

Tim Reynish



2007 Conferences

Between March and July this year I had the opportunity to visit 4 major wind conferences:

March 3 – 4	Deutsches Bläserforum, Stuttgart, Germany
March 28 – 31	CBDNA Conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
June 28 – July 1	BASBWE Conference, Glasgow, Scotland
July 8 – 14	WASBE Conference, Killarney, Ireland

Below you will find reviews of each of the above events, together with the text of my presentation on new repertoire 2005-2007, given at the WASBE conference. Click on the links to go to the different chapters.

[Deutsches Bläserforum](#)

[CBDNA](#)

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[2005-2007 Repertoire](#)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Reynish'.

Tim Reynish
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**Deutsches Bläserforum, Stuttgart, Germany
3-4 March 2007**

Some years ago in WASBE we held a questionnaire of members, and were advised that many wanted more national activity in between conferences, concerts, clinics, discussion forums. The German WASBE chapter under the leadership of Eduard Oertle and Walter Ratzek have tackled this with two wind forums, one held in Dortmund and the second in Stuttgart on the 3rd and 4th March 2007. Four concerts, two workshops, a repertoire lecture and masterclasses on trumpet with a Members meeting made up the programme; two world premieres were featured, one a consortium commission put together by Eduard Oertle and WASBE Germany. This weekend was an object lesson in what should be happening in WASBE world-wide.

POLIZEIMUSIKKORPS BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG
Conductor Toni Scholl

In einem anderen Licht	Stephen Melillo
Danseries	Kenneth Hesketh
The Year of the Dragon	Philip Sparke
Yiddish Dances	Adam Gorb
Jazz Suite	Manfred Schneider

The Conference began with a world premiere of a work by Stephen Melillo, sumptuously scored and very exciting, stopping rather suddenly and taking the audience by surprise. Melillo's film score techniques were very much in evidence. Three works from England followed, all three benefiting from the clear direction of Toni Scholl and the expert playing of the Police Band. I could not help thinking that professional players bring a clarity to wind music which is refreshing, though there were balance problems. Players of side drum, cymbals and bass drum, as well as of the heavy brass, must realise that their job is to support most of the time and not dominate. On Sunday morning, the brass and percussion of the State Opera Orchestra gave an object lesson in careful balance and textures.

The **Hora** in **Yiddish Dances** was I felt too fast. I have danced it on a starlit December night on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, and it was slow and sensuous, and I know the composer likes it like that (longer and more royalties, he says). However, Toni reckoned that he had a Rumanian in the band who claimed that in that country they dance the **Hora** at this faster speed; *vive la difference*. I found the **Jazz Suite** disappointing, but I am no jazzer so perhaps it works for some.

BLÄSERPHILHARMONIE HEILBRONN
Conductor Marc Lange

Il Judizio universale	Camille de Nardis
Sinfonietta for Symphonic Wind Orchestra	Axel Ruoff
Tuba Concerto	Edward Gregson
Sinfonia "Save the Sea"	Frigyes Hidas

Available on CD from www.blaeserphilharmonie-hn.de

Another well-balanced programme was chosen for the evening Galaconcert by the Heilbronn Philharmonic Wind was founded in 2003 and conducted by Marc Lange, another excellent former student of Felix Hauswirth. Already the group is well balanced and flexible and is tackling a wide range of good repertoire. The Nardis dates from 1878 when it won first prize in a composition competition in Italy. It is

pleasantly operatic, again with some great scoring but as with the Schneider I did not find its musical ideas interesting and convincing enough.

Axel Ruoff's **Sinfonietta** was a commission by a consortium put together by Eduard Oertle and WASBE Germany, and is a work of considerable substance. The portentous introduction is based on a repeated note with Wagnerian brass comments and a plaintive bass clarinet solo leading to an expressive cor anglais passage. The mood changes with an extended cadenza like passage for solo flute over menacing horn chords, interrupted by the ostinato this time beginning on timpani, and leading to a link into a scherzando, fleet arpeggii through the woodwind combining with energetic brass interjections. The ostinato is picked up by the sidedrum, and a more reflective almost Ravellian passage follows, winding down to a recapitulation of the opening material which dies away. The scherzando material follows and a grandiose chordal passage brings the work to a triumphant close. The whole work runs for a little over 15 minutes and is a major addition to the European wind repertoire. It is published by Strube Verlag on Munich and Berlin.

The first half ended with the **Tuba Concerto** by Edward Gregson, premiered in this version by the great John Fletcher at the RNCM years ago. It was given a thoroughly idiomatic performance by Steffen Burkhardt, well accompanied by Marc and the Philharmonie, though with some untidy articulation in the 16th note fanfares of the first movement and some slight ensemble problems.

It was good to be able to pay tribute to one of the great stalwarts of WASBE for over a quarter of a century, the Hungarian composer Frigyes Hidas, 1928 – 2007, who died four days later in Budapest. Hidas has contributed considerably to the medium, and his works have found a place in the international repertoire. He said of himself "I am the last Hungarian Romantic composer", and his **Symphony Save the Sea**, while wonderfully scored and constructed, might have been written over one hundred years ago. Can a composer ignore say the legacy of Bartok, Janacek or Stravinsky and write music which has a real integrity? I find his music sometimes very beautiful but all too often too sentimental rather than being full of feeling and sentiment. I asked a distinguished conductor if he ever programmed Hidas – "Too sweet" was the rejoinder, an opinion which I share albeit reluctantly.

STADTSORCHESTER STUTTGART Conductor Enrique Mazzola

In my Homepage for January, I wrote about the lack of leadership in the wind band movement; the concert on Sunday morning provided professional leadership in ample measure, a programme of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi transcriptions played by the augmented musicians of the State Opera to a completely sold out audience. This was a magnificent occasion; conductor Enrique Mazzola made absolutely no concessions to the fact that there were clarinets playing string parts, and as one colleague put it, he had no idea that wind players could tongue so fast. This was an object lesson in balance and phrasing.

LANDESBLASORCHESTER BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG Conductor Isabelle Ruf-Weber

I was only able to hear a rehearsal of the very fine Landesblasorchester Baden-Württemberg under the exacting baton, and ear, of Isabelle Ruf-Weber. Oliver Waespi's **II Cantico** has impressed me in Singapore. This is a fifteen minute tone poem which did not quite make my top selection of works for the Conference. After

an atmospheric start, perhaps inhabiting the territory of Respighi and Richard Strauss but clearly Waespi's own language, I find it loses its way in a rather discursive idyllic section, but it builds into an exciting finale returning to the material of the start.

Thomas Krause was represented by his **Die Tränen des Phoenix**, a work with fascinating sounds from bamboo flute among other unusual instruments. When the big tune does arrive, I find it disappointing, a rather trite melody over a simple popular harmonic progression. Trite is the word to describe the four chord trick that dominates Yasuhide Ito's Saxophone Concerto which is a great pity, since the first two movements show great imagination. I hope that this is made available to swell the growing number of saxophone concerti with wind. The concert ended with a second half of British works, Edward Gregson's **The Sword and the Crown**, some movements from Walton's **Façade** and the Holst **Second Suite**

CBDNA Conference
March 28 – 31, 2007, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

TOP EIGHTEEN WORKS

In his forward to the conference programme, President Jerry Junkin wrote that *“Michael Haithcock and his colleagues have assembled what will be one of the most exhilarating conferences in recent memory.”* For once the description on the packet was what we got inside; unusually this was not American hyperbole. There were many works which I would love to recommend but which I am leaving out to concentrate on two per concert. Unfortunately we were rarely given dates for the works, and never publishers, so for more information please contact the band or ensemble.

Bryant, Stephen	Stampede	Florida International University
Colgrass, Michael	Arctic Dreams	Texas Christian University
Daugherty, Michael	Raise the Roof (with solo timpani)	University of Michigan
Françaix, Jean	Hommage à l’Ami Papageno	Cincinatti Chamber Players
Gandolfi, Michael	Vientos y Tangos	Florida International
Grantham, Donald	Baron Cimetière’s Mambo	Small College Band
Gryc, Stephen	Passaggi (with solo trombone)	Hart School Wind Ensemble
Gubaidulina, Sofia	Hour of the Soul	University of Michigan
Mackey, John	Redline Tango	Central Michigan
Mackey, John	Turning	Texas Christian University
Newman, Jonathan	As the Scent of Spring Rain	Florida State University
Paulus, Stephen	Concerto for Piano & Winds	Indiana University WE
Phan, P.Q.	Race of Gods	Indiana University WE
Thomas, Augusta	Magneticfireflies	Central Michigan
Read		
Ticheli, Frank	Symphony no 2	Small College Band
Tommasini, Matthew	Three Spanish Songs	Cincinatti Chamber Players
Welcher, Dan	Symphony no 4	Florida State University
Zivkovic, Nebousa	Tales from the Centre of the Earth (solo percussion)	Hart School Wind Ensemble

“All we can do is to make things better for the next generation”
H.Robert Reynolds

It is a little over twenty-four years since I attended my first American music conference, the Michigan Music Educators Conference in Ann Arbor in 1983, and I was welcomed by Bob Reynolds with this philosophy for the future. With hundreds of sessions, clinics, concerts, I was amazed and immediately hooked on conferences and wind bands, a groupie for life. One memorable trip was at 6.am in freezing cold, crammed into a tiny car driven by Jerry Junkin to a rehearsal of the Michigan second band, with Karel Husa in front, off to hear a rehearsal of Karel’s virtuoso trumpet concerto. I was quite amazed at the virtuosity of the sololists, the band and of Jerry. Later back in Manchester we played the concerto with John Wallace as sololist, and in June I shall premiere a trumpet concerto I have commissioned from Marco Pütz with John Wallace again as soloist, another work in the attempt to make things better. One of our biggest problems is to let people know about such works, our

performances significant or otherwise are ignored by the musical press, we often do not write about our own new music, so here are my personal impressions of the programmes.

Packed into three and a half days were nine concerts, twenty three papers, four panel discussions and a video session on marching bands. In the concerts we heard fifty two works of which three were world premieres, three were transcriptions and fourteen were not by American composers. The overall artistic planning of each concert was impressive, with the usual aggressive virtuoso pieces set cheek by jowl with major repertoire works, such as a Krommer **Partita**, **Hammersmith**, **Dionysiaques**, Hindemith's **Konzertmusik** with organ solo, the Schoenberg **Chamber Symphony no 1**, and **Création du Monde**. Thus the Conference was very much about music rather than band, but I thought there were several performance issues which I believe are crucial to our survival and development.

TAMING THE DECIBELS

We do have a problem with the wind band, that of decibels.....in short we all tend to play too loudly. The reasons for this are five-fold, in part due to the brilliance of the medium with all of those primary colours jostling and competing, in part due to our choice of repertoire, in part due to the noisiness of our modern age, in part due to sheer laziness and in part due to poor conducting. We can learn so much from the great orchestral conductors of our time.

THE ABUSE, AND MISUSE, OF DYNAMICS

Gunther Schuller sums it all up, with reference to symphony orchestras, in his magnificent book, **The Compleat Conductor** (Oxford University Press).

"The abuse, and misuse, of dynamics is perhaps the most common evil in orchestral playing today being either tolerated or generated by our conductors. This is particularly ironic, since the technical abilities of modern players are so high that no claim could ever be made that subtle control is beyond their capabilities. And to excuse this dynamic laziness by saying "its more fun to play loud" or it makes a bigger effect" or "its more exciting" or more philosophically resigned – "it's just human nature", is insufficient reason and just plain laziness, carelessness.

It is at that very highest level of performance that a wealth of interpretative choices and decisions become available at least to the really sensitive intelligent and imaginative recreator. It is in this realm that there is not one pp, but many subtly different pps; not one f but many different kinds of fs, and not one slur but many different kinds of legatos etc. etc. The more basic point however is that it is pp not a p or a mf."

At the 2003 WASBE Conference, the late Wayne Rapiere, co-principal oboe for many years of the Philadelphia and Boston Orchestras, said that as a young player he used to sit in on rehearsals by Stokowsky to try to analyse why the performances were so great. He reckoned that Stokowsky had an incredible control of the architecture of dynamics, with two or three major climatic moments in a concert. I personally remember playing for Ferdinand Leitner in Brahms Symphonies, with our dynamic range extended incredibly – so that a fortissimo at the end was so much louder than a fortissimo at any other time in the work.

BALANCING THE BRASS

Max Rudolf puts it very clearly:

*"In most halls, the sound level of trumpets and trombones is just right **if the conductor barely hears them**. The same is true for horns in piano passages, while they often must be encouraged to bring out a forte marcato. Woodwind soloists*

should hit the conductor's ears quite strongly to make sure that their sound carries into the auditorium. This, of course, must not be accomplished by forcing the tone, which would hurt the instrument's sound quality and intonation. The solution lies in having the accompanying instruments play more softly...".

Eric Leinsdorf in another of my bibles, *The Composer's Advocate*, makes two excellent points about dynamic levels:

VERTICAL DYNAMICS

"Composers often wrote one dynamic mark for the entire vertical scoring involved. They expected performers to adjust their instruments' relative strength according to the primary or secondary importance of their roles."

