

Dalton Series

1984-85 Season
267th Concert

Tuesday 2 April 1985
Dalton Center Recital Hall
8:00 p.m.

AMERICAN BRASS QUINTET

Raymond Mase, Trumpet
Chris Gekker, Trumpet
David Wakefield, Horn
Michael Powell, Tenor Trombone
Robert Biddlecome, Bass Trombone

Alfonso Ferrabosco II
Thomas Morley
Anthony Holborne
Alfonso Ferrabosco II
Thomas Weelkes

Thomas Simpson
John Dowland

Thomas Stoltzer
1475-1526

David Snow
b. 1954

G. W. E. Friedrich
Hosea Ripley
Stephen Foster

Hosea Ripley

Johann Sebastian Bach
1685-1750

William Lovelock
b. 1899

Elizabethan Consort Music

Almayne
Joyne Hands
Widow's Mite
Dovehouse Pavan
Why Are you Ladies Singing?
Hark, I Hear Some Dancing
Allemande
Volta

Three Fantasias in Church Modes

from **Octo Tonorum Melodiae**
Hypodorian
Hypophrygian
Hypolydian

Dance Movements

intermission

Americana Suite

Ellen Bayne QuickStep
Schottisch
Quadrille Number 4; Old Folks Quadrille
Sweetly She Sleeps, My Alice Fair; Beautiful Dreamer
Blondinette Polka

Contrapunctus III and IX from **The Art of Fugue**

Miniature Suite

Prelude
Fugue
Intermezzo
Finale

The **AMERICAN BRASS QUINTET** is managed by TRM Management, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110. They have recorded for New World, Columbia, Nonesuch, Titanic, Delos, and CRI Records.

PROGRAM NOTES

Alfonