

Concert-Band Music in the United States

by John P. Paytner

If the fifty years from 1876 to 1926 represent, as Richard Franko Goldman has said, the "golden age of the march," the next half-century (1926-1976) can be called the triumphal era of the school band in America. While men like Frank Simon, Edwin Franko Goldman, Karl L. King, Herbert L. Clarke, and some others strived successfully to keep alive the tradition of the professional concert band, a whole new stream of band activity, this time an entirely American phenomenon, was gaining importance in the schools. The elementary and secondary school bands were taking root in increasing strength, and the *Music Man* story was being reenacted in small and large towns across the land. (For additional information on the preceding fifty years of American march music see New World Records 80266-2, *The Golden Age of the American March*.)

Music education in the public schools had dated from the time of Lowell Mason (1792-1872) in Boston, but it was a tradition of vocal music that had come with the immigrants from Europe and was established in the curriculum of the Boston schools in 1832. Its spread to other areas of the country was slow but steady. Instrumental music, however, lacked a European tradition, so its introduction into the schools was sparse at best, and little existed in the way of school bands before the turn of the century. Gradually more inroads were made, until by the time of World War I, a number of instrumental programs had been established, only to be delayed in their expansion by the nation's entry into the war. Nevertheless, the importance of military music in the war effort and the increasing appeal of professional bands finally brought instrumental music into the schools to stay.

At this time the spotlight shifted to the colleges and universities, where some loosely organized "pep" bands had begun to perform for athletic contests and college rallies. With increasing regularity, the institutions of higher learning began to put marching bands on the gridiron, at first without serious planning, but later patterned after the well-organized example set by A. A. Harding with the University of Illinois Band. At Illinois, not only were new instruments and fresh sonorities pouring out on the football field, but music of a more serious nature was being performed on the indoor concert stage. Harding and John Philip Sousa were good friends, and the precepts of concert band music as a professional art form were mirrored in the band as a sincere expression of collegiate music-making. Harding soon introduced clinics for school-band directors where the latest music could be heard and the most recent techniques for developing bands were discussed.

By the time the Sousa Band was in its decline, a whole slate of high school and college bands was ready to take over. National contests had accelerated the development of their skills since 1926, and when Sousa died in 1932 more than a thousand school bands were competing in state contests.

The growth in numbers and proficiency in the university bands was partly due to the excitement and budgets generated by college football. For better or worse, this resulted in ever-expanding forces, until it was not at all uncommon to see concert or symphonic bands, as well as marching bands, of over a hundred players. Harding was particularly imaginative and constantly experimented with the basic instrumentation made standard by Sousa, adding new woodwinds, brasses, and even strings. In 1929, in a historic meeting in New York City, Harding met with Edwin Franko Goldman, Arthur Pryor, Frank Simon, Victor J. Gabel, and a half dozen other men to organize the American Bandmasters Association. John Philip Sousa was elected first honorary life president.

A new strain of influence, much of it from the University of Illinois, spread across the land, this time to the colleges and universities of America. There, standardized instrumentation, regular rehearsal techniques, new performance practices, and a blossoming repertoire were rapidly developing. Important in this development were many of the university band directors of the Middle West, among whom could be named Raymond F. Dvorak at the University of Wisconsin, Glenn Cliffe Bainum at Northwestern University, Harold B. Bachman at the University of Chicago, Clarence Sawhill at UCLA, Mark Hindsley, who succeeded Harding at Illinois, Walter Beeler at Ithaca College, Manley Whitcomb at Ohio State, and William D. Revelli at the University of Michigan. The universities soon served as the training centers for band directors and the repositories for their new music, because many of the university band directors were also gifted arrangers and composers.

Almost immediately the American Bandmasters Association launched a search for more good music by encouraging some of the world's greatest composers to write for band. (This is an activity that continues even today through the annual A. B. A.-Ostwald Band Competition Contest.) Some of the well-known American and European composers who were responsive to the invitation to write for band were Henry Cowell, Gustav Holst, Percy Grainger, Ottorino Respighi, and Eugene Goossens. Still, the bulk of the serious literature for bands was transcribed or arranged from the masterworks for orchestra or keyboard. Marches, especially from the pens of Henry Fillmore, Karl King, Edwin Franko Goldman, Russell Alexander, Harry L. Alford, and a number of others, continued to provide some of the best original music for band, while upholding the traditions of the early days. Popular music in all forms was more and more available in arrangements of increasing value. Yet original works from American composers were still more the exception than the rule.

Europe, which had given birth to the earliest wind bands, had not, in most cases, kept pace with the growth of bands in America; the idea of school bands, from which the better college, military, and professional bands would come, was not at all well known in Europe. It was true that a body of highly significant wind literature had been written by European composers from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. It included the massive musical and pyrotechnical display of Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*; the intimate and gracious serenades of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and their contemporaries; and the richer, resonant chamber wind ensembles of Gounod, Dvorák, and Richard Strauss, as well as a few isolated pieces by Wagner, Berlioz, Mendelssohn, and others. Even earlier, the Venetian school--most notably, Giovanni Gabrieli--had produced brass choir music of substance and style. The 450-year history of Western instrumental music contains several hundred works for wind ensembles and orchestral wind sections. Most of it, although it has been enthusiastically claimed and performed by bands and parts of bands, was not composed specifically for band. The function of bands in Europe had been--and still largely is--to perform ceremonial, outdoor, festive civic tasks, which were not taken seriously as music. The compositions that came out of Europe before 1920 were aimed at the wind sections of symphony orchestras, and an orchestra without strings is still not a band.

Band music, true band music, continued to thrive in the States. The college-band movement became a universal trend, and thousands of school bands were conducted by well-trained, inspired teacher-conductors. Prominently successful high school band directors moved on to the centers of higher learning to pass on their skills and their enthusiasm to more aspiring young people.

One such high school mentor was William D. Revelli, who developed a championship high school band at Hobart, Indiana. Indeed, Revelli's band actually won five consecutive national

championships before he moved on to become director of bands at the University of Michigan in 1935. Revelli became the most important new influence on the national band scene. He founded the College Band Directors National Association, a group that energetically applied its forces to searching out, publishing, performing, and recording new music for the band.

Revelli became a symbol of excellence and perfection in band performance. His early training on the violin and his familiarity with orchestral tradition moved him to work for finer detail and greater musical sensitivity in the performance of band music. Revelli was a tireless and tyrannical conductor: devoted and dogmatic, often brazen and none too tactful, but always honest and sincere. He was the new spiritual leader of American band conductors, and his Michigan Band embodied performance standards which, in their own sphere, were on a par with the standards of the finest symphony orchestras at that time.

Serious band music could now expect serious performances. The large symphonic instrumentation of the band was standardized and firmly established through the work of the American Bandmasters Association, the College Band Directors National Association, and, since 1950, the American School Band Directors Association. Now America was learning what Europe already knew: that the presence of a band did not necessarily mean the immediate development of music to play. Although serious concert bands were already a quarter of a century old by the time of World War II, there were still many more performers than original compositions for them to play.

In the years that led to Pearl Harbor, and for the period of readjustment that followed, bands "did with what they had": martial and patriotic music, some excellent transcriptions and arrangements, a rapidly expanding quality of "pops"-oriented material that stemmed from the "big band" (that is to say, jazz band) craze, and a continuing flow of marches and other music of the school-band level. The war produced more band leaders and players, and made American bands better known both at home and overseas. Great college- and school-band directors like Harold Bachman, Glenn Cliffe Bainum, Howard Bronson, Mark Hindsley, George S. Howard, and many others went off to lead military bands. Some stayed in the service to perpetuate the tradition of service-band music, while those who came home to the college campuses of America took up the search for music again. Many fresh faces and sounds emerged from military bands as new composers and arrangers developed. Most important, there were unlimited numbers of mature, experienced wind and percussion players looking for places to play, to conduct, and to teach.

The Eastman School of Music, one of the premier institutions for music in America, was the site of the next significant change in the direction of bands. Frederick Fennell announced the formation of the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble in 1952. It was to be a wind band of about forty-five players with an instrumentation as follows:

REEDS

2 flutes and piccolo
2 oboes and English horn
2 bassoons and contrabassoon
1 E-flat clarinet
8 B-flat or A clarinets
1 alto clarinet
1 bass clarinet
2 alto saxophones

1 tenor saxophone
1 baritone saxophone

BRASS

5 cornets and/or trumpets
4 horns
3 trombones
2 euphoniums
2 or 3 tubas

OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Percussion, harp, celeste,
piano, organ, harpsichord,
solo string instruments, and
choral forces as desired

The exact instrumentation was far less significant than the reasons behind Fennell's decision to adopt it. It was his announced intent to provide a "sonority resource," the total numbers of which would be used only as required by the composer, and with little or no doubling on the separate parts. The importance of this one-on-a-part arrangement was, of course, monumental in view of the tremendous popularity by this time of the so-called symphonic band, in which multiple performers on each part was not only common practice, but the most important sonority source.

Under Fennell's plan, the wind ensemble was to be employed in three ways. First, it could easily cut back its size to the proper dimensions for playing wind music by Haydn, Mozart, Gounod, Richard Strauss, or other classical composers. Second, the whole body of strong, well-written original music for band would be played with a fresh, new sound. And third, the composers themselves would decide how many instruments on each part they wanted for a particular piece.

Sousa had popularized the band; Harding had brought it fully to the educational field; Revelli nursed it to musical maturity. Now Fennell took the band, trimmed its size, added individuality, solo virtuosity, and a touch of podium showmanship, and, like each of the others, brought boundless energy and faith to his task. In quick succession a series of Mercury recordings was produced featuring the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble under Fennell's direction. Band directors all over America had a professional model to hear, to study, and to imitate. Suddenly that body of delightful English band music which had been produced in the early twentieth century became standard fare for school bands in Delaware, Kentucky, Colorado, and Oregon. The music of Gustav Holst, Gordon Jacob, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and William Walton, which had been composed for small British military and industrial ensembles, was now being played by American youngsters who modeled their interpretations and style after Fennell's Eastman group.

It was a short step from there to the recordings of such band (or wind ensemble) classics as Igor Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, Darius Milhaud's *Suite française*, Paul Hindemith's *Symphony in B-flat for Band*, and Arnold Schoenberg's *Theme and Variations for Band*, Opus 43A--all works by composers whose origins were European, and all compositions of consummate value.

Although a number of American band composers had emerged from the ranks of well-known figures even as early as the 1930s and 1940s, the more elastic nature of bands provided by Fennell's

sonority resource and the overall excellence of wind performance now appealed to some of the most creative musicians in the United States. They knew that bands were here to stay, and it was rewarding to compose for groups that were completely capable of negotiating the most challenging demands of technique and range. Instrumental resources were unlimited. What is more, performances and publication, the lifeblood of the composer, were more probable with music written for band.

The years since 1952 have produced a flood of new band music, music of a unique and not always easily accepted genre; music of today, utilizing all the same techniques, devices, resources and creativity as any other contemporary music. No longer does the band need to apologize for playing "someone else's" material. If there is an apology in order, it is only because it took so long for the band to arrive at its present position as a viable exponent of new music, leaving the centuries of earlier music somewhat less well represented in its repertory.

THE COMPOSERS AND THEIR MUSIC

The five compositions chosen for this album represent a wide cross section of styles and composers. All are native-born Americans (Canada, considered as part of the Americas, being the birthplace of Henry Brant), and each has written more than one work for band. The earliest of the five is *Pageant*, composed by Vincent Persichetti in 1953. The most recent is Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra of Wind Instruments, composed in 1974 by Ross Lee Finney. In all, they represent a sampling from the most productive twenty years of band composition, a period of productivity that represents only 10 percent of the American band's history, but 80 percent of its serious, original band music.

VINCENT PERSICHETTI

Pageant, Op. 59

Vincent Persichetti was born in Philadelphia in 1915. His entire musical career was steeped in the great classical tradition of the Eastern conservatory scene. His study in composition was with Paul Nordoff and Roy Harris. His conducting teacher was Fritz Reiner. A graduate of Combs College, the Philadelphia Conservatory, and the Curtis Institute, Persichetti later returned to head the composition department at the Philadelphia Conservatory (1942-1962), and joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music in New York, where he became head of the composition department in 1948.

Divertimento for Band, composed in 1950, was followed in 1951 by Psalm for Band and in 1953 with *Pageant*, a work commissioned by the American Bandmasters Association. The first performance took place on March 7, 1953, at the A. B. A. convention in Miami, Florida, with the composer conducting the University of Miami Band. From that time until his death in 1987, a steady stream of compositions, many of them for bands and winds, continued to come from this prolific and popular composer, conductor, and teacher.

Pageant begins in a slow tempo with solo horn playing a three-note motive, 1-5-4 of the major scale, that is used throughout the slow opening section and the lively second section that follows. The orchestration is lean and often even sparse, making the work highly suitable to performance with wind ensemble even though it is subtitled an "Original Composition for Band." The polyphonic treatment of scalewise melodies, coupled with a free, tonally oriented (but not dominated) harmonic scheme, provides the vehicle for alternating choirs of sound. Clarinets, saxophones, and horns

exchange dialogues with trombones, euphoniums, and tubas. The percussion, as well as the cornets and trumpets, except for two short phrases, save their talents for the upcoming fast section. This is warm, expressive writing that nonetheless has a spartan, conservative quality about it that tends to contradict its rich harmonic idiom.

The second part begins quietly at first, in percussion, the innocence of the first section carrying over. A lively "parade" suddenly bursts forth. This brighter tempo provides even stronger evidence of Persichetti's craftsmanship. The alternating choirs of sound continue, now with more rapid exchanges: woodwinds, then brass; trombones, then trumpets; full winds, then percussion alone. The varied distinctive solo and choir colors of winds are outlined with clarity. Persichetti's reputation as a music analyst shines through in a rhythmic development that abounds with imitation, strettos, and augmentation. In a final summation, both principal themes are brought together in counterpoint, and the last big chord, comprised as it is of superimposed thirds, comes as a confirmation of the composer's strong musical link to the past and his particular genius for structuring today's sounds on yesterday's resources.

Through the years and compositions since *Pageant*, there was solid evidence of Vincent Persichetti's belief in bands. More than twenty works, some of them using voices with band, others calling for narration, joined the earlier pieces to form a body of literature that is substantial enough to be played frequently by groups at all levels of ability. A composer for whom bands at first held only modest interest has come to regard this means of musical performance with healthy respect.

HALE SMITH

Expansions

A native of Cleveland, Hale Smith was born in 1925 and attended the Cleveland Institute, where he studied with Ward Lewis and Marcel Dick. He received his master's degree in 1952 and was awarded the first BMI Student Composers Award that same year. He moved to New York in 1958 and worked with jazz composers Chico Hamilton, Oliver Nelson, Quincy Jones, Eric Dolphy, and Ahmad Jamal. A prolific composer, Hale Smith has written scores for documentary films and works for orchestra, chamber ensemble, piano, voice, and band. In 1972, Smith became an associate professor at the University of Connecticut.

Expansions was composed in 1967 on a commission from the Symphonic Band at Southern Illinois University. The title serves both to describe the compositional technique with which the work is formed as well as to speak to the composer's optimism with regard to expanding his listeners' range of musical understanding and acceptance. Tone clusters in the first ten measures of the work contain all twelve tones of the chromatic scale and initiate a spreading out from close position in the trumpet section to wider combinations in low brass and woodwinds. These measures, in fact, present all of the basic musical resources from which the rest of the composition will come.

Small groups of instrumental sonority are contrasted with increasing episodes of heavy vertical substance with everyone playing. The expanded clusters now extend from tuba to piccolo. A second section, in which vertical sets of tones convert to melodic intervals, begins in solo cornet, then leads to an almost simplistic melody-harmony setting. The original trumpet clusters return to signal the entrance of the horns in triplet rhythm and a variation on the wide vertical chord clusters. Another, slower section returns the first melody in pointillism with intervals changed to disparate octaves along with harmonic augmentation. Here, transparency permits wide spacing between separate

clusters of sound. Tuned cymbals, tuned triangles, and vibraphone join with flutes to set a color background for melodies in oboe, alto saxophone, cornet, and horn. A last recapitulation begins as in the opening measures, with narrow clusters of sound, but bursts into massive tutti qualities of full volume and immense density. Trumpet, oboe, and vibraphone perform a concluding tune in which all the clustered tones are exposed in a last, fiercely accented marcato chord.

HENRY BRANT

Verticals Ascending

Born in Montreal in 1913, Henry Dreyfuss Brant attended the Juilliard School and returned there to teach in 1947. He has been active as a composer, conductor, and arranger. He has written music for documentary films for a variety of United States government agencies. Brant's splendid knowledge of instruments and their potential sounds and techniques gives him the ability to create works of exciting color and dense polyphony. He is widely known as a composer of "spatial music in temporal polyphony," a technique succinctly displayed in *Verticals Ascending*.

Written for two separated instrumental groups, and performed and recorded that way on this recording, the score for *Verticals Ascending* is laid out as follows:

GROUP I (4/4)

(Right Channel)

2 oboes

2 bassoons

E-flat alto saxophone (optional)

2 B-flat trumpets

trombone

piano

GROUP II (3/4)

(Left Channel)

piccolo

flute

B-flat clarinet

E-flat alto clarinet

B-flat bass clarinet

2 F horns

tuba

percussion (2 players):

timpani, chimes, glockenspiel, vibraphone, electric organ (optional)

(n. b.: Both optional instruments are used in this recorded performance.)

The two bands were situated on opposite sides of the stage with separate conductors who could see each other, although the bands were back to back. A twelve-foot sound wall and fifty feet of space separated the two groups further, ensuring as complete an autonomy of sound as possible. A measure of 4/4 in Group I is equal to a measure of 3/4 in Group II, and the conductors achieve the composer's "3 against 4" feeling throughout the work by coordinating the first beats of each measure.

Subtitled "After the Rodia Towers," *Verticals Ascending* was written to reflect in music the effect of the architectural sculpture of the late Simon Rodia, an immigrant laborer whose Rodia Towers are located in the Watts section of Los Angeles. The towers were constructed between 1921 and 1954, and were built from commonplace materials such as scrap metal and refuse. They were done without commission or subsidy, solely for Rodia's own aesthetic needs, and they are considered today to be equal to the unique work of the Catalonian architect Antonio Gaudi.

The instrumentation of each ensemble creates its own special mood. In Group I there is active sonority in the double reeds (oboes and bassoons), saxophone and cylindrical brass (trumpets and trombone), both in straight mutes and open, and in the high metallic register of the piano. Group II is more passive, with its sounds from flutes, clarinets, conical brass (horns and tuba), and quiet percussion. Even the electric organ is set to play with reed stops. An additional element of texture design is achieved through the prevalence of melodic octaves in both groups.

The groups occasionally play separately, although this serves more to enhance the dual performance. A thoroughly calculated counterpoint at first presents itself in disorganization, but as the ears become attuned to doing their own "mixing," a sudden realization of the "3 against 4" takes place. Sympathetic contrasting of dynamics (Group I might create a crescendo against a diminuendo in Group II) permits the "spatiality in temporal polyphony" to sound clear.

Although the score is not exceptionally difficult for the players, its challenge is one of synchronization and balance. The real virtuosity is on the part of the listener, who must put the parts together and judge their meaning from two different sending signals, mixing them in his own central hearing center. This experience, one in which the consumer of music engages in performance with the purveyors of sound, is increasingly common to the twentieth century and to the new literature for the band.

ROSS LEE FINNEY

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra of Wind Instruments

Bands have not been Ross Lee Finney's favorite subjects. When he composed *Summer in Valley City* in 1969 he was sixty-three years old and had written some seventy major works. Even then, his friend and colleague William Revelli had to prevail upon him to do the suite for band. Of course, it resulted in a strong and suitable score that was quickly absorbed into the serious repertory for band.

Ross Lee Finney was born in Wells, Minnesota, in 1906. His entire life was spent in the academic climate of college and university--teaching, composing and lecturing. He studied with Nadia Boulanger, Alban Berg, and Gian-Francesco Malipiero, and taught at Smith College, Mount Holyoke College, the Hartt School of Music, and Amherst College. From 1948 until his retirement in 1976, he was composer in residence at the University of Michigan. He died in 1997.

By 1950 Finney had defined his philosophy of composition in the *Principle of Complimentarity*. It provided that no work of art could be understood from a single point of view. His music finds its structure then in opposites, a conscious dualism that runs through much of what he produced after 1950. In it, harmonic complexity might be tempered by rhythmic simplicity; or dense harmonic structures could underscore a relaxed melody. At about the same time (1950), a gradual move toward serialization of pitch became a permanent factor in Finney's compositions. Since that time all of his works use some form of material pitch organization.

The Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra of Wind Instruments was commissioned by friends and students of Larry Teal, a longtime friend of the composer, and, until his retirement, a distinguished professor of saxophone at the University of Michigan. The first performance was presented by the University of Michigan Band, H. Robert Reynolds, conductor, with Teal's successor at Michigan, Don Sinta, as soloist.

This concerto represents the epitome of technical proficiency, not only for the soloist, but even for the wind and percussion players in the ensemble. The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, two B-flat clarinets, bass clarinet, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three B-flat trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, baritones, tuba, harp, celeste, timpani, tam-tam, glockenspiel, xylophone, bongos, suspended cymbals, vibraphone, chimes, triangle, snare drum, crash cymbals, and bass drum. Despite its heavy, Romantic resources and proportions, the composer achieves opacity and translucence between soloist and accompaniment. This too was a stock-in-trade of Ross Lee Finney.

There are two movements. The melodic and harmonic organization is the same in each movement, that of an octatonic (eight-tone) scale. This technique is used by Stravinsky in *Petrouchka*, with an F sharp and C triad, and by Messiaen in *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jésus*. Finney's scheme outlines the melody, but structures a harmony as well, consisting of a fully diminished seventh chord (such as F sharp, A, C, E flat) with a partial diminished chord (G sharp and B) above it. Since the very nature of the octatonic division of the scale (whole step-half step-half step-whole step) into symmetrical parts creates the illusion of restlessness, ambiguity, and atonality, the harmonies can be considered "rootless."

To offset this sense of dissociation, Finney uses simple diatonic lines in the solo saxophone, but ones which can develop into brilliant technical gymnastics later on. The dialogue between solos is at first patient and relaxed. As the harmonic sonorities settle into familiarity, the soloist's rhythmic divisions and tempo begin to increase. Exchanges between sections of sound are quicker and the pace becomes more heated. Transparency is not sacrificed even when a multitude of solo sounds from the ensemble are placed against the principal soloist. Finally, the first section ends quietly and slowly.

The second movement opens with bongos and staccato winds, now in a fast, compound meter. The now familiar superimposed tetrachords are heard as vertical accentings, while the solo saxophone continues its diatonic embroidery, but in a frenzied, violently rhythmic exercise that exploits even the altissimo register of the instrument. Meter changes become increasingly complex while the texture of the accompaniment gradually thickens and darkens. The trumpets in unison break in to announce a cadenza. The winds perform controlled aleatoric passages in a designed improvisation. An interlude of solo saxophone encourages more improvised sounds from the ensemble, this time in the building up of strong, vertical sonorities. Another, even more difficult, solo passage introduces the final cadenza segment that grows into a gigantic mass of trills and clusters. After a quick musical reprise an energetic coda concludes the concerto.

ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

Symphonic Songs for Band

Robert Russell Bennett had little trouble becoming acquainted with bands. He learned to play a

variety of instruments from his father, a bandmaster, and learned the piano from his mother. While growing up in Kansas City, Missouri, where he was born in 1894, he played violin and trombone and began conducting at the age of eleven. He later played professional engagements on organ and viola, performing on a variety of instruments in the local theaters.

Bennett studied with Carl Busch in Kansas City and with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, where he was a student colleague of Aaron Copland and Roger Sessions. During World War I he served as an army band leader, and beginning in 1922 his talents led him more and more toward a career as an arranger of Broadway musicals. To this art he brought an uncanny ear for orchestrated sound and an innate sense of melodic accompaniment and counter-melody. More than three hundred musicals have been enhanced by Bennett's arrangements, including shows by Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Vincent Youmans, Frederick Loewe, and Richard Rodgers.

Somewhat obscured, but certainly not lost in a flurry of theater, film, television, and recording activity was Bennett's skill as a composer. He wrote successfully in all forms, including opera, operetta, concerti, symphonies, tone poems, suites, chamber music, voice, and keyboard. In all of this, it is possible that the band, his first musical experience, was still his great love. From the town band he knew so well, the early jazz bands of the twenties, the pit bands of the big shows, the military bands of World War I and World War II to the band-like passages that pop up at least once in every show he had did--whenever the orchestration calls for trumpets and trombones in octaves of melody against an "oompah" rhythm, Robert Russell Bennett wrote for band.

Symphonic Songs for Band, a three movement suite, was composed in 1958 on a commission from the national band fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi. It lends itself well to performance by wind ensemble, its melody-harmony style requires little textural doubling on the parts. An economy of forces, well known to those who write for the theater, is evident in the simple employment of only those sounds which are essential.

A tricky, witty, cheerful Serenade starts off the suite with a four-minute lesson in balance. The opening measures, which set a rhythmic pattern for the first movement, are written in 3/8 time, quick enough to be conducted one to the bar. The cross-accenting (hemiola), which gives the listener a strong feeling of one measure of 3/4 time for every two measures of 3/8 that are actually written keeps the listener off balance until the three-octave melody finally gains a foothold. Bennett's Serenade is not of the gentle Mozartean or Schubertian type. It is a tune, bred of American humor, that manages to be courteous but naughty. Brass and woodwinds play a staccato tattoo against the longer diatonic tune and a spunky rhythmic background in basses and horns. Solo sounds emerge from clarinet, euphonium, trumpet, and trombone. Against it all the incessant cross-rhythm persists, stepping aside only in the last headlong upward sweep that ends the movement.

The Spiritual has an innocent irreverence that exhibits Bennett's marvelous good humor. This middle movement provides a blues-like background for solos and euphonium, cornet, horn choir, English horn, flute, and piccolo. Its little A-B-A design has just enough flexibility to allow new tunes to emerge and to provide new instrumental colors each time the ear is prepared for them. Relaxed and warm, it is nonetheless wicked--right down to the last chord in both major and minor.

The elements of reserve and restraint that were in short supply in the first two movements are fully abandoned in the finale, Celebration. The "mule race" is on, with cheering throngs of spectators chirping in the woodwinds, and brass portraying the action down on the track. A middle interlude

introduces the old steam calliope, and a little later there is a twittering bird. The use of solo and section sounds in their optimum ranges is further evidence of Bennett's mastery. When *Symphonic Songs for Band* ends, with the final thrust of full forces on a suspended high chord that drops to a final "button," the listener is easily convinced of the vitality, originality, and humor of this fine American composer.

