

Program Notes

American Salute - Morton Gould

Morton Gould was born in Richmond Hill New York in 1913. At a very early age, he displayed his talent for music by beginning piano lessons at age four and he published his first composition at the age of six. By the time he was eighteen, he had already secured a position on the Radio City Music Hall musical staff. At the age of twenty one, he became conductor and arranger for the WOR-Mutual Radio Network orchestra and had his own program. Besides radio, he had composed for television, musical comedy, motion pictures, wind bands and many other genres.

"American Salute" was originally published in 1943 by Mills Music. The composition is based on the theme "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again", and is brilliantly scored which offers a marvelous effect of weaving the melody in-between many different harmonies. American patriotic themes were often used by Gould. Examples of these are four "American Symphonettes", "St. Lawrence Suite", and "A Lincoln Legend". This is a piece that was originally written for orchestra and Morton Gould transcribed this for wind band himself.

Selections from *Porgy and Bess* - George Gershwin arranged by Robert Russell Bennett

"Porgy and Bess" the folk opera is based on the book "Porgy" written by DuBose Heyward. This composition marked the climax of the short career of George Gershwin. It was debuted in Boston by the "Theatre Guild" starring Todd Duncan as "Porgy" and Anne Brown as "Bess". After flopping on Broadway, the show closed after only 124 performances. It wasn't until 1942, five years after Gershwin's passing, did the revival of the show, become a smash hit. In the year 1959, this folk opera was turned into a hit movie, starring Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge, and Sammy Davis, Jr. Remarkably, the shows that were performed up to 1975 were of an abbreviated nature. The full concert version received its premier performance in Cleveland that year, and the complete stage version was performed by the Houston Grand Opera Company also in 1975. This arrangement includes "Summertime", "A Woman Is A Sometime Thing", "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'", "Bess, You Is My Woman", "It Ain't Necessarily So", "Picnic Parade", and "Lawd, I'm On My Way".

Rhapsody in Blue - George Gershwin

Brad Tinfow - Piano

Rhapsody in Blue was debuted in New York's Aeolian Hall on February 19, 1924 by the Paul Whiteman Orchestra with George Gershwin, himself, as pianist. The orchestration was originally done by Ferde Gofe as each page was composed by Gershwin. This popular piece of American music has been played countless times and has been featured most recently by Walt Disney Studios in their popular animated movie "Fantasia 2000", and United Airlines in their commercials.

George Gershwin was born in 1898 in Brooklyn, New York and passed away at the young age of 39. Unsuccessful brain tumor surgery led to the unfortunate circumstance of his passing. During his short life he and his brother Ira, were amongst the most popular and successful writers of their day. Together they composed over a dozen successful musical comedies over the span of 14 years. The catalyst for George's success was Al Jolson's rendition of his "Swanee". Some selections from the pen of George Gershwin include "An American in Paris", "Rhapsody in Blue", "Porgy and Bess", and many piano pieces and songs. Gershwin proved that the "new" jazz stylings of the era and traditional classical music can be assimilated to produce a beautiful effect.

Symphony for Band - Jerry H. Bilik

This three movement piece was published in 1972 by Jerry Bilik Music. The dedication for this major work is to his primary composition teacher, Tibor Serly. Tibor Serly is important to music, as he is credited as first person to employ the "Modus Lascivus" system of tonal organization. This same system is used for this work, "Symphony for Band". Wayne Pegram describes this piece, "...it is somewhat unique in that the first and final movements have short interludes which both forecast and recall the other movements. For example, a short interlude introducing the basic motive material for the middle movement is heard before the first movement has drawn to a close. The second movement utilizes and develops this thematic material. The final movement begins with a dramatic fanfare like motif in the first horns. The motif reoccurs through out the movement. Musical statements from each other movements are also restated, thus creating a "rondo-like" summary of the complete work."

Jerry H. Bilik was born in New Rochelle, New York on October 7, 1933. He attended University of Michigan where he received B.M.E. and M.M. degrees in music. His principal composition teacher was Tibor Serly. Shortly after graduation, he joined the United States Military Academy and became their chief arranger. We know Jerry Bilik from many areas of music. He has written popular and successful music for wind bands at all levels, choirs, marching bands, and has authored an acclaimed book on marching bands. Jerry Bilik has been honored with two Presidential Commendations.

