# DISCOVERING CONCEPTS, COLOUR AND TEXTURES IN MUSIC MAKING 

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, October 2009

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I. To my 'educators' who have put their knowledge, experience, wisdom and expertise into the written word:-

| Reginald Smith Brindle | Musical Composition |
| :--- | :--- |
| Hugo Cole | Sounds \& Signs |
| Thurston Dart | The Interpretation of Music |
| Robin Maconie | The Concept of Music |
| Alfred Mann | The Study of Counterpoint |
| Jean-Jacques Nattiez | Music and Discourse |
| Walter Piston | Orchestration |
| Richard Rastall | The Notation of Western Music |
| Richard Taruskin | Text \& Act |

II. To my mentor, Professor Peter Graham, who has enabled me to discover and develop hitherto uncharted areas of my musical persona. For his professionalism and willingness to impart something of the enormous talent with which he is gifted. For his understanding, patience and readiness to accommodate such a heavy maintenance student.
III. Finally, to my wife, Diane, whose belief in the potential by far exceeded my own insight. Her continuing encouragement and willingness to share her considerable musical talent in listening to fledgling scores and sharing her much valued opinions have been an invaluable support to me. Her contribution has enabled me not only to meet but to surpass my own expectations.

## INTRODUCTION

My very first memories of hearing live music are when I was about nine years old. Those memories were provided by the Boscombe Band of the Salvation Army - an experience that projected me for the first time into the fascinating world not only of music but also of brass banding. Hearing the sounds of musical instruments 'up close and personal' stirred me profoundly and shaped the world in which I have subsequently found a great deal of fulfillment in making music for myself as a performer and latterly as a writer.

My musical education, whilst not fornal in the accepted way, has nevertheless been full in the sense of absorbing and being absorbed by the music I have played produced by brass band writers and classical composers. So, from the early (confining) days of SA banding, my own experience has developed as a performer, teacher and conductor of a much wider repertoire. It was not until the early nineties that I started to arrange initially for the SA band, of which I am a member. Over a period of fourteen years my arrangements/transcriptions have encompassed the music of Bernstein, Bizet, Chabrier, Rutter, Warlock, William Ross, Offenbach, John Williams, Boccalari and Cosma. Early in the year 2000 Steven Mead commissioned me to arrange the music of the two latter composers. First came the Fantasia Di Concerto for Euphonium and brass band, and then the Cosma Concerto, originally composed for Orchestra and solo euphonium. My brass band arrangement received its premier performance in Switzerland with Brass Band Treize Etoiles in 2002. Fantasia was recorded in 2001, and subsequently the Cosma in 2003. Both were recorded by Steven with the Williams Fairey Band.

What makes a composer? Once the creative process begins and that process manifests itself into a person communicating his intentions not just to the performer(s) but also to the listener, it could be argued that a composition has been produced. With our modern perception and acceptance of new ideas of where the boundaries - if indeed there are any we acknowledge that pieces as disparate as 'Happy Birthday to you', 'Das Rheingold' and $4^{\prime} 33^{\prime \prime}$ have nevertheless one common factor - they are all composed.

Playing at the level that I have been, and with the clock ticking all too quickly, my thoughts had been for some time focused on the problem of how to continue making music when my Tuba playing was telling me not to! My own preconceptions and appreciation of composition both caused me to regard my limitations as serious when I looked into the MA portfolio requirements; the most substantial works I had completed to date were mainly arrangements/transcriptions. Composing music would be a vertical learning curve for me - I really didn't need Reginald Smith Brindle to tell me that "nothing empties the mind more quickly than a sheet of blank manuscript paper".* It was really at the point of embarking on the Masters course, however, that my thinking became crystallised. This, together with the more than generous encouragement of my mentor Professor Peter Graham, galvanised me into action and an attempt to get to grips with this matter of composition.

The work that I am presenting for my Doctorate has not been produced so much by the rigorous adherence to recognised form; neither by the attempted simulation of music produced by a multitude of composers of every genre who have educated and challenged me. Rather it has been by a student attempting to find the composer within, by attempting to find $m y$ way to writing music. Piece by piece, my music embodies a development of composition not only within my 'home ground' medium - that of the Brass Band - but uses a variety of musical media as described in the following Abstract.


#### Abstract

The portfolio compositions examine the effects of using differing textures and colour within original musical concepts.

The portfolio includes the results of research into methods of composition using two forms of the brass family - a reduced combination (Quintet) and the standard brass band configuration. The use of a combination of keyboard with solo brass, a combination of wind instruments with a solo wind instrument, and a combination of an orchestra with choir (SATB) is as a result of developing compositional techniques in hitherto unfamiliar areas. The works also attempt to reflect the influences of a number of recognised composers Ralph Vaughan Williams, Frederick Delius, John Ireland, John Rutter, Leonard Bernstein, Lalo Schiffren and George Butterworth. My portfolio contains a wide diversity of moods and styles and is presented as a result of serious artistic endeavour.


My work has been produced under the supervision of Professor Peter Graham - Chair of Composition. The portfolio contains the following original compositions:-

1. Psalm 23 - a setting for Orchestra and choir
2. Caprice for Alto Saxophone and Wind Band
3. Sonata for Tuba and Piano
4. The Well of Eternity - Variations on Abbots Leigh for Brass band
5. Petite Suite for Brass Quintet
6. The Bridestones - A Rhapsody for Brass Band

## SECTION ONE - CRITICAL COMMENTARY

# 1. - Psalm 23 <br> A setting of the psalm for Orchestra and Choir (SATB) 

with
2 Flutes, 1 Oboe, 2 Clarinets in $B^{b}, 1$ Bassoon, 2 Horns in $F, 1$ Trumpet in $B^{b}$, Timpani (1 player) and Strings.

As stated in my introduction, my writing has not been produced either by confining/developing within a classical structure or by the simulation of the works of those whom I have found most stimulating. Psalm 23 most probably belies that statement in two major ways:
i) The basic building block of thematic material.
ii) Style of composition.

Writing for orchestral forces and voices was a new experience for me. While I had the stimulus of the written text of the Psalm, my problem was, as indeed it has been for almost everything that I have written, to locate the stimulus and inspiration to generate the musical text? My Tuba playing, on which I spend some considerable time in development, unintentionally provided the answer to the first problem. Some of my 'warm-up' material contains chromatic and scalic passages and it occurred to me that one such passage, which can now be recognised as a thirteen note motif, provided the challenge I had been looking for. I envisioned this as being in two parts, the first of which rather dark in colour, reflecting the content of the written text. The second, lighter, to again capture the nature of the words which this time express the hope and optimism contained in the concluding part of the Psalm.

The piece begins with a tranquil and somewhat pastoral opening for the first eight bars, which is then followed by a more dramatic section. Against sustained chords, a thirteen note motif is presented four times, beginning in the 'cellos in bar 14, (Ex. 1). This is then taken up by the flute, clarinet and finally the oboe, before bringing the first section to a climactic sustained unison A in the upper register and played at the octave.

Ex. 1.


The extended introduction provided by the orchestra continues its dramatic, threatening tone with the strings presenting the motif in diminution (bar 24) (Ex. 2) whilst the woodwind and brass provide a backdrop of the same motif in augmented form with the timpani providing an extra element of intensity.

Ex. 2.


As this passage proceeds the intensity is lessened and the piece again pauses with an octave D provided by the horns. This then makes way for a more tranquil passage, just as the piece commenced, to introduce the vocal element.

The Psalm is known sufficiently well for me to dispense with any further commentary. The voices are introduced here, and the soprano line and the body of the musical text are formed around the thirteen-note motif.

The texture of the orchestra is restrained and the tempo and mood have been intended to reflect tranquility. This continues until the darker, uncertain element of mortality is introduced and once again the earlier motif is heard. However, this gives way to a brief interlude, out of which arise the words of solace and the motif which has until this point been heard in a major form, lifting both colour and texture to present the second part of the Psalm.

The words of the Psalmist indicate the passing of the more sober aspects of his exhortation and in contrast provide a far brighter hope. Here, too, the musical text attempts to complement this aspect of the Psalm with a light semiquaver arpeggio passage commencing in bar 83 from the first violin (Ex. 3) and viola (Ex. 4).

Ex. 3.


Ex. 4.


Commencing in the Bass, solo vocal elements are introduced (Ex. 5) against which can be heard a 'cheerful' echo (bars 93-95) in the flute of the earlier darker motif.

Ex. 5.
B.


The second part of the music moves between bright tone centres and these progressions, in keeping with the written text, produce an extended sense of adulation, arriving at the conclusion of the Psalm in a strong and positive style. A short postlude completes the work, and the material heard throughout the piece is echoed by solo instruments. This is set against a softening orchestral backdrop, with the piece finally concluding on a C major chord.

The text of Psalm 23 is taken from the paraphrase 'The Living Bible' and the model for the musical text is from the work of John Rutter, whose Requiem employs the less familiar woodwind combination used here. His examples in this genre are inspirational.

# 2. - Caprice <br> for 

Alto Saxophone and Wind Band

A little further away from my music making comfort zone found me pondering on the construction of a jazz saxophone piece with wind band accompaniment. Although this was an exploration into a sound world hitherto unfamiliar to me I like the combinations, colours and textures these produce. For me they are more liberating than the strictures of pure brass. The concept I started out with was a 'formless' piece - a capricious expression of a young person finding all the joyful and romantic facets of life. It has three movements:-

1. Scherzo
2. Romance
3. Joie de Vivre

Movement 1. Scherzo.

Beginning with a short soliloquy, the soloist sets the tone of the movement with a rhythinic melody that represents the light-hearted nature of youth. The band takes up the melody line after eleven bars; here the line is slightly developed, and the soloist reappears to take back the prominence. Cross-rhythms from the band's saxophones and trombones provide a humorous touch. These 6:4 rhythms are reinforced with the inclusion of bassoons, clarinets, horns, euphonium, tuba and glockenspiel. At bar 31 there is a scherzo-like badinage section for a few bars between the soloist and band before a change of key and of melody line. The scherzo atmosphere is still maintained, but is an extended link to new material.

This occurs at bar 58 where the tuba supported by a brushed snare drum introduces a four bar ostinato and at bar 62 the euphonium enters with the same four bar ostinato a major 3rd higher (Ex. 1). This figure is taken up by bassoons and bass clarinet with some trombone section colour.

Ex. 1.


The soloist makes the entry with his/her statement - echoing something of the solo material heard previously. The first time is in the key of B major and this whole section is then repeated having modulated to C major with a contrapuntal line from the horns at bar 75 .

The upper woodwind provides a further diversion almost as a restraint on an ever-wayward adolescent who must, for just two bars (88-89) be part of the establishment! Lional Winner's drinking song Little Brown Jug written in 1869, and made famous by Glenn Miller Swing Band in the 1940 's, is referred to here. The 'Brown Jug' reference lingers for a little while, but the capricious soloist dominates with short statements that are echoed by the band. These lead into a reprise of the ostinato section until bar 130 where a short codetta moves through several keys. This is presented in non-swing and ultimately brings the movement to a halt.

Movement 2. Romance.
If the piece is representative in the first movement of an emerging, developing life, then the second movement leaves that cocoon of youthfulness and reflects an episode of romance. The solo saxophone begins with a plaintive tune (Ex. 2).

Ex. 2.

Alto Sax.


The accompaniment for the first 20 bars is restrained but as the soloist finishes the melody line, the tutti band adds its strength and weight to the melody. It is presented here with much more passion, as if to emphasise what has been heard before. At this point the now reduced accompaniment repeats the melody line, and the soloist re-emerges with an expression of joy and contentment in the upper register (Ex. 3). Both melody and counterpoint reach a point of fulfilment in a prolonged pause.

Ex. 3.

Alto Sax.


The movement ends as it began with a plaintive reminder of the last fading two bars of the melody, the band providing a subdued chordal progression leading to a pianissimo conclusion.

Movement 3. Joie de Vivre.
The last movement is marked Giocoso, but still retains and requires a scherzando approach. The opening clarinets together with a bass tread set the scene for a number of motifs, provided by a number of instruments throughout the range to produce varied colourings. These are presented in both augmentation and diminution. The soloist enters (bar 203), mimicking these motifs and extending the figure a little. The small section is then repeated
and there follows another 'conversation' between wind band and soloist until a change of key and of texture at bar 228.

