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Messiah University

Graduate Wind Conducting Recital Program Notes

Brandon Mast

MUAP 621

Messiah University Graduate Wind Conducting Recital

Brandon Mast

Soldiers' Procession and Sword Dance (1992) Bob Margolis (b. 1949)
(after Tielman Susato, ca. 1500-1551-4)

First Suite in Eb for Military Band (1909) Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Feliz Navidad (Merry Christmas) (2009) Words and Music by Jose Feliciano (b. 1945)
arr. Victor Lopez (b. 1950)

Psalm for Band (1954) Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)

Frosty the Snowman (2001) Words and Music by Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins
arr. Gerald Sebesky

Still, Still, Still (2011) Traditional German Carol
arr. Randall D. Standridge (b. 1976)

Symphony in Bb (1951) Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

The Red Balloon (1992) Anne McGinty (b. 1945)

Portrait of a Clown (1988) Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Messiah University Graduate Wind Conducting Recital

Soldiers' Procession and Sword Dance (1992)- Written by Bob Margolis, this composition is based on the music of Tielman Susato. Divided into two parts, the two distinct sections of this work take titles directly from Susato's *Danserye*, a collection of popular Renaissance era music.¹ Tielman Susato's date of birth is a bit of an approximation. Scholars think he was born around 1510-1515 because of a document from 1565 in which Susato refers to himself as fifty years old.² He held many titles in the music industry, including composer, arranger, instrumentalist, and publisher. Susato is native to northern Germany, but spent most of his life settled in Antwerp – modern day Belgium where he had a successful career as a music printer.³

Bob Margolis is the founder and owner of Manhattan Beach Music. A native New Yorker, Margolis holds degrees from Brooklyn College in speech and television production. During his aforementioned education, he also studied composition and orchestration. Starting instruction on the recorder at age seven, Margolis' interest in the instrument has led to the publication of several articles, and even a teacher's manual on the instrument. Bob Margolis has produced several works for band that are considered staples of the wind band repertory to include: *Battle Pavane, Terpsichore, Ode & Festival, Color*, and many more.⁴

1. Tielman Susato, *Danserye*, 1551.

2. Grove Music Online, s.v. "Tylman Susato," accessed January 22, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.messiah.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27146>

3. Larry R. Blocher, Ray Cramer, Eugene Migliaro Corporon, Tim Lautzenheiser, Edward S. Lisk, and Richard Miles, ed. Richard Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Chicago: GIA Publications. 2010), p. 114

4. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 244

In keeping with Renaissance composition styles, both tunes of this work are in a polyphonic texture. Margolis carefully doubled lines in multiple instruments that would have been a part of the same instrument family during the Renaissance period. This style of orchestration is accurate to the time period, allowing the performance to be an authentic window into popular music performances of the Renaissance era.⁵

First Suite in Eb for Military Band (1909)- Gustav Holst is most well-known for his orchestral work, *The Planets*. However, *First Suite in Eb for Military Band* is perhaps one of the most important and influential wind band works in existence.⁶ Gustav Holst came from a musical family that resided in England. A product of his experiences, Holst had a grounding in more traditional compositional techniques, but also strayed from the mainstream in his exploration of the English folksong, and Hindu philosophies through the extensive study of Sanskrit. As an instrumentalist, Holst's journey was led by various illnesses. Described as a sickly child, he was unable to become proficient at piano because of neuritis in his right arm. He then begrudgingly spent time learning the violin, and eventually settled as a trombonist in an effort to help with his asthma. In his earlier years, Holst was heavily affected by the work of Richard Wagner. Later in his career, he also drew a lot of inspiration from his colleague, Ralph Vaughn Williams.⁷

The melodies in *First Suite in Eb for Military Band* have been described as "folk-like"

5. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 245-246

6. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 489

7. Grove Music Online, s.v. "Gustav Holst," accessed January 22, 2022.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.messiah.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.13252>

even though they are all original compositions by Holst. Although the piece is clearly in E-flat major, these themes often give some ambiguity to this fact. For example, the first note in the opening theme is an “E-flat” pick-up note that lands on a concert “F” on beat one. Another interesting facet is this piece’s instrumentation. In the *New Winds of Change*, Jon Mitchell is paraphrased in saying that an examination of the first page of the manuscript indicates that Holst was writing for a medium that was in flux. The saxophone family, a relative newcomer, was gradually replacing the alto and bass clarinets; likewise B-flat trumpets were replacing those in E-flat. Partially in response to these changes, over 40% of the listed instruments were marked as optional.⁸

Feliz Navidad (Merry Christmas)(2009)- This popular holiday song was originally composed by Jose Feliciano. This arrangement by Victor Lopez is one that stays true to the original spirit of the song, letting the beloved song shine of its own accord.

Jose Feliciano is an American Puerto Rican singer, songwriter, and guitarist. Blind from birth, he had an extensive career producing Latin American crossover albums in the United States. Feliciano’s family moved to New York from Puerto Rico when he was five. He was later discovered by RCA records who led him to produce several albums. Although *Feliz Navidad* is Feliciano’s most famous recording, he considers his specialty to be that of Latin American Boleros.⁹

Victor Lopez is very busy as an educator, composer, arranger, and musician. He has a

8. Frank L. Battisti, *The NEW Winds of Change: The Evolution of the Contemporary American Wind Band/Ensemble and its Music*. (Florida, Meredith Music Publications, 2018), 31

9. Grove Music Online, s.v. “Jose Feliciano,” accessed January 22, 2022.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.messiah.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2262268>

wide variety of accomplishments as a former lead trumpet player for the Miami Sound Machine, 1978 Miami-Dade Public School Teacher of the Year, 1979 Florida State Teacher of the year teaching at both the middle school and high school level. He was also a principal at G.W. Carver Middle School, adjunct professor at Florida International University, and a composer and arranger for Alfred, Barnhouse, and Hal Leonard publishers. He has over 450 pieces published with these companies.¹⁰

Victor Lopez's arrangement of *Feliz Navidad* for Concert Band stays true to the spirit of the original composition. He writes in an abundance of articulation markings to make sure the piece is performed with a focus on its Latin style. Lopez also makes sure to include many stylistically appropriate percussion instruments including the clave and cowbell.

Psalm for Band (1954)- Vincent Persichetti composed *Psalm for Band* on a commission by the Alpha chapter of Pi Kappa Omicron national band fraternity at the University of Louisville.¹¹ The fraternity may have reached out to Persichetti because he was historically enthusiastic about wind band music. He recognized the artistic potential in a medium that others may have thought was reserved for popular music.¹² This stems from his fundamental idea of composition that composers need to integrate a working vocabulary of the wealth of different materials and compositional techniques available to them.¹³ Persichetti identified two

10. "Victor Lopez," C.L. Barnhouse Company, accessed January 22, 2022, <https://barnhouse.com/composer/victor-lpez/>

11. Nikk Pilato, and Dave Strickler, "Psalm for Band," Wind Repertory Project, Nikk Pilato, October 5, 2021, https://www.windrep.org/Psalm_for_Band

12. Frank L. Battisti, *The NEW Winds of Change*. 49

13. Grove Music Online, s.v. "Vincent Persichetti," accessed January 22, 2022. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.messiah.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.21384>

main styles within his creative tendencies; graceful, and gritty. Persichetti's music will often get to the core of pure musical creativity in a way that is similar to the joy and innocence of children. Because of this trait, Persichetti's compositions for amateur musicians will often stand up next to his more difficult compositions with being condescending, or apologetic.

Psalm for Band is an excellent example of Vincent Persichetti's compositional style, and falls in the center of his stylistic variances. It is a solemn piece that demonstrates Persichetti's command of his compositional devices. While using modern techniques, there is no sense of experimentation, only authority.¹⁴ In a program note written by Persichetti himself, he describes the piece as being constructed entirely from one germinating harmonic idea. Also, he identifies that the piece is in three distinct sections; a solemn opening, a forward-moving chorale, and a joyful allegro section that serves as a culmination for the piece.¹⁵

Frosty the Snowman (2001)- The Holiday season is a time of joy and magic for many people. Children who celebrate Christmas get increasingly excited for Santa Claus and the presents to follow. However, people of other religious beliefs also consider the same time of year to be a very important one. Regardless of the religious affiliation, most people can agree that there is something magical about the holiday season, and *Frosty the Snowman* has captured this spirit for many years. Simply by placing a magical silk hat onto Frosty's head, he became alive. Symbolic of the holidays themselves, Frosty's magic, and the unimaginable joy it brings, is fleeting. The song ends with him running away over hills of snow promising to be back again someday.

14. Robert Evett. *Notes* 13, no. 1 (1955): 147–48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/893587>.

15. Pilato, and Strickler, "Psalm for Band"

Gerald Sebesky's arrangement is an accessible rendition of *Frosty the Snowman* that allows the musicians to reach the magic of Frosty himself. With a brief introduction, this arrangement only covers the first verse of the original tune. The shortness of the songs allows younger musicians to play the song with their limited stamina. Sebesky adds some fun elements to the song with the implementation of the sleigh bells and slide whistle.

Still, Still, Still (2011)- This selection is a traditional Austrian Christmas carol that was arranged by Randall Standridge. Standridge currently lives in Arkansas with his family and is a very well-known composer among directors of younger instrumental groups. He is currently published with Grand Mesa, Alfred, FJH, Wingert-Jones, Band Works Publications, Twin Towers, and Northeastern Music Publications. His music has been performed at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, and featured in the *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* series. A former band director, Standridge has a Bachelor's degree in Music Education and a Master's degree in Music Composition, both from Arkansas State University.¹⁶

Still, Still, Still is a traditional Austrian Christmas carol that reflect the peacefulness of the manger where the infant Jesus lay. It is believed that the original Carol came from Salzburg in the mid-19th c.¹⁷ Alternate, more secular lyrics of the carol have emerged over the years as well. Randall Standridge's arrangement of Still, Still, Still features solo opportunities for the clarinet, and does a great job of capturing the peacefulness that is intended by the original composition. It does so through homophonic scoring, lush textures and instruments passing

16. "About Randall," Randall Standridge. accessed January 22, 2022.
<https://randallstandridge.com/bio/>

17. "Still, Still, Still," Tradition in Action. accessed January 22, 2022.
https://www.traditioninaction.org/religious/Music_P000_files/p018rpStillstillstill.htm

around the main opening motive in a way that imitates an echo.

Symphony in Bb (1951)- This work was composed by Paul Hindemith for the United States Army Band, it was premiered on April 5th. Hindemith is considered the foremost German composer of his generation. He was a composer of many mediums, conductor, viola and violin player, and teacher.¹⁹ During the rise of the Nazi regime, attention was brought to some of Hindemith's works that were considered too provocative. He was eventually listed in a program of "degenerate" artists, partially because of the Jewish heritage of his wife. He then fled Germany and spent many years living in either Switzerland, or the United States. He became an American citizen in 1946 while teaching at Yale University. He is still considered one of the most important German composers of his time, even though he never moved back to his home country.²⁰

Symphony for Bb is a standard in the repertoire for concert band. It is a perfect example of Hindemith's mature style. As he described in *The Craft of Musical Composition*, he doesn't necessarily prescribe to atonality. Instead, Hindemith's system treats major and minor keys without differentiation. He bases his understanding of consonance and dissonance on intervals between tones and how that aligns with the natural harmonic series. Composed in three distinct sections, counterpoint is the essential language of Hindemith's structures. Although the melodies tend to be longer phrases, they are constructed of small motivic material. Melodies will also frequently avoid any triadic movements that might imply a diatonic harmony. Another

19. Grove Music Online, s.v. "Paul Hindemith," accessed January 22, 2022.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.messiah.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.13053>

20. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 952

unifying element is the dotted-note rhythm, which creates a perception of forward motion and momentum building.²¹

The Red Balloon (1992)- This composition is by Anne McGinty, who is known as the most prolific woman composer in the field of concert band literature. She aims to compose music that is both educational, and musical, encouraging students to stay in their instrumental music program. She is published by Queenwood, C.L. Barnhouse, Boosey & Hawkes, Hal Leonard, Kendor, Kjos, and Southern Music company. After a successful career as a composer and publisher of educational music, McGinty has turned her sights to writing chamber music for brass and woodwinds. All of these newer chamber works are published through her new publishing company, McGinty Music.²²

The Red Balloon is a programmatic piece, meaning that the music is meant to describe something non-musical. While this concept is something of a hallmark to the Romantic era, it is also a great educational tool, teaching students to play beyond the notes and rhythms. *The Red Balloon* is based on a painting that left an impression on McGinty even though she only saw the painting once. The painting is of an older gentleman and a young child holding a red balloon. The entire painting is different shades of white except for the stark color of the red balloon. This piece works best for students when they are asked to imagine the red balloon's journey as it floats through the air.²³

21. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 952-3

22. "Meet the composers," McGinty Music. accessed January 22, 2022.
<https://mcgintymusic.com/inspiration/meet-the-composers/>

23. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 225-6

Portrait of a Clown (1988)- This fun, flexible, and engaging work was composed by Frank Ticheli for the Murchison Middle School Matador Band. Ticheli is a prolific composer of wind band music that has been described as optimistic, thoughtful, and brilliantly effective to name a few. Frank Ticheli earned his doctoral and masters degrees in composition from the University of Michigan. He is published by Manhattan Beach, Southern, Hinshaw, and Encore Music. He is a professor of composition at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, which is a post he has held since 1991.²⁴

Portrait of a Clown is also a programmatic work that is supposed to bring to life the bouncy, happy, carefree style of the clown character. This piece was commissioned by Cheryl Floyd for her Middle School Band, and was premiered by the same group in 1988. *Portrait of a Clown* is in ABA form with a brief introduction, and coda to match. The middle section features a more lyrical stylistic change, without changing tempo. It is scored so that it may be successfully performed with bands who lack proper instrumentation in low woodwind and low brass instruments.²⁵

24. "Frank Ticheli Composer Bio," Manhattan Beach Music. accessed January 23, 2022. https://www.manhattanbeachmusiconline.com/frank_ticheli/biography.html

25. Blocher, Cramer, Migliaro Corporon, Lautzenheiser, Lisk, and Miles. *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*. 212

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<https://randallstandridge.com/still-still-still/>