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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF MUSIC SYMPHONIC BAND - DENNIS W. FISHER, CONDUCTOR
The Easter Symphony (I. Kings, II. The Deathtree, III. Symphonia Ressurectus)

VOLUME 2 - 1861-MCD
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS WIND ENSEMBLE - W. DALE WARREN, DIRECTOR

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CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Dr. Richard R. Fischer, Conductor

The WIND SYMPHONY is the premiere instrumental ensemble at Concordia University, River Forest, IL.

This 70 member organization maintains an active performance schedule, having performed in schools, churches, and concert halls in 38 states and Canada. The group has a commitment to the finest traditional and contemporary sacred and secular repertoire. In addition to this recording, the Wind Symphony has recorded two compact discs of sacred wind music.

~ About the Conductor ~

Dr. FISCHER received the Bachelor of Music Education degree in 1973 and the Master of Music degree in 1979 from DePaul University. In 1987, he completed the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Michigan State University. He also studied at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, and the Universiteit van Northern Colorado at Greeley. He has performed with the Chicago Metropolitan Brass Quintet, the Greely Philharmonic Orchestra, the Michigan State Wind Symphony and Symphony Orchestra, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, and the Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest. In 1974, he was a member of the Centennial Singers orchestra that travelled to the Pacific Northwest, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. Dr. Fischer performed with the Michigan State Wind Symphony at the Third International Music Conference of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles at Boston University, and the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. Presently, he performs with the Concordia University Faculty Brass Quintet.

Dr. Fischer, Professor of Music, joined the Concordia Faculty in 1974, where he conducts the Wind Symphonies and, in collaboration with the pit orchestra for musical productions. In addition, he teaches basic and advanced conducting courses, as well as various music education courses. Dr. Fischer is the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in Music Education. He also observes student teachers.

Dr. Fischer maintains an active conducting schedule and is in demand as guest conductor, clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States and Canada. In February 1987, under Dr. Fischer’s direction, the Concordia University Wind Symphony was chosen to perform at the 24th National Conference of the College Band Directors’ National Association held at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. In addition to “Sinfonia Voci,” Dr. Fischer and the Wind Symphony have recorded the complete works of Douglas Nimmer, premiered the EASTER SYMPHONY, a 55 minute, three movement chorale symphony based on the Passion of Christ. This performance in Minneapolis, will be released as part of a Mark Recordings CD project of the composer’s complete works, early in 1996. Two volumes of a projected 6 volume set will be available the summer of 1995.

In addition to his local ministerial duties and writings, Holsinger spends time as a guest lecturer and conductor throughout the United States. In recent years he has appeared with numerous All-State organizations, professional orchestras, university orchestras, etc. Dr. Fischer is the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in Music Education. He also observes student teachers.

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In the mid-afternoon of August 28, 1990, a massive tornado swept through the center of Plainfield, Illinois, a community some 30 miles southwest of Chicago. This severe storm scythed a five mile long path, causing millions of dollars in damage and the deaths of 29 residents of the city.

Plainfield High School was one of many structures totally destroyed. In the fall of 1992, the Plainfield Band Boosters commissioned Holsinger to write a commemorative work for the High School Symphonic Band and a Civic Chorus made up of the many church choirs of the community. In the spring of 1993, after 3 years of relocation in Joliet, Plainfield High School returned to its city, and in a dedication service, the Plainfield Band and Chorus, under the direction of Scott Casagrande premiered SINFONIA VOCI.

The composition is based on the 1784 Wurttemberg Gesangbuch melody entitled ELLACOMBE and a text by Issac Watts. This hymn declares the sovereignty of God over the heavens and the earth. be it gentle flower petals or raging tempests, and asserts, in Watts’ text, “...all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care.”

SINFONIA VOCI

“I Sing the Mighty Power of God!”

Dedicated to the Indomitable Community Spirit of Plainfield, Illinois.

In Memoriam: August 28, 1990

This selection is also repeated without the choir on track number 10 [6:06]. Dr. Fischer has interpreted the selection differently to compensate for the change in the ensemble.


On a HYMNSONG OF PHILIP BLISS is a radical departure of style of this composer. The frantisc tempos, the ebullient rhythms we associate with Holsinger are replaced with a restful, gentle, and reflective composition based on the

1876 Philip Bliss - Horatio Spafford hymn, “I My Faith Looks Up To Thee”.


In the early 19th century, the leading composer of hymn tunes in America was Lowell Mason (1792-1872), whose main activities centered in Boston and New York City. Mason is particularly renowned for having pioneered the introduction of music instruction on a regular basis into the Boston public schools in 1827. He composed or arranged some 1600 hymn tunes and compiled some eighty collections of music. Among the best known of his surviving hymn tunes is ANTOCH (Joy to the World), AZMON (O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing), BETHANY (Nearer My God to Thee), HAMBURG (When I Survey the Wondrous Cross), and the tune on which this composition is based, the 1832 OLIVET (My Faith Looks Up To Thee).


Though we may come into contact with hundreds, perhaps even thousands of individuals in our lifetime, there is always an “uncommon man,” whose life’s work affects us more deeply than others. Their impact in our lives is measured not by memories, but by our ongoing effort to be a “little more like them” in what we pursue. In the lives of countless friends and former students, Dr. Charles A. “Pete” Wiley’s human legacy will be rich, indeed!

Pet Willey is an easy man to remember. To my children, Dr. Wiley was the “tallest guy who ever came to our house” and “the man who used tons of pepper on his food!” To his colleagues, friends, and students, he was a man of honor, firm, but wise to the ways of music and musicians. In the publishing world, his name represents integrity and a search for a significant repertoire for the band and wind ensemble. To his family, he was a Godly example of His Heavenly Father’s love, grace, and guidance. To me, he was my “unofficial older, wiser uncle”, and best of all, perhaps one of my closest friends...I rejoice that I knew him for awhile.

But, to be truthful, I must add...This was the most difficult piece my heart ever had to write.

In Memoriam: Pete Wiley

Just as the rural camp meetings in the early decades of the 19th century produced the popular “camp songs,” the urban revivals in the latter decades brought forth the popular church song - the hymn. This genre emerged in the 1870’s as a by-product of the Spiritual Singing Schools established by William Bradbury, and Robert Lowry were leading composers of Sunday School music. Lowry (1826-1890), a Baptist Pastor, served as editor of Sunday School songbooks for the New York firm of Biglow and Main. Among his many lasting hymnsongs are “Shall We Gather at the River”, “I Need Thee Every Hour”, and the subject of this composition, “Nothing But The Blood of Jesus.”

This is the fourth in a series of compositions based on the melodies of traditional American hymns and spirituals. Previous composition titles include ON A HYMNSONG OF PHILIP BLISS (It is Well with my Soul), ON A HYMNSONG OF LOWELL MASON (My Faith Looks Up to Thee), and ON AN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL (Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?).


ON A SOUTHERN HYMNSONG is based on the spiritual entitled Weeping Willow, and ON AN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL (Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?). This composition was commissioned by Betty Bates, Director of the fine Scottsboro High School Symphonic Band in Scottsboro, Alabama. It joins a series of hymnsong compositions based on traditional hymns of America. Previous works include variants on “It is Well with My Soul,” “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord”, and “Nothing But the Blood of Jesus.”

About American Spirituals...

During the pre-Civil War period Negro slaves developed spirituals, then generally called plantation melodies. However, the first collection of American spirituals entitled Slave Songs of the United States, was not published until 1867. Negro spirituals after the Civil War branched into two streams. One stream - the grassroots spiritual - continued among the common people. The other stream - the concert arrangements of spirituals harmonized in “correct” European style - was spread through popular performances of groups such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers (Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee), beginning about 1871.

While the grassroots spiritual continued to be sung with less polished harmonies and free improvisations, the more acceptable concert versions became known to the public at large. As they appear in current hymnals, their harmonies are more akin to the concert versions than to folk practices.

The earliest of these spirituals to be published in a hymn collection seems to be Were You There, 1911, in Songs of Evangelism published by Standard Publishing Co. of Cincinnati. However, several modern hymnals refer to an earlier adaptation by John and Frederick Work, about 1907.


In Holshinger’s Hymnsong Series, the listener may notice that the On An American Spiritual is a surprising departure from the two previous hymnsong compositions. We expect theplaintive opening (“Were you there when they crucified my Lord?”) and majestic closing portions (“Were you there when He rose up from the dead?”).... But the chaotic, brutal nature of the center section would seem greatly out of place until one reminds oneself of the lyrics of this Easter lament, where the center verses recount how they nailed Him to the tree and laid Him in the grave. With this in mind, one realizes that Holsinger has composed a variation very dependent on extramusical events (the traditional verses) for inspiration and understanding.

8. In the Spring...

IN THE SPRING AT THE TIME WHEN KINGS GO OFF TO WAR was commissioned by the Kappa Kappa Psi Chapter at Stephen F. Austin University, Nacodoches, Texas in 1985. Premiered under the baton of Bandmaster Mel Montgomery in the spring of 1986, the composition was later declared the winner of the 1986 American Bandmasters Association Ostwald Award. The composition is based on I Chronicles 20, verses 1 through 3. This short scripture tells of the gathering of King David’s armies under the command of Joab, the legions attack and siege of the land of the Amorites; the subsequent capture and execution of the Ammonite Kings; the plunder and slavery of the surviving foe; and the triumphant return of David’s army to Jerusalem.

Using a variety of musical idioms, from diatonic to “sound mass”, aleatoric to measured. Vocal to synthetic, the composer has woven a tonal picture of the chaos, pathos, triumph, grief, faith, and tragedy. In short, IN THE SPRING, literally portrays programmatically, this Old Testament episode.


This simple, but effective arrangement of the William Bradbury “Sunday School” song, JESUS LOVES ME, was written in 1991 for a young band series. Its intensity and emotional strength has elevated this composition into even the collegiate band ranks, marking it as one of the composer’s more endearing contributions to American band literature.

~ Kapelle Personnel ~

Dr. Kurt Amolsch (for Sinfonia Voci)

Soprano

Cena Burdeen
Felicia Daniels
Jeni Emmrich
Rebecca Ruffin
Hackbarth
Laura Krag
Tricia Morris
Angela Smith
Erin Sorgatz
Rebecca Tatina
Ruth Tuttle
April Wanner

Alto

Cena Burdeen
Felicia Daniels
Rebecca Ruffin
Hackbarth
Slavia Briele
Kelli Hildebrand
Soprano

Cena Burdeen
Felicia Daniels
Trixie Morris
Anna Rufner
Angela Smith
Erin Sorgatz
Rebecca Tatina
Ruth Tuttle
April Wanner

Tener

Kathleen Garg
Kjael Kjelson
Heidi Hill
Kristin Hirt
Emily Jarabak
Suzanne Krause
Cecilia Lee
Tammy Mazur
Christine Reed
Schawn Schockman
Rebecca Westgeraad

Bass

Lesli Baade
Tod Clark
Matt Frennder
Clayton Horath
Jeremy Loesch
Andrew Manthei
Mike Mathey
Peter Olson
Dan Schuth
Dan Wilant
Mike Wolniakowski
Jon Zehnder

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Soprano

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Felicia Daniels
Trixie Morris
Anna Rufner
Angela Smith
Erin Sorgatz
Rebecca Tatina
Ruth Tuttle
April Wanner

Tener

Kathleen Garg
Kjael Kjelson
Heidi Hill
Kristin Hirt
Emily Jarabak
Suzanne Krause
Cecilia Lee
Tammy Mazur
Christine Reed
Schawn Schockman
Rebecca Westgeraad

Bass

Lesli Baade
Tod Clark
Matt Frennder
Clayton Horath
Jeremy Loesch
Andrew Manthei
Mike Mathey
Peter Olson
Dan Schuth
Dan Wilant
Mike Wolniakowski
Jon Zehnder
The Symphonic Wind Music of David R. Holsinger

Volume 2

1. Sinfonia Voci (with choir) [6:21]
2. On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss [4:45]
3. On a Hymnsong of Lowell Mason [5:16]
4. Consider the Uncommon Man [7:06]
5. On a Hymnsong of Robert Lowry [5:40]
6. On a Southern Hymnsong [4:43]
7. On an American Spiritual [4:15]
8. In the Spring, At the Time When Kings Go Off to War [11:42]
10. Sinfonia Voci (band version) [6:06]

Concordia University,
River Forest, Illinois

Wind Symphony & Kapelle

Dr. Richard Fischer, Conductor

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