

The Classical Harmonie to the Present Day

by Timothy Reynish

The sixth in a series of historical surveys of wind music by Tim Reynish written especially for *Winds* which appeared as follows:

One hundred and forty years of music at Kneller Hall	(Winter 1996/1997)
British Wind Music 1922-1982	(Spring 1997)
British Wind Music Renaissance 1982-1991	(Autumn 1997)
British Wind Music Renaissance 1991-1997	(Winter 1997)
The Beginning of Wind Music Renaissance & Baroque	(Winter 1998/1999)

End of an era - the Nineteenth Century

Forty or so years ago, the world of classical wind music was tiny; we were discovering Mozart and Beethoven, but very little else was known, let alone published. The way forward was shown by Roger Hellyer and David Whitwell whose pioneer work has led to the current explosion; recently a further twenty years of research by Jon Gillaspie, Marshall Stoneham and David Clark has resulted in a catalogue of over 13,000 works by more than 2,400 composers and arrangers. Recent scholarship for instance has actually discovered parts for an arrangement of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (published Bärenreiter) which almost certainly is by Mozart himself, while even more recently, the *Serenade for Thirteen Wind* appears to have been originally scored for the more traditional octet (published Doblinger), and later rescored with basset horns. There is still a great deal of research to be done, and good music to be published, but there are editions of some of the military repertoire. One of the earliest 'English' works is by Johann Christian Bach, *Due Marce di Cavalleria e d'Infanteria le Prince Wallis de la Gran Bretagne d'un Regimento di Dragoni*, with splendidly Euro-titles: No 1 *Marcia zu Fuss*; No 2 *Marcia zu Pferde*. Like J C Bach, Haydn spent a good deal of time in London, and he also wrote for the British military, a *March for the Prince of Wales in E* and *Two Derbyshire Marches in E*, written for the Derbyshire Volunteer Cavalry. Beethoven wrote a number of marches, for Prince Esterhazy, for Archduke Anton and others. There is a certain amount of repertoire for Harmonie to be found in British libraries, and there is a listing in the *Instrumentalist* of September 1977, following an article by David Whitwell and Clarence Wiggins. It includes the Hummel *Octet Parità*, the Matthew Locke *Music for His Majesty's Sackbuts and Cornetts*, as well as works by W F Bach, Bishop, Blow, Dibdin, Dittersdorf, Meyerbeer and Wesley, and even a song by Prince Albert for voice, flute, basset horn and bassoon.

France & Revolution

The social and political changes brought about by the French Revolution swept away the aristocracy which patronised the Harmonie, and the 19th century saw the growth of a middle class and with it the development of the public concert. Technically, the advances made in design of woodwind instruments by inventors such as Boehme, Triébert, Klosé, Buffet, Almanraeder, Heckel and Sax, even exceeded those of the seventeenth century by Hotteterre, Philidor and Denner. The technical possibilities of wind instruments were greatly increased, and with the development of the valve, and thus the fully chromatic brass family, bands grew rapidly in size.

The influence of this musical explosion was felt in England, echoed in the change from a rural to an industrial society. The waits were dissolved, church musicians replaced by the organ, (even in Thomas Hardy's *Melstock*), and by the second decade of the new century, factories and mines throughout Lancashire, Yorkshire and South Wales, were forming bands to provide enjoyment, employment and entertainment for their workers. In 1816 Peter Wharton's Band was founded in the village of Queensbury, near Bradford; two years later Clegg's Reed Band was started over the border. The first recorded contest was in 1818, in which Stalybridge Old Band mustered a trumpet, two french horns, a bugle horn, a serpent, two bassoons, a bass horn, four flutes, four clarinets, cymbals, drum and triangle.

The chromatic brass gradually replaced the less efficient woodwind, and the final emergence of the brass band dates from the first Belle Vue contest in Manchester, won in 1853 by Mossley Temperance Band on their newfangled Saxhorns which the Distin family had introduced from Paris. Wharton's and Clegg's bands became Black Dyke Mills and Besses o'th'Barn respectively, and the great British brass band movement was launched, with its rigid rules on instrumentation and registration, its passion for contesting and its resultant high standards of performance.

There is no doubt that civil military bands did flourish in the latter part of the century. Arthur Butterworth has written about the history of the Culcheth Band, Adamson's Band of Dukinfield recently celebrated its centenary, but the brass band, with fewer digital problems for fingers gnarled by work at pit face or mill bench, with its simple system of one clef so that all instruments can be taught simultaneously, and its almost athletic approach to performance, was an irresistible force which swept the military bands into virtual obscurity, a fate sealed by two great wars.

Adolphe Sax 1814 - 1894

Of all of the developments in technology during the 19th century, those of Adolphe Sax certainly had the most far-reaching effect. Not only do his own patented saxophones provide the backbone of jazz groups, but his bass clarinet became firmly established in the Symphony Orchestra and the success of his family of saxhorns spelled the virtual end of the development of the wind band for sixty years. Commercially, his inventions were handled in England by John Distin, but in the fifties the two men fell out, and the agency passed to Rudall, Rose and Carte, Distin continuing to make instruments but finally selling out to Boosey and Company in 1868. The complete story of Sax and his instruments is told very amusingly by the late Wally Horwood, formerly editor of *Winds*.

Meanwhile, in France the messages of the Revolution, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, were put over to the public in enormous Fêtes, gatherings of hundreds of players and singers performing patriotic cantatas and marches by composers such as Catel, H and L Jadin, Méhul, Gossec, Gebauer, Devienne and others. Some of the orchestral music appears in modern arrangements, but the lasting musical legacy was the founding of the free music school of the Parisian National Guard, which in effect became the Paris Conservatoire, formally founded in 1795, opening to the first students in 1796. The taste for the spectacular wind ensemble continued through the last two centuries, and the normal complement for French or Belgian military bands, even today, is of nearly one hundred players. The *Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale* of Berlioz is typical of the grand scale; of the rest of the European repertoire for this kind of wind band, the only work which appears regularly in international programmes today is the superb *Dionysiaques* (1913) of Florent Schmitt.

The wind orchestra & ensemble in the 19th century

The 19th century wind band was largely a vehicle for transcriptions of orchestral repertoire, or for light popular music, marches, dances or potpourris. There are a handful of works by Ponchielli, some pleasant chamber music by composers such as Raff and Reinecke, but on the whole the repertoire is scanty. Those interested in performing music of this period should contact David Whitwell whose researches have resulted in many practical performing editions, particularly of Italian repertoire of the period.

The few Romantic works by major composers, mostly for small ensemble, are listed below:

Reicha, Anton (1770-1836)	<i>Commemoration Symphony</i> (1809/15)
Mendelssohn, Felix (1809-1847)	<i>Overture in C op 24</i> (1824)
Berlioz, Hector (1803-1869)	<i>Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale</i> (1840)
Wagner Richard (1813-1883)	<i>Huldigungsmarsch</i> (1864)
Wagner Richard (1813-1883)	<i>Trauersinfonie</i> (1844)
Bruckner, Anton (1824-1896)	<i>Mass in E Minor</i> (1864)
Saint-Saens, Camille (1835-1921)	<i>Occident et Orient</i> (1869)
Dvorak, Antonin (1841-1904)	<i>Serenade in D Minor op 44</i> (1878)
Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai (1844-1908)	<i>Variations for Oboe on a Theme of Glinka</i> (1876)
Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai (1844-1908)	<i>Concerto for Trombone & Band</i> (1877)
Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai (1844-1908)	<i>Concerto for Clarinet & Band</i> (1877)
Strauss Richard (1864-1949)	<i>Festmusik der Stadt Wien</i> (1943)
Strauss Richard (1864-1949)	<i>Serenade in Eb op 7</i> (1881)
Strauss Richard (1864-1949)	<i>Suite in Bb op 4</i> (1884)
Strauss Richard (1864-1949)	<i>Sonatina in F</i> (1943)
Strauss Richard (1864-1949)	<i>Sonatina in Eb</i> (1944-45)

Rimsky Korsakov and the Russian Navy

Of these composers, only Rimsky-Korsakov was involved in the military, holding the post of Inspector of Music Bands from 1873 until 1884, giving him an unrivalled education in orchestration:

I had learned what every practical musician (a German military bandmaster, for example) knows, but what, unfortunately, artist composers do not know at all. I understood the basic principle of convenient and inconvenient passages; the difference between virtuoso difficulties and impracticability.

Rimsky-Korsakov's two works for Clarinet and Trombone are quite well known, but the charming set of *Variations for Oboe and Band* deserves more performances. There is a need for research also into his arrangements of works by Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Meyerbeer and Wagner.

One interesting military sideline stems from the appointment of the brother of the better known Gaetano Donizetti as conductor of the band of the Sultan of Turkey. Giuseppe had served with the French army as a flautist, and was involved in the Battle of Waterloo, before taking the job in Istanbul from 1832. The traditional Turkish military bands, or Mehter bands, which had given the West the evocative sounds of cymbals, bass drum and the Jangling Johnny (there is a fine specimen at Kneller Hall, captured from the French at the time of Napoleon) were now replaced by wind bands, orchestras, opera and ballet. Until recently, there were still seventy six western style military bands in the Turkish armed forces, dating back to 1826 for the army, 1831 for the navy.

Paris 1879

La Société de Musique de Chambre pour Instruments à Vent February 6th 1879 saw the first concert of a series which would do much to establish France as a major centre for wind chamber music during the past 120 years. Led by the distinguished conductor, flute player and teacher Paul Taffanel, the ensemble was primarily an octet, dedicated to restoring classical works to the repertoire as well as commissioning new pieces. The first concert included the Beethoven *Octet*, Bach *Flute Sonata* in B minor and the Rubinstein *Piano Quintet*. A fortnight later the programme started with the Mozart *Serenade K375*, a month later they played the Mozart and Beethoven piano quintets. Commissions included works by d'Indy, Pierné and the Gounod *Petite Symphonie*.

Another typically French development was that of the Reed Trio, or Trio d'Anches. The first published example is probably by Lefevre, who flourished from 1763 to 1829 and was Professor at the Paris Conservatory from 1795 - 1825, but the earliest work extant is a Trio by Flegier written in 1897. This repertoire really developed from the 1930's under the patronage of Editions de L'Oiseaux Lyre and eleven works were dedicated to the Trio d'Anches de Paris France, founded by the bassoonist Oubradous. These include trios by Barraud, Bozza, Iberty, Milhaud, Tomasi, Rivier and Roussel.

The tradition of largescale music for wind continued, but only a handful of significant works by members has stemmed from France, by members of Les Six, and later by Olivier Messiaen.

Honnegger, Arthur (1892-1955)	<i>King David</i> (1921)
Milhaud Darius (1892-1974)	<i>Concerto for 2 pianos & percussion</i>
Milhaud Darius (1892-1974)	<i>Suite Française</i> (1945)
Milhaud Darius (1892-1974)	<i>Symphony no 5 for wind</i>
Poulenc, Francis (1899-1963)	<i>Suite Française</i> (1945)
Messiaen Olivier (1908-1992)	<i>Couleurs de la Cité Céleste</i> (1963)
Messiaen, Olivier (1908-1992)	<i>Et Exspecto Resurrectionem</i> (1964)
Messiaen Olivier (1908-1992)	<i>Oiseaux Exotiques</i> (1968)

Elsewhere in Europe, the post First World War reaction against the opulence of late romanticism resulted in a number of works by major composers for wind ensemble:

Weill Kurt (1900-1950)	<i>Kleine Dreigroschenmusik</i> (1924)
Berg, Alban (1885-1935)	<i>Kammerkonzert</i> (1925)
Stravinsky Igor (1882-1971)	<i>Concerto for Piano & Wind</i> (1924)
Stravinsky, Igor (1882-1971)	<i>Ebony Concerto</i> (1949)
Stravinsky Igor (1882-1971)	<i>Octet</i> (1922/3)
Stravinsky Igor (1882-1971)	<i>Symphonies of Wind</i> (1920; rev 1945/47)
Stravinsky Igor (1882-1971)	<i>Symphony of Psalms</i> (1930)

Donaueschingen 1926

One oasis of benevolent patronage in Europe was Donaueschingen, which from 1488 had been the seat of the Furstenbergs; from 1921; Prince Max Egon von Fursternberg encouraged the establishment of a festival of contemporary music. In 1926, a few years after the commissioning by Kneller Hall of military band works from Holst, Vaughan Williams and Gordon Jacob, the then festival director, Paul Hindemith, promoted a concert on July 24th of works especially commissioned for the local army band, under the direction of Hermann Scherchen.

Paul Hindemith	<i>Konzertmusik für Bläserorchester op 41</i>
Ernst Krenek	<i>Drei Märsche op 34</i>
Ernst Pepping	<i>Kleine Serenade für Militarorchester</i>
Ernst Toch	<i>Spiel für Bläserorchester</i>

The experiment was not a great success, the German bandsmen did not take kindly to the 'new music', and never was the Military Band ever to attract such serious attention from leading composers although in Washington the principal military bands have a considerable tradition of commissioning, the highpoint perhaps being the *Symphony in B_b* by Hindemith, commissioned by the US Army Band in 1951. A decade earlier the Goldman band premièred the *Theme and Variations* (1943) by Arnold Schoenberg, but generally the leading composers of the century have not written their best music for the medium, or have ignored it completely.

America

The repertoire has changed little; it comprises marches, selections, transcribed overtures and specially composed works among which those of a light character are the general favourites.

(*The New Grove Dictionary of Music & Musicians*, 1980)

Thus did the 1980 Grove dismiss some sixty years of development in America. In the USA, following a vast growth of interest in bands in Universities and Public School after the First World War, the symphonic wind band of sixty to one hundred players became the norm, with a repertoire not only of 19th century transcriptions but also of new commissions. Emigré composers such as Hindemith, Husa, Krenek and Schoenberg wrote for the professional bands in Washington and New York, while native composers such as Copland, Cowell, Creston, Hanson, Persichetti, Schuller, William Schuman and many others wrote also for schools and colleges. Much of this repertoire is scored with thick heavy strokes of colour, expecting large numbers of flutes and brass while the mass of clarinets carry the role which in the orchestra belongs to the strings.

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Eastman Wind Ensemble

However, in 1952, Frederick Fennell founded his Eastman Wind Ensemble, in which the concept of one player to a part gave composers control at last over the sonorities for which they were writing, and in general the most significant repertoire of the past forty years has been written with solo players in mind. The Wind Ensemble concept of an ensemble up to about 45 solo players, one to a part, is totally clear, its repertoire generally confined to the concert hall, ranging from Gabrieli, through Mozart and the 19th century to the avant garde. The story is fully told in *The Wind Ensemble and its Repertoire* edited by Cipolla and Hunsberger and published by the University of Rochester Press. The chamber approach provides a rich palette of colours and is in fact the enlarged symphony orchestra wind section, with the flexible instrumentation stipulated by the composer rather than the forces available.

The first programme was primarily of chamber ensemble repertoire:

<i>Ricecare for Wind</i> (1559)	Willaert
<i>Canzona XXVI</i>	Scheidt
<i>Motet for double brass choir</i>	Di Lasso
<i>Sonata pian e forte</i>	Gabrieli
<i>Canzon noni toni</i>	Gabrieli
<i>Suite no 2 for brass</i>	Pezel
<i>Three Equali for four trombones</i>	Beethoven
<i>Serenade in Bb</i>	Mozart
<i>Serenade in Eb op 7</i>	Strauss
<i>Angels</i>	Ruggles
<i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i>	Stravinsky

The American Wind Symphony

One of the most extraordinary series of commissions for wind is that of the American Wind Symphony, an ensemble formed by Robert Boudreau in 1957. For forty years, Boudreau has toured the waterways of America, and more recently of Europe, with a group which is in effect an expanded symphony orchestra wind section, triple or quadruple wind, brass and percussion, without saxophones. Over 350 works have been commissioned, 159 have been published by C F Peters, and one of the results of the 1991 WASBE Conference at Manchester was a research project by Jeffrey Renshaw on this repertoire.

A few works have entered into the repertoire as occasional pieces, *King Lear Variations* and the *Horn Concerto* by David Amram, some of the concerti by Henk Badings who wrote or arranged no less than nineteen works for Boudreau, the *Bozza Children's Overture*, *Report* by Fiser, *Symphonies of Wind* by Ton de Leeuw, the *Concerto for Wind Orchestra* by Colin McPhee, Arne Nordheim's *Recall and Signals*, the *Pittsburgh Overture* by Penderecki and Rodrigo's *Adagio for Wind Orchestra*. Remarkably, less than a quarter of the 159 works published have received a second performance beyond those given by the American Wind Symphony.

Education in the USA

In the United States, there is still a feeling in some Universities that the massive band of 70 or more, with multi flutes, clarinets and brass, playing arrangements and transcriptions, or accompanying the football game, is the real medium for today. In most Universities, the top ensemble is based on the Fennell Eastman Wind Ensemble, with one to a part, and the large scale symphonic band is used for the rest of the students or non-music majors. One of the biggest problems is that the academic background of the wind band in the US has little or no contact with real musical life, and there is a tendency to commission virtuoso works from College composers which get one or two performances and have no real musical meaning outside the college band directors. The impact so far of WASBE has been minimal, and apart from frankly commercial works, little repertoire from Japan or Europe is played in the USA. At High School level, the Americans score over the rest of the world in their training systems; music is taught through band method, rather like the still current brass band system, and the accent is on turning out masses of players, a broad base to the pyramid, and a vast number of students learning. As with brass bands in Europe, however, the overriding passion is for competition, in contesting as well as in

marching bands, and this leads in turn to commercial music and commercial methods being rampant in US education.

A Universal Language

"I firmly believe that music will someday become a 'universal language'. But it will not become so as long as our musical vision is limited to the output of four European countries between 1700 and 1900. The first step in the right direction is to view the music of all peoples and periods without prejudice of any kind, and strive to put the world's known and available best music into circulation. Only then shall we be justified in calling music a 'universal language'."

The first composer of genius to write extensively for the wind band, Percy Grainger, pointed the way forward quite clearly in his vision of the future. The potential of the medium has long been realised by Mozart, Berlioz, Wagner, Strauss, Holst, Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Schoenberg, Messiaen and scores of today's composers.

There is however a stigma attached to the wind band still; the name conjures up military parades, the pier bandstand, the high school music room. It is a tricky medium to compose for and to conduct, the problems of voicing, balance, intonation and tone quality far outstrip those posed by the symphony or chamber orchestra or the brass band.

There is an emotional warmth in the tone of the orchestra, especially of strings, and of course there is a readily recognisable popular "classical" repertoire, from Bach to Britten. The wind orchestra conductor must select his repertoire carefully, must train the players to a high degree of sensitivity difficult to achieve except by experts, must have an acoustic which is sympathetic but not too generous, obscuring the clarity of detail, and then needs an appreciative audience who knows the works, or at least a proportion of them. With so many compact recordings of fine performances now available, it is essential that WASBE, BASBWE and every other national association, press for air time, and that commercial discs are made readily available.

We are at present where perhaps the authentic performance musicians were forty years ago. In the fifties, there were only a handful of enthusiasts such as the Dolmetsch family; two decades later Early Music had taken off and was big business. It is unrealistic to anticipate much of a growth in professionalism in the wind ensemble and wind band field, but surely this is one area with an enormous potential for the millennium.

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