

ACE Brass



Baycourt X Space

April 28th 2021

Richard Cohen | Fanfare
Oskar Boheme | Prelude and Fugue op 28 in E-flat Major
Ástor Piazzolla | Ave María 'Tanti Anni Primi'
Ástor Piazzolla | Libertango
Helen Bowater | White Kingdom
Diego Ortiz | Ricercar
Yasunori Kanazawa | Three Billy Goats Gruff for Brass Trio and Narrator
Thierry Thibault | Petites Variations sur L'Alphabet de Mozart
Martin Wesley Smith | White Knight and Beaver for Trombone and Tape
Giacomo Puccini | O Mio Babbino Caro
Manning Sherwin | A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square
Harold Arlen | Somewhere Over the Rainbow

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Tauranga Musica

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Chamber Music
New Zealand

Cohen | Fanfare

Richard Cohen is a contemporary American horn player and composer. His fanfare is short, bold and melodic, which showcases the brass instruments in their traditional, celebratory roles.

Boehme | Prelude and Fugue op 28 E-flat major

German born trumpeter and composer Oscar Boehme wrote predominantly in the Romantic style and almost exclusively for brass instruments. Boehme wrote two trios, which have been out of circulation for over a century. We believe this is the New Zealand premiere of this work. The first movement, a lyrical sweet prelude, is followed by a lively fugue where the three parts bounce off each other in a lively fashion, before coming to a rousing conclusion.

Piazzolla | Ave Maria

This was originally composed for a film "Enrico the Fourth", along with one of Piazzolla's most famous pieces, *Oblivion*. After the film's premiere, Piazzolla's Italian agent changed the name of the piece from *Tanti Anni Prima*, to *Ave Maria*, and I can see why, for at times it sounds like a church organ during a reflective moment. In the film this piece was performed by oboe and piano. Here it has been arranged for us by our friend Pablo Ruiz Henao, the bass trombone player in the Christchurch Symphony.

Piazzolla created his own style of music known as 'Nuevo Tango' which added new elements to the traditional Argentinian tango. In this piece Piazzolla breaks some of the rules of the traditional musical tango pattern, but you can still hear the slow tango rhythm from time to time in the trombone part.

Piazzolla | Libertango

Libertango was also written in Italy shortly after the composer left Argentina in 1973. The title reflects Piazzolla's liberation from the older style of traditional Tango, as well as his new-found freedom to live without the political and military constraints imposed upon people in Argentina during this time.

Libertango has featured in two Roman Polanski films, and has been recorded by many famous artists in different genres, including Yo-Yo Ma and Grace Jones. Here it has been arranged for ACE Brass by Pablo Ruiz Henao.

Bowater | White Kingdom

World premiere. Composed for ACE Brass in 2016

I composed this piece when awarded the University of Otago Wallace Pah residency in 2016. It's five sections relate to stories of Polynesia:

1. Tuli

Tuli, the bird messenger of Tangalooa, god of the sea, searches endlessly for a place to rest. The distinctive "song" of this snipe is produced by tail feathers. Eventually Tangalooa threw rocks into the ocean for Tuli. These became the islands of Tonga and Samoa.

2. White Kingdom

In Hawaiian legend this is the realm of the moon goddess Lona who carried her mortal love to the White Kingdom on her wings.

3. Kupua

Hawaiian legend describes these creatures as monsters, mischief makers and shape shifters.

4. Silent Country

In Cook Island lore this is the realm at the bottom of the primordial ocean.

5. Pele

This powerful, destructive and unpredictable Hawaiian fire goddess lives in the crater of Kilanea volcano.

– Helen Bowater

Ortiz | Ricercar

Diego Ortiz (ca. Toledo, 1510 – Naples, 1570) was a Spanish composer and musicologist. Ortiz published influential treatises about instrumental and vocal performance during the Golden Age of Spanish music. The title of this work, *Recercada* [Ricercar] literally means 'seeking anew'. The work of the musician from Toledo will endure as exceptional testimony to sixteenth century instrumental music, it is full of abounding life, imagination and spontaneity.

Kanazawa | Three Billy Goats Gruff

Born in 1964, Yasunori Kanazawa is a Double Bass player who has written chamber music for many different instrument combinations. This brass trio is based on the Norwegian children's fairy tale of the Billy Goats Gruff which was collated by the Brothers Grimm to preserve the stories of Scandinavia.

Three goats have eaten all the grass in their field and want to travel to a bigger meadow on the other side of a bridge. But the bridge is home to a vicious troll who threatens to eat anyone attempting to cross it. The smallest goat goes across first and when the troll stops him, he tells the troll to wait for the next goat, who is much bigger. The troll lets him pass and then stops the bigger goat who follows him. But this goat also promises that a bigger goat is coming, so once again, the troll lets him cross. The final goat is the largest and he challenges the troll to a fight and knocks him off the bridge, where he floats down river, freeing the bridge for anyone to cross as they please.

Tibault | Petites Variations sur L'alphabet de Mozart

French tuba player Thierry Thibault (born 1963) is a current and founding member of the Epsilon brass ensemble. As a composer and arranger, Thierry Thibault has written many works that are considered standard repertoire in the brass world. He is currently Director of the Conservatory of Valenciennes, in northern France.

This piece is an original short interlude in the style of Mozart.

Wesley-Smith | White Knight and Beaver

Martin Wesley-Smith was an Australian composer with an eclectic output. Two main themes dominate Wesley-Smith's music: the life, work and ideas of Lewis Carroll, and the plight of the people of East Timor. He founded and directed the Electronic Music Studio at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. The tape part of *White Knight and Beaver* was produced on the Fairlight CMI. The Fairlight CMI is a digital synthesizer, sampler, and digital audio workstation introduced in 1979 by Fairlight. Each note was produced by the synthesizer individually and then taped together to create the entire electronic backing track. It required 15 inches of tape for a crotchet, 7 1/2 inches for a quaver and so on. 10 seconds of music took 3 weeks to complete. The trombonist (Lewis Carroll, or the White Knight as he portrayed himself in 'Through the Looking Glass') is showing Alice (the beaver in 'The Hunting of the Snark') how one can play nursery rhymes backwards and upside down on music boxes. Or in this case the Fairlight Computer Musical Instrument, one of the grandest music boxes of all.

Puccini | O mio Babbino caro

As brass players we are always trying to emulate the sound of the human voice. Here we get to do just that, with one of Puccini's most famous arias. This aria, from his opera Gianni Schicchi, is sung by the principal female character Lauretta (soprano). It is the only moment of genuine emotion and expression in a tale fraught with duplicity and misdirection. Lauretta pleads with her father to ease tensions with the family of her true love, Rinuccio.

Sherwin | A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square

We regularly perform school shows for children across New Zealand, promoting music and encouraging young people to take up brass instruments. This piece was arranged by Huw to show off the lyrical side of the trombone. Here the trombone takes the melodic material, the bass part is mostly in the horn, with the trumpet playing harmonies and the occasional melodic fragment.

Arlen | Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Written by Harold Arlen for the soundtrack to "The Wizard of Oz," this song has endured because of its perfect portrayal of yearning. Garland, portraying Dorothy, sings the song in the beginning of the film as she dreams of escaping the flat, black and white landscape of her home in Kansas. The song's first two notes illustrate this desire by making a full octave leap, symbolising a leap between two different worlds.

Here Huw has arranged the solo line for Emma on horn which fits the character of the song beautifully.

Huw Dann is the Principal Trumpet of the Auckland Philharmonia and Brass Unit Coordinator at the University of Auckland. Originally from Melbourne, Huw moved to Auckland in 2009 to take up his job in the APO. He has always loved playing chamber music so soon formed ACE Brass with John and Emma in 2011. Outside of music, Huw enjoys playing chess, long distance running, watching Australian Rules Football, and spending as much time as possible with his wife and two young children.

Emma Eden is a proud Kiwi who has been principal horn of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra since 2020. Prior to this Emma was principal third horn in the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra for 11 years. Emma is a founding member of ACE Brass and especially enjoys the community outreach part of her job. Outside of music Emma enjoys gardening, water skiing and spending time with her wife and two-year-old daughter.

John Gluyas (MMus) is a graduate of the Rotterdam Conservatory of Music where he studied with Jorgen van Rijen, the solo trombonist of the Concertgebouw Orchestra. As well as being an inspirational teacher where he holds the position of Head of Brass at St. Peters College in Auckland, he has performed with the Adelaide and New Zealand Symphonies, Orchestra Victoria and the Auckland Philharmonia. John has also performed in Broadway productions of musicals such as Aladdin, Wicked, Mary Poppins and The Book of Mormon. John is passionate about new music. In 2007 and 2009 he attended the IMPULS New Music master course in Graz, Austria where he studied with trombone soloist and composer Mike Svoboda. John enjoys watching football, taking French classes and glamping with his family.