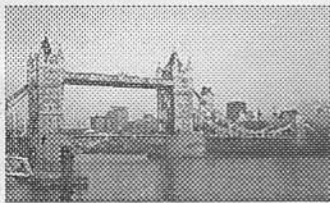


The

BrassBand Bridge



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

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POST-CONTEST ISSUE 2002

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Inside this issue . . .

President's Podium

Virtuoso Brass

Brass Band News

Percussion XX

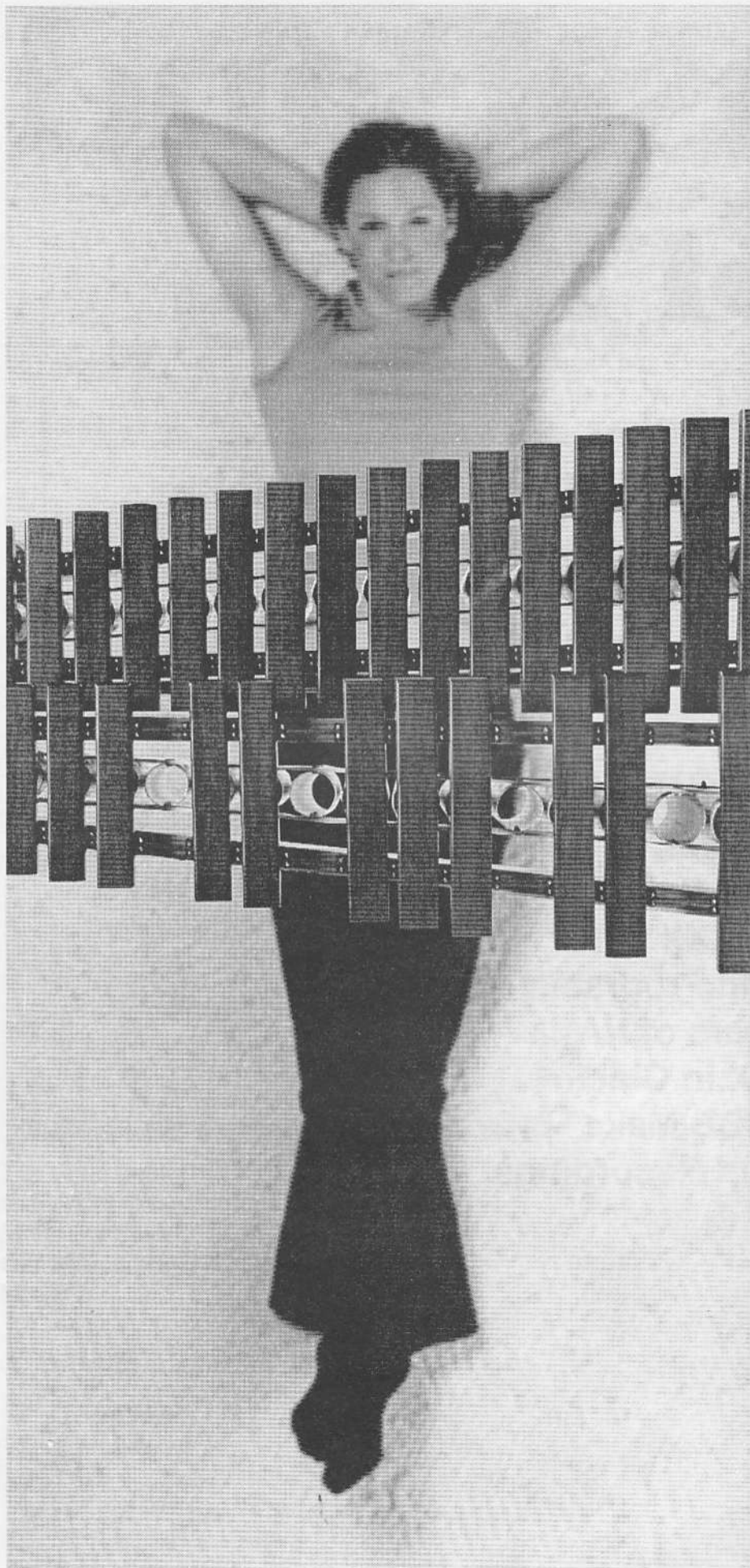
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NABBA XX in Cincinnati

BBC and IBB Make NABBA History

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INDEX OF ARTICLES

<i>President's Podium</i> by Anita Cocker Hunt	5
<i>Brass Band News</i> submitted by our readers	5
<i>Virtuoso Brass</i> submitted by David Buckley	6
<i>Brass Band Programs</i> submitted by our readers	9
<i>NABBA XX in Cincinnati</i> submitted by our reviewers	14
<i>Role of Honor: Twenty Years of NABBA Competitions</i> from the archives	29
<i>New Music: NABBA Reading Band Session 2002</i> submitted by Ronald W. Holz	32
<i>Percussion XX</i> submitted by Thomas Myers	37
<i>Brass Band Recordings</i> reviewed by Ronald W. Holz	40
<i>NABBA Board of Directors Nomination Form</i> is your band represented?	47

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Yamaha	2
Dillons	12
River City Brass Band	13
Altissimo Recordings	14
Kanstul	20
Bernel Music	36
Midland CDs	43
Solid Brass	48

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.

Editor's Notes



As we celebrate twenty years of NABBA contests, the central focus of this issue is, of course, the recent competition hosted in Cincinnati and I'd like to publicly express my gratitude to those of you who generously reviewed the various aspects of the competition while I was "stuck in the box." Having had the pleasure now of playing, conducting (and winning!), helping to host, and adjudicating at NABBA contests, it's most gratifying to experience the high level of integrity and witness the extraordinary level of detail and care and organization that goes into any of our competitions.

Within this issue you can read in detail on the various events that took place in Cincinnati. Both the Brass Band of Columbus and the Illinois Brass Band made history, with the first time that two bands have tied for first place. In addition, the BBC won for a record ninth time, and the IBB became the first band to record a double hatrick of consecutive wins. Congratulations to both bands for magnificent accomplishments.

As well as extensive articles on programs and band news, Tom Myers assesses the percussion sections in Cincinnati, Ron Holz continues his sterling work with both recording reviews and music reviews from this year's Reading Band, David Buckley keeps us in touch with events in Canada, and I've included a listing of our competitive winners at NABBA for the past twenty years.

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

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President's Podium

Well, now that the dust has settled on NABBA Competition XX, it's that time to thank those many people that made it happen, and also reflect on the positives, and how we can keep improving.

You responded overwhelmingly with thanks and praise to both The Cincinnati Brass Band and the NABBA staff. Thanks for your suggestions for the future; they will be reviewed and discussed at the next NABBA board meeting.

My thanks, especially, goes to Dwight Wages, President of The Cincinnati Brass Band and head of the competition steering committee, for his tireless efforts in putting an exceptionally well-run week end together. Thanks, also, to the rest of The Cincinnati Brass Band steering committee, members of the band, and

the many volunteers.

And enough cannot be said about the NABBA teams. Contest Controller, John de Salme did a magnificent job in organizing, preliminary work, and keeping a watchful eye over the entire week end. Ron Holz, Associate Controller, brought his years of expertise and knowledge, which we were grateful for.

To the rest of the teams; Frank and Sara North, Louis (Hap) Bourgois, Tom Myers, Joel Pugh, and Jeff Clymer---you ran the competition like a well-oiled machine.

The Lexington Brass Band and Vincent di Martino was certainly a highlight on Friday night, playing to one of the largest and enthusiastic crowds ever.

And, enough cannot be said about the Gala Concert's performance by The Brass Band Of Battle Creek. If you were there, you know what I mean!!!

It was wonderful seeing all of you. What a great camaraderie we have in brass banding. Congratulations to all of the bands, ensembles, and soloists who made it a special week end.

The next NABBA competition will be exceptional and a first---we head farther south to Little Rock, and they are preparing now, for us to have a great week end there.

Thank you for a great NABBA XX.
Anita Cocker Hunt
NABBA President

Brass Band News

Doyen Recordings and Salvationist Publishing & Supplies Ltd. will join forces in a unique partnership in the distribution of brass band recordings throughout the world. SP&S will become proprietors of the entire Doyen catalogue, and will be the principal distributors of all Doyen titles. Doyen Recordings will continue in their quest to bring quality recordings of the very best brass ensembles in Europe into that catalogue. Given the recent re-emergence of the Egon label, together with the development of its own SP&S label, this partnership will make SP&S arguably the largest distributor of brass band recordings in the world.

Congratulations to the **Brass Band of Columbus** (Paul Droste) who will represent NABBA after being selected to perform at this year's Midwest Band and

Orchestra Clinic in December 2002.

The **Brass Band of Central Florida** stands ready to begin an exciting and eventful 2002-2003 season. Following a strong showing at this year's annual NABBA competition, the BBCF has a full slate of activities planned, including performances at St. James Cathedral and Lake Eola Park in downtown Orlando. Also in the planning stage for this fall is a concert featuring euphonium virtuoso Stephen Mead. BBCF is scheduled to cut its first CD this year to include plenty of popular brass band favorites as well as a few more serious pieces for the enthusiasts in their audience. www.brassbandofcentralflorida.org

Members of the Louisville Pipe Band skirled along on three pieces in a sur-

prise ending to a **Commonwealth Brass Band** (Jerome Amend) performance on April 7, 2002 at Indiana University Southeast, New Albany that might have been called "Four pipers piping; one drummer drumming." Two nights before the concert, a mini-band of Commonwealth volunteers had played at appearances by the Pipe Band's full complement of bagpipers and drummers, performing together *The Rose of Kelvingrove* (Knox), *Skye Boat Song* and *Highland Cradle Song* (arr. Lamb) and *Scotland the Brave* (Trad/parts for brass band revised by Amend). CBB also was visited by two outstanding clinicians. The first, on Feb. 13, was Torgny Hanson, conductor of the internationally renowned Stockholm

continued on page 7

Under the capable direction of Brian Burditt, Bandmaster of the Salvation Army Canadian Staff Band, The Hannaford Band presented a most enjoyable concert featuring David Daws, Principal Cornet of the Enfield Salvation Army Band and just retired principal of the International Staff Band on April 28, 2002 in Toronto, Ontario.

David Daws opening solo, *Golden Slippers* (Bearcroft), was flawlessly and excitingly executed, convincing the audience that Daws ranks with the finest cornet players anywhere. All the characteristic Bearcroft touches in the accompaniment were fully realized but without at any time covering the soloist. This solo was written for Derryck Diffey who was in the audience enthusiastically supporting the soloist. Daws showed us his flowing lyrical sound in Martin Cordner's arrangement of Paul Marshall's *Mid All The Traffic*, although with a bit more vibrato than I would have liked. In the second half, Daws played Erik Leidzen's *Wondrous Day*, written for Derek Smith, Father of Phil Smith. Daws favoured us with a fun encore (unannounced) and as a further encore, the cornet trio, *Bugler's Holiday*, with

Hannaford players, Ray Tizzard and Stuart Laughton. This may have been the fastest Bugler's I have heard. Normally you would not think of speed as being a prime musical characteristic, but it was great fun nevertheless.

In the first half of the program, the band, after opening with *Milestone* (Himes), played *Rocky Mountain Overture* (Burge), *Romance* (Kulesha)--a brass transcription of his string work--and *New World Dances* (Ellerby). All three pieces were interesting and refreshingly accessible, useful additions to any band's repertoire. I particularly enjoyed the Kulesha which paid homage to other fine string compositions which had been an influence on Gary in his youth.

The second half opened with *Hannaford Street March* (Ballatine) played in true light and bright Ballantine style. This was followed by *Flourish and Dances* (Norbury), a short four movement work of great charm. The concluding item to the program was Leslie Condon's brilliant selection, *The Call of The Righteous*. Burditt and the band gave an absolutely scintillating performance of this classic, marred only by the tiniest of slips from

the cornets in the opening fanfare. This opening fanfare is a challenge to any cornet section and several of the top bench cornet players from the Tottenham Citadel, now Enfield, band who premiered this work in the late 1950s talked afterwards about shillings being put on the stand to go to the player who was flawless. The rest of the performance was outstanding with a spine tingling finale. This piece should be heard more from NABBA bands and would make an excellent own choice in contests.

Despite some criticism of aspects of this band's performance, I am continually amazed by their ability to perform such demanding repertoire with such limited rehearsal and with so many guest conductors. In this concert, Bandmaster Burditt managed to coax the Hannaford players into some double pianos and the trombone section into making more of an impact in the ensemble, both significant improvements. Only an over enthusiastic tuba in the opening march and some touchy tuning from muted horns and baritones marred what was an outstanding performance. The Hannaford Band is to be congratulated for their continued contributions to the Canadian brass band scene. Well done Hannaford!

David Buckley.

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NABBA XXI

April 11-12, 2003

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Gala Concert by the

Grimethorpe Colliery Band

NABBA XXII

April 16-17, 2004

St Louis MO

Hosted by the **St Louis Brass Band**

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**Gala International
Brass Band Festival**

continued from page 5

South Citadel Band and the National Youth Wind Orchestra of Great Britain and Inspector of Military Music in Sweden. He worked successfully with Commonwealth on *Concertante for Band* (Bulla) and *The Three Musketeers* (Hespe), which CBB performed at April's Cincinnati NABBA competition. The second clinician to work with the band, on April 17, was Frank Renton, the noted English conductor who was on holiday in Kentucky after serving as a NABBA Championship adjudicator. He led Commonwealth in run-throughs of *English Suite* (Lovelock) and *Festival Music* (Ball), stopping frequently to stress the qualities that lead to improvements to a band and an individual player. Also, at the start and end of the clinic, Renton gave inspiring lectures on the enjoyment of performing music.

The **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** (Tom Nelson) will host the Eighth Annual Grand Celebration of Brass Bands on June 15, 2002 at the Ushers Ferry Historic Village, Cedar Rapids, IA. EIBB will be joined by **Prairie Brass Band** (Dallas Niermeyer) and the **Illinois Brass Band** (Peter Lipari). Concerts start at 11 a.m. EIBB are also performing at the Iowa Bandmasters Association, as well as giving concerts in Sturgis, Cedar Falls and Kent Park.

Conductor of the **Fountain Creek Brass Band** in Colorado Springs, CO, Paul Curnow is moving to Long Beach, CA, and Debra Baker is assuming the position of Conductor. Debbie is the Director of Music with the Colorado Springs Christian Schools, and has been FCBB's Associate Conductor for the past three years. The band is preparing for their fourth season of the "Concert in the Park" summer series in Soda Springs Park in Manitou Springs, CO, a town nestled between Colorado Springs and Pikes Peak (from which flows Fountain

Creek). During this season FCBB hopes to select at least one Associate Conductor.

Motor City Brass Band (Craig Strain) began their 2002 season with the Senior Degree Recital of MCBB trombonist Steve Feltner in Pease Auditorium at Eastern Michigan University. Steve played several unaccompanied before presenting three solos with MCBB; Concert Pour Trombone Et Brass Band (Grondahl/Strain), Rhapsody for Trombone (Langford) and Wind Beneath My Wings (Henley/Barry). On March 2, 2002, MCBB participated in the Seventh Annual Red Cedar Festival of Bands in Hasslett, MI. A St. Patrick's Day concert, "Irish Spectacular", was the musical finale of the first quarter. MCBB showcased a number of great Irish tunes including a new Craig Strain arrangement "Songs of Ireland". Last years special guests Kelly Garver (violin) and Tyler Duncan (Irish whistle, uilleann pipes and bodhran) returned again this year and, with the Celtic Renaissance trio (guitar, Dulcimer and drum), treated the audience to several high energy new wave Irish tunes. Colin Holman visited the Motor City on March 25, 2002 to conduct a clinic for MCBB as it prepared for NABBA 2002.

Pacific Brass (Gonzalo H. Viales) recently completed their eleventh season. Their active schedule has included concerts in Carmel Valley CA and Hollister CA. They gave a joint performance with the Concord CA Salvation Army Band last November and a concert/clinic on brass bands for the California Music Educators Association in Monterey, where many educators present were hearing a brass band for the first time. Most recently they had the pleasure of featuring retired Canadian Brass trumpeter Ronald Romm to a capacity audience.

The last three months have been ex-

tremely busy for the **Triangle Youth Brass Band** (Tony Granados). Cornet soloist Terry Everson and trombonist Mike Kris were featured guests of the TYBB on March 9th, performing solos with the TYBB, leading clinics with the students, and sharing a recital. The concert was performed at Meymandi Concert Hall, the new 63 million dollar performing arts complex in Raleigh, NC, one of the best halls in the south, and acoustically designed for the North Carolina Symphony. The audience was very receptive. Following this concert, the TYBB set its eyes on preparing for NABBA in Cincinnati. Mark Clodfelter, newly appointed Professor of Trumpet at the University of Kentucky and conductor of the Smokey Mountain Brass Band, came to work with the TYBB to help polish the band for its performance in Cincinnati. Mark is an intense teacher and has the ability to pull the most out of the people around him. His help was very much appreciated, and TYBB look forward to working with him again in the future. NABBA XX marked the TYBB's second appearance at the annual competition, competing in the Youth Division, and adding more students to the solo and ensemble competitions. Both

continued on page 8



Debra Baker, Fountain Creek Brass Band

continued from page 7

trips to NABBA have been very rewarding experiences for all of the students in the band. Not only has it helped the band to grow musically, but the students have grown socially as well. The players usually see each other once a week at rehearsal and it was a lot of fun for them to spend the whole weekend together on the trip. The students would like to make the commitment to attend the competition every year as one of their band activities. It is their hope that Youth Bands form in many more brass band supported towns. It has really been worth the effort to experience the results of what young people can accomplish when given the opportunity. TYBB would like to thank all the dedicated people in Cincinnati for hosting a wonderful weekend in April. May 18th brought the TYBB back to Bond Park in Cary for the final concert of its Fifth season. The concert

featured music from the movies. As they finished this season, they look forward to the next season of providing a special musical experience of the highest caliber to the local brass talent of the Triangle area. Many thanks go out to all of the dedicated people who help to make the TYBB a special group.

The **St Louis Brass Band** (Keith Wilkinson) presented *Slides Rule!* on May 12, 2002 at the Orthwein Theater, Mary Institute-Country Day School in St Louis with guest trombone soloist: Brett Baker (principal trombone of the Black Dyke Band and trombone solo champion of Great Britain). Brett presented an unforgettable evening of pyrotechnical and lyrical trombone mastery. In addition to performing solo works with the Band, Brett was also featured with the STLBB's trombone section.

Utah Premiere Brass (Alan Boyer) con-

cludes its concert series at Provo Tabernacle on May 17, 2002. UPB has enjoyed a series of five concerts hosted by Provo City Arts and the concluding performance from this series will bring together a local school choir, Mountain Ridge Junior High (Cathy Jolley), in a performance of Sir Malcolm Arnold's *Song of Freedom*. Well known conductor Dr. Ralph Laycock will also direct UPB in three pieces, and in two of the pieces, he will be joined by his daughter, the talented vocalist Kathryn Little. Dr. Laycock retired from service to Brigham Young University and this appearance is intended to pay tribute to his extensive service to music. UPB will perform *Paganini Variations* (Wilby) as a grande finale work. Other pieces will include *Fanfare and Flourishes* (Curnow), *Mr. Lear's Carnival* (Howarth), and *Toccatina in D minor* (Bach/Farr). A special arrangement of *The Star Spangled Banner* has been specially prepared by band member Dr. Todd Fiegel and it will hopefully be made available in published form in the near future. This arrangement is a must for bands wanting something slightly different from the normal but not wanting to deviate from the true spirit of the music. Other concerts in the series have seen the band perform *Tuba Mirum* (Wood), *Suite in F* (Holst), *Folk Song Suite* (Vaughan Williams), *Rhapsody in Brass* (Goffin) as well as the favorites *Pines of Rome*, *Procession to the Minster* among others. The final concert is entitled "Heritage" and is designed to trace the interwoven history of British style brass bands in Europe and Utah, a state that boasted over 100 bands at the start of the twentieth century. Concert attendance has been excellent and UPB is enjoying a rapidly growing reputation for its high quality performance and extremely entertaining programs. The next Provo Tabernacle series will see the band programming other major works



Pacific Brass (Gonzalo Viales)

continued on page 9

Brass Band News

continued from page 8

including *Sounds* (Golland), *Of Men and Mountains* (Gregson), *Partita* (Sparke) and other major as well as lighter works. www.utahpremierebrass.org

Weston Silver Band has had a relatively quiet spring as they search for a new conductor to replace Ron Clayson who resigned in December. Robin McGubbin, a former bandmaster, has been carrying on very effectively in the interim with the help of Keith Ketteringham. The band is hoping Rob can organize his work schedule so as to take on the job. The band was excited to hear of Marc Donatelle's new venture in organizing the Chicago Brass Band. Marc, the former principal trombone of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, has filled in at Weston on many occasions from second baritone to principal trombone until his move to Chicago. Currently WSB are rehearsing for a concert on May 11 featuring the trumpet soloist and bandmaster, Bobby Herriot

and also for a busy summer, with four concerts all falling in one week. The band has held two events this spring up to the date of writing; a Slow Melody Contest in January for members of the band and an Entertainment Contest in April with the Whitby Brass Band. The Slow Melody Contest is a means to give potential soloists in the band exposure and for mature players to show them the way. Nine members of the band participated and it was most exciting to hear the development of the young cornet players, both front and back bench. In the end the winners chosen by judge Alastair Kay were two old-timers, both with Welsh backgrounds. Principal euphonium Ron Williams won for the third year in a row and has now been banned for a year. Gwyn Evans, former principal cornet who has just returned to the band after several years absence, was second with a soulful rendition of "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose". The band is please to have Gwyn back in the playing ranks. The Entertainment Contest with Whitby Band has been held for several

years and provides some fun for all. Weston played a wide variety of music including *Bees-A-Buzzing*, *Fest Musik der Stadt Wein*, *One Moment in Time*, the delightful *Serenata* by Toselli, *Soldiers in the Park*, *Tancredi*, and concluded with "Seventy Six Trombones". Starting with the three from the WSB section, the band ended with seven as those who had also played trombone joined in--not quite seventy-six but fun nevertheless. As a point of interest, one of the judge's scorecard mentioned that the band was too loud for the trombones. One of the tubas suggested that that was an historical first! The highlight of Whitby's program was a tuba solo in which the excellent tuba player added a tutu to his clothing half way along and danced in the aisle as he played. This gained Whitby significant marks in the entertainment grading but not quite sufficient for them to overtake Weston who received the trophy for the third year running. No one from Weston was able to be at NABBA this year but we hope to remedy that in the future. Regards to all from the no longer frozen North.

Brass Band Programs

Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste). March 11, 2002. British Arts Festival, Otterbein College, Columbus, OH. Festival March - *Celebration* (Condon); *Cambridge Variations* (Sparke); *Flourish and Dances* (Norbury); *Colonel Bogey March* (Alford); *Concerto for Trumpet* mvt. III (Sparke), Dan King, trumpet soloist; *Prelude "49th Parallel"* (Vaughan Williams/Douglas); *Overture - Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams/Douglas); *I Vow to Thee, My Country* (Holst/Steadman-Allen); *Navigation Inn* (Sparke), Gary Tirey, conductor
March 2, 2002. 17th Annual God &

Country Concert, Merson Auditorium, Columbus, OH, with **Canadian Staff Band** (Brian Burditt). *Liberty Bell* (Sousa); *Star-Spangled Banner* (Smith/Susi); *Bill Bailey* (Cannon/Susi), Bill Bailey, soprano cornet soloist; *Flourish and Dances* (Norbury); *Celebration* (Condon); *American Overture for Band* (Jenkins/Sarsany); *Parade of the Charioteers from Ben Hur* (Rozsa/Jenkins); Combined bands: *Marching Onward* (Bosanko); *Amazing Grace* (arr. Himes); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson); *March-Praise* (Heaton).
February 15, 2002. 18th Annual Concert

at St. John's Church, Columbus, OH with **Central Ohio Brass Band** (Tony Zilincik). *Fairest of the Fair* (Sousa); *My Funny Valentine* (Rodgers/Swearingen); *Overture to Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams/Douglas); *Praise the Lord with Drums & Cymbals* (Karg-Elert/Norbury); *Deep River* (arr. W. Broughton); *Flourish and Dances* (Norbury); Combined bands: *National Emblem* (Bagley); *My Shepherd* (Broadstock); *March from Pines of Rome* (Respighi/Snell).

continued on page 10

continued from page 9

February 12, 2002. Union County Community Concert Association presents Hollywood Meets Uncle Sam, with Paul "Uncle Sam" Bierely and Rico "Mr. Film" Long, announcers. *Fanfare from "2001"* (Strauss/Susi); *Star-Spangled Banner* (arr. Susi); *Colonel Bogey March* (Alford); *Liberty Bell March* (Sousa); *Over the Rainbow* (Arlen & Harburg/Richards), Lisa Galvin Eb horn soloist; *Fairest of the Fair March* (Sousa); *A Disney Spectacular* (arr. Richards); *El Capitan March* (Sousa), Mark Baker vocal soloist; *Parade of the Charioteers* (Rozsa/Jenkins); *William Tell Overture-Finale* (Rossini/Grant); *March from "1941"* (Williams/Gallehue); *Prelude 49th Parallel* (Vaughan Williams/Douglas); *Bill Bailey* (Cannon/arr. Susi), Bill Bailey E-flat cornet soloist; *Armed Forces Medley* (arr. Heine); *James Bond Collection* (arr. Richards); *Salvation Army March* (Sousa); *God Bless America* (Berlin/arr. Leiden), Mark Baker vocal soloist; *Stars & Stripes Forever* (Sousa); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Howe/Steffe/Wilhouisky & Ringwald/Susi), Mark Baker vocal soloist.

Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Hunt). February 25, 2002; Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Cincinnati, OH. *Pressing Onward* (Leidzen); "Bring Him Home" from *Les Miserables* (arr. Wilkinson), Pat Counts, soprano cornets soloist; *Brass Miniatures* (Curnow); *Hymn for Diana* (Turrin); *James Bond Collection* (arr. Richards); *The Huntress* (King).

Clinch River Brasses (Lloyd P. Farrar). City of Norris Community Building, Norris TN, with guest conductors Paul Bryan and Daniel Bowles. "La Rejouissance" from *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Handel/Mortimer); "Sound an Alarm" from *Judas Maccabeus* (Handel/Hawkes); *Gems from the St Paul Oratorio* (Mendelssohn/Hawkes); *The American Beauty* (D'Urbano/Farrar); *The South-*

ern Star (Broadbent); *Introduction and Allegro* (Fernie), Brian Hodge, euphonium soloist; *Il Guidica Universale* (DeNardis/Meredeth); *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. Gordon).

Commonwealth Brass Band (Jerome Amend). April 7, 2002; Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN. *La Peri Fanfare* (Dukas/Roberts); *There's No Business Like Show Business* (Berlin/Richards); *Robin Adair* (Hartmann), David Centers, euphonium soloist; *A Night in June* (King), featuring the euphonium and baritone sections; *Enigma Variations, Introduction and Theme and Nimrod* (Elgar/Ball); *The Trouble With Tuba Is* (Relton), Bob Rada, tuba soloist; *Manhattan March* (Leidzen); *Rondeau* (Mourer/Graham); *Somewhere Out There* (Horner/Barry); *Concertante for Band* (Bulla); *The Three Musketeers* (Hespe); *I've Got Rhythm* (Gershwin/Fernie); and, with members of the Louisville Pipe Band, *The Rose of Kelvingrove* (Knox); *Skye Boat Song and Highland Cradle Song* (arr. Lamb); *Scotland the Brave* (Trad./band parts revised by Amend).

Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Tom Nelson). April 20, 2002; Mount Vernon, IA. *National Anthem*; *Jubilee Prelude* (Sparke); *Fantaisie Brillante* (Arban), Paul Waech,

cornet soloist; *Cambridge Variations* (Sparke); *Connotations* (Gregson); *Barn Dance and Cowboy Hymn* (Sparke); *En Aranjuez, Con Tu Amor* (Rodrigo), Theresa Anderson, flugelhorn soloist; *Nimrod* (Elgar); *Party Piece* (Sparke), Jordan Fiebelkorn, euphonium soloist; *Slavonic Dance No. 1* (Dvorak/Hammer); *Amazing Grace* (arr. Holcombe), Dennis Modracek, cornet soloist; *South Rampart Street Parade* (Harries).

Golden State British Brass Band (Karl Swearingen). March 24, 2002; Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, in Yorba Linda, CA, and May 4, 2002; Soka University International Festival, Aliso Viejo, CA. *Songs of the Quay* (Richards); *Harbour Light* (Bearcroft), Norman Taylor, euphonium soloist; *Gathering of the Clan* (Duncan); *Misty* (Garner/Barry), Jane Carter, flugelhorn soloist; *Folk Festival* (Shostakovich/Cordner); *Jerusalem* (Parry/Langford); *Confection for Brass* (Richards); *James Bond Collection* (Richards); *Concert March from "1941"* (Williams/Sykes); *Calling Cornwall* (Richards); *Crimond* (Irvine/Richards); *Famous British Marches* (arr. Langford); *Clog Dance* (Marcangelo/Charleson); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford).

Pacific Brass Band (Gonzalo H. Viales). September 23, 2001; Hidden Valley Music Seminars, Carmel Valley, CA. *Slipstream* (Sparke); *Light of the World* (Goffin); *Demelza* (Nash), Al Tarasco, tenor horn soloist; *Sandon* (Purday); *Fantasy on British Sailing Songs* (Langford); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *Kalinka* (arr. Woodfield); *West Side Story* (Bernstein/Wright); *A Ragtime Picnic* (Zeise); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Wilhouisky/Catlinet). November 3, 2001; St Benedict Church, Hollister, CA. *Slipstream* (Sparke); *Light of the World* (Goffin); *Demelza* (Nash), Al Tarasco, tenor horn soloist; *Poet and*

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continued on page 11

continued from page 10

Peasant (Suppe); *Dance of the Russian Sailors* (Gliere/Dodd); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *First Suite in Eb* (Holt/Herbert); *Castell Caefilli* (Powell); *Cazardas* (Monti/Duncan), Howard Miyata, tuba soloist; *Deep River* (arr. Broughton); *Jingle Bells* (arr. Broughton); *Armed Forces Salute* (arr. Bulla); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Wilhousky/Catlinet).

April 20, 2002; Hartnell College, Salinas, CA, with *Ronald Romm, trumpet soloist. *Castell Coch* (Powell); *Light of the World* (Goffin); *Light Walk* (Gott); *"Nessun Dorma" from Turandot* (Puccini/Van Berigan); *Cazardas* (Monti/Duncan), Howard Miyata, tuba soloist; *Cross of Honour* (Rimmer); *Numbers* (Rowe); *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich/Kitson); *Punchinello* (Rimmer); **La Virgen de la Macarena* (Mendez/Freeh); **Prelude in E minor* (Chopin/Norris); **Sleepytime Down South/Swing that Music* (arr. Norris); **Hot Licks, Hot Lips* (Romm/Norris); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Wilhousky/Catlinet).

Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer). March 17, 2002; John Hersey High School, Arlington Heights, IL. *The Cossack* (Rimmer); *Ballet for Band* (Horovitz); *Soiree de St Petersburg* (Boehme), Jay Cohen, cornet soloist; *Irish Tune from County Derry* (Grainger); *Far and Away* (Williams); *The Year of the Dragon* (Sparke); *Tyrolean Trumpets* (Cloedt/Wilby), Jay Cohen, Matt Sypherd, David Scherer, Carol Dickenson, Jen Judge, Randy Steinberg, cornet soloists; *Gaelforce* (Graham); *Saddleworth Festival* (Richards); *Amsterdam Harbour* (Kelly).

Spires Brass Band (John Slezak). February 10, 2002; Frederick Church of the Brethren, Frederick, MD. *To God Be The Glory* (arr. Gordon); *Share My Yoke* (Webb/Bosanko), Laura Lineberger, euphonium soloist; *Simon Called Peter* (Vintner); *I'll Walk With God* (arr.

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Richards); *Las Lluvias Grandes* (Graham); *My Shepherd* (arr. Broadstock); *Collage of Contemporary Praise* (arr. Himes); *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. Gordon); *Bringing in the Sheaves* (arr. Himes); *Hymn to the Fallen* (arr. van der Woude). March 9, 2002; Kussmaul Theatre, Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD. *Star-Spangled Banner* (arr. Himes); *Gathering of the Clan* (arr. Duncan); *"Seville" from Spanish Impressions* (Newton); *Never Gleamed the Sea So Softly* (arr. Brevik), Luke Spiros and Laura Lineberger, euphonium soloists; *Seterslatt* (Forde); *Hine & Hine* (arr. Graham); *A Malvern Suite* (Sparke); *Windows to the World* (Graham).

Spokane British Brass Band (Mark Williams). March 24, 2002; SFCC Auditorium, Spokane, WA. *Fanfare Prelude* (Curnow); *Fantasia Brillante* (Arban/Muscroft), Jim Phillips, cornet soloist; *Serenade* (Langford), Eugene Johnson, trombone soloist; *Blaydon Races* (arr. Langford), Richard Evans, baritone soloist; *Siciliana and Giga* (Handel/Langford), Bruce Brummett, horn soloist; *Euphonium Concerto* (Sparke), Kit Cutler, euphonium soloist; *Zebra Fanfare* (Williams); *Demelza* (Nash), Joe Potter, soprano cornet soloist; *Figaro's Cavatina from The Barber of Seville* (Rossini/Marsteller), Ernie Carlson, euphonium soloist; *Softly, As I Leave You* (De Vital/Catherall), Ernie Carlson, euphonium soloist; *The British Grenadiers* (arr. Langford); *Grand Russian Fantasia* (Levy/Wyss), Matt Parker, flugelhorn soloist; *Rhapsody in Brass* (Goffin); *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* (arr. Sparke), Jerry Olson, tuba soloist.

Triangle Youth Brass Band (Tony Granados). March 9, 2002; Meymandi Concert Hall, Raleigh, NC. *Festive Overture* (Shostakovich/Kitson); *Cleopatra* (Damare), Terry Everson, cornet soloist; *Be Thou My Vision* (Curnow), Terry Everson, cornet soloist; *Air for Tuba Ensemble* (Rodgers), Tuba Euphonium Ensemble; *A Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Petit Suite de Ballet* (Ball); *The Guardian* (Graham), Michael Kris, trombone soloist; *"Habañera" from Carmen* (Bizet/Spivack), Percussion Ensemble; *The Doomsday Machine* (Burritt), Percussion Ensemble; *Irish Tune from County Derry* (Grainger); *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral* (Wagner/Himes); May 18, 2002; Sertoma Amphitheatre, Cary, NC. 2001 *Fanfare from Also Sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss/Pearce); *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *"Hymn to the Fallen" from Saving Private Ryan* (Williams/van der Woude); *Robin*

continued on page 13



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Brass Band Programs

continued from page 11

Hood, Prince of Thieves, Main Title Theme (Kamen/Broadbent); *Batman The Movie, Main Title Theme* (Elfman/Catherall); *The James Bond Theme* (Norman/Relton); *You'll Never Walk Alone* (Rodgers/Snell); *The Sound of Music* (Rodgers/Wright); *Bohemian Rhapsody* (Mercury/Barry); *Armed Forces Salute to N.A.B.B.A.* (arr. Bulla);

Triangle Brass Band (Michael Votta, Jr., Music Director; Brian K. Doyle, Resident Conductor). February 17, 2002; Meymandi Concert Hall, Raleigh, NC. *Circius, Wind of the North* (Aagaard-

Nilson); *Evocations of An English Countryside* (arr. Doyle); *Euphonium Concerto* (Horovitz), Edward Mallett, euphonium soloist; *Variations for Brass Band* (Vaughan Williams), Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Japanese Slumber Song* (Wood), Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Valdres* (Hanssen); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

April 21, 2002; Hill Hall Auditorium, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, NC. *Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead), Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Evocations of An English Countryside* (arr. Doyle), Michael Votta, Jr., conducting; *Tuba Concerto* (Gregson), Tony Granados, tuba soloist, Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Badi-*

nage (Norbury), Mark Mabe, tuba soloist, Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Prayers for the Dead* (Mallett); *Japanese Slumber Song* (Wood); *Thunder and Lightning Polka* (Strauss).

May 5, 2002; Chatham County Arts Council Facilities, Pittsboro, NC. *Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead), Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Canterbury Chorale* (van der Roost); *Euphonium Concerto* (Sparke), Randy Guptill, euphonium soloist; *Blue Rondo ala Turk* (Brubeck); *Circius* (Aagaard-Nilson), Brian K. Doyle, conducting; *Badinage* (Norbury), Mark Mabe, tuba soloist; *Japanese Slumber Song* (Wood); *Thunder and Lightning Polka* (Strauss).

NABBA XX in Cincinnati

Everyone is to be congratulated in Cincinnati, from the hosts and organizers (Cincinnati Brass Band), to the many participants, the sponsors that made the event possible, and the many in the audience who showed to listen, cheer, support, encourage and be enlightened and entertained. The standards of performance were exceptionally high throughout the weekend and the participation was a reflection of the continuing growth of NABBA. Below are a series of reviews of events during the course of the weekend that will give the reader a contrasting picture of reviews by a number of different contributors, with results where appropriate.

YOUTH BRASS ENSEMBLES

Reviewed by Julie Vish

I had the pleasure of reviewing the youth ensemble section of the NABBA competition. These small ensembles all exhibited solid fundamental playing skills and careful preparation of their musical selections. The maturity of these young musicians is to be commended. Mr. Richard Holz was the

adjudicator for this section.

The first group to perform was **Brass Alive**, representing the Triangle Youth Brass Band. Their performance of the first movement of the *Quintet in D Major* (Ewald/Jones) was excellently played with special recognition going to the French horn and first trumpet players. I feel that this group definitely would have been in the running for placement if they had used cornets and tenor horn as originally called for. Their disqualification was very unfortunate, but supported the NABBA instrumentation rules for the ensemble competition.

Next was **Jason's Dance Mix**, a Trombone ensemble representing the All Star Brass and Percussion. This ensemble's performance of the *Fugue in C minor* (J. S. Bach) was well performed, with excellent dynamic contrast and pitch. There were a few small balance problems that kept this group from the top position, but their second place finish was well deserved.

The winner of the competition, and the third group to perform were the **Four Freaky French Horn Substitutes**, a horn quartet from the All Star Brass and Percussion. This group was well balanced and played with excellent pitch, dynamic contrast, and musicality. Their performance of the Samuel Scheidt *Canzon* was well polished and prepared.

The final group to perform was the Triangle Youth Tuba-4 (get it?). They performed *The Marriage of Figaro Overture* (Mozart/Fabrizio). This performance was well prepared, and the students enthusiasm for the music came through. Their third place finish was well earned.

As a high school Instrumental Music Director, I was very thrilled to hear all of these students. Their hard work and high standards for performance was inspiring.

Julie Vish is a cornet player with the Central Ohio Band and a member of the NABBA Board of Directors.

YOUTH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES

Winner: **Triangle Youth Percussion Ensemble**

ADULT BRASS ENSEMBLES

Winner: **Derby City Tuba Quartet**

continued on page 15

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continued from page 14

ADULT TECHNICAL SOLOS

Reviewed by Joel Pugh

The adult technical solo competition proved to be extremely competitive from a participant's perspective; however this allowed for an enjoyable afternoon of musical entertainment for the audience and some very difficult decisions for the adjudicator, Geoffrey Brand. In addition to the virtuosic playing that was evident throughout the competition (another indication of the musical growth of NABBA), practically every instrument in the brass band was represented which gave the listeners a varied program.

Marcia Kline of the Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band performed Vincent Bellini's *Concerto* on the Eb Cornet. The andante section was performed with sensitive musicianship, a light tone, and excellent accuracy. The technique of the allegro was played with light crisp technique and, in general was well played throughout.

As usual, the cornet was well represented, with many of the air varie type solos, for which this instrument is known, wonderfully performed. Gabe Kasperek of the Prairie Brass Band gave a very solid rendition of the Goedeke *Concert Etude*. Ryan Dolan of the Motor City Brass Band played Jules Levy's *Grand Russian Fantasia*. His nice big tone, clear technique, impeccable triple tonguing, and the fact that the piece was played from memory enhanced Dolan's aggressive approach to the piece. In addition to the technical aspects of the solo, he was sensitive to the musical nuances and gave the audience a treat by nailing the "Eb" at the end of piece. Paul Waech of the Eastern Iowa Band performed Arban's *Fantasia Brillante*. Again, we heard not only amazing technique, both with fingers and articulation, but it is always nice to hear these tech-

nical solos played musically, and Waech did just that. Cyndi Scoglio also of the Prairie Brass Band played the wonderful standard of Arban/Leidzen, *Carnival of Venice*. Scoglio truly captured the light Clarke-style of the cornet and demonstrated amazing technique throughout this timeless selection.

The alto horn was represented by Michael West of the Lexington Brass Band, who performed the rarely heard *The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Hall*. West demonstrated a pure alto horn sound and played with a consistent level of musicianship, particularly in the cadenzas. My only regret was that, due to time constraints, he was not able to finish the solo and not being familiar with this piece, I would certainly have enjoyed hearing the rest of it.

The audience was treated to two Arthur Pryor trombone solos that always are "crowd-pleasers." Not only did both of these pieces fulfill all the technical requirements for which these solos are known, but also both players truly captured the Pryor-style that endeared himself to his listeners. Rob Barnes of the Illinois Brass Band excited the audience with the Pryor standard, *Thoughts of Love*. Again, it is always impressive to see a performer take a chance and perform from memory, as Barnes did. Not only is this pleasing aesthetically, but it allows the performer to internalize the solo and give the absolute best performance. Dave Guion of the Prairie Brass Band played *Love's Enchantment* and demonstrated amazing flexibility and very secure high range throughout this Pryor solo.

David Shriver of the Brass Band of the Tristate played Goff Richards' jazzy *Rainy Day in Rio* on bass trombone. Shriver showed excellent technique, had a complete command of the pedal range of the instrument and captured the light jazz style, necessary to make this piece

succeed.

Like the cornet, the euphonium had many participants, but the diversity in the selections of players was particularly pleasing to the audience. St. Louis Brass Band's Jeff Binns who played Arban's *Variations on a Tyrolese Song* represented the turn-of-the century solos. Binns performed with a beautiful euphonium sound and demonstrated great flexibility, blazing technique, and a very accurate triple tongue. Kent Wellman of the Brass Band of the Tristate played the first movement of Joseph Horowitz's landmark piece for euphonium, *Concerto for Euphonium and Brass Band*. Wellman succeeded in the most difficult aspect of this solo, capturing the musical style. After the performance Geoffrey Brand mentioned to me that though he conducted the premiere and has heard it countless times, he never tires of hearing this great selection. Lexington Brass Band's Tony Wise treated the audience to one of the newer classics in the euphonium repertoire, *Euphony* by Robert Redhead. Since no piano accompaniment exists, (and Hospitality Suite #301 was not large enough to house the Lexington Brass Band!) Wise performed a capella. From the outset, the excitement in this piece was evident. He demonstrated a full euphonium sound and performed with impeccable technique. Especially impressive was the crisp double tonguing in the last section of the solo. Scott Heath of the Brass Band of Columbus educated the audience in a non-brass band selection, written for Brian Bowman at the Leonard Falcone Competition at the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp; David Gillingham's *Blue Lake Fantasies*. Heath chose to perform the first and last movements of this programmatic piece, "Firefly" and "Party Antics." Heath "pushed the envelope" in terms of tempo and it certainly paid

continued on page 16

continued from page 15

dividends by providing a truly exciting rendition of this wonderful piece. His flawless technique, attention to dynamics, and smooth flexibility helped in making this a real audience favorite.

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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.

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solo, originally written for tuba is Catozzi's *Beelzebub* and this selection was performed by the Sunshine Brass Band's Tod Markin. Markin's rendition of this piece was very solid and captured the light-hearted style that endears these selections to the audience. Chris Combest of the Lexington Brass Band chose Monti's gypsy violin solo *Csardas*. While this piece has been transcribed for virtually every instrument, there is something especially thrilling about hearing this piece played on BBb tuba. Combest demonstrated a wonderful sense of musicianship in the rubato opening section and then showed virtuosic technique in the remainder of the solo.

It was not only the brass that showed fine solo playing this afternoon; several percussionists played enjoyable selections on the marimba to give the complete array of musical diversity. Illinois Brass Band's Teralyn Schwab performed the Spanish selection, *Asturias Leyenda* by Albeniz/Stensgaard. Schwab's performance was marked by extremely emotional playing complemented by smooth flowing technique that combined for an inspiring performance.

The three winners of the competition certainly were-deserving, although any number of the previously mentioned participants could also easily have placed. The third place winner was Tony Zilincik of the Brass Band of Columbus and Central Ohio Brass Band played Goedeke's *Concert Etude* as fast as I've ever heard it. (I think he was concerned about the six-minute time limit!) Not only was it a tempo of one to the bar (Jayne Canady, the accompanist, should also be commended for keeping up with the soloist) but it was absolutely flawless! Well-done!! Oh, by the way, Zilincik played the *Concert Etude* for Trumpet on Eb tuba!

Amy Nelson of the Illinois Brass Band performed Arban's *Carnival of Venice*,

which earned her a second place result. Certainly a crowd favorite, Nelson demonstrated a true cornet sound, effortless technique, and careful attention to dynamics, which resulted in a thrilling rendition of this familiar solo. As if an almost-perfect performance wasn't enough, Amy and her accompanist, Steve Marcus, "hammed it up" to give some levity to this serious occasion.

The winner of the Adult Technical Competition was Dewie Dowdy of the Brass Band of the Tristate who played Earl Hatch's *Furioso and Valse* on the marimba. The technique Dowdy demonstrated in the *Furioso* was phenomenal and the light-hearted *Valse* section provided the perfect compliment to the piece. As with several of the other performers he performed the solo by memory, which allowed him even more artistic freedom to put his own personal touch on this winning performance.

All the participants should be congratulated for a great afternoon of musical enjoyment. It is evident that hours of hard work that went into each of these performances. Also, it is no secret that the individual players make bands great and this is one of the main reasons that the level of the NABBA bands continue to rise.

Joel Pugh is director of the Heidelberg Brass Band and a member of the NABBA Board of Directors

ADULT SLOW MELODY

Reviewed by David Rosen

The week-end of NABBA XX was a very well staged event by the Cincinnati Brass Band and Dwight Wages and Crew. The "Adult Slow Melody" competition was an excellent exhibition of musicianship. A very high degree of interest in fine brass

continued on page 17

continued from page 16

playing was evident given the variety and quality of literature prepared and presented. All of these aspects of the competition put an additional degree of pressure on Judge Frank Renton in the final selection; especially after a day filled with so many wonderful solo performances. At the conclusion of each presenter's selection I was evermore relieved to be announcing and not adjudicating. At the end of the day and after a long period of consideration, Maestro Renton awarded the first place prize to trombonist Brian Byrne of the Illinois Brass Band. Congratulations to all participants.

David Rosen is a member of Solid Brass of Little Rock

YOUTH SOLOS

Reviewed by Jackson Hill

I was given the privilege to be the announcer for the Youth Solo Division at NABBA. It was a pleasurable opportunity to listen to the wonderful talents of these fine young musicians. The future of brass bands is truly alive and well within the youth divisions.

I would like to congratulate all the participants for a job well done. A special ovation goes to Dwight King, bass trombone, for first place, Jason Watkins, trombone, for second place and David Root, marimba, for third place.

All the performers showed great preparation which is a testament to their instructors and brass band programs. The goal of mastering an instrument is a major priority. Overall the musical selections were difficult. Musicians should strive to find music that is challenging yet still be within ones skill level.

Many of these student soloists would be a great asset to any senior brass band.

I personally envy the youth programs that are being developed. This is the future of brass bands in North America. I am hoping in the future to develop a program in our area. I encourage more bands across the country to develop these programs. The youth in our organization work in conjunction with the colleges and universities in the area to earn credits for their ensemble work with us.

I am looking forward to Little Rock 2002. I would like to see more alto horns and baritones perform in the solo competitions. This would really help build these sections with your band.

Once again congratulations to all the performers in the youth solo division. See you in 2003!

Jackson M. Hill is a baritone player and founder of the Brass Band of the Tri-State and a member of the NABBA Board of Directors

LEXINGTON BRASS BAND CONCERT

with Vincent DiMartino

Reviewed by Chuck Wyrick

NABBA members, their guests and the Greater Cincinnati Community were indeed fortunate to have the Lexington Brass Band, with guest trumpet soloist, Vincent DiMartino, present a concert at the close the first day of the NABBA Championships.

The program opened with the William Himes arrangement of the *Star Spangled Banner* which was far from a routine performance of The Anthem, but rather a stirring miniature tone poem. Next was Clifton Williams's *Dramatic Essay* performed by Mr. DiMartino which demonstrated his ample virtuosity and lyrical style. Edward Grieg's *The Last Spring* from *Two Elegiac Melodies* (arr. Steadman-Allen) was a wonderful framework for the band's overall rich tone

quality with beautiful playing on this piece by the principal solo cornetist. Following was the "Humoresque" from Erik Leidzen's *Folk Song Suite* followed by soloist and first trombonist, David Henderson's beautiful legato playing on "Berceuse" (Angels Guard Thee) from the opera *Jocelyn* by Benjamin Godard, transcribed and arranged by Eric Ball. After a very humorous introduction by Vincent DiMartino, he performed Gordon Langford's *Rhapsody for Trumpet and Brass Band* describing it as "Holy Jazz." Next on stage to conduct was one of the several distinguished judges for the Championships, Geoffrey Brand, leading the band in a premiere of Erik Leidzen's *Abide With Me*; and what a different treatment of this old hymn it was, with its never thick but rather light and transparent texture with many exposed passages - a challenge for any brass band. "Hymn to the Fallen" from the movie *Saving Private Ryan* (Williams/van der Woude) was then given a very poignant and moving reading by the band. The boisterous *Pastime With Good Company* (Henry VIII/Stephen Roberts) could have ended the program but to cool things down a bit and put an exclamation mark on the concert, Vincent DiMartino returned to the stage to perform the popular and powerful aria from Puccini's *Turandot*.

One notable aspect that made this such an enjoyable concert, in addition to the fine performances by the Lexington Brass Band, soloist Mr. DiMartino and guest conductor Mr. Brand, were the eloquent introductions by the LBB's conductor, Dr. Ronald Holz. With a wordsmith of this caliber, there is no need for a professional announcer.

Chuck Wyrick is a member of the Cincinnati Brass Band

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

INTEREST SESSIONS

This year's hosts incorporated a series of brief and informal seminars on the Friday evening to both enlighten and educate newer and experienced NABBA members alike on a number of topics pertinent to the organization. Several of the sessions appear below with a synopsis of the materials in the discussion, and further details can be obtained from the contributors to each session.

HOSTING THE NABBA CHAMPIONSHIPS

This interest session was conducted by two prior NABBA Championship Hosts: Illinois Brass Band - 1999 (Lisa Barnes & Jeff Lyons), and Cincinnati Brass Band - 2002 (Dwight Wages). There was a well attended session with 13 NABBA members availing themselves to the presentation, with lots of good questions from the audience. Present were representatives from the Commonwealth Brass Band, Syracuse Univ. Brass Ensemble, Little Rock Brass Band, and Sunshine Brass Band (apologies to other bands represented, if you are not listed). It was especially encouraging to see next year's host (Little Rock) present with several members as they get geared up for next April.

A three page outline of the key areas which should be considered and secured in preparation for hosting a NABBA Championships was presented. These included: 1) Volunteer Recruiting & Organization of Steering Committee, 2) Committee roles/ responsibilities, 3) Responsibilities of the NABBA Board at the Championships, 4) Securing the Venue Locations (hotel, performance locations, reception), 5) Percussion Equipment/NABBA logowear/Programs, 6) Scheduling, 7) Communications (Website, host - band liaison contacts),

8) NABBA Weekend Logistics, and finally 9) Post-event follow-ups & NABBA report.

There were some good frank questions and the leaders of the sessions gave feedback on the commitment that each band must have from their full membership if planning on undertaking the responsibility of hosting. Emphasis was given to getting early commitment (minimum of 1 year, preferably 2 years) for the venues and gala concert entertainment. The importance of preparing a preliminary budget with a focus on estimating how the hosts expect to raise the funds to cover the expenses for the Championships was addressed. It was suggested that potential hosts use this as a basis for deciding whether the band can expect to emerge financially in good shape, since one would not want a host band to end up with a significant deficit. And lastly, the importance of planning to have top quality percussion equipment available for both the performances and rehearsal sessions was stressed.

Several of the members in attendance requested a copy of the Hosting Planning Book - Competition Manual which the NABBA Board had prepared in 2001. These names have been passed onto Anita Cocker Hunt, for dissemination of this manual. In addition, Dwight, Jeff & Lisa offered to consult with any bands who are considering or already agreed to host a future Championships. As we further refine the Hosting Manual, and build a group of prior hosting consultants.....the experience of hosting, while no small task, can with good advance planning be a very gratifying and unifying event for a NABBA band. Submitted by Dwight Wages wagesd@mindspring.com

HOW TO START A YOUTH BAND

The session on starting a youth brass band had few participants, but many

people stopped us to ask questions about our band throughout the weekend. We were more than happy to share what we knew. The following questions and answers are drawn from our conversations over the weekend. It is our hope that this article will encourage people to start up youth bands in their area, and to use the NABBA competitions as a vehicle to enhance their musical ability.

Our youth band is still a work in progress. While we are really excited about the ensemble it has become, each year we find some areas that need improvement. We are still really in our infancy. Things are coming together nicely, and each year brings new learning experiences for the people in charge of making the TYBB a good musical product. The vision is the most important part of starting a youth band. We are trying to provide the highest quality ensemble for the best players we can find. Musical excellence is the primary focus, with a secondary focus being to instill a love for brass band playing in young players. By playing a concert in the new symphony hall, bringing in guest artists, and travelling to NABBA each year, we hope to attract fine talent and continue to improve every aspect of the TYBB each year. We don't focus on competition. The NABBA trip is just one of the things we try to do to provide a comprehensive learning experience. It took the TYBB four years to make it to a NABBA competition and that happened because the timing was just right.

What were your first steps?

In the spring of 1997, the Triangle Brass Band (TBB) held Brass Day in Durham at a performance hall. Students from high schools throughout a 3-county area were invited to participate. The clinic was held on a day when the TBB had an evening concert planned in the same venue.

continued on page 19

continued from page 18

Students attending Brass Day also received a complimentary ticket to that concert. The day began with a program for all students on the difference between brass bands and concert bands. TBB members demonstrated brass band instruments. A well-known musician led a master class. TBB borrowed a second set of brass instruments for the day and the students spent about an hour and a half reading brass band music and playing brass band instruments -- that really sold the students on the idea of forming their own band. The Triangle Brass Band's commitment to hosting this Brass Day was essential to the beginning of the youth band. Our successful youth band has come from our successful adult band, using their resources as our jumping-off point.

Where did you get your instruments?

The adult band was ready to begin upgrading their instruments. As a section's instruments were replaced, the older instruments were passed down to the new youth band. Our first year we had cornets and flugelhorn. Students in other sections played their school instruments. (Yes, we had french horns in our youth band.) Two years later we were able to add tenor horns. The fourth year of the band we had baritones for them to use.

Who directs your youth band?

The director has so far been a member of our adult band. The first semester we had 4 directors sharing the responsibilities. This did not work well for the students -- they needed more consistency. From the second semester on, only one person regularly directed the band. Just as band directors at schools become actively involved in the lives of their students, our band directors have spent a lot of time away from rehearsals communicating with our students. The director needs to have a good rapport

with kids, a link to band directors and other musicians in the area, and a lot of time to devote to the project. A very important quality a youth director should possess is the ability to inspire.

How do you select the students to be in the band?

Our members are all high school students. We try to have an equal number from each grade. Selection for TYBB is by recommendation and audition. We do not have open auditions. Our director learns who the best high school brass players are and then recruits them to play in the band. He checks the All-District and All-State lists. It helps to network with the area band directors and private instructors and to develop a relationship with them. If they support the band, they will readily recommend students. We have found it useful to emphasize to the local band directors that our students are always excused from brass band functions if they conflict with a school band function.

When do you rehearse?

We began with rehearsals on Sunday afternoons from 2:00 - 4:00pm. The theory was that students had more free time on weekends and could fit a rehearsal in before they attended youth activities at their churches in the evenings. We had some problems with attendance on Sundays. Families visit relatives on weekends, science projects and English papers are frequently due on Mondays, and school trips are usually scheduled over weekends. This past year we changed to Tuesday nights from 6:30 - 8:30pm. We still have some problems with attendance as schools schedule concerts and honor society meetings and basketball games on weeknights, but it is much better. We chose Tuesday nights after checking with other local groups. The youth orchestra meets on Mondays; our adult band meets on Wednesdays; and our school district frequently schedules their workdays (stu-

dent holidays) on Fridays so families leave town on Thursday evenings -- this meant Tuesday was the best for us.

Two hours is a lengthy rehearsal for some players. The students take a 10-15 minute break half way through the rehearsal. As adult brass players know, the playing in brass bands is more demanding than in regular band. Many students have to build up their endurance for it.

We schedule at least five rehearsals before a concert, but we recognize that they are not as polished as the concerts performed after 8 or 9 rehearsals. We do not schedule any rehearsing just prior to concerts. If necessary, we will have a 5-7 minute sound check and then give the students 30-45 minutes of rest before the concert begins.

Tell me about your season.

After a couple of years of trying to begin rehearsals early in the fall, we finally acknowledged that we could not compete with marching band programs in the schools. We have auditions in late October and begin rehearsals the week after the last major marching competition. We schedule a concert in mid-December and then take off for Christmas break. We try to schedule a concert in late February to mid March. Rehearsal is suspended the week of spring break. The last two years we have competed at NABBA (which we hope to continue to do each year). We then finish our season in mid May with an outdoor concert. The last two years this May concert has featured music from movies and musicals. At the end of this concert we collect all the instruments and music.

What kind of music do you play?

The music is partly from the TBB library.

continued on page 21



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continued from page 19

We have also purchased some new music for the band. We want the music to be interesting, educational and challenging. They play advanced literature like "Moorside Suite" and "Festive Overture" as well as easier tunes like "Be Thou My Vision" and "Danny Boy." We want the students to play a broad range of music from traditional brass band repertoire to orchestral transcriptions and solo pieces. It is important to play music that is interesting and challenging to high school musicians. Most of the players are looking for the challenge, and might lose interest quickly if they did not get it.

Endurance during a performance should be taken into consideration. A 45-minute concert is too short, yet many students (mostly cornets) will have trouble making it through a full hour and a half, even with intermission. We have supplemented the band performance by adding a percussion ensemble selection on each concert. This also provides our percussionists some extra work since the band music is not always challenging for them. During the concert, this piece is good for about 7-10 extra minutes of performance without using up cornet chop time. Our tuba/euphonium/baritone sections have also performed a Tuba Ensemble selection. Plans in the future also include a trombone choir. Cornets and tenor horns can rest up a bit during these times.

Do you charge dues?

Our students pay dues at the first rehearsal each year. This year it was \$60.00 per student. We may have a student or two with a financial problem that causes them to be late, but it has not been a problem. This money pays the rent for the rehearsal space, provides for new music, and helps pay for guests.

What would you like to change?

We continue to work on audience development which is a problem for almost every amateur group in our area. We are also working to improve attendance at rehearsals. We are also studying the idea of some kind of corporate sponsorship so that we don't have to charge dues. That would make performing even more of an honor. We feel that if the students can play and travel and work with famous people for free, it would be that much more valuable and would help with recruiting down the road. We would also like to have more performances, so the band feels more like a performing ensemble rather than a rehearsal ensemble.

What are the best aspects of your band?

We provide some of the best brass players in the area an opportunity to play consistently challenging music. Many students and parents tell us they are not challenged in their school music programs. We believe we are helping the school band programs educate and mature their members. Our students really enjoy playing together. We also expose our members to world class brass musicians through NABBA trips and visits by guest conductors and friends.

Submitted by Carolyn Kohring and Tony Granados. Carolyn Kohring is Business Manager of both Triangle Brass Bands. She has also been a "Band Mom" with the Youth Band since it began in 1997. Tony Granados is Director of the Triangle Youth Brass Band and plays tuba with the Triangle Brass Band. tbbmgr@attglobal.net

SOME THOUGHTS ON RECRUITING

The Interest Session on Recruiting drew a small, but interested audience. Those who attended were presented with a variety of thoughts on the recruiting process.

The first main point in recruiting was to

stress the uniqueness of playing in a brass band: the beautiful organ-like sound of a brass band, the different (and increased) challenges for brass players, the exciting and varied literature, and the rewards of playing in a musical organization with like-minded adults. Also mentioned was the opportunity to become a part of NABBA and to attend and participate in the annual championships, receive the newsletter, and develop new contacts and friends.

The second main point was to go through the instrumentation of a British-style brass band and develop criteria for the recruiting of players for each instrument. The technical demands within the cornet section provided an example of where advanced players were crucial (solo and Eb soprano), and where role players would fit in the band (second and third parts). In the event that French horn players are not willing to play alto (tenor) horn, cornet and trumpet players could be switched with relative ease.

The third major point was the need to have a small group of enthusiasts who are strong players become a reference point for filling out the band. There is the danger of allowing marginal players to become members right at the beginning, only to have the problem of replacing them when they cannot keep up with the level of the band. It is better to start small and build carefully. Do not be afraid to recruit players from existing community wind bands and orchestras because many of them want to play in more than one group.

A final point of discussion was whether to audition players, let them sit in a rehearsal or two without obligation on either side, or to use the recommendations of the current players to fill vacancies. Perhaps a combination of

continued on page 22

continued from page 21

these could be used. Insist that new members make a commitment to regular attendance at rehearsals and concerts.

Paul Droste is the conductor of the Brass Band of Columbus and an Honorary Member of NABBA

ENTERING A NABBA COMPETITION

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, 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, why should one enter, and how does one go about preparing for such an event?

It's possible that you may have to begin by convincing the entire ensemble that this is a worthwhile venture. Competition is an important part of (most) brass band calendars and have been so since the instigation of brass bands, in both the UK, Europe, Australasia AND North America, and there are historical reasons for entering.

... it was competition with other brass bands that gave [the early brass bands in America] dynamism and the will to improve. Widespread even in the earliest days of the movement, good-natured rivalry stimulated amateur bands to play more often, to dress more attractively, and to practice more diligently. Rivalry among towns and companies can even be said to have led to the formation of many bands in the first place.

There was fierce competition for good musical arrangements as well... In one

incident, long remembered by residents of Battle Creek, Michigan, the Germania Band upstaged a neighboring band from Bay City by playing one of Bay City's original pieces, but in a far better arrangement, during the very same concert at which Bay City band premiered their work.

Ultimately, however, the only meaningful way to establish one band's superiority over another was to fight it out in concert. Such "windy wars" as a New Orleans newspaper called them, were common occurrences in the nineteenth century. On city street corners, in the middle of parades, and even on the decks of passing steamboats, rival bands tried to outshine the competition with the quality, not to mention the volume, of their playing. Similar musical battles, waged by Confederate and Union bands during the Civil War, have become legendary.

These spontaneous play-offs evolved into a highly organized forum for band competitions known as band contests or tournaments. Sponsored variously by instrument companies, regional band associations and chambers of commerce, band contests catered to the competitive nature of bandsmen while offering more tangible rewards. As Trumpet News pointed out in 1877, a band could learn more from one "well-regulated band contest than [from] months [of] the ordinary routine of band practise." In addition to this educational function, band tournaments offered participation an opportunity to win fantastic prizes of cash or instruments. In one contest, held in Fremont, Ohio, in 1884, the grand prize was a wagon worth two thousand dollars plus five hundred dollars in gold. Needless to say, winning competitions was another way a band could raise money!

Band contests became very popular, especially during the 1870s and 1880s.

Some of the large ones, such as the three and four day tournaments held annually at Marancook, Maine, and Evansville, Indiana, attracted both amateur and professional bands along with thousands of spectators. Other competitions were small-scale affairs, featuring a few local bands and perhaps a few dollars in prize money for the winning bandsmen. No matter how the contests were administered, the opportunities they provided for bandsmen to hear each other and play together went a long way toward fueling the dynamism of the American amateur band movement.

Margaret Hindle Hazen and Robert M. Hazen, *The Music Men* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1987), 66-67.

The following guidelines might be used.

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. The biggest stumbling block to commitment is of course financial. Some bands pay the membership's entire expenses to attend, some bands partially subsidize and others expect members to pay their entire way. Your decision will depend on your band's philosophical outlook. Having a band pay their way ensures a higher level of commitment because of the individual investments being made, but it also may result in more members not wanting to invest or not

continued on page 23

continued from page 22

being able to afford an airfare and two nights in a hotel room. Expecting the band to pay places an enormous burden on an ensemble that for most have limited budgets, but this approach may help members to commit. It's a tough choice!

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 test-piece selection as a guideline to your band's abilities.

4. Listen to recordings of the test-piece if available. Although the last thing one wants to hear is a carbon copy performance, 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 test-piece as thoroughly as possible.

5. Select wise own choice(s) music. Each band is required to fill the remaining time in their program (depending on the section entered) with own choice music from "the best of brass band repertoire." 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, acclimatize 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 test-piece 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, and skills. Bear in mind the time limitations, both minimum and maximum when making your own choice music selections. Practice timing. Practice setting up (percussion needs, especially) and tuning within the allotted time allowances. Practice 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. Practice 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. Practice 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.

10. The adjudication system: few matters garner more criticism in brass band presses around the world more than the systems of adjudication. Here we utilize the following system. Three judges adjudicate each section. The judges do not confer. The judges listen to the performances "blind." The judges are required to provide both taped and written criticisms of the performances. Their scores are simply added up at the conclusion of each performance and places are awarded on the merit of the most number of points. Presently the scores are weighted 60% for test-pieces and 40% for own choice materials. Points are deducted for performing both under or over the allotted amount of time. The winners are traditionally announced during the evening Gala Concert.

continued on page 24

continued from page 23

11. Planning a rehearsal schedule: conductors have to balance the musical needs of the band between their competition preparations and other concert engagements leading up to NABBA. I think that most if not all bands add extra rehearsals to their schedule as part of the preparations. My experience has been to include a weekend "kick-off" event in January (Thursday night, Friday night, all day Saturday) and then add an extra Saturday morning rehearsal every other week leading up to the competition. Saturday morning rehearsals have typically been much more productive than Thursday evening rehearsals. I've utilized sectionals and clinics. I've programmed NABBA competition music as often as possible in concerts leading up to and following the event.

12. Many bands use their performances for recordings. It's usually a highlight of the performance calendar and there's a good audience on hand to support everyone. The quality of the recordings has generally been good.

13. Many bands use their awards and placements as part of grant applications. It could be possible for every band entering the competition to state that they are one of the top twenty brass bands in North America, regardless of where they place.

EXPLORER, OPEN, YOUTH AND CHALLENGE SECTIONS

Reviewed by Bert Wiley

On April 13, I had the distinct privilege of announcing for and listening to, the bands that played their competition programs in the Ballroom of the Raddison Hotel in Cincinnati. The excitement was evident as the first band appeared for performance, supported by a large number of family and friends; this excitement lasted

throughout the day, even though the audience size varied greatly.

The categories included in this part of the competition included Explorer, Youth, Open and Challenge. It was unfortunate for the true sense of competition that the Explorer and Open only had one competitor each. It is our ardent hope that this will change as the brass band movement continues to grow.

The first band to perform, an Explorer, was conducted by Keith Wilkinson; the band was the **Varsity All-Star Brass Band** from the Columbus, OH community. This group consists of students from grades nine through twelve; their required test piece was *Sinfonietta for Brass Band* by Joseph Horowitz. The band played with great certainty and excellent preparation and was conducted with skill and tremendous consideration for detail.

The Youth bands were from Ohio (**Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band**) and the **Triangle Youth Brass Band** from Raleigh, North Carolina. Both bands played the *Petite Suite de Ballet* by Eric Ball, and both played extremely well. One of the interesting features of the entire day was to witness the constant changes in the set up of the band chairs and stands. The changes were interesting and sometimes amusing as chairs, stands and percussion equipment was located and relocated throughout the day.

The **Syracuse University Brass Ensemble** was the only band in the Open section and were members of the faculty of SU and surrounding regions in upstate New York. The open section test piece was the *Concertante* by Stephen Bulla and the band played this in a tight and meaningful way.

The next five bands were in the Challenge Section, also performing the re-

quired test piece, *Concertante*. As an intent listener it was most fascinating to quickly become aware of the diversity of interpretation as well as the placement of certain sections of the bands, particularly the cornets and trombones. The repetition of the test piece made for a most interesting diversity of sound as well as interpretation. The bands all played extremely well, both as they played the test piece, but also in their choices of repertoire to complete their programs.

As a long time member of NABBA and with tremendous interest in brass bands, I am proud of the accomplishments of each band, regardless of section and regardless of the great variety of playing abilities. I found this to be a day of great pleasure as the emcee and as a listener.

Results:

Explorer: 1. **Varsity All-Star Band** 251.6

Youth: 1. **Triangle Youth Brass Band** 281; 2. **Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band** 262.8

Challenge: 1. **Sunshine Brass Band** 278 2. **Solid Brass** 270.6 3. **Commonwealth Brass Band** 262.2 4. **Spires Brass Band** 253.4 5. **Brass Band of the Tri-State** 251.6

Open: **Syracuse University Brass Ensemble** 260.4

Bert Wiley is the NABBA Executive Administrator

HONORS SECTION

Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Palmatier

The Princeton High School auditorium in Sharonville, OH offered a wonderful venue for the Honors and Championship sections of the North American Brass Band Association's annual competition. The acoustics were excellent, and the judges would get an accurate listen to the bands

continued on page 25

continued from page 24

competing that day. The adjudication panel was one of the most distinguished in the brass band world; Geoffrey Brand, James Curnow, and Frank Renton brought many decades of world-class experience to the event. I was privileged to serve as compere for the venue and jotted down my observations as the day wore on. In some cases, I had to leave the hall to attend to other business so some bands' notes are less extensive than others.

The test piece for the Honors Section, Joseph Horowitz's *Ballet for Band* would provide a real challenge for the four bands in that section. The first to tackle the test was the **Prairie Brass Band** (Dallas Niermeyer). Niermeyer was outwardly quite relaxed and did his best to settle his band as they took the stage, knowing that the early hour and a number one draw were not ideal. The band launched into the test piece with great spirit and a wonderful tutti sound. The piece's torturous exposed lines were not all well handled, something that would plague every band in this section. Although there was a bit of loss of rhythmic focus, the band survived the "test" in overall good fashion. Prairie's choice piece was the formidable *Year of the Dragon* and the band was clearly comfortable with this piece. While exposed passages still proved problematic, the band's tutti sound showed fine balance and character. Prairie set a high standard for the other bands to overcome, but did not really nail it to the wall and had left room for others to take home the banner.

Next up was the **Motor City Brass Band** (Craig Strain). This band has shown steady improvement each year and seemed confident as they took the stage, showing their years of experience in NABBA competitions. Strain had chosen to go with a full and varied program rather than performing two "test" pieces.

The band opened with *Procession of the Nobles*. Despite some pitch inaccuracy, particularly in the muted sections, the band handled the piece well and used it to settle themselves. Next was the test piece. Motor City also had some difficulties with the exposed sections but it was apparent the band enjoys the piece and you could feel them gaining confidence and momentum as they played, finishing strongly. Next was *Elsa's Procession* and Motor City provided some truly moving moments. There was one crescendo/rallentando that was so perfectly played I nearly gasped. This group's music making was really impressive and showed years of growth as an ensemble. MCBB closed their program with *Praise*, a real chestnut that deserves more frequent performance. At this point, I was not sure which one of these bands was in the forefront but believed they would both be strong competitors for the banner.

The **Central Ohio Brass Band** (Tony Zilincik) came next and the contrast in timbres was striking. This band went after the test piece displaying a fat and powerful low brass sound, a very trumpet-like cornet quality, and a bit thin in the middle. Their reading was confident and aggressive but I wondered how the "trumpety" sound would go over with the judges. They followed with Philip Sparke's *Mountain Song*, presenting an enchanting and ethereal opening with a wonderful muted euphonium solo. While the sound again was a bit akin to fanfare trumpets at higher dynamic levels, the band clearly has an affinity for this piece. COBB closed their set with *Les Gursks* (Jean Balissat). Rhythmically clean and forceful, it played to their strength - this band likes to rock. A fine and entertaining performance but probably lacking the polish and blend it would take to capture the banner in this section.

The *All-Star Brass & Percussion* batted clean-up in the Honors Section and

started with Ray Steadman-Allen's *Service Above Self*. Displaying a muscular sound and a powerful low brass section, the band also had a different tuning temperament than some of the other bands. With a bit of vibrato and a wider pitch center, it sounded a bit like some of the 1950s era brass band recordings in its tuning. The opening march was rhythmically sound and dynamically terraced but could have used more shading in the dynamics. They followed with the test piece where tempi seemed to take a while to really lock in, giving a slightly frantic feel. The exposed sections were every bit as treacherous for this band as for those who went before. The All-Stars closed their program with *The Moor of Venice* (William Alwyn). It wasn't apparent that their choice selections would really help the band overcome some of the difficulties with the test piece. As their set went on, the band seemed to wear down and I finished listening wishing they had perhaps competed in the Challenge Section where this talented young band would be better matched to both the music and the competition.

Excellent performances and aggressive choice programming marked this year's Honors Section. The test piece left no band "unscarred" and truly gave the judges opportunities to hear each band's strengths and weaknesses. As the section finished, my notes reflect I thought the bands would finish in the order of play (Prairie, Motor City, COBB, All Stars). However, none of the bands had really nailed their program so the order could easily be jumbled. As it turned out, the scores were extremely close.

Results:

1 **Prairie Brass Band** 260.6 2. **Motor City Brass Band** 248.8 3. **Central Ohio Brass Band** 248.6 4. **All Star Brass and Percussion** 237

continued on page 26

continued from page 25

CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION

The 2002 Championship Section would feature eight bands, many with impressive credentials and some with new personnel. First up was the **Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band** with Dr. Keith Wilkinson at the helm (or his clone, as it seemed Keith was nearly everywhere!). They jumped right into the test piece, Philip Sparke's *Cambridge Variations*. The band had a nicely realized interpretation and was energetic in its approach. Some troublesome solo lines and the intricate inner parts would leave plenty of room for others to jump ahead. Their reading of Peter Graham's *Essence of Time* was quite effective. The band seemed to get their second wind and had calmed a bit. Overall it was a respectable showing, but CVBB would probably not be at the top of the section at the end of the day.

Perennial powerhouse **Illinois Brass Band** was next with a new conductor, Peter Lipari. His bio reflects mostly orchestral experience and his conducting style showed it - extremely energetic, expressive, and in a style unlike many of the others. The band launched into the test piece and they were stunning and powerful, and yet polished. Their test piece, *Montreaux Wind Dances* displayed not only technical artistry but also an extremely deft rendering of textures and shaping. IBB did not seem to my ears to have quite the raw power and energy they have shown in the past, but had a bit more shape and subtleties in their lines. Anyway, it was clear this would be the band to beat on this day.

Another NABBA stalwart, the **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** took the stage next, also with a new conductor, Tom Nelson, a former member of the band. Starting with *Cambridge Variations*, the band

displayed their trademark honeyed sound. However, at higher dynamic levels when the trombones and cornets "stepped on the gas," the other sections didn't quite balance and the band's sound got thin and bright. EIBB gave a fine reading of the test piece but displayed flaws in some of the exposed sections. They followed with *Connotations* and struggled a bit with the treacherous opening. This was a solid reading but nothing that would vault them into the upper tier. Frankly, I was sorry to see EIBB join the growing ranks of "two test piece" bands. Their reading of marches was always a highlight for me and had played well to their strengths; polished sound, good ensemble playing, and nuanced dynamics.

All-Star Staff Brass Band was next and opened with Curnow's *Fanfare Prelude*. A good starter for them, it was rhythmically tight, had a solid pitch center, and was well played. This was a good choice to get the band settled in but probably wouldn't garner them many points because of the moderate difficulty of the piece. Their reading of the test piece showed them falling into some of the same traps as the others in the exposed sections. While the band held firm, they just didn't have the depth in the solo chairs to pull this off. The All-Star Staff Brass Band closed with *Shine as the Light* (Peter Graham), a fun piece well played. The band did not quite perform the delicate technical passages but closed with a rousing and quite inspirational finish. Both this band and the All-Star Brass Band are much improved over last year with better pitch and more firm technique. I couldn't help feeling however that both bands were playing one section higher than they should.

Keith Wilkinson returned with the **St. Louis Brass Band** and opened with *Resurgam*. The band was resplendent in new scarlet gold-trimmed tunics and their reading of the Eric Ball classic was

proper but did not bring out the deep emotionalism of this piece. As each of the judges would probably have strong feelings about *Resurgam*, I expected the vanilla rendition would hurt the band in the scoring. SLBB's test piece was fine but seemed to be a few woodshedding sessions away from making a run at the banner. SLBB has come a long way in a short time but 2002 didn't seem to be their year.

An air of quiet confidence surrounded the **Brass Band of Columbus** as they took the stage. Veteran conductor Dr. Paul Droste appeared to be relaxed while lounging in a chair in the wings as the band set-up crew worked and it seemed this old warhorse was looking forward to the race. BBC opened with Leslie Condon's *Celebration*. If I could have, I would have given them the banner right then--glorious, well paced, nicely shaped, just the way this march should be played. BBC's test piece did not seem to me to be as cleanly played as IBB's but showed strong solo work and a superb interpretation. They closed with *Flourish and Dances* (Kevin Norbury). A cute piece, it let BBC show their ability to go from the lightest *delicato* to a thundering *fortissimo*. Regarding their standing *vis-à-vis* IBB, my contemporaneous notes say "too close to call." I had no idea how prophetic that would be!

Atlantic Brass Band (Salvatore Scarpa) opened with *The Day Thou Gavest* (Philip Wilby). Following the test piece, they gave us *Symphony of Thanksgiving* (Dean Goffin). Throughout their performance, they pushed the edge in tempi. In the spectrum between classical and romantic approaches, this band is always far to the romantic end. Frankly, I love listening to them and love watching Scarpa at work. Their approach will probably never bring them home a banner because the

continued on page 27

continued from page 26

band feels free to "freelance" a bit with their approach to the music. An excellent band, I didn't feel they had the attention to detail to win the section but really hope they continue to bring NABBA their interesting and adventuresome approaches to the music. While at times unconventional, their musical approach is always listenable, entertaining, and thought provoking.

Prior to the entry of the **Central Florida Brass Band** to the stage, the audience was introduced to a fictional Band #8 with members from IBB and EIBB threatening to combine "Brassed Off" with "The Full Monty" in what might be termed the only entry of the weekend for the Exhibition Section (you had to be there to appreciate this!). CFBB were great sports about it and they soon launched into a stirring rendition of the test piece. They ended with Kevin Norbury's dramatic *Odyssey* with Michael Garasi at the helm in his first NABBA appearance. Their test piece reading was not quite ready for top-flight competition and seemed tight and nervous. As the program went on, Garasi and the band seemed to forget about the judges and just played, and the effect was noticeable. CFBB is a fine band and with more experience they could contend for a banner.

At the end of the day, the Controller staff was alerted that a tie had occurred in the Championship Section. Referral to the NABBA Contest Rules called for the winner to be determined by the score on the test piece --- also a tie! It would be patently unfair (and not supported by NABBA's By-Laws) to concoct some type of additional tiebreaker on the spot --- Contest Rules are approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Accordingly, both IBB and BBC were declared winners of the Championship Section --- a truly Solomon-like out-

come. The odds of this occurring, with totally independent judges and weighted scoring (60/40) are astronomical and left all of us surprised. Lest anyone think there was any opportunity for judges to confer, let me put that to rest as I was with the judges the entire time they were "out of the box." As each band performed, the judges completed their scoring and turned the sheets in enclosed in a sealed envelope. Even during their breaks, judges were accompanied and barred from discussing the competition, which they adhered to scrupulously. After recalling the two bands' performances, it was apparent to me and reflected in my notes, that there really were two legitimate champions; well played and well earned!

Most encouraging in this year's competition was the continued good sportsmanship and fellowship displayed at every turn. When a band had turned in a particularly fine performance, it was not uncommon for the audience, comprised mostly of their competitors, to leap to their feet in ovation. This was not limited to the winning performances, but occurred whenever the audience felt there had been some musical magic. In the wings, I saw several players fingering parts along with a competitors' band and commenting "that's better than I've ever played it," when a particularly good rendition was offered. That appreciation for good music and musicianship and sincere affection for each other is what makes NABBA special.

Finally, the host Cincinnati Brass Band set the standard for future hosts. Meticulous planning, friendly efficiency, and attention to detail gave us all a wonderful experience. Dwight Wages and his staff put on a terrific show. NABBA President Anita Hunt should be very proud and pleased with her first contest as President as I was able to discover what is perhaps the best job in NABBA; Past President.

Results:

1. **Brass Band of Columbus** and the **Illinois Brass Band** 281.4 3. **Brass Band of Central Florida** 276.6 4. **St Louis Brass Band** 266.6 5. **Atlantic Brass Band** 265.2 6. **Eastern Iowa Brass Band** 261.4 7. **Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band** 256.8 8. **All-Star Staff Brass Band** 241

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Palmatier is a Past-President of NABBA.

GALA CONCERT

Reviewed by Ralph Hotz, Peter Cooper and Ed Carroll

Recipe for Success: Bring together some of the finest musician from the United States, augment them with Stephen Mead and Co. from the UK, bring in Howard Snell and Sam Palafian, and you have a recipe for a stunningly successful Gala Concert. This is what was heard at the annual Gala Concert at the Tri-County Assembly of God Church. Although all in attendance suffered from the soaring temperatures in the hall, the musicians prevailed on stage by providing their own brand and style of heat. Howard Snell led with a conducting style that was reserved with a clear style and beat. Devoid of unnecessary movements, he was able to convey the fullness of the music, especially in *Harmony Music* (Philip Sparke). Many of the musicians on stage probably had never played this stalwart brass band competition piece. With limited rehearsal, *Harmony Music* highlighted the serious first part of an extremely entertaining concert.

The spotlight of the first half of the evening's program was a stunning rendition, by Steven Mead of *Napoli*. Mead's euphonium playing displayed technique that was as masterful as has ever shown in the famous cornet solo. The speed of *Napoli* may have been a bit excessive,

continued on page 28

continued from page 27

but no one could argue with the clarity of both the tonguing and flexibility that Steven exhibited.

Possibly the highlight of the evening in an evening that had so many highlights, was the demonstration of trombone virtuosity by Wycliffe Gordon while playing Ellington's *Black and Tan Fantasy*. Gordon's ability to make his trombone speak with many inflections brought a great roar of approval, awe and acceptance from the audience.

Sam Palafian's understanding of the jazz idiom, and his ability to convey his desires added to the mix of the evening. His artful arrangement brought life to one of Ellington's early hits. There is no brass band in the world that has the ability to swing with the style of Battle Creek Brass Band. And it is not the easiest project to entertain an audience already saturated and sated after a long day of repetitious competition and contesting tension, but Battle Creek succeeded with a gourmet feast of uniquely presented and played brass band music.

Conductor Snell began the second half of the band's concert with his own wonderful arrangement of timeless Cole Porter tunes. The audience roared its approval when the band portrayed both a broken record and a Victrola who's spring had wound down. Freshness and fun at it's best!

Blue Bells of Scotland is, as was pointed out, at the concert, the trombonist's "Carnival of Venice." Many have tried and many have failed but on this particular evening it was a slam-dunk for soloist Alain Trudel. You cannot spend a lifetime around banding without hearing many performances of this evergreen but it may only be once that you hear it played with the virtuosity of this young

Canadian musician. His fluid technique, sound, humor and the stunning tempo with which he played the final variation will be remembered by all who attended for many, many years.

Some music is so soothing it belies the artistry that must be present to create it. Such were the quiet moments of our evening with the Battle Creek ensemble. Both *I'm Getting Sentimental Over You* and *Concierto de Aranjuez* were truly welcome moments of respite in the whirlwind that was NABBA XX. Both the trombone quartet and flugel soloist Tim Morrison made us remember that a few well placed notes can speak to our emotions in ways that the most wonderful technique can never do.

Guest conductor Dr. Paul Droste led the band in a spirited rendition of the *Circus Bee March*. If anyone expected the tempo to be on the conservative side because of the band's invitation to include three of NABBA's youth banders they were certainly stunned at the downbeat. Many a band may attempt this breakneck tempo. Few will succeed with the clarity and dynamic contrast heard on this night and if fingers don't lie.....those young guests had no trouble keeping up. Bravo to our future stars and to Battle Creek for providing such a memorable moment for banding's future stars!

The evening concluded with a last taste of the style that has made this band famous. Battle Creek proved once and for all--Brass Bands can swing! The closer was the title number from their first CD and it was a real treat to hear *Sing Sing Sing* in live performance. Percussionist Mike Gould, quietly in the background throughout the evening put his personal stamp on night with his highly creative solo. It was a very fitting punctuation with which to close out a great concert and NABBA Championship. A final thanks to Battle Creek for drawing the three days together with

such great programing and artistry!

Ralph Hotz is a tenor horn player with Utah Premier Brass, NABBA Board Member and Advertising Manger for the Brass Band Bridge; Pete Cooper and Ed Carroll are members of the Las Vegas Brass Band.

JUDGE'S COMMENTARIES

It was obvious from the first contact with John de Salme that NABBA XX was in good hands. Contact and instructions were clear and unambiguous and everything fell into place as the competition approached. The weekend itself was most interesting especially for someone more used to brass band competitions in the British Isles. Your criteria for adjudication are much more formal, much clearer and, I believe, in the end fairer to everyone concerned; that can only be good.

At best, the performances I heard were very very good and would stand comparison with bands of a similar status anywhere in the world. Farther down each section the problems seemed to be less technical but more concerned with intonation and the ability to actually perform in an outgoing and convincing manner. That doesn't mean just play louder; it's about the overall shape of the music chosen and the impression it creates for the listener.

The whole weekend was worthwhile, the competitions seemed to be played out in a fair and genuine atmosphere and the other attractions, concerts and exhibitions worked really well. All in all I think a good time was had by all concerned. Thank you.

Frank Renton

continued on page 45

Role of Honor: Twenty Years of NABBA Competitions

CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION

		Testpiece
1983	Smoky Mountain British Brass Band (Richard Trevarthen)	<i>Sinfonietta in Three Movements</i> (Gordon Langford)
1984	Gramercy British Brass of NY (John Lambert Jnr)	<i>Entertainments</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
1985	Gramercy British Brass of NY (John Lambert Jnr)	<i>Vizcaya</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
1986	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Ballet for Band</i> (Joseph Horovitz)
1987	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Connotations</i> (Edward Gregson)
1988	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Symphony of Marches</i> (Gilbert Vinter)
1989	WRAL British Brass Band (Jack Stamp)	<i>Plantagenets</i> (Edward Gregson)
1990	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Introduction, Elegy and Caprice</i> (Morley Calvert)
1991	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Aspects of Praise</i> (William Himes)
1992	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Les Susi/Paul Droste)	* <i>Connotations</i> (Edward Gregson)
1993	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	* <i>Firestorm</i> (Stephen Bulla)
1994	Hawthorne City Brass Band (Ken MacDonald)	<i>Variations for Brass Band</i> (Ralph Vaughan Williams)
1995	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>The Essence of Time</i> (Peter Graham)
1996	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>Trittico</i> (James Curnow)
1997	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>The New Jerusalem</i> (Philip Wilby)
1998	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>Contest Music</i> (Heaton)
1999	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste)	<i>Isaiah 40</i> (Redhead)
2000	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>Whitsun Wakes</i> (Ball)
2001	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>Masters of Space and Time</i> (Broughton)
2002	Brass Band of Columbus (Paul Droste) and Illinois Brass Band (Peter Lipari)	<i>Cambridge Variations</i> (Sparke)

HONORS SECTION

1983	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)	<i>Little Suite for Brass</i> (Malcolm Arnold)
1984	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)	<i>A Suite for Switzerland</i> (Roy Newsome)
1985	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)	<i>The Shipbuilders</i> (Peter Yorke)
1986	Sunshine Brass (Don Kneeburg)	<i>A Barchester Suite</i> (Derek Bougeois)
1987	WRAL British Brass Band (David Reed)	<i>Hinemoa</i> (Gareth Wood)
1988	WRAL British Brass Band (Jack Stamp)	<i>Trilogy for Brass Band</i> (Joseph Turrin)
1989	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Steve Wright)	<i>A Moorside Suite</i> (Gustav Holst)
1990	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Al Stang)	<i>Variations on "Terra Beata"</i> (James Curnow)
1991	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Jon Woods/Paul Droste)	<i>Canticles in Brass</i> (Stephen Bulla)
1992	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)	* <i>Pageantry</i> (Herbert Howells)
1993	Sheldon Theatre Brass Band (W. Larry Brentzel)	* <i>Aspects of Praise</i> (Himes)
1994	Illinois Brass Band (Colin Holman)	<i>Laude</i> (Curnow)
1995	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)	<i>Tournament for Brass</i> (Ball)
1996	Dominion Brass Band (Thomas Palmatier)	<i>Diversions on a Bass Theme</i> (Lloyd)
1997	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (John de Salme)	<i>Endeavour</i> (Sparke)
1998	All-Star Brass and Percussion (Eric Aho)	<i>Purcell Variations</i> (Kenneth Downie)
1999	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)	<i>Sinfonietta</i> (Leidzen)
2000	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)	<i>Music for the Common Man</i> (Downie)
2001	St Louis Brass Band (Keith Wilkinson)	<i>A London Overture</i> (Sparke)
2002	Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer)	<i>Ballet for Band</i> (Horovitz)

Role of Honor: Twenty Years of NABBA Competitions

CHALLENGE SECTION

1986	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)	<i>Little Suite for Brass</i> (Arnold)
1987	Eastern Iowa Brass Band (Steve Wright)	<i>A Malvern Suite</i> (Sparke)
1988	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)	<i>Three Hawthorn Impressions</i> (Langford)
1989	NCSU British Brass Band (Perry Watson)	<i>Cityscapes</i> (Bulla)
1990	Ohio Collegiate Brass (Joel Pugh)	<i>Suite in B flat</i> (Jacob)
1991	Milwaukee British Brass Band (Wayne Becker)	<i>Partita</i> (Gregson)
1992	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>A Downland Suite</i> (Ireland)
1993	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>Three Hawthorn Impressions</i> (Langford)
1994	*****no entries	
1995	Buffalo Silver Band (Michael Russo)	<i>Partita for Band</i> (Wilby)
1996	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)	<i>Chorale and Toccata</i> (Bulla)
1997	Cincinnati Brass Band (Anita Cocker Hunt)	<i>American Variations</i> (Ferne)
1998	Prairie Brass Band (Dallas Niermeyer)	<i>Hinemoa</i> (Wood)
1999	St Louis Brass Band (Malcolm McDuffee)	<i>A Moorside Suite</i> (Holst)
2000	Sunshine Brass Band (Jim Cheyne)	<i>Symphonic Suite</i> (Lucas)
2001	Spires Brass Band (John Slezak)	<i>Rhapsody in Brass</i> (Goffin)
2002	Sunshine Brass Band (Jim Cheyne)	<i>Concertante</i> (Bulla)

*testpiece selected from a list of choices

OPEN SECTION

		Testpiece
1996	Woods Manufacturing Brass Band (David Druce)	<i>Chorale and Toccata</i> (Stephen Bulla)
1997	Northwinds British Brass Band (Milton Potter)	<i>American Variations</i> (Alan Fernie)
1998	***no entries	
1999	***no entries	
2000	***no entries	
2001	Syracuse University Brass Ensemble (James Spencer)	<i>Rhapsody in Brass</i> (Goffin)
2002	Syracuse University Brass Ensemble (James Spencer)	<i>Concertante</i> (Bulla)

YOUTH SECTION

1987	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>Music for Greenwich</i> (Edward Gregson)
1988	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>Appalachian Mountain Folk Song Suite</i> (James Curnow)
1989	***no entries	
1990	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>English Country Scenes</i> (Eric Ball)
1991	Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>Petite Suite de Ballet</i> (Eric Ball)
1992	Junior Varsity All-Star Brass Band (Eric Aho)	<i>Wheatlands</i> (Bram Wiggins)
1993	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Little Suite for Brass</i> (Malcolm Arnold)
1994	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Divertimento</i> (Eric Ball)
1995	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Legend in Brass</i> (James Curnow)
1996	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Suite from Kantara</i> (Kenneth Downie)
1997	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Key West</i> (Darroll Barry)
1998	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Ken McCoy)	<i>The Journeymen</i> (Ray Steadman-Allen)
1999	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Legend in Brass</i> (Curnow)
2000	Junior Varsity All-Stars (Eric Aho)	<i>Diogenes</i> (DeHaan)
2001	Triangle Youth Brass Band (Tony Granados)	<i>The Seasons</i> (Wilby)
2002	Triangle Youth Brass Band (Tony Granados)	<i>Petite Suite de Ballet</i> (Ball)

Role of Honor: Twenty Years of NABBA Competitions

EXPLORER SECTION

2001	Varsity All-Stars (Keith Wilkinson)	<i>The Seasons</i> (Wilby)
2002	Varsity All-Stars (Keith Wilkinson)	<i>Sinfonietta</i> (Horovitz)

