concert of lighter music or one that features a series of show melodies, this item will be quickly read and enjoyed.

Studio Music

ABBA Selection (arranged by Frank Bryce), reissue from 1997. Moderate. 10:00. Short score.

Studio reissued this arrangement from the 70s featuring hits from the Swedish pop group ABBA (that shot to fame with their win at the Eurovision Song Contest) in a new large format to coincide with the London West End success of *Mama Mia*. The medley includes *Money, Money, Money*, *I Have A Dream*, *Fernando*, and *Thank You For The Music*. Although I was only supplied with the Conductors (Short) Score, the writing appears to be typical Frank Bryce; well scored and effectively balanced. I'm personally not exactly sure how much the music of this group has dated in this country, but certainly if you are planning a theme concert (which a number of brass bands have been doing in North America), or playing to an audience that would appreciate this selection, then it's bound to be well received. ABBA's big hit *Waterloo* isn't in this medley, but those that are receive a good work out.

Instant Concert (Harold L. Walters), reissue from 1973. Moderately easy. 3:10. Short score.

I also only received the short score to this work, but have played it many times (and conducted it a couple) that I can attest to its effectiveness. The concept is that of a piece that will appeal to listeners with a wide variety of tastes; except that it has the effect of a medieval *quodlibet*; let's a short snippets of familiar tunes that come in quick succession and go equally quickly to delight and

amuse the audience. It works well as a concert closer, or a mid-concert novelty, perhaps where the audience gets to guess how many tunes (30) are packed into just over three minutes of entertaining music. Highly enjoyable to play and to listen to; it will (in part) quell the audience critics who say you haven't played a tune they know or can hum!

Salute to Sinatra (arranged by Philip Harper), 1999. Moderately difficult. 9:30. Full score. Percussion in two parts; Timp/Vibes, Drum Set.

This tribute to "Ol' blue eyes" incorporates *All the Way*, *Love and Marriage*, *Three Coins in a Fountain*, *My Way*, and *New York, New York*. It doesn't matter where you sit in the band for a Philip Harper arrangement; everyone is challenged both technically and musically, and this arrangement doesn't make many short cuts. It presents five well known Sinatra tunes with something for everyone. There are lots of interesting scoring effects, solos for trombone (*All the Way*), cornet (*Love and Marriage*), tenor horns (*Three Coins*), euphonium (*My Way*) and the big band style finish for *New York, New York*. A wonderful tribute especially at this time of great nostalgia for Sinatra's music; certain to be popular with audiences if your band can handle the technical and stylistic demands that this medley requires.

Euphonium Solo: *Kol Nidrei* (Max Bruch, arranged by Bram Gay), 1998. Solo: difficult; Band accompaniment: moderately difficult. 11:30. Full score; percussion limited to timpani.

Max Bruch composed three violin concertos, the *Scottish Fantasy*, and the *Kol Nidrei* variations, all for solo string instruments with orchestral accompaniment--*Kol Nidrei* is a staple work for the solo cellist, derived from the Hebrew prayer for the evening of the Day of Atonement. As part of the Novello Se-

ries, Bram Gay has faithfully transcribed this distinctive work, retaining as much of the original cello register as possible in writing for the solo euphonium, but providing alternative octaves to the material that stretches the upper register of the solo instrument. The solo part covers a three octave range and demands the full expressive capabilities of the soloist together with a demanding sensitive accompaniment from the band. This would be an impressive solo feature for a top-level soloist (Steven Mead gave the first performance) and there are plenty of recordings of the original on which to base your approach and interpretation.

Euphonium Solo: *Jean-Elizabeth* (Goff Richards), 1999. Solo: moderately difficult; Band accompaniment: moderate. 3:45. Full score; three percussion parts.

There's no shortage of brass band solos for the solo euphonium, and here's another charming addition from the pen of Goff Richards; a slow melody solo with opportunities for expressive playing and a sustained accompaniment. There's a short opening statement from the soloist followed by band interlude. Then a middle section follows building to a more agitated passage before the music quietly concludes. There's also a short cadenza for the soloist which is responded to by solo cornet. The requirements for trombones and cornets of cup mutes and harmon mutes adds color to the accompaniment. This is a work that is not as easy as it initially seems, yet would provide some nice contrast from the more traditional technical type of solo. If I have one criticism (not specifically of this piece), it's that publishers tell us little or nothing about the titles and the dedications. I wish that I didn't have to stand up in front of an audience and seem like I didn't do my homework! Perhaps there's also something to be

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said for a work with an enigmatic title, but the obvious beauty of the writing is surely a reflection of what I assume to be the titled lady.

Puttin' On the Ritz (Irving Berlin, arranged by Goff Richards), 1999. Moderate. 2:45. Short score; two percussion parts, with optional vibraphone.

Goff Richards has set this 1929 classic in a manner which alternates the Charleston with a swing style so that there are not too many rhythmic or range problems to deal with and the arrangement will read quite quickly for most, if not all, bands. There's a short 8 measure written out jazz-style solo for the solo cornet and the typical optional "fill" for the set player at the end. The vibraphone part will probably be heard to greater effect if played on the optional xylophone as mentioned in the score. As for the jazz style in general, the rhythms are notated as they are intended to be played, so there's no need for too much "interpretation." This will be another effective welcome addition to the repertoire for bands and audiences alike.

American Band Journal:

Christmas 1998. As has been previously mentioned, this series comes with enormous flexibility on the part of the performers with optional soprano cornet, flugelhorn, baritone, bass trombone and percussion, so that the music could be performed with as few as nine players. There are only two B flat cornet parts, though the first is usually divisi. The series can also be adapted for concert band or orchestra. It is boldly and clearly printed with excellent rehearsal and program notes.

March: *Christmas Rejoicing* (William Gordon). [reviewed at the NABBA99 Reading Band]

Cornet Solo: *Huron Carol* (Kevin Norbury). 2:45. Full score. Moderate.

This traditional melody has been set by Norbury in a sensitive and most effective manner. There are essentially two verses accompanied by contrasting harmony and orchestration to which the soloist takes the theme in both, interrupted by a climactic interlude. The dorian theme is comfortably written for the soloist, though the interlude does reach up to a high B (written pitch). A delightful and well known melody with which to feature one of your cornet players.

Go Tell It (Leonard Ballantine). Moderate. 2:30. Full score.

This setting of the well known spiritual doesn't look too difficult on paper but it will be helpful to have a number of read throughs at a much slower tempo to get all the rhythms exactly in the right place before attempting the tempo marked of 176 which will be driven forward by some confident percussion playing. All the swing rhythms are notated as dotted eighth and sixteenth combinations, and there are a couple of syncopated places to trap the best! The best advice is included in the rehearsal notes; don't overdo it--don't underdo it!

Trepak from The Nutcracker (Tchaikovsky, transcribed by Keith Wilkinson). Moderately difficult. 1:00. Full score.

Another detailed arrangement of the ever popular Christmas favorite, omitting the final accelerando (most of us would do it anyway!) but effectively detailed and balanced. Everyone plays almost continually throughout this item but endurance shouldn't be a problem since it is fairly brief in duration. The arrangement does cut a few corners but without sacrificing. Those of you afraid to try the Sparke arrangement might certainly find this one a bit more manageable.

Wright & Round

Prologue and Main Title from Battlestar Galactica (Stu Phillips and Glen Larson, arranged by Leigh Anthony Phillips), 1998. Moderately difficult. 3:00. Full score. Three percussion parts utilizing full percussion.

Although I am not a follower of *Battlestar Galactica*, this arrangement takes two themes from the TV series (developed from a sci-fi film) and turns them into an impressive though difficult concert item. Following bold opening unison fanfares, the prologue is a "sinuous" solo for flugelhorn followed by the main theme which is both fanfare and march-like. The arrangement seems a bit treacherous at first but with a little work would be effective especially in a theme concert; it demands full bold playing from all sections, a full sounding ensemble and all percussion covered as notated for greatest effect.

Simple Gifts (Arranged by Katie Bell), 1998. Moderately difficult. 5:45. Full score. Two percussion parts (timpani/glockenspiel).

This item reads as a direct transcription of the final section of *Appalachian Spring*—"Variations on a Shaker Melody" with the coda to the ballet music attached. Since it's well known by bands and audiences alike, I suspect it will and should be featured often. But beware! It demands skillful soprano cornet playing (very high and exposed throughout) and great control from the whole band, especially towards the end when the music calls for very sustained playing at a low dynamic level.

Also received from *Studio Music* is the previously reviewed *Concertino for Flugelhorn* (William Himes) now available with piano accompaniment.

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Note: Nominee must be member in good standing of NABBA

Statement of Nominee's background and brass band experience (or attached 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.

Signature of Nominee _____ Date _____

First Nominator's Signature _____ Printed Name _____

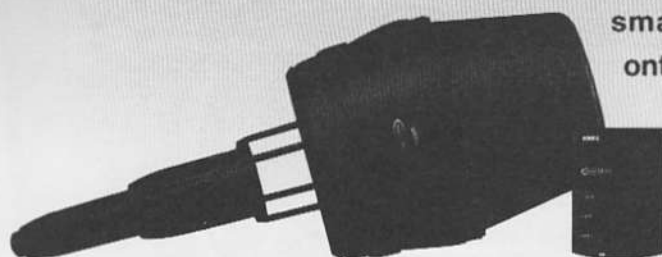
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This form may be duplicated as needed. Return the application by July 15, 1999 to: Bert Wiley, NABBA Membership Chair, PO Box 2438, 798 Pressley Cr. Rd, Cullowhee, NC 28723, marked BOARD NOMINATION FORM

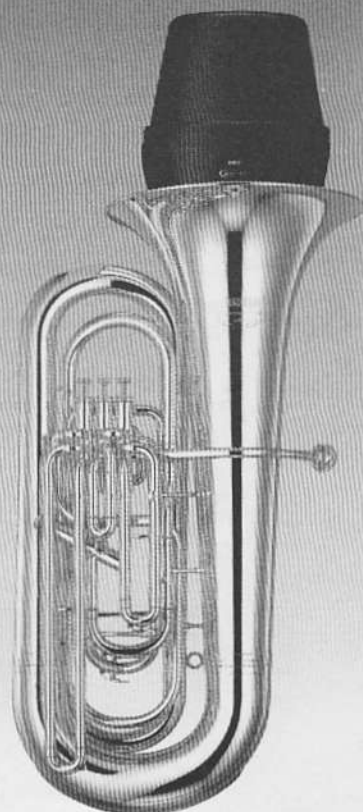
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