

# Program Notes:

## Jericho Rhapsody - 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 publishing his first composition at the age of six. By the time he was eighteen years of age, 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 radio program. Besides radio, he has composed for television, musical comedy, motion pictures, wind bands and many other genres.

"Jericho Rhapsody" was published in 1941 by Mills Music. This is a musical rendition of the great biblical story of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho. While the rhapsody has sections in it, it is not movemented. The sections are Prologue, Roll Call, Chant, Dance, March and Battle, Joshua's Trumpets, The Walls Came Tumblin' Down and Hallelujah. This piece uses a slight jazz influence with modern chords to emphasize the highlights of the story.

## Four Serious Songs - Johannes Brahms / arranged by Jerry Bilik

*William Warfield - Baritone voice*

- I. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts
- II. So I returned, and considered
- III. O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee
- IV. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels

'See what violent words these are: 'for that which befalls man, befalls beasts,' and then in the fourth song, 'though I give my body to be burned!'" This was Johannes Brahms' comment, on the occasion of his first performance of his "Four Serious Songs" .

"Four Serious Songs" were the last songs composed by Brahms, then 63 years of age. He died less than a year later, on April 3, 1897. This song-cycle for bass voice and piano, which uses texts from the Old Testament, and the famous words of St. Paul to the Corinthians, "Though I speak with the tongues of

men and of angels and have not charity [love, agape], I am become as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," culminating in the exclamation, "But now abide faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. This has the character of a musical "last will and testament" by Brahms.

### **William Warfield - Baritone voice**

Born into a family of sharecroppers in Arkansas on Jan. 20, 1920, William Warfield grew up with a love of music. From singing as a boy soprano in a junior choir, to his first piano lessons at the age of nine, he knew his would be a life in music. After his voice changed, he rejoined his high school chorus in Rochester, New York, discovering that he had developed a beautiful baritone voice.

In the career that followed, he did a little bit of everything in music, from Broadway to Grand Opera, but his real love was the tradition of the German Classical lieder, and its American counterpart, the African-American spiritual. From his first New York City recital at Town Hall in March 1950, to his passing on August 26, 2002, he had sung and taught this music around the world. His efforts have earned him the honorary title, "America's Musical Ambassador."

### **Symphonie - Mathis der Maler - Paul Hindemith arranged by Guy Duker**

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- I. Angelic Concert
- II. Entombment
- III. Temptation of Saint Anthony

In 1934, Paul Hindemith, then thirty-nine years old, was in the process of completing his third full-length opera, *Mathis der Maler*. The libretto, the composer's own, was based on the life of the painter Mathias Grunewald and was inspired by that artist's magnificent series of nine paintings commissioned to adorn the panels of the alterpiece at St. Anthony's Church in Isenheim, Germany. Before the opera was completed, Hindemith extracted from it the three movement symphony which received its premiere in Berlin in 1934. For a variety of political reasons the opera did not have its premiere until 1938. It was Dr. Begian who asked Guy Duker to prepare this transcription for a large symphonic band.

## Aegean Festival Overture - Andreas Makris

**Andreas Makris** was born in Salonika Greece in 1930. He studied at the National Conservatory in Greece, Phillips University, Kansas City Conservatory, Mannes College of Music, Aspen Music Festival and in Fontainebleau, France. Makris holds a very important part in history as he was the first contemporary composer who had a work performed at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall with the National Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Antal Dorati. Makris also was selected by conductor Mstislav Rostropovich to sit as a member of the first violin section in that same National Symphony Orchestra. Makris was also later appointed to the position of composer-in-residence and as an advisor to Maestro Rostropovich.

Aegean Festival Overture, the transcription for wind band, was published by Galaxy Music Corporation 1971 after being composed in 1967 for the Washington National Symphony Orchestra. It was premiered in 1968 by that orchestra under the baton of Howard Mitchell in Constitution Hall. The wind band version was transcribed with the help of Albert Bader of the United States Air Force Band and it was premiered by Colonel Arnold Gabriel and the United States Air Force Band. This work displays the essence of Makris' Greek origins as it blends classic form with Greek musical influences.

## Toccata Marziale - Ralph Vaughan Williams

**Ralph Vaughan Williams** (1872-1958) composed this work in 1942 and it was debuted by the band of the Royal Military School of Music that same year at Wembley Stadium in London, England. This work was largely ignored in Europe, but this piece and his "Folk Song Suite" was quite popular in the United States. Frederick Fennell relates that Vaughan Williams was surprised and pleased that the "Toccata Marziale" was popular in the United States as he knew that it had never been a popular selection in England. In spite of the fact that his band works are few in relation to his other compositions, Ralph Vaughan Williams, influence in the wind band world continue to be significant and his compositions are considered to be one of the standards upon which today's wind band works are measured.

## 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. Cecelia 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 Began was appointed Director of Bands, only the third person ever to serve in that position.

During Dr. Began'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. Began greatly enjoyed conducting the transcriptions of Harding and Hindsley, continuing the grand legacy of the Illinois Band. Further, Dr. Began championed the music of Percy Grainger, producing a landmark two-album set of Grainger's works. Among transcribed literature, Began is perhaps best known for his interpretive genius with the tone poems of Richard Strauss. Among original band literature, Began'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. Began's career at Illinois demonstrated a devotion to march music which was second to none. Producing several march albums, Began demonstrated interpretive possibilities to the band world which have long been admired and imitated.

In 1985, after the retirement of Dr. Began, 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:**

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Dr. Harry Begian, University of Illinois

Craig Pare, Depauw University program notes Mark Records 4280-MCD

"Bykus Magazine", and "Fidelio Magazine", issue Number 81, 2002 for

"Four Serious Songs" by Anno Hellenbroich.

Fidelio Magazine, "William Warfield on Tour 'Live It, Baby!'" by Harley Schlanger - May 11, 2000

### **With specific help from:**

William Wakefield, University of Maryland

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### **About this project**

In order to preserve and make permanent the artistic accomplishments of Dr. Begian 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. Begian. This project was originally undertaken by Mark Records as a tribute to Dr. Begian and the memory of Vincent S. Morette, this company's founder. who's great admiration of Dr. Begian'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.

# University of Illinois Symphonic Band

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

1. **Jericho Rhapsody** ..... Morton Gould [11:58]  
**Four Serious Songs** ..... Johannes Brahms / arranged by Jerry Bilik  
*William Warfield - Baritone voice*
2. I. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts [4:55]  
3. II. So I returned, and considered [4:07]  
4. III. O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee [3:57]  
5. IV. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels [5:07]
- Symphonie - Mathis der Maler** ..... Paul Hindemith / arranged by Guy Duker
6. I. Angelic Concert [8:32]  
7. II. Entombment [4:00]  
8. III. Temptation of Saint Anthony [13:06]
9. **Aegean Festival Overture** ..... Andreas Makris [10:21]
10. **Toccata Marziale** ..... Ralph Vaughan Williams [4:44]

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