A SUSTAINED NOTE IS ALWAYS STRONGER THAN A MOVING VOICE

"There is one fundamental physical law that bears repetition, since so many musicians are unaware of it; a sustained note is always stronger than a moving voice....There is so much to be decided by the conductor who cares for a balanced performance that no amount of detail can possibly cover the permutations presented by such considerations as types of instruments (and players), size and acoustic of hall, seating arrangements, types of scoring...."

Pierre Boulez explains the process of decision making:

"There are times when respect for the musical text alone does not serve much purpose. You may have a secondary part written for a relatively weighty instrument, and a principal part written for a much lighter instrument. You have to change the dynamics. I have no qualm about doing that. As a fellow composer, I say to myself, "That's what he wanted to hear, but he didn't have enough experience to write down the exact dynamics,." So I change them, that's all.

The composer has written a certain number of instrumental lines and on the whole, he hasn't done so just to make a general amount of noise. He's composed those lines so that we can hear certain things, so that we can experience a certain hierarchy that's dependant on his writing. What I try to do is to bring out that hierarchy in a very precise way, even when its difficult."

Walter Beeler, one of the great band trainers of the last century said:

"Restraint is especially important in fast music; the spirit begins to suffer if played too loud. The audience tires, the players tire and it becomes a very determined piece. It's hard for a band to play with restraint because speed and excitement always tend to increase the volume. But if we rely on articulations, accents and rhythm (rather than volume) to bring about a condition of brightness, it will definitely be more musical."

RICHARD STRAUSS GOLDEN RULES

4 Never look encouragingly at the brass, except with a short glance to give an important cue.

6 If you think that the brass is not blowing hard enough, tone it down another shade or two.

I believe that the quality of the music and the level of performance by our top wind groups is second to none in the world of music. However, rather like our colleagues in the brass band world, we often go for noise to engender brilliance and excitement, and we lose the real energy of contrasts of orchestration, of clarity of little notes, of architecture of dynamics, diversity of accents. However, having said that, the quality all of the performances and repertoire at Ann Arbor was outstanding. I wish I had a group to play some of these works.

INDIANA WIND ENSEMBLE

Nine disparate works made up the first programme, Bach and Dvorak transcriptions, bouncily attractive new pieces by Prior, Phan and Puckett, each lasting about six minutes, Ives and Nelson to end on an upbeat, and a deeply felt elegiac cello solo by Michael Schelle, **Prayer: Schöne Maydl**, commissioned by Robert Grechesky, for me at eleven minutes just a little too lacking in contrast and hence too long. The major work was a large-scale romantic piano concerto by Stephen Paulus, with hints of energetic Prokofiev in the first movement, of the timeless quality of a Bartok slow movement in the second, *Tranquil with Mystery*, and some marvellous Ravellian wind swirls in the finale, *Driving*. None of these are quotations, just my reaction as I try to find signposts; the work is twenty minutes in length and has a lot to say, a great addition to the repertoire. My other favorite work here was **Race of Gods** (2005) by the Vietnamese composer P.Q.Phan, a fleet scherzando miniature tone poem.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Neatly concise programming by Central Michigan gave us five works, a golden *oldie* in **Hammersmith**, here given a fine reading by John Williamson, which perhaps did not quite plumb the depths of the serenity of Holst's very slow and very quiet indications. Gillingham's **No Shadow of Turning** had some gorgeous writing, full of sentiment, in the introduction, but for me, became too sentimental when quoting the hymn *Gentle is Thy Faithfulness*. I need to hear Augusta Reed's **Magneticfireflies** again, but it seemed to me to be a first-rate attempt to write for schools in a contemporary idiom. The Concerto in this programme was the **Rhapsody** by Frigyes Hidas, a nice tribute to a composer who unfortunately died in February. This is a well-constructed piece for Bass Trombone which eschews the sentimentality of much of Hidas' music, and is a more than welcome addition to the repertoire for that instrument. (There is another fine bass trombone concerto by Marco Pütz). The final performance was **Redline Tango** of John Mackey, which is always exciting in performance or on disc, given here full vim and vigour.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY WIND ENSEMBLE

The problem with conferences is that there are frequently hidden agendas to the performances; here the ensemble had suffered a nightmare journey the day before, arriving at their hotel after midnight. They were really tired, and as a result, there was a charm and laid-back quality about their playing which I thoroughly enjoyed. In the Dahl **Sinfonietta**, a masterpiece of our literature which I have always found a little heavy and dull, there was a transparency and elegance which revolutionized my view of the work and made me want to revisit it. This light dance-quality so often missing in our wind performances was a feature of the Gandolfi **Vientos y Tangos. Octandre** by Varèse still shocks after some eighty years; it was played here by a group of professors and students, its energy nicely offset by a Grainger trilogy with **Folk Tune** which I had never heard before. I enjoyed Steven Bryant's **Stampede**, echoes of Copland and every cowboy film ever seen, full of good humour and played here with a nice feel for the idiom. I very much enjoyed the control, balance and wit of this group and their conductor, Roby George. Perhaps lack of sleep would be the answer to the intense dynamics of many wind groups, and like our England cricket team, they should all party the night before a concert.

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Under the energizing baton of Bobby Francis, TCU gave us an attractive mix of works and began with a choir singing the piece on which Grantham's **Trumpet Gloria** is based, a nice touch. I enjoy multi-faceted programmes if there is at least one major symphonic work to concentrate on, and preferably a concertante piece as

well; here we had both, the spiky sonorities of Hindemith's **Kammermusik Nr. 7** for organ and ensemble contrasting sharply with the noble expanses of Michael Colgrass's **Artic Dreams**. A colleague who has performed the work three times said that this was the best choral contribution he had heard, and certainly the nuances of the score, sometimes lost in recordings, came into full play in the splendid Hill Auditorium. They gave us an upbeat beginning and end with the Grantham and the Ives **Country Band March**, and a pool of serenity in the middle with **Ye Banks and Braes**, but also another new work, a premiere of **Turning** by John Mackey; strong, lyrical, intense, full of sentiment but not sentimental, this is a wonderful addition to the pitifully small repertoire of short slow works for band.

CINCINATTI CONSERVATORY CHAMBER PLAYERS

We are forever in Rodney Winther's debt for his research which gave us *An Annotated Guide to Wind Chamber Music*, recently published by Warner Brothers and an essential part of any library. Here he brought a clever five-work programme, two contemporary works preceded by an early 19th century classic, and a second half which contrasted the Gallic wit of Jean Françaix with the Austrian intensity of Arnold Schoenberg. Performances were excellent, neat, and tidy, but I found the Krommer **Partita** lacked the charm of phrasing which is so essential to this most elegant of composers, and although superbly balanced in the woodwind, the problem of the contemporary horns in the wind ensemble was not always solved, here or in the Schoenberg. I need to hear the **Between Blues and Hard Places** again before I can assess this world premiere, but I very much enjoyed hearing live the **Three Spanish Songs** by Matthew Tommasini again. Looking back over the week, Terence Milligan's unobtrusive direction of the very funny **Hommage à l'Ami Papageno** was as delightful as anything in the conference, and took me back to a performance in Manchester with the composer at the piano. Funny music is quite hard to bring off, but the CCM Chamber Players managed it here and largely in the Krommer, where more risks with dynamics and phrasing might have paid off. I wonder whether stage-shifting could have been smoother – I always find long gaps watching chairs, stands and music moving about quite distracting.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SYMPHONY BAND

No such problems beset the start of this concert, two Takemitsu fanfares enclosed Milhaud's little masterpiece, each following without applause. This restrained first group gave way to the exuberance of Michael Daugherty's **Raise the Roof for Timpani and Symphonic Band**, enthusiastically energetic in performance by Michael Haithcock and the home team and the only work of the week to be awarded a standing ovation; if you like Michael Daugherty music, you will love this macho concerto. The second half just included two major statements, **Hour of the Soul** by Gaubuldaina which was impressive but needs repeated hearings, and a fine reading of **Dionysiaques**. There is an energy and excitement about the Michigan Band which sweeps the audience along whatever the repertoire, and while I prefer the clarity of the smaller wind ensemble, the Michigan performances have a maturity and depth which was there under H. Robert Reynolds and has been fostered and developed by our wonderful host for this conference, Michael Haithcock.

SMALL COLLEGE INTERCOLLEGIATE BAND

So to the final day, and a programme of three works by composer/conductor, Fank Ticheli, with Grainger and Grantham as the filling in a double sandwich. Ticheli is energetic and charming, his music-making fun and full of interest. His new work **Nitro** might be described as minimal Copland; subtitled a **Fanfare for Band**, this is a very useful addition to the repertoire of 'openers'. Grainger's **Children's March** was nicely paced and pointed, Grantham's hilarious *moto perpetuo*, **Baron Cemetery's Mambo** was very amusing, and they enclosed Frank's **Sanctuary**, beautifully played

and yet for me a little too sweet and sentimental – that word again. It is based on the idea of Granger's **Colonial Song**, his own **First Sentimental**, so perhaps I should not grumble. No grumbles about his **Symphony no 2**, commissioned to honour Jim Croft on his retirement, and now an astonishing four years old. Frank has a real gift for writing what works and sounds good, as someone said, a skill born of being a natural conductor. The students sounded as if they had had a ball with Frank throughout the week.

THE HARTT SCHOOL WIND ENSEMBLE

University of Hartford.

This concert was loud, as was their concert at the Eastern Division Regional Conference last year. Many wind bands play too loud, and this is one of the loudest. The missed point is that the excitement of the wind band, or of any ensemble, is not in the noise level, which just becomes boring, but the detail, the *crescendi* and *diminuendi*, the variety of accents, the colours of double reeds and weaker percussion, the intensity of the inner harmonic progressions. Bands and orchestras must also consider the acoustic; the New York premiere of Corigliano's *Circus Maximus* in Carnegie Hall was thrilling, but I was glad to have my hearing aid in – turned off! A year later, the magnificent Strathmore Arts Centre near Baltimore could take every nuance of the score with ease and comfort.

Some time ago I went to hear a rehearsal and concert by Sir Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra of **Blood on the Floor** by Mark-Anthony Turnage. Both composer and conductor were excited by the percussion kit, the electric guitar, electric keyboard and the heavy brass, and ignored the fact that sitting the other side of the stage was a small group of strings, wind and harp, totally inaudible. I felt so strongly that a reduction in the noise level of 10-20% just *some* of the time would have thrown the climaxes into huge relief and allowed us to hear the multicoloured scoring of these weaker instruments in the breathing spaces between the peaks.

Glen Adsit and his players are first rate, he gets incredible accuracy, the sound is very loud but never forced, the passage work virtuosic. However, I could not help contrasting the end of Joseph Schwantner's **Recoil**, which ended with a lower intensity than the previous three minutes and left the audience dazed, not knowing whether to clap or not; there was a performance later that evening of another very noisy piece, John Mackey's **Turbine**, in which the high decibel factor was off-set by enormous care over the detail of *crescendi*, *subito piano* or different types of accent. There was a growing sense of inevitability at the end which led us inexorably onwards with a louder *ffff* than any previous *ffff*, the kind of growth that we feel at the end of Stravinsky's *Danse Sacrale*. I learned such a lot about timing from our opera producer in Manchester, who would insist that we keep the energy level throughout a scene sustained and rising in intensity.

That being said, this was indeed a high velocity programme, and the exciting virtuosity of Scott Hartman, trombone in the premiere of *Passagi* by Stephen Gryc and of Ben Toth in **Tales from the Centre of the Earth** by Zivkovic saved me from sheer boredom of being battered by noise. Glen gave a fine apologia of why he selected these three works, but it was heavy duty even for those of us going deaf. **Recoil** I need to hear again, perhaps in a bigger but dryer acoustic, the Gryc and the Zivkovic I would programme if I had a great ensemble. They are both terrific. It was a nice touch to commission a Lullaby from Joe Turrin (check out his opera **The Scarecrow** on his website) to go with Bassett's **Lullaby for Kirsten**, conducted lovingly by H Robert Reynolds.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY WIND ORCHESTRA

This was a concert in which I enjoyed every aspect, the programming, performances, balance, phrasing, sound world. If I have the smallest quibble it was in the slightly heavy handed accompaniment to the Kurt Weill **Violin Concerto**, a lighter touch from Rick Clary, one of my favorite wind conductors, would have made this score more transparent and have brought out the bitter-sweet wit of Weill's accompaniment.

Grantham's **Court Music** is a fun piece, full of engaging sounds, and I have already commented on the performance of John Mackey's **Turbine**. This work will always be exciting, it inhabits that typical wind world, and we all do 'exciting' very well, but Mackey includes a huge amount of detail that can get lost very easily but was featured strongly here. In contrast we heard Jonathan Newman's beautiful **As the Scent of Spring Rain**, at last a miniature, full of sentiment but not sentimental. We are lucky at present to have so many older and younger composers of real talent and imagination writing for us. One of the most skilled is Dan Welcher, and it was a considerable experience to hear such a fine performance of his **Symphony No 4** to go alongside Frank Ticheli's **Symphony No. 2**, two major musical statements of our time.

Rick Clary has built on the legacy of Jim Croft and turned this ensemble into a very potent force in wind music, retaining the quality of sound and elegance of phrasing which was such a feature, and adding on perhaps a greater efficiency, accuracy in pointing rhythms, a wider dynamic range, in all a maturity which we find in the President's Own or in the best of the world's symphony orchestras playing at their peak. While I was delighted with most of the programming of all nine concerts, and thrilled as ever by the playing, we in the wind world perhaps have one more journey to make towards mature performances which are not over-stretched and over-exuberant, in which there is no testosterone-fuelled competitive element.

THE FUTURE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IS IN THIS ROOM

One great legacy from the 2005 New York Conference was the welcome publication by Donald Hunsberger of essays on the Wind Band in and around New York 1830-1950. Many of the papers for 2007 are available on the CBDNA website in extract. I hope they too get published and I hope that Michigan can post the composer's panel that ended the meetings, a fascinating discussion between Joseph Schwantner, Matthew Tomassini, Michael Daugherty and Dan Welcher. It was extraordinary that we could have had a second panel with Michael Colgrass, Jonathan Newman, Stephen Bryant, John Mackey and other composers who had premieres; this is where a conference really earns its corn, fostering the interaction between composers, conductors and players. Michael Daugherty's bon mot about the future of contemporary music met with enthusiasm, but mine was tempered by sadness that earlier he referred to Stockhausen "your favorite composer", which was met with loud laughter. Stockhausen is not my favorite composer, but I worry when I hear sentimental tunes and clichéd chord progressions whether for school or university band, in works which ignore what has been written during the past century, whether by Varese, Stravinsky, Bartok or even Stockhausen - (I am becoming a grumpy old man.)

FINAL THOUGHTS ON DYNAMICS

If we as wind band conductors are to have a future in the world of real music, we must develop a more sophisticated approach to our music making, starting with the problem of noise. I wanted to ask the composers panel whether they felt we were doing a good job in interpreting their dynamics. Like Mozart, most composers write forte or fortissimo right down the score, whether for flutes, oboes, trumpets,

trombones, snare drum or cymbals. Leinsdorf wrote: *Another kind of balancing problem arises from conventions of classical scoring and is sometimes apparent even in the early twentieth century. Composers often wrote one dynamic mark for the entire vertical scoring involved. Rare are the instances of graded dynamics in scores prior to 1850. They expected the performers to adjust their instruments' relative strengths according to the primary or secondary importance of their roles.*

I think they still do today, since it is impossible for a composer to write sensibly all of the nuances which will balance a chord perfectly with a dozen different family types in a myriad of different situations. We need to invite our players to address these problems, and we need to carefully balance every measure. The mature wind orchestra and the careful conductor will automatically edit these markings.

THE SINGLE FORTE IS OFTEN OVERDRIVEN

On the subject of loud music, Leinsdorf sums up the dilemma in a discussion of the Beethoven Seventh Symphony:

The optimum effect is created by a well-considered scale of dynamics. Achieving it requires a firm resolve that nothing before bar 427 of the finale in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony shall reach the triple-forte level. There are many ff spots in the preceding forty minutes of play, and every one of them is a bit different. The scoring is different, the emphasis is different and the impact should be different. Perhaps the most decisive nuance in this whole reckoning will be the single f, which is, alas, often overdriven.

FOOLISH SCRAPINGS AND MEANINGLESS NOISE

Leopold Mozart re-inforces this view of *forte* when he writes *...wherever a forte is written down, the tone is to be used with moderation without foolish scrapings.*

And finally it is worth repeating a couple of bon mots on crescendo. First Gunther Schuller, who writes:

As the crescendo is initially held back and then gradually released to run its course, its ultimate resolution, when it finally arrives, is all the more exciting, dramatic and rewarding.

And lastly Von Bülow who insisted that *Diminuendo* signifies *forte*, *crescendo* signifies *piano*.

The excitement comes from contrast, not from noise. I am often laughed at with my T-shirts that state *forte is a light dynamic*, and one distinguished conductor at Ann Arbor quoted me as asserting that *forte is a soft dynamic*. Baloney – its light! Professor Musin in St Petersburg used to say memorably that *forte* is a characteristic. We would do well to remember that in Italian the word means strong, not loud or heavy. Steve Bryant came up with a wonderful description of dynamics as implying energy.

BASBWE INTERNATIONAL WIND FESTIVAL
GLASGOW 28th June – 1st July 2007

Thirteen concerts, thirteen lectures, two conducting workshops, one repertoire session – this was a Festival covering a huge range of music and ensembles, from the refined Harmonie of Haydn and Beethoven to Big Band Jazz, the latest contemporary concertos from USA and the Czech Republic, world previews anticipating the following week's WASBE Conference, a fairy story with a twist, and a world premiere from one of England's leading composers, James MacMillan.

Our American colleagues tend to put catchy slogans to their conferences –

INSPIRE – INVIGORATE
OR
REFRESH - REVITALISE - REJUVENATE
OR
CONDUCTORS & COMPOSERS - CONNECT
& CHANGE

I have never attended any wind conference or Festival with such a wealth of professional virtuosity on display in the service of really great music. Whether it was for wind was irrelevant, but there were no strings attached, and my list below of new repertoire which I recommend exploring is limited and leaves out a great deal of super music which you might prefer. Anyway, this is my choice for my next dozen concerts, if I had them to conduct. I have omitted some remarkable chamber works, such as *Cinderella* or the Haydn, as well as all that jazz....and what a wealth we were offered in clinics and sessions.

CONCERTOS.

An Elegy for Ur (solo oboe)	Edwin Roxburgh	Maecenas
Brooklyn Bridge (solo clarinet)	Michael Daugherty	PeerMusic
Dead Elvis (solo bassoon)	Michael Daugherty	PeerMusic
Flute Concerto	Marco Pütz	Bronsheim
Image in Stone (mezzo)	Stephen McNeff	Maecenas
Trumpet Concerto	Marco Pütz	Bronsheim
Tuba Concerto	Juraj Filas	James.gourlay1@ntlworld.com

WORKS FOR SCHOOL BAND

Aeolian Carillons	Edwin Roxburgh	Maecenas
Choralis Tonalis	Marco Pütz	Bronsheim
Dance Sequence	Marco Pütz	Maecenas
Deep Soul Diving	Emily Howard	Maecenas in December
Freya's Call	Andrew Duncan	www.lewismusicpress.com
Hymn for Africa	Peter Meechan	www.petemeechan.com
Passacaglia	Timothy Jackson	Maecenas
Sun Low Over water	Bill Connor	bilmus@tiscali.co.uk
Tales from Andersen	Martin Ellerby	Studio

The opening gala concert set the scene, given by the Wind Orchestra of our hosts, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with four conductors and two amazing soloists. Maximiliano Martin, principal clarinet of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and James Gourlay, Director of Music at the RSAMD.



Martin was the soloist in the British premiere of Michael Daugherty's *Brooklyn Bridge*, an exciting extrovert score which was given full dramatic treatment by both soloist and orchestra.

James Gourlay has been assiduously building a repertoire of original works for solo tuba, and the Concerto by the Juraj Filas is a terrific addition to the repertoire. There is no doubting Filas' heritage, snatches of Dvorak, Smetana, Martinu and Janacek might be discerned; the melodic invention is engaging and there is a refreshing energy and spontaneity about the piece which will bring it many admirers. Gourlay shared the conducting honours with three members of RSAMD staff. Bryan Allen, Head of Brass and co-artistic director, Brian Boddice who is Scotland's leading wind orchestra conductor, and the Principal of the RSAMD, John Wallace, so standards of performance were guaranteed.



The concert itself was a game of two halves, starting with *Sowetan Spring* by James MacMillan and Edwin Roxburgh's *Time's Harvest*, two uncompromising contemporary works, the Roxburgh aimed at a good High School or Honours Band, while the MacMillan demands professional players on top form, especially in the horn section. Both were given convincing performances. In the second half, the musical mood changed, the Filas *Tuba Concerto* was always interesting, often charming, Whitacre's *Cloudburst* seemed old fashioned and out of place as did the wind band arrangement of Malcolm Arnold's *Peterloo*.

COMPOSERS IN RESIDENCE



One exciting factor in conferences or festivals is the chance to meet composers, hear them talk about their works either formally or informally. Philip Sparke, Guy Woolfenden, James MacMillan, Rory Boyle, Eddie McGuire, Raymond Head, Stephen McNeff, Martin Ellerby, Christopher Noble, Oliver Searle and Emily Howard were all present, and there were two composers featured "in residence", Marco Pütz and Edwin Roxburgh.

The Friday morning concert by Our Lady's High School Wind Band provided two BASBWE premieres, a teasing exploration of a large number of keys in Marco's beautifully controlled *Choralis Tonalis*, while Andrew Duncan's *Freya's Call*. Duncan is better known for his brass band repertoire, but this work would be well worth

school bands looking at. His publishing house is Lewis Music, 124 Newmarket, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scotland, HS2 0ED, Tel +44 (0) 1851 706549 :: sales@lewismusicpress.com

No time for lunch at this conference; from 1.p.m there was a concert again full of virtuosity, given by the RSAMD Faculty Wind Ensemble. Two world premieres here, the biggest for wind ensemble was Rory Boyle's angry *Behemoths*, a vicious attack on the proliferation of wind farms in some of Scotland's most beautiful; and hitherto unspoilt countryside. I am not a great devotee of wind quintets, but James MacMillan's early *Two Movements*, recently discovered, is a major find, though it will need a conductor of the caliber of MacMillan unless it attracts a lot of rehearsal time. Back to Daugherty for *Dead Elvis*, a wonderful spoof for solo bassoon on the music of the great man.

Rehearsals meant that I had to miss what looked to be another excellent programme by Brian Boddice and the West of Scotland Schools Concert Band, with Eddie McGuire's *Sirocco*, Marco Pütz' *Dance Sequence* and the world premiere of Edwin Roxburgh's glittering *Aeolian Carillons*.

JOHN WALLACE, PRINCIPAL, SOLOIST AND SECOND TRUMPET

So to Thursday evening and a pre-WASBE concert by the Irish Youth Wind Ensemble; I have always loved *Finnegan's Wake* by Archie Potter, one of the few really funny pieces in our repertoire, and our programme continued with another work by Pütz, the British Premiere of his *Trumpet Concerto*. This is a fine work in three movements, cast in a traditional language but as with all of his music, characterised by unexpected turns of phrase, and unusual harmonic twists. The slow movement is built on the Bach Chorale and we are left wanting more, The first and last movements are classical in structure, in regular sonata form,



It was a rare privilege to hear one of the world's greatest trumpet soloists working with a Youth Wind Ensemble, and despite the pressures of being Principal of the RSAMD, there he was on the same day at lunchtime, playing second trumpet to a student in the Stravinsky Octet. John always plays with fire, energy and humour, I remember a really funny performance of the Hummel many years ago, when he reduced audience and orchestra to waves of mirth. The concerto was played with panache, alone well worth the delegates fee as an object lesson in performance. I cannot wait to get the recording made by Phillippe Schartz and the Luxembourg Military Band, to be released at the official world premiere in October.

Marco Pütz has, I think, a knack of writing extremely well for solo instruments, and this concerto, like the Flute Concerto which we heard on Saturday, is a major addition to the repertoire. It was a joint commission between Schartz of the Royal National Orchestra of Wales and my wife and myself in memory of our third son, and the IYWE concert had two more commissions, the world premiere of Stephen McNeff's moving song cycle, *Image in Stone*, and Kenneth Hesketh's uproariously passionate Serbian lovesong with variations, *Vranjanka*. I am of course biased, but I think that all three works will prove to be very popular, and would recommend anyone looking for new repertoire to explore these works, whether traditional by Pütz, ethnic by Hesketh, or for voice and smaller ensemble, by McNeff.

CINDERELLA ON SATURDAY

Saturday at 9.30 found us again marvelling at the RSAMD student wind ensemble, giving a superb performance of Rory Boyle's tour de force, *Cinderella* for narrator, wind quintet and piano. It is hard to bring off and sustain a joke in music, but this version of Roald Dahl is quite brilliant. It was followed by the Poulenc Sextet, full of wit, charm and pathos, great programming.

TWO SLOW PREMIERES

We keep commenting on the problems of writing easy music for schools, and amusing music for all of us. Equally hard is writing slow music which does not become sentimental, and the lunchtime concert had premieres of two slow pieces. Tim Jackson's fine *Passacaglia* was originally written as the last movement of a work for thirty-two horns, and on hearing this I immediately commissioned the transcription for wind. It is a wonderful work of seven minutes continuous development, half the length of *S.L.O.W.* by Bill Connor, or to give it the full title *Sun Low Over Water*, another extraordinary bit of sustained writing with a filmic quality which never becomes Hollywoody. The Glasgow Wind Band gave assured performances of both, together with the Pütz *Flute Concerto* and a Shostakovich *Scherzo* arranged by Andrew Duncan.

A rehearsal sadly meant another missed concert, the joint Sheffield and Manchester Universities Band, playing Adam Swayne's *Goe Down, Hoe Down*, Holst's *Hammersmith*, two Grainger marches, a 70th birthday present to David Bedford of his *Ronde for Isolde*, and the latest commission by Charles Camilleri, *Il Nostro Tempo*.

