

The

BrassBand Bridge



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and intellectual

second - MAURICE RAVEL

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The Brass Band Bridge: Official Journal of the North American Brass Band Association

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

In this issue, you can briefly review the testpiece selections, see how the adjudicators are prepared in advance to judge the bands, soloists and ensembles, read how you might consider preparing for brass band competition in North America as a first time entrant, and take suggestions for your band's own choice literature. Your band should have received contest rules by now. Please ensure that you follow directions and deadlines carefully. Address contest concerns to our new Contest Controller John de Salme. Join me in also congratulating Anita Cocker Hunt for being voted in as the new NABBA President, as well as showing gratitude to Tom Palmatier for his many contributions and excellent leadership over the past couple of years.

Finally, please note that I will be an adjudicator for NABBA XX--and honored to be selected among such illustrious company. While I am always happy (indeed eager) to receive your band news, programs, accomplishments etc to put into print, please ensure over the next six months that my ability adjudicate fairly will not be compromised.

Colin Holman, Editor

NORTH AMERICAN BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION

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Brass Band Bridge

Greetings to all NABBA bands and members. My words at this time will be brief, due to the urgency of getting this current issue to print.

A special thanks to Major Tom Palmatier has led us through two years of continued growth and given us outstanding leadership. I also want to thank the past

board officers and board members who work so hard, bringing to our meetings your ideas and concerns. They are heard, discussed, and decided upon. These members give of their time and efforts to further the cause of NABBA.

In the next issue of *The Bridge*, I'd like to expound on the future goals of NABBA, the directions we are going, and the

active committees we have working throughout the year.

I am pleased to be elected your new president and will do all I can to make NABBA and brass banding in North America the best that it can be.

Anita Cocker Hunt, President

MARK YOUR DIAIRES!

NABBA XX

April 12-13, 2002

Cincinnati OH

Hosted by the **Cincinnati Brass Band**

see the competition website for all information

<http://w3.one.net/~jwclymer/nabba/>

Gala Concert by the **Brass Band of Battle Creek**

Geoffrey Brand, Frank Renton, James Curnow, Steve Bulla, Bram Gregson and Colin Holman, adjudicators

NABBA XXI

April 11-12, 2003

Little Rock AR

Hosted by **Solid Brass**

Gala Concert by the
Grimethorpe Colliery Band

NABBA XXII

April 16-17, 2004

St Louis MO

Hosted by the **St Louis Brass Band**

In collaboration with a
**Gala International
Brass Band Festival**

The **Cincinnati Brass Band** (Anita Cocker Hunt) performed concerts at Sharonville Ohio's Sharon Woods Heritage Village (6/17); at Ashland, KY for the Brass Band and Hot Dog Festival (6/23); and at Edgewood Kentucky's President's Park (6/26). On July 20 & 21 the CBB will perform with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra (Eric Kunzel) at Cincinnati's Riverbend Center for the Performing Arts. Performances with the CPO will be preceded with a short concert by the Band. Pieces performed with the CPO include "Mars" from *The Planets* (Holst), Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, and John Williams's *Theme from Star Wars*. The CBB has also been engaged to perform in February 2002, for the fourth time, with the Cincinnati Pops at Music Hall. In August (8/4) the CBB will perform a concert at The Proctor and Gamble Pavillion on Cincinnati's Riverfront.

The **Commonwealth Brass Band** (Jerry Amend) gave the North American premiere of a new Philip Sparke march at the Ashland (KY) Brass Band Festival on June 23. The work is "Navigation Inn", commissioned for Navigation Brass, which is made up of former championship players and competes in the annual Whit Friday contests in Lancashire, England, donating prize money to charity. Commonwealth received the music for the concert march from Nan Moore, a CBB tenor horn player. She has been band director at Male High School for 23 years, and her symphonic band has been chosen as one of five high school bands from around the world to perform at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago in December. In searching for repertoire to perform at the international band and orchestra clinic and concert, Moore began extensive and enjoyable e-mail "conversations" with Sparke. She had told him of her involvement with Commonwealth and he offered to send the just-

completed brass band arrangement for "Navigation Inn" an offer from "a very nice man" that she was quick to accept. Commonwealth Music Director Amend describes the piece as "a rowdy, good bit of fun for the performer and listener in the best tradition of the British march." For the fifth straight year, CBB provided the music for the annual Queen's Birthday Garden Party given by the Kentucky Branch of the English-Speaking Union in Louisville on June 17, 2001. The band performed a variety of typical British music and watched somewhat enviously as the party-goers sipped champagne and dined on delicate goodies.

The **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** hosted their seventh annual Grand Celebration of Brass Bands this summer. Their two latest CDs have sold exceedingly well. They played concerts this summer in Johnson County, West Branch (twice), Cedar Falls, Clear Lake, Corydon, and Fulton, IL. This fall they give three concerts in Mount Vernon, as well as others in Washington (IA.) and Marshalltown.

The **Illinois Brass Band** had an active summer, playing concerts in Mundelein, West Chicago, Vernon Hills, Grayslake, and the Grand Celebration of Brass Bands in Cedar Rapids IA. One of their summer highlights was at the Wheaton Band Festival, an all day long festival of band music where their performance included the Bourgeois *Trombone Concerto* with Eric Carlson from the Philadelphia Orchestra who grew up in Wheaton. The band recently parted company with MD Colin Holman after eight very successful years together. The search for a new MD is underway, as well as plans for a ten year anniversary concert.

The **Spires Brass Band** (John Slezak) received some prominent publicity following their success in the Challenge

Division of NABBA XIX this year. As well as an article in the Frederick (MD) *News*, they received front page coverage and a two page article in the *Frederick Senior* magazine, outlining the band's history.

The **Triangle Brass Band** performed in concert on June 24, 2001 at Greenwood Forest Baptist Church in Cary, North Carolina. This concert was a celebration of the release of their newest CD "Instruments of Praise." The Band performed several selections from the CD. Dr. Jack Fuller from NC State University has served as Director during the summer. The July 3rd Independence Celebration at Rocky Mount, North Carolina provided an enjoyable venue for the Band to perform several of their favorite marches. The Band opened the evening's activities at the Rocky Mount Athletic Stadium. After their hour-long concert, the mayor introduced the evening's sponsors. The Band then performed the National Anthem as a color guard presented the American Flag. The Band is now taking a summer break and will begin their Fifteenth Anniversary season in September. The anniversary concert will be November 3rd. Special guests will be Phil Smith as soloist and Jack Stamp as conductor. Jack was Music Director of the Band before moving to Pennsylvania. We are planning an exciting evening as we celebrate our beginnings and look to our future.

The **Triangle Youth Brass Band** completed their season with a concert on May 18th in the Sertoma Amphitheatre in Cary, North Carolina. Three of the eight seniors recognized that evening have been members of the Band since it's beginning. Tony Granados led the students in wide range of music from "Festive Overture" to Broadway tunes.

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NABBA 2002 Testpieces

CHAMPIONSHIP LEVEL

Cambridge Variations (Philip Sparke).
Studio Music, 1992. Time 14:45-15:30

Published in 1992 for the All England Brass Band Championships held in Cambridge in May of that year. It uses fairly comprehensive percussion spread over three parts. Timpani very important. The basis of the variations are the six musical notes found in the word 'Cambridge' (CABDGE). The work falls into five sections (variations) which are derived from these six notes. The first section contains a chorale with cornet ostinato. This leads to molto vivace with a robust tune in the baritones and euphoniums, followed by an interlude featuring each section of the band in turn. The

slow section follows with an expressive cornet melody, restated later by the flugel, ending with muted passages adding to the tranquility of the established mood. A Vivo section starts with an ostinato in the euphoniums over a bass tune. Various sections of the band introduce different figures with the soprano introducing a more lyrical melody. A slow chordal passage unravels into a unison passage for the whole band leading to a triumphant return to the original chorale from the introduction. Technically demanding throughout the band with surprising harmonic shifts and stylistic changes. Unusual and original ending. A real audience pleaser.

HONORS LEVEL

Ballet for Band (Joseph Horovitz). R. Smith & Co. Time 10:50"

Used for National Championships finals in UK in 1983. 1st Section Regional Test Piece in UK in 1997. NABBA Championship Section test in 1986 and one of three choices for NABBA Championship Section 1992. Three main linked sections of which the middle is the most lyrical. Themes derived from opening fanfare theme, percussion parts integral and interesting. Principal solos presented are Eb soprano, Bb Solo Cornet, and Euphonium. Rhythmically interesting.

CHALLENGE/OPEN LEVEL

Concertante (Stephen Bulla). Curnow Music Press. Time 13:30

An ideal test for most sections. The title comes from the use of solo groups of

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instruments -- concertante. In each of the three movements the solo groups is contrasted: cornets in the first, flugel/horn/baritone/euphonium in the second, and trombones in the third. The drawback is not much percussion, but what a test for our bands! It is classy pastiche and superb training and program material. Each band might think about how soli groups stood, etc., or maybe that should be left to the imagination! This one will be a great musical test.

EXPLORER LEVEL

Sinfonietta (Joseph Horowitz). Novello 1971. Time 11-12:00

Enjoyable music making and straight forward, biting neoclassic sounds, but with no range problems, and just the right type of rhythmic and solo challenges.

YOUTH LEVEL

Petite Suite (Eric Ball). Time 8:00

An ideal starter piece for the emerging brass band, whether youth or adult. Challenges all the sections without excessive technical demands. Four separate movements, with lots of variety of playing styles. NABBA has used it in the youth section in the past, and its classy scoring provides a great vehicle for band training.

NABBA Adjudicators Guidelines Revisited

At our August 2001 board meeting the NABBA Board of Directors requested that all bands receive a revised copy of an article on general guidelines that the NABBA Controller shares with judges prior to each Contest. What follows is a summary report listing major factors in the judging process. We hope these will be helpful for bands as they prepare for a NABBA contest. Ronald Holz, who served as NABBA Controller for 12 years, did the revision. Other contributors included contest subcommittee members John de Salme, Colin Holman, Dallas Niermeyer, and Paul Droste.

A. Judges' Preparation

Judges receive the following materials at least 2 months prior to the NABBA Contest:

- 1) Music scores for the required test piece in the section they are judging; these scores are marked with measure numbers for easy reference.
- 2) Copies of the Contest Rules

3) Copies of all adjudication forms/scoring sheets used in the Contest, including scoring sheets

4) Guidelines for judges (an expansion of this document)

5) List of 'own' choice pieces by bands within sections they are judging.

Judges may then request any of these scores for study and preparation. These scores, which NABBA bands should mark with measure numbers, must have been received from NABBA bands by March 1st. Judges are reminded that if they lack experience in this system, for any for whom it is new, they are encouraged to practice making quick, clear verbal responses during a musical performance, while still maintaining focus on the performance flow.

B. Judges' Meeting

Judges will meet on the Thursday evening prior to the Contest in order to be more thoroughly oriented to what is expected of them. At this time they receive 'own-

choice' scores that have not been previously requested.

Among other concerns that the Controller brings to their attention, the following Guidelines and policies were reemphasized at the August 2001 Board meeting

1. At the beginning of each band tape the judges must identify themselves, state the number of the band in that section (for example - Honors Band #4), list the repertoire in the order of play provided. They are then to verify that the tape is recording properly by checking this first portion. The tape is run continuously (must not be stopped) from the time the announcer first draws attention to that band until the applause is received following their final item, and the judge has made final summary comments.

2. Judges must make detailed musical observations the primary basis of their

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commentary. Judges must bear in mind:
a) Large, silent gaps in commentary - letting the tape merely run - is unacceptable.

b) Non-stop talking, on the otherhand, to the exclusion of listening to the performance, is likewise unacceptable, as would long-scale commentary on minutiae, which can keep the judge's attention off the performance.

c) Judges are asked to be positive and instructive as they make observations. The tape should provide the means of improving a band's performance via suggestions and observations received from each judge

d) Judges are asked to refrain from sharing their own aesthetic evaluation of a band's chosen program or allowing that to impact their scoring.

e) Judges are asked to evaluate the performance only. Choice of literature and level of difficulty are to have no bearing on their scoring. The Controller will screen all unacceptable items prior to the Contest. This avoids a judge adding points to a band merely for attempting a 'harder' piece, despite whether they do it well or not; or taking points off because a selection is viewed as 'too easy' for the Section. That is not the judges' province.

f) Judges are especially asked to provide balance in their attention to the various sections of the band. The percussion section, for example, can frequently be overlooked. Judges are to make spoken and written comments on this section when appropriate.

g) Judgements about interpretation should not affect point totals unless that interpretation is objectively incorrect. For example, if tempos chosen are blatantly out of line with score indications. The same would hold true with dynamics, and other musically expressive parameters. Judges are not to base their point scale on how they agree with a given interpretation. Judgements must

be kept, as much as possible, to concrete objective, musical observations: technique, articulation, balance-blend, intonation, phrasing, general musicianship, and stylistic considerations required by the score.

h) Final placements into the categories of Excellent, Good, fair, etc., must be justified by the detailed comments on the tape, and reinforced on the written sheets. Whether musical excellence is achieved, however is of course much more than a matter of avoiding technical mistakes!

i) At the end of each tape the judge must first provide a summary analysis of their overall judgement PRIOR to making written comments and marking the scoring sheet.

3. Judges are to use the tape as the primary means for sharing their judgements. The NABBA Board reaffirmed the desire of NABBA bands to continue this kind of adjudication at its August 2001 meeting. The judge's written summary on the scoring sheet, however, should reflect their basic assessment as well.

4. Upon the completion of each band evaluation, the Controller staff will collect tapes, scoring sheets, and scores. Judges may not return to their sheets for later adjustment. They can maintain a tally sheet for themselves, provided by the Controller, on which they may list their scores for each band.

5. Judges do not rank bands against each other, but by the standard scale provided in the Contest Rules. The judge does not make the final percentage calculations (60% test piece; 40% own choice), but rather the Controller's staff handles that task. The judge merely reports two scores, each one based on the standard 100 point scale.

6. Judges do not confer on their scores at any time during the contest. They

must not meet to discuss placements, scores, or rankings.

7. Solo/Ensemble contest: while judges are provided with a point system for evaluating each entry, and a sheet on which to provide helpful, positive, educational comments, essentially the judge will be choosing the top three performers in an assigned area. The judge is selecting those performances they felt were the most musically excellent, engaging, and successful (not necessarily the most technically flashy, etc.)

8. Confidentiality-ethical concerns: NABBA still adheres to closed adjudication and therefore we ask that judges avoid conversations with NABBA bands concerning their music and their level of participation. Judges will not be given a NABBA program until AFTER the contest has been completed. If a judge is approached by any NABBA member or NABBA band with information that may compromise the nature of our contest, judges will report this to the Controller immediately.

9. In addition to their judging duties, NABBA adjudicators may be asked to serve as a volunteer conductor for the NABBA Reading Band.

Preparing for NABBA

For many bands, playing in NABBA is an annual highlight, an important part of the growth and the direction of a brass band, and a focal point of the performance calendar. Brass bands who participate spend considerable amounts of funding,

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personal and organizational, to attend, and this investment should be balanced by careful preparations. But for those thinking about taking the plunge for the first time, how does one go about preparing for such an event?

1. Commit the band to entering. This sounds obvious, but a firm commitment means better planning for a dedicated performance. Persuade the membership (if they need persuading) that planning earlier means ensuring hotel space, good rates for travel by land or air, and ensuring those that need time from work can take it off without a problem. Plenty of NABBA participants bring the family and make an entire weekend out of it. It's great social and musical bonding time for the band--ask anyone who has attended before.

2. Read the contest rules carefully. Communicate concerns or questions to the contest controller well in advance if you are unclear about any procedures. Share these with the band. Be sure that you also adhere to deadlines for submission of materials. Keep in touch through the Brass Band Bridge and especially through the electronic resources provided by hosts on a yearly basis.

3. Pick an appropriate section to enter. There are no regulations as to which section a new band should enter. Most beginning bands enter the Challenge Section or the Explorer Section, but new bands have entered higher sections as first time entrants and been quite successful. Use the testpiece selection as a guideline to your band's abilities.

4. Listen to recordings of the testpiece if available. Although the last thing one wants to hear is a carbon copy perfor-

mance, recordings of brass band music by established and recognized top-level brass bands can be of great benefit to all brass bands, but especially those less experienced. This is valuable not just for the MD but for all the membership. Prepare the testpiece as thoroughly as possible.

5. Select wise own choice(s) music. Your selections will be determined by the guiding artistic philosophies of your band. Less experienced bands like to start their programs with something short and comfortable, a march for example, to help them settle in, acclimatise to the acoustic, settle the jitters, and leave a good impression on the adjudicators. Other bands are ready to jump right in to something more substantial. The order of pieces is not so important as the items themselves. It does no harm to finish at a climactic point, but pick music that you will sound good at, that will help develop the band beyond the scope of the competition, and that artistically balances the testpiece to develop and display your flexibility. Show your strengths, but use your choices to improve on your weaknesses, technically and musically.

6. Consider timing, balance, skills. Bear in mind the time limitations, both minimum and maximum when making your own choice music selections. Practise timing. Practise setting up (percussion needs, especially) and tuning within the allotted time allowances. Practise as many times as possible just running your program and time it for length. There should be no excuse for a band playing over or under the time limits; this is just poor preparation and needless penalty points for the band.

7. Practise all aspects of performance. Prepare as much as possible to play as

well as you can. There seems little point in investing large sums of money and putting the name of your band in front of an audience and critical adjudicators to not give your very best and learn as much as possible from the experience.

8. Use clinicians. Seek outside help in preparation. New objectivity is a marvelous thing in preparing for such an important event. Seek the collective wisdom of other experienced brass band conductors who can give you an honest and critically constructive opinion about how your band is progressing.

9. Practise hard and have fun! When you arrive at the competition, participate. Listen to as many of the solo and ensemble competitions. Better still, take part. Listen to as many bands as you can. Go to clinics. Play in the Reading Band and check out the percussion equipment and the acoustics. Typically a one hour final rehearsal for the band is scheduled during the Friday evening of the competition weekend. Be prepared for limited percussion during this time. Meet friends in the bar or restaurant and you will find a wonderful support mechanism for your brass band. Get more involved in NABBA. Be sure your band has a representative on the NABBA Board. Enjoy the weekend, the results, the hard work of the hosts, the Gala Concert and use the event to lift, broaden and enlighten the membership of your brass band. Win or not win (no-one loses when they prepare in the correct fashion and use the competition not as a means unto itself but as a growth tool), you'll understand why bands and their members come back year after year to compete and play for each other.

Ron Holz shares some thoughts on "own-choice" selections for NABBA Contests [reprinted and revised from the Brass Band Bridge 12/98]

When NABBA designed its brass band contest, the philosophy behind the structure that calls for both a set test piece and additional music was shaped in order to encourage the exploration of higher quality literature as well as the planning of imaginative programming. Our short history has proven our founders correct in this decision, making the NABBA contests unfold like a series of short concerts at which a wide range of good music is shared. Having served as NABBA's Contest Controller for at least 50% of its existence, I can testify to the fact that the vast majority of bands do indeed understand the phrase "the best of brass band literature" that accompanies the guidelines for selecting the remaining portion of a band's program. At one time in our past we encouraged at least one solo presentation, but as bands shied away from that, we instituted the now-successful Solo and Ensemble portion of our Contest.

Many new bands, however, may be puzzled by how to go about deciding such literature. My aim in this brief article requested by our Board of Directors is not to get into a discussion of strategies, but merely to share some common sense about the issue, as well as to provide some general examples and guidelines. The Controller always has the right to confront a band on an issue of musical quality - i.e. that some of their music does not meet the broad suggestion - when their application is first received. This provides the band ample opportunity to make a quick adjustment. I have always made myself available in the past, additionally, to serve as an advisor to bands on this exact issue. In all the years I have been Controller, only once did I directly ask a band to change its program and in only

two other instances did I suggest that a change be made, as opposed to former - requiring a change. It is not necessary to share specifics in these cases, either in band or pieces, but suffice it to say in each case it was a matter of the band choosing light entertainment arrangements that bordered on kitsch. Most of our NABBA conductors have good taste; however, as the old Latin phrase puts it, *de gustibus non disputandum...* (There's no disputing taste!).

We are probably better off emphasizing what is acceptable literature, rather than starting with negatives. Certainly the decision to feature another fine test piece has proven effective. Excellent short concert works --concert preludes, overtures, suites, excerpted movements from suites, classical transcriptions, well-constructed marches, portions of test pieces (as appropriate)--all of these make perfect sense. Here is a wide sampling from three years at NABBA of such choices that particularly fit the definition of the best of brass band literature; the list does not contain other large-scale test pieces - works exceeding 10 minutes - that were chosen to round out programs:

Prelude for an Occasion (Gregson); *Tam O'Shanter's Ride* (Wright); *Come Sweet Death* (Bach/Leidzen); *Polotskian Dances* (Borodin/Snell); *Bridgewater Intrada* (Downie); *Introduction* (Aagaard-Nilsen); *March to the Scaffold* (Berlioz/Snell); *Pittsburgh Symphony* (Sparke); *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. Le Reau); *Devon Fantasy* (Ball); *Malvern Suite* (Sparke); *Praise* (Heaton); *March—Motivation* (Himes); *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *Second Rhapsody on Negro Spirituals* (Ball); *Amazing Grace* (arr. Himes); *Appalachian Mountain Folk Song Suite* (Curnow); *Gaudete* (Norbury); *Finale from Symphony No. 4* (Tchaikovsky/Gordon); *Circius* (Aagaard-Nilsen); *Gavorkna Fanfare* (Stamp/Gallahue); *Russian Christmas Music* (Reed/Leppla); *Henry V* (Vaughan Wil-

liams); *Nimrod* (Elgar/Wright); *Castell Coch* (Powell); *David of the White Rock* (Willcocks); *Dunlap's Creek* (Bernat); *Cross Patonce* (Richards).

Notice the avoidance of the merely popular - the latest Broadway tune, movie score theme - or the avoidance of what I call, for lack of better term, bandstand boogie - an attempt to make the brass band hip, and not succeeding! Or worse, novelty items with quirky instrumental features, gags, story lines, whatever (real kitsch). Now, many choices can be deceiving in terms of technical demands. On the surface, a choice like Leidzen's classic setting of Bach's *Come Sweet Death* might seem like a rather easy choice for the Honors or Championship Level (actually used at both levels in recent years). Playing it well, playing it musically, is a challenge for the very best bands. Remember, our adjudicators do not allow technical level or repertoire choice (aesthetic response) to influence their scoring. They are judging your musicality! The Controller has a sworn duty, of course, to scrutinize each band's program to insure that, if, for example, they are entering the Championship Level, their 'remainder of program choices' reflect very high standards. While NABBA does not legislate such levels, common sense and ensemble pride will usually prevail before any Controller action needs to be taken.

I am proud of the fact that this has so rarely been a problem at our NABBA Contests. There should be no reason why that fine tradition should not continue in the future. The current Contest Controller, John de Salme, will be more than willing to help any band with the content of their programs. Conductors are also encouraged to talk to other successful NABBA directors to see what they might suggest. Choose music that challenges your band, engages your audiences, and of which you will be proud years from now!

Commonwealth Brass Band (J. Jerome Amend), June 1, 2001; Corydon, IN; June 23, 2001; Ashland (KY) Brass Band Festival; Aug. 17, 2001; Jeffersonville, IN. Selected from the following: *Mr Sandman* (Ballard/Henderson), Susan Reigler, Ann Moore and Scott Cooksey, tenor horn soloists; *The Flea* (Hodel), Pam Fleitz, xylophone soloist; *Pantomime* (Sparke), David Centers, euphonium soloist; *Fidgety Feet* (Perberdy), Bob Webb, Shawn Roark, Carl Reckelhoff and Dee Pratt, cornet soloists; *Frolie for Trombones* (Heath), John Albrecht, Bob Spiegelhalter, Mark Kersting and Joe Spain, trombone soloists; *Festmusik der Stadt Wein* (Strauss); *La Peri Fanfare* (Dukas/Roberts); *The Champions* (Wilcocks); *Puttin on the Ritz* (Berlin/Richards); *Light Cavalry Overture* (Suppe/Greenwood); *The Light of the World* (Goffin); *Adagio from Spartacus and Phrygia* (Khachaturian/Langford); *Navigation Inn* (Sparke); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *The Stripper* (Rose/Richards); *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (Rodgers/Bernat); *Finale from Symphony No. 4* (Tchaikovsky); *Whitehall, Grand March Triumphant* (Wright).

June 17, 2001; Queen's Birthday Garden Party, Louisville, KY, (John Jones, conducting). *British Bandsman* (Broadbent); *March of the Peers* (Sullivan); *Cross of Honour* (Rimmer); *Men of Harlech* (arr. Langford); *The Phantom Brigade* (Myddleton); *Famous British Marches* (Langford); *Melodies of Britain* (Wright); *Ravenswood* (Rimmer); *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Handel); *God Save the Queen*; *Rule Britannia*; *America the Beautiful* (Ward/Himes); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman). July 28, 2001; Wheaton Band Festival, Wheaton, IL. *Strike Up the Band* (arr. Richards); *Jubilee Overture* (Sparke); *Concerto for Trombone and Brass Band* (Bourgeois), Eric Carlson, trombone soloist; *And the Band Played On* (arr.

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 Ralph Hotz.

Richards); *March from Le Coq d'Or* (Rimsky-Korsakov/Catherall); *Bohemian Rhapsody* (arr. Barry); *Dance of the Comedians* (Smetana/Farr).

Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer). July 28, 2001; Wheaton Band Festival, Wheaton, IL. *Voice of the Guns* (Alford); *Pastime with Good Company* (arr. Roberts); *Con te Partiro* (Sartori/Beraerts), Jay Cohen, cornet soloist; *The Golden Helmet of Cortez* (Steinberg); *Nott'num Town* (Street); *Serenata* (Anderson/Niermeyer); *Gaelforce* (Graham); *Arnhem* (Kelly); *Listen to the Band* (Renton).

Spires Brass Band (John Slezak). June 1, 2001; Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD. *Star-Spangled Banner* (arr. Himes); *American Salute* (Gould/Larch); *Nautical Variations* (Taylor), Laura Lineberger, euphonium soloist; *American Variations* (Bilik); *Dark Eyes* (arr.

Geldard), Kirsten Lies-Warfield, trombone soloist; *The Belle of Chicago* (Sousa); *Song of Exultation* (Bearcroft), Susan Rider, cornet soloist; *March from 1941* (Williams/Sykes); *America the Beautiful* (Ward/Larch); *Duet for Two Cats* (Rossini/Snell), Susan Rider, cornet soloist and Kirsten Lies-Warfield, trombone soloist; *A Tribute to Elvis* (arr. Oud); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

Triangle Brass Band (Michael Votta). June 24, 2001; Greenwood Forest Baptist Church, Cary, North Carolina. *A Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead); *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. LaReau); *Nicaea* (Himes); "Adagio" from *Concierto de Aranjuez* (Rodrigo/Bolton), Bob Peckham, flugelhorn soloist; *Invictus March* (Himes); *Peace Like a River* (Bulla); *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *Psalm 100* (Curnow); *Valdres* (Hanssen/Møller); *Aspects of Praise* mvmt IV (Himes); *Amazing Grace* (arr. Himes);

July 3, 2001; Rocky Mount, North Carolina. *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow); *The Liberty Bell* (Sousa); *Amazing Grace* (arr. Himes); *Valdres March* (Hanssen/Møller); *Peace Like a River* (Bulla); *The Belle of Chicago* (Sousa); *Armed Forces Salute* (Bulla); *Invictus March* (Himes); *Seventy Six Trombones* (Willson/Duthoit); *Three Kings Swing* (Himes); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa); *Star Spangled Banner*.

Triangle Youth Brass Band (Tony Granados). May 18, 2001; Sertoma Amphitheatre Bond Park, Cary, NC. *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich/Kitson); *Canterbury Chorale* (Van der Roost); *Manhattan Beach* (Sousa); "High Summer" from *The Seasons* (Wilby); *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Williams/Forster & Dye); *Irish Tune from County Derry* (Grainger/Wright); *Oklahoma Selections* (Rogers/Wright); *Memory* (Lloyd Weber/Richards).

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NABBA XX

April 20-21, 2001

Hosted by the **Cincinnati Brass Band**

<http://w3.one.net/~jwclymer/nabba/>

Directions

The competition will be held in Sharonville, OH which is 20 minutes north of downtown Cincinnati, 45 minutes north of Greater Cincinnati Airport (located in Kentucky!) and 40 minutes south of Dayton OH airport. All Friday events (solo/ensemble, Youth/Exhibition/Explorer band competitions) and the Challenge band competition and reception (on Saturday) will be held at the Radisson, Chester Rd, Sharonville. The Honors and Championship band competition will be held at Princeton High School, less than a half-mile from the Radisson.

Accommodations

Main Hotel: Radisson Hotel Cincinnati, 11320 Chester Rd, Sharonville OH 45246
Telephone: (513) 772-1720 • Fax: (513) 772-6466 • Reservations: (800) 333-3333
Special Room Rate: \$94 (plus tax). This includes a full hot breakfast buffet.
Free Parking, plus a free shuttle to Princeton HS and the Gala Concert (Radisson guests only).

Gala Concert

featuring the **Brass Band of Battle Creek**

April 13, 2002,
8:00 p.m.

Tri-County Assembly of God

7350 Dixie Hwy (Rt 4), 1/2 mi. north of I 275, Fairfield, OH.

Members of the BBBC will be in attendance at the post-Gala reception
at the Radisson following the concert.

Contact Executive Administrator Bert Wiley
if your band has not yet received a copy of the Contest Rules and Regulations

For the seventh year in a row the **Grand Celebration of Brass Bands** drew large crowds of brass band enthusiasts to Ushers Ferry Historic Village in Cedar Rapids.

Held on June 16, the event provided over seven hours of brass band music. Four bands performed during the day, providing the audience with a wide variety of musical entertainment.

Joining the host Eastern Iowa Brass band at this year's festival were the Illinois Brass Band (back for their sixth time) and the Sheldon Theatre Brass Band of Red Wing MN for their first appearance. Also presenting a concert was the Cedar Valley Brass Ensemble.

Starting at 11.00 a.m. with EIBB playing the first concert live on KMRY-AM radio, bands presented concerts until 6.00 p.m. when members of all the bands got together and performed three items for massed band, each conductor taking their turn being precariously balanced a top a ladder while they led the group, and providing a grand finale with over 100 players joining in music together.

Audience members were spread near and wide throughout the day to provide enthusiastic receptions to each performance. Once again the level of both musicmaking and entertainment was at an extremely high level, and it was particularly welcoming to have the excellent Sheldon Theatre Brass Band back into NABBA circles again. Audience response to the Grand Celebration was again overwhelmingly positive, with audience members from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Great Britain.

Next year's Grand Celebration is set for June 15, 2002.

Two top quality British-style brass bands performed at this year's **Great American Brass Band Festival**, Danville, KY: **London Citadel Band** of the SA (John Lam) and **Lexington Brass Band** (Ronald Holz). The weather was the best in years, with temperatures in the balmy 80s and crowds estimated once again at close to 50,000 by the height of the festival.

London Citadel, like most SA bands from the True North, is adept at marching and they looked and sounded classy indeed during the colorful parade that formally opens the Festival Saturday morning. Both bands participated in a new venture, indoor concerts on Saturday afternoon in the excellent concert facility, Newlin Hall. The bands played back-to-back and then joined for a thrilling, short massed band Finale. Both bands received standing ovations for their individual programs, as did Vincent DiMartino, who brought the house down with his inimitable version of *La Virgen de la Macarena*, returning as soloist with the band with whom he served as the first principal cornet. The shout of acclaim and praise that greeted the ending of *Elsa's Procession* led to extended series of bows for Holz and Lam, though no further music could be shared due to time constraints.

London Citadel provided the glue around which the morning ecumenical Worship Service is held together. They accompanied the many hymns and the all-town choir (Ballantine's *Joyful, Joyful* arrangements), as well as postlude, prelude, and offertory. They were joined by the Olympia Brass Band, whose main contribution came during the serving of Communion to nearly 5000 people. Both bands returned to the Main Stage on Sunday for their second concerts of the weekend. The following lists the Satur-

day programs of each band, as well as the massed band program:

Concert #1 Lexington Brass Band: Newlin Hall; *Fanfare for a New Age* (Richards); *No Business Like Show Business* (Berlin/Richards); Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke/Jakeway), Stephen K. Bottom, soprano cornet soloist; *Be Thou My Vision* (Curnow), Bill Jones, cornet soloist; *Post Bellum Rhapsody* (Leidzen); *St Louis Blues* (Handy/Fernie); *Impresario* (Cimarosa/Wright); *Troika* (Prokofiev/Blyth); *La Virgen de la Macarena* (Mendez/Freeh), Vincent DiMartino, trumpet soloist; *The Rejoicing from Royal Fireworks* (Handel/Skinner); *Jubilation* (Curnow).

Concert #2 London Citadel: Newlin Hall; *Make His Praise Glorious* (arr. Gordon); *Marching Onward* (Bosanko); *Go Down Moses* (arr. Ballantine); *This Is My Story* (arr. Lundquist), Darrin Tilley, cornet soloist; *Appalachian Mountain Folksong Suite* (Curnow); *Deep River* (Broughton); *Finale from Treasures from Tchaikovsky* (tr. Coles);

Massed Bands: *Shenandoah* (Ballantine), Led by BM John Lam; March: *Liberty Bell* (Sousa), Led by Dr. George Foreman; *Elsa's Procession* (Wagner/Himes). Led by Dr. Ronald Holz.

Additional solos included LBB Soprano Cornetist Stephen K. Bottom on Audoire's *Irish Melody* and LCB's Flugelhorn soloist, Ron Gilbert, on Himes' *So Glad*.

Listed in Alphabetical Order by Title.
Reviews by Ronald W. Holz except as
otherwise noted

Some Observations About Reviewing
and a Request for NABBA Members: I
have again been struck by the produc-
tiveness of the brass band subculture
when it comes to recordings. What a
feast I enjoyed these past few months,
the results of which are before you.
You'll read about this healthy state of
affairs, first with several fine, but rela-
tively unknown (in terms of NABBA)
European groups - Dutch, Norwegian,
and Swiss bands. Two of our own fine
NABBA bands, two good SA bands, two
British Championship level bands of leg-
endary status, and even some fine brass
ensemble recordings round out the list.
I am grateful to Tony Zilincik and Harold
Burgmayer for their guest reviews of
discs in which I played a part, and
therefore could not be an impartial writer.

But let me ask our NABBA membership
something. Are these reviews and our
review process what you are looking for?
For instance, unlike other brass band
press reviews we list the entire content of
the disc, total time of the disc, and other
related data, rather than letting you guess-
ing about what is included. This allows
us to focus in a more detailed way, with
a real point of view, rather than just a
relisting of the contents. However, that
is only one way to approach the matter.
I will look forward to hearing from you
about the reviews, about what you like,
and what you would like changed. If I
hear nothing, I will then assume it does
not matter, and will suggest we could
use the space more wisely, maybe by
just listing the CDs and then rating them
on some made-up scale, though we
could still list the contents, if that was a
helpful afterthought. So, let us know
what you think, what you want this
portion of the Bridge to be, how it can be
of value to you.

Please contact me at 859-858-3511 Ext
2246; or ronald.holz@asbury.edu

Ronald Holz

Blazing Brass. New York Staff Band
(Ronald Waiksnoris), with tuba soloist
*Patrick Sheridan. Triumphant TRCD
1067. TT 71:27. Program: *The*
Proclaimers (Norbury); **Grandfather's*
Clock (Doughty/Graham); *Excerpt from*
Swan Lake (Tchaikovsky/Davis); **Tuba*
Concerto (Ellerby); *Flourish and Dances*
(Norbury); **Badinage* (Norbury); Trom-
bone Feature--*My Shepherd*
(Broadstock); **Ad Optimum* (Graham);
**Concert Etude* (Geodicke/Broughton);
Into the Fire (Wildhorn/Bowen), Raymond
Livingston, vocal soloist; **Variations on*
a Tyrolean Song (Arban/Freeh); *Truth*
Aflame (Norbury); *Stars and Stripes*
Forever (Sousa/Graham), with Trio solo
by Pat Sheridan.

Every so often, a soloist emerges who
transcends his or her instrument; never
to be called a tuba soloist, but simply a
soloist. Such is the case with Patrick
Sheridan. His latest effort, *Blazing Brass*,
with the New York Staff Band (Ronald
Waiksnoris) is evidence of this. Mr.
Sheridan's five solos on this album show
a deftness of technique and a lyrical
singing voice, though I would have pre-
ferred more of the latter. Missing from
this album is the total lyricism of, for

example, his rendition of *Danny Boy* from
his earlier recordings. Nonetheless, his
selections still show us a grand story-
teller whose musicality goes far and
above technical demands. Peter Gra-
ham presents the tuba and brass band
standard *Grandfather's Clock* in a re-
vised version. Revised indeed, as I doubt
many tubists were playing an f2 at the
end of the piece when it was written!
Martin Ellerby's *Tuba Concerto* is a
single-movement work in two sections.
The lyrical "Andante" shows us Patrick's
true singing voice with the band laying
down a subtle background that allows
him full expressive reign. The "Allegro" is
a frantic dialogue between soloist and
band with technical demands on both
sides equally met. Kevin Norbury's *Badi-
nage* was written for Mr. Sheridan and
portrays his personality. Whimsical and
carefree, Patrick takes the band on an
amazing ride. His final selection, Arban's
Variations on a Tyrolean Song moves at
light speed with flying arpeggios and
acrobatic leaps, their difficulty belied by
Patrick's ease of performance. The only
negative aspect of all of the technical
playing is acoustic: with all of those
notes flying around on that big air stream,
even a moderately live hall will cause
them to run together, and it gets worse
as you go faster. Still, though, these

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performances are something to behold. Kevin Norbury is a hornist with the NYSB, and is also an accomplished brass band composer. In a day when brass band music is starting to sound the same, Mr. Norbury is able to be unabashedly tonal while remaining highly original. His renaissance take in *Flourish and Dances* offers a fresh sound for the band by looking back in time. The eclectic nature of 21st century is evident in his *Truth Aflame*, with rock and neo-romantic influences. *The Proclaimers*, referring to the NYSB, is a straight-ahead march with strong SA roots. Kevin Norbury maintains his integrity, his musicality and his faith while writing music for all. We need more of this, both in the concert hall and on the contesting stage. The NYSB has long been known as one of the finest brass bands in North America and this album bears that out. On their own, they play with a great sense of urgency and with great integrity. As accompanists, they play with great sensitivity and control. Marches fittingly open and close the recording. Norbury's *The Proclaimers* opens the album, and Peter Graham's arrangement of *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (with Patrick Sheridan playing Eb piccolo tuba!) closes the disc. With the exception of the occasionally ram-bunctious bass trombone, very clean playing is the hallmark of the day, but with no attempt to hold anything back. The cornets and tenor horns show well in Trevor Davis' arrangement of *Excerpt from Swan Lake 'Act 1'*. There is also some fine solo euphonium playing in *Truth Aflame*. The trombone section plays beautifully in Broadstock's setting of *My Shepherd*. Peter Graham's heroic *Ad Optimum* is sure to be a new standard in the Salvation Army repertoire. The NYSB is a fine ensemble that plays to the highest musical standards and with great "Blood and Fire." This album is beautifully presented, with comprehensive program notes by Ron Holz. I highly

recommend it; it has great solos, new band literature, fine playing, and above all, musical integrity. [Reviewed by Tony Zilincik, Music Director Central Ohio Brass Band]

Brazz. Brassband Burgermusik Luzern (Ludwig Wicki) with brass soloist *James Morrison, vocalist +Regula Schneider, tenor saxophone soloist #Roland von Flue Bauer--Obrasso. CD 869. TT 65:56. Program: **An Ellington Portrait* (Ellington/Freeh); +*Here's That Rainy Day* (Jarvis/Wicki); #*Jersey Bounce* (Jarvis/Wicki); *#*A Touch of Mancini* (Mancini/Freeh); +*Am I Blue* (arr. Barduhn/Wicki); +*Three Kings Swing* (Himes); *Light Walk* (Gott); +*Minuano* (Methany/Farr); +*Journeys* (Kerschek); +*Riverdance* (Wheeler/Farr).

Brazz- meaning Brass and Jazz, though with a saxophone soloist thrown in for good measure! This entertaining program features three excellent soloists and a solid band with a good feel for a variety of jazz styles. For me, the highlights were the two excellent medleys arranged by Mark Freeh - on Ellington and Mancini. In his solo items,

Morrison wails on both trumpet and trombone, but especially on the former. Strangely enough, on the ubiquitous *Light Walk* we do not hear Morrison on the solo, but rather (again!) a player reading Barrie Gott's provided solo, though she makes it much more convincing than most performances of my least favorite brass band swing tune. It is good to hear it swung quite well. While the booklet is in German, the talented Schneider sings in English, or wordless vocalise. On the Methany arrangement, the wordless vocal doubling on the main melody works very well. With a melody percussion background a key element, the arranger recaptures the essence, the spirit of the original *Minuano*. In that same genre is Kerschek's intriguing *Journeys*, a 12 minute minimalist inflected jazz-rock overture - though even these categories break down, so many substyles come into play, so many interesting rhythmic gestures and meters! There is a fascinating and extended percussion feature in the mid-section reminiscent of certain Steve Reich scores. Maybe Reich meets Methany? While a 1999 release (it took a while for this disc to get to the *Bridge*), the wait was well worth it, especially for those interested in exploring just how well a brass band can be metamorphosized into a jazz ensemble. Brass Band Luzern is more than up to the task and the excellent soloists give the overall product a real taste of class.

Countryside and Common People. Brassband De Bazuin Oenkerk (Klaas van der Woude). Obrasso. CD 874. TT 72:41. *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Williams/Graham); *The Essential James Bond* (Barry/Barry); *Hymn to the Fallen* (Williams/Woude); *Countryside and Common People* (Fernie); *Sing, Sing, Sing* (Prima/Woodfield); *Tell Him* (Foster/Woude), Welmoed Kemkert and

Moving or Moved?

The **Brass Band Bridge** cannot be forwarded because it is mailed third class. So, please be sure to mail to NABBA Executive Secretary Bert Wiley your old and new addresses, or your copy of the *Bridge* will be discarded by the U.S Post Office, and you will not receive any future issues!

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continued from page 18

mote band that maintains such a fine standard. The short insert notes make it clear that the title tune fits the band well, and with the most positive of meanings. Contact Obrasso directly concerning this CD and publications: Phone: 011-41-(0) 32-636-37-27; Email--
obrasso@bluewin.ch

Elegie. Thomas Ruedi, euphonium soloist, with **Brassband Burgermusik Luzern** (Ludwig Wicki). Obrasso-Bauer. CD 875. TT 60:58. All arrangements/transcriptions by Thomas Ruedi, unless noted otherwise. Program:.. *Elegie*, op. 30 (Vieuxtemps); *Zigeunerweisen* (Sarasate); *Variations on a Rococo Theme* (Tchaikovsky); *Chants Russes* (Lalo); *Fantasie Originale* (Picchi/Bale); *Nocturne*, Op. 19 (Tchaikovsky); *Banjo and Fiddle* (Kroll); *Meditation* (Bridge); *Danse du Diable vert* (Cassado); *L'Heure exquise* (Hahn).

Thomas Ruedi may be ranked among the best of the rising young generation of euphonium soloists. In this wide-ranging recital of classical transcriptions, this Swiss virtuoso offers a high quality package - literature and performance. The disc is co-sponsored by Yamaha (Ruedi plays the YEP-642 model) and Obrasso, the publishers of all the arrangements except the Picchi *Fantasie* and the final item, a manuscript arrangement of a Hahn art song for the unusual combination of just euphonium and marimba. Brassband Buergermusik Luzern provides fine accompaniments throughout, many times taking on rather challenging material. The tour-de-force for both soloist and band on the disc must be the Tchaikovsky *Rocco Variations*, which runs a whopping 18:38 minutes. Originally for cello and string orchestra, the work stands up well in Ruedi's own transcription, the all-brass version complimenting the original all-string version. The other string works

that have been transformed here include those for solo violin (Lalo, Kroll, and Sarasate), viola (Vieuxtemps), and cello (Cassado). While the title suggests an emphasis on the lyric and melodic, there is ample contrast provided by some fiendishly difficult work. Among my favorites that highlight this contrast are the Frank Bridge (mentor and teacher of Benjamin Britten) *Meditation*, a beautiful vehicle for Ruedi's tight, warm sound, and the contrasting Cassado *Danse du Diable vert* - diabolical indeed! Let me repeat that this handsomely produced disc (a three-fold box, with good notes in German and English; fine recording sound and balance between soloist and band) contains excellent playing by both soloist and band. It is a joy to discover a new player of this caliber and to also hear a fine band from Switzerland, a telling document of that country's fine brass band culture. To contact Thomas Ruedi directly about this disc and/or his transcriptions, write via email to: tomruedi@bluewin.ch - or -
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Eric Ball: The Undaunted. Grimethorpe Colliery RJB Band (Elgar Howarth). Doyen. DOY TT 69:46. Program: *Morning Rhapsody*; *Tournament for Brass*; *Cornet Overture--The Undaunted*; *Conchita*, Richard Marshall, cornet soloist; *Four Preludes*; *Free Fantasia*; *Resurgam*.

This is a disc to treasure! Elgar Howarth, guest conductor, Paul Hindmarsh, producer and author of the excellent program notes, and Grimethorpe Band deserve high praise for this outstanding document that provides first rate performances of both well-known, and undeservedly forgotten works by the dean of brass band composers in the twentieth century, Eric Ball (1903--1989). Doyen's sound quality is excellent throughout, so kudos to recording engineer Richard Scott, as well. We hear only second recordings of two master-

works on CD, the concert overture, *Undaunted* and the three movement *Tournaments For Brass* - definitive readings, indeed. Taking these two works alone, you are provided with the two sides of Eric Ball's creative skill. *Undaunted* is marked by musical and spiritual struggle, brooding, leading ultimately projection of positive hope. *Tournaments* unfolds as sheer delight in sound and in the lyrical/technical resources of the brass band medium Ball knew so well. While we have used *Tournaments* in our NABBA contests, *Undaunted* has not been featured, but it is beginning to appear again over in the mother country at a number of contests. To my limited knowledge, four works receive their premiere CD recordings: *Morning Rhapsody*, *Free Fantasia*, *Four Preludes*, and the cornet solo, *Conchita*, the latter given a graceful interpretation by Richard Marshall. The album closes with a very creditable *Resurgam*, which now has received three outstanding CD recordings in just the past few years - ISB, Yorkshire Building Society, and now Grimethorpe. While I have my personal favorite (YBS), there is much to commend in Howarth's interpretation, which just goes to show that one of the marks of a true masterpiece is its ability to sustain multiple interpretations as it stands the test of time. I would like to recommend the unfamiliar works to all our NABBA bands. *Morning Rhapsody*, a companion work to Ball's equally lovely *Sunset Rhapsody*, runs almost 9 minutes and is quintessential Ball, with a hint of Strauss and Elgar, two composers, as pointed out by Hindmarsh, to whom Ball was strongly attracted. It is of moderate difficulty, dating from 1949, having been set as an area test for the Nationals. Even more accessible from the technical viewpoint are the *Four Preludes*, the order of the subtitles being 1) 'Prelude for a Solemn Occasion'; 2) 'Prelude to a Comedy'; 3) 'Prelude to a

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Reinier Veening, cornet soloists; *Symphonic Soul* (Mancini/Fernie); *Crimson Tide* (Zimmer/Woude); *Abba Goes Brass* (Andersson/Fernie); *Still Time* (Richards); *My Heart Will Go On* (Horner/Fernie); *Viva La Bamba* (Woodfield); *One Moment in Time* (Hammond/Fernie); *When the Saints* (Richards); *Time to Say Goodbye* (Sartori/Fernie).

Located in the northern part of the Netherlands, this Dutch band has gained an international reputation in recent years for consistently high contest results and good musical presentations. Small wonder, then, that Obrasso chose them as the band to feature a series of recent publications by this Swiss brass band publisher. The disc begins with a stately version of John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (arr. Peter Graham) and then launches into Darrol Barry's 9-minute *The Essential James Bond* medley. Some very lovely playing takes place during the band's conductor's arrangement of the theme from the movie *Saving Private Ryan*, *Hymn to the Fallen*, an elegant, tasteful version indeed. Another van der Woude movie score arrangement that is nicely put together is *Crimson Tide* (Hans Zimmer), which ends quietly with the intoning of the U.S. Navy Hymn ("Eternal Father Strong To Save"). Title piece, *Countryside and Common People* takes the form of an easy, original pop-rock style work of 7 minutes length, divided into an ABA - Fast/Slow/Fast format; very suitable for developing bands, if slightly repetitive for my taste. Two solid Goff Richards' miniatures are included, his original *Still Time*, and his energetic arrangement of *When the Saints*. The Scandinavian pop group ABBA receives an 8:41-minute medley, a bit too much for me, but just the ticket for fans of this highly popular group. All in all, this is a worthy representation of Obrasso's popular arrangements catalogue and a credit to this relatively re-

Tragedy'; 4) 'Prelude to Pageantry'. The final movement has been excerpted on a number of earlier vinyl recordings; in fact, each short movement could stand alone, though at 11:31 this non-championship level test would be an outstanding choice for any NABBA band in both competition or for concert use. *Free Fantasia* dates from 1946, just a few years after Ball had left the ranks of SA and had begun his successful career as a brass band conductor. It is in fact a short theme and variations work of about 6 minutes length that, as Hindmarsh observes, is reminiscent of SA symphonic variations like *The Old Wells*. It also shows a newly emerging voice in Eric Ball, one that would lead in just a few years to *Resurgam*, *Tournaments*, *Festival Music*, and eventually *Journey Into Freedom* or *High Peak*. Everyone connected with this disc must be congratulated for outstanding service in reinvigorating our understanding of our heritage via the music of Eric Ball. I truly hope and urge for future volumes. First class all the way!!

Essential Dyke, Volume III: President's Choice. Black Dyke Band (Nicholas J. Childs). Doyen. TT 63:35. Program: *The President* (German); *The Corsair* (Berlioz/Brand); *Napoli* (Bellstedt/Owenson), Roger Webster, cornet soloist; *David of the White Rock* (Willcocks); *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (Williams/Graham); *I'm Gettin' Sentimental* (Bassman/Geldard), Brett Baker, trombone soloist; *Serenade* (Bourgeois); *Two Movements from West Side Story* (Bernstein/Crees); *Endearing Young Charms* (Boddington), David Thornton, euphonium soloist; *Toccata in D Minor* (Bach/Farr); *Cartoon Music* (Graham); *Suite Gothique* (Boelmann/Ball).

Another smashing success for the 'new' Black Dyke under Nicholas Childs, *Essential Dyke Volume 3* is notable by the profiling of the band's great end men - Roger Webster, Brett Baker, and David Thornton. Each of them give you vintage

solos in stellar performances. Check out the titles listed above - you won't go wrong seeking out these readings. The disc also evokes the Geoffrey Brand years at Dyke, first with his fine transcription of Berlioz' overture *The Corsair*, played brilliantly, and another Dyke favorite, Willcocks' lovely setting of the Welsh tune, *David of the White Rock*. This brought back memories of that pace-setting 1967 recording of this same piece, which also included their grand and legendary performance of *Journey Into Freedom*. Another past gem that gets the royal treatment is the whimsical *Serenade* by Bourgeois. Some more whimsy, and Tom-and-Jerry slapstick comedy, is heard on Peter Graham's (currently associate conductor of the band) delightful *Cartoon Music*. You could use it as a 'test' for recognizing classical excerpts inserted into the musical romp. Graham is also represented in an incredibly dynamic version of his setting of Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*. Word of warning about the J.S. Bach *Toccata in D Minor*. This is Ray Farr's short rock-style adaptation, not the full-blown *Toccata and Fugue*. However, an organ work that does show up, and the piece that is the crowning jewel of the program, is Eric Ball's superb transcription of Leon Boelmann's *Suite Gothique*. This masterpiece of brass band scoring literally jumps off the page in this fine reading by this excellent band. The entire suite runs to just over 13 minutes - a simply marvelous work for an Honors level test piece or remainder of program choice piece. It is divided into three sections, or movements: Introduction and Minuet, Prayer at Notre Dame, and Toccata. The first two sections flatter the average brass band, maybe making them sound as good as they can possibly be! The Prayer calls for a secure cornet soloist, beautifully played here by Richard Marshall. The concluding

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Toccata will test the best of bands. It is here that we marvel at the superb dynamic, technical, and sound-color control for which this band is famous for the world over. To this you must add their wonderful rhythmic ensemble - incredible. One thing that must be pointed out about this new Dyke is that Childs is conjuring a truly united sound once again, no one player sticking out by being allowed overly aggressive playing, something that tended to mar some outstanding Dyke recordings in the not too distant past. All in all, this is another stunner from a great band, great conductor, and excellent recording company, Doyen.

Exultation! Amsterdam Staff Band (Howard Evans), featuring cornet soloist *Roger Webster. SP&S. SPS CD 146. TT 62:52. Program: *Heralds of the Dawn* (Goffin); *Redeeming Love* (Rive); **Song of Exultation* (Bearcroft); *St. Magnus* (Steadman-Allen); *Christ Is Alive* (Downie); *The Road to Emmaus* (Goffin); **When I Remember* (Catherwood); **Precious Jesus* (Clarke/Redhead); *Elegiac Variations* (Evans); **They Could Not* (Harris/Bowen); *Celebration of Contemporary Gospel Song* (Himes).

The Amsterdam Staff Band was founded in 1962, though a tradition of a national brass band for the SA in the Netherlands can be dated back before World War I. Their most recent CD focuses on music of Eastertide, with the added attraction of Roger Webster as guest cornet soloist. The disc opens with a solid reading of a Dean Goffin march, *Heralds of the Dawn*. Right from the outset, the ensemble playing of the band pleased me. In both accompaniments and their own features, this staff band is in good form, a tribute to recent training the band has received under British conductors such as Don Jenkins and their current leader Howard J. Evans. Roger Webster is in excellent shape, as well. His main con-

tribution comes on Bearcroft's demanding *Song of Exultation*, which Roger interprets with grace, ease, and technical bravura. *Precious Jesus* and *They Could Not* allow excellent scope for Webster's lyric gifts, while *When I Remember* is one of those quick, flashy encore type solos. The recording presence for the soloist is excellent - just the right balance with the band. Of the major works recorded I was pleased to have a CD format of Goffin's classic *Road to Emmaus* and Evans' recent score, *Elegiac Variations*, the latter based on Evans' own original melody. This latter work has not yet had wide play but this reading should prove helpful in correcting that situation. The 13-minute work presents many challenges of test-piece variety, though the composer intends to project a vision of ultimate victory of life

over death rather than a series of technical feats to be overcome. The band attacks the music with gusto and flair, with only occasional loss of finesse. With an album of this consistency the Amsterdam Staff Band is beginning move forward towards the front rank of such bands in the world-wide SA band fraternity. The well-produced package includes helpful notes on the music, an essential in a sacred instrumental music album, as well as information of the band, soloist, conductor, and a personnel list.

Far From Chicken. Oslofjord Brass Band (John Philip Hannevik). Produced by Oslofjord Band. TT 63:40. Program:

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Chicken (Ellis/Fjellvang--Hannevik); *Slavonic Fantasy* (Hohne/Kerwin), Tarjei Gilbrant, cornet soloist; *Eumerella Shores* (Hannevik--Fjellvang); *Norwegian Dance* (Aagaard-Nilsen); *In Quiet Pastures* (Steadman-Allen); *The Witness* (Himes); *Concert Piece for Trombone* (Guilmant/Steadman-Allen), Torunn Bachmann, soloist; *English Heritage* (Lloyd); *A Castle in Heaven* (Am/ Hannevik); *Summon the Dragon* (Graham).

This 'young' Norwegian band - young in years (only recently formed) and youthful in membership - delivers a vibrant and varied program that seems to mirror their joyful, enthusiastic approach to the British-style brass band. Their conductor, along with several members, wears two hats, by also serving as an SA bandmaster in Oslo. Therefore, the program is a mixture of SA and contest band repertoires. Opening the disc in a casual but hip manner, the band launches into the old fusion tune, *Chicken*, in a new arrangement by their leader. The recording is from a live performance in an outdoor setting, but the pick-up is fine. (The majority of the album was recorded in The Salvation army recording studio in Oslo.) Right from the start you can sense how much they enjoy playing together. In complete contrast to this rouser is Hannevik's skillful setting of a Norwegian choral work by Magnar Am, that of an old ethnic religious tune; on this arrangement the band really shines in elegant style, as they also do on Hannevik's adaptation of the Australian bush song, *Eumerella Shores*. Other Norwegian fare includes a rousing up-to-date *Norwegian Dance* by Aagaard-Nilsen, one of my favorites on the disc. The band's two soloists are up the challenge of their great standard classics, the Hoehne *Slavonic Fantasy* perhaps not as well known as the trombone work. The center piece of the album is their

spirited reading of Lloyd's *English Heritage*, an appropriate choice for a band that would do well in our own Honors Section. In the middle of program come two older SA works, the selection *In Quiet Pastures*, and one of Himes' earliest marches, *The Witness*, both of which were quite pace-setting in their day and still seem fresh many years later. There

is a freshness about the band and this music that is highly appealing; it speaks well for the dynamic brass band scene in Norway and now especially in Oslo. To order, contact the band via their director, John Philip Hannevik, at his email address: pip@enitel.no

Flying High! Brass Connection (Andreas Spoerri). Obrasso CD 871. TT 63:02. Program: *Four Short Pieces* (Saurer); *Send in the Clowns* (Sondheim/Saurer); Suite--*On the Town* (Bernstein/Saurer); *Salmagundi* (Powell); *Canon* (Pachelbel/Saurer); *Earle of Oxford's March* (Byrd/Howarth) *Night on Bare Mountain* (Mussorgsky/Saurer); *Eager for Igor's Swing* (Bellmont); *A Night in Tunisia* (Gillespie/Saurer).

Brass Connection is a 12-piece symphonic brass choir consisting of 4 trumpets, 2 horns, 4 trombones, a tuba, and a percussionist. While the disc contains one Philip Jones Brass Ensemble style transcription, Elgar Howarth's *Earle of Oxford* adaptation, and a demanding *Night on Bald Mountain* (Mussorgsky/Saurer), the majority of the program consist of contemporary and jazz inflected charts and arrangements, most them written or arranged by Swiss composer/arranger Marcel Saurer. Indeed, the album's final cut turns this brass choir into an effective big band with competent jazz soloists on Saurer's arrangement of Dizzy Gillespie's *A Night in Tunisia*. With Saurer's engaging *Four Short Pieces* the group opens up the show on a positive, confident, professional level. *Salmagundi* by New Zealander Kit Powell is the one concession to 'serious' modern brass choir music, though Powell may have his tongue in cheek from time to time on this puzzling but 'interesting' romp. Here modernist techniques link up with German and English folksongs, and even

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NABBA RENEWAL DATE!!

March 1

This date holds for all members and member bands. ALL Registrations at NABBA will be based on Executive Administrator 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 may be eligible for back issues of *The Brass Band Bridge* where available

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Wilsson's 76 Trombones!. The short original work *Eager for Igor's Swing* (Another Swiss writer, Andre Bellmont) flows on a similar dialectic, becoming in the process musical homage to Stravinsky via Gershwin and Kurt Weill. The recording sound is very good. The only slight drawback is that the notes supplied for this Obrasso disc are only in German. However, that is but a small thing when compared to the quality of the playing. Brass Connection is a fine group of players adept at many styles; they exhibit good technical skill throughout the challenging program; they play with verve and energy. Serious students of brass ensemble music and performance should check out this group and these pieces.

Oberaargauer Brass Band and Friends. **Oberaargauer Brass Band** (Manfred Obrecht) with soloists Paul Muff, E flat and B flat trumpet; Armin Bachmann, trombone and bass trombone; Thomas Ruedi, euphonium; Raphael Christen, vibraphone. Obrasso. CD 871. TT 57:08. Program: *MacArthur Park* (Webb/Fernie); Euphonium Solo--*Carrickfergus* (Roberts); Trombone Solo--*The Pink Panther* (Mancini/Richards); Trumpet Solo--*Love on the Rocks* (Becaude/Sparke); Vibraphone Solo--*Hello Dolly!* (Herman/Woude); Bass Trombone Solo--*Wandrin' Star* (Loewe/Fernie); *Puttin' on the Ritz* (Berlin/Richards); Vibraphone Solo--*A Tribute to Lionel* (Waignein); *It Ain't Necessarily So* (Gershwin/Fernie); Bass Trombone Solo--*Swing Low* (Fernie); *I'm On My Way* (Gershwin/Fernie); Euphonium Solo--*Let Me Try Again* (Caravelli/Fernie); *Jambalaya* (Williams/Fernie); Trumpet Solo--*Summertime* (Gershwin/Snell); *The World is Not Enough* (Arnold/Woude); *Coming to America* (Diamond/Fernie).

Four renowned guest soloists join the Swiss Band of the year for 1999 and the Swiss Entertainment Champion Band of

2000 for a light-hearted, enjoyable program of popular music. It is amazing how many of this kind of CD showed up in this issue of the Bridge. Perhaps it goes to show just how effective brass bands are getting at this kind of music as well as how much better the arrangements are getting. The insert card provides bare bones info - in German - but the music speaks for itself, both through the fine soloists and through this very good band. The recording sound is very good, too. A good compilation pop arrangements played with spirit and style. Contact Obrasso or the band directly at their email address: info@oberaargauerbrassband.ch

On Broadway. **Swiss Brass Consort.** Obrasso. CD 873. TT 50:54. Suite--*Cabaret* (Kander/Saurer); Suite--*Wonderful Town* (Bernstein/Saurer); *Be a Clown* (Porter/Fernie); Suite--*Fiddler on the Roof* (Bock/Saurer); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Fernie); Suite--*My Fair Lady* (Loewe/Saurer); *I Got Rhythm* (Gershwin/Harvey); *The Way You Look Tonight* (Kern/Bissill); *New York, New York* (Kander/Tuor).

The Swiss Brass Consort formed in 1997 as a brass choir modeled on the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble: 4 trumpets, 1 horn, 4 trombones, 1 tuba, and percussion. Like Brass Connection (see review of the disc *Flying High!* above), these are top Swiss professional players; indeed at least one player shows up in both personnel lists. The playing is excellent and the recording quality provides complete satisfaction. The program is self-explanatory - show tunes to the fore. While it is not explicitly stated in the short German-only notes provided, it seems the album was a collaborative effort between Swiss Brass, Obrasso, Inc (recording and publishing), and the arranger Marcel Saurer, to whom the majority of the arrangements are attributed. Several other familiar brass band names are also included, like Fernie,

and Harvey, with their brass band arrangements adapted to the smaller combination. I am assuming, perhaps incorrectly, that this fine CD serves also as model performances for 10-piece arrangements handled through Obrasso. Fortunately, the disc contains phones, addresses, and emails for Obrasso and Swiss Brass Consort. This is a highly entertaining and very well performed and presented thematic program. Small brass choir groups should get hold of this disc as another source of good 'pops' literature.

Music for Trumpet and Wind Ensemble. **Trumpet Soloist Vincent DiMartino and The Syracuse University Wind Ensemble** (John Lavery/Bradley Ethington). Mark Recordings 3412 MCD. TT 57:42. Program: *Concerto #2* (Tull); *Prayer of St. Gregory* (Hovhanness); *Solo de concours* (Charlier/Lavery); *La Reine d'amour* (Sousa/Lavery); *Solea* (Evans/Muccioli); *Sonata for Trumpet* (Kennan).

Vincent DiMartino is one of the most versatile, exciting, energetic, and all-around gifted brass musicians with whom I have had the privilege to work. In this stunning display of those characteristics, DiMartino lays down some definitive versions of both well-known and new compositions or arrangements for trumpet and wind ensemble. Taking one performance ornament along - how and when to apply types of vibrato - and you could use this disc for a clinic. His vibrato can range from a wide, slow, warm sound of the most Romantic type to a tight fast singing Neo-classical tone, all the way to the straightest symphonic laser beam! What a technical showcase, as well, especially on the Fisher Tull *Concerto #2*, which ranks in the 'unplayable' category for most mortals. Yet this is contrasted with a short Sousa cornet solo, here in a recording pre-

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miere. It's a mid-19th-century style solo that takes the form of a slow melody followed by a charming polka- allegro. Also new are the arrangement of the Charlier (remember those *Transcendent Etudes* on which it got harder and harder to transcend?) and Kennan's own wind-band edition of his famous *Sonata*. Only on *Solea*, originally a Gil Evans/Miles Davis collaboration, do we lose presence on the soloist, who seems to use both flugel and trumpet; otherwise DiMartino is front and center in the recording. The wind ensemble does a fine job keeping pace with the soloist, showing good technical resources, intonational control, and musical sensitivity. This is an album to be studied by all trumpet/cornet players for the careful approach the soloist gives to such a wide repertoire and for the incredible energy with which he imbues these scores. All brass musicians will enjoy this incredible musician who gives us much to enjoy, much to think about, and much to rejoice over.

Shakin'...Not Stirred. Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman). Produced by Illinois Brass Band CD 003.TT 57:09. Program: *Let's Face the Music and Dance* (Berlin/Richards); *Sugar Blues* (Williams/Morrison), Guy Clark, cornet soloist; *Puttin' On the Ritz* (Berlin/Roberts); *L'il Darlin'* (Hefti/Sparke), Jim Swager, cornet soloist; *Miller Magic* (Stephens); *I'm Gettin' Sentimental* (Bassman/Geldard), Brian Byrne, trombone soloist; *And the Band Played On* (Richards); *Summertime* (Gershwin/Snell), James Sobacki, soprano cornet soloist; *Sweet Georgia Brown* (Richards); *The Whistler* (Green/Holman), Lisa-Ann Barnes, xylophone soloist; *Georgia On My Mind* (Carmichael/Morrison), Mike Harloff, flugelhorn soloist; *Jazz* (Wilby).

What a joy it is to see our NABBA bands flourishing! One of our best, Illinois

Brass Band, has had a spectacular ride of success under their talented conductor, Colin Holman, literally sweeping the boards at our annual contests in recent years. The centerpiece of this "Jazz Collection," as the subtitle puts it, is their live winning performance of Wilby's demanding test piece *Jazzin' Lexington*, KY, at NABBA 1998. It was their dynamic reading of this 'own choice' work that won the day for them. You can just sense the band's enthusiasm, right from the first euphonium glizzando, and they just get stronger and stronger as the complicated but entertaining score unfolds. They also get looser and looser - in the best sense of that word - and bring this music to life, in many ways doing a better job stylistically than of the British readings I have heard. The recording done by David Henderson that day is a credit to the improvement in this aspect of NABBA, so much so that bands are able to use these takes on their CD releases. The other items are recorded in a drier environment (listed as a high school auditorium), the result, by contrast, a slightly 'studio' kind of sound, but certainly a balanced reproduction of this band's good sound. I agree with the decision to put the test piece last on the CD, for the remainder of the program unfolds in a light hearted, ebullient way, with relatively short show tune arrangements coming at you in good order and proper style. Several band soloists, six in all, stand up well and this also adds to the charm of the program. Special commendation to Holman, the arranger, and Lisa-Ann Barnes, the performer, for bringing to life in a new format the "ever-Green" (sorry for the pun) xylophone solo, *The Whistler*. The insert card provides exactly what we want to know about the band, its history, its list of personnel, and the appropriate listing of publishers, recording engineers - a model for how it should be done. Congratulations to our champion IBB for this their fourth, and very entertaining disc, one with a James Bond title that I think

catches a notable facet of this band.

Show Business. Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John W. de Salme). Westmark. WCD 30092. TT 63:18. Program: *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *Puttin' on the Ritz* (Berlin/Richards); *And the Band Played On* (Ward/Richards); *There's No Business* (Berlin/Richards); *Summertime* (Gershwin/Snell), Joan Force, soprano cornet soloist; *I Got Rhythm* (Gershwin); *I Wish You Love* (Trenet/Fernie), Todd Bransky and Don Stine, euphonium soloists; *Be a Clown* (Porter/Fernie); *Aspects of Andrew Lloyd Webber* (Graham); *Whistle Down the Wind* (Webber/Farr); *Helter Skelter* (Leomn/Woodfield), Connie O'Meara.

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xylophone soloist; *For the Love of a Princess* (Horner/Duncan); *That's -A-Plenty* (Pollack/Richards); *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy/Sing, Sing, Sing* (arr. Woodfield); *The Free Lance March* (Sousa).

The announcement of John de Salme's 'retirement' as music director of Eastern Iowa this past Spring makes this compact disc release by EIBB all the more interesting. It stands as a testament to this excellent conductor's achievements with this very successful NABBA band (see companion disc, *The Spirit of Christmas*, reviewed below). The chosen program embraces top tunes from the entertainment industry, Broadway or the silver-screen, many of them in recent, popular arrangements. Recorded over a 3-day period, the band is presented in a favorable light, with good overall balance and warmth of sound. Several of the band's soloists step front and center. Joan Force's sweet soprano cornet, a notable part of the band's sound for years, is heard to good effect on *Summertime*, as arranged by Snell. The euphonium duet and xylophone solo are also stand out tunes on what is a relaxing series of light arrangements played with style and energy. The play list flows well and kept me focused and interested. Several works were new to me and caused me to reflect a bit further on them. Peter Graham's *Aspects of Andrew Lloyd Webber* comes off quite well at about 7 1/2 minutes, while Woodfield's arrangement that combines *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* with *Sing, Sing Sing* was not as convincing, though that is not a reflection on the band's playing. The closing Sousa march demonstrates what is excellent about this band: a solid tone, good ensemble, and generally very good intonation. They play accurately and their director insists on a solidly musical approach, with good phrasing and line to the fore. The whole produc-

tion is handsomely conceived and carried out. The insert booklet contains background on the band and music, list of personnel, and a good center-fold color picture of the band in their inimitable relaxed, period attire. Congratulations EIBB and John de Salme for a recording that will have wide, general appeal.

The Spirit of Christmas. Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John W. de Salme). Westmark. WCD 30093. TT 76:35. *Joy to the World* (Woodfield); *Adeste Fidelis* (Woodfield); *Deck the Halls* (Woodfield); *The Spirit of Christmas* (Graham); *Silent Night* (Gordon); *An Australian Christmas* (Curnow); *In the Bleak Midwinter* (Holst/Fernie); *Dies Natalis, Op. 86* (Gollan); *Sussex Mummers Christmas Carol* (Smith); *Caribbean Christmas* (Smith); *Comin' To Town* (Freeh); Paul Waech, cornet soloist; *Santa-Claustrophobia* (Smith); *Frosty the Snowman* (Smith), Tom Thrums, tuba soloist; *The Christmas Song* (Drover), Dan Davies, flugelhorn soloist; *Yule Dance* (Harper); *Russian Christmas Music* (Reed/De Salme); *We Wish You* (Rutter/Wilson); *Auld Lang Syne* (Drover).

EIBB's companion release with *Show Business* contains a whopping 76 minutes of holiday music. From short carol arrangements to symphonic suites and transcriptions, the literature is well chosen for the band. I commend to you the entire album as a great resource for you when making those annual decisions on holiday repertoire. The title carol arrangement by Peter Graham would be a great piece to open any holiday program, his alternation of meters bringing this old carol back to life in a new and exciting way. The Curnow three-movement suite, *An Australian Christmas*, features several carols by a talented Australian musician, a suite I have found goes down very well here in the States despite the unfamiliar songs. While lots of bands have tackled Alfred Reed's *Russian*

Christmas Music in David Leppla's condensed version (about 7 minutes), this disc contains director John deSalme's more complete transcription (just over 12 minutes). The band's soloists are heard to good advantage, and I had a particular liking for the witty bass solo by Sandy Smith, *Frosty the Snowman*, played with proper gusto by Tom Thrums. Smith is represented on a variety of other tunes, showing him to be a clever handler of the brass band score. Not profound stuff, but just the right thing for a Christmas concert. Westmark Recordings has reproduced the band's warm sound quite well, recorded in a high school auditorium with good resonance (or with a slight touch of reverb added). Again, kudos for another well-produced disc by one of our most successful NABBA bands, and a fitting tribute to their director, John deSalme.

Turning Point. National Capital Band (Lars-Otto Ljungholm); Crossroads Recordings CR 057. TT 62:50. *Rosehill* (Jakeway); *I Love You, Lord* (Klein/Davies); *Celestial Morn* (Condon), Tom Bratten, tuba soloist; *The Living God* (Gates); *Sound Out the Proclamation* (Ball); *The Dearest Name* (Catherwood), Tony Barrington, euphonium soloist; *All That I Am* (Himes); *The Lamb* (Gates), Dorothy Gates, trombone soloist; *Turning Point* (Gates), Narration by John Gowans; *I'd Rather Have Jesus* (Himes), Ian Anderson, cornet soloist; *Deep River* (Broughton).

The National Capitol Band has an outstanding legacy of recordings, the hallmark of which is a fusion of fresh, newer works with quality renderings of lesser heard Salvation Army works. This latest release, entitled *Turning Point*, successfully retains this pattern. Bandmaster Lars-Otto Ljungholm has been in the United States for just over ten years,

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serving as the Salvation Army's Divisional Music Director for the National Capitol Division. His background as a Swedish trained brass musician is reflected in the band's poised restraint in negotiating music of great sophistication. In keeping with the purpose of SA music-making, there is clear "gospel" message woven into the entire project, including the superb liner notes by Dr. Ronald Holz. These notes help the listener to understand the referential intent of much SA music. In particular contemplative works, known often as "meditations," center around one or two "devotional songs." Pieces like these are intended to function as "sermons" in sound. The National Capitol Band seem to relish the opportunity to present three recent works in this unique, sophisticated form of sacred music-making. Dorothy Gates' *The Living God* is introspective music focused around a prayer chorus - "Spirit of the Living God." The tenuous instrumentation is admirably accomplished, including the expressive soprano cornet solo passages by Noel Morris. The meditation *All That I Am* by William Himes is based on the arranger's own chorus of the same title. The "Cap" Band demonstrates fine sustained playing and handles this composer's familiar harmonic palette with real understanding. The nearly 7-minute meditation is brought to a splendid conclusion under Ljungholm's baton. A third meditative offering is based on the Laurie Klein worship chorus "I Love You, Lord," eloquently building from a simple solo voice to an exultant denouement. The title track *Turning Point* by Dorothy Gates, while esoteric and demanding for any SA band, is rich in musical imagery, emanating from several song references, particularly "Raise Up an Army, O God" (a cry for help for those in need) and "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" (a call for "turning" one's focus on Jesus alone for strength, hence the title) The episodic

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writing is arresting. The first full presentation of "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" is given a wandering treatment exhibiting compositional restraint before giving way to a triumphant rendition representing the warrior's fresh resolve. At about the six and a half minute mark, the present General of The Salvation Army, John Gowans dramatically intones the voice of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. Booth's "I'll Fight" speech is heard over undulating layers of ostinato. The response to the moving oration is an emotion charged epilogue based on an old SA victory song, "I believe we shall win if we fight in the strength of the King." Four soloists are featured on this CD. Ian Anderson's controlled cornet soliloquy on *I'd Rather Have Jesus* acts as an effective foil to the intensity of *Turning Point*. The tuba solo *Celestial Morn*, performed by Tom Bratton, is given excellent support by the band. Bratton displays a solid tone and approach, while maintaining measured tempos throughout. The euphonium solo *Dearest Name* is the Scottish "Annie Laurie" tune retooled with sacred lyrics, as is often done in SA worship. The arranger David Catherwood couches the lovely melody in an effective arrangement. One only wishes the soloist could have appeared further forward in the mix. Dorothy Gates' arrangement and solo trom-

bone performance is centered around a children's song by Michael Kenyon based on the well known poem of William Blake - *Little Lamb*. Again, the band meets the demands of the precarious instrumentation, particularly in the lengthy introduction. One wonders if such an exotic picture needed to be painted around this simple tune, yet the music exudes a child-like sense of wonder in keeping with Blake's poem. Three lesser heard traditional Salvation Army works bring balance to the disc, including Jakeway's classic *Rosehill March* and Bearcroft's lighter *To Regions Fair*. The Jakeway march, with its frequent passages of octaves demand pitch and rhythmic accuracy. Eric Ball's *Sound Out the Proclamation* is given a good "classic" brass band treatment, not overdone, but with enough bravura to make the three variations exciting. The concluding Count Basie style setting of *Deep River*, as arranged by William Broughton, is the only item in "pop" style, reminding the listener of "home over Jordan." Highest kudos to B/M Ljungholm and the National Capitol Band on *Turning Point*! With the exception of the occasional insecure intonation, this album represents outstanding brass band musicianship. There is some disappointment in the quality of the actual recording, as the disc takes on an almost live recorded sound, with an occasional over-miking of the snare drum. The quality of the cover photo, utilizing the famous Rio statue of Jesus, lacks print quality (the CD imprint version renders Jesus' face with greater clarity). Any weaknesses, however, cannot hide the clear and refreshing thread of gospel presentation made by this fine assembly of brass musicians.

[Reviewed by Dr. Harold Burgmayer, composer, arranger, and Divisional Music Director for the Pendel Division of the SA (Philadelphia)].



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