SOLO AWARDS

1983	Ann Buckner (cornet), Smoky Mountain Brass Band
1984	Ron Williams (euphonium), Weston Silver Band
1985	Kris Dahlin (soprano cornet), Bloomington Brass Band
1986	Marc Gordon (euphonium), Sunshine Brass
1987	James Ketch (soprano cornet), WRAL British Brass Band
1988	Robert T. Snyder Jr (trombone), NCSU British Brass Band
1989	Joan DeHoff (soprano cornet), Eastern Iowa Brass Band
1990	Scott Heath (euphonium), Ohio Collegiate Brass
1991	Jack Tedrow (euphonium), Sheldon Theatre Brass Band
1992	David Laird (tuba), Atlantic Brass Band
1993	James Frank (soprano cornet), Allegheny Brass Band
1994	Scott Heath (euphonium), Ohio Collegiate Brass
1995	Julie Vish (soprano cornet), Ohio Collegiate Brass
1996	Adam Wilson (euphonium), Heidelberg Brass Band [Youth Section] Diana Herak (euphonium), Central Ohio Brass [Adult Slow Melody] Niles Dening (tuba), Buffalo Silver Band [Adult Technical]
1997	Kevin Baker (trombone) [Adult Slow Melody] Anthony Zilincik (tuba), Central Ohio Brass Band [Adult Technical]
1998	Matt LaFontaine (euphonium), All Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Section] Dennis Mondracek (cornet), Eastern Iowa Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody] Brian Meixner (euphonium), Lexington Brass Band [Adult Technical]
1999	Keith Smith (cornet), All-Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Section] Kevin Cramer (tenor horn), Sunshine Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody] Amy Nelson (cornet), Illinois Brass Band [Adult Technical Solo]
2000	John Bourne (euphonium), All-Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Solo] Amy Nelson (cornet), Illinois Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody] Scott Heath (euphonium), Brass Band of Columbus [Adult Technical Solo]
2001	Andy Stankey (bass trombone), All-Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Solo] Amy Nelson (cornet), Illinois Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody] Guy Clark (cornet), Illinois Brass Band [Adult Technical Solo]
2002	Dwight King (bass trombone), All-Star Brass and Percussion [Youth Solo] Brian Byrne (trombone), Illinois Brass Band [Adult Slow Melody] Dewie Dowdy (marimba), Brass Band of the Tri-State [Adult Technical Solo]

Role of Honor: Twenty Years of NABBA Competitions

ENSEMBLE AWARDS

- 1997 Ozark Mountains Brass Sextet
- 1998 All-Star Tuba Quartet [Youth Section]
Four Horsemen Tuba Quartet [Adult Section]
- 1999 Fudge and Friends [Youth Brass Ensemble]
Estamos Enfuego [Youth Percussion Ensemble]
Prairie Brass Band Quintet [Adult Brass Ensemble]
- 2000 All-Star Brass and Percussion Trombone Quartet [Youth Brass Ensemble]
Three Amigos [Youth Percussion Ensemble]
Derby City Tuba Quartet [Adult Brass Ensemble]
Sticks St Louis [Adult Percussion Ensemble]
- 2001 Bombastic Bones [Youth Brass Ensemble]
All-Star Mallet Men [Youth Percussion Ensemble]
St Louis Brass Band Quartet [Adult Brass Ensemble]
Illinois Brass Band Percussion [Adult Percussion Ensemble]
- 2002 Four Freaky French Horn Substitutes [Youth Brass Ensembles]
Triangle Youth Percussion [Youth Percussion Ensembles]
Derby City Tuba Quartet [Adult Brass Ensembles]
SASF Percussion Trio [Adult Percussion Ensemble]

New Music: NABBA Reading Band Session 2002

Reviewed by Ronald Holz

The Reading Band session met Friday evening, 8:45--10:00 p.m. in Princeton High School. Thanks especially to the Cincinnati Brass Band and several members of the Lexington Brass Band, and NABBA staff, we were able to have solid instrumentation throughout the session. Our conductors were the six adjudicators Geoffrey Brand, James Curnow, Bram Gregson, Colin Holman, Richard Holz, Frank Renton, NABBA President Anita Hunt, NABBA Controller John de Salme, as well as yours truly. We were especially grateful that Vincent DiMartino could be part of the session as a guest soloist. As the one session at NABBA in which those who don't play in a competing band, the reading session continues to be of value to the organization and

its membership.

Unless otherwise noted, the instrumentation supplied for each item reviewed below follows traditional British brass band scoring. Most British publishers supply only treble clef versions for all parts except bass trombone. I have given a technical level range as follows: Very Easy VE; Easy E; Moderate M; Moderately Difficult MD; Difficult D; Very Advanced VA. Additional items received from publishers will be reviewed in upcoming issues as well as being featured at the upcoming Ashland Brass Band Festival Clinic session. Timings are approximate only.

When contacting publishers, please mention the Brass Band Bridge and the Reading Band Session, for this keeps

the industry's interest and support!

Curnow Music--DeHaske Publications, 100 John Sutherland Dr., Suite 1, Nicholasville, KY 40356. Tel: 1-800-7-CURNOW; Email: [HYPERLINK mailto:bshawims@mis.net](mailto:bshawims@mis.net) bshawims@mis.net OR [HYPERLINK mailto:timjims@mis.net](mailto:timjims@mis.net) timjims@mis.net Both of these pieces are recorded on the Williams Fairey recording *Images for Brass*, Anglo Records.

Shipston Prelude (Stephen Bulla). Level M. T 3:48. This is a lovely arrangement of an Anglican hymn that Bulla presents in three contrasting yet complimentary

continued on page 33

continued from page 32

settings. Very well written and effectively scored piece suitable for all sorts of occasions and uses. The piece ends "big" but not in an overblown style. Bulla has done an excellent job in keeping things in balance throughout the piece, with an emphasis on the lyric. This got the Reading Band session off to an excellent start; the group sounded great!

Fanfare and Jubiloso (James Curnow) Level MD. T 2:41. If you liked Curnow's *Fanfare and Flourishes* you will love this sequel to that successful arrangement. Here the main tune comes from the Renaissance dance composer Tilman Susato, surrounded once again by this top arranger's original fanfare music. The lively dance tune has been used before in such classics as Dello Joio's *Scenes from "The Louvre"*. The piece does call for some brilliant tonguing from nearly all sections and you need a sharp, wide awake percussion section; yet it is not overly difficult. I was pleasantly surprised at how well the Reading Band dealt with the piece. I predict great popularity with this fine arrangement.

The Salvation Army - New York, 440 West Nyack Rd, West Nyack, NY 10994; Tel: 1-888-488-4882 or 1-914-620-7200; FAX: 1-914-620-7751. These two pieces are part of the new Philip Smith Signature Series of the Triumphant Collection. We were fortunately to have Vincent DiMartino reading the solo parts, so this was a really special added attraction, especially after Vince playing so well at the Lexington Brass Band concert. Both these pieces are recorded on the NYSB/Phil Smith recording *My Songs of Songs*, Triumphant label.

Cornet/Trumpet Solo: *Standing on the Promises* (Douglas Court) Solo Level MD; Band Level M T 4:02. In this graceful-yet-energetic Latin-style solo the soloist starts out on flugelhorn and then

switches to trumpet. The score calls for 3 percussionists, the most critical being a good set player. Court handles the style well and scores very well. The accompaniment is not at all difficult, so I think this arrangement of an old gospel classic will be highly attractive to many bands.

Joshua Swings the Battle (Stephen Bulla) Solo Level MD; Band Level MD. T 2:51. This is a fast, or in the words of the arranger, "bright" swing arrangement that will challenge both soloist and band, but not excessively so. Actually the Reading Band did very well until the very end, where some ensemble drill would really be needed. Vince just soared over the band, making it a highlight of the session. Bulla adapted this setting for Phil Smith, at his request, from a King's Brass recording. Again, this should prove an attractive short program solo feature for most of our NABBA bands.

Rosehill Music, PO Box 48, Aylesbury, HP17 8DW, United Kingdom; Tel: 011-44-1494-674-411; email: HYPERLINKmailto:bb@britishbandsman.com info@rosehillmusic.com

Agincourt Song (Elgar Howarth/Ray Farr) Level M T 2:15. Ray Farr has rescored Howarth's famous Philip Jones Brass Ensemble setting of this famous 15th-century battle hymn that celebrates the English and Henry V's victory over the French. We could not really play it the correct way, for it calls for three antiphonal choirs of the bright instruments, two choirs of cornets, each with a tenor drum, on the Right and the Left; and then Trombones standing behind the remainder of the band at centerstage. This is a great program opener! Some of the hemiola rhythms might give trouble on a first reading, but generally this is a very playable piece, though to do it best you need a fearless soprano player.

The Salvation Army - Toronto, 2

Overlea Blvd, Toronto, ON Canada M4H 1P4; 416-425-2111; brian.burditt@sallynet.org. This piece comes from the new Maple Leaf Series edited by Kevin Norbury. NABBA bands are encouraged to contact the SA Toronto music department for a complete listing of their new series.

Three Images (Kevin Norbury) Level VA. T 12:00 approx. This technically demanding suite presents three images of Christ, each in a separate movement: Christ Incarnate; Christ the Shepherd; Christ Victorious. We could only read the first movement, which was quite a challenge, but filled with lots of interesting sounds and beautifully scored by Norbury. Imaginative original music marks each movement but a hymn reference also appears. Movement 1, for instance, uses the Renaissance Advent chorale *Lo Ere a Rose*. This piece was a stretch for the Reading Band, though they seemed to enjoy the music. The only negative complaint received was that some of the parts were quite small, and therefore a challenging reading experi-

continued on page 34

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!

continued from page 33

ence.

Anglo Music Press. PO Box 303 Wembley, HA9 8GX England. Email: PhilSparke@aol.com; Part of Philip Sparke's new Ceremonial Series begun in 2000. Both pieces are contained on the Williams Fairey recording *Images For Brass*, Anglo Records.

Navigation Inn (Philip Sparke) Level D. T 3:11. A corker of a concert march, Sparke rates this work a grade 5, but I would say it is more a 5.5+! This is one of those great "busy" marches with an intentionally "retro" feel. Part one sounds in F Minor while the Trio is in D Flat, like an old Gullidge march. The title refers to the band for whom it was commissioned, Navigation Brass (Ian Gibson). I had members of my LBB asking if they could play it next year, always a good sign! This would be such fun to play, but it will take hard work.

Time Remembered (Philip Sparke) Level MD. T 8:26. Subtitled an *Elegy for Band*, this moderately challenging work was commissioned by the NSK-RHP Band to commemorate their 60th anniversary. One of Sparke's lovely tunes forms the basis of the moving work. There many short soli passages throughout during which most of the principal players are called to task, but in a lyric style. This is emotional and expressive music well worth the effort, and a piece that would serve well not just at times of remembrance. It does not always stay on the subdued side; the overall form might be described as a soaring arch. Lovely, satisfying music of wide appeal.

Novello C/o Studio Music. PO Box 19292, London NW10 9WP, England. Email: HYPERLINKmailto:polyphonic@studio-music.co.uk polyphonic@studio-music.co.uk This work is recorded on the new Black Dyke

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recording *Michael Ball*, Doyen Recordings.

Cambrian Suite (Michael Ball); Mvt 3 Level M. T 9:00 approx. Here is a wonderful moderate-level suite well within the reach of any of our bands, but especially suitable to Youth, Explorer, or Challenge section bands. There are three movements, each based on a traditional Welsh melody: 1) Men of Harlech; 2) Cradle Song; 3) The Rising of the Lark. Frank Renton took the Reading Band through the final movement, during the climax of which Ball brings back the famous melody "Suogan" (Cradle Song, from Mvt 2) just before a scintillating coda that ends in a blaze of sound. Three active percussion parts added to the score's brilliance. This should prove a winner.

R. Smith & Co, Ltd. PO Box 367, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 4LJ England Tel: 011-44-296-682-220; email: HYPERLINKmailto:sales@rsmith.co.uk sales@rsmith.co.uk

Festival Music (Eric Ball), Mvt 1 Level D T 12:00 approx. Thanks to Geoffrey Brand we were able to read this great classic commissioned as the top level test piece for the 1956 British National Brass Band Championships. As we soon learned, it is still quite a test of any

band! Ball wrote the work as a tribute to Mozart on the occasion of the 200th centenary of his birth. We struggled through movement one, Overture, which has all the chromatic pitfalls of a late keyboard fantasia by this great master. The middle movement takes the form of a heart-felt Romance and movement three is called an Impromptu. This is Eric Ball at his most enlightened and elegant. This fine music deserves a revival. Are there bands willing to risk the hard work it would take to succeed in such challenging, yet rewarding music?

The Salvation Army - London; SP&S 1 Tiverton Street, London, SE1 6NT, England. 011-44-207367-6580; email: HYPERLINKmailto:Mail_Order@SP-S.CO.UK Mail_Order@SP-S.CO.UK Both of these pieces came to us in manuscript draft mode, pieces destined for the SA Triumph Series, a medium level series scored as follow: Soprano; First and Second Cornet (No flugel part, but it can be cued in the second cornet); First and Second Horn; First and Second Baritone; Three Trombones; Euphonium; Two Basses; Percussion.

Faithful God (Chris Bower/Dean Jones) Level E. T 2:10. A fine tone study for any band, effectively scored for smaller ensemble, but sounding great for large brass band as well. Could be used by any band as a great tone builder. The euphonium does soar up to a high B Flat, at fortissimo level, but it is reached by scalar motion. Otherwise, this should be a straight forward piece for any band. I was unfamiliar with the tune, but it unfolds like a slow contemporary Christian anthem, though the arranger wisely avoids putting a drum set behind his effective setting.

Kings of Orient (David Ayma) Level E. T 2:00. Here is a cute Christmas item, We

continued on page 35

continued from page 34

Three Kings transformed into 2/4 time by Chilean Salvationist David Ayma. This is a short romp that will go down well with band and audience. Our manuscript parts were hard to read (too small) but this was not the final format for the piece.

The Salvation Army - Atlanta, 1424 Northeast Expressway, Atlanta, GA 30329; 404-728-1383; 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 supplied in all appropriate keys and clefs. Provides full score and piano part/reduction. To receive a Compact disc containing all 16 arrangements available contact the USA South Music Department

What Child Is This (James Curnow) Level E. T 2:40. An extremely effective setting of the tune "Greensleeves", suitable for brass quartet through large band. Curnow is a master at this kind of setting, pulling off a mini-masterpiece at the grade 2 level, a true gift indeed! Effective percussion parts add measurably to the success of this little gem. I would have no hesitation using this with a large-scale brass band of the most advanced level.

Passion Chorale (J.S. Bach/Noel Jones) Level VE. T 2:20. This Grade 1 setting of "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" would be great for a band warm-up, especially new bands still filling in the gaps of their instrumentation. It will also be a valuable addition for brass ensembles and church groups desperate for quality music during the Easter season.

Wright&Round. The Cornet Office. PO

Box 157. Gloucestershire. GL1 1LW. UK

Tel: 011-44-1452-524-438; Email: HYPERLINK mail to: wright-and-round@interactive-sciences.co.uk

Paintings: Canvasses from East Anglia (Derek Broadbent) Level M. T 9--10:00 approx. This is delightfully uncomplicated music with a warm spirit and effectively scored for mid-level bands. There are 3 movements, each referring to famous painters and their landscapes or portraits dealing with East Anglia subjects. Mvt 1: A View Near the Coast/Thomas Gainsborough; reference to the painting scenes "Calm Seas Glistening, Peaceful Folk Resting, and Storm Clouds Threatening." Mvt 2: Travellers/Sir Alfred J. Munnings; reference to the painting scene "Romany horses, 'neath sunny autumn skies tread gently through the peaceful countryside." Mvt 3: William Wollaston/Thomas Gainsborough; A portrait of this MB, militia member, and player of the one-keyed flute. Each movement could stand on its own, but I think this piece would be best heard as an entire suite. The Reading Band sounded great on the final movement, which captures very well the essence of a dignified country gentleman who is part soldier, country squire, and amateur musician!

Dreams and Aspirations (Tony Cliff) Level MD. T 7:00 approx. Tony Cliff would not be well known in the US, but this score would be a good way to get to know this interesting and talented musician. The score has decided rock and pop music inflections, in a fine post-modern blend. The music will be challenging mostly only the rhythmic level, though I would think Youth bands, for which the music is particularly well suited, would rip through this fun score.

Warner Brothers Publications/International Music Pub. 15800 NW 48th Ave, Miami, FL 33014. Tel: 877-297-7544; email: HYPERLINK mail to: mike_green@warnerchappell.com Here are two of a fine new series of pieces released on the new Warner Bros brass band series. Contact Mike Green for a complete listing.

Nutcracker "Sweet" (Tchaikovsky/Mark Freeh) Level MD. T 9:00 approx. Here's something different for Christmas! Mark Freeh has given us a transformed Nutcracker along the lines of Duke Ellington's experiments with famous classics. Opening with a bright swing setting of the opening Miniature Overture, Freeh then intersperses various dances, some more straightforward than others! The Children's March, for instance, starts out straight, and then suddenly shifts into swing. How about Waltz of the Flowers changed into a fast driving swing? Perhaps the most intriguing is the Arabian Dance turned into a Rumba. Try it! I bet your audiences will love it.

Peanut Vendor (Moises Simons/Mark Freeh) Level M. T 4:00+ A real classic from the 1930s, this great Latin hit gets revived in fine style here in a setting that should prove pure camp, and one that will get the band and audience really going. The piece is based on a two-bar "Montuna Feel" vamp. Various members of the band augment the percussion section by picking up various Latin instruments; a secure set player is mandatory, of course. The vamp is very clearly notated in the score and a rhythm sheet so that bands get just the right feel that essential to such a repetitive rhythmic pattern. There are some neat and challenging riffs for the trombone and cornet sections. This piece can go as long as you want, and a skillful band could open it up for solos.

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*Submitted by Thomas A. Myers
Past President and Past Editor*

As I manage the stage for the Championships, keeping everyone on track and on time, there are only a few moments to listen to the bands. Since this year's Championship section test piece (Philip Sparke: *Cambridge Variations*) was a tour de force for our percussionists, I stepped aside for a few minutes to notice how well the percussion sections were doing and to update my previous comments about snare drum selection for brass band.

Without question, Sparke's test piece is a dramatic challenge, a challenge that in most cases was met handsomely by each percussion section. I have worked many of our championships, and I believe the percussion sections this year were the most focused, most accurate, and clearly the most musical. They also exceeded the performance standards for professional percussionists by a wide margin - that is, the percussion teams would be just as welcome in a great orchestra as in a great brass band - although the brass band offers more interesting, more challenging, and more rewarding opportunities to play. At the debut concert of my Screamers & Lyric Brass Band a few years ago, Scott Johnston, professor of trumpet at the University of Akron, joined our solo cornet bench for the concert. He was familiar with British brass bands but had never played in one. At the conclusion of the concert, he said with pleasure, "Whew, I certainly don't get this kind of a great and enjoyable workout when I play an orchestra performance." It is the same for our percussionists.

Congratulations to each of our colleagues in the percussion section - Extremely Well Done!

And now on to snare drum sound, from a conductor's viewpoint.

A brass band has a wonderful range of sound, from the cornets and trombones on the bright side to the bell-up saxhorns with their complex overtones. So what is the best snare drum sound to select?

For the rich and generally mellow sound of the brass band, we want a snare drum that complements and supports the brass. That leads us quickly to a darkish and warm sound with a nicely complex color. The slightly brighter snare drum sound that needs to fight its way through the strings and upper woodwinds of an orchestra to be heard (or to complement them) is simply too bright for brass band - it will stick out way too much. Ditto for jazz, rock, country, and most other snare drum setups.

Unfortunately, the snare drums used by a few of the day's bands in the Honors and Championship sections were drums with thin metal shells and spiral wire snares. Regardless of the drum heads used, these bright beasts cause the band to sound like a tin drum solo with brass band accompaniment and distract from almost every performance in which they are used. Give those drums along with earplugs (seriously, drummers should play with musician's earplugs to protect against hearing damage) to young aspiring rock groups. Since it is not likely that they will take the drum, the least you can do is toss the spiral snares and install dry cable snares, discussed below.

A wood drum shell is a must for the sound we seek, along with cable snares and thin batter and snare heads, perfectly tuned a bit low. You will need to change the thin heads more frequently than thick ones, but the reward will be much better color.

I previously reported in the Bridge on how to tune this combination. If you would like a copy of that article, as well as Bridge articles on cymbal selection and bass drum tuning, please send a double-stamped self-addressed envelope, 9x12 or larger, to me at 4716 Warm Hearth Circle, Fairfax VA 22033-5075, and I will be happy to help you.

The right drumsticks also will help darken the sound. My preference continues to be the Tom Gauger model TG17 (now made by Vic Firth). For lighter work, I suggest his models TG16 and TG15. Obviously, you should stay with your current sticks if you love them.

Which Championship section band best achieved the desired snare drum sound? This year, it was the Brass Band of Columbus. Gary Hodges does a beautiful job at tuning his Noble & Cooley Solid Shell Maple Classic snare drum, 5 inches deep by 14 inches in diameter. He uses an Evans Genera Orchestral Concert batter head and an Evans Gen-

continued on page 38



Gary Hodges gracefully glides through a tom-tom sequence while James Moore proves it is just as important to count the rests as play.

continued from page 37

era Snare Side 200 head. He adds a Noble & Cooley dampening ring, either the smallest ring or the medium, depending on the situation, and has never used more than one ring at a time - which just proves that he is a master of drum tuning. His difficult-to-duplicate secret is his Hinger cable snare, which has not been manufactured for a few decades. Gary's performances are simply glorious.

Gary recently retired after serving 27 years as a music educator (including



The Saint Louis Brass Band: Don Parker spins exactly the right English on his sticks as Matthew Hake starts a tasteful cymbal clash.

band director) in the Dublin city public schools. One of his early performance experiences was in the armed services as a percussionist with the U.S. Air Force Academy Drum & Bugle Corps. Following the service, he enrolled as a music education major at the Ohio State University, majoring in percussion, but played trumpet in the Ohio State Marching Band. The BBC has been fortunate to have his musical talents in the percussion section for about 15 years - but the solo cornet bench knows it has a capable backup just a drumstick away.

Coming in a close second in this informal competition was Dr. Don Parker's drum with the Saint Louis Brass Band. Don's wood shell was custom-made for him, so that stays a secret (ppp: Clarence Williams). Its size is 5.5 inches deep by 14 inches across. His batter head is a Remo coated Emperor and his snare head is a Remo Ambassador. Don is the Associate Professor of Music and Director of Percussion & Jazz Studies at the University of Missouri Saint Louis, so for flexible sounds, his drum is configured with a triple and tunable snare that previously was manufactured by Black Swamp Percussion for Tom Freer, then with Clevelander Drum. (Black Swamp no longer makes that particular snare setup, but you can get a built-in similar quad system if you buy their Multisonic drums. Clevelander Drum offers an adjustable triple combination that will be too bright for brass band.) For the Championship section performance, Don used two of his three available snares: the gold coated cable (for a dry gut-like sound) along with the spiral wire to brighten the gold. It gave him an articulate sound with good depth. His uncoated stainless steel cable remained off. Another of Don's secrets is his laminated business card (one side is the card, the other side is felt) tied to a string that is tied to his drum; it is used to dampen the batter head when needed and also identifies the drum's owner in case they ever

get separated - pretty slick. Moongel - the primary dampener - remains on his batter head all the time. The tone of the drum and Don's wonderful playing sounded great. Why Gary first and Don next? I thought Don's snare setup was just a touch too bright for the band.

What should you buy to replace that tin drum?

For wood shells, consider the Noble & Cooley Solid Shell Maple Classic line, particularly the 7-inch deep by 14-inch diameter drum and Gary's choice, the 5-inch deep by 14-inch diameter. I own their 7-inch and 3.875-inch. My 3.875-inch is currently on loan to the Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band, since they needed the drum, and I found it tedious to find its fundamental resonance and get the drum settled into the piccolo sound I wanted. It handles the delicate and articulate piccolo drum tasks very well, but don't expect a big rich sound from it. They also have my Yamaha 5.5-inch snare drum, which sounds good for brass band, as well. Also consider Clevelander Drum, Black Swamp, Grover, and other high-end wood shells. You will pay quite a bit for these, but they can be tuned with ease and will sound exactly right for your brass band. If you search for a while and are lucky, you may find a used one in good condition with undamaged snare beds at about half the cost.

For drumheads, the winners in my previous article were a Remo Diplomat batter head (plus Noble & Cooley dampening rings) and an Evans Genera 200 snare head. I have not updated my former exhaustive test of drumhead models, so you are on your own with the newest alternatives.

Gary's and Don's snares are no longer manufactured. The snare winner in my

continued on page 39

continued from page 38

previous article was the great-sounding Grover Orchestral Cable snare, which is still a good choice. In addition to the dark side of Grover's cable snare line, you should consider the Black Swamp (blue) coated cable snare, which will blend



Rique Pizarro begins decaying a bass drum note.

nicely with most brass band music. Select the Black Swamp gold-coated cable snare for a darker, dry, and gutty sound that is especially good for traditional marches and field drums. Follow Black Swamp's website instructions on tuning the gold snare unevenly to get the best articulation and voice across the drum's dynamic range; it works. The blue is a little brighter than the gold and is more articulate in soft passages. I believe Gary's Hinger snare sound is between the blue and the gold. The Black Swamp combination blue and uncoated stainless

steel cable is too bright for brass band.

During the Championships, I was focused on what I needed to do next, when I heard this gorgeous maracas sound from coming from the stage. I immediately went to see the source, since great maracas and great maracas performers are infrequent. So, the Cuyahoga Valley Brass Band wins the award for the best maracas sound and performance. Rique Pizarro was the talented percussionist performing her beautiful instruments (Latin Percussion Fiber Maracas - steel shot, black hard plastic spheres, natural wood handles). Her thrilling performance, played so well, was quite a wonderful surprise. When I realized what band was playing, I guessed correctly that Rique had been a student of Dr. Larry Snider (percussion professor at the University of Akron who was interviewed for the previous article on bass drum tuning), since Larry is so great at musical precision with maracas, tambourines, and sleigh bells, as well as with all the other percussion instruments. It used to be that the best maracas sound, loud enough to be heard in a band or orchestra, came from copper toilet floats converted into maracas. Rique's instruments had an equally audible and much nicer sound. I greatly enjoyed her all-too-brief performance on maracas.

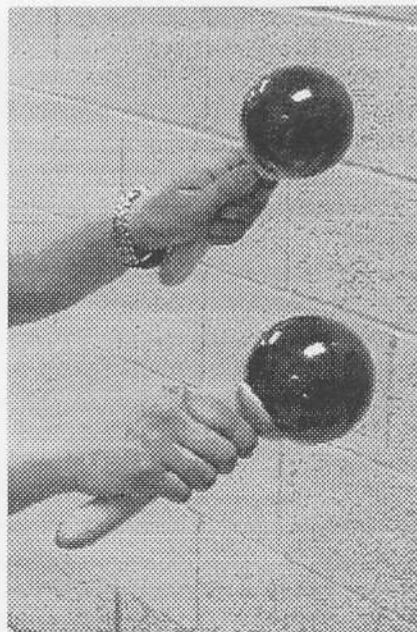
Gary, Don, and Rique will receive a pair of my custom-made fff Brass Band cymbal brushes to thank them for the percussive pleasure they provided to us on Saturday.

One other observation: The most advanced bands used a team of folks, not just the percussionists, to move the percussion instruments on the stage and off. For those bands, I believe those other players share the percussionists' disproportionately large logistical tasks all the time. That has always made sense to me.

So, for this lover of percussion and brass, it was a most wonderful Championships! I look forward to being with you next in Little Rock.

Links:

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The grip for Rique Pizarro's maracas solo was most effective.

Brass Band Recordings

Listed in Alphabetical Order by Title; Reviews by Ronald W. Holz unless otherwise noted

I am grateful to Paul Droste and Robin Weatherall for providing reviews on recordings for which I provided liner notes. Robin has agreed, by the way, to take over the compact disc review section of the Bridge starting with the December 2002 issue. I will be on sabbatical leave and this will be the ideal time for a new voice to be heard in our publication. I express special thanks to those of you who have taken the time to give Colin Holman and me some feedback on the Bridge. It is nice to know that some of you actually read and appreciate our stuff, even if you don't always agree with us!

Live Brass Band Concert Recordings

Master Brass Volume XII (2001 All England Masters). ***Brighouse&Rastrick Band** (Withington), +**Fodens Courtois Band** (Hurdley), Trumpet Soloist Rod Franks, and #**Youth Brass 2000** (Jeans). Polyphonic QPRL 212D. TT 70:30. Program: +*Ruslan&Ludmilla* (Glinka/Hargreaves); +*Gaelforce* (Graham); #Trumpet Solo *Sunshine of Your Smile* (Arr. Hume); #*Scarborough Fair* (Smith/Crees); #*Excerpt from Four French Renaissance Dances* (Praetorius/Anthun); +*Shine As the Light* (Graham); **Pageantry* (Howells); +*Pink Panther Theme* (Mancini/Barry); +*Trumpet Concerto* (Arutunian/Antrobus); +*The Day Thou Gavest* (arr. Wilby); +*Entry of the Gladiators* (Fucik).

Polyphonic's recording wizard, Michael Moor, has pulled off another miracle in this excellent live recording of one of the best festivals in the brass band calendar. The centerpiece is a fine, aggressive winning performance of *Pageantry* (Howells) by Brighouse&Rastrick. The hall, the Cambridge Corn Exchange, can be easily overblown by these great bands,

but Moor has been able to capture the sound of this rather brilliant band without distortion. The other excellent band, Fodens, provides some fine playing from the Gala Concert, including a complete reading with professional trumpeter Rod Franks (a real polished player), of the Arutunian *Concerto*. Franks also plays with an all star group called Youth Brass 2000, who also play very well indeed. There are many attractive tracks on this fine CD. I love live recordings, and this is indeed a good one!

NABBA Member Band Recordings

Pressing Onward. **Cincinnati Brass Band** (Anita Hunt). Cincinnati Brass Band CD 001. TT Program: *Pressing Onward* (Leidzen); *The Shipbuilders* (Yorke); Horn Trio: *Trio Con Brio* (Langford); Soprano Solo: *Bring Him Home* (Schonberg/Wilkinson), soloist Pat Counts; *A Disney Spectacular* (Richards); *A London Overture* (Sparke); *Hymn For Diana* (Turrin); *Land of Freedom* (Bulla); *American Civil War Fantasy* (Bilik/Himes); *The Huntress* (King/Gallehue).

Our efficient and gracious hosts at NABBA 2002 released their first compact disc in time for our conference and it is a disc that proves why they are held in high regard as an effective, award-winning band marked by multiple victories in our Honors Level competition. Right from the opening title march by Leidzen you are met by a clean, tuneful, controlled band whose conductor pays close attention to all musical parameters. Two of the major works included, *The Shipbuilders* and *London Overture*, are heard in the band's live performances at NABBA 2001 in Washington. This is always risky, but the band can hold their heads high. There is fine live playing here, and in good, aggressive style. Stylistic versatility is also a hallmark of the band and this program, from the tongue-in-cheek Italian-classics postcard

Trio Con Brio for three horns to what I consider the centerpiece (literally and in terms of playing) of the disc, Richards' *A Disney Spectacular*. The band really sparkles here on a rather challenging, 11-minute suite (good soli playing by the band's anchor players). Cincinnati Brass are equal to the task. There is a classy balance to the overall program that, while having lots of variety, never embraces kitsch, always something I loath in brass band recordings. One personal highlight for me is the Soprano solo by Pat Counts, who offers up a lovely sound and flow melodic line on the Schonberg Broadway song, *Bring Him Home*. The recording is clear, both the live excerpts from NABBA, and the majority recorded at home in Cincinnati. David Henderson served as the engineer in both instances, so a good match has been made. Congratulations to another debut album by a fine NABBA band!!

Strike Up the Band. **Saint Louis Brass Band** (Keith Wilkinson and Shane Williams). STLBB. TT 62:03. Program: *Strike Up the Band* (Gershwin/Richards); *A London Overture* (Sparke); Cornet Solo *One Fine Day* (Puccini/Wilkinson), Soloist Mary Weber; *Imperial Edward* (Sousa/Weatherall); Flugel Solo *Misty* (Burke/Barry), Soloist Jason Harris; Euphonium Solo *Carnival of Venice* (Arban/Wilkinson), Soloist Jeff Binns; *Londonderry Air* (Weatherall); *Simoraine* (Barraclough); Baritone Solo *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Dvorak/Langford), Soloist Edward Jacobs; *A Psalm of Praise* (Curnow); Soprano Solo *Bring Him Home* (Schonberg/Wilkinson), Soloist Erica Sparks; *St Louis Blues* (Handy/Geldard).

In 1999 St Louis Brass Band made its NABBA debut by taking First Place in the Challenge Section. Two years later they took First Place, again, this time in

continued on page 41

continued from page 40

the Honors Section. This recording, made just a few weeks after that second victory, demonstrates their commitment to constantly improving, always pursuing musical excellence. Their dynamic, aggressive performance here of the 2001 Honors test, *London Overture*, stands as a testament to that approach to banding. Wilkinson is a stickler for detail, and STLBB places it all together quite nicely for him. That same approach is evident in their tackling of Curnow's demanding *A Psalm of Praise*, an ideal choice, by the way, for this particular band. Five secure soloists are showcased, and on all the traditional brass band instruments: soprano/cornet/flugel/baritone/euphonium. This is not only smart programming, but it develops key players for the kind of solo playing a championship band must have. Robin Weatherall joins Keith Wilkinson as an arranger of several effective program items, each represented by two. I hope Robin's good arrangement of Sousa's less-often-heard march *Imperial Edward* gets wide play. Sousa's augmented sounding of *God Save the King* in the middle of things is a real treat! The recording has a spacious sound which I found enhanced by cranking the volume just a bit more than on some brass band recordings. It is a delight to see the excellent success of our NABBA bands. STLBB can be counted among our most successful in so many areas: contest victories, corporate support, organizational structure, leadership pattern. It is a joy to have this fine sample of their varied musical offerings. Again, kudos to Wilkinson and St Louis for another fine NABBA band debut CD!!

Brass Band Recordings (Non-Salvation Army)

Mumbo Jumbo: The Music of Barrie Gott. The Ransome Band (Russell Gray). Ego SFZ 108. TT 62:40. Program:

Declaration Overture (Smith/Gott); *Mumbo Jumbo; Godspell* (Schwartz/Gott); Horn Solo *Adagio* (Corelli/Gott), Soloist George Thackray; *Let There Be Praise* (Tunney/Gott); *Jazz Suite*; Alto Trombone Solo *Adagio* (Tartini/Gott), soloist Chris Jeans; *Lightwalk; Glasshouse Sketches; Daniel; Danny Boy* (Baker/Gott); *Gospel Train; Appalachian Overture* (Barnes/Gott).

Barrie Gott has been in the forefront of "contemporary" brass band writing and arranging for both SA and non-SA bands since the late 1960s. In this cross-section of his original music and arrangements/transcriptions, The Ransome Band and Russell Gray allow us a chance to review some of that contribution of over thirty years and to also hear recent works that we may not be familiar with. For Barrie Gott has written much more than the ubiquitous *Light Walk* or his early jazz-rock version of *Dare to be a Daniel!* Gott now resides in Brisbane, Australia, having settled back in his homeland after a lengthy stay in the USA. He currently directs the Brisbane Temple SA Band and works as a professional music educator throughout Queensland. His *Glasshouse Sketches* is an example of his recent original writing, a 10-minute work commissioned for the 1999 Grade C Australian Brass Band Championships (Challenge Level might be comparable). The middle tune in this pop-style work is a fine example of Gott's song-writing capacity. The 3-movement *Jazz Suite* was also a commissioned work, this time for the National Youth Brass Band of Switzerland. Gott asks youthful musicians to tackle rock, cool-jazz, and then latin, or salsa styles. In this his good discernment as a music educator comes to the fore. This is also true of his adaptation of Barnes' popular wind-band *Appalachian Overture*. Two surprises were the Corelli *Adagios*, very effective solo works, though few bands would have solo alto trombonists, no doubt settling for a less-rare

instrument. Gott would be the first to admit that he does not write "profound" music; he would counter, rather, that he writes what he feels can be useful, enjoyable, effective in teaching musical concepts, and also music liable to bring a smile to the face of the average listener. This is a valuable rejoice for bands seeking to expand their "pop" music repertoire.

Windows of the World. Yorkshire Building Society (David King). *For the Love of a Princess* (Horner/Duncan); *Molly on the Shore* (Grainger/Snell); Soprano Solo *Casta Diva* (Bellini/Roberts), Soloist Peter Roberts; *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (Rodgers/Smith); Euphonium Solo *Shepherd Song* (David), Soloist Morgan Griffiths; *Silver Mountain* (Richards); Horn Solo *Piper O' Dundee* (Downie), Soloist Sheona White; *Hymn for Diana* (Turrin); *Beautiful World* (Downie); *Windows of the World* (Graham).

The combination of YBS and David King in contest has been unmatched in recent years as they won the British Open in 1997, 1999 & 2001, The All England Masters in 1999 & 2000, and The European Championship in 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000 & 2001. This latest CD from Polyphonic showcases not only the band but several of the fine soloists that are the foundation of this splendid group and, as I expected, the title refers to a musical journey around the world culminating in Peter Graham's suite, *Windows of the World*. Only two of the ten pieces are new to CD; "Cavatina" from *Norma* by Bellini and *Beautiful World* by Kenneth Downie. Cavatina ("Casta Diva") is an excellent vehicle for soloist Peter Roberts who proves, yet again, that he is one of the world's very finest soprano cornet players. The smooth technique and fluid sound are perfection, he makes what is obviously a difficult solo sound easy.

continued on page 42

continued from page 41

Beautiful World is typical Ken Downie at his lyrical best, a six-minute picture of the British countryside based on the children's hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'. It is lovingly played by YBS with style ideally suited to this charming work. Sheona White is featured in a work she has recorded before with YBS; perhaps this is the same recording? Sheona is respected as one of the finest of the younger generation of Tenor Horn players and she demonstrates here big sound and admirable technique to perfection on Downie's *Piper O'Dundee*. YBS show off their technical prowess with a spirited performance of *Molly on the Shore* and offer a particularly moving performance of *Hymn for Diana*, a work which has found a worthy place in the repertoire of many bands over the past couple of years. Add to that a new arrangement of *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* by Sandy Smith, a silky rendering of *Silver Mountain*, the smooth Euphonium playing of Morgan Griffiths in a charming new arrangement of *Shepherd Song* by Trevor Davis. And you come to the title track, *Windows of the World* by Peter Graham. YBS and David King premiered this major work at the 2000 European Championships in Birmingham. Graham takes us on a multicultural journey using soloists and percussion to great effect. The driving Latin beat of Amazonia, the luscious sounds of Sheona White's Tenor Horn and Margaret Antrobus' Baritone accompanied by only the lower band in Rain Forest, through The Rising Sun, Drums of Thunder, and Celtic Dream to Trumpet soloist Ben Godfey and drumset soloist Stian Villanger in the jazz based Earth Walk. Altogether an interesting and varied CD with the first class playing one expects of this splendid band. Reviewed by Robin Weatherall.

Salvation Army Brass Bands

The Sound of Britain. Household

Troops Band (John Mott). SP&S. SPS CD 156. TT 72:18. Program: *Manhattan* (Leidzen); *The Sound of Britain* (Bearcroft); *For Our Transgressions* (Calvert); *Cornet Solo Clear Skies* (Ball), Soloist Carl Saunders; *Cornet Duet Deliverance* (Catelinet), Soloists Carl Saunders, Craig Snell; *The Spirit* (Steadman-Allen); *Fanfare of Praise* (Redhead); *Britannia* (Smith); *Spitfire Prelude and Fugue* (Walton); *Ask!* (Graham); *Euphonium Solo Holy Well* (Graham), Soloist Keith Loxley; *Great Day* (Bearcroft); *Time to Shine* (Mackereth); *Jubilee* (Drury).

The first great SA brass band was the Household Troops Band, the forerunner of the ISB. Founded in June 1887 (same month as the NYSB), it soon toured all over the UK and, in 1888, Canada and the US. That tour transformed the fledgling SA brass band scene in both of those countries; they were the first great model band in the SA. Since 1985 (a hundred years after the first Life Guards Band campaign that set the pattern for the HTB), when conductor John Mott revised the concept of a special campaign band called the Household Troops, this band has made quite a name for themselves during their short tours. This Spring the band returns to North America, and this disc is their tour album. It is a splendid example of the musical and spiritual zeal of this fine group of young but accomplished players who are drawn from some of the finest SA corps bands throughout the UK (England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland). Despite only getting together on occasion they play at a very high standard. They have a fine array of good soloists and good, entertaining music representing a wide range of SA music. While all their music is presented with great "flare and care", their march playing is very captivating, and on a wide variety of march styles: *Manhattan*, *Britannia*, *Great Day*, and *Jubilee*. In terms of longer works, Bearcroft's 4-movement suite *The Sound of Britain*, a

standby of the Canadian Staff Band under him years ago, gets a refreshing revival. Bearcroft is also the writer of the short but informative liner notes given for each item. One nice addition unusual in an SA recording is a tribute to the William Walton centenary (1902—2002), in the form of Walton's majestic and exciting *Spitfire Prelude and Fugue* (though the arranger is not identified). By the time most of our readers get this issue Household Troops will have already finished their tour. Here's a great way to catch a very interesting, solid band with a great history on a fine, entertaining disc.

Solo Albums

Two of a Mind. *Doug Yeo, Bass Trombone; +Nick Hudson, Tenor Trombone, with Williams Fairey Band (Thomas Wyss) and #David Chapman, Piano. Egon SFZ 107. TT 72:16. Program: *Duet Trombone Institute of Technology* (Davis); **Vigilant* (Watson); #*Duet from Cantata 78* (Bach/Yeo); +*Concertino* (Leidzen); **Mr. Nice Guy* (Drover); +#*Questions* (Camsey); *#*The Call* (Vaughan Williams); +#*Silent Noon* (Vaughan Williams); *Duet Fire Divine* (Watson); #*Concerto* (Lebedev); #*Duet Pastorale* (Ewazen); +*My Funny Valentine* (Rodgers/Drover); *Duet Currents* (Wolfe).

Two terrific trombonists team up in *Two of a Mind* for a wonderful program of solos and duets marked by great variety, technical assurance, and above all, mature musical lyricism. This latter characteristic dominates. The two Vaughan Williams' transcriptions are a case in point, each of the team delivering lovely interpretations, Hudson on short lyric solo song *Silent Noon* and Yeo on "The Call" from *Five Mystical Songs*. There are three important (large-scale) works that

continued on page 43

continued from page 42

receiving readings that can be placed among those considered "definitive": Hudson's majestic approach to the Leidzen *Concertino*, the Yeo's splendid resurrection of the Tuba and Piano version of the Lebedev *Concerto for Bass Trombone*, and Ewazen's *Pastorale*. This latter work dates from 1993 in the initial version for Flute, Horn, and Piano, but here reworked for tenor and bass trombone with piano. This is truly beautiful music. What I also found attractive was the alternation between band accompaniment, piano accompaniment, soloists, and duets - even the unaccompanied opening short duet by Davis really draws you in! Doug Yeo has been known for his high-quality, innovative recordings. This is no exception in

terms of literature, interpretation, quality of accompaniments (band and piano), and in the choice of a stellar partner. I highly recommend this disc to all serious brass students, not just trombonists. In addition to your local dealer, this disc is available through both artists' website. When you get into that website you will see that Doug Yeo has compiled comprehensive program notes for the entire disc: www.yeodoug.com and www.hudson66.freeseve.co.uk

Solo Albums With Music and/or CD/ Keyboard Accompaniment

Christmas Joy: Instrumental Solos for the Holiday Season (All Arranged by Stephen Bulla). Curnow Music, 2001. Available for various solo instruments (See Great Hymns review below for de-

tails) with keyboard accompaniment, or with CD Demo performance and accompaniment (midi/electronic version). Program: *Tuning Notes; We Wish You; Angels From the Realms; In the Bleak Midwinter; Good King Wenceslas/Jolly Old St Nick; Away in a Manger; Wassail Song; Westminster Carol; O Holy Night; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Coventry Carol; Greensleeves; O Come Immanuel.*

Gloria! Instrumental Solos for Easter (Stephen Bulla). Curnow Music, 2001. Same as for Christmas Joy except accompaniment CD only, no midi demo performance. Program: *Tuning Notes; Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Christ*

continued on page 44

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continued from page 43

Arose; Come Thou Almighty King; Crown Him With Many Crowns; Come, Ye Faithful; Golden Harps Are Sounding; Thine Is the Glory; Passion Chorale; At the Cross; Were You There?

Every year I receive phone calls from area organists and church musicians asking if there are any quality collections of hymn arrangements for solo instrumentalist and keyboard, especially for Christmas and Easter. This Eastertide alone I received four such calls. In all honesty, there were very few that I could recommend, until these two sets arranged by Stephen Bulla and handsomely produced by Curnow Music. Each set contains twelve solos ideal for use in a sacred service or concert setting. A demo CD comes with the solo book, the Christmas CD containing both a midi-version performance and just the accompaniment track, while the Easter CD just has the accompaniment tracks. Tuning notes appear only at the beginning of the CD, but this is no real disadvantage. The midi sounds chosen for the accompaniment are certainly adequate, though I would always recommend live keyboardist when available! However, Bulla does not always just use a sampled keyboard, so this makes for some fun and interest when playing along with the track. Bulla chooses to vary the solo instrument on the demo CD because the book is designed to be played by a wide range of instruments. I have copies of the B Flat treble clef book (trumpet, clarinet, etc). The notation and layout are just right, easy to read, and well marked with just the right expressive suggestions. Technical demands are moderate for the soloist and only rarely more so for the keyboardist. Alternate notes are always provided if the arrangement goes above the staff, for instance. Both collections range widely in style, tempo, with a good cross-section of material suitable for these two seasons.

What really pleases me is the classic restraint and solid craftsmanship of these arrangements. So often the "stuff" in this market is just unusable, in bad taste. That is not the case with Stephen Bulla. Highly recommend for all instrumentalists that must play solos at the holidays. Excellent for teaching situations as well. Word of caution with any of these CDs that come with solo books. Get a hard case for the CD rather than keep moving the CD in and out of the plastic sleeve that is glued in the book. One can inadvertently damage or soil the CD and thus render it inoperable. Proper care will insure long use.

Concert Studies: 16 New Studies from Grade 3 Through 6. Philip Smith, Trumpet. Curnow Music, 2001. Compact disc of performance and sheet music booklet. TT 48:54. Program: *Coronation* (Johnson); *Canterbury* (Hosay); *Olympus* (Court); *Requiem* (Bulla); *Arabesque* (Bulla); *Antares* (Turrin); *Fanfare, Cadenza, and Scherzo* (Curnow); *Poem* (Barnes); *Prelude and Pantomime* (Vizzuti); *Promenade* (Johnson); *Romance* (Norbury); *Quadrille* (Turrin); *Bolero* (Curnow); *Saltarello* (Turrin); *Spiral Dance* (Vizzuti); *Street Scene* (Sparke).

This excellent collection of short concert studies for solo trumpet comes with a superb CD performance by the artist for whom they were written, Philip Smith. A impressive group of writers were commissioned this grade series that ranges from moderate to difficult level (grades 3—6): Tim Johnson, James Hosay, Doug Court, Stephen Bulla, Joseph Turrin, James Curnow, James Barnes, Allen Vizzutti, Kevin Norbury, and Philip Sparke. Most etude collections get boring very quickly either because the writing is poor despite the technical hurdles addressed, or they are all in the same style. The decision to have this wonderful range of composers makes this collection all the more attractive. The entire normal compass of the trum-

pet is gradually explored, from low written F sharp to D above the staff. All manner of technical and lyrical playing is incorporated through the progressively more difficult set. The developing player has not only up-to-date etude material, they also have the model performance they can refer to, or even play along with, should they so choose. While most these pieces fit well into a study scheme, some might be seen to transcend the study piece and actually feature in a trumpet recital; this would be particularly true of the more advanced items, like Turrin's *Saltarello*, Sparke's *Street Scene*, or Vizzuti's *Spiral Dance*. Indeed, the latter starts out in a manner reminiscent of Vizzuti's very difficult solo pieces, *Cascades*. Yet even a few of the early items have that quality too, like Bulla's elegant *Requiem*, a lyric study that

continued on page 45

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continued from page 44

sounds like homage to Gabriel Faure. I have thoroughly enjoyed every one of these sixteen etudes. They make musical sense, they challenge a player in a wide range of technical problems, and they demand attention beyond the mere production of notes. And then the performance of the CD! What can I say, but here is another demonstration of Smith's great gifts as one of the finest musicians of our day. All developing cornetists and trumpeters should definitely have these Concert Studies with demo CD. Finally, while the target audience may be trumpeters, all treble-clef reading brass musicians should also use this collection to improve their musical skill and musicianship.

Great Hymns: Instrumental Solos for Worship. Arranged by James Curnow for solo instrumentalist with keyboard (piano and organ accompaniment) or CD accompaniment. Curnow Music, 2001. Solo part books available for 1) Flute/Oboe/Violin; 2) B Flat Clarinet/Tenor Saxophone; 3) E Flat Alto Saxophone; 4) B Flat Trumpet; 5) Trombone/Euphonium Bass Clef; 6) F or E Flat Horn. Compact Disc performances by **Philip Smith, Trumpet**, with Becky Shaw, piano, and Michael Rintamaa, organ. Demo and Play-along CD. TT 51:51. Program: *Tuning Note; All Creatures of Our God and King; Praise to the Lord the Almighty; Be Thou My Vision; O Worship the King; Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; Brethren, We Have Met to Worship; We Gather Together; I Sing the Wondrous Power of God; A Mighty Fortress; All Hail the Power.*

What I said about the Bulla sacred solo collections above gets amplified and accentuated in this excellent collection of hymn arrangements by James Curnow, superbly played by Philip Smith and two excellent accompanists. The technical level is a bit more advanced on some of

the items, though again the editor always provides ossia, alternative choices. Notice the multiple-use nature of the set; it is not just for trumpet or cornet. *Be Thou My Vision* is now also available with brass band accompaniment and *Brethren, We Have Met to Worship* is a skillful reworking of material from Jim's brass band classic, *Knoxville 1800*. All the other items will be new to most of us. This is a terrific collection that makes a major contribution to a sadly neglected or abused area of solo playing. This is a must for solo performers and for students of excellent brass performance.

Wind Band and Brass Ensemble Recordings

Breaking the Century: Great British Music for Wind Band, Volume 7. Central Band of the Royal Air Force (Rob Wifin) with Tuba Soloist*James Gourlay. Polyphonic QPRL 138D. TT 67:39. Program: *Breaking the Century* (Clarke); *Hemming Way* (Dankworth); **Tuba Concerto* (Horovitz); *Music for Arosa* (Sparke); *Evocations* (Ellerby).

In this seventh volume of British wind band music several of the recorded works were first scored for brass band: *Breaking the Century* and the Horovitz *Tuba Concerto*. *Breaking the Century* was commissioned for the Oxted Brass Band's centenary, and then reworked into the current "dance overture" format, a lively work lasting just under 7 minutes. Besses O'the Barn Band commissioned the *Tuba Concerto* for James Gourlay, who then rescored the work for wind band, Gourlay provides an excellent performance of the three-movement, 20-minute work here. The Sparke piece is another excellent example of Philip's fine writing, the title merely referring to the festival for whom work was commissioned. This is quintessential Sparke, and I would not be surprised to see a brass band version, as well, due to the careful brass scoring. Ellerby's *Evoca-*

tions is aimed at Spanish and Latin American subjects, and unfolds as a four-movement suite: 1) Harlequin's Carnival; 2) Death of Don Quixote; 3) Sueno (Dream); and 4) The Royal Hunt of the Sun. The third movement, after a poem by Lorca, is particularly enchanting. Dankworth's music was new to me, but his lighthearted, almost third-stream style (a blending of jazz elements and symphonic structure) kept my interest. All these pieces are played well by one of Britain's finest military bands. The liner notes include commentary by each composer of his music. The sound is clear, full, even lush. This is an attractive package of new music, much of it with brass band roots, origin, or connection.

Gaelforce: Music for Wind Band by Peter Graham. Royal Norwegian Navy Band (Nigel Boddice). Doyen DOYCD 083. TT 70:02. Program: *Pentium; Gaelforce; Summon the Dragon; Cartoon Music; Windows of the World; Northern Landscapes; Swedish Folk Song; Montage: Symphony for Winds.*

Can we admit that it is good to have the ears of brass banders flushed, at least occasionally, with the sounds of a good wind band? This disc by the Royal Norwegian Navy Band is an outstanding example of an absolutely superb wind band playing music by Peter Graham, whom the brass band world claims as one of its own. With only one exception, all of these pieces are also available in the brass band format. This is one of the finest recordings that I have heard - 70 minutes of pure enlightenment and enjoyment. All titles are published by Gramercy Music (UK). The opening piece is called *Pentium*, but it is really an elongated version of *Praeludium* which was published for brass band in 1996. This is an energetic piece that will be worth the time and effort to learn it. It

continued on page 46

Brass Band Recordings

continued from page 45

sparkles for almost 4 minutes and the brass band version has a short aleatoric section at the end. The title piece, *Gaelforce*, is a setting of three Celtic tunes. If you like the music of Percy Grainger, you will really like *Gaelforce*. *Summon the Dragon* is a fanfare and prelude in the style of John Williams and features the trumpets and trombones. *Cartoon Music* lives up to its title. Naturally, it is full of vaudeville slapstick and other musical clichés (chase music, etc.) with lots of percussion. This is an engaging and genuinely funny piece. *Windows of the World* is a five-movement journey in multiculturalism. The

musical versatility of both the composer and the band is evident here. *Northern Landscapes* features brass quintet and band and is a very usable piece for this combination. Graham has given us a short, imaginative arrangement of *Swedish Folk Song*, better known as *How Great Thou Art*. The CD concludes with *Montage - Symphony for Winds* which was a brass band test piece in the 1994 All-England Masters. This audience-friendly piece is a 15-minute work in 3 movements. Many will remember the challenge of playing Graham's *The Essence of Time*, the NABBA Test Piece in 1995 (Toronto). There are many other Graham marches, major compositions, and arrangements that are available for

bands at many levels. I recently heard a live performance of *Harrison's Dream* by the U.S. Air Force Band. This piece won the prestigious ABA/Ostwald Award in 2002. I am sure that there is music on this disc that will appeal to listeners and performers alike. What a gift it is to have so many interesting pieces by this major composer, for both wind band and brass band, on one recording. The program notes by Ron Holz give complete background information on the composer and his music. This recording should be in every band lover's library.

Reviewed by Dr. Paul Droste

NABBA XX in Cincinnati

Firstly, the Cincinnati Brass Band is to be congratulated for its organizational expertise in presenting, with congeniality, a splendid celebration in brass. From arrival to the conclusion of the dazzling concert by the Brass Band of Battle Creek everything was done to make us comfortable and provide a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Secondly, it is gratifying to hear the improvement in performance level of the bands. It seems that each time I am privileged to adjudicate, the repertoire, generally, is more challenging and the standard of playing is higher. Yes, there is still a long way to go before we hear more than a few top class performances but is heartwarming that so many bands are participating and learning from the competition experience.

There is no magic. Only by assiduous preparation and meticulous attention to

detail is it possible to perform at the highest level. The prerequisites, of course, are the attainment of good tone (quality of sound); diligent attention to dynamics (quantity of sound); cognizance of rhythmic structure; and mastery of the technical challenges presented by the music. After these have been mastered, then comes the magic! It is not written on the page! It is the ability to meet the requirements of the music, recognizing the various moods. This is where the imagination of the conductor (supported by the talents of the players) conveys style with nuance, appropriate pulse and shading of the musical text. Unfortunately this cannot be achieved without careful attention to balance. This was not always evident in the performances that I heard.

I also want to point out to the youth soloists the importance of selecting music that is within your technical ability. It is impossible to make music if its technical challenges are more than can be comfortably accommodated. It is no

coincidence that the top awards in the Youth Solo competition were given to those who selected a composition in which they were close to mastering all the notes and the manner in which the notes were connected!

I greatly admire all bands and individuals that competed at NABBA. Your participation is crucial to the festival of brass that we were privileged to attend. Congratulations to those who were honored for superior performances. For the rest, keep up the good work and remember the old adage "when you are average you are as near to the bottom as you are to the top". Above all, remember that making music is more important than winning. Continue to support each other and exchange ideas and the future of the brass band movement in North America will be bright.

Bramwell L. Gregson

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