Concerto for Trumpet - Jerry H. Bilik

David Hickman - Trumpet

This piece was written by Jerry Bilik at the behest of Dr. Harry Begian and the University of Illinois. When Dr. Begian first heard the incredible playing of professor of Trumpet, David Hickman, he knew immediately that he had to commission a work that was worthy of Hickman's talents. Dr. Begian knew that Jerry Bilik was the only person in the world he would ask to write this piece. This recording represents the world premier of this work. At present, this music is not published but available for rental.

David Hickman is considered to be one of the world's preeminent trumpet virtuosos and has performed over 2,000 solo appearances around the world as recitalist with over 500 different ensembles. He has toured extensively in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia and almost every major US city. Hickman received his B.M. at University of Colorado and continued his studies at Wichita State University. He taught at the University of Illinois from 1974 - 1982 before he went to Arizona State University where he is currently on faculty and is a Regents' Professor of Music. David Hickman is the founder of the ensemble "Summit Brass", a past president of the International Trumpet Guild and is a Yamaha Performing Artist.

Corrida - Domenico Savino arranged by Floyd Werle

This work was transcribed in the 1950's from the composer's score for orchestration by Floyd Werle, chief arranger for the United States Air Force Band in Washington, DC. The composer Domenico Savino was a graduate, with special honors, from the Naples Conservatory. After coming to the United States, he became a citizen and later conducted the CBS Symphony Orchestra after which he was chief editor for one of the larger publishing houses in New York City. Savino toured extensively and guest conducted many major orchestra's across the United States.

American Overture for Band - Joseph W. Jenkins

This selection was published in 1956 and was commissioned for the United States Army Field Band, Chester E. Whiting, conductor. "American Overture for Band" was Jenkin's first attempt to write for wind band and it remains his most popular work to date. To quote Jenkins himself "(he is) ...hard pressed to duplicate its success."

Joseph Wilcox Jenkins was born in Philadelphia in 1928. He actually had a degree in pre-law before he decided on a career in music. He studied composition with Vincent Perschetti at the Philadelphia Conservatory of Music and with both Thomas Canning and Howard Hanson at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Jenkins has a wide breadth of publications which include two symphonies, string quartets, many choral arrangements, a musical, and works for organ to name a few.

- 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.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BANDS

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:

"I have never heard such professional playing and sheer musicianship from any band"

"I have never heard any band, professional or otherwise, that has the warmth of tone and brilliance of sound that the Concert Band has."

"I know of no other band that could have played so much difficult music so well."

"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.

Bibliography:

Band Music Notes, Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, published 1977 by Program Note Press.

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About this project

In order to preserve and make permanent the artistic accomplishments of Dr. Began at the University of Illinois, Mark Custom Recording Service, Inc. is producing a limited number of compact disc recordings such as this one. Works on this CD have personally been selected by Dr. Began. This project was originally undertaken by Mark Records as a tribute to Dr. Began and the memory of Vincent S. Morette, this company's founder. who's great admiration of Dr. Began's and his bands was a source of great inspiration for him and his own bands.

These CDs have been carefully re-mastered from the original analog master tapes. Unfortunately, some of the master tapes have under gone a chemical change and have has some degradation of signal. We have made every attempt to compensate for this aging process but still keep as much of the original integrity and historical perspective as possible. The CDs in this series have not been drastically altered to compensate for some of these changes or to take full advantage of today's technology.

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**In Concert with the
University of Illinois Symphonic Band**
The Begian Years • Volume XVI
Dr. Harry Begian, conductor

1. **American Salute** Morton Gould [5:30]
2. **Selections from *Porgy and Bess*** George Gershwin /arr. Rodney Russell Bennett [6:59]
3. **Rhapsody in Blue** George Gershwin [7:33]
Brad Tinfow - Piano
- 4.-6. **Symphony for Band** Jerry H. Bilik [15:43]
- 7.-9. **Concerto for Trumpet** Jerry H. Bilik [13:05]
David Hickman - Trumpet
10. **Corrida** Domenico Savino /arr. Floyd Werle [3:23]
11. **American Overture for Band** Joseph W. Jenkins [4:31]

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