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The Symphony Band

DONALD S. GEORGE, CONDUCTOR

SUNDAY, MARCH 27, 1977

4:00 PM

GANTNER CONCERT HALL

OVERTURE TO "BEATRICE AND BENEDICT"

Hector Berlioz

The opera story concerns the difficulties encountered by army officer Benedict in his efforts to win the heart and hand of fair Beatrice. Berlioz, in his memoirs, said of "*Beatrice and Benedict*," "I had taken the book from '*Much Ado About Nothing*' and added the songs and episodes of the musician. Critics, some expressly from Paris, praised the music warmly. Some thought the dialogue was stupid. It was copied word for word from Shakespeare." The overture consists of three movements, contrasting comedy and romance in an interesting manner. The first movement, with its gay, scherzo-like rhythm, is of a light nature, in keeping with the subject matter of the story. The second movement is somewhat slow and sustained, romantic in content. The third, an *allabreve allegro*, is definitely related to the thematic material of the first movement. The arrangement for concert band is by Franz Henning.

DIES NATALIS

Howard Hanson

Dies Natalis, for band, is in the form of an introduction, chorale, five variations and finale, based on the ancient and beautiful Lutheran Christmas chorale-tune, celebrating the birth of Christ. It was performed for the first time in the Eastman Theatre, April 7, 1972, by the Eastman Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Donald Hunsberger for the 50th birthday of the Eastman School of Music.

Dr. Hanson has the following to say about the chorale-tune:

"I used to sing it as a boy in the Swedish Lutheran Church of Wahoo, Nebraska. This chorale has, without doubt, been the greatest single musical influence in my life as a composer. Traces of the chorale appear in my early orchestral work, *Lux Aeterna*, and in sections of my opera, *Merry Mount*. The chorale form has also influenced my *Chorale and Alleluia* for band and my fourth and fifth symphonies for orchestra."

FOLK SONG SUITE

Ralph Vaughan Williams

1. March - "Seventeen come Sunday"
2. Intermezzo - "My Bonny Boy"
3. March - "Folk Songs from Somerset"

Folk Song Suite reveals Vaughan Williams interest in the folk song movement which swept through England toward the close of the nineteenth century. The suite was written for the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall. After the first performance on July 4, 1923, *The Musical Times* reviewer commented, "The good composer has the ordinary monger of light stuff so hopelessly beaten." *Folk Song Suite* has become one of the true masterpieces in the repertoire of the concert band.

INTERMISSION

TRANSCONTINENTAL - March

Harry R. Hughes

ELEGY FOR SYMPHONIC BAND (1976)
Premier Performance

Ivar Lunde, Jr.

Elegy for Symphonic Band was composed in 1976 by Ivar Lunde, Jr., a member of the Music Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. The work was First Runner-Up in the 1977 American Bandmasters Association-Ostwald Band Composition Contest.

Mr. Lunde comments on his *Elegy* as follows:

"The *Elegy* was written as a spontaneous response to the news of the death of my father's two dear friends. The composition carries the inscription: 'In memory of Ivar A. Røed and Olaf Borge who died unnecessarily, summer 1976.' The composition depicts the struggle between life and death. The twelve tone theme is accompanied by a tonal chord progression that always seems to rise higher and higher towards heaven. The use of the minor sixth and the first tetrachord of the Phrygian mode gives the melody a sad and infinite character. The piece ends as it began with a short, soft, melodic climb to illustrate that in spite of personal sadness, life continues; however, the experience makes life more dear to us."

CHILDREN'S MARCH: "OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY"

Percy Grainger

The life, personality, and career of Percy Aldridge Grainger had a lasting impact upon the musical world. A confirmed eccentric, he was nevertheless a pianist of a very high order and a daring innovator in his compositions. Though he was an advocate of the contemporary, he maintained a link with the status quo in his research of folk music, rescuing from oblivion many gems which otherwise would have perished. It was in the setting of these tunes that he used his musical inventiveness to its utmost. *Over the Hills and Far Away* is one of a large number of compositions Grainger contributed to band literature. In this work, which he cast in a sunny, carefree mood, the composer put into practice certain theories he had tested during a nineteen-month stint as an army bandsman. He was of the opinion that it is in the lower octaves of the band and from the deeper and larger members of the reed family that the greatest expressibility is to be looked for. His intuitive understanding of the capabilities of the wind band is evident in all of his writing for that medium. *Children's March* was one of the first works originally composed for an American Band. It was completed in 1918 while Grainger was serving with the United States Coast Artillery Corps Band.

FOUR SCOTTISH DANCES

Malcolm Arnold

- I. Pesante
- II. Vivace
- III. Allegretto
- IV. Con brio

The Scottish Dances were composed early in 1957, and are dedicated to the BBC Light Music Festival. They are all based on original melodies but one, the melody of which was composed by poet Robert Burns. The first dance is in the style of a slow strathspey, a slow Scottish Dance in 4/4 meter with many dotted notes, frequently in the inverted arrangement of the Scotch Snap. The name, derived from the Strath (valley) of the Spey, was originally coterminous with the reel. The second dance is a reel which is quicker and has more smoothly flowing rhythms, lacking dotted notes. The third dance is in the style of a Hebridean Song, and attempts to give an impression of the sea and mountain scenery on a calm summer's day in the Hebrides. The last dance is a lively fling.

Four Scottish Dances has been transcribed for concert band by John Paynter, Director of Bands at Northwestern University.