

ACE BRASS.

A Philharmonic Fanfare

Eric Ewazen

Eric Ewazen, a composer well-known to aficionados of band music, is currently one of the most performed living composers of music for brass instruments. He has been commissioned to compose pieces for many leading brass soloists, ensembles and organisations including the New York Brass Quintet and the International Trumpet Guild. *A Philharmonic Fanfare* was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to honor a retiring board member and skillfully weaves together the three voices of trumpet, french horn and trombone to create an interesting musical texture. Evocative and assertive the fanfare contains striking rhythmic variety.

Sonata

Francis Poulenc

1. Allegro Moderato
2. Andante
3. Rondeau

Written in 1922, Poulenc's *Sonata* for horn, trumpet and trombone was dedicated to his childhood friend Raymonde Linossier. Poulenc described Mademoiselle Linossier as the '*true intellectual leavening*' of his adolescence who '*like me loves chips, pianolas, coloured lithographs, sea-shell boxes and Paris*'. As a composer Poulenc was largely self-taught and his early works such as this *Sonata* mimicked the ironic neo-classicism of Stravinsky. His works are immediately identifiable with their bright colours, strong clear rhythms and gorgeous diatonic harmonies.

Four Pieces for Brass Trio

Robert Sims

1. Trumpet
2. The Trombone
3. Horn
4. The Three of Us

This piece was written as a display piece for brass education concerts to demonstrate the capabilities of the trumpet, horn and trombone by exploring their sound and style. Rob Sims began his musical career as a trumpeter in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and has had a wealth of experience playing in all genres from orchestral to big bands, films, commercials and chamber ensembles, most recently working with Orchestra Victoria, The Australian Pops Orchestra and Cathedral Brass. As an educator he taught at Monash University, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and the Victorian College of the Arts where he was Head of Brass from 1993 – 2008. He specialises in compositions for brass and small ensembles and aims to mould his music to suit the musicians he writes for, gravitating towards lyrical melodies and experimenting with a combination of consonant and dissonant harmonies.

Sequenza V

Luciano Berio

Italian composer Luciano Berio is probably best known for his experimental series of virtuosic solo pieces known as *Sequenzas* written for 18 individual instruments. His trombone *Sequenza* was written in 1966 and is an essay in musical gestures and actions. The trombonist combines and transforms both the sound of his voice and the traditional sound of the instrument by simultaneously playing and singing into the instrument. The piece's musical and theatrical gestures are based on the memory of the last great clown known as Grock (Adriano Wettach). Berio writes "*Grock was my neighbour in Oneglia. He lived in a strange and complicated villa up the hill,*

surrounded by a kind of Oriental garden with small pagodas, streams, bridges and willow trees. Many times, with my schoolmates, I climbed a high iron fence to steal oranges and tangerines from his garden. During my childhood, the closeness, the excessive familiarity with his name and the indifference of the adults around me, prevented me from realizing his genius. It was only later, when I was perhaps eleven, that I saw him perform on the stage of the Teatro Cavour in Porto Maurizio, and understood him. Once during the evening, while performing, he stopped suddenly and, staring at the audience with a disarming look, asked: “warum?” (“why?”). Like everyone else, I didn’t know whether I should laugh or cry and I wanted to do both. After that experience, I stole no more oranges from his garden.”

Sequenza V is a tribute to Grock and his metaphysical “why”, which is the generating cell of the piece.

Interval

Trio for Brass

Anthony Plog

Part 1

1. Allegro vivace
2. Andante
3. Allegro moderato

Part 2

4. Adagio
5. Allegro vivace

The music of Anthony Plog has been performed in over 30 countries around the world. He is the recipient of numerous grants and commissions, including the National Endowment for the Arts (for the American Brass Quintet), the Malmo Symphony (Sweden), Nick Norton and the Utah Symphony, the Summit Brass, the GECA Brass Ensemble in France, the Chicago Chamber Musicians, the University of Texas at Austin, and the St. Louis Brass Quintet. At the beginning of his compositional career Plog wrote almost exclusively for brass, and his composition has grown out of a rich and varied career in music including many years working as an orchestral trumpeter.

Bravura Variations on “John Barleycorn Must Die”

Thomas Goss

Theme: Soberly
One: Cheerily
Two: Courageously
Three: Carelessly
Four: Belligerently
Five: Stinko
Shiksh: Roaring Charleston Swing

These *Bravura Variations* were commissioned by ACE Brass in 2011 for a recital in Emma Richard’s home town of Timaru. The composer’s word of warning to the players was ‘*don’t play this piece on an empty stomach.*’

The character of John Barleycorn (from the traditional British folksong) is a personification of the cereal crop barley and of the alcoholic beverages made from it; beer and whisky. In the song, John Barleycorn suffers attacks, death and the indignities that correspond with the various stages of

barley cultivation, such as reaping and malting. There are six variations, each with directions for the performers to take shots of whiskey, which leads to the musical and theatrical representation (and deterioration) of John Barleycorn.

A Song for Japan Stephen Verhelst

A colleague of trombonist John Gluyas, Verhelst wrote this piece as a tribute to the earthquake and tsunami tragedy that occurred in Japan in 2011. Verhelst wrote the piece originally to be performed by Japanese trombonists living abroad to raise support funds through their performances. The project achieved significant international recognition when a YouTube clip went viral which featured a number of the world's great trombonists. This in turn saw the piece performed in concert halls, theatres, lobbies, foyers, schools and many other public places by brass players all over the world. Bass trombone player Steven Verhelst studied at the Rotterdam Conservatory and has performed with most Belgian and Dutch orchestras. and is also a performer with ensembles such as World Brass, NBE, and the Belgisch Koper Offensief.

ACE BRASS

ACE Brass (Auckland Chamber Ensemble Brass) was formed in 2011 to bring world-class chamber music into the concert halls and homes of New Zealand.

Huw Dann (trumpet)

Huw completed his BMus at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Australia. Before moving to Auckland in 2009 to become associate principal trumpet with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. Huw freelanced in Melbourne, performing with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. and has performed as a soloist in China, America and Canada. He has also performed in the middle of the Melbourne Cricket Ground in front of eighty thousand spectators and has even performed for the Queen at a private dinner party. He is an artist teacher at the University of Auckland and also teaches trumpet privately in Auckland

Emma Richards (french horn)

Emma began her musical life in Timaru at the age of 9 playing the tenor horn in the Waimataitai School Brass Band. From here she continued on to study the french horn at Massey University in Wellington . After graduating with first class honours in 2007 Emma travelled to Canada where she attended the Banff Summer School. Emma has performed in various orchestras and ensembles throughout New Zealand, Australia, China, Canada, London and Tonga, and has appeared as a soloist with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Choral Society and St Mathews Chamber Orchestra. in 2010 Emma became principal third horn with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra.

John Gluyas (trombone) i

A graduate of the Rotterdam Conservatory of Music John has played with the Netherlands Ballet Orchestra, Macau Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria and the Auckland Philharmonia to name a few. John is the music director/conductor of the Auckland City Brass Band. Passionate about new music, he is a member of ARKO Symphonic Project based in Melbourne. In 2007 and 2009 he attended the IMPULS New Music mastercourse in Graz, Austria where he studied with trombone soloist and composer Mike Svoboda. During this course he performed with Klangform Wien. In 2011 he performed the world premiere of KURSK, an Oratorio Requiem by composer David Chisholm, as part of the Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Although trombone is his specialty John is experienced in teaching all the lower brass instruments and regularly performs on the bass trombone, renaissance sackbut, euphonium and tuba.