

Program Notes:

March Symphonique - Domenico Savino

Domenico Savino (1888–1973) was born in Tarranto, Italy and graduated with honors from the Naples Conservatory. Shortly after coming to the United States, Savino became a naturalized citizen and secured a position as conductor of the NBC Symphony and as chief editor for a major New York publishing house. In addition to *March Symphonique*, Savino's other popular works include, *Corrida* (Begian Years, Volume XVI), *A Study in Blue*, *The Patriot*, and *Himalya*. In addition to his composing, Savino also produced a number of albums featuring the music of many composers. As director of the "house band" of the Pathé record label during the 1920s, Savino used the pseudonym "D. Onivas" (Savino spelled backwards). As a composer and conductor of popular music, Savino toured extensively as a guest conductor of major orchestras across the United States.

Capriccio Espagnole, Opus 34 - Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov transcribed by Mark Hindsley

Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 -1908) was the youngest son of an aristocratic Russian family (Korsakov) that had years ago added the place and name of their geographic region, Rimsk. As a boy, he learned piano but his dream was to follow his brother as an officer in the Russian navy, so he enrolled as a Kadet in the naval academy. It was here that he heard his first opera and he fell in love with it. His three orchestral masterworks, *Capriccio Espagnole*, *Scheherezade* and *Russian Easter Overture*, were completed in successive summers after which he abandoned purely orchestral compositions to concentrate on opera.

Rimsky-Korsakov considered his *Capriccio Espagnole* to be a study in "virtuoso orchestration." The work displays Rimsky-Korsakov's own skill in the use of orchestral colorations, such that the virtuosity is in the orchestration itself. Although the setting of the *Capriccio* is Spanish and most of the tunes derive from the melodies of Spanish folk music, Rimsky-Korsakov understood perfectly what he was trying to do. The music is unmistakably that of a Russian composer. This transcription, made by Mark Hindsley is still available through: The Hindsley Transcriptions, 18559 Carpenter St., Homewood, IL 60430 USA.

***Concerto for Oboe in C* - Franz Joseph Haydn arranged by Dr. Harry Begian**

Dr. Edmund Williams - Oboe

The *Oboe Concerto in C* which has been attributed to Franz Joseph Haydn was not likely written by Haydn. The distinguished Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins Landon states that the Oboe Concerto "is certainly not by Haydn, but an attractive and bright work by a good minor master," while the equally astute Haydnist Karl Geiringer dismisses it more bluntly in a footnote as "spurious." Nonetheless, the work is a true gem in the repertoire of the oboe and, regardless of who actually composed it, the *C Major Oboe Concerto* is a work of appealing gusto and unforced charm.

Dr. Edmund Williams - Oboe

Dr. Edmund Williams was educated at University of Illinois, where he earned his Doctorate in Music Education. He also attended classes at Catholic University and the University of Michigan. After graduating, he joined the U.S. Air Force Band & Orchestra in Washington, DC performing on oboe, English horn and bassoon. He has also held positions in the Richmond, Norfolk, and Champaign-Urbana Symphonies, as well as the Washington Chamber Players, Oklahoma Symphonette, and the Pacific Rim Woodwind Quintet to name a few. In addition to an extensive professional performance career, Dr. Williams has been a distinguished educator. He had taught at many institutions including the University of Illinois, University of Pittsburgh, Kansas State Teachers College, Southwestern State University (OK). Dr. Williams is currently living in Oklahoma where he is still an active conductor, educator and performer.

***Wotan's Farewell from "Götterdämmerung"* - Richard Wagner arranged by Guy Duker**

Andrew Cottle, Baritone voice

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 much of value concerning the stage 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.

This selection is an excerpt from the opera *Götterdämmerung*, and is titled "Die Walküre" in German. Tenor voice, Andrew Cottle, sings about the banishing of his daughter, Brünnhilde, and places her into a profound sleep, protected by a ring of fire where by she can only be rescued by the young hero, Siegfried.

Overture for Band - Felix Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), born in Hamburg, Germany, was a child prodigy, who by age 11 had already composed over 50 musical works. Besides being a very popular composer and performer through out Europe, he was also conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig.

This work was originally composed in the summer of 1824 for the court wind orchestra in Bad Doberan, a resort on the shores of the Baltic. Amazingly, Mendelssohn was only fifteen years old. The original scoring was very close to the modern wind ensemble although the score did go through many revisions, supposedly to ensure more performances in Great Britain. Originally titled "Ouverture für Harmoniemusik, Opus 24" the work was published in 1826 by Simrock.

Slavonic Dances - Antonin Leopold Dvorák transcribed by James Curnow

Antonin Leopold Dvorák (1841-1904) was born in Nelahozeves, Bohemia in 1841. Dvorák grew up in relative poverty, taking music lessons from Organ master Josef Spitz, locally, and later studying in Prague. He played organ at a church, viola in various bands and orchestras, and taught music as well in order to earn a living. His love, however, was composition. When Dvorák was 37, Johannes Brahms decided to help Dvorák by recommending to his publisher, Fritz Simrock of Berlin, that he publish some of Dvorák's works. Success was almost instantaneous. His popular *Slavonic Dances*, a collection of Slovak folk songs, was originally written for piano four-hands and then scored for orchestra, increasing its popularity. Dvorák's compositional output was considerable and included symphonies, string quartets, solo works, choral works, symphonic poems and opera. He is widely regarded as the most frequently performed and popular Czech composer of all time.

- 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 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:

"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:

Program Notes -Capriccio Espagnole edited from notes by C. Michael Kelly November 20, 1999, Band Music Notes, Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, C.1977.

Overture for Band edited from notes by Dr. Larry Harper from the CD "Romantic Sensibilities" on Mark Records 2483-MCD and the score published by G. Schirmer. as well as Band Music Notes, Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, C.1977.

Woton's Farewell: The Grove Concise Dictionary of Music, © Macmillan Press Ltd., London. Band Music Notes, Band Music Notes, Norman Smith and Albert Stoutamire, C.1977, Websites www.recordsbymail.com, and www.orchestranet.co.uk, program notes from the CD "Wagner Orchestral Music" catalog # 8616, EMI Classics C. 1981, 1983 and 1995.

Concerto for Oboe program notes from interviews with Dr. Harry Begian and Edmund Williams. and the Website www.orchestranet.co.uk

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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.



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

1. **March Symphonique** Domenico Savino [4:25]
2. **Capriccio Espagnole, Opus 34** Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov /tran. Mark Hindsley [15:44]
3. **Concerto for Oboe in C** Franz Joseph Haydn /arr. Dr. Harry Begian
Dr. Edmund Williams - Oboe [10:15]
4. Mvt. I. Allegro spiritoso [5:36]
5. Mvt. III. Rondo (allegretto)
6. **Wotan's Farewell** from *Götterdämmerung* Richard Wagner /arr. Guy Duker [15:01]
Andrew Cottle, Baritone voice
7. **Overture for Band** Felix Mendelssohn [8:07]
8. **Slavonic Dances** Antonin Leopold Dvorák /tran. James Curnow [11:59]

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