The lower brass with bass clarinet provide a series of chords as a backdrop to enable the soloist to demonstrate agility in this upper register (Ex. 4). The material used here is a variation on the melody line provided by the tutti band at bar 238, using a modulation to a flatter key.

Ex. 4.


This short section leads to a cadenza for the soloist, in which fragments from melody lines heard in the first movement and earlier in the last movement are evident.

The cadenza gives way to the finale in G major and the solo line is given prominence with subdued support from the band, and with a change of key to $A^{b}$, the two bar figure is repeated. Just before the final key change there is a new figure introduced by the flute. This is then echoed not just by the soloist but by various instruments throughout the band, until a chromatic ascending passage from the band gives the soloist the last (answering) chromatic statement to end on a high D semibreve. The band brings the piece to a close with a punctuated semiquaver/staccato crotchet finish.

Caprice for alto saxophone is intended to demonstrate the agility of the instrument and the dexterity of the soloist.

## 3. - Sonata for Tuba and Piano

The quantity of music for solo tuba has increased greatly over the last two decades, and much of this has been in the form of studies and exercises. The Sonata is in four short movements and requires of the soloist stamina - not so much for any fast playing - but an ability to sustain a good sound in a fairly high register.

## First Movement - Allegro Spiritoso

The unaccompanied soloist starts the piece, in keeping with the marking (Ex. 1).
The opening melody is repeated with the piano and so the dialogue commences. At bar 19 the piano takes up the melody and at bar 25 the soloist provides an obbligato for five bars, before ending this section by repeating the second half of this first melody. Ex. 1.


A change of key at bar 37 introduces a modulation and the second melody at bar 41 in a cantabile style (Ex. 2) and at bar 51 the soloist becomes a duettist for 10 bars, resuming prominence as soloist at bar 41 . Here the key changes once more to present an episode in F minor, with characteristic badinage between both players.

Ex. 2.


Bar 75 sees another key change and another melody line demanding dexterity and a good facility from the soloist. There is a return to the melody first heard in bar 73 and this is woven into a reprise of the opening melody that ends this movement in rumbustious style.

## Second Movement - Elegy

As the title suggests, this movement is intended to enable the soloist to demonstrate the finesse of the performer/instrument, and the style throughout should reflect this approach. The piano commences the movement, setting the scene for what follows. At bar 132 the soloist enters with a short statement in his/her own time and at the a tempo is joined by the accompanist in supporting style to enable the soloist to add to the opening statement. A further passage of unaccompanied solo occurs. The section containing these passages is intended to create the impression of sadness and of solitude.

At bar 142 the mood is lightened and the accompaniment introduces a more pastoral passage for the soloist. The piano provides pure accompaniment for these bars where the soloist sustains the melody in the upper register of the instrument, until the return to the Doloroso section at bar 164. It is the piano which then creates a sense of disquiet again as the movement creates a soulful, sad picture with the soloist now in the lower register. With the lighter mood having disappeared, and, at bar 179, a pause in the music, the soloist ends the movement as it began, with the impression of having a heavy heart. However, in the final bar a tierce de Picardie presents a hint of things to come.

## Third Movement - Valse Humoresque

This short movement again provides a conversation piece between soloist and accompanist. The waltz melody - although a little angular - is suited to the tuba. After the repeated opening section, the accompaniment provides the melody line while, as in the first movement, the soloist provides an obbligato, set in the upper register. At bar 209, there appears an accelerando and the waltz moves from a sedate three-in-a-bar to a quicker dotted minim passage until bar 229. Here the music returns to the slower tempo and the earlier material is re-scored between the piano and tuba, but still with the notion of a conversation that ends on a calm, sustained $G$ from the soloist and a quiet arpeggio chord from the piano.

## Fourth Movement - Scherzo

The final movement requires a combination of dexterity and agility from both the soloist and the accompanist. Conversation is again a feature of this movement, with short statements from the Tuba, and equally short responses from the piano (Ex. 3).

Ex. 3.


There are also 'duet' bars and so the music moves swiftly between pure soloistic passages and conversation pieces. Without lessening the tempo, the music changes character from bright and lively activity to a more cantabile passage at bar 273 , where it moves from $E^{b}$ major to F major. However, the reflective nature does not last and is abandoned at bar 298, where both the soloist and accompaniment return to a more playful mood and the opening melody line, with the movement and the Sonata concluding on a bright note.

As in other pieces included in my portfolio, some of the Sonata (the Elegy) has been written with an acknowledgment to two significant classical composers. In this instance - Frederick Delius and John Ireland. From the former comes the Song of Summer which evokes a sense of solitude and restfulness. The latter has produced a great deal of piano music of which The Towing Path, A Grecian lad (3 Pastels), Leaves from a Child's Sketchbook, and The Darkened Valley are but four examples. All have a lightness of structure and delicate textures. The intention in the Elegy is to reflect these qualities.

4. - The Well of Eternity<br>Variations on Abbot's Leigh for Brass Band

Abbot's Leigh is a village in North Somerset whose claims to fame are that it was the hiding place of Charles II in 1651 during his escape to France after the battle of Worcester. Its name is given to a hymn tune written by Cyril Vincent Taylor in the mid 1900s. The hymn tune is interdenominational and is widely used today. The words most associated with it are 'Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken', and its poetic language embraces the Christian belief in God as the means - the Well - of eternity. Of the four variations the second, third and fourth contain references to the moods and styles of those giants of their art. I have not intended that any of my portfolio should contain music 'in the style of', but in these variations the influences of Lalo Schiffren and Leonard Bernstein (Variation 2), Olivier Messiaen (Variation 3) and Benjamin Britten (Variation 4) are reflected. The associated music being from the film music of Mission Impossible and West Side Story - Symphonic Dances; Quartet For The End of Time-Variation 5 for 'Cello \& piano; Variations and Fugue on a theme of Purcell respectively.

Following an introduction in which can be heard snatches of the main theme, there are four variations each differing in style. The first is a free expression and has a pastoral flavour in its setting. The second is very far removed from this more dignified variation and uses the idiom of modern jazz. The third variation is in classical mode using an ostinato as a foundation for the whole variation. The final variation remains within the classical framework of the fughetta form. From this emerges the final statement of the main theme that gives way to a presto section in which can be heard truncated material originally heard in the earlier movements. After a short codetta the piece ends in a bright, positive style.

## Introduction and Main Theme

In all the variations the first three notes of a major triad are predominant, since the tune itself begins in this way (Ex. 1).

Ex. 1.


The introduction commences with the opening notes in the upper cornets (Ex. 2) and echoed in bar 3 by the lower baritone and bar 4 (in a minor mode and augmentation) by the upper baritone (Ex. 3).

Ex. 2.


Ex. 3.


The reappearance in both augmented and diminution form continues until the music moves to the presentation of the main theme in its complete form at letter A. However, snatches of the primary three notes can still be heard throughout the score e.g. Timpani at bar 27 (Ex. 4) and first baritone at bar 29 (Ex. 5).

Ex. 4.
maestoso


## Ex. 5.



As the latter bars of the main theme progress, embellishments from euphonium to repiano cornet can be heard adding a degree of interest against an otherwise stately melody. There then follows a link passage - lighter in texture and reflective in character - before moving to the first variation at letter C .

## Variation 1

As indicated in the earlier introduction of this music, Variation 1 has abrupt changes in character, texture and colour, providing a robust, bucolic flavour. It is quite short and follows the ternary form. Sudden changes in dynamics and florid passages for all sections of the band are predominant, but the now familiar downward moving triad makes a brief appearance again from repiano cornet in bar 93 (Ex. 6) down to second baritone (inverted) in bar 94. (Ex. 7).

Ex. 6.


Ex. 7.


The variation concludes with a ringing tam-tam, and serves as a bridge to the next variation.

## Variation 2 - (Letter F)

The hitherto stateliness of the main theme is exchanged at this point for an unconventional treatment in the jazz idiom. The process of presenting the major triad motif as descending is now reversed to begin with - ascending and then descending - from upper cornets (bar 126Ex. 8) down to the timpani (bars 132/133-Ex. 9), to prepare the listener for a new style. Ex. 8.


Ex. 9.


Underpinning this entire movement is a backdrop of an ostinato bass line together with percussion which, for this movement, is augmented to 4 players - Percussion 1 (timpani, xylophone and tubular bells); Percussion 2 (glockenspiel tubular bells, loose cymbal, snare drum, tom-toms and tam-tam); Percussion 3 (clash cymbal, triangle, loose cymbal, tam-tam, cow bells, glockenspiel, xylophone and snare drum); Percussion 4 (bongo).

The three-note motif is developed in this variation and is presented throughout in a discordant statement in the upper brass with responsive echo from the tenor section with euphonium and xylophone in bars 145 and 146 (Ex. 10).

Ex. 10.


This passage is repeated in similar fashion by the horn section with a response from the upper cornets accompanied by euphonium and xylophone. So the movement continues to progress towards a section beginning at letter $G$ when soloistic opportunities are provided at bar 174 for trombone (solo) (Ex. 11) with xylophone. The notation here is deliberately written so as to indicate to the soloists that a 'non brass band' approach is required and that a certain amount of freedom from strict tempo is appropriate.

Ex. 11.

1st Tbn.


A full band break then occurs providing a contrast in both colour and texture before a final solo passage for flugel horn occurs at bar 200. The pace and energy begin to fade away in bar 212 where a series of three descending crotchet progressions are heard from baritones, trombone and euphonium. These serve as a continuity statement, and the movement ends with a sustained discord from the muted upper cornets; a caesura is indicated to provide separation between this variation and the next variation.

## Variation 3 (Letter I)

In this variation the main motif is presented in various ways, the most subtle of which is to be found in the Messiaen-like ostinato. Here, from bar 224, each of the commencing notes of each successive bar present this motif throughout. Added to this is a new figure (Ex. 12), first appearing on second cornet and solo horn, flugel horn and first trombone, 3rd cornet, flugel horn, 1st baritone and glockenspiel. It is then presented in rhythmic retrograde (Ex. 13).

Ex. 12.


Ex. 13.

1st Bar.


The movement has been conceived as intensely introspective, rhapsodic in form, lightly scored at first but nevertheless creating substantial texture and colour as it progresses. Once again at bar 232 a strong re-emergence of the motif (Ex. 14) sounds through the now very intense music. This continues to be repeated in increasing volume until bar 234 where, from here to the conclusion of the movement, the soprano and solo cornet present a reflective duet figure above the band which, from bar 240 is muted.

Ex. 14.


## Variation 4 (Letter K)

The commencement of this final variation is written in the form of a fughetta commencing at bar 243. The upper cornets enter with an eight bar subject commencing with the recognisable notes of the major triad and this is followed by an extended counter-subject. Each of the remaining sections - alto, tenor and bass - repeat the subject and counter-subject at the appropriate pitch in turn with the exception of the bass section, which dispenses with the countersubject entirely. At bar 275 the repiano, second and third cornets re-present the subject and the tenor section the countersubject. The main theme emerges and rises from the body of the band, and this is accompanied by a harmonic bass, tubular bells, xylophone and percussion.

The intention is to produce a majestic recapitulation of this magnificent tune. Just as the middle bars of the tune, when it is first presented at letter A, are thinly scored with just upper brass and trombones, the idea is repeated again with a thin texture and lighter colouring at letter N. However, this interlude is extended with a more animated character before continuing at letter O , concluding the main theme in bar 312. At this point a codetta is presented using previously heard motifs in a truncated form so as to produce an exuberant conclusion.

5. - Petite Suite<br>for<br>Brass Quintet

As with the setting of Psalm 23, the Petite Suite was another new experience for me. I have always felt nearer my home ground with larger brass forces, and so a quintet presented me with a challenge. It has four movements: -

| I | - | Intrada |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| II | - | Dance Images |
| III | - | Elegy |
| IV | - | March |

I Intrada

After a short opening statement, the music moves into the Intrada with the melody line shared between first trumpet (bars 6-8), and Trombone (bars 8-13). At its repeat it appears in the horn and first trumpet. The next section at bar 20 sees a change of key and style (Grazioso), where the melody line appears in the second trumpet and then it is taken up by the tuba. A transitional passage, using new material but reflecting that which appears at the start of the 'Intrada' brings the music to a pause before a re-statement of the opening section in the home key. A short codetta is added at bar 44 to bring this movement to its conclusion.

This movement encompasses a time span of approximately five centuries - from Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II. For the commencement of this opening section, the tenor drum/tabor is introduced and played by the temporarily redundant tuba player. The style is that of an Elizabethan Pavanne. The same melody line continues into bar 90, but at this point the style and colour change to a more modern setting and the drum, often associated with the $16 / 17^{\text {th }}$ century dance, is abandoned.

A link in $3 / 4$ time takes the music from its original 'time zone' to a more modern one-in-abar waltz, with the second trumpet establishing a new melody that is shared with the horn (bar 129). Modulating, a repeat of the waltz is made using different instrumentation and, after a short bridge section, the movement returns to the section originally heard at bar 90 . There is a short coda and the dance images conclude with just a hint of a $20^{\text {th }}$ century rhythm.

III Elegy

During the writing of this suite I received news that a friend, who has been a life-long bandsman, had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. It is the only music I have written that has been prompted in such a way, but I feel it appropriate to include this as a tribute to him, and the courage he has shown in dealing with the devastating condition.

The whole movement therefore is very sombre, and its minor mode and melody lines are indicative of the intended sentiment. The initial 21 bars make an unmistakable reference to sadness which, at bar 182, veers away from the tragic to a slightly brighter and warmer section. This, as a semplicé passage, gives an intended impression of the uncomplicated personality and a performer who through his playing could demonstrate the kind of pathos and sensitivity written into these few bars. His strength of character is also evident in this passage, despite his awareness of his own mortality. After a climactic fortissimo at bar 207, the music begins to fade with echoes of earlier motifs and the movement progresses towards its inevitable conclusion. Descending in pitch and volume the movement finishes as it started, with dignity and reverence.

## IV March

Many schools and colleges (perhaps more so in the United States) have thriving (marching) bands and if a set of long standing traditions and a band are put together, parades are often the outcome. The March, which concludes the Suite, aims to capture this spirit of high school/college razzamatazz.

A quasi fanfare starts the movement, with the marching music proper commencing at bar 232 in the horn, with the accompaniment in the upper register being muted. At bar 240 a bass section is included - repeating the melody previously heard - but now in the traditional march mould. Passing reference is made in bar 248 to a well known martial hymn, and this bridge leads to a 'trio' section and the school song. In this passage phrases are passed between the instrumentalists; horn first, first trumpet and repeated in the second trumpet and then the first trumpet.

There is an eight bar bridge between the end of this section and a reprise of the march proper. On its reappearance here it is a little more decorated with semiquaver/trumpeting accompaniment from the trumpets/trombone. At bar 303 there is a change of key and the march is repeated once more and, just as the Suite commenced, so it comes to its conclusion with a quasi fanfare.

## 6. - The Bridestones

## A Rhapsody for Brass Band

Formed under the sea about 150 million years ago in what is now Dalby Forest in the North Yorkshire Moors is a collection of sandstone rocks call The Bridestones. The rock formations have, over a period of time, been weathered into peculiar shapes. As peculiar as these shapes, are the bizarre myths that surround them. One legend has it that should a bride on her wedding day be the first to reach the central stone before her husband, then she will dominate their marriage. Other legends include tales of witchcraft and other rites. At the time I visited them the weather was poor and the sky was cloud laden, threatening rain. It is against this backdrop of an ommous-looking Yorkshire moor, with its panoramic view, that the music seeks to portray images of the Bridestones and the environs.

The introduction (bars 1-16) represents the climb to the site of the stones and the stark view which awaits. Within the introduction is an heraldic figure (Ex. 1) and this is repeated throughout the music. The first sighting of the stones is at letter A, a panorama of the moors and the several rock formations held within the vastness of the moors.

Ex. 1.


There are no smooth contours and the music depicts this with a sudden break from the poco ritenuto bars (22-25) that initially gives the impression of a flowing scene but which is
rudely interrupted with a Marcato section as the scene is one of the hideously shaped stones (bars 26-32). A two bar link moves the scene from one stone to a glance at another, equally angular in formation but moving to a break in the continuity of stone gazing. Here the scene is one of hurrying along (bars 41-65) represented by a solo euphonium passage. The tutti band repeats this melody and the darker mood of the music is changed to a lighter, brighter one.

The pace slows for a short while as a respite from the impressions of these monolithic structures, but it is only for a while as the music and scene change again, returning to the earlier view of the initial climb to the top of the escarpment. There is a sense of trepidation (bars 83-93) as the walk around this ancient site continues and inusic returns briefly as a reminder of earlier scenes. This time they are viewed from a different perspective as another stone comes into view, but this is soon replaced with a scene of tranquility - the Bridestone. Here, legend leads us to believe that wedding ceremonies were once held in ancient times and within the music scenes of romance can be visualised, represented by a plaintive solo cornet (bars 100-107). The tutti band at bar 108 with a Con Calore marking serves to emphasise this more attractive facet of the Bridestones.

Having reflected on the much happier times in the life of the stones we are drawn back to the beginning of the visit - the heraldic figure, first heard at the opening bars of the rhapsody and another new part of the moor comes into view (Bar 118). This part of the music presents the scene with an ostinato found in the lower brass (Ex. 2) the formation of which includes the tonal progression of the heraldic figure.

## Ex. 2.



Above this is plainsong, initially in the alto section of the band and then the cornets. An image of hooded figures proceeding with their ceremonies and ancient rites is intended. There is a dark undertone provided by the trombones and then baritones (bars 121-137) recalling perhaps ritualistic events at one time witnessed at the stones. But the event passes and the music, as with this history of the monoliths, fade and is less turbulent with a major triad from the trombones.

The close encounters with the Bridestones; the past which they represent and the pagan/ satanic connections embodied within them are succeeded (bar 149) by a clear uninterrupted view of the moor by the walker. Here is a panoramic view of this vast, beautiful rolling countryside provides a glimpse of a creation more associated with splendour rather than superstition. This final movement has its mood and intention set by a sustained loose cymbal with a set of duet figures. These are heard initially from first horn/first baritone; repiano cornet/flugel horn/solo horn, and this is reiterated through the band. The texture and colour are intensified (bar 161) as more of the panorama comes into view. The musical intensity grows (bar 173) as does the sense of wonder and appreciation of this small part of the natural world.

The journey to the Bridestones comes to its conclusion having taken in this final scene, and as the walkers prepare to leave, less and less of the stones and their moorland home can be seen. This departure is reflected in the more subdued music. Within these fading scenes though are reminders of what has gone before - the heraldic figure now more faded than stentorial (bar 185). A figure in the following bar in the tubas formerly leading us to expectation of different scenes now leads into a codetta (Vivace) at bar 187. Contained in these final few bars are figures in the first baritone (Bar 187) (Ex. 3) which reflect the note progressions heard in romantic mood in bar 100 and bars 192 and 193 in the upper horn family (Ex. 4). These serve to remind the listener of the heraldic responsive figure heard earlier in bars 2 and 3.

Ex. 3.


Ex. 4.


With these final bars reflecting a lighter image of the Bridestones comes a sense of exuberance at one of nature's wonders.

## Psalm 23

A Setting for Orchestra and choir
John Meredth







Hn.





Fl.


Hn.


Timp.

S.

B.


Vin. I

VIn. II


Fl.


Hn .


Timp.

B.


Vln. I




Hn.


Timp.
S.
A.



$m f$ cresc
T.

B.


Not be a
mf cresc

Not be a

Vin. I

VIn. II







Hn .


A.

T.

B.

Vin. I






Hn.

S.

A.


Vln. I





Fl.


Hn.


Timp.

S.

B.


Vln. I





Fl.

$p p$

Hn.

A.

T.

B.


VIn. I


Caprice for Alto Saxophone and Wind Band





































2nd Movement - Romance










































Tb. ${ }^{97}{ }^{97}$




## II. Elegy








## IV Scherzo


loco.









$141$


$143$




















$163$




















$183$










$193$


















## Petite Suite

Brass Quintet
Intrada
John Meredith















Tpt.







Elegy










## March













The Bridestones - A Rhapsody for Brass Band.




Perc. 1 \#













Perc. 1










Perc. 1







perc 1 $\qquad$ | 2 |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
















Perc. 1 些表












## APPENDIX

Compact Disc of compositions


[^0]:    PhD Thesis
    2009