John P. Paynter (1928-96) had been Director of Bands at Northwestern University since 1953. At the time of his death, Paynter was also Professor of Music and Chairman of the Conducting Department. He oversaw all bands and taught courses in conducting, band arranging, and band techniques. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University School of Music and was a member of the Wildcat Marching band as an undergraduate. Paynter was an active composer and arranger with more than 400 works to his credit. His contributions to music were honored with awards from the National Band Association, the John Philip Sousa Foundation, Illinois Music Educators, the Instrumentalist, and the National Association of Music Clubs, among others. In 1987 he was named one of the inaugural recipients of the Northwestern Alumni Association Excellence in Teaching Award, and in 1992 De Paul University granted him an honorary doctorate of humane letters. Paynter had served in positions with several organizations, including presidencies with The World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic, the American Bandmasters Association, and the National Band Association, of which he was also cofounder and honorary life president. He was a life member of Music Educators National Conference and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.

Frederick L. Hemke a member of the faculty of the School of Music since 1962, has been professor of music at Northwestern University since 1975; he has been chair of the department of music performance studies at the School of Music since 1968. Mr. Hemke has appeared as a soloist with symphony orchestras in the United States and around the world, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, New Zealand Philharmonic Orchestra, and the (Seoul) Korea Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Hemke has been a distinguished visiting professor at the Conservatoire National de Musique, Paris; the Sweelinck Conservatory of Music, Amsterdam; and the Basel Conservatory of Music, Basel. He has been an artist-in-residence at Musik Högskola, Arvika, Sweden, and has been a visiting professor at numerous universities in the United States. He has released numerous solo albums, and has appeared as a soloist on other recordings. Mr. Hemke has appeared as a saxophonist on six recordings with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The roster of the **Symphonic Wind Ensemble** numbers approximately 50 of the finest wind and percussion instrumentalists from the School of Music. Its repertoire embraces music from the sixteenth through the twentieth century, from octet to full wind ensemble. The Symphonic Wind Ensemble performs eight on-campus concerts annually.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bennett, Robert Russell. *Instrumentally Speaking*. Melville, N.Y.: Belwin-Mills, 1975.
- Berger, Kenneth. *Band Discography*. Evansville, Ind.: Berger Band, n.d.
- . *Band Music Guide*. Evanston, Ill.: Instrumentalist Co., 1964.
- . *Bandmen*. Evansville, Ind.: Berger Band, 1955.
- Bierley, Paul E. *John Philip Sousa: American Phenomenon*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973.
- Burford, Cary Clive. *We're Loyal to You Illinois*. Danville, Ill.: The Interstate, 1952.

- Cooper, Paul. "The Music of Ross Lee Finney." *Musical Quarterly*, 53, no. 1 (January 1967).
- Fennell, Frederick. *Time and the Winds*. Kenosha, Wis.: G. Leblanc, 1954.
- Goldman, Richard Franko. *The Wind Band: Its Literature and Technique*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1962.
Reprinted Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974.
- Reynolds, H. Robert, with Eugene Corporon, Allan McMurray, Stanley DeRusha, and Robert Grechevsky. *Wind Ensemble Literature*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Bands, 1975.
- Sousa, John Philip. *Through the Year with Sousa*. New York: Crowell, 1910.
- Thomson, Virgil. *American Music Since 1910*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971.
- Yarberry, Glen Allen. "An Analysis of Five Exemplary College Band Programs." Master's thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1974.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Robert Russell Bennett:

- Stephen Collins Foster: A Commemoration Symphony*. Pittsburgh Symphony & Chorus, William Steinberg conducting. Everest EVC 9027.
- The Fun and Faith of William Billings, American*. National Symphony, Antal Dorati conducting. London LON-26442.

Henry Brant:

- Concerto for Alto Saxophone with Nine Instruments. C. Leaman, alto saxophone; Michigan Chamber Players, M. Dickey conducting. Redwood ESCD 45.
- Concerto for Trumpet and 9 Instruments. Gerard Schwarz, trumpet. Phoenix PHCD 115.

Ross Lee Finney:

- Chromatic Fantasy*. Jerome Jelinek, cello. CRI CD 711.
- Sonata No. 2. Jerome Jelinek, cello; Gurt Joseph, piano. CRI CD 711.
- Summer in Valley City*. University of Michigan Symphony Band, William D. Revelli conducting. Educational Record Reference Library No. 35, BP-135.
- Symphony No. 3. Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney conducting. LOU S-672.

Vincent Persichetti:

- Bagatelles for Band*. University of Illinois Concert Band, Mark Hindsley conducting. University of Illinois Concert Band Record No. 32.
- Concerto for English Horn and String Orchestra. Thomas Stacy, English horn; New York String Orchestra, Vincent Persichetti conducting. New World 80489-2.
- Serenade No. 11 for Band; *Masquerade*. Ithaca High School Band, Frank Battisti conducting. Golden Crest GC 6001.
- Sinfonia: Janiculum* (Symphony No. 9). Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting. RCA LSC-3121.
- Symphony No. 5, Op. 61. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Riccardo Muti conducting. New World 80370-2.
- Symphony No. 6 for Band, Op. 69. Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music Wind Symphony, E. Corporon conducting. Klavier KCD 11047.

Hale Smith:

- In Memoriam--Beryl Rubinstein*. Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra; Kulas Singers. CRI S-182.
- Innerflexions*. Slavonic Symphony Orchestra, A. Nanut conducting. CRI CD 590.

Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble Recording Personnel, November 1976

Piccolo-Flute: Diane Schick, Mark Peterson, Judith Washburn

Oboe-English Horn: Karen Kang, Steve Kurtz

Bassoon-Contrabassoon: Ellen Peichel, Mark Parta, Tim McGovern

E-Flat Clarinet: Solomon Baer

B-Flat & A Clarinets: Robert Fitzer, Laurie De Luca, Jesse Johnson, Susan Jarvis

Bass Clarinet: Jean Hansen

Contrabass Clarinet: Timothy Hein

Alto Saxophone: Wayne Richards, Debra Richtmeyer

Tenor Saxophone: William Hochkeppel

Baritone Saxophone: Diana Slaughter

Trumpet-Cornet: Susan Enger, Jeffrey Hickey, Charles Matthiessen, Peggy Paton, Michael Serber, Billie Worthen

Horn: Ronald Schneider, Beth Kinch, Deborah McCracken, Heidi Kepper

Trombone: Marc Donatelle, James Haack-Dodds, Charles Boston, Marc Wolfram

Euphonium: Timothy Myers

Tuba: Andy Bryan

String Bass: Margaret Storer

Harp: Phyllis Manning

Organ: Marcia La Reau

Piano-Celeste: Amy Riebs

Percussion: Clint Dodd, Bruce Carver, Milton Harper, Joseph Ludwig, Timothy Akin, David Swenson, Deborah Katz

Producer: Andrew Raeburn

Engineer: Jerry Bruck

Associate engineer: Mark Dichter

Tape editor: Noel Harrington

Mixing engineer: Russ Payne

Digital mastering: Dirk Sobotka, SoundByte Productions, Inc., NYC

Recorded in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

Program consultant: Don Roberts

Cover design: Bob Defrin Design, Inc., NYC

The original recording was made possible through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation

This project is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

This recording was made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency

This recording was also made possible with a grant from Francis Goelet

FOR NEW WORLD RECORDS:

Herman E. Krawitz, President; Paul Marotta, Managing Director; Paul M. Tai, Director of Artists and Repertory; Lisa Kahlden, Director of Information Technology; Virginia Hayward, Administrative Associate; Mojisola Oké, Bookkeeper; Ben Schmich, Production Associate.

RECORDED ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC, INC., BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

David Hamilton, Treasurer; Milton Babbitt; Emanuel Gerard; Adolph Green; Rita Hauser; Herman E. Krawitz; Arthur Moorhead; Elizabeth Ostrow; Don Roberts; Patrick Smith; Frank Stanton.

Francis Goelet (1926-1998), Chairman

© 1977 © 1997 Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in USA.

WINDS OF CHANGE 80211-2

AMERICAN MUSIC FOR WIND ENSEMBLE FROM THE 1950s TO THE 1970s

The Northwestern University Symphonic Wind Ensemble

John P. Paynter, conductor / Frederick L. Hemke, saxophone

Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)

1 *Pageant* (publ. Carl Fischer, Inc.) 7:24

Hale Smith (b. 1925)

2 *Expansions* (publ. Edward B. Marks Music Corp.) 8:19

Henry Brant (b. 1913)

3 *Verticals Ascending* (publ. MCA Music, A Division of MCA, Inc.) 9:33

Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997)

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra of Wind Instruments (publ. C. F. Peters Corp)

4 Moderato 7:24

5 Allegro energico 5:45

Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981)

Symphonic Songs for Band (publ. Chappell & Co., Inc.)

6 Serenade 3:54

7 Spiritual 5:15

8 Celebration 4:13

This recording was originally released as New World Records LP NW 211

**NO PART OF THIS RECORDING MAY BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED WITHOUT
WRITTEN PERMISSION OF R.A.A.M., INC.**

NEW WORLD RECORDS
16 Penn Plaza #835
NEW YORK, NY 10001-1820
TEL 212.290-1680 FAX 212.290-1685
Website: www.newworldrecords.org
email: info@newworldrecords.org

LINER NOTES © Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc.