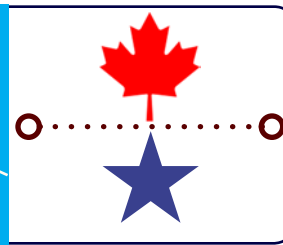




THE BRASS BAND BRIDGE



ISSUE 107

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UNDER THE BRIDGE



Douglas Yeo

Editor

I was walking in my local shopping mall the other day when I heard the familiar sound of bells ringing. The Christmas decorations were up, Santa Claus was being photographed with young children and cash registers were beeping, full of dollars and credit card slips. But the ringing was a different sound. In a corner stood a volunteer next to a kettle, collecting money for the Salvation Army's work. I had seen the sight many times but this time it was different. I have long become accustomed to missing the brass quartet that was for so long a fixture at these scenes. What I saw and heard was a single volunteer who stood ringing a bell – while talking on his cell phone.

This jarring juxtaposition – the mixture of the sacred (collecting money to help the less fortunate) with the profane (“taking care of business” when bored) – got me thinking of how we sometimes, during our concerts, forget that the audience is actually paying attention to what we are doing. The kettle volunteer seemed unaware that the very passers-by that he hoped would give a donation might be put off by his casual attitude. Likewise in our playing, we need reminding that how we present ourselves has an impact on how our music making is received.

The U.S. Open Brass Band Championship showed itself to be solidifying as an important brass band contest in North America. Entertainment contests are completely different than the test piece type of contest that our NABBA Championships present. For bands interested in this aspect of performance, it's nice to see a vehicle for their talents to be on display. The three reports – three! – about the U.S. Open give some of the flavor of the day's performances including the remarkable performance of 11

year old Peter Moore, principal trombonist of Wingates Band which travelled from the U.K. for the contest. Congratulations to the Prairie Brass Band for hosting this event and to Fountain City Brass Band which in 2007 are double champions, winning the Championships section of the NABBA XXV Championships and taking first place at the fifth U. S. Open.

Speaking of the NABBA Championships, when the calendar rolls over to January 1, it's a sign that NABBA bands will be hard at work on their NABBA contest programs, with special attention given to the challenging test pieces for 2008. While it has been said before (and is said again within these pages), there are two important things that all competing bands must keep in mind: 1) All applications for the Championships (band, solo, ensemble) must be **RECEIVED** by NABBA by the close of business on Friday, January 11, 2008. This is a firm deadline; any application received after this date will be considered late and will not be accepted. This firm deadline is critical to the planning of the Championships. Remember: January 11 is the **RECEIVED BY** date, not a “postmarked by” date. 2) Louisville and the surrounding area is still experiencing a hotel room crunch due to a convention of truckers that is meeting the same weekend as our NABBA Championships. If you have not already done so, make your hotel reservations NOW. Some bands are reporting that at this late date, available hotel rooms are costing more and are further out of town than they would like. Visit nabba.org for information about hotels and all Championships applications.

Along with the NABBA Board of Directors, I wish you and your band all the best as we close out 2007 and roll toward 2008. Keep your news, photos and articles coming. And give some thought to Eric Ball's sage words on page 12. Each of us really CAN make a difference not only in our bands but in the world. ☺

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ATOP THE BRIDGE



Russell Morris

NABBA President

Happy Holidays!

eral years not to take either for granted. Both can be snatched away from you very quickly and unexpectedly. I could not do this "hobby" of brass banding without the encouragement and support of my family and especially my wonderful wife, Nadine. She is very tolerant and understands my passion and love for music

I am very thankful for my extended family, the Natural State Brass Band. I am fortunate to have such a great group of people to be associated with. Their commitment and hard work makes it easy for me to continually be excited about brass banding and striving for improve-

goal makes this task easier. I am thankful that all of you are patient with me and have given me this opportunity for growth. I look forward to working with all of you this upcoming year and beyond.

Finally, I am thankful for all of you, the membership of the North American Brass Band Association. It is because of you, your hard work, your commitment, and your sacrifices, that we have this wonderful organization called NABBA. While most attention is focused on what is wrong with the world today, we are part of what is right. Be proud of that fact. I very much look forward to meeting and getting



NABBA President Russell Morris with the Natural State Brass Band
November, 2007

As this issue of *The Brass Band Bridge* is published, the leftovers from Thanksgiving are all but gone and Christmas is only ten days away. Most have finished up the banding "season" and will have some time off before the preparations begin for next year and the 2008 NABBA Championships. This time of year is always one of reflection for me, looking back on the year and counting my many blessings.

First and foremost I am thankful for my family and my health. I have learned over the past sev-

ment. In addition to the NSBB, I am thankful for the other musical ensembles in Little Rock and North Little Rock that let me play with them. You all help me to stay grounded and focused on the important things in life.

To the NABBA Board of Directors, I am thankful to have such a diverse and knowledgeable group of people to work with. Your willingness to work and sacrifice for a common

to know as many of you as possible in the days and months ahead. Have a safe and happy holiday season! ☆

rjmorris61 @ comcast . net

THE BUTLINS MINEWORKERS BRASS BAND FESTIVAL (SKEGNESS, ENGLAND), ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST BRASS BAND CONTESTS, IS PLEASED TO INVITE THE CHAMPIONSHIP SECTION WINNER OF THE NABBA XXVI CHAMPIONSHIPS TO ATTEND AND COMPETE IN THEIR JANUARY 2009 EVENT. THE WINNING NABBA BAND WILL RECEIVE £3000 TO GIVE A CONCERT AT THE FESTIVAL, WILL RECEIVE COMPLEMENTARY ACCOMMODATION AT THE BUTLINS RESORT FOR THEIR TIME IN SKEGNESS, AND WILL BE INVITED TO COMPETE IN BOTH THE SATURDAY CHAMPIONSHIP BAND COMPETITION AND THE SUNDAY CHAMPIONSHIP ENTERTAINMENT COMPETITION. BOTH COMPETITIONS OFFER EXTRAORDINARY

CASH PRIZES:

1ST PLACE: £6500

2ND PLACE: £2500

3RD PLACE: £1250

4TH PLACE: £750

IN ADDITION, THE BAND WILL BE GIVEN ASSISTANCE IN SETTING UP ADDITIONAL CONCERTS IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

MORE DETAILS WILL FOLLOW IN BRIDGE ISSUE 108.

ACROSS THE BRIDGE

FEBRUARY 2, 2008

Big Bend Brass Band Festival.
More information at BBBBFestival.org

MARCH 8-9, 2008

Ohio Brass Arts Festival, Columbus Ohio. Hosted by Central Ohio Brass Band. More information at ohiobrassbands.com

MARCH 28-29, 2008

NABBA XXVI Championships. Indiana University Southeast and Louisville, Kentucky. **NOTE:** Due to several large conventions in Louisville during the NABBA Championships weekend, hotel rooms should be reserved IMMEDIATELY. For more information about the NABBA XXVI Championships and updated details about hotel room availability, visit nabba.org and click on "Contest Info 2008." Also, the deadline for all applications for the Championships (band, solo, ensemble) to be **RECEIVED** by NABBA is Friday, January 11, 2008. Late entries will not be accepted. **PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ENTRY FORMS AND MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS NOW!**

JUNE 13-15, 2008

Great American Brass Band Festival, Danville, Kentucky. More information at gabbf.com.

JUNE 21, 2008

Grand Celebration of Brass Bands, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Hosted by Eastern Iowa Brass Band. More information at eibb.org/gcobb.php.

BUILDING BRIDGES: NEWS FROM NABBA BANDS

L.A. METROPOLITAN BRASS BAND

The L.A. Metropolitan Brass Band performed its inaugural concert for over 300 people on November 11, 2007 at the Redondo Union High School Auditorium in Redondo Beach, CA. The audience was very receptive and provided a lot of energy and enthusiasm. The event was designed to formally introduce the country's newest British-style brass band to the South Bay and greater Los Angeles community. It helped the band receive much needed support and awareness from the local community.

The band has several more concerts planned for this season, each detailed on the band's website at www.LAMetroBrass.com. There is also some video of the band posted on the website and on the band the at LAMetroBrass.blogspot.com. (Submitted by Aaron Stanley)

NEW YORK STAFF BAND OF THE SALVATION ARMY

The International Euphonium Player of the Year award was presented to Aaron VanderWeele at a music festival given on October 20, 2007 by the New York Staff Band in celebration of its 120th Anniversary Reunion



International Euphonium Player of the Year Award
Presented to Aaron VanderWeele of the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army by Bandmaster Ronald Waiksnoris

Weekend at a church in White Plains, New York. Alumni of the band shared in a reunion weekend with the current bandmen, and those in attendance included former bandmasters Vernon Post, Derek Smith and Brian Bowen.

Aaron was given the award in a surprise presentation by Bandmaster Ronald Waiksnoris following Aaron's presentation of the euphonium solo, *Ransomed*, during the festival. It is our understanding that this award is normally presented in London during the National Championships weekend, but the logistics of having Aaron being at that event conflicted with the NYSB weekend, and this alternative presentation was arranged. Aaron was presented with a plaque commemorating this achievement, and it is our understanding that his name will be added on to the trophy/plaque in the UK that contains all previous winners of this award. As far as we know, Aaron is the only other Salvationist award winner of International Euphonium Player of the Year besides Derick Kane of the International Staff Band. (Submitted by Tom Scheibner).

NEW ENGLAND BRASS BAND

Douglas Yeo, music director of the New England Brass Band, has announced that he will be retiring from the NEBB at the end of the 2007-08 season. In his announcement to the band's board of directors in October, Yeo spoke of the tremendous satisfaction of his 10 years of working with the band, "Since I came to the New England Brass Band in 1998, we have built on the past as we have moved forward to a present that none of us could have imagined. The band is a tightly-knit group of friends who work hard and have achieved a high level of musical excellence that has brought great satisfaction to all of us as well as to our international audience. Some highlights of our decade long collaboration include five best-selling compact discs, concerts in Boston's Symphony Hall and the Salvation Army's Centennial Temple in New York City, two NABBA Championships titles (Challenge in 2004, Honors in 2006), a performance at the 2007 International Trumpet Guild Conference, and a concert celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Boston Symphony (guest conducted by Boston Pops conductor, Keith Lockhart). We could not have even dreamed of this kind of growth in the NEBB when we began our



New England Brass Band Music Director Douglas Yeo with the NEBB at Symphony Hall, Boston

(Photo by Michael Lutch, courtesy Boston Symphony)

collaboration together. It is especially gratifying that we have just released the band's fifth compact disc, **Be Glad Then America**, that provides a very satisfactory valedictory to our long-time collaboration." Yeo then spoke of the timing of his decision, "Even with all of this great success and fun, nothing can last forever. I was very fortunate to take over the NEBB after the fine leadership of William Rollins who conducted the band from its founding

in 1988 to 1997. That foundation allowed me to build and help move the band forward as it embarked on new and more diverse activities. Yet I now find myself needing more time to explore and care for other things given my busy schedule of performing with the Boston Symphony and other commitments as a teacher and with my church. This is the right decision at the right time for the right reasons, but I plan to continue my association with the NEBB by attending concerts, and keeping involved with brass banding through my work on the NABBA board and guest appearances with bands around the world." Said NEBB President Kenneth Griffin, "The New England Brass Band has enjoyed a decade of exceptional leadership under Music Director Douglas Yeo. His superb musicianship is inspirational, his dedication is exceptional, his work ethic unequalled. It would be fair to say that during these ten years hardly a day has gone by that Doug has not thought about or worked for the NEBB. That standard is impossible to sustain indefinitely. At this time, the daily operation of the band is functioning at a very high level, it is playing well and we are enjoying every minute of it. He and the band have much to be proud

of. At the close of this season, Doug will not simply leave the directorship of a band. He will leave thirty people who consider him family and I am sure that family will keep him close." Douglas Yeo's final concert with the NEBB will take place on June 1, 2008, at Hope Church in Lenox, Massachusetts. The band board of directors and search committee have been working to secure a new music director for the 2008-09 season and an announcement to that end is expected soon. For more information, including the New England Brass Band's latest newsletter, visit the NEBB website at newenglandbrassband.org. (Submitted by the New England Brass Band)

OHIO BRASS ARTS FESTIVAL COMPOSITION CONTEST

The Ohio Brass Arts Festival and Jagrins Music Publications are pleased to announce the first OBAF Composition Contest. Entrants for the 2008 OBAF Composition Contest are to write a standard Contest March. The piece must be an original composition that has never been performed before, as it will be premiered at the 2008 Ohio Brass Arts Festival. International entrants are not only accepted, but encouraged.

Dates: The closing date for entries is Thursday, January 31st, 2008. The entrants will then be trimmed down to three finalists. The three winners will be announced at the 2008 Ohio Brass Arts Festival scheduled for the weekend of March 7-9, 2008, where all three marches will be performed before a final decision on the outright winner is made. Jagrins Music Publications will publish the winning piece and also reserves the right to publish the other two finalists. Additionally, there will be cash prizes for the top three marches including a \$300 prize for the winning march.

Submission Format: Scores and parts may be sent in as a pdf file, Finale file or, preferably, any Sibelius file.

All entries should include the composer's contact information (name, address, phone number and e-mail), title of the march, pdf files, and Sibelius/ Finale file if applicable. Entries and questions are to be e-mailed to entrants@ohiobrassbands.com (Submitted by Patrick Herak)

The Natural State Brass Band wants to express our deepest thanks and gratitude to the following people for their recent gifts of instruments to the band:

Russ & Enny Gottschalk (Smith-Watkins cornet)
Courtney & Kim Swindler (Smith-Watkins cornet)
Richard Tackett (Smith-Watkins cornet)
Chuck Goldner (Yamaha tenor horn)

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



OHIO STATE MARCHING BAND

When The Ohio State University Marching Band became an all-brass band in 1934, it was soon known as “the world’s largest brass band.” At that time a student member of the band, Richard Heine, began re-writing standard military marches and school songs for the 120-piece band. After World War II, Heine was asked to make full-blown arrangements for the band, and also to provide some original brass band music. After writing all of the band’s arrangements for several years, he was joined by John Tatgenhorst and Ed Montgomery. Later, Jim Swearingen, Ted McDaniel, Steve Pfaffman, and Ken McCoy joined the arranging staff and they, and Tatgenhorst, are still writing for the band.

Many years ago, former director Jack O. Evans described Heine’s contribution to the band by saying, “If there is any one person who has created the sound of the all-brass Marching Band, that man is Richard Heine.” Thanks to a long time partnership with Reg McGovern of FSR Recordings, the OSU Marching Band is the most recorded marching band in the country. Every recording features arrangements by Richard Heine.

Richard Heine recently died at age 91. On November 4 two NABBA member bands - the OSU Alumni Band directed by Paul Droste and Jon Waters, and members of the current OSU Marching Band directed by Jon Woods - presented a musical tribute to Richard Heine. Guest speakers, including most of the current band staff, acknowledged Heine’s legacy in writing for brass bands. His arrangements exhibited both simplicity and complexity - easy to play and memorize, yet full sounding and interesting. He liberated the alto horn section from playing only afterbeats, and made sure that all sections eventually played the melody. Heine’s arrangement of the Orton Hall Chimes (Big Ben) exploits the all-brass sound as it introduces the OSU Alma Mater at all football games, concerts, and university events.

Former director Paul Droste closed the tribute by relating that Heine would sometimes finish all of the musical arrangements for a halftime show, then rip them up and start over because he was not satisfied. Unlike many other arrangers, Heine would play through or sing every band part to insure

good voice leading and easy patterns for memorization. Droste also remarked that “when Heine turned in the score and parts, the band would read it once, then start to memorize it.” In his own way and in his own time, Richard Heine was truly a brass band pioneer. (Submitted by Paul Droste)

WESTON SILVER BAND

2007/2008 marks the 87th season of the Weston Silver Band (WSB), which was formed as the Weston Boys Band in 1921. Rather than wait to “toot our own horns” for the 90th Anniversary Gala concert in 2011, the WSB decided there is no time like the present to celebrate the bands’ long-time presence in Weston (now part of the City of Toronto) and hold a special concert honoring the history of the Weston Silver Band and its large extended family of alumni players.

Part birthday party and part alumni homecoming, The WSB’s 87th Birthday Concert will be held on January 27, 2008 at Don Bosco Auditorium in Toronto. The concert will take a fond look back through music at the bands’ history and accomplishments and forward to its future. The program will include selections conducted by several former Music Directors, including George Swaddling (MD 1967 – 1969), Douglas Field (1978 – 86), Robin McCubbin (1986-89) and Ron Clayson (1991-2002) and will feature a massed band performance of current and former WSB members. Among the expected honoured guests are family members of WSB founder, George Sainsbury as well as descendants of members of the 1920’s Boys Band.

Under the leadership of Larry Shields, who assumed the helm as Music Director in 2004, WSB has been experiencing a renaissance of sorts over the last several years. A substantial grant was received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2005 which enabled the band to augment its inventory of instruments and percussion equipment, enhance marketing/outreach and strengthen the bands organizational infrastructure. In 2006, the WSB released a new recording, engineered by Ed Marshall, entitled *Around the World in 80 Minutes*.



Weston Silver Band (Toronto, Canada), 2007

The close of the 2006/07 concert season was another exciting high point for the band. The WSB was honoured to present Richard Marshall, Principal Cornet – Black Dyke Band, as guest soloist in a weekend of concerts in April 2007. Marshall’s dazzling performances showed all in attendance why he has been dubbed “The Man” (4barsrest) and has been hailed “one of the finest cornet players of his generation” (British Bandsmen). Not only a brilliant musician and soloist, Marshall’s genuine love and enthusiasm for banding was inspiring. Sharp eyed audience members in Toronto could not have missed Richard sneaking into the back row just before the downbeat to play 3rd cornet in the WSB’s performance of Eric Ball’s *Resurgam*!

The band also hosted Richard’s masterclass at Humber College (Toronto), sponsored by Long and McQuade Musical Instruments (www.long-mcquade.com). The masterclass featured a display of the new line of York Instruments which were available for trial by participants. Richard was accompanied on his trip to Canada by his wife Rebecca Marshall, also an accomplished musician and member of the Black Dyke cornet section, who sat in on the front bench for the concerts. All in all, the week had all the qualities that make brass banding such a wonderful experience – great performances along with great fun and friendship. For information on the Weston Silver Band, please visit our web site at www.westonsilverband.ca (submitted by Theresa MacDonald) ☺

2007 U.S. OPEN BRASS BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS: PERSPECTIVE

By Rusty Morris

As this was my first trip the U.S. Open Championships, I did not know exactly what to expect. I knew there would be fantastic music and creative concepts towards entertaining the audience and judges and I was not disappointed. This Championship is different from the NABBA Championships in the sense it is an entertainment type contest. There are no set test pieces for the bands to perform and there are no differentiating classifications. The bands have a window of 25- 30 minutes in which to present their programs.

Programs this year varied from traditional sit down type concerts to programs with choreography, bands playing in darkness, bands playing to the back of the stage, costume changes, sections of bands playing in the audience, and many of the bands standing for their performances. While the bands are scored for their entertainment ability, none ever lost sight of the high level of musicianship needed to compete. It was a very enjoyable day of brass band programs.

The emcee for the day, Mr. Frank Renton, is alone worth the price of admission. His knowledge and experience with brass bands is unquestionable. He is able to provide information and anecdotes relevant to the music, bands, and conductors. Mr. Renton is very entertaining in his delivery and very quick with his wit.

One of the unusual characteristics of this Championship is how the time is filled between the band's performances. The performing bands provide small groups competing in a "Buskers" event. A mystery judge in the audience selects the winner and that group is awarded a top hat full of money collected throughout the day. This year's groups ranged from Dixieland type performances to vocals

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to certain bands members (conductors perhaps.....) dressed in drag. Some very entertaining and creative shows were presented.

If one wanted or needed a break during the day, there were multiple vendors in attendance with their wares on display. If one wanted to try out a new horn with a new mouthpiece and a new mute, this was THE place to be. Quite a wide range of instrument lines and accessories were available as well as CDs and other goodies. The vendors were set up in the cafeteria area which bode well for them during the lunch break. The band boosters of St. Victor did a great job in getting everyone fed in a timely fashion (and very reasonably priced, I might add).

The evening concluded with a banquet and awards presentation. This gave everyone an opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones. One of the most positive aspects that I have observed from the brass banding community is that of support for each other. Everyone competes to win but not at all costs. After the official events were over, I'm sure there were other "un-sanctioned" events and celebrations going on. After all, this is a brass band event.

The hosts for the weekend, Prairie Brass Band, deserve a huge pat on the back for a job well done. No event like this comes off without the behind the scenes help of many. Dallas (founder) and Clark Niermeyer (President, U.S. Open) are to be commended for their work and dedication to this event.

Finally, huge congratulations to all of the competing bands. The Wingates band, all the way from north-west England, made a substantial commitment (both time and money) to come to the US Open. They should be very proud of their contributions to this year's event. The NABBA member bands, Fountain City Brass Band (Champions), the Brass Band of Central Florida (runners - up), Prairie Brass Band, and the Illinois Brass Band all did themselves and all of NABBA proud. In addition, Eastern Iowa Brass Band, Motor City Brass Band, and Milwaukee Festival Brass Band all made significant contributions to the event.

Next year's U.S. Open will be held on November 8th, 2008. Make your plans now to attend this event. You'll be glad that you did. ★

RETROSPECTIVE

by Michael Boo

In the five years that the U.S. Open Brass Band Championships has been in existence, it has grown from a small event in a cramped auditorium that could seat just over 300 fans to a major event in the brass band community that attracts attention from around the world.

This year's event was held on Saturday, November 10, 2007 at St. Viator High School in Arlington Heights, Illinois, in what some Chicagoans refer to as "the land beyond O'Hare." Eight bands from six states and the United Kingdom gathered to celebrate the growing interest in brass bands this side of the big pond, as well as compete for points and esteem.

Representatives from 4 Bars Rest, the pre-eminent chroniclers of happenings within the brass band world, once again flew over from the United Kingdom to cover the event for fans worldwide who want to know what's happening in brass bands in America.

Once again, BBC Radio 2's Frank Renton hosted the proceedings. As always, Frank was able to fill in minute details about the music selections and the activity for novice and long-time fans alike. His contributions to the event have become essential to the learning experience enjoyed by all.

Each band was judged by Dr. Joseph H. Allison, Director of Bands at Eastern Kentucky University, John Phillips, musical director at the York Region District School Board Arts School in Ontario and judge administrator for Drum Corps International, and John Bell, Professor of Music and Director of Bands at Southern Illinois University—Edwardsville. Joe Courtney adjudicated Timing and Penalties.

Bands were judged in two captions, Music and Entertainment, spotlighting the positive qualities of each performance. In traditional brass band competitions, judges concentrate on recording technical errors. That makes the U.S. Open an event where the score is built up rather than torn down. A Most Entertaining award is based solely on scores in the

Entertainment caption, and the judges were also responsible for selecting the band that presented the Best Performance of a March, the Best Featured Solo, the Best Original Composition or Arrangement of the day, and the new Most Outstanding Percussion Section Award, each award coming with a monetary award.

A blind drawing was held to establish the position of performance, done by a third party a few weeks prior to the event.

As always, the event was punctuated by buskers performances, solos or ensembles performed in between the bands that were judged by an anonymous person out in the audience. The winning buskers routine would earn whatever money was collected in a hat in front of the stage.

During the day, numerous brass exhibitors filled the concession area at the U.S. Open Marketplace, showing off the latest in fine brass instruments and recordings among other things. Eastern Iowa Brass Band, directed

by Casey Thomas, kicked off the festivities with *Knight Templar*, a George Allan march that exhibited the classic attitude of traditional brass band literature, with delicate high brass obligatos punctuated by full chordal tuttis that shook the stage. All were reminded that one of the goals of brass bands is to stir the soul with power as well as tickle the senses with panache.

Barrie Gott's jazzy *Light Walk* was an unusual, toe-tapping take on the old Salvation Army tune, *Walk in the Light*. This delightful swing dance re-created the sort of environment one would expect to hear on a dance floor after World War II. Philip Sparke's *Party Dance* provided the backdrop for a challenging euphonium solo feature, indeed a party if one was exclusively serving highly caffeinated beverages, as if the soloist wasn't fully awake, this continual barrage of runs and arpeggios could have easily ended up somewhere on the floor in front of the stage.

Fans of BBC offerings on PBS stations recognized Howard Goodall's flowing *Psalm*



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23 as the theme from the comedy, "The Vicar of Dibley." Philip Sparke's *Barn Dance and Cowboy Hymn* concluded the set with a joyous celebration of western United States folk heritage.

The first buskers came from the Wingates Band, led by trombonist and band director Andrew Berryman, playing a jazzy trombone solo backed up by swing ensemble titled *Yellow Snow*, a designation the audience didn't particularly want to think about too much. The group followed up with a short vocal solo of *Three Little Kittens* as an encore.

Illinois Brass Band opened their set in regal fashion with Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, the band lined up across the front of the stage and bombarding the ears with a sonic wall of power. Directed by Ryan T. Nelson, this band has made tremendous strides over the past few years. Philip Sparke's *Barn Dance and Cowboy Hymn* came next, the tempo of the dance frenetic and vivacious, offering a supreme contrast to the elegiac hymn sandwiched in the middle, which itself was punctuated by brass stabs that appeared to fall from the sky like shooting stars

John Philip Sousa's *The Thunderer* came next, the march serving to highlight the delicate contrasting beauty of Eric Whitacre's *Lux Aurumque*, arranged from a choral setting of hovering chords, seeming to float over the chairs in the theater. Most of the brass stood and faced backwards, allowing the sound to bounce off the back wall for an ethereal distance effect.

Philip Whilby's *Jazz—Mvt. 3* featured a cornet solo amidst a sort of "Third Stream" sensibility that recounted some of the jazzy symphonic excursions by Leonard Bernstein. Subtitled, "Cool," it did in fact remind one of the piece of the same name from Bernstein's *West Side Story*, culminating with an overflowing jazz-filled bliss that poured out of the piece with unrestrained glee. The final work was Robert Bernat's arrangement of the American pioneer era shape note classic, *Dunlap's Creek*, a plaintive chorale featuring flugelhorn and euphonium and building to a resolute conclusion.

Wayne's World, the buskers from Brass Band of Central Florida presented their rendition of the Queen rock classic, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, deftly navigating the myriad moods that appear and disappear throughout the piece.



Fountain City Brass Band at the U.S. Open Brass Band Championship.



Illinois Brass Band at the U. S. Open

Fountain City Brass Band, directed by Joseph Parisi, kicked off their presentation with Charles Anderson's *ORB*, reminiscent of a grand circus march, replete with tons of cascading inner lines that poured out of the piece. J.B. Arban's *Carnival of Venice* provided for a sometimes delicate, always fireworks-inducing stunning cornet solo feature that would leave many cornetists tongues tied up in knots around the mouthpiece.

The rest of the show took on a space theme, starting with John Williams' *Planet Krypton* from the "Superman" movie. The euphonious low chords that opened the piece haunted the soul, building up to a tremendously loud climax punctuated by cornets being scattered through the auditorium for a surround-sound effect. *Mars* from *The Planets* by Gustav Holst presented a sense of underlying terror through its pulsating, violent chords that stabbed the air of the theater with an unrelenting angst, resolved by John Williams' *Luke and Leia* theme from the "Star Wars" trilogy, a serene piece that offered a soothing dose of hope after the cataclysm that came before.

Cantina Band from "Star Wars," arranged as *Sing, Sing, Sing* by Louis Prima, commenced with an antiphonal ensemble and went on to be a rousing delight that had the toes tapping throughout the auditorium with the pounding drums. Philip Sparke's "Finale" from *Music of the Spheres* concluded the set. The opening had people looking for the hidden pipe organ,

so beautifully tuned was the waterfall of brass chords that started the movement. The brief furious section that followed was one of those pieces that just plain seems impossible to ever execute, rapid firing volleys shooting out of band and sticking to the walls for dear life.

Hurricane Funk from Brass Band of Central Florida delivered a buskers treatment of Youngblood Brass Band of New York's *Brooklyn* in a rousing, hand-clapping Dixieland swing style that had people gyrating in their seats.

Prairie Brass Band, under the direction of U.S. Open founder Dallas Niermeyer, opened with Ian McDougall's *Bells*, with bell-like tolling heard throughout in the upper and middle brass. The bell effects from the brass were quite stunning, as they sounded more percussive than brass-generated. Peter Graham's *Bravura* featured a euphonium soloist exploring the many moods available from the instrument, from solemn to exuberantly exultant.

British Bandsman by Derek Broadbent is one of those classic works that lifts up the hearts of brass band traditionalists. Plenty of old school riffs abound in this chestnut, popping out throughout to carry the piece through to its stirring conclusion. Another piece reflecting the English consciousness was an arrangement of *Robin Hood and His Merry Men* of Eric Korngold brought to life Korngold's first movie score, full of imagery of brave bandits stealthily haunting the deep forests and castles to rob from the

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rich, and also full of heroic imagery of nobility representing the act of giving their bounty to the oppressed poor of the kingdom.

Chuck Mangione's *Echano* finished the set, its somewhat mournful introduction belying the fiery Spanish celebration to follow. Hot, hotter and hotter still, the piece turned up the thermostat in the theater to a tad beyond boiling, with the brass coming to the forefront to scream out the final chords in jubilant joviality.

After lunch break, Wingates Band, directed by Andrew Berryman, showed all why the ensemble is ranked so high in the world and how the band has sustained its success since 1873. William Rimmer's *Ravenswood* kicked off the festival within a festival. This century-old piece showed off the band's prowess with dazzling sudden dynamic changes and super quick crescendos and decrescendos that continually caught one off guard. The work was performed in classic Whit Friday fashion with the band standing up. (For those who haven't heard of Whit Friday, a Google search is in order.)

Lucy Pankhurst, solo horn with the band (and celebrating her birthday today) wrote a

devilishly clever jazz morsel titled *Wicked*, full of some truly wicked jazz effects that were as innovative and unusual as anything ever heard on the stage. No special effect was off limits as the band utilized a large amount of extended sound effects to keep the ears on edge. Perez Prado's *Mambo No. 5* was a cool saunter through Latin jazz, the equivalent of enjoying a musical pina colada under a palm tree. A trombone solo on *Blessed Assurance* astonished the audience when they found out from the emcee that the principal trombonist for the band is only eleven years old, a silken-toned prodigy indeed. Keep an eye out for the name Peter Moore, because you're bound to hear more about him.

An adrenaline-laced rendition of *Malagueña* scorched the stage. Normally this piece is pretty hot to the touch anyhow, but this version by John Parkinson went far beyond the normal fervor of the melody and sent the brass straight into the stratosphere. Wingates closed their thoroughly captivating production with Randy Edelman's *Reunion and Finale* from the film "Gettysburg." Dripping with pathos, the humble eulogy literally brought misty eyes to many, with the standing band moving to the

front of the stage with two rudimental drummers pounding out the final burst of raw emotion, wringing every last drop of emotion out of the piece and leaving the audience equally wrung dry by what had come before.

Prairie Dawgs buskers of Prairie Brass Band played the ragtime *Buster Strikes Back*, a charming little ditty that helped the audience refresh its collective palette before the next band.

Motor City Brass Band, directed by Craig Strain, opened their production with John Gibson's *Pegasus*, a brief, energetic fanfare of furious zeal. The fireball of energy slammed the heads of the audience back as if risking whiplash. *Diogenes*, by Jacob de Haan, continued in the vein of high energy with a bubbly and impetuous introduction that segued into a ballad of reflective sorrow, recapping with the main theme that so accurately captures the devil-may-care manner of the Greek cynic philosopher for which it is named.

Hoagy Carmichael's *Georgia On My Mind* featured a yearning trombone solo, the nostalgic treatment saturating the melody with love. It was one of those pieces that wraps itself around the soul like a warm puppy. Morton Gould's *American Salute*, based on "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," created a unique effect whereas the low brass sounded just like the low rumbling reeds of the original. The series of fast runs risked sending the body of the piece into the laps of the audience.

The band ended with a jazzy swing tune tribute to their hometown, *Hello Detroit*, by Berry Gordy, Jr.

The buskers named Weaverettes/Matchstalk Men from Wingates Band then accompanied a vocal soloist singing *Bless This House*.

From the Eastern Iowa Brass Band, seven trombones, (many doubling on trombone apart from their normal instruments), plus tuba, piano and drum rhythm accompaniment performed *Go Tell It On the Mountain* for their buskers offering.

Milwaukee Festival Brass, directed by Patricia D. Backhaus, kicked off its set with *There's No Business Like Show Business* of Irving Berlin from behind a series of large wedges of cheese. Reinhold Gliere's *Russian Sailors' Dance* commenced with a weighty low brass introduction,

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slowly evolving through different variations until the sudden fast variation kicked into overdrive, leading into a series of contrasting variations that kept changing direction.

An arrangement of *Little Red Bird*, a Manx tone poem (from the Isle of Man) provided for a baritone solo to take carry the nostalgic tune. Paul Lincke's *Berliner Luft* created a calliope-like effect, a piece one might expect to hear during the Barnum & Bailey's Circus Parade that is held in Milwaukee every summer.

Bucky Badger, named after the University of Wisconsin's mascot, ended the band's set. Arranged by a band member that couldn't be at the festival due to a funeral, the piece prominently featured a crash cymbals player who knew way too many techniques for spinning cymbals in all sorts of ways that defy the principles of normal physics.

Mercury Brass, a buskers group from Wingates Band, delivered a humorous rendition of Queen's *I Want to Break Free*, with a "you-had-to-hear-it-to-believe-it" vocal solo and an equally "you-had-to-see-it-to-believe-it" dance in drag.

Brass Band of Central Florida, under the direction of Michael J. Garasi, started with a rousing and out of the ordinary rendition of the *Star Spangled Banner*, transcribed from an arrangement by John Williams, reinventing the piece everyone only thought they knew. Leonard Bernstein's lively *Candide Overture* followed, the long string musical arcs from the original perfectly translating to the brass idiom, sandwiched between vigorous explosions of multi-metered bombast.

Leoncavallo's *On With the Motley* from "Pagliacci" was performed as a solo cornet feature with band accompaniment. This was a most emotional few minutes of dramatic poignancy. In contrast, the Melvin H. Ribble march, *Bennet's Triumphal*, was most jubilant and robust. Even emcee Frank Renton couldn't find anything in his research about Ribble, so unknown was the composer.

Eric Whitacre's hauntingly atmospheric *Lux Aurumque* ("Light of Gold") was performed in the dark, adding an element of spirituality to the already mystical work. Lighting the auditorium once again was *Malaga* by Bill Holman, arranged from the Kenton Band jazz

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Fountain City Brass Band celebrating their first place finish at the U.S. Open.

classic that lit the world of jazz afire with its sheer blistering take on Latin jazz. In the hands of this band, the Holman treatment sounded as if it should have been written for brass band first and then arranged for jazz band. With a brassy edge that was anything but polite (in the kindest sense possible), this version of the piece will leave an imprint on the minds of many contest attendees.

After all the bands had performed, the award for Best Cornet Player of the Day award was presented to Raquel Rodriguez of Fountain City Brass Band for her stunning performance of Arban's *Carnival of Venice*. She went home with a custom-built Besson BE2028 Prestige Cornet, courtesy of Buffet Crampon USA, Inc.

At the banquet afterwards, each of the judges spoke briefly to the audience, which included all members of each of the performing bands. Joe Allison was a first-time judge. He offered, "I'm just so thankful and pleased to see the camaraderie everyone has for one another. I appreciate seeing you share your appreciation for the glory of all." John Bell stated, "From last year to this year, there was some serious practicing going on, without a doubt. It's a wonderful opportunity to hear such fantastic musicianship. Thank you all for adding something positive to the world." John Phillips concluded with, "I do think that participation in an activity like this nourishes our minds, bodies and spirits. That certainly came out in the performances today. You are musicians who have stayed engaged in music and I hope you all appreciate that."

Casey Thomas is the new director for Eastern Iowa Brass Band. He stated, "It was pleasantly surprising. New to the field, I had no expectations, so I didn't really know what we were going up against. I like the fact that it's a competition, but it's not a cutthroat exhibition of talent. It's an opportunity for a wide variety of bands to come together and put their best foot forward to show what they're all about. It's not a cookie cutter competition. There's an entertainment aspect, but there's still an element of independence in how one can approach their program, and that's very much appreciated by every band."

Performance plaques were then presented to all participating bands. Contest and banquet emcee Frank Renton presented the Buskers Award to the Prairie Dawgs of Prairie Brass Band.

Eric Ball's Point of View...

“

. . . and on Earth, Peace, Goodwill Toward Men. . .

Is this a vain dream? Can it ever be transformed into reality? Misunderstanding, prejudice, violence, and other fearsome giants stalk the world, their baneful influence darkening the starlit sky, as if by a choking fog. Yet the star still shines; men and women still follow it; and good deeds shine in a naughty world. Some, wiser than most, seemingly helpless in the face of a chronic world sickness, yet work for peace in their own lives. They seek also the grace of humility, that nothing false in their own lives may be allowed to stand in the way of harmony. Perhaps, for example, there is a rift in your band that could be healed by *your* courtesy and self-effacement, however 'right' you feel you are. It's not beyond the bounds of possibility that the positive peace achieved in your bandroom could spread far beyond into the whole brass band movement, and out into the world."

—Reprinted from *"Eric Ball: His Words and His Wisdom"* compiled by Peter Cooke. 1992, Egon Publishers. Used with permission.



Prairie Brass Band, host of the U. S. Open Championships.

The Championship Trophy and \$1,000, sponsored by Buffet Crampon, (makers of Besson and Courtois brass instruments), was won by Fountain City Brass Band with 361 points. The band won all captions from all three judges and also captured the Most Entertaining Band Trophy and \$500, (sponsored by Sam Ash Music).

Lee Harrelson, the artistic director of the Fountain City Brass Band, had this to say about the festival: "The camaraderie of the bands sets this apart from the other contests we've been to. The banquet is a warm atmosphere and the bands seem supportive of each other. Everyone works to make it successful. This is our fourth time here. We've won Best Soloist every year we've been here and we've won the Most Entertaining Band Trophy for three years now. Finally winning the contest is a much better feeling. I saw Central Florida and Wingates and I was glad I didn't have to judge it. I saw the Eastern Iowa Brass Band and couldn't believe the progress they made. (Eastern Iowa finished in fourth.) I'm really happy for the band members. Many have been in the band since it was founded in 2002 and it's wonderful to win the U.S. Open. This is one of the two major brass band competitions in America and we've now won both of them, but this is the only one that is the entertainment format, as the other is a test piece competition."

The Second Place Award and \$250, (sponsored by Sonare Winds York), went to the Brass Band of Central Florida with 354 points. The band also won the Most Outstanding Percussion Section Award and \$250. The Best Performance of a March Award and \$250, (sponsored by Yamaha), went to Wingates Band, who ended up in third with 352 points.

The Best Featured Soloist Award and \$250, (sponsored by Smith-Watkins), went to Raquel Rodriquez of Fountain City Brass Band for her performance of Arban's *Carnival of Venice*. The Best New Arrangement or Composition for Brass Band Award and \$250, (sponsored by DANSR), was earned by Lucy Pankhurst of Wingates Band for *Wicked*.

The U.S. Brass Band Championship is always held the second weekend of November. Next year's event will be held on November 8, 2008.

For more information on previous year's U.S. Brass Band Championship events and future

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Michael Boo writes extensively for Drum Corps International, creating text for program books, CD and DVD liner notes and content on www.DCI.org. He also writes for BOA (Bands of America) and WGI (Winter Guard International). His many contributions to such activities have resulted in him being dubbed "The Pen of Pageantry." Information about his concert band and percussion compositions can be found at www.michaelboo.com and he can be reached at boomike@aol.com. ★

WINGATES BAND PROUD TO REPRESENT U.K. AT U.S. OPEN

By Michael Boo

One of the special things about the U.S. Open Brass Band Championships is how it attracts bands from a great geographic diversity. Not only do bands attend from the Midwest region of the nation, the Champion band in the past three years, Brass Band of Central Florida, travels to the Chicago area each year from a thousand miles away.

As much as the members from Florida might think their travel distance to Chicago is extreme,

the Wingates Band earns the most frequent flyer miles for this year's U.S. Open, traveling all the way from Bolton in the United Kingdom. This is the fourth time in five years that a band from the UK has made the trek over the big pond to participate in this event.

The cost of attending the contest would present a challenge to any organization. According to Wingates Band Chairman Barry Bentley, the members had to raise £20,000 (about \$40,000) to make the trip. That required quite an investment in time and effort to appeal to the band's many supporters, who gladly gave donations so their favorite ensemble could show off Bolton's best to American audiences. The rest of the funds were raised through concert performances, including a well-publicized "Stars and Stripes" concert of American music.

Bentley says the band was originally going to attend the Scottish Open in November, but the invitation to come to America was too tempting to resist.

David Kaye, President of Wingates Band, says that individuals contributed up to \$500 so the band could make this trip. However, all donations were greatly appreciated by the band, as the cumulative contributions, big and small, eventually made the trip possible. The independent community band also received grants from charities due to being a self-financing organization that doesn't benefit from having a major sponsorship.

The U.S. Open chose to ask the band to come to America due to its ranking position and the fact that Wingates has won the French Open Championships twice in the past three years. The band has enjoyed a busy year recording, adding to its prestige by finishing six albums over the past several months. Famed film composer Michael Nyman, having the option of working with any brass band in the UK, added to the band's fame by choosing Wingates to make a recording of a compilation of several of his film pieces. This led to a lot of additional publicity, which further attracted the selection committee of the U.S. Open.

According to Kaye, when the U.S. Open asked the band to come over to Chicagoland, the band instantly agreed to do so and decided to worry about the money issues later.

The members were so thrilled by the possibility



Wingates Band from Bolton, United Kingdom, at the U.S. Open Championships.
Andrew Berryman, conductor



Wingates Band Conductor Andrew Berryman (in drag) leads the Wingates Buskers.

of coming to America that only one of the 28 members was unable to make the trip due to job issues. An additional 11 people came with the band to offer their support.

Bentley states that at least three-quarters of the band's members have not been to America before this trip, and all are interested in hearing the American bands perform, adding that the prestige of being here will be fantastic for Wingates. While the band is known within the British band movement for its travels in the past, it's currently a relatively young band and is working on building up its prestige again. He says the current level of performance makes the band a force to be reckoned with once more, being akin to the professional performance level of an American National Football League team.

There are thousands of brass bands in the UK. Seven bands reside within five miles of the small village where Bentley lives. Therefore, being associated with a band of such quality is quite an honor.

What's the big difference between coming to an event like the U.S. Open and the big contests in the UK? Kaye explains that the British Open, arguably the world's oldest music competition at 154 years of age, is an event where every band plays the same test piece as their only repertoire. In eight hours, that's all one will hear. Both the historic brass band championships in the UK are set test piece contests.

While the UK also has "entertainment contests" like the U.S. Open, it's the set test piece contests that establish the prestigious rankings by which the highly competitive bands live and die. Bentley compares these events as "like owning a diagnostic machine. The people who judge find all the faults in the piece."

That's one reason the members committed so strongly to coming to the U.S. Open. Though being ranking in the top 25 brass bands in the entire world, this trip offers the band a chance to spread its artistic wings, see a new part of the world, and make many converts in the New World for one of music's oldest and most cherished activities. ☼



U.S. Open Best Soloist Raquel Rodriquez of Fountain City Brass Band, playing "Carnival of Venice."

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NATURAL STATE BRASS BAND, RUSSELL MORRIS, CONDUCTOR

December 9, 2007. Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas. *A Christmas Intrada* (David Roswell), *The Star Spangled Banner* (F.S. Key, arr. William Himes), *Sleigh Ride* (Leroy Anderson, arr. Ernest Tomlinson), *The Christmas Song* (Torme & Wells, arr. Philip Sparke), *Gaudete* (Kevin Norbury), *Greensleeves* (Stuart Pullin-Robert Herring, Tenor Horn solo), *Three Kings Swing* (William Himes-Wes Hall, cornet solo), *In the Bleak Mid-Winter* (Gustav Holst, arr. Derek Broadbent - David Laubach, cornet solo), *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town* (Fred Coots, arr. Mark Freeh - Courtney Swindler, cornet solo), *Silent Night, Holy Night* (arr. Gordon Langford), *Frosty the Snowman* (Nelson & Rollins, arr. Sandy Smith - Paul Taylor, bass trombone solo), *Santa Claus-Trophobia* (Sandy Smith), *Troika* (Serge Prokofieff, arr. Ray Farr), *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* (Monty Beaumont).

PRINCETON BRASS BAND, STEPHEN ARTHUR ALLEN, CONDUCTOR

November 21, 2004, Princeton Church of Christ, Princeton, New Jersey, (First public performance). *Amazing Grace* (Arr. Himes); *The Champions* (Willcox); *Festival Overture* (Shostakovich, Arr. Antrobus); *Meditation Just As I Am* (Heaton); *Napoli* (Bellstedt, Arr. Owenson - Euphonium Soloist Stephen Arthur Allen); *Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Chelsea Bridge* (Strayhorn, Arr. Drover); *Challenging Brass* (Vinter); *Serenade* (Bourgeois); *Resurgam* (Ball).

April 3, 2005, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Amazing Grace* (Arr. Himes); *The Champions* (Willcox); *The Corsair* (Berlioz, Arr. Brand); *Meditation Just as I am* (Heaton); *Napoli* (Bellstedt, Arr. Owenson - Euphonium Soloist Stephen Arthur Allen); *Moorside Suite* (Holst); *Chelsea Bridge* (Strayhorn, Arr.

Drover); *Challenging Brass* (Vinter); *Serenade* (Bourgeois); *Resurgam* (Ball).

May 1, 2005, Princeton Church of Christ, Princeton, New Jersey, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss, Arr. Pearce); *Brilliant* (Hume); *Deep Harmony* (Parker); *Stanshaue* (Bourgeois - US/World Premiere); *Concorde* (Newsome - Cornet Soloist Dr. Gary Fienberg); *Purcell Variants* (Meechan - US Premiere); *Daloro* (Gregson); *Tuba Concerto* (Vaughan Williams - Tuba Soloist Ronald Pokryska); *I Will Follow Him* (Stole, Roma, Plante); *Rhapsody for Euphonium*, (Curnow - Soloist Clearnce Weber); *Thingumybob* (Lennon-McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Connotations* (Gregson); *Riverdance* (Whelan, Arr. Farr); *Heroes* (Stephen Arthur Allen) World Premiere.

November 20, 2005, Yvonne Theatre, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Eventide* (Monk); *Prelude for an Occasion* (Gregson); *Earle of Oxford's March*, Movement I of Music from the Elizabethan Court (Byrd Arr. Howarth); *Tuba Concerto* (Gregson - soloist William Nazzaro); *Thingumybob!* (Lennon-McCartney); *Tippett's Adagio* (Tippett, Arr. Allen); *Rejoice, the Lord is King* (Gordon); *Fantasy for Brass Band* (Arnold); *Jubilee Overture* (Sparke), *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *Concertino for Baritone Horn* (Thorne -- soloist Louis DeVizia); *Gaelforce* (Graham), *Cortege, Lento Espressivo* (Howells); *Variations on 'Laudate Dominum'* (Gregson).

March 26, 2006, Yvonne Theatre, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Spectrum* (Vinter); *Variations for Brass Band* (Vaughn Williams); *Amazing Grace* (Arr. Himes); *The Champions* (Willcox); *Concorde* (Newsome - Soloist Dr. Gary Fienberg); *Chelsea Bridge* (Strayhorn, Arr. Drover); *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral* (Wagner, Arr. Himes); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

June 25, 2006, Princeton Church of Christ, Princeton, New Jersey, *Maryton* (Smith); *Daloro* (Gregson); *Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Crown Imperial* (Walton, Arr. Wright); *Appalachian Mountain Folk Song Suite* (Curnow); *Mood Indigo* (Ellington, Arr. Siebert); *Batman the Movie* (Elfman, Arr. Catherall); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *Colonel Bogey* (Alford); *Folk Festival* (Shostakovich, Arr. Snell); *Pineapple Poll* (Sullivan, Arr. Mackerras); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

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November 4, 2006, Princeton University Chapel, Princeton, New Jersey, *Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams); *Viva Birkenshaw* (Rimmer); *Meditation* (Hemmel -- World Premiere); *Episodes: Lyra Davidica*, (Green -- World Premiere); *Carnival of Venice* (Clarke, Arr. Kerwin -- cornet soloist Dr. Randy Tinnin); *Trumpeter's Lullaby* (Anderson - cornet soloist Dr. Randy Tinnin); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Little Suite for Band* (Arnold); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *Cornet Roundabout* (Eaves -- cornets Dr. Gary Fienberg, Michael Green, and Phillip DeFranco); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson -- Euphoniums Clearnce Webber, Russell Perkins Branch, and Brian Taylor); *I will follow Him* (Plante, Pourcel, Mauriat, & Gimble -- trombones Sue Moxley, Peter Reichlin, and Michael Darriba); *In Memoriam R. K.* (Howarth), *Mood Indigo* (Ellington, Arr. Siebert); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

November 19, 2006, Yvonne Theatre, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams); *Viva Birkenshaw* (Rimmer); *Meditation* (Hemmel -- World Premiere); *Episodes: Lyra Davidica*, (Green); *Trumpeter's Lullaby* (Anderson - soloist Dr. Gary

Fienberg); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Little Suite for Band* (Arnold); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *Cornet Roundabout* (Eaves - cornets Dr. Gary Fienberg, Michael Green, and Phillip DeFranco); *I will follow Him* (Plante, Pourcel, Mauriat, & Gimble - trombones Sue Moxley, Peter Reichlin, and David Robbins); *In Memoriam R. K.* (Howarth), *Mood Indigo* (Ellington, Arr. Siebert); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

December 9, 2006, Canal Walk Ballroom, Somerset, New Jersey, *Henry the Fifth* (Vaughan Williams); *Viva Birkenshaw* (Rimmer); *The Day Thou Gavest* (Arr. Wilby); *Episodes: Lyra Davidica*, (Green); *Trumpeter's Lullaby* (Anderson - cornet soloist Dr. Gary Fienberg); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Little Suite for Band* (Arnold); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *Cornet Roundabout* (Eaves - cornets Dr. Gary Fienberg, Michael Green, and Phillip DeFranco); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson - Euphoniums Clearnce Webber, Russell Perkins Branch, and Brian Taylor); *I will follow Him* (Plante, Pourcel, Mauriat, & Gimble - trombones Sue Moxley, Peter Reichlin, and David Robbins); *In Memoriam R. K.* (Howarth), *Mood Indigo* (El-

lington, Arr. Siebert); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

December 12, 2006, Yvonne Theatre, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Viva Birkenshaw* (Rimmer); *Pineapple Poll* (Sullivan, Arr. Mackerras/Brand); *Trumpeter's Lullaby* (Anderson - cornet soloist Dr. Gary Fienberg); *Folk Festival* (Shostakovitch, Arr. Snell); *White Christmas* (Berlin, Arr. Sparke); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *Pulchinello* (Rimmer); *The Christmas Song* (Torme & Wells, Arr. Sparke); *Bugler's Holiday* (Anderson - Euphoniums Clearnce Webber, Russell Perkins Branch, and Brian Taylor); *Greensleeves* (Arr. Langford); *Frosty the Snowman* (Nelson & Rollins, Arr. Smith - bass trombonist Mike Darriba); *Christmas Festival* (Anderson, Arr. Duncan); *Theme from "The Snowman"* -- *Walking in the Air* (Blake, Arr. Sparke); *Sleigh Ride* (Anderson, Arr. Tomlinson).

March 22, 2007, Yvonne Theatre, Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, *Praise* (Heaton); *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (Newton); *Carnival of Venice* (Arban, Arr. Muscroft - cornet soloist Amy Nelson); *I'd Rather Have Jesus* (Himes - cornet soloist Amy Nelson); *Little Suite for Band* (Arnold); *March Le Tricot Rouge* (Heaton); *Land of the Long White Cloud* (Sparke); *Fancy's Knell* (Vinter - Quartet: Gary Fienberg and Brian Fleming, cornets; Kevin Perdoni, horn, and Steve Allen, euphonium); *Greensleeves* (Arr. Langford); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).

April 22, 2007, Yardley Community Center, Yardley, PA, *Praise* (Heaton); *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (Newton); *Mood Indigo* (Ellington); *Carnival of Venice* (Arban, Arr. Muscroft - cornet soloist Amy Nelson); *I'd Rather Have Jesus* (Himes - cornet soloist Amy Nelson); *The Day Thou Gavest* (Scholefield, Arr. Wilby); *Little Suite for Band* (Arnold); *March Le Tricot Rouge* (Heaton); *Land of the Long White Cloud* (Sparke); *I Will Follow Him* (Plante, Pourcel, Mauriat, & Gimble); *Greensleeves* (Arr. Langford); *Thingumybob* (Lennon- McCartney, Arr. Wardle); *Epic Themes* (Williams); *McArthur Park* (Webb, Arr. Fernie).



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**NEW ENGLAND BRASS BAND,
DOUGLAS YEO, MUSIC DIRECTOR**

December 9, 2007, First Congregational Church, Wilmington, Massachusetts; December 16, 2007, South Congregational Church, Kennebunkport, Maine; December 22, 2007, Free Christian Church, Andover, Massachusetts. *The Wonder of Christmas* (Peter Graham); *A Carol Medley* (Stephen Bulla); *Away in a Manger* (Peter Graham - Spencer Aston, flugelhorn solo); *A Christmas Suite* (Stephen Bulla); *Dormi, Jesu* (G. Keith Rogers, arr. Douglas Yeo); *Yule Dance* (Philip Harper); *Do They Know It's Christmas?* (Geldorf and Ure, arr. Alan Fernie); *A Christmas Festival* (Leroy Anderson, arr. James Wood); *Silent Night* (Erik Leidzén); *The Herald Angels* (Erik Leidzén); *Frosty The Snowman* (Nelson and Rollins, arr. Sandy Smith - Douglas Yeo, bass trombone solo); *Adeste Fideles* (Erik Leidzén); *Christmas Calypso* (Peter Graham); *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* (arr. William Himes).

**LEXINGTON BRASS BAND, RON-
ALD W. HOLZ, MUSIC DIRECTOR**

November 4, 2007, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky. **SILVER SCREEN BRASS:** *Twentieth Century Fox Fanfare* (Alfred Newman, arr. Louis G. Bourgois III); *Suite from Ben Hur* (Miklos Rosza, arr. John Mortimer); *Gabriel's Oboe from The Mission* (Ennio Morricone, arr. Roland Kernen - John Higgins, cornet solo); *Epic Themes of John Williams* (John Williams, arr. Steve Sykes); *Over the Rainbow* (Arlen - Susan Henthorn, alto horn solo); *Warner Brothers Fanfare* (Max Steiner, arr. Louis G. Bourgois III); *Music from The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Wrich Wolfgang Korngold, arr. Louis Bourgois); *Reunion and Finale from Gettysburg* (Randy Edelman, arr. Andrew Duncan); *Colonel Bogey March* (Kenneth J. Alford); *The Gael* from *The Last of the Mohicans* (Trevor Jones, arr. Andrew Duncan - Kevin Raybuck, guest organist).

**ATLANTIC BRASS BAND, SALVA-
TORE SCARPA, CONDUCTOR**

October 7 & 13, 2007, Cape May Convention Hall, Cape May, New Jersey; October 14, 2007, Rowan University. *Festive Overture* (Dmitri Shostakovich, arr. Peter Kitson); *Simoraine* (Clive Barraclough); *Intermezzo* (Pietro Mascagni, arr. Gordon Langford); *The Old Rustic Bridge* (Erik Leidzén - Arthur Henry, tenor horn solo); *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* (Franz Liszt, arr. Robert Redhead); *Congress Hall March* (John Philip Sousa, arr. Jack Deal); *Nocturne* (Alexander Borodin, arr. Gordon Langford); *Kitten on the Keys* (Zez Confey, arr. Salvatore Scarpa - Dana Suchecki & Paul Gibson, keyboard solo); *Serenade* (Derek Bourgois); *The Day Thou Gavest* (C.C. Scholefield, arr. Philip Wilbey); *Finale from Daphnis and Chloe* (Maurice Ravel, arr. Howard Snell).

**HANNAFORD STREET SILVER
BAND**

October 14, 2007, Jane Mallett Theatre. Elgar Howarth, Guest conductor. *The Liberty Bell* (J. P. Sousa); *The Three Aces* (H. L. Clarke - Richard Sandals, Robert Venables and Anita McAlister, cornet soloists); *Good Medicine: A Charlie Russell Suite* (H. Cable); *Spectrum* (G. Vinter); *Parade* (E. Howarth); *The Legend of Sangeet* (P. Harper - Prosad, sitar solo); *Boddington Variations* (E. Howarth).

November 11, 2007, Jane Mallett Theatre. Curtis Metcalf, Resident Conductor, Tom Allen, Host & Story Teller. *Voice of the Guns* (Kenneth Alford); *Firestorm* (Stephen Bulla); *Battle Galliard* (Samuel Schiedt); *Gi-Giwe Na?* (Barbara Croall); *The Appian Way* from *The Pines of Rome* (Ottorino Respighi); *Colonel Bogey* (Kenneth Alford - Jerome S. Augusting, guest conductor); *The Battle of Britain Suite* (William Walton); *1812 Overture* (Tchaikovsky - with Hannaford Street Youth Band, Darryl Eaton, Director). ☘

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COMPACT DISC

REVIEWS

Ronald W. Holz, Editor.

Reviews in this issue are by Ronald W. Holz (RH) and Douglas Yeo (DY)

Many if not all of these recordings reviewed may be accessed from www.worldofbrass.com, who provided many of the review copies. Reviews presented in alphabetical order by title.

American Anthology. Enfield Citadel Band (Andrew Blyth). SP&S SPS229 CD. TT: 70:20. Program: *Praise Him!* (Stephen Bulla); *The New-Born Babe* (Bruce Broughton); *Faith Is The Victory* (James Curnow); *Journey Into Peace* (William Himes), Andrew Justice, trombone soloist; *Images for Brass* (Stephen Bulla); *Guardian Of Our Way* (James Curnow); *New York 90* (Stephen Bulla); *Cause for Celebration* (William Himes); *The Higher Plane* (Stephen Bulla), Tim Buckle, soprano cornet soloist; *Covenant* (Bruce Broughton); *I'd Rather Have Jesus* (William Himes), Maurice Patterson, cornet soloist; *The Firing Line* (Bruce Broughton); *A Psalm of Praise – Psalm 100* (James Curnow); *Motivation* (William Himes).

Enfield Citadel Band has one of the most distinguished histories among Salvation Army bands and their rich discography is a testimony to their high level of music making. That James Williams, the band's recently retired bandmaster, served the band for over 50 years as a member of the cornet section, deputy bandmaster and bandmaster, gave the band an unusually consistent sound. In 2005, Andrew Blyth succeeded Williams as bandmaster and is himself bringing his own view of music making to the band. As the title implies, this new disc pays tribute to four American composers who both have strong ties to the Salvation Army and to brass banding. The music of Bruce Broughton, Stephen Bulla, James Curnow and Williams Himes appears on programs for every brass band in the world; their influence has been undeniable and some of their works, such as Himes' arrangement of *Amazing Grace* (not included in this collection), Bulla's *Images for Brass* and Curnow's *A Psalm of Praise* deservedly

can be called classics in the brass band musical Pantheon. Putting together an album of American music is a tricky thing – especially if it wishes to stay away from the “patriotic” genre – but Enfield has come up with a fine selection of music that represents the composers and their individual styles very well.

The anthology includes major and less substantial works from each of the four featured composers. William Himes' euphonium solo, *Journey Into Peace*, is superbly adopted for trombone solo by Andrew Justice (who also serves as principal trombonist of the International Staff Band). Justice's playing is an excellent model of top notch trombone playing with just the right touch of vibrato and a fine sense of the musical line, especially evident in the unaccompanied opening section. Broughton's *The New Born Babe* is an fine example of the chorale prelude form adopted for our modern times. In this, the band is at its best, exhibiting a beautiful, warm sound. *Covenant*, also by Broughton, was a pleasant revelation, previously unknown to me, and a piece that has so many unexpected turns and creative delights that it should certainly find its way onto more concert programs. James Curnow's *A Psalm of Praise* is an excellent development on the well known “Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven,” enhanced with fine solo playing by cornet and euphonium. Stephen Bulla's soprano cornet solo, *The Higher Plane*, is well presented by soloist Tim Buckle who fearlessly tackles the challenging leaps and offers the sensitivity needed for the more expressive passages. There can never be enough recordings of Bulla's *Images For Brass* for it is such a strong piece that bears hearing in a wide variety of interpretations. *Images*, however, brings out a theme that pervades this disc: when the band reaches to forte and louder, the sound turns rather brash. Led by the very strong trombone section, the cornets seem as if they do not want to be left out of the “burnished” cylindrical sound and push their instruments to the point that they sound more like trumpets. Brian Hillson's mix favors the trombones throughout the album but the hardness of the band's sound in the louder dynamics is a departure from other Enfield recordings I have heard. Perhaps the band is searching for its sound under its new conductor. Whatever the reason, this made for more than a few moments when I raised an eyebrow, wondering where the gorgeous, blended sound of the band in the softer dynamics went when it began to increase the decibel level.

There is no denying the importance of this album and the music that it presents. Yet just as American brass bands often hear the criticism from those across the pond that they do not exactly capture the “proper British band sound,” it can also be said that British bands sometimes have trouble interpreting American music. While it's difficult to define but easy to hear, there IS an “American style” to this music, not only in the way the pieces develop and play out, but in the unique ways each composer scores for the band. Perhaps the brashness in the band's sound was a result of a bit of overreaching to imitate an “American sound.” Finally, it is not mere quibbling to point out that the omission of several critical percussion instruments in Bulla's *Images For Brass* – there are no chimes, bell tree, shaker, tam-tam or slapstick heard – greatly diminishes the impact of the performance. Bulla's scoring is masterful, and to replace an important strike of a chime in the “Chorale Prayer” section with a tinny glockenspiel or to leave out the opening chime strike on the first beat of the piece, or substitute the gong strokes near the end with a suspended cymbal are things that simply should not be done, even if the band carries only two full time percussion players. On a recording, even more than at a concert, all of the percussion parts simply must be covered. In sum, the album is an important document of some fine original compositions and arrangements by four of America's finest brass band composers. Ron Holz's program notes are exemplary and the 16 page accompanying sleeve insert is uncluttered and informative. (DY)

Ceaseless Service. New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army (Ronald Waiksnoris). Triumphonic TRCD 1087. TT: 73:46. Program: *Heralds of Victory* (Richard E. Holz), Gordon Ward, Christopher Ward, Jeffrey Barrington, Derek Lance, cornet soloists; *Ceaseless Service* (Stanley Ditmer); Selections from *Call of the Cossacks* (Peter Graham); *Crossroad* (Stephen Bulla), Gordon Ward, cornet solo; *My Comfort and Strength* (Brian Bowen); *Lamb of God* (Terry Camsey); Band Chorus: *By His Hand* (Thomas Mack); *I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked* (Peter Graham), Burt Mason, trombone soloist; *Lover of My Soul* (Dorothy Gates), Douglas Berry, soprano cornet soloist; *Star Lake 70* (Stephen Bulla); *Bravura* (Peter Graham), Aaron VanderWeele, euphonium soloist; *'Tis So Sweet* (Harold Brugmayer); *Variations*



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on *'Maccabeus'* (Kevin Norbury). Available from nysb.org, \$15.00.

In 2007, the Salvation Army's New York Staff Band celebrated its 120th anniversary, an event that was marked with no fewer than three important releases: this CD, **Ceaseless Service**, a DVD of the band's 120th Anniversary Concert (reviewed later in this issue of *The Brass Band Bridge*) and a reissue of Ronald W. Holz's book, **Heralds of Victory**, first issued in 1987 to celebrate the band's 100th anniversary and now substantially revised, reformatted and retitled, **The Proclaimers** (also reviewed in this issue). And why not celebrate in such a big way? The NYSB has been a tremendous influence on Salvation Army music and music making for so long that it is easy to take for granted the significant contributions of the many bandmasters, arrangers and players who have brought so much to its missional work.

Former Bandmaster Richard E. Holz's opening track, the solo cornet section feature *Heralds of Victory*, is a throwback to a well-worn Salvation Army style with tight harmonies and a bit of cakewalk thrown in for good measure. It's a

retro-romp, nicely played and fitting way to get this anniversary disc started.

One of the highlights of the disc might seem one of the most unlikely: Harold Burgmayer's *'Tis So Sweet*, arranged for the SA's American Band Journal series. Here the band is at its expressive best, demonstrating that a piece need not be complex to be persuasive and moving. The concluding track, Kevin Norbury's *Variations on 'Maccabeus'* is, to my mind, one of his finest compositions. The theme, variations and finale on Handel's, "Hail, the conquering hero comes," is clever without ever falling to parlor tricks. His subtle tributes to Beethoven, Verdi, Elgar and Rachmanioff add touches of color to Norbury's considerable craft and the second variation is crushing in its beauty and intensity. The band knows this music well and if moments seem a bit over-played (who can blame them – it is music that carries away both listener and player), the overall effect is excellent. One cannot fail to mention the blistering tempo of the final variation which is handled with great dexterity.

Peter Graham has written a great deal of fine

music for brass band but his *Call of the Cossacks* has never seemed, to these ears, to be one of them. Its inclusion on this album (three movements) is a bit of a curiosity, one of two non-sacred tracks (both by Graham), although from the notes, it figured prominently in the band's 120th anniversary season concerts and can also be heard on the DVD of its anniversary concert. It is difficult to make this kind of music sound convincing after the models of Rimsky Korsakov and others who defined the genre. The finale, "Cossack Fire Dance" puts many of the band's soloists through paces with snatches of other famous Tartar style pieces (alas, not the strongest playing on the album) but the effect is just silly and the piece doesn't seem to be able to make up its mind if it is a polka on steroids or a klezmer dance. One thing is for sure: it doesn't make these ears think of the Cossacks of old and the band's final vocal exclamation – "Oy!" – accentuates the stylistic schizophrenia of the whole suite. On the other hand, Stephen Bulla's cornet solo *Crossroad* is a masterful example of the genre that integrates soloist and accompaniment so well that one is hardly aware that this is a "solo." Gordon Ward plays with palpable sensitivity and the band handles its assignment with great skill. Burt Mason's playing on *I Walked Where Jesus Walks* is nothing short of beautiful and soprano cornetist Douglas Berry has a silken tone and plays with the confident nerves of a fighter pilot in Dorothy Gates' *Lover of My Soul*. International Euphonium Soloist of the Year Aaron VanderWeele makes the extreme technical and range demands of Peter Graham's *Bravua* seem like Child's play (pun intended) but his fine playing cannot keep this tribute to great euphonium soloists of our time (with countless snippets of well known pieces tossed in throughout) from sinking a bit under its own weight.

The album's booklet is creatively arranged to unfold to reveal an impressive collage of photos that show the band in concert, on tour and with well known celebrities (Elton John, Billy Graham, Rudolph Giuliani) throughout its distinguished history – although captions would have helped the non-Salvationist more fully appreciate the historical importance of the photos. Finally, Ronald W. Holz has written program notes for so many recordings that it only when considering the research that goes into his words that one realizes that the breadth of his knowledge is nothing short of mind-boggling. And his writing isn't too shabby, either! Congratulations to the New York Staff Band

for its important work spanning two centuries. With this plethora of offerings for a 120th anniversary, one can only wonder – although I cannot imagine! – what they will do when they reach 125 or 150 years. (DY)

Celebration. Robert Childs, Euphonium Soloist, with Brass Band du Conservatoire d'esch-sur-Alzette and +l'Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg (Fred Harles). Doyen CD 183. TT 76:10. Program: *Concerto for Euphonium and Brass Band: Eulogy* (Downie); *Euphonium Concerto* (Horovitz); *Concertino* (Newton); *Euphonium Concerto*, Op. 64 (Golland); + *Concerto for Euphonium* (Wilby).

In recent years the brass community has gotten so used to Robert Childs' outstanding achievements as a conductor we may have forgotten that he is still an outstanding performer of the euphonium. Well, he is back with great aplomb in this excellent recording of five major, concerto scale British works for solo euphonium, all initially written for brass band accompaniment. In this program, the first four are accompanied by a Luxembourg brass band, and the fifth, by Wilby, accompanied by symphony orchestra, here in terrific live performance. The Downie, Newton, and Wilby concerti were written for Childs, Childs premiered the Golland, and he was an early advocate of the Horovitz as well. The celebration referred to in the title marks Robert's 50th year and conductor Fred Harles' 60th year. Doyen lovingly produced this disc, providing fine notes on the music, composers, performers, as well as tributes to Robert Childs by brass notables, including his brother. Nicholas.

Throughout the program Robert Childs' rich, warm sound is heard to great advantage. The concluding, live performance of the Wilby, in the new orchestral version, contains a very exciting movement three, the Greek dance, ending with a great plate breaking and audience reaction! Robert Childs continues to give so much to the British brass band community. This disc pays great tribute to his contributions as a solo performer, and an inspirer of fine new works for his instrument. (RH)

Chris Jaudes & The New York Staff Band.

Chris Jaudes, trumpet, with the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army (Ronald Waiksnois). Eastern Territory Soloist Series. Triumphant TRCD 1085. TT: 60:00. Program

(all tracks apart from *Breezin' Down Broadway* feature Chris Jaudes): *Onward, Christian Soldiers* (arr. Terry Winch and Mark Freeh); *Holy, Holy, Holy* (arr. Stephen Bulla); *Gospel John* (Jeffrey Steinburg, arr. Harold Burgmayer), duet with Joe Alessi, trombone; *A Carmen Fantasy* (Frank Proto); *Be Strong and Take Courage* (Basil Chaisson, arr. Kirkland, Fettke and Brooks, trans. Kevin Norbury); *Breezin' Down Broadway* (Goff Richards); *Green Hornet* (Al Hirt, arr. Dorothy Gates); *Eternal Song* (Joseph Turrin); *Who Can I Turn To?* (Bricusse and Newly, arr. John Daniel); *Let the Beauty of Jesus* (Bill Broughton); *Clear Skies* (Eric Ball); *Bridge Over Troubled Water* (Paul Simon, arr. Keith Mansfield/Dorothy Gates); *Oration* (Howard Snell). Available from nysb.org, \$16.95.

This is the latest in the New York Staff Band's Eastern Territory Soloist Series which also includes the fine release featuring the band's principal euphonium player, Aaron VanderWeele (*Air'N Variations*). During its history, Salvation Army bands have worn many different hats in order to bring the Gospel to diverse audiences. This disc shows the band as far out in the direction of jazz/pop as they have ever gone on a recording. The album's scant notes tell us four things about trumpet soloist Chris Jaudes: he teaches in the jazz studies program at the Juilliard School of Music, he is a member of the Brass Band of Battle Creek, he is heard regularly in the pit for leading Broadway shows and he is a committed Christian (he is a Salvationist, although that is not mentioned in the notes). Two seconds into the album's first track you learn something else: Maynard Ferguson has had a profound influence on Chris Jaudes.

Chris Jaudes is a trumpeter of prodigious abilities, able to cover the full range of the instrument with apparent ease. The "slot" where a player needs to set his embouchure in order to reach the "screech" range seem to be effortlessly located by Jaudes, who plays notes so high and can play them with such force that the listener is, at times, pinned back in his chair in astonishment. The repertoire consists mostly of arrangements of well-known tunes, both sacred (Stephen Bulla's *Holy, Holy, Holy*) and popular (arrangements originally made for Maynard Ferguson such as *Gospel John* and *Bridge Over Troubled Water*). Jaudes is a genre player – his particular strength is the full tilt, zenith, apocalyptic high range playing that thrilled so many generations of brass players when it was so well done by Maynard Ferguson.

son. Chris Jaudes wears that mantle well but I confess that after a few tunes with high register shakes of a perfect fourth (or greater) and high notes played not because the line demands them but because they are part of the soloists' considerable technical toolbox, the effect is a bit numbing. The inclusion of several "down tempo" items including Eric Ball's *Clear Skies* is helpful and the final track, Howard Snell's *Oration* is a welcome, peaceful tonic. Trombonist Joseph Alessi joins Jaudes as co-soloist on two tracks. Alessi is one of our time's finest symphonic trombonists and it must have been a treat for him to cross over from the orchestral style to Jaudes' hard driving jazz funk. Unfortunately, Alessi sounds rather distant in his tracks, a product of what sounds like a weak microphone mix or mike placement and his decision to use his large bore symphonic equipment which is much better suited for his work with the New York Philharmonic than to keep pace with Jaudes' brilliant sound. Uncredited on the album is the trombone soloist (a member of the band? Burt Mason?) on *Bridge Over Troubled Water* who gets in some good jazz licks. Kudos to the New York Staff Band, which provides a good accompaniment to all of the solo items, no mean feat when the horns and baritones are charged with covering parts usually assigned to saxophones in a big band.

The album's production values are a bit thin with minimal program notes and precious little information on the soloist although it's nice to see photos of the recording sessions that allow a bit of a peek behind the scenes. The lack of inclusion of timings for the tracks is mildly irritating and I would have preferred less artificial reverb as it gives the album a thinner sound that it would have had if it had capitalized on a fine natural acoustic. But if you like the sound of a jazz trumpet player going all out and putting the pedal to the metal, these quibbles won't stand in the way of your enjoying this disc. Chris Jaudes and the NYSB have certainly given us one of the most energetic brass band CDs to come along in some time. (DY)

De lux trompette: New Music for Trumpet and Wind Band. Philippe Schartz, Trumpet Soloist, with Military Band Grand Duchy Luxembourg (Andre Reichling). Doyen CD 231. TT 77:01. Program: *L-Fanfare for Trumpet Quartet* (Wiltgen); *Trumpet Concerto* (Pütz); *Concerto for Trumpet and Band* (Ford); *Schmelz*

Trilogy (Wiltgen); *Trumpets on a Trip* (Frisch).

Briefly put, this recording will primarily be of interest to students of new trumpet literature, though there is much to be admired here beyond new compositions, both in terms of the featured soloist and in the accompaniments given by a solid military band. The soloist, Philippe Scharz, was new to me; he plays with authority, and with a convincing, aggressive style. The initial, attractive cut, *L-Fanfare*, calls for four trumpets alone, while the final tune, the more extended, four-movement suite *Trumpets on a Trip*, pits a trumpet quartet with the full wind band. The latter is filled with quotations--both short fragments and longer, pastiche-like passages--from great trumpet literature of the past, making for a 'musical history tour' of sorts, sometimes witty, sometimes clever, sometimes moving. Of the two major trumpet concerti featured, the P_tz is more abrasively modernistic, and the Ford more conservative and predicable--and yet at the same time commendable. Time will tell if they can find a lasting place in the standard repertoire

for trumpet and wind band. The middle work, *Schmelz Trilogy*, is a three-part symphonic tone poem evocative of the collapsing steel industry in Luxembourg. It is a rather dark, brooding work that seems a bit out of place, though by the same composer of the sunnier *L-Fanfare* that opened the disc with such élan. (RH)

Eminence. Richard Marshall, Cornet, Trumpet, and Flugelhorn Soloist with Black Dyke Band (Nicholas Childs). Doyen 59:46. *Concerto for Trumpet* (Arutjunjan); *Bless This House* (Brahe); *People* (Black--Catherall); *Concertpiece* (Curnow); *Concerto for Cornet and Brass Band* (Aagaard-Nilsen); *Jubilance* (Himes); *Blessed Assurance* (Bulla)

Richard Marshall can rightfully stand in an eminent position within the brass band world, and beyond. His achievements as a soloist, first with Grimethorpe, and now Black Dyke are among the finest of this era. He and Black Dyke deliver a stunning program that show-

cases his remarkable lyric gifts and his dramatic power. Having never heard him as a trumpeter, I was pleasantly surprised by his forceful approach to the opening Concerto by Arutjunian. He then supplies gorgeous, liquid lines in a series of tone solos. I was particularly captivated by the band and Marshall on Curnow's *Concertpiece*. Marshall plays in a particularly beautiful way in the middle portion. Having had the privilege of conducting the American premiere of the Aagaard-Nilsen *Concerto* with Roger Webster (at ITG 1998), Marshall's predecessor at Black Dyke, I was delighted to hear Marshall and band tackle in convincing manner this challenging, quirky, and strangely satisfying work--a terrific achievement on this major contemporary work that anchors the whole album. Marshall is secure in all he plays here. I do not think works like Bulla's *Blessed Assurance*, written for Philip Smith, are best suited to him, but nonetheless he can play that kind of piece as well. The recording sound is exemplary, but I would have preferred a more detailed series of notes on the music, no matter how fancy the 'artistic' presentation. This is an excellent disc. (RH)



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Have Yourself a Brassy Little Christmas. Imperial Brass (Glen Daum and Jeffrey Schultz), with +Joseph Alessi, Trombone Soloist; Warren Vaché, Trumpet Soloist; Laura Schutter, Vocal Soloist. Produced by Imperial Brass. Program: *Rhapsody Noel* (Turrin); *New Born Babe* (Broughton); *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town* (arr. Freeh); *+Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* (arr. Daum); *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* (arr. Starling--Freeh); *White Christmas* (Berlin--Freeh); *Farandole* (Bizet); *The Christmas Song* (arr. Korey); *+O Holy Night* (Adam); *An Australian Christmas* (Curnow); Euphonium Solo--*We Three Kings* (arr. Richards), soloist Eric Richards; **I'll Be Home for Christmas*; *Jingle All the Way* (arr. Freeh); **Rudolph the Rednose Reindeer* (arr. Freeh); *Road to Bethlehem* (Roland); *Midnight Serenade* (arr. Finegan); *All I Want for Christmas* (Daum); *Nutcracker Sweet* (arr. Comstock--Freeh)

Imperial Brass marks its varied and highly entertaining Christmas disc with a fine array of arrangements, many quite playful and witty, others rather thought provoking. Joseph Alessi tops the short list of fine guest soloists, but the band also puts forth their own accomplished end chair players, both up front, and with short spotlights throughout these tunes. The band's

sound is quite bright, the altos even taking on a 'French horn' sound at times, but usually appropriate when considering the origins of some tunes, like those written originally for the Manhattan Brass Choir, and wonderfully made alive again thanks mostly to Mark Freeh's outstanding adaptations. The playing is solidly competent throughout the disc. My only complaint is that on occasion – rare occasion – there are some tuning and balance-blend problems. The repertoire especially commends this disc, matched by the solo features. Some of the solos are not what one expects. *O Holy Night* unfolds in a decided, soft jazz ballad style--a clever, engaging presentation, Alessi, as in all his other spots, is in command of the situation. Another unusual treatment comes in *We Three Kings*, here a scherzo-like approach over a rhythmic ostinato, all with an imprecise--meaning effective--ethnic flavor. I was delighted to have a CD recording of Curnow's delightful, short suite, *An Australian Christmas*, just the sort of 'out of the ordinary' holiday fare bands look for every year. That can be underscored, as well, for the opening arrangement by Joseph Turrin, a bit more commercial than I would have expected, but quite captivating; it gets the disc, and band, off to a brilliant start. Perhaps the highlights for me were the subtle, original tune, "Road to Bethlehem," an evocation of Mary and Joseph's lonely walk captured in a slow jazz swing originally written for the Manhattan Brass Choir and Freeh's adaptation of Comstock's tribute to Tchaikovsky, *Nutcracker Sweet*. NABBA members may remember struggling through this fun arrangement during a NABBA Reading Band session a few years ago. Here Comstock embraces a tradition going back to Duke Ellington, who did similarly not only with Tchaikovsky but also, among others, Edvard Grieg. This is not easy, Freeh wisely making the flugelhorn, alto horns, baritones, and euphoniums the equivalent of the sax section, which puts them through their paces, so to speak. Imperial tackles it with authority, the disc ending in a highly satisfying, unique manner. Congratulations Imperial, co-conductors Daum and Schultz, and Mark Freeh for this handsome production and attractive presentation. Directors and NABBA members will find this to be a wealth of new Christmas tunes for them to consider in coming seasons. The disc may be ordered from the band's website www.imperialbrass.org or contact Imperial Brass at

730 Mill Street, Belleville NJ 07109 \$15 plus \$3 payable to Imperial Brass (RH)

Highlights from the 2007 European Brass Band Championships.

Double CD, all live performances. Various bands, including *Cory Band (Robert Childs), +Brass Band Willebroek (Franz Violet) and #European Youth Brass Band (Ian Porthouse). Doyen 234. TT 2:08:02. Program CD #1: *Festmusik der Stadt Wien* (Strauss); **Elgar Variations* (Ellerby); #*Alloway Tales* (Graham); +*Variations on Tyrolean Song* (Arban), cornet soloist Raf Van Looveren; #*Folk Festival* (Shostakovich); *The Drop* (Dobson); #*Lionheart* (Harper); Funky Brass (Schwarz); #*Caravan* (Ellington--Sykes); +*Music of the Spheres* (Sparke). Program CD #2: #*Malagueña* (Lecuona--Freeh); *Contest Music* (Heaton); +*Horizons* (Lovatt-Cooper); *Concerto in F Minor* (Boehme), cornet soloist Hans Gansch; *Beyond the Horizon* (Kelly); +*You'll Never Walk Alone* (arr. Snell); *Czardas* (Strauss--Snell); +*Finale from the Organ Symphony* (Saint-Saens--Wilby)

Doyen delivers another excellent sound chronicle of the annual European Brass Band Championships, this one from the 2007, the week-long festival held in Birmingham, England. All cuts are 'live,' a good portion capturing fine playing at the Gala Concert by the European Youth Brass Band formed for the occasion, the Brass Band Öberösterreich (based in Austria) and one of the contenders on the day, the Belgian-based Brass Band Willebroek. Willebroek captured the Championship title via their splendid performance of their own-choice work, Sparke's *Music of the Spheres*, while Cory came in a close second, winning the set test piece portion with an authoritative interpretation of Martin Ellerby's *Elgar Variations*. In this work Ellerby embraces a similar symphonic technique he used in *Tristan Encounters*, with broad swatches this time of Sir Edward Elgar's music both up front and hidden, Ellerby absorbing into his own craft the unique sequencing style of symphonic Elgar. This attractive piece unfolds in a decidedly, and intentionally traditional and tonal design, and must be very enjoyable to perform. Cory plays it with warm-blooded zeal! There is much more than the two winning championship performances, however,

in this fine continuation of Doyen's splendid series. A commendable double CD with lots of riches. (RH)

The History of Brass Band Music: Classical Arrangements. Grimethorpe Colliery Band (Elgar Howarth). Doyen 164. TT 68:26. Program: *Prelude to Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner--Owen); *Praeludium* (Jarnfelt--Halliwell); *Overture to Nabucco* (Verdi--Rimmer); *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (Delius--Warlock); *Academic Festival Overture* (Brahms--Wright); *Giles Farnaby Suite* (trs. Howarth); *Froissart Overture* (Elgar--Ball); *Des Pas sur la Neige* (Debussy--Snell); *Four Scottish Dances* (Arnold--Farr).

Elgar Howarth and Grimethorpe team up once again for another installment in Howarth's personal view of the history of brass band music. I wish to stress that this is indeed one man's view of a huge portion in the overall brass band repertoire, and therefore, as he would readily admit, a series of choices marked by his own bias. Nonetheless, backed by a super booklet of scholarly notes by Trevor Herbert, he has achieved another significant milestone in aiding the brass band subculture in valuing and honoring its heritage. Choosing transcriptions from the late 19th century, at a time when several top bandmasters had their own unique view of brass band instrumentation, and selecting his own representative sample right into the modern era, Howarth provides an interesting slice of varying approaches, while chronicling the gradual enrichment of brass band timbre, especially with the expansion of the percussion section and the use of mutes for all instruments in the band. The band provides committed performances, some quite beautiful, particular those of the impressionistic works by Debussy and Delius. A severe contrast is the famous Owen version of Wagner's *Tristan Prelude*, which comes off rather too aggressive, too red-blooded, maybe even harsh at times. Perhaps here Owen was too literal in his adaptation, while in Wright's version of the Brahms overture, subtle aspects, especially rhythmic and textural, of the original get shaved away, made safer for the bands of the 1930s. Howarth's inclusion of his own *Giles Farnaby Suite*, and the rare Peter Warlock version of Delius's *Cuckoo*, as elegant as they are, had me wondering about

a whole host of fine transcribers whose works were played for so many years and are still in the repertoire but were by-passed for 'rare blooms' like these! The modern transcribers, with access to new sound sources and a higher technical standard in all sections of the band, come off quite well, and are heard to great advantage due to Howarth's careful regard for proper balances and layering of the band's sound.

My personal favorite is Eric Ball's treatment of the Elgar overture. Here it seems that the band sounds 'Elgarian.' Ball has captured the sound of the brass band as if Elgar had scored it himself. His handling of the limited timbre palette of the brass band instruments without resorting to coloristic effects in the percussion, his excellent understanding of Elgar's subtle additive treatment in building and taking away from sound mass is simply brilliant. As a result, Grimethorpe provides some of the best, controlled playing on this piece. The same is true of Snell's Debussy, a very convincing realization. As Leidzén said over sixty years ago, a transcription is not merely a rehashing of a work--it is another version of a work of art, and the transcriber must conceive of the work in that manner, while maintaining the highest respect for the original, hoping to do justice to the work as if the original composer, had he been so inclined or gifted, would have scored it for brass band given the opportunity. Perhaps only the late Renaissance Farnaby keyboard pieces would fail to fit into that Common Practice framework, but Howarth, like Granville Bantock who tackled many of these same works before, adapting them for strings, has done justice to them, making them live again. I highly recommend this disc on multiple levels--performances, repertoire, informative accompanying materials, sound reproduction. A first rate production. (RH)

Life Abundant. Philip Cobb, Cornet, Piccolo trumpet, Trumpet Soloist, with Cory Band (Stephen Cobb) and *Benjamin Horden, organ. Egon SFZ 140. TT 59.33. Program: *Trumpet Call* (Downie); *Someone Cares* (arr. Steadman-Allen); **Concerto in D Major* (Telemann); *Before the Cross* (Gregson); *Wondrous Day* (Leidzén); *Healing Waters* (Downie); *Virtuosity* (Baker--Peberdy); *Don't Doubt Him Now* (Ballantine--Woodland);

Life Abundant (Redhead); *Time and Eternity* (Bosanko); **Te Deum Prelude* (Charpentier).

Philip Cobb has recently made a major impact in the brass band and trumpet world. This excellent disc documents why that it is so. On this disc, Cobb displays mastery of the widest stylistic range on three different instruments, all the while impressing us with his consummate lyrical skills, skills nurtured and honed first in his family, his father and grandfather, Stephen and Roland, being legendary cornetists. It was my pleasure to recommend Philip to Douglas Yeo and Terry Everson as the ideal young soloist for the New England Brass Band's performance at the 2007 International Trumpet Guild Conference; Cobb did not disappoint our expectations. The outstanding Cory Band and organist Benjamin Horden provide him wonderful accompanying support, and the resulting program is simply terrific. While some brass band cornetists do not quite make a convincing shift to other 'trumpets' and trumpet repertoire, Cobb is fully in command of all the horns he uses. The album opens with the riveting *Trumpet Call*, Cobb at ease in all registers of the trumpet, his sound fully symphonic, and most appropriate to Downie's excellent composition. His Telemann *Concerto* sings like the famous Maurice André recordings from decades ago, but with his own sweet, lyrical sound, a vibrato just right for this galant gem. His cornet playing compels me to compare him to not only his father and grandfather, but to other great players of the current generation. He is measuring up, playing with the flare and pizzazz of his grandfather, and, where appropriate, the elegant restraint and care of his father--and yet he is more than the sum of these two great men. This is especially evident in his masterful reading of *Wondrous Day*, a work written for Roland, but here marked with Philip's own voice. He renews the work. The program flow and contrasts are excellent, the quality of the sound first-rate, with excellent presence for the soloist, band and organ balanced just right as accompaniment. The presentation is also classy, with solid booklet notes by Philip's compatriot in the International Staff Band, Kevin Ashman. (RH)

FOR COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NABBA XXVI CHAMPIONSHIPS INCLUDING ALL ENTRY FORMS (BAND, SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE CONTESTS), TEST PIECES, REVISED CONTEST RULES AND HELPFUL INFORMATION REGARDING THE LOUISVILLE HOTEL ROOM SITUATION, VISIT NABBA.ORG

The Noble Trombone. Chris Thomas, Trombone Soloist, with Cory Band (Robert Childs) and *Harvey Davies, piano. Doyen CD 228. TT 65:17. *The Noble Trombone* (Bowen); **Concertino d'Hiver* (Milhaud); *Mosquito* (Aagaard-Nilsen); **Sonatine* (Casterede); *Sweet Hour of Prayer* (arr. Heaton-Hindmarsh); **Concertino for Trombone* (Larsson); *Angels Guard Thee* (Godard--Ball); *Immortal Theme* (Steadman--Allen).

Having heard the solid trombone section of Cory Band (Buy as Your View) play with such authority for the past few years, I was delighted to acquire this fine solo disc by its principal trombone, Chris Thomas. His sound fits both the rather traditional-sounding Welsh band, as well as being decidedly, and characteristically, symphonic. I really enjoy those solo albums that alternate accompaniments, here swinging back and forth between brass band and piano. The piano-accompanied works are great standards of the 20th-century trombone recital repertoire, all of anti-romantic, 'neoclassic' style, two quite French (Milhaud, and Casterede), and one,

the Larsson, from Scandinavia. The Larsson *Concertino* surely ranks among that Swedish composer's finest in the series he wrote for orchestral instruments and chamber orchestra (usually string orchestra). Thomas plays it with authority and conviction, the final movement being especially captivating. The other piece of Nordic origin, *Mosquito*, is just a bit too onomatopoeic for my taste--mosquito buzzing and stinging--mimesis run amok. This is hard for me to declare, because I am a fan of Aagaard-Nilsen's music! His tongue is just a bit too far into the cheek--and a cheeky piece it is, one many will love. Thomas's program runs the stylistic gamut, in which he is quite equal to the task. From time to time, Cory's cornets are a bit too 'fruity,' as they are on the opening of the Godard *Berceuse*, but fortunately Thomas does not try and match their vibrato rate. On other items this aspect of Cory's sound is just right, and they do it as well as any band. The program is pillared by two excellent pieces of SA origin. First, Thomas makes us sit up and pay attention on the title tune, *The Noble Trombone*, a work first written for Dudley Bright and the NYSB; he and this terrific band certainly drew me into the disc. The wonderful recital concludes with what is only the second CD recording of Steadman-Allen's 13-minute, three-movement concerto, *The Immortal Theme*, a pace-setting, eclectic work when premiered in the mid-1960s and still a challenge for any band and soloist. It makes an excellent finale for this outstanding program. Thomas provides his own, informative, and substantial notes on the music and the composers. All round, a very fine production that should prove of great interest not only to trombonists, but also to all students of brass music and performance. (RH)

Regionals 2008. *Black Dyke Band (Nicholas Childs), + Cory Band (Robert Childs), Whitburn Band (Duncan Beckley). Doyen CD 238. TT 62:07. Program: **Festival Music* (Ball); +*James Cook--Circumnavigator* (Vinter); *Three Part Invention* (Downie); **Dark Side of the Moon* (Lovatt-Cooper); +*Four Cities Symphony* (Newton).

In February and March 2008 brass bands from all over Great Britain will be competing for the right to represent their region in

the various levels of the National Brass Band Championships that will follow in October of the same year. For a number of years now Doyen has provided an excellent service via exemplary performances of the test pieces in each level. Three fine bands do so here, with some previously recorded versions and some new readings. For the NABBA member and conductor what better way to study brass band test pieces at these same levels? I have discussed in my notes to Black Dyke's 2003 Eric Ball centenary disc, **Festival Music**, the superb tribute to Mozart Ball composed in 1956, the three-movement *Festival Music*; it is still a daunting test. That recording is indeed a definitive one. Cory Band nails the exciting opening of Vinter's still riveting tone poem on James Cook, and the rest is a fun ride! Whitburn is solid on the new Downie work that could be great for a NABBA Challenge or Explorer test. In the final, fourth level test piece Newton paints lighter-style sound portraits of four cities: London, Paris, Rome, and Moscow. Neither the third section piece by Lovatt-Cooper nor the Newton appears to be particularly significant work, regardless of technical level, but I am willing to stand corrected. This serviceable disc should be an excellent addition to the library of students of brass band repertoire. (RH)

Whit Friday Marches: Highlights from the Delph March Contest 2007. 18 different bands. Doyen CD 236. TT 79:51. Eighteen marches.

I thoroughly enjoy this series that Doyen has been releasing over the past few years, each disc providing the widest range of contest march repertoire played by bands of all levels and backgrounds. It is a wonderful archive, a treasure trove! In this disc alone they include three great George Allen marches--*Knight Templar* played by Black Dyke, *The Wizard* played by Rothwell Temperance Band, and *The Senator* played by Emley Band. Also, you encounter two Rimmers, two by Thomas J. Powell, two by John Carr and even a relatively new march, but in 'retro' style, *The Conqueror* by Philip Sparke, played by Alexander Brass. Other top bands heard 'live' include Foden's on *The President* (German). While the crowd noise is audible in the background, the engineers capture the bands well. This is quite the atmospheric overview of a

typical Whit Friday evening in the village of Delph. (RH)

The Words of the Amen. Salvation Army National Capital Band (James B. Anderson). CRD 072. TT: 63:43. Program: *Winchester Revival* (Kenneth Downie); *Take Time* (Kenneth Downie); *God With Us* (Camp Kirkland/Tom Fettke, arr. Kevin Norbury); *Rhapsody for Cornet* (Ray Bowes), Ian Anderson, cornet soloist; *Confrontations* (Dudley Bright); *Jesus Loves Me* (James Anderson); *The Conqueror* (Ray Steadman-Allen), Tony Barrington, euphonium soloist; *The Blessing* (William Himes); *What a Friend* (Erik Leidzén); *The Words of the Amen* (James Anderson); *Sovereignty* (Brian Bowen).

The Salvation Army's National Capital Band, now celebrating its 82nd anniversary, draws its members from Salvation Army churches in the greater Washington D.C. area; its bandmaster, James Anderson, is well known as an adjudicator at a number of NABBA Championships as is the band's principal trombonist, Stephen Bulla. This recording shows the band to be in the upper echelon of North American Salvation Army bands. Unlike some "all star" groups, the National Capital Band shows evidence of regular rehearsal together that serves the group well with a balanced ensemble and surety of playing.

Most of the works on the album are substantial in length, with six of the 11 tracks being about six minutes or longer. Two of these are solos: Ray Bowes' *Rhapsody for Cornet* and Ray Steadman-Allen's euphonium solo, *The Conqueror*. Both solos are more than the generic theme and variation type work and each receives a fine treatment from their protagonists, Ian Anderson (cornet) and Tony Barrington (euphonium). Dudley Bright's tone poem, *Confrontations*, is a creative work that takes as its seed Stanley Ditmer's song, "I'm in His Hands." Bright's craft comes across both taut and expressive and the band is well equipped to handle the considerable challenges put before them. Not being a fan of the genre generally known as "praise choruses," the pastiche of several such songs arranged by Kevin Norbury is lost on me (why this music is called Christian "contemporary music" mystifies me as most of these kinds of songs and arrangements seem stuck

in the early 1970s and don't have much to say to my ears that is either contemporary or musically interesting). That said, the band motors along and puts the medley across with conviction.

The most substantial work on the album is James Anderson's title track, *The Words of the Amen*. Taking its name from words in Revelation 3:14, it depicts spiritual journey from darkness (and "lukewarmness") to light. There is much to recommend in this, with the interpolation of several Salvation Army tunes and the old chant, "Dies irae," bringing added context to the musical journey. The band once again shows itself up to the challenges of the work. But I must comment: the section that includes the band vocalizing which culminates with a spoken oration of words of Scripture would have been much more effective had microphones been moved to better pick up the voices. With today's recording technology, such moments in a band piece – always risky since they can come off a bit contrived – should be given greater attention so they sound well integrated into the whole.

As one who deeply appreciates the legacy of Erik Leidzén – a composer whose creativity still comes across as fresh and vibrant even decades since his death – it is good to see one of his many meditations included on this disc: Charles Converse's classic, *What a Friend We Have In Jesus*. Leidzén's arrangement of this lovely tune is played with great involvement and communicates its message convincingly. Leidzén's craft remains a model of taste and forward looking style (if the ubiquitous long snare drum roll that often is heard in music of this era has today, thankfully, been mostly banished).

On repeated listenings the album holds up well; the programming is a good mix of substantial and shorter works (Kenneth Downie's harmonic twists in his march *Winchester Revival* are a delight) and through it all the band's playing is persuasive. For an album that is not based on a particular theme, this collection continues to hold this listener's interest and provides band conductors with a mine of works that ought to find their ways more frequently onto concert programs. Bravo. (DY) 🎵

THE DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IN THE 2007 NABBA RECORDING OF THE YEAR CONTEST TO HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED WAS DECEMBER 15 – THE WINNING ENTRY WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE NABBA XXVI CHAMPIONSHIPS.

DVD REVIEW

By Douglas Yeo

New York Staff Band's 120th Anniversary Concert (Ronald Waiksnoris). Recorded January 26, 2007, Centennial Memorial Temple, New York City. NTSC format. Disc One: Musical Program: *A Fanfare of Praise* (Robert Redhead); *Heralds of Victory* (Richard E. Holz), Gordon Ward, Christopher Ward, Jeffrey Barrington and Derek Lance, cornet soloists; *Exultate!* (Kenneth Downie); *Faith Encounter* (Ray Steadman-Allen), Brett Baker, trombone soloist; *The Light of the World* (Dean Goffin); *He's Always Been Faithful* (Sara Groves, arr. William Himes), Victoria Ward, vocal soloist; Selections from *Call of the Cossacks* (Peter Graham); Finale from *William Tell Overture* (Rossini, arr. Peter Smalley), Richard Baker, Simon Morton, Ryan McCrudden and Aaron VanderWeele, soloists; *Rousseau* (Ray Ogg); *The Old Rugged Cross* (Erik Leidzén), Brett Baker, trombone soloist; *Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit* (arr. John Humdberg); *The Holy War* (Ray Steadman-Allen); *The Stars and Stripes Forever* (John Philip Sousa); *Rock of Ages* (arr. William Bearchell). Disc Two: Interviews by Ronald W. Holz of NYSB Bandmasters Vernon Post, Derek Smith, Brian Bowen and Ronald Waiksnoris. Available from nysb.org, \$20.00.

Anniversaries are important milestones, opportunities to look back on the past and then look ahead to the future. The New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army has certainly had a history to celebrate and the tri-partite release of a new CD, book and DVD has allowed the band to share its 120th anniversary with the public in diverse ways. This DVD release is the first such project undertaken by the band. In recent years, DVDs of brass band concerts, festivals and competitions have been released with increasing frequency. Unfortunately, most of these have been produced in the United Kingdom and Europe using the PAL system; such discs are not playable on machines made for use with the NTSC format which is used in the United States. If you live in the USA, the excellent DVDs of bands made in the UK and Europe are not viewable by you unless you have a multi-region DVD player (which, by the way, is not very expensive and is a very useful component). It is nice to see the NYSB putting out a DVD of its own; good sales of this item may very well encourage other American bands to release similar discs.

The 120th Anniversary concert took place on January 26, 2007 in the Salvation Army's Centennial Memorial Temple in New York City. This art deco building is rich with history and the capacity audience that gathered for the evening concert heard a cross section of Salvation Army music played by the Army's premiere North American musical evangelists. The band's recorded discography is tremendous, but to actually *SEE* the band playing adds a new dimension to our appreciation of its players, conductor and musical presentation. While a live concert does not have the polish of a studio recorded CD which can be edited to perfection, there is an honesty and freshness apparent that greatly enhances the whole viewing and listening experience.

The program begins with Robert Redhead's *A Fanfare of Praise*. It begins softly and beautifully, but just as you're lost in contemplation of the words to "Fairest Lord Jesus," the drum set comes in and it's off to the races with a double-time, hard-driving rock beat. The juxtaposition is jarring but such is the flexibility of the NYSB that can convincingly deliver a wide variety of musical styles, changing gears on the fly. Richard E.

ISSUE 108 OF THE BRASS BAND BRIDGE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON MARCH 1, 2008, AND WILL CONTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE PREVIEW OF THE NABBA XXVI CHAMPIONSHIPS

Holz's *Heralds of Victory* (also recorded on the band's 120th anniversary CD, **Ceaseless Service**) fares well in a fine performance by the band's front row of cornets. The visual element adds measurably to the presentation, and as a result, the piece – a real throwback to an older style of Army music – comes across even more vibrantly than when heard on an audio CD.

Brett Baker, principal trombonist of Black Dyke Band, is the featured soloist at the concert; he needs no introduction. His two solos, Steadman-Allen's *Faith Encounter* (an absolute tour de force, and as such, rarely heard) and Leidzén's beautiful *The Old Ruggered Cross* are given engaging performances. Many British trombonists seem to be using less and less vibrato these days, distinguishing themselves from their brass band cornet brethren, something that heightens the conical/cylindrical difference in bands. But Baker finds expressiveness through delicate tone shading and phrasing and seeing him in his Black Dyke uniform in front of the NYSB is yet another reminder of how this is not your grandfather's Salvation Army Band. Black Dyke and the International Staff Band have been collaborating for many years and the NYSB has worked for many years to make the crossover to collaborations with non-Army groups and players.

Sara Groves' *He's Always Been Faithful* never fails to move me and William Himes' arrangement for vocal soloist (horn player Vic-

toria Ward), electronic keyboard (trombonist Lorena Simmonds) and band makes for one of the more successful vocal numbers with band that I have heard. And the arrangement for euphonium/tuba quartet of the finale of the *William Tell Overture* is a hoot, led by Aaron VanderWeele who plays with a twinkle in his eye as if he knows the whole enterprise is an absurdity – but never mind: it works!

One of the disc's highlights is flugelhorn player Andrew Garcia's beautiful playing on *Doyle's Lament* from Peter Graham's *Call of the Cossacks*. This is a perfect example of a piece that is greatly enhanced by the DVD format. When played by the band on its CD **Ceaseless Service**, Graham's piece came across as a bit silly and disjointed. Yet with the visual element (soloists standing up, cameras showing the response of the audience), the whole enterprise is more successful. This highlights the truth in the musician union's slogan, "Live music is best." The same can be said for the band's excellent performance of Ray Steadman-Allen's *The Holy War*; seeing the band engage this difficult work adds measurably to the viewer's appreciation of both the music and the band's playing.

Band Chorus Leader Thomas Mack leads two vocal numbers including the classic William Bearchell arrangement of *Rock of Ages*. If the band's singing does not have the polish and power of the "old days" when the band had only male voices and the bandsmen seemed to be auditioned as much for their vocal abilities as their instrumental playing (see more on this in the review of Ronald W. Holz's book, *The Proclaimers*), the band sings with earnest commitment and it does not fail to move.

A bonus to the whole production is the inclusion of a second disc, this of interviews by Ronald W. Holz of four of the band's Bandmasters: Vernon Post (1963-1972), Derek Smith (1972-1986), Brian Bowen (1986-1992) and Ronald Waiksnoris (1992-present). The interviews take the form of a panel discussion and this is a precious historical document as Holz is adept at drawing out fascinating stories from each of the men. In fact, Ron Holz is probably the only person who could have pulled this off: son of NYSB

Bandmaster Richard E. Holz (1955-1963), he grew up with the band as an integral part of his life (although he never was a member of the group) and his knowledge of the band's history allows him to ask the right questions and coax informative answers. The disc is a tremendous addition to the oral history of the NYSB and it adds measurably to our knowledge of the band.

As a first effort at this kind of production, the 120th Anniversary Concert DVD succeeds very well. Yes, at times it has the look of a homemade production (although the camera work is mostly excellent) and the microphone placement could have picked up the band (and particularly the soloists) better. The audience is real – the sound of a baby crying on occasion and the sight of people walking in and out of the auditorium gives the video a, "Well, this is life in New York City," kind of feel. The accompanying booklet has nothing in the way of program notes; they are missed, especially for those who are not familiar with the music. And the band seems a bit conscious of the fact that their concert was being preserved for posterity, being a bit more "buttoned down" than usual, particularly in the vocal numbers. That said, a journey begins with a first step, and the NYSB is to be enthusiastically commended for this inaugural foray into the video market. No doubt much was learned in the planning and execution of this production and we can look forward to future offerings that will build on this success. Congratulations to Bandmaster Ronald Waiksnoris, DVD producer Aaron VanderWeele, Ronald W. Holz and the entire band and support crew for giving us a useful, informative DVD set that brings us closer to the fine work of the NYSB. ☺

BOOK REVIEW

By Douglas Yeo

The Proclaimers. Ronald W. Holz. The Salvation Army, 2007, West Nyack, New York. ISBN 978-0-89216-110-2. 389 pages + 29 pages of photographs. With companion CD of performances by the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army (15 tracks): *March Religioso* (Anonymous, adapted Darby), rec. 1922; *Memories* (Allan), John Allan, cornet soloist, rec. 1923; *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (Mozart, arr Frederick Hawkes), rec. 1940; Vocal Solo: *The Ninety and Nine* (arr. Bearchell), Frank Fowler, vocal soloist, William Bearchell, organ, rec. 1940; *On to the War* (Leidzén), rec. 1950; *Precious Name* (arr. Leidzen), rec. 1951; *On The Way Home* (Leidzén), rec. 1960; Male Chorus: *Rock of Ages* (arr. Bearchell), rec. 1961; Solo with band and male chorus: *Banners and Bonnets* (Willson, arr. Holz), rec. 1962; *The Roll Call* (William Broughton), rec. 1963; *Canadian Folk Song Suite* (Morley Calvert), rec. 1968; *Thy King Cometh* (Leslie Condon), rec. 1983; Laude (James Curnow), rec. 1987; Excerpt from *Swan Lake* (Tchaikovsky, arr. Davis), rec. 2001; *Pressing Onward* (Leidzen), rec. 2003. Available from nysb.org, \$16.00.

When Ronald Holz's 1986 history of the New York Staff Band, *Heralds of Victory*, was published, it represented a milestone of sorts, being an attempt to document the music, musicians, activities and mission of North America's oldest and most distinguished Salvation Army band. Written for the band's centennial, the book was a successful, Herculean production that, despite the rather home-made look and feel (the layout was tightly packed and used a sans-serif font which made reading a bit difficult on the eyes), nevertheless told a compelling story of the band and its work over 100 years. With the band's 120th anniversary taking place in 2007, author Holz undertook to revise – and in many cases, rewrite – the book, now reissued as *The Proclaimers*. The result is a book that unquestionably should be in the library of every bandsman and woman whether or not he or she is a member of the Salvation Army.

Histories are not easy to write. The first

question is how to narrow the scope. 120 years is a long time and even a book of 389 (plus a photo section) pages is not long enough to include even the most important highlights. Too, history is always told through the lens of the teller. In this, Ron Holz is the perfect choice, having grown up the son of NYSB Bandmaster Richard E. Holz. Ron is also the unequalled and unquestioned world-wide expert on the history of Salvation Army music and its musicians and his writing style is well suited to telling such a big and important story.

Comparison between the two editions of the history of the NYSB are inevitable and in every way, this new book comes up better and stronger than its 1986 incarnation. There is much more to the book than new chapters that detail the work of the band since its centennial in 1987. The book has been revised throughout, not just for content but for flow. Subtle changes in sentence structure have also helped the book read better. 29 pages of photographs add a great deal to the narrative; they are much better reproduced, laid out and captioned than those in the 1986 edition. The addition of several appendices is welcome on many levels as they offer, in an excruciatingly detailed way, information that simply would not fit in chapters (such as lists of recordings, band members, executive and local officers and a detailed chronology of the band). *The Proclaimers* is also beautifully laid out, a professionally designed and executed production in every way. The new typeface is easy on the eyes, the pages are uncluttered and the soft cover binding is of a high quality and allows the book to comfortably fall open in your hands. Holz's story is comprehensive without being tedious and his writing style is comfortable while being thorough. This is a tremendous resource and a great read. In many ways *The Proclaimers* sets the standard for historical narrative of a musical institution. While Holz has a strong bias that might have lead him to shy away from a thoroughly honest accounting of the band's history, he does not avoid controversial subjects (including the band sharing the stage at Carnegie Hall with Elton John). If you are tempted to think that such a historical book might be dry and fussy, think again and run – don't walk – to get a copy of *The Proclaimers*.

As if Ron Holz's fine history of the NYSB is

not enough, this book includes an important, welcome and creative companion: inserted on the back inside cover of each copy is an audio CD of historical performances of the band taken both from recordings and live concerts. What a bonus this is! The 15 tracks cover 80 years of NYSB music making, from the band's first extant recording, *March Religioso* (recorded in 1922) to a 2003 (previously unreleased) recording of Leidzén's march, *Pressing Onward*. Historical recordings such as this provide the listener with a great many insights. We who live in the modern era are often tempted to think that playing standards are, "of course," better today than in the past. But this disc gives lie to the assertion that evolution is necessarily always forward moving. The disc shows the band – throughout its history – to be full of tremendously accomplished players. While we cannot hear the true sound of the band in early recordings – many of which were made to 78rpm plates – the band's excellence comes through on every track. Mention must be made of what is, for me, the highlight of the CD – the 1961 recording of William Bearchell's band chorus feature, *Rock of Ages*, with Albert Avery, tenor soloist. This fine arrangement is superbly sung by the band. The vocal training of the group is evident from the first chord: beautiful balance and blend coupled with both sensitive and forceful singing. The interpolation of singing at Salvation Army band concerts can, today, seem a bit contrived when the voices sound small and untrained against the polish of the full band. Clearly this was not the case during "the old days" of the NYSB, where the singing of the band (which at the time was made entirely of men) was absolutely riveting.

In short, this is a tremendous package. I cannot praise Ron Holz and the NYSB enough for making this excellently produced book and CD available and, at \$16.00 (book and CD), it is perhaps the best value for money of anything published by the Salvation Army. You will not be disappointed. ☺

EXIT RAMP



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IN FOCUS

WATERLOO BRIDGE

WARNER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Issue 107 of *The Brass Band Bridge* features Waterloo Covered Bridge in Warner, New Hampshire.

Covered bridges are a ubiquitous part of the New England landscape. While they are not unique to New England - covered bridges of one or another type of construction can be found in most states in the USA and excellent examples are found in Europe and Asia) - the combination of New England fall foliage and deep snowfall makes New England covered bridges among the most photographed in the world.

Constructed in 1840, the Waterlook Bridge is an example of town lattice construction. Located south of New Hampshire Route 103, west of Warner Village, it crosses the Warner River. The bridge is 76 feet, 4 inches long and has an overall width of 12 feet, 11 inches. In 1857, the bridge was completely rebuilt and in 1970, it was further rebuilt at a cost of \$16,500. In 1987, additional rehabilitation of the bridge was undertaken. Waterloo Bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places. ★

