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Faculty Recital:Michael Forbes, Tuba

Michael Forbes Tuba
Illinois State University

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Illinois State University

School of Music

Faculty Recital

Michael Forbes, *Tuba*

"The English Tuba"

Assisted by:

Illinois State University

Brass Tentet & Percussion

Dr. Steve Steele, Conductor

&

Illinois State University

Undergraduate Woodwind Quintet

Center for the Performing Arts

Wednesday Evening

April 2, 2003

This is the One hundred and thirty-sixth program of the 2002-2003 Season.

8.00 p.m.

Program

Cappriccio

Rodney Newton
(born 1952)

Brass Tentet & Percussion

Alarum

Edward Gregson
(born 1945)

Unaccompanied Solo Tuba

Tuba Concerto

Andante ma non troppo
Allegro con brio

Martin Ellerby
(born 1957)

Brass Tentet & Percussion

~ Intermission ~

Concerto for Bass Tuba & Orchestra

Prelude – Allegro moderato
Romanza – Andante sostenuto
Rondo alla Tedesca – Allegro

Ralph Vaughan-Williams
(1872-1958)

Woodwind Quintet

Tuba Concerto

Allegro deciso
Lento e mesto
Allegro giocoso

Edward Gregson

Brass Tentet & Percussion

Personnel Listing

Brass Tentet & Percussion:

Elisa Curren, *E-flat trumpet*
Laura Hall, DeLynn Mull, & Myles Singleton, *B-flat trumpets*
Elizabeth Clapper, *flugelhorn*
Chris Render, *horn*
Greg Delich & Michael Gallant, *tenor trombones*
Justin Gund, *bass trombone*
Brandon Hopkins, *euphonium*
William Young, *tuba*
Bill Cuthbert, Kortney Hinthorne and Andy Bautista, *percussion*

Woodwind Quintet

Emily Brooks, *flute*
Megan French, *oboe*
Brian Beddigs, *clarinet*
Amy Zordaon, *bassoon*
Brandon Helem, *horn*

A special note from the performer. . .

Greetings and welcome to the second installment of the "European Tuba," a series of recitals I am giving in partial fulfillment of my Doctorate of Musical Arts Degree at the University of Maryland. Many of you may remember the "The Scandinavian Tuba," my first faculty recital here at Illinois State University, where I explored the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian repertoire for the solo tuba. In tonight's recital I will showcase the many fine works for solo tuba from the United Kingdom.

Perhaps no other nationalistic musical tradition is more influential to the development of the solo tubist or the solo tuba repertoire than that of Great Britain. Our most important and traditionally most widely performed solo comes from one of England's most infamous composers: Ralph Vaughan-Williams. You will even hear the introduction of this *Concerto* quoted in Edward Gregson's *Concerto!* But beyond Vaughan-Williams' mission to write a work for what was still perceived as an unconventional instrument, the brass band tradition of the UK was—and still is—an especially important driving force in the development of the tuba as a solo instrument.

Possibly due to the brass band traditions of having numerous novice musicians start out on cornet then move down, if desired, to the lower instruments, the tuba parts of any brass band piece are, in general, much more on par with the solo cornet book. There is an equality that exists among all the brasses of England that does not exist in the U.S. Perhaps it was due to the importance of keeping a simple, steady beat in the basses of U.S. civil war bands or maybe it was due to J. P. Sousa's simplistic sousaphone parts; nonetheless, American tuba parts have generally not been treated as equals to the other brasses in scoring nor in technical facility. This is a disappointing factor that is still present today in the U.S. and has certainly left its mark on some of the solo tuba repertoire created by a number of American composers.

On the contrary, the English composers as a whole have treated the tuba as they would any other dignified solo instrument; and, as a result, we have a great body of solo repertoire from composers of that nation. Gregson's *Tuba Concerto* is perhaps one of the most often played tuba works around the globe due to its memorable tunes and simple attractiveness. It also lends itself well to performances on both the bass and contrabass tubas, making it more playable by younger CC tubists in America and Japan especially. His newer work, the unaccompanied *Alarum*, is a challenging piece for the solo tubist and audience alike, as it explores Gregson's newer, less-tonal compositional style. Not without a sense of humor, Newton's *Cappriccio* demonstrates the slightly lighter side of the instrument, while Ellerby revels in the more competitive nature of the brass band tradition. Suffice it to say, these composers strived to create works that challenge the tubist's musical and technical abilities, respectively.

