

Although **Richard Wagner** (1813-1883) led a tempestuous life, characterized by poverty, political persecution and derision, he stands as a giant in the history of nineteenth-century music. A precocious child, he learned about the theatre from his step-father, Ludwig Geyer, an actor of considerable talent. Inspired to become a musician, Wagner's phenomenal progress in the study of counterpoint and his intimate knowledge of the theater created in him a desire to compose operas with a dramatic story, utilizing orchestral parts equal to the vocal parts. For Wagner, music functioned to serve the needs of dramatic expression, and in this regard he had no peers.

Mark Hindsley (1905-1999) was born in Union City, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University in 1924 with a degree in chemistry but stayed at Indiana to conduct the band. He later earned the Master of Arts degree in music. In 1934, Albert Austin Harding appointed Hindsley his assistant as director of the University of Illinois bands. Hindsley served in the U.S. Army Air Forces Training Command during World War II and returned to the University of Illinois, succeeding Harding in 1948. He held that position until his retirement in 1970. Under his direction, the University of Illinois bands attained great success, also issuing an extensive series of recordings which presented the best band repertoire of the period.

While Hindsley has not composed extensively, he is noted for his many fine band transcriptions of orchestral classics. Through his company, Hindsley published his own music and volumes of his own essays. He is the author of seven books.

Lohengrin was first produced at Weimer in 1850, under the direction of Franz Liszt. The legend of the Holy Grail was the inspiration for the story of the opera. The recorded work is a transcription by Mark Hindsley of the instrumental introduction to the third act, which is followed by the festal music for the wedding of Elsa and Lohengrin. This introduction is neither traditional nor conventional, but is a free development of two strongly contrasting themes, with an interlude on a third theme.

The second theme, a period consisting of a phrase of four measures, twice repeated, rising a third higher each time, is an exceedingly impressive one. It was of this period that Hector Berlioz wrote:

Nothing comparable to this can perhaps be found in all music for grandiose vigor, force and brilliancy; launched forth by the brass instruments in unison, this theme turns the strong beats at the beginning of its three phrases, into as many cannon shots which make the listener's breast quake.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949), like Gustav Mahler, was a celebrated conductor. Strauss was trained under Hans von Bulow and held conducting positions in the opera houses of Vienna,

Weimar, Berlin, and Munich. He was frequently honored throughout Europe as a composer and conductor and was widely recognized as the dominant figure in German musical life during the early twentieth century. As the definitive post-Romantic composer, Strauss is known for his symphonic poems, generally composed before 1900, and for his operas, which came later. Strauss wrote symphonic poems with both philosophical and descriptive programs.

Among the tone poems of **Richard Strauss**, many believe that *Ein Heldenleben (A Hero's Life)* takes first place for its brilliance and magnitude of proportions. It was his most ambitious and perhaps most convincing achievement. Through the systematic development of leading motives, a definite attempt was made by Strauss to suggest characters. Although *Ein Heldenleben* is quite programmatic in nature, Strauss was quoted as having said "There is not need of a program. It is enough to know that there is a hero fighting his enemies."

Strauss composed this particular tone poem in 1898 and dedicated it to Willem Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam. In America, the work was first performed in 1900 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Theodore Thomas conducting. This superb transcription for symphonic band is the work of **Mark Hindsley**.

Although not as well known as Shostakovich and Prokofiev, **Dmitri Kabalevsky** (1904-1987) was one of Russia's highly gifted composers. His style is in the Tchaikovsky idiom with appropriate modern trimmings - which is another way of saying that his music has great and immediate appeal for the average listener. Kabalevsky was fourteen when he and his family moved from St. Petersburg to Moscow, where he attended the Scriabin School of Music from 1919 to 1925. In 1925 he entered the Moscow conservatory where he studied composition with Miaskovsky, who apparently had great influence on his early works. However, his later compositions show unique and personal style marked by clear tonality and energetic rhythms.

The Overture to "Colas Breugnon," composed in 1938, is a brisk, brilliant, and high-spirited piece, written as the curtain raiser of Kabalevsky's opera based on Romain Rolland's lusty novel of life in French Burgundy during the sixteenth century. The hero of the story has something in him of both Robin Hood and Francois Villon, a French lyric poet who was banished from Paris in 1463. Kabalevsky has written music admirably fitting this character. **Walter Beeler** created this arrangement for band in 1967.

Richard Wagner's opera, *The Flying Dutchman*, was written in 1841. The story concerns a man condemned to sail the seas on a ghost ship. Every seven years he is cast on shore and given the opportunity to find a wife who will be faithful to him until death. Daland, a sea captain, upon promise of treasure, accepts him as fiancé for his daughter, Senta. She consents and vows eternal fidelity. In spite of the opposition of her suitor, Erik, and the Dutchman's admission of his curse,

she frees him from it by throwing herself into the sea. The overture from *The Flying Dutchman* was transcribed for band by Mark Hindsley.

Also *Sprach Zarathustra, Op 30* , Strauss' tone-poem "after Nietzsche" was written in 1896, between *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* and *Don Quixote*. Two years later the composer followed it up with his musical autobiography, *A Hero's Life*. *Zarathustra* is thus both predecessor and natural complement to the later work. Although not an actual autobiography, it is a confession acknowledging Nietzsche's philosophy. It may be summed up by the lines from the prose-poem which head the score:

Music has dreamt far too long; now we shall awake. Walkers in darkness we were,
in light we shall walk henceforth.

The aspiring ideas of the tone-poem are matched by an unusual choice of instruments which include six horns, two harps and an organ. In this work Strauss does not attempt to "write philosophical music" or offer a composed system of thought, but rather attempts to echo Nietzsche's ideas. Mark Hindsley transcribed this classic orchestral work for symphonic band

Notes by Dr. John R. Locke, Director of Bands, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Sources for program notes:

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BAND

In the 1920's, John Philip Sousa called it the "World's Greatest College Band." During separate guest conducting appearances in the 1950's, Edwin Franko Goldman acclaimed it "second to none," and the "finest of all concert bands."

More recently, many of the country's most prominent composers and conductors have written in terms such as these:

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"One can easily see why the University of Illinois Bands continue to lead the nation in cultural attainment."

Shortly after the University of Illinois opened in 1868, a military band was organized. The military band became also a concert band and gave its first formal concert in 1890. Beginning in 1906, the University of Illinois Bands were guided to a position of eminence by Albert Austin Harding, universally regarded as "the father of the college band." Mark Hindsley, who had come to the University in 1934 as principal assistant, became Director of Bands in 1948 upon the retirement of Harding. It was during Hindsley's tenure that the University of Illinois Band Building was planned, constructed and dedicated to Harding. It is Hindsley who receives credit for initiating the far-sighted project of producing long playing disc recordings of the University of Illinois Concert Band.

Without question, Albert Austin Harding and Mark Hindsley were pioneers in the college band field, both as conductors and as arrangers. Both conductors produced numerous transcriptions of orchestral repertoire for performance by the Illinois Band greatly enriching the amount of quality music available for band performance. Upon the retirement of Hindsley in 1970, Dr. Harry Begian was appointed Director of Bands, only the third person ever to serve in that position.

During Dr. Begian's tenure at Illinois, the Symphonic Band performed virtually every work of substance in the concert band repertoire including original compositions, transcriptions and marches. Dr. Begian greatly enjoyed conducting the transcriptions of Harding and Hindsley, continuing the grand legacy of the Illinois Band. Further, Dr. Begian championed the music of Percy Grainger, producing a landmark two-album set of Grainger's works. Among transcribed literature, Begian is perhaps best known for his interpretive genius with the tone poems of Richard Strauss. Among original band literature, Begian's name is inseparably linked with the *Armenian Dances, Part I and II* of Alfred Reed which were composed for and dedicated to him. Additionally, Dr. Begian's career at Illinois demonstrated a devotion to march music which was second to none. Producing several march albums, Begian demonstrated interpretive possibilities to the band world which have long been admired and imitated.

In 1985, after the retirement of Dr. Begian, James Keene was appointed as the fourth Director of Bands in the history of the University of Illinois. Before coming to Illinois, Keene served for five years as director of Bands at the University of Arizona during which his bands received national recognition and acclaim through their concert tours and convention performances. Previous to his appointment at Arizona, Keene taught at East Texas State University, the University of South Carolina, Louisiana Tech University and the University of Michigan. At the University of Illinois, the Symphonic Band has continued to flourish under the leadership of Keene with frequent performances throughout the country at the most prestigious conferences and conventions.

- ABOUT THIS SERIES -

In order to preserve and make permanent the artistic accomplishments of Dr. Harry Begian at the University of Illinois, Mark Custom Recording Service, Inc. is producing a limited number of compact disc recordings. Compact discs such as this one have been remastered from the original University of Illinois tape recordings made between 1970 and 1984. Works which have been included on this compact disc were selected personally by Dr. Begian. This project was undertaken by Mark Records as a tribute to Dr. Harry Begian and the memory of Vincent S. Morette and his great admiration of Dr. Begian. Many of the older Master Tapes in the recording industry have undergone a chemical change. To keep the original integrity and historical perspective, the compact discs in this series have not been altered to compensate for these changes.

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- Dr. Harry Begian -

Conductor and Director Emeritus, University of Illinois Bands

Dr. Harry Begian is one of the world's most renowned band conductors. He was Director of Bands at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign from 1970 to 1984. Prior to that appointment he was director of Bands at Michigan State University for three years and at Wayne State University for the previous three years. Dr. Begian's work at both M.S.U. and W. S. U. carried forward the reputation he earned during his many years at Detroit's Cass Technical High School where he developed one of the finest high school bands in the country. In addition to his band conducting duties, during his last few years at Cass Tech, Begian headed the Music and

Performing Arts Departments.

Begian's early musical training was in the Detroit area where he studied trumpet with Leonard Smith and flute with Larry Teal. He received undergraduate and masters degrees at Wayne State University and a doctorate at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

Begian organized and conducted his first band and orchestra while in his teens and has studied conducting at Tanglewood, summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as guest-conductor, clinician and lecturer throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Along with his band conducting activities, he has also conducted operatic and musical comedy performances, community bands and orchestras, and church choir. In 1987, the musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra invited Dr. Begian to conduct a formal concert in Detroit's Orchestra Hall.

A charter member of the American School Band Directors Association, he is also a past-president of the American Bandmasters Association and a member of the College Band Directors National Association. An honorary member of the National Band Association and Phi Beta Mu Band Fraternity. Begian is also a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Phi Delta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa. Most recently he was conferred honorary memberships in Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma.

Dr. Harry Begian is a recipient of the National Band Associations Citation of Excellence, the Edwin Franko Goldman Award, the Notre Dame St. Cecilia Award and was elected to the Academy of Wind and Percussion Arts. His more than 60 record albums produced with the University of Illinois Symphonic Band comprise, what has been called "the most distinguished and complete collection of recorded band performances in existence."

After a year of retirement, Begian returned to the podium for two years as conductor of the Purdue University Symphonic Band from 1985-1987. He is presently active as guest-conductor, clinician, adjudicator and lecturer with over 20 engagements a year, is a Consulting Editor to The Instrumentalist magazine and serves on the Board of Directors of the Mid-West International Band and Orchestra Clinic.



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1. Prelude to act III, "*Lohengrin*"Richard Wagner / Mark Hindsley (3:15)
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3. Overture to "Colas Breugnon"Dmitri Kabalevsky / Walter Beeler (5:10)
4. Overture to "The Flying Dutchman"Richard Wagner / Mark Hindsley (9:54)
5. Thus Spake Zarathustra, Op. 30Richard Strauss / Mark Hindsley (30:27)



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