... the more we encourage composers to use the wind ensemble, the better it's going to be, particularly with the generation of wind players that's out there now

Sir Simon Rattle

Quarter of a century ago when BASBWE was formed, we looked forward to the day when there would be a proliferation of wind orchestras to match the fine amateur symphony orchestras throughout the country. A lasting legacy of this Conference must be the newly formed Scottish National Wind Orchestras, conductor Russell Cowieson, who gave the Gala Concert on Saturday evening in another well planned programme, plenty of contrast

Secret Rites
Old Home Days
An American Song
Resonance

Akira Miyoshi
Charles Ives arr Elkus
Alan Fletcher
Christopher Marshall

Adagio
An Elegy for Ur
Spiel

Joaquin Rodrigo
Edwin Roxburgh
Ernst Toch

Two witty pieces, the Ives and the Toch, an extraordinary Japanese piece by a pupil of Dutilleux which in some five minutes encompasses a huge variety of styles and textures, and a new piece from Alan Fletcher which was for me the only disappointing performance, not quite capturing the mazy dreamlike quality of some performances I have heard. The end of *Resonance* was beautifully managed under the eloquent baton of Mark Heron, as the birds of the New Zealand rain-forest gradually swamped the calls of the wind and the horn chords.

UR OF THE CHALDEES

The Roxburgh is another William Reynish commission, a deeply felt work, at times elegiac, at times virtuosic, played wonderfully by the principal oboe of the Hallé Orchestra, and given strong support by the orchestra. This is essentially a cri de coeur about the despoliation of one of the oldest cities of the world, Ur of the Chaldees. Over 6,000 years old, it is now a military base, with a huge Burger King and Pizza Hut built on the incredible archaeology of the past.



Apart from the virtuosity of Staphane Rancourt, the outstanding performance was perhaps the Rodrigo *Adagio*, difficult to manage and catch the changes of mood, hard to balance, but this is a very good community ensemble of enormous potential, under a conductor who is developing all of the time. What a great project this is, and let us hope for some recordings, some broadcasts, some commissions and regular concert series.

SECOND MANCHESTER SCHOOL

Manchester and Sheffield Universities Joint Honours Band

It was sometimes difficult to get a real glimpse of the works in the repertoire session on Sunday morning. Rehearsals went on during the session, discussions with the audience and orchestra resulted in textures emerging which did not add much to our perception of the pieces. Jim Pywell's *Yellow Stripe* I would like to visit again, subjecting as it does Western compositional techniques to African musical influences, a kind of latterday *Sowetan Spring*. I could not make much of Chris Noble's *Furore* on a first hearing, and it was a relief to settle into the cosy world of Hans Christian Andersen and the *Suite* written by Martin Ellerby.

I already knew Daniel Basford's *Selections from Variations on a National Theme* though you don't hear much of the original. He is a bright young composer as are two other Manchester trained composers, Peter Meechan whose *Hymn for Africa* is another ingenious set of variations, aimed very successfully at less experienced bands, and Emily Howard whose *Deep Soul Diving* I commissioned. It came over strongly here, with an elegance lacking in a great deal of our wind music. Three composers to watch out; is there a Second Manchester School on the cards? Conductors were Chairman-Elect, Philip Robinson, Treasurer-Elect, Tony Houghton and Mark Heron whose input into our website, Winds and the Conference is enormous. BASBWE is in safe hands with the younger generation taking over.

I was unable to get to many of the lectures and discussions, but one I was delighted not to miss was on the **Wind Band Movement in Democratic Portugal** given by the very engaging and eloquent Andre Granjo. A passionate expert on the past of the Portuguese band movement, he is working hard on bringing the bands up-to-date with contemporary ideas and getting the best Portuguese composers to write. This was followed by West Lothian Schools Jazz Ensemble in a programme covering a wide range of styles. Jim Pywell asked me why wind orchestras cannot play as rhythmically as jazz bands, I always wonder why we don't have the same passion for our repertoire and performance as they do.

GUY WOOLFENDEN OBE, AT SEVENTY



To the final concert in the deadly position of Sunday afternoon. Guy as former Chairman knows well the dangers, and it seemed disaster would be compounded when NOW, the Northampton Orchestral Winds, were unable to get the money together for the trip to Glasgow. An inspired suggestion by the Artistic organisers resulted in a wind Dectet, and a delightful programme of Haydn and Beethoven, framing three chamber works by Guy. Wit, charm,

elegance, sometimes passion, all of the emotional elements which we look for in music were there, without the noise and tub-thumping that so much of our repertoire calls for. This was urbane music-making at its best, and the soloists of NOW were given their head and allowed to shine.

Guy wrote our first BASBWE commission back in 1983, *Gallimaufry*. Since then, he and Jane his wife and publisher, have contributed enormously to the wealth of music which has built up in the last quarter of a century, both through his own compositions and their publications. They have both been on the BASBWE Executive and have worked tirelessly for conductors, composers and players.

This Conference caught a lot of the excitement of the 80's and 90's, when we were hearing new works by Guy and others, hearing great bands emerging, getting involved in education and recording projects and developing links with WASBE, CBDNA and other associations. The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama has superb facilities second to none, with a wealth of studio and concert hall space and a great exhibition space for the Trade. Musically this was one of the strongest I can remember, with virtuosity fused with great composition and the strongest support from the bands and ensembles.

WASBE Conference
8th – 13th July, Killarney, Ireland

Manchester, Skien, Kortrijk, Boston, Kerkrade, Manchester, Valencia, Hammamatsu, Schladming, San Luis Obispo, Lucerne, Jonkoping, Singapore, KILLARNEY

This was a conference not to be missed! Various colleagues who dropped in for a couple of days confessed that they heard nothing to interest them. But as Kenneth Hesketh wrote *I only witnessed a small part of it but there was a serious mindedness about it that reminded me that the medium and those involved seem to be leading the genre to places where it can be taken very seriously and along side all the other forms of performing arts, which has got to be a good thing.* As a very distinguished American colleague put it *I hadn't attended a WASBE conference in twenty years and now, based on the Killarney experience, I'm back in the fold! What great hosts and what an interesting collection of experiences. The perfect complement to everything else that I regularly do.*

I personally don't need WASBE, but I am addicted, and every so often a performance, a premiere, a clinic, a class, changes my life and renews my passion for music, not just for wind music, but for music as an art, as a calling and vocation. The performance of Shostakovich on Thursday evening alone justified the existence of WASBE, and all those thousands of dollars spent on subscriptions, travel, hotels and tickets in the past twenty six years. In fact, of some eighty works in fourteen concerts, several were relatively unknown to me and were works which I would certainly programme next season if I had a group to conduct. Out of these, my top ten "must play" works are the very beautiful **Concerto for Cor Anglais**, the fine **Temples** by Waespi, Guy Woolfenden's charming **Divertimento**, the extraordinary Shostakovich and my own commissions or publications, **Image in Stone**, **Omaggio**, **Morning Music**, **Resonance**, **Versuche** and **Vranjanka**. I think that the following are well worth exploring also.

Big Jig	Thierry Besancon	BIM
Blaze	Steve Rouse	Manhattan Beach
Cheetah	Karel Husa	BMI
Concertino for Euphonium	Marco Pütz	Bronsheim
Concerto Dark Rain	Andy Scott	Astute Music
Concerto for Cor Anglais	Peteris Vasks	Ms
Divertimento for Band	Guy Woolfenden	Ariel
Fascinating Ribbons	Joan Tower	AMP
Fourth of July	Morton Gould	Chappell
Frenergy	John Estacio	Composer
Image in Stone	Stephen McNeff	Maecenas
La'i	Bright Sheng	G Schirmer
Miranda, Ariel, Umbriel	Ian Wilson	Ricordi
Percussion Concerto	Joseph Schwantner	Schott-Helicon
Prelude and Toccata	John Kinsella	OCMP
Resonance	Christopher Marshall	Maecenas
Shortcut Home	Dana Wilson	Ms
Temples	Oliver Waespi	Beriato
The Priest and his Servant Balda	Dmitri Shostakovich	Ms
The Spiralling Night	Joseph Phibbs	Ms
Three Spanish Songs	Matthew Tommassini	Ms
Versuche uber einen Marsch	Marcel Wengler	Maecenas
Vranjanka	Kenneth Hesketh	Faber

NOISE
An orgy of vulgar noise.....
Louis Spohr describing Beethoven's 5th Symphony

Five of these works I have to admit to not enjoying because of the noise levels. **Frenergy** was the opening minimalist piece of the International Youth Wind Ensemble, an arrangement by Fraser Linklater, superbly conducted by Glenn Price as was the Schwantner **Percussion Concerto**. For me the noise factor and the repetition palls, but take no notice of me, I have been known to walk out of a Steve Reich concert in boredom. I am full of admiration for Andy Scott's tour de force, **Dark Rain**, incredibly played by Chethams with Andy and Rob Buckland as soloists, but here, as in the Schwantner, I wanted to hear the rich palette of the wind orchestra, I wanted more contrast, more colour, not just noise. **Blaze** on the other hand is too short, and **La'i** might also benefit from a contrasting section. The composers can ignore me and Louis Spohr and take comfort from the undoubted success of Beethoven Five.

There were older pieces which it was great to revisit, Bennett's **Morning Music** and Ball's **Omaggio**, both of which I commissioned for WASBE at Boston in 1987. There were pieces that I need to hear again, the Kinsella, Phibbs and Ian Wilson, and there were pieces I just do not understand, including **La'l** and **Night Moves**, I think because of balance problems. I commissioned Phillip Grange's extraordinary **Concerto Sheng Sheng Bu Shi for Solo Clarinet Radical** and I conducted the first two performances, but I still am baffled by it. I am full of admiration for the virtuosity displayed by Sarah Williamson and the National Youth Wind Ensemble of Great Britain under their brilliant conductor, Phillip Scott, but while I think it is great that a WASBE Conference should come in contact with the *avant garde*, the proper place for the work would be in an ISCM Conference or the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, with smarter people than me to appreciate it.

IRISH YOUTH WIND ENSEMBLE
Conductors James Callaghan & Timothy Reynish
Soprano Norah King
Trumpet Mark O'Keefe

Finnegan's Wake
Trumpet Concerto
Vranjanka

A.J Potter
Kamillo Lendvay
Kenneth Hesketh

Interval

Prelude and Toccata
Image in Stone
Samurai

John Kinsella
Stephen McNeff
Nigel Clarke

I think it was Odd Terje Lysebo or Craig Kirchoff who suggested a daily late evening discussion at the bar in which conductors defended their programme planning. I cannot really comment on the opening concert, since I was involved in the planning of the programme, in conducting two of the works and the commissioning of three, and so I am wildly biased, but we worked hard to give audience and students a balance of experiences.

We started with a traditional military band “fun” piece, proceeded to a slightly gritty Hungarian concerto, premiered at WASBE in Manchester in 1991, virtuosically played by the Principal Trumpet of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and ended the first half with an eight minute ethnic dance with plenty of solos for everyone, constant mixed metres and lots of excitement. The second half began with the world premiere of a work by Irish composer John Kinsella which gave the students the flavour of the slightly austere world of Stravinsky, continued with a song cycle which for me balances beautifully that divide between traditional and contemporary writing, and we ended with a work originally premiered at WASBE in Japan in 1995, now regularly played as a sort of wind-world **Sacre de Printemps**. We tried for plenty of variety, chances for the individual players to shine and a different emotional impact and challenges with each work.

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI CCM CHAMBER PLAYERS

Conductors Rodney Winther & Terence Milligan

Octet Partita op 78

Franz Krommer

Dixtuor

George Enescu

Interval

Suite in D

Arthur Bird

The Nutcracker

Peter Tchaikovsky

Rodney Winther is a superb musician and technician, and he has fashioned the chamber ensemble of Cincinnati into a responsive and sensitive groups of the highest caliber. His technical equipment reminds me of conductors of the caliber of Maazel or Giulini, there is apparently nothing that he cannot demonstrate with a flick of the wrist or twitch of the torso, and yet I find myself often unmoved by the results. Like so many great conductors with super techniques, his players follow slavishly, and I long to hear some originality in phrasing, *rubato* which does the opposite of what we expect, an oboist or clarinetist who might say in a repeated passage “Hey, Rodney, I think it would be fun to try it this way”.

I guess I am incredibly jealous of his technical accomplishment and of the players in his group, but as with many of the great ensembles and conductors in the United States, I long for democracy, for freedom, perhaps for some bad manners. I remember Simon Rattle bringing the Mozart **Gran Partita** to a BASBE Conference with his City of Birmingham Wind. It was glorious music making, absolutely over the top, permissiveness ruled OK and I remember too the late Dame Thea King being furious with the quite unstylish and unclassical broadcast. I gather in the tour of South America that followed, the Mozart became more and more self indulgent, sensuous and amusing as he let the players express themselves, and then at the Proms when they returned, good taste prevailed again, but tempered with freedom of expression. It is a nice balance, freedom and control, and the Cincinnati group and the conductors have the expertise to explore much further stylistically. This is mere caviling and quibbling; the group was generous with time and expertise giving us four sessions in all, but as with their repertoire programme, their session with Bastiaan Blomhert, and a concert of lunchtime chamber music, throughout they presented music-making of the highest calibre, which for me just missed perfection. Don't miss the next WASBE Conference in 2009 when they will be our hosts.

GOTHENBERG SYMPHONIC BAND

Conductor Jerker Johansson

Saxophone Daniel Rodhe

Formerly the Gothenberg Homeguard Band, this group played with commendable precision, but also with an elegance of phrasing and balance, so that even lighter

music was attractively presented. They opened with the Overture **Maid of Orleans** by Soderman, arranged by the conductor Jerker Hohannson, and immediately we were struck by their enormous range of dynamics and timbre, and the Mendelssohnian lightness and charm. A movement by Svendsen showed their control of sustained line and low dynamics, as did the mainly light second half. However, they shone in the main work of the concert, **Versuche über einen Marsch** by Marcel Wengler.

Years ago I wrote to Hans Werner Henze to invite him to write a wind piece, and he recommended that I contact Wengler, a former student. He sent me a score of **Versuche** which I have programmed ever since, either just the march or the whole piece, now happily published by Maecenas. The work was written in 1981, and it received its first performance at the Festival of Contemporary Music (Steirischer Herbst) in Austria that year. Wengler wrote:

How can you bridge the gap between so-called contemporary music and more popular music known and used much more widely, and how can you make the music for our time more accessible to the layman? Answering these questions was worth a try.

The march used is an old German traditional march, in which misplaced metrical accents and altered phrasing cause chaos. On this Wengler develops a series of experiments, with hints of Berg, Stravinsky, Ravel, quotations from **La Valse** and **Espana**...does the Theme from *Harry Lime* appear also? The Gothenberg band gave a deliciously pointed performance in which Johansson extracted every ironic point with wit and charm. He is a fine conductor, demonstrative but not in any way heavy handed, and any band looking for a guest should consider Jerker.

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE WIND ENSEMBLE
 Conductors Frederick Speck and Dennis Johnson
 Cello Paul York
 Marimba Greg Byrne

La'l	Bright Sheng
Three Spanish Songs	Matthew Tommasini
Entrata	Kryzstof Pendereki
Day Signal	Toru Takeemitsu
Night Moves with solo cello and marimba	Frederick Speck
Partita	Robert Linn
Interval	
Blaze	Steve Rouse
Cheetah	Karel Husa
Fourth of July	Morton Gould
They are Here	Charles Ives
The Alcotts	Charles Ives
Fascinating Ribbons	Joan Tower

Monday evening brought an incredible programme from Louisville, with no less than twelve works. It was a game of two halves, the first contemporary often unmitigatingly so, the second a not too obvious tribute to Americana. **Cheetah** I had heard in initial stages of preparation, and it has to be played as brilliantly as this. Frederick Speck is a meticulous conductor, and the ensemble was on outstanding form, throwing Husa's virtuosity off effortlessly. His own concertante piece for cello and marimba soloists, **Night Moves**, I need to hear on disc, since from where I was sitting the balance did

not work, the marimba was too reticent. I had problems too with the balance in the Tommasini songs, since the soloist was quite far back in the group, good for ensemble but difficult for balance. (I hope I did not goof on this account in the McNeff.), Fred, with Dennis Johnson contributing a pleasant Ives item, contrived a concert which centred on the Grawemeyer composers Husa, Penderecki, Takemitsu and Joan Tower, and this was an intriguing, brilliantly played and conducted programme. However, I needed something substantial, I get tired very easily of constantly shifting idioms and structures, and had I been on the Artistic Planning I might have wrestled with Louisville and tried to persuade them to programme a major work somewhere, perhaps not from recent centuries.

ARTISTIC PLANNING NIGHTMARES

In fact I awoke soon after Conference in Western Ireland from a nightmare about Artistic Planning, with a brilliant idea (I thought) that WASBE should consider combining two or three ensembles in two or three concerts. For instance, it might have been a wonderful antidote to hear a Krommer **Partita** as the major work in the first half of Louisville, while a couple of Louisville pieces would have added spice to the super-cool chamber music concert by University of Cincinnati (and perhaps replaced the Tchaikovsky). Programmes might then be devised artistically, not dependant on the players available and the whim of the conductor. We could then think about music instead of wind music. I can remember discussions in advance of the Lucerne Conference, in which I proposed featuring Yuri Bashmet and Sabine Meyer playing different concerti with different ensembles, giving master classes on Brahms sonatas and finally joining in the **Kegelstat Trio**. The aim was to discuss music, not wind ensemble or wind band, but it did not work out.

Tuesday afternoon was given over to Percussion Ensembles and I pathetically escaped to the country. My noise threshold is quite low in my old age, but I gather that it was an exciting and entertaining concert

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY OF ARTS, JAPAN Conductors Masaichi Takeuchi and Jan van der Roost

Tivoli Festival Overture	Soren Hylgaard
Three Spanish Songs	Hayato Hirose
Sinfonietta	Jan van der Roost
Interval	
Fooga	Tetsunosuke Kushida
Pictures at an Exhibition	Modest Moussorgsky arr. Takahashi

I was disappointed with this programme, and I felt that if this was representative of the best literature emerging from the East in the past five years, then the Japan Band Association need to take stock and commission better composers and WASBE needs to extend its influence. I found too that the band uncharacteristically for a Japanese group a little sloppy. Intonation and ensemble suffered, though curiously in their repertoire session the following morning, when the repertoire was less exacting technically but more interesting musically, their playing improved. These technical shortcomings may also have been due to the two conductors who were diametrically opposed in methods, Jan van der Roost athletically exploring every possible gesture and inch of the podium, Takeuchi formal and controlled, and this together with a repertoire which stretched the players technically but rarely musically or emotionally led to an evening of disappointment. The Moussorsky had some fascinating sounds and some virtuosic playing, but suffered some truly awful cuts, imposed by timing restrictions. This was an inartistic decision, and quite spoiled the piece. I was

disappointed too that the group seemed hardly to experience the conference, whereas many other ensembles attended several concerts.

CHETHAM'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC
SYMPHONIC WIND ORCHESTRA AND CHAMBER CHOIR

Conductors David Chatterton and Martin Bussey
Robert Buckland and Andy Scott, saxophones
David Thornton, euphonium

Apparebit repentina dies Concerto "Dark Rain"		Paul Hindemith Andy Scott
	Interval	
Concertino for euphonium Rainland		Marco Pütz Joseph Phibbs

Chethams is the leading UK specialist music school, and the standards of performance are invariably excellent. We were assured then of playing and singing of the highest quality, with two conductors who did not obtrude and who controlled a difficult programme firmly. Somehow, however, for me the programme did not quite work. Hindemith at his academic dryest was contrasted with a noisy raunchy virtuosic concert for two saxophones, an assault on the ear which I suspect as audience you either love or hate. I admire the piece, but do not enjoy it; for any good University group with two fine saxophones to show off it is a must.

I am a devotee of Marco Pütz who has contributed enormously to the repertoire, especially of concerti. This is a great showcase, well worth investigating. The main work was *Rainland*, a cantata for three female soloists, chorus and band. For once the acoustic was too clear, I enjoyed it more in the recording from the Albert Hall or in performance at the Cheltenham Town Hall, both giving a bloom to the sound. Written for schools choirs, this is a traditional work with ingenious though conservative writing for band and chorus, again is well worth exploring by any amateur choir.

NATIONAL YOUTH WIND ENSEMBLE OF GREAT BRITAIN

Conductor Phillip Scott
Clarinet solo Sarah Williamson

Diaghilev Dances Concerto Sheng Sheng Bu Shi		Kenneth Hesketh Philip Grange
	Interval	
The Spiralling Night		Joseph Phibbs
	<i>World premiere</i>	
Omaggio		Michael Ball

Phillip Scott is a quite extraordinary conductor, tackling really challenging programmes with a wind orchestra average age of about 16 with a professionalism unique in UK and I would guess anywhere. His programme was of four works offering major technical and musical challenges, and seemed to be dispatched effortlessly. The Hesketh has gorgeous writing for everyone, as in all of his music, second and third players have great parts, and there is an impressionistic swirl of sound, again in this clinical acoustic laid a little clean and bare, but nonetheless convincing. Phillip's **Concerto** I am completely baffled by, I do not recall any musical events, I do not enjoy the sound world, I just sit back and marvel at the expertise of Sarah, Phillip and the Ensemble, and wonder how on earth I ever conducted it. It does need to be performed, it is a serious addition to the repertoire, and I need to revisit it seriously over a few weeks or months, or when I retire.

Joseh Phibbs is certainly likely to develop as a major figure in British contemporary music. A former student of Harrison Birtwistle and Steven Stucky, his is an original voice, and both works performed at the Conference are major additions to the repertoire. He likes the medium, wants to write more, and should receive a further commission as soon as possible.

Phillip argued his case for the works in the very informative programme, and pointed out that Michael Ball's **Omaggio** had been scheduled for performance at WASBE in Boston. There is a slight discrepancy in his notes, in that the performance was not cancelled by the group scheduled to perform it. **Omaggio** was put up for a repertoire performance by a major Washington military band, who found the first and last movements too difficult, proposed to play only the second, and so the decision to withdraw it was mine as the commissioning editor. The first movement is totally virtuosic, with teasing metric changes, the second is a heartfelt funeral movement which reminds me of the spirit of the slow movement of Elgar's second Symphony, while the third is a recreation of the Palio in Siena, huge fun, again virtuosic. We can only hope that good University bands, or professional bands, will take up the challenge after twenty years.

KILLARNEY CATHEDAL
CHETHAMS SCHOOL OF MUSIC DECTET & CHAMBER CHOIR
Conductor Martin Bussey

Mass
Pageant

Igor Stravinsky
Michael Ball

It was a great shame that so few braved the horse carts and the traffic grid-locks to attend this extra afternoon concert, with the ideal programme juxtaposition of the cool neo-classicism of Stravinsky and the red-hot virtuosity of Michael Ball. It was the premiere of **Pageant** which made me immediately commission **Omaggio** for the Boston Conference, and I was lucky enough later to be called in at the last minute to conduct it at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with the National Youth Choir. It is a wonderfully passionate extrovert work, which probably needs ideally a professional choir to punch the vocal lines through. It taxed the choir, but they will have learned an enormous amount from it, the Chethams players threw it off with aplomb. Again, any department with a fine mixed choir should consider this for performance, they will have a lot of fun in its challenges.

NANSET WIND ENSEMBLE
The Priest and His servant Balda
Dmitri Shostakovich
Edited by Odd Terje Lysebo

Opera – animation – figure theatre – choir – orchestra – soloists

Conductor Odd Terje Lysebo

Thursday was in fact one of those days where instead of being at WASBE we might have been at Salzburg, or Edinburgh, or any of the great music festivals. The NYWEofGB is probably one of the best wind groups in the world, and while Chethams Chamber Choir did not quite have the measure of the Ball, musically it was great to sit in the cool cavernous acoustic of Killarney Cathedral and listen to great music. The evening concert alone made the trip to Killarney worthwhile, a charming realization of the film music by Shostakovich to a story by Pushkin, using every possible theatrical device. This was creativity of the highest order, edited,

devised and brilliantly conducted by Odd Terje Lysebo who is one of the most inspirational and inventive figures in world wind music.

The result was an evening of the highest professional entertainment which could grace any festival world wide. I suspect that we were so taken up with the animated film, the fine singers and the huge grotesque puppets that many of us never noticed the sheer professionalism of the wind group. We had another chance to appreciate this in a late-night entertainment of songs and instrumental music by Weill, Eisler and Stravinsky. I have no comment except that I hope the group has the chance to tour. I would probably invite them to the next WASBE Conference immediately to give the US premiere.

BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONIC WINDS
Conductors Keith Allen and Guy Woolfenden
Percussion soloist Simone Rebello

University of Louisville 12 – Birmingham Symphonic Winds 12

It was a draw, in a high scoring game; Louisville paid homage to the Grawemeyer and faculty composers, Birmingham to some of the composers with whom they have been especially connected. They also had an excuse, because through some misunderstanding they thought that they were presenting a short programme of only nine works. To make up time they added three more pieces two by Guy Woolfenden who celebrated his 70th birthday rehearsing on the previous day.

Guy's new piece **Divertimento** I liked very much, three movements, the first terse and argumentative, the second lyrical, tuneful andwell....beautiful, then third an energetic dance. However, it was his performance of **Gallimaufry** which was for me the outstanding event of this concert and one of the best things of the conference, finely balanced and phrased, lovingly played by the band. Perhaps, the most exciting thing about this concert was the control by both Guy and Keith Allen of sonorities and balance. Hearing the orchestra and Keith's conducting develop over the past ten years has been fascinating, and they are now a well drilled musical ensemble capable of great musical playing. They are capable too of dreadful lapses in taste, such as their final addition of **Applause** the only work I believe to survive from Singapore and quite one of the worst pieces heard in what was a disappointingly mediocre conference musically. How could the artistic planning committee allow this to happen I do not know. Keith defended it by saying that he likes to stir up controversy – fine, but please don't do it by playing a really bad piece at a World Conference which I have spent good money to get to.

They opened with one of my favorite minimalist pieces Dana Wilson's **Shortcut Home**, and they included works by Jonathan Dove, Kit Turnbull, Fergall Carroll, Kenneth Hesketh, Eric Whitacre, Martin Ellerby and Andrew Boyesen; again as with Louisville I wanted something of substance to relax into, but this like the Louisville programme was always interesting and invariably well played and conducted. The soloist in Martin Ellerby's percussion concerto was the fascinating Simone Rebello, and we are truly lucky in UK to have Simone and Dame Evelyn, as well as Colin Currie and several other great percussion virtuosi.

ROYAL SYMPHONIC BAND VOORUIT, HARELBEKE
Geert Verschaeve, Conductor
Dimitri Mestag, Cor Anglais

Marc Vertessen, Clarinet

Prelude from Tombelene	Godfried Devreese
Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra	Peteris Vasks
Interval	
Divertimento for Clarinet and Band	Roland Coryn
Cantica de Sancto Benedicto	Jacob de Haan
World Premiere	

Concert 11 came from Belgium and was given by a band given the accolade of World Champion in the 15th World Music Contest Kerkrade in 2005. At the risk of being a little cynical, and recalling the American World Series in baseball, which only has USA teams, to win first prize in Kerkrade is certainly a tremendous achievement, and the band is excellent.

The opening work was scored for band by the composer's son, and reminded me that for the 2003 Conference we recommended to the groups participating a score from the younger Devreese, as well as from Roland Coryn. Both works were sound contributions to the genre, and I suspect that those of us outside Belgium should be investigating Coryn and his music. For me this **Divertimento** was too short, I wish it had been a Concerto and the ideas expanded. The great find of this concert was the **Concerto for English Horn**. I very rarely programme arrangements since there is so much original music which I will never have time to to conduct, but this concerto is absolutely gorgeous.

For the final work, the Band was joined by a joint choir from Chethams and Ireland, the Cantica de Sancto Benedicto by Dutch composer Jacob de Haan He is one of the most popular and most played wind music composers of our time. His compositions, mostly written on commission, are known worldwide – especially the works that are based on film-music-like combinations of styles. Oregon, his most performed composition, brought about his international breakthrough. His oeuvre for wind band further consists of compelling concert works with different grades of difficulty, short concertante works, didactic material for beginners, entertainment music, and marches. He also writes various arrangements of existing classical works and chorals.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WIND ORCHESTRA

Dame Evelyn Glennie, percussion

Glenn Price, conductor

Gerhard Markson, conductor

Frenergy	John Estacio
Percussion Concerto	Joseph Schwantner
<i>interval</i>	
Resonance	Christopher Marshall
Miranda, Ariel, Umbriel	Ian Wilson
Morning Music	Richard Rodney Bennett

Under the inspired leadership and organization of Glenn Price, the IYWO has begun to assume its proper place in the calendar of international youth events in music. Over fifty students from thirteen countries worked with Glenn who is one of the leading wind conductors of the world, and also with the vastly experienced Gerhard Markson, Principal conductor of the RTE National Symphony with a career

embracing 90 orchestras and many opera companies. They also had the invaluable experience of working alongside Dame Evelyn Glennie, who is undoubtedly one of the most charismatic musicians on the world stage.

I have commented elsewhere on the Estacio and Schwantner; the second half was conducted by Markson who, with no technical fuss creates great rhythmic precision, a fine balance and clarity of line, an object lesson to us all in control of his forces. **Resonance** by Christopher Marshall I consider to be a major work of the last couple of years, beautifully and tautly constructed, while **Morning Music** was here celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its premiere in WASBE at Boston, still for me an imaginative tone poem which is also a fine set of variations. Ian Wilson, like Marshall and Bennett, relished the sonorities available from a wind ensemble, and his work needs more hearings to be appreciated fully. At first hearing, it is taut, athletic music of serious intent.

SWISS ARMY SYMPHONIC BAND

Philipp Wagner, conductor

Jan Cober, Guest Conductor

Marsch Inf Rgt

March Winds

Big Jig

Dionysiaques

Interval

Temples

Remembering Serge Lancen,

Armando Blanquer and

Henk van Lijnschooten

Paul Huber

Derek Bourgeois

Thierry Besancon

Florent Schmitt

Oliver Waespi

arr Jan Cober

This was another great programme with something for everyone. It Philipp Wagner began with an amusing regimental march, stylishly played, which was followed by Derek Bourgeois' outrageous **March Winds**, dating from the first international conference of 1981. I always enjoy the outrageous musical puns and the spoof mock-heroic *nobilmente* of the trio, but this was my first ever wind band commission so I am biased – and it is for wind band, not ensemble.

Big Jig, an Irish Radio Fantasy is really good fun, the band fades into three different radio programmes, French, German and Irish, each with their own radio commentator, so that themes appear and collide with other material in an Ivesian way. This was a great way to take us into one of the masterpieces of the genre, **Dionysiaques**, here given a superb performance under Jan Cober.

The major work of the concert if not of the conference, opened the second half; **Temples** is Oliver Waespi's most recent work and shows a wonderful grasp of sonorities and control of structure. Over twenty minutes long, this is a symphonic work which I think will prove to be a tremendous addition to the repertoire for the large symphonic band. It has parts for cellos and basses, but Oliver, with a view to practicalities of performance, assured us that it was possible to do without.

Jan Cober's heartfelt tribute to three stalwarts of WASBE in the eighties, Lancen, Blanquer and Lijnschooten, would have been better placed earlier in the concert. Jan is a great conductor, and performances as good as these may well have convinced many that the three movements used were great music. However, as a wind band outsider, I feel that the medium has moved on in the last quarter of a century, and the right piece to end with for me would have been the Waespi or the Schmitt. As it was

we were wrenched from contemplation of great architecture in musical sonorities and plunged back into the world of educational and entertainment, albeit brilliantly realized by Cober and Wagner's brilliant band.

WRITING ABOUT MUSIC IS LIKE DANCING ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

Frank Zappa

Conference is the place to meet conductors and composers, to hear a vast range of music usually in excellent performances, and to argue about where the wind world is going.

At any Conference, we should return home inspired and invigorated, and the WASBE Conference in Killarney certainly achieved that as much as any I have ever attended. Some great performances, some great music, some great colleagues, the most beautiful countryside and the parties went on into the wee hours.

WIND PREMIERES 2005-2007

Killarney was the second WASBE Conference at which I was accepted to give an overview of new works in the previous two years. As before, my thanks are due to the many conductors and composers who sent information and sometimes scores and CDs of new works of significance premiered since the last WASBE Conference in 2007. With over 250 works proposed, my lecture merely skimmed the surface. If anyone needs more information, please get in touch at timreynish@tiscali.co.uk and I will try to respond as soon as possible. An additional excitement was the joy of attending four superb conferences, in Stuttgart, Ann Arbor, Glasgow and Killarney. Meeting composers and conductors, hearing new music, this is the very stuff of WASBE, BASBWE and CBDNA. Of course, there were many good or even great pieces played at the four conferences....of the new pieces, I would like to conduct Oliver Waespi's **Temples**, Guy Woolfenden's **Divertimento**, Passacagli by Timothy Jackson, the arrangement of the **Cor Anglais Concerto** by Peteris Vasks, the song cycle **Image in Stone** by Stephen McNeff and **Hymn for Africa** by Peter Meechan. There are other pieces at school and community level which are useful, and there are certainly a number at professional level. What a great year it has been.

ROLE FOR WASBE

It has been a fascinating and sometimes frustrating task to put together this biennial listing of new works for wind ensemble, fascinating because of the wealth of great music being composed, frustrating because of the lack of information sometimes available. Both WASBE and CBDNA give generous space to previews or reports of new pieces, but rarely do they give information on duration, orchestration and publication, so that the busy band director might well decide to save time and programme something that he or can find easily in the library. I have very few other contacts, with Europe or with Asia, so a great deal has to be achieved by trawling through the web. It would be wonderful if all of this information was collated officially and efficiently by WASBE and disseminated world-wide to all of the other wind associations as a WASBE resource.

OUTLINE OF LECTURE

My lecture concentrated on six areas
A-Z OF CONTEMPORARY WIND MUSIC
MAJOR COMPOSERS
REYNISH COMMISSIONING PROJECT
WORKS BY WASBE COMPOSERS & PUBLISHERS
THE JAZZ ELEMENT - CROSSOVER
BCM & JOHN MACKAY

VALENCIA SPAIN – VALENCIA IRELAND

One of the few things I remember from Geography was the teasing question "compare and contrast the climate of Valencia, Spain, and Valencia, Ireland". The answer was that it rains in Valencia Ireland and it doesn't in Spain. There have always been strong links between Ireland and Spain, so it was perhaps fitting to start the lecture with an A – Z of contemporary wind music beginning in Spain. WASBE held a conference in Spain in 1993, reportedly a huge success, but sadly we have learned little about Spanish music since. In Sweden I arranged three colleagues to give lectures, and they are still working in this specialized field, so for information on the Spanish scene go to their websites.

A IS FOR ALARCON – and MARCO POLO

The Dutch conductor and publisher, Frank de Vuyst, is editor for the major Spanish publisher, Piles, and also conductor of one of the principal Spanish wind orchestras. Frank sent me this summer a great video recording of the 2006 Certamen in Valencia, with a performance of **Marco Polo** by Luis Alarcon, premiered by Banda Sinfónica de la Unión Musical Utielana conducted by Frank. I played the audience in with this DVD, with its extraordinary range of colour, featuring as it does a number of ethnic wind, string and percussion instruments. This is to my mind a major addition to our repertoire. The sheer virtuosity of Spanish bands and the cut-throat competition in their contests results in some wonderful music. Frank de Vuyst has sent a scores of **Marco Polo** and **Preludio y Danza del Alba** for brass quintet and band, and mentions **De Tiempo y Quirnera** which I believe has been programmed by Felix Hauswirth. Alarcon is a composer to be watched.

Z IS FOR ZYMAN – and CYCLES

Samuel Zyman is a distinguished teacher from Juilliard, one of three Mexican composers to be included this year. I first came across Zyman's work when I joined a consortium put together by Gary Ciepluch to commission his **Duo Concerto. Cycles** was premiered in 2005 and is now available on a fine recording by Steven Steele and Illinois State on TROY 821. It is in a restless, jazzy style, the first of many crossover works featured in this talk, reminiscent in its changing metres of Gorb's **Metropolis** with which it shares a delight in colour and rhythmic urgency

MAJOR COMPOSERS

As a rough guide to "great" composers, I simply took a list of the winners of the Grawemeyer Award as a kind of blueprint for those whom WASBE might be inviting to write:- Currier, Kurtag, Tsontakis, Unsuk Chin, Saariaho, Kernis, Boulez, Ades, Tan Dun, Simon Bainbridge, Tcherpnin, Adams, Takemitsu, Husa, Joan Towers, Chinary Ung, Penderecki, Corigliano, Birtwistle, Ligeti and Lutoslawski are all award winners. Most of them are either dead or have never written for wind. When Frederick Speck was asked to put on a concert at Carnegie Hall including wind music by these "great" composers, he struggled to find repertoire – a pair of fanfares by Lutoslawski and Takemitsu, a new commission from Karel Husa, a CBDNA commission from Joan Tower, all of which he programmed brilliantly at WASBE, and an arrangement of a movement by John Corigliano, though he might have chosen a work by Chinary Ung, **Grand Spirals**. So a survey of composers of international stature who have contributed to our genre in the past two years will be sadly very brief. Since Singapore there has been nothing to match the excitement of the Corigliano Symphony no 3, **Circus Maximus**, the intensity of Simon Rattle's commission for the Berlin Philharmonic from Heiner Goebbels, or the intriguing works by David del Tredici and Richard Danielpour. Too many of our commissions in the past two years have been from academe.

David Chaitkin

Karel Husa

Christopher Rouse

Steven Stucky

Celebration

Cheetah

Wolf Rounds

Hue and Cry

As usual there seems to have been little or no national or international press covering these. However, Fred Speck was at Conference and performed **Cheetah** in his concert with Louisville, and Gary Green had hoped to be there to introduce **Wolf Rounds** to us all. There is a score of Steven Stucky's **Hue and Cry** in the WASBE Score Library, and a recording of his Concerto for **Percussion and Wind** for which WASBE was part of the commissioning consortium. **Hue and Cry** was a joint

commission between Eastman and Cornell, and is a short very energetic fun piece for wind ensemble without saxophones.

DAVID CHAITKIN

It is 16 years since WASBE last featured music by David Chaitkin, his **Summersong** was programmed in the 1991 WASBE Conference, played by the BBC Philharmonic conducted by Gunther Schuller. I find a wonderful luminosity and lyricism in his music and a refreshing delight in colour. Chaitkin wrote to me recently about his latest piece.

*My new **Celebration** for winds was indeed premiered on March 4 by the U.S. Marine Band, which commissioned it. The piece, in one movement, is about 12 minutes in duration, and scored for 23 wind instruments and a contrabass. I enjoyed writing for the same ensemble (minus the bass) so much in **Summersong** that I decided to have another go at it.*

To this tiny group I would add two other works which I think have stature. First I would like to play part of **Gleams from the Bosom of Darkness** by the Israeli composer, Lior Navok. His music was described recently by the Boston Globe as *colorful, haunting, accomplished and exciting*. **Gleams** actually dates from 2002, but its premiere is recent. It is an extraordinary bit of writing and one of the most exciting finds for me in this two years.



Richard Danielpour is another New Yorker, one of the most distinctive voices of the American scene – the first movement of his **Voice of the City** was premiered in 2005, and I very much hope that he will finish the second movement and that we can hear the whole work this Fall. In the first movement, jazz elements, hints of Bernstein in the funky accompaniment, perhaps of Varese in the obsessive little opening phrases, bitonality, minimalism but with plenty of variety, all rubbing shoulders in what I find to be a compulsive language. This is a portrait of the City as a jungle

OPERA – BANDANNA & THE SCARECROW

Perhaps the most exciting wind ensemble events of the past two years has been in the field of opera with one major recording of Daron Hagen's **Bandanna** and a series of productions of Joseph Turrin's **The Scarecrow**.

I was contacted during the year by Joseph Turrin with details of **The Scarecrow**. You can hear the whole opera on his website, <http://www.josephturrin.com/music.html> This is a major addition to the repertoire, the overture itself would make an excellent concert number, and the first line of the first aria must bid to be one of the most memorable ever.

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG WITCH, THE WOMEN SNARLED AT ME

The other is the release of a recording of **Bandanna** with University of Nevada at Las Vegas wind orchestra and chorus; Hagen describes the opera as *an aggressive, manic, emotionally overwrought, progressive piece of American opera, equal parts opera and music theatre*

Hagen's masterful score captures the rage, intrigue, and tender resignation of the tale."

Jerry Young, Austin American Statesman, 2/99

"You will find Bandanna's weave most intricate."

Andrew Osborn, Boston Review, 3-4/99

"Sonorous, highly-varied, rhythmically gripping, dramatic music; one can scarcely imagine another living composer pulling it off."

Clarino Magazine, Germany

"The drama is powered by a strong emotional thrust, most of it conveyed in the form of popular song, and leads to a shattering climax."

Read Ireland Book Reviews, Ireland

WILLIAM REYNISH COMMISSIONING PROJECT

Since Singapore, I have commissioned eleven works in memory of our third son, William.

Berkeley, Michael	Slow Dawn	OUP
Carroll, Fergal	Blackwater	Maecenas
Hesketh, Kenneth	Vranjanka	Faber
Hesketh, Kenneth	Cloud of Unknowing	Schott
Horne, David	Waves and Refrains	Boosey & Hawkes
Jackson, Timothy	Passacaglia	Maecenas
Marshall, Christopher	Resonance	Maecenas
McNeff, Stephen	Image in Stone	Maecenas
Pütz, Marco	Trumpet Concerto	Bronshiem
Roxburgh, Edwin	Elegy for Ur	
for solo oboe and ensemble		Maecenas
Roxburgh, Edwin	Aeolian Carillons	Maecenas

Nine pieces are by professional composers with no particular attachment to the wind ensemble world, and of these, three are attached to British orchestras as composer in residence, Michael Berkeley to the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Stephen McNeff to the Bournemouth Symphony and Kenneth Hesketh to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic where he was preceded by David Horne. McNeff and Berkeley have a burgeoning international reputation in the opera house. Edwin Roxburgh has recently completed a massive opera, Chris Marshall's international reputation is largely based on his choral music, while Timothy Jackson follows a renaissance-like career as composer, conductor, natural and modern horn player, jazz pianist.

Two then are more involved with wind music, though not exclusively; Fergal Carroll is a conductor in Ireland with one of the military bands, Marco Pütz is a fine saxophone player and teacher in Luxembourg, and is perhaps best known as a specialist in wind music, usually for amateur bands.

WORKS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL WIND ENSEMBLE

It is tempting to divide these recent commissions into two genres. In the first we might include those "serious" works aimed at the "professional" wind ensemble, **Slow Dawn, Cloud of Unknowing, Waves and refrains, Resonance, Image in Stone** and **Elegy for Ur**.

Michael Berkekey's **Slow Dawn** is short, cogent and wonderfully austere, sharing the sound world perhaps of Judith Bingham's **Bright Spirit**. David Horne is one of the brightest talents in England of today. He is a pianist and educationalist, his studies took him to Curtis Institute and Harvard, and he now is back in Manchester where he teaches at the RNCM.

Horne's music can be viewed both as a response, and as a reaction, to modernism. His language has evolved naturally from the classically-orientated modernist masters, exploring essentially abstract musical ideas. Yet Horne deploys these with an attractive lyricism, an impressionistic ear for instrumentation, and with invigorating energy

EDWIN ROXBURGH

The young Edwin Roxburgh was described by Nadia Boulanger as the new Stravinsky, but I think that a career as a composer was too narrow for him, he is a fine professional oboist, was a teacher at the Royal College of Music where he for many years conducted the contemporary group, and he brings these skills to his composition Eddie was a featured composer at BASBWE – celebrating his 70th birthday this year, the BASBWE conference played all three of his works for wind, **Time's Harvest**, **An Elegy for Ur** and **Aeolian Carillons**. The oboe concerto, **An Elegy for Ur**, is a wonderfully understated, haunting rhapsody on the destruction of one of the world's oldest cities, Ur of the Chaldees. It is scored for orchestral wind without saxophones and will repay study.

Kenneth Hesketh has emerged during this decade as one of the most exciting new talents in the wind world. Many of you will know **Danceries** and the bright and breezy **Masque**, getting to know his **Dances for Diaghilev**, a wonderful swirling score of impressionistic colourings. His **Cloud of Unknowing** inhabits that world, perhaps the same kind of continuous expression through sound that we find in Debussy's **Jeux** or Schoenberg's **Erwartung** with very little development. Part of my commissioning scheme is to attract composers of international importance liker Horne, Hesketh, Gorb and Roxburgh, to write challenging music with no holds barred, but also to invite them to contribute easier pieces for the less experienced players. This is extremely hard and not everyone accepts the challenge. One who has is Hesketh , an essentially practical composer who like Adam Gorb and Dana Wilson writes for less experienced players without patronizing, setting them the same musical problems as in the works for more mature players. He followed **Cloud of Unknowing** with a wonderful score of terrific Balkan energy, **Vranjanka**. As with all his score4s, there are challenging parts for second and third players, and a teasing set of variations mainly in 7/8 on a Serbian love-song.

Cloud of Unknowing	2005	Published Schotts
Vranjanka	2006	Published Faber

Chris Marshall is a New Zealander who is now resident in Florida. I think his **L'homme Armé** is one of the strongest of my commissions, and he followed it with the exquisite **Resonances**. He writes about the challenges of composing:

Sometimes the single-minded pursuit of originality severs too many links with the past. Without existing music as a reference point, communication may be lost. By the same token, a composer who restricts himself to the techniques and aesthetics of the past is irrelevant. The challenge, as I see it, is to produce music that is recognisably of our time, yet also timeless.

His first work, **Aue**, was commissioned by the WASBE Schools Network, and here again we find an Ivesian montage of melodies and rhythms. He paints a picture of the New Zealand rain forest, bursts of rhythms and odd screeches, calmed from time to time by a Wagnerian utterance from the horn section which gets more and more insistent.

At the climax, his reminiscences of a missionary great grandfather resolve onto a 19th century hymn melody – (shades of the myriad of wind and brass band works which are based around Salvation Army hymns or Southern Harmonies!) but Chris is amazing skilful in his set of variations, and finally the piece dissolves into a magically beautiful ending. As with his great grandfather’s sermons in the forest, the song of the birds overwhelms the music.

2005
2007

Resonance
Renascence

FOR THE LESS EXPERIENCED GROUPS

The second may be considered as works aimed at the less experienced group which is looking for more of an intellectual, emotional and technical challenge than is often afforded by wind repertoire. I am of course massively biased, but I do think that each and every work written for me recently represents a valuable addition to the repertoire, and many of these works are able to stand alongside earlier major commissions such as Adam Gorb’s **Dances from Crete** or Christopher Marshall’s **L’Homme Armé**. Another work by Roxburgh, the exciting efflorescent **Aeolian Carillons**, and an extraordinarily moving **Passacaglia** by Timothy Jackson which has a Brahmsian spaciousness, couched in a contemporary idiom.

We were very proud and honored to have an entire programme dedicated to William played in Adelaide last year.

Elder Conservatory	Wind	Ensemble,	Adelaide
Conductor Bob Hower			
14th October 2006			
L’Homme Armé		Christopher Marshall	
Song of Lir		Fergal Carroll	
Bright Spirit		Judith Bingham	
Symphony for William		Derek Bourgeois	
Dances from Crete		Adam Gorb	

MUSIC FOR YOUNG BANDS

Writing expressive, lyrical music for young bands without being patronizing, condescending and sentimental, is difficult; few of even our most distinguished colleagues manage it. Adam Gorb manages it usually, and one composer who writes well is Fergal Carroll, who has followed his **Song of Lir** with another effective Irish piece, **Blackwater**. A third, though not in my commissioning series, was premiered recently and is called **Silverwinds**. All three are published by Maecenas.

The most recent work my commission series is by Marco Pütz who was the featured composer in the BASBWE Conference held in Glasgow

WORKS FEATURED IN GLASGOW

Putz, Marco	Trumpet Concerto
Pütz, Marco	Die Judenbuche
Putz, Marco	Derivations
Pütz, Marco	Flute Concerto
Pütz, Marco	Choralis Tonalis

The Irish Youth Wind Ensemble gave the public premiere of his Trumpet Concerto with John Wallace, and this is a fine three movement work, typical of Marco's style which is traditional and yet challenging. It starts with a cadenza, followed by an intense introduction which breaks into the traditional allegro.

CONCERTOS

As I was putting this lecture together, I reflected that there were very few concerti to report but gradually I came to the conclusion that it is in fact something of a vintage two years. Most of these concertos are referred to later in the lecture but I would like to draw attention to a composer who made a strong impression on Adam Gorb and myself in Singapore, Zecharaiah Goh, who recently wrote a fine Marimba Concerto.

NEW CONCERTI

An Elegy for Ur	Edwin Roxburgh	Oboe	13.56
Liquid Gold	Dana Wilson	Clarinet	12.40
The Avatar	Dana Wilson	Bassoon	16.00
Concerto	Mike Mower	Saxophone	22.14
Horn Concerto	Simon Wills	Horn	16.41
Trumpet Concerto	Marco Pütz	Trumpet	19.00
Passagi	Steven Gryc	Trombone	22.42
Trombone Concerto	Martin Ellerby	Trombone	15.06
Dance Diversions	Ralph Hultgren	Trombone	
Black Fire	Nigel Clarke	Violin	26.02
Marimba Concerto	Zecharaiah Goh	Marimba	13.21
Concerto Saxophones	Eddie Mora Bermudez	Saxophone Quartet	
Concerto	Hermann Regner	Piano	11.00

WASBE COMPOSERS WRITING FOR SCHOOL BANDS

Writing for High School students is an immense challenge – how to engage their interest and challenge them intellectually but write enjoyable music with being patronizing. I am glad I am not a composer. In the library you will find scores and a CD of music by a member of WASBE, Thomas Rohrer, Director of Bands at the Utah State University, Logan, where he has premiered no less than five of his compositions. Working at HighSchool level in Texas is another former WASBE member, Jason Nitsch, now teaching in Houston, who has written several works for school band which I think are effective. A school band director looking for traditional band music which occasionally says something different might find it worth going to

his website, www.jknitsch.net and exploring his very generous library of downloads with full performances. I found **On the Banks of the River Shannon** quite charming, a flowing melody giving way to an Irish dance. At the other end of the world, Board member Ralph Hultgren continues to compose and publish a fine range of music, some of it aimed at High School bands, some of it more ambitious and premiered by University and College groups.

Carroll, Fergal	Silverwinds
Ellerby, Martin	Tales from Andersen
Hultgren, Ralph	Jessie's Well
Hultgren, Ralph	My Sister's Tears
Nitsch, Jason	Elegy for a Ghost Town
Nitsch, Jason	On the Banks of the Shannon
Rohrer, Thomas	Transcontinental Union

One British composer who has carved a new life and career in Spanish band music is Derek Bourgeois, who many years ago was largely responsible for taking the British Brass band music into the 20th century.

Four Mallorcan Folk Songs
Concerto for Bass Trombone
Felanitx Fiestas
The well of the Moon
Band Land

He now lives in Mallorca, his music is published by HaFaBra, is nearly all available on CD and can be readily purchased on line. His most recent work for less experienced bands is **Band Land**, a Young person's Guide to the Wind Orchestra which is available with the narration in 10 different languages

WASBE COMPOSERS – MARTIN ELLERBY

I have always felt that WASBE should be taking care of its composers, making sure that we have easy access to information about their works, and conversely composers should be contacting WASBE as a central source for information. There are two composers on the Board at present, Martin Ellerby who incidentally is fifty this year, and Adam Gorb who is 50 next. Martin Ellerby has contributed several scores for the military; Ellerby's **The Cries of London** was written for the Coldstream Guards, premiered in September 2005 and recorded by the Band in a disc of his music on SRC 109. There is a wonderful breezy energy some of this piece which typifies the best of British light music

Last year Martin rescored his miniature Symphony **Natalis** for wind and it was premiered by the Royal Marines. This is a dramatic work, typical of his music for the last few years with strong contrasts. Here is the opening, perhaps reminiscent of **Paris Sketches** in its emotional content and scoring. This has been a productive two years for Martin

Ellerby, Martin	Neapolitan Serenade for flute
Ellerby, Martin	Trombone Concerto
Ellerby, Martin	Chivalry – a Tone Poem
Ellerby, Martin	The Canticle of the Sun
Ellerby, Martin	Terra Australis

Ellerby, Martin	Tristan Encounters
Ellerby, Martin	Mass of St Thomas Aquinas
Ellerby, Martin	Commemorations
Ellerby, Martin	The Cries of London
Ellerby, Martin	Tales from Andersen
Ellerby, Martin	Prelude from Hampstead Heath
Ellerby, Martin	Natalis, wind band version

Natalis is one of the first publications in the new Maecenas series, *Accolade*. The second is an arrangement by Martin of Prelude for Hampstead Heath, which has proved very popular in its brass band version. His **Trombone Concerto** is in three movements, an extremely energetic first, a heartfelt elegy as a second and a third which returns to the extraordinary high spirits of the first.

Many of his works have been written for the Coldstream Guards or the Royal Marines, including the most recent, **Commemoration**, premiered two weeks ago. Martin is now General editor for Studio Music, and two new works from their catalogue which have been brought to my attention are by Nigel Clarke. In a few weeks, the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, will premiere Nigel's work written to celebrate their 150th anniversary, **Fanfares and Celebrations**. The same composer's **Black Fire** for violin and concert band was recorded recently by the Royal Marines in Portsmouth, a very dramatic work with exciting writing for both soloist and wind orchestra, Nigel Clarke in a very different mood from his usual style.

ADAM GORB

Despite a hectic year teaching and traveling, Adam Gorb has written three strongly contrasting works as well as a work for the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. I was lucky enough to hear his very moving piece for choir, soloists and brass, **Scribblings on a Blank Wall**. The drama of it made me think that it is time that he wrote an opera. This is a rare piece in the choral repertoire, a work which escapes the somewhat cloying style of the English choral tradition.

Adrenaline City	Studio
Sunrise & Safari	Maecenas
Scribblings on a Blank Wall	Maecenas

This Spring saw the premiere of **Sunrise and Safari** commissioned by the Singapore Youth Band Festival. The score is on the Maecenas stand. In this he introduced a little aleatoric bird song, but was asked to notate it with bar lines, thus making it far more difficult. Perhaps the answer is the path taken through the New Zealand rain forest by Christopher Marshall in the bird song coda to his beautiful **Resonance**, and just whistle.

The third piece is the very virtuosic **Adrenaline City**, a sort of son or cousin of **Awayday** and **Metropolis**, incredibly energetic and unfortunately for conductors in 10/8; commissioned last year by the US Army..

DANA WILSON AND ADAM GORB

At a funeral recently, composer Giles Swayne spoke of *composition which challenges the intellect while engaging the heart*. It is interesting that so much of the wind music of the last two years achieves this, often in crossover styles. Writing in the vernacular utilizing jazz and pop elements has been very much part of the art of those two WASBE stalwart composers, Adam Gorb and Dana Wilson and I would love to get them both round a table for a discussion since both are essentially

practical in their approach to composition, writing music which will test the finest ensemble without over-taxing that important element the audience. Dana has written three works in the past two years which are important additions to our repertoire. . Both Dana and Adam write marvelously for professionals like Larry Coombs and the US Military Academy, Gail Williams or Evelyn Glennie, but they also write some of their best music for amateur and students. Last summer Dana wrote a work to celebrate the career of Frank Battisti, **Day Dream** This is a work of sixteen minutes in three movements, dedicated to Frank who asked that it should be playable by ensembles of varying abilities. After a first movement in which Dana portrays a dramatic sunrise, he moves on to a second movement typifying Youth. Dana uses a kind of written out aleatoric technique where the wind players are invited to play ostinati at whatever speed they prefer, giving a blurred effect against which very tight funky rhythms are in sharp contrast.

For me, the harmonic procedures of the finale bring to mind the mature Richard Strauss. What Strauss never quite discovered was the jazz potential of the bassoon. Dana achieves some funky fagot playing in his three movement concerto The Avatar, written for Michigan State,

There was no time to do more than mention three other fine concerti, for horn by Simon Wills, and for trombone by Stephen Gryc and Martin Ellerby

The practicalities of composition are so important, none of the ivory tower stuff for Adam nor Dana, nor indeed for the Austrian composer Hermann Regner of the University of Salzburg, a pupil of Carl Orff, he has contributed enormously to music education in the Orff tradition with works for children in all genres. Interestingly, he had a work in our first International score library back in 1981 and he has been a member of WASBE for some years. He will be 80 next year, but is still actively composing and his Piano Concerto written three years ago is a perfect indication that there is life after Hindemith. If you are looking for a jewel of a piano concerto, try this and there is a fine recording by the Bläserphilharmonie Mozarteum Salzburg

EDUARD OERTLE & WASBE GERMANY

I have always felt that WASBE should be actively encouraging the commissioning of new music, and so I was delighted to be invited to Stuttgart by Eduard Oertle to talk about my own commissions in memory of William, but also to hear three fine concerts, one which featured the world premiere of the **Sinfonietta** by Axcel Ruoff, played by the Bläserphilharmonie Heilbronn. I knew of this composer already from Leon Bly, a cello concerto and a piano concerto, but it was good to hear a piece live. A menacing introduction features an omnipresent ostinato figure, and it gives way to a section of wonderful lyricism

MUSIC FOR AMATEURS

As usual many works were written in Europe for amateur performance and these included a fine **Sinfonietta** by Oliver Waespi. Waespi many will remember from works played in Lucerne and in Singapore. The work which I would like to introduce today is his **Second Sinfonietta** for Wind Band, premiered in June 2006 and strongly recommended by Christoph Müller. He has had a year further study in London, and I think has integrated a more advanced control of his technical language without losing the almost Straussian opulence of some of the earlier works. His new works are listed below, and **Temples** was certainly one of the great events of the conference.

Sinfonietta no 2
Moving Sculptures
Temples

Festive Impressions

What is important for wind music as a genre is to involve other composers and artists who do not specialize in the medium. One such is Carl Rütli better known for his choral music His **Ground for Band** was premiered in Switzerland, and I then discovered a fine **Euphonium Concerto** commissioned and recorded by David Childs and the RNCM. More recently he wrote a fine test piece for the European Brass Band Championships, **Montreux Dances**

ENGLISH LYRICISM

Far away in atmosphere is the lyrical rhapsody of Daniel Basford, a young composer who graduated recently from the RNCM and who handles wind orchestration with a sure touch. **Songs and Refrains** was premiered in 2005 and will be published later this Autumn by Maecenas. It is a four movement suite of twenty minutes very much in the English pastoral tradition and perhaps in the faster movements reminding us of Gordon Jacob in his handling of folk song.

COMPETITIONS

WASBE composers have been very active in competitions Internationally

Luis Serrano Alarcon 1st in Corciano
Ferrer Ferran 1st in Romualdo Romenco
Jose Suner Oriola Audience prize Tokyo
Jukka Viitasaari 1st Concorso Pernice
Jukka Viitasaari 2nd in Lambersart

and also in UK in the annual British Composer Award

2004 Adam Gorb	Towards Nirvana
2005 Ian Gardiner	Toccata, Canzona & Ricecare
2006 Andy Scott	Dark Rain

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

FROG'S EYE

I am always grateful to WASBE conductors and publishers who send me information about premieres that they rate as important. Gary Ciepluch, one of the few current WASBE members who attended the first international Conference back in 1981, wrote in about several works including an extraordinary piece by Monica Houghton, a nightmare tonepoem **One Morning in September** written after 9/11

One conductor extremely active in the contemporary field is Fred Harris at MIT and I recently received a wonderful recording of compositions by Evan Ziporyn, a member of Bang on a Can. Part of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, this disc Frog's Eye on CA 20140 includes this very imaginative work for soprano and wind ensemble, **The Ornate Zither and the Nomad Flute.**

Like Fred Harris at MIT, . Cindy Johnson-Turner at Cornell has premiered several great pieces this year. One composer she has enthused about is XI WANG who won a Morton Gould ASCAP award this year

JAZZ AND THE WIND ENSEMBLE

Another composer Cindy introduced is a professor at the University of San Pedro in Costa Rica, Eddie Mora, whose Concerto for Four Saxophones is his second work for wind band. It is a sprawling three movement work which straddles several styles. The second movement starts with the quartet in a driving minimalist allegro, later underpinned by percussion and becoming really funky, while the finale begins with a languid laid-back tune

Another interesting crossover piece was sent to me by Gordon Brock of the University of North Florida, a work entitled **Scatter Down Light** by Gary Smart.

A unique musician, composer-pianist Gary Smart performs, composes and improvises music that reflects an abiding interest in Americana, world musics and jazz, as well as the western classical tradition

While there is a wealth of music available, we must continue commissioning, and I was delighted to be in touch with Andrew Gekoskie, Director of Bands at Langley High School. Andrew heads up one of the most vibrant High School programmes in the united states; with a series of important commissions. There most recent was **Mosaico Mexicano** which they premiered in Carnegie Hall this Spring.

Crossover is becoming more and more part of our musical language, as it becomes less and less important to be modern. One WASBE member who is investigating a whole tranche of exciting new musical sounds is Mike Christianson with the Gotham Wind Symphony who describes the most recent disc from Gotham Wind symphony

This is our Americana – the version where we celebrate New York as the important cultural font it is, the version where we recognise jazz as the great artistic contribution it is (within every wind ensemble is a jazz band – literally).

There are two commissions on the disc from the band, and my favorite is a great 7 minute Prelude by guitarist James Chirillo, which reminds me of those sweet little pieces by the Gerry Mulligan Quartet – **Prelude to A Minor Insenistivity**

Another jazzer from the other side of the Continent getting very involved in wind ensemble is Fred Stride who has built up a fine connection with Pacific Symphony Wind Ensemble under its conductor Marc Crompton, resulting in three new works since Singapore, a Saxophone concerto, **Trajectories** for trumpet and wind, and **Seaquam**.

There were several works reported by Robert Grechesky of Butler, including a **Spring Serenade** by Eric Ewazen and **Prayer** by Michael Schelle which was played at the last CBDNA Conference. I am grateful to Tony Houghton, Ralph Hultgren, Philip Robinson, Robert Rumbelow, Ken Thompson, Philip Wagner, Christian Wilhelm and others for sending information about premieres.

BCM and OSTI

I would like to end with a look at a group who I think will make a difference to our programmes. Most composers are poor at self-promotion, but this is a criticism that cannot be leveled at a group of five young American composers who are contributing hugely to our repertoire. The four who make up BCM are Steven Bryant, Jam Bonney,

Jonathan Newman and Eric Whitacre. I have added to this group John Mackey and his publishing house, Osti.

BCM began at the Juilliard School where 3 of the composers met while studying with John Corigliano. Their credo:

Our goal is to create music for the wind ensemble medium not bound by traditional thought or idiomatic cliché.

STEVE BRYANT

They often write in what we Europeans might think of as a typical American style, noisy and brash, but they usually combine this style with a sense of self-deprecating humour missing in some of their colleagues.

Radiant Joy

Dusk

Suite Dreams

Steve Bryant speaks for them all when he says:

Here's what I really want to achieve when I compose:

I strive to write music that leaps off the stage (or reaches out of the speakers) to grab you by the collar and pull you in. Whether through a relentless eruption of energy, or the intensity of quiet contemplation, I want my music to give you no choice, and no other desire, but to listen.

JIM BONNEY

Jim Bonney is into electronics and really experimental noises; I particularly enjoyed this recent quotation from him:

I've become very fond of eschewing the creative confines of both "highbrow" and lowbrow music and simply creating nobrow music

Threnody

Watercolors

Sticks & Stones for drumset and band

JONATHAN NEWMAN

I think that all five of them can write quiet music which is full of sentiment without being sentimental. One of the lasting memories of the CBDNA conference in Ann Arbor was of a beautifully paced and balanced performance of Jonathan Newman's **As the scent of spring rain**, a work I want to programme as soon as possible.

Avenue X

New work for solo flute & Ensemble

ERIC WHITTAKER

Eric Whitaker has been very busy this year with an opera which opens this summer – for information go to his website. His gentle transcriptions from his choral pieces are becoming extremely popular and make a welcome change of pace to hard-hitting programmes.

JOHN MACKKEY

Meanwhile over the past two years, a fifth young composer, John Mackey, burst on to the scene with the prize winning **Red Line Tango** of 2004, followed by **Turbine**, surely two of the noisiest tunes in the repertoire. In **Strange Humors** and music for other ensembles he is showing a more lyrical side to his work.

Turbine

Turning
Strange Humors

The encouraging thing about this group of composers is that they all have a formidable technique, they have the wildest imagination and wackiest sense of humour, most of them are Juilliard trained and I believe that they will show the way for a new generation of young excellently trained composers who might provide us with a vast pyramid music for wind ensemble, wind orchestra, wind band, some of which might rival the great masterpieces of the past.

Thinking of masterpieces of the past, I would like to end with reference to three composers born one hundred years ago. The contribution from two of them was limited to a single work each for wind ensemble, both very distinguished.

Music for Wind and Brass	Elizabeth Maconchy
Sinfonietta	Willem van Otterloo

The third is a composer who never bothered at all with self-promotion, publication or a career. Here is part of **A Children's Plea for Peace** by the great underestimated, under-rated maverick composer, Alec Wilder. You will find more information about his music on my website.

Children's Plea for Peace
by Alec Wilder