I would like to graciously thank Dr. Steve Steele and the many students who have generously donated their time, energy and talent in assisting me with tonight's recital. In order to best showcase this music of England in its most authentic form, I felt it most appropriate to have the brass and wind accompaniments rather than piano. Not only do these accompanimental adaptations provide for a more entertaining and musically interesting recital, it gives the students and I the opportunity to interact more intensely as we share our collective musical visions in a more in-depth, collaborative performance setting. I hope you enjoy tonight's musical tour of England, and I whole-heartedly invite you to the "French Tuba," the remaining installment of this "European Tuba" series to be performed sometime in the fall of 2003.

—Michael Forbes

Program Notes

Cappriccio, Rodney Newton

Cappriccio for solo E-flat tuba and brass band, written in 1986 especially for James Gourlay, is designed to demonstrate, in an entertaining manner, the agility and range of the modern tuba. The principal material consists of a bright, syncopated main theme contrasted with a lyrical second subject. These ideas are passed between soloist and band before a strong climax leads to a romantic melody giving the soloist an opportunity to show the expressive qualities of his instrument. The music of the first section makes a reappearance in altered form and this leads, after a cadenza for the soloist and a repeat of the main theme, to a reappearance of the romantic melody on the full band. The soloist plays the main theme once more and a coda based on the opening material brings the piece to a rousing conclusion.

—Note by the composer

Alarum, Edward Gregson

Alarum for solo tuba was written specially for James Gourlay (brass chair, Royal Northern College of Music) and was first performed by him at Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham, England, on 13 February 1994. The title of the work derives from an old English word meaning 'a call to arms' and I have taken this to be a primitive (that is primeval) call and hence the opening gesture of the piece is meant to imitate a tribal-like intensity. The opening four-note set of pitches is taken from the name of the dedicatee: jAmES (e-flat) Gourlay.

The piece is divided into three main sections and runs continuously. The first section is by turns aggressive, nervous and lyrical. The second section is melodic and peaceful, but reaches a climax when the two themes (lyrical and rhythmic) are juxtaposed against each other (a very tricky moment for the soloist!). The last section is dance-like in character with changing time patterns which lead back to the very opening statement (the 'alarum') of the piece.

—Note by the composer

Tuba Concerto, Martin Ellerby

Martin Ellerby's *Tuba Concerto* was completed in June 1988 and premiered in its orchestral version by Stephen Sykes (to whom the work is dedicated) and the Ryton Sinfonia in September of that year in Workop Priory. Structurally the piece is in two contrasting movements which are linked without a break. The first part, *Andante ma non troppo*, features the tubist's lyrical qualities with a constant development of the initial rhapsodic theme against contrasting textures in the accompaniment. This gradually leads into the second part, marked *Allegro con brio*, which displays the tubist's agility with a toccata main section. Eventually a brief cadenza section is reached accompanied by the band who then bring the music back to its original mood. After a brief recapitulation a short coda brings the work to a sparkling close.

—Note by Maecenas Music Publisher

Concerto for Bass Tuba and Orchestra, Ralph Vaughan-Williams

Toward the end of a long and productive life, Ralph Vaughan-Williams wrote two works for which he has achieved a certain notoriety. The *Romance* for harmonica and orchestra and the *Tuba Concerto* are unusually fine contributions to otherwise neglected repertoires. The challenge of writing a significant composition for such odd solo instruments apparently intrigued Vaughan-Williams. Although the *Romance* has not enjoyed wide circulation (for lack of an active concert performer), the *Tuba Concerto* has become a staple of the tuba player's repertoire.

—Note by Dr. Paul Borg, Professor of Music, Illinois State University

The form of this concerto is nearer to the Bach form than that of the Viennese School (Mozart and Beethoven) though the first and last movements each finish up with an elaborate cadenza which allies the concerto to the Mozart-Beethoven form. The music is fairly simple and obvious and can probably be listened to without much previous explanation. The orchestration is that of the so-called Theatre Orchestra consisting of woodwinds, two each of horns, trumpets, and trombones, timpani, percussion and strings.

—Note by the composer

Program Notes (cont.)

Tuba Concerto, Edward Gregson

My *Tuba Concerto* was written for my dear friend John Fletcher, now sadly no longer with us. I had promised for some time to write him a major work, and in 1975 the opportunity came when Besses o'th'Barn Band (one of the oldest brass bands in Britain and also one of the most enterprising) had the idea of commissioning a concerto for tuba and brass band. This was a difficult task, mainly because of the problems of balance in such a medium. I wanted to produce a work which was accessible for audiences, although I was distinctly aware that such a combination was difficult enough without making the music highly modernistic. Also I wanted to exploit the lyrical characteristics of the tuba, which I hope I have done. Essentially I wanted to write a piece of music that would stand the test of time.

The *Concerto* is in three movements, following the usual quick – slow – quick pattern. The first is in a sonata form shell with two contrasting themes, the first rhythmic, the second lyrical. There is a reference made in the development section to the opening theme of Vaughan Williams's *Tuba Concerto*, but only in passing. The second movement unfolds a long cantabile melody for the soloist, which contrasts with a ritornello idea which is announced three times by the band. The last movement is in rondo form, alternating the main theme with two episodes. The first of these is a broad sweeping tune, the second is jazz-like. After a short cadenza, reference is made to the opening of the *Concerto*, and the work ends with a triumphal flourish.

—Note by the composer

Performer Biographies:

Michael Forbes, the Assistant Professor of Tuba and Euphonium at Illinois State University, began his career as a tubist with the U.S. Army Band, "Pershing's Own" in Washington, D.C. During his tour, Mr. Forbes was an active soloist and chamber musician as well as the founder and conductor of the U.S. Army Brass Tentet. Also a regularly commissioned composer and arranger, Mr. Forbes's works have been selected for numerous international competitions and recordings. His compositions are published by *Editions BIM/The Brass Press* while his many arrangements for low brass can be found in the catalogs of *Music Express* and the *Tuba and Euphonium-Press*. As a soloist and part of the internationally recognized *Sotto Voce Tuba Quartet*, Mr. Forbes is regularly invited to give performances and clinics at universities and conferences throughout the U.S. and Canada. *Sotto Voce* has released its premier recording, "Consequences" on the *Summit Records* label (DCD 322) and anticipates its second disc, "Viva Voce: The Complete Quartets of John Stevens" to be released in 2003. Mr. Forbes is currently on the final stages of completing his Doctorate of Musical Arts Degree at the University of Maryland. He holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Wisconsin and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Pennsylvania State University. Through an exchange program, he also spent a year in Manchester, England where he studied at the University of Manchester and the Royal Northern College of Music and had the opportunity to meet and interact with both James Gourlay and Edward Gregson.

Dr. Steve Steele, Director of Bands at Illinois State University, received his D.M.A. from the University of Arizona. He has served as the Marching Band Director and Assistant Director of Bands at the University of Arizona in Tucson and spent thirteen years as a high school band director in California, Oregon, and Arizona. He also regularly serves as a clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor throughout Canada and the United States.

Upcoming Events

April

3	KRH	8:00 p.m.	Music Factory
4	CPA	8:00 a.m.	Seventh Annual Jazz Festival
5	TBA	7:30 a.m.	Seventh Annual Jazz Festival
6	CH212	1:00 p.m.	Clarinet Studio Recital
6	CPA	3:00 p.m.	Civic Chorale & Women's Choir
6	KRH	5:30 p.m.	Senior Recital, Ginger Thomas, <i>soprano</i>
6	KRH	7:00 p.m.	Graduate Recital, Loretta Kitko, <i>viola</i>
6	KRH	8:30 p.m.	Graduate Recital, Michelle Brower, <i>piano</i>
7	KRH	8:00 p.m.	Chamber Winds
8	FUMC	7:30 p.m.	Guest Artist, Franz Wagnermeyer, <i>trumpet and organ</i>
8	CPA	8:00 p.m.	Faculty Recital, Mariá Horváth, <i>piano</i>
9	KRH	6:00 p.m.	Graduate Recital, Lynn Bowes, <i>flute</i>
9	CPA	7:30 p.m.	Illinois State University Guitar Ensemble
10	CPA	8:00 p.m.	Guest Artist, Franz Wagnermeyer, <i>trumpet</i>
12	KRH	6:30 p.m.	Junior Recital, Rebecca Johnson, <i>soprano</i>
12	CPA	7:00 p.m.	African Drumming & Dance

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum
 April 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18 @ 7:30 p.m.
 April 13 @ 2:00p.m.
 April 19 @ 7:00 p.m.

CPA - Center for the Performing Arts
 KRH - Kemp Recital Hall
 FUMC - First United Methodist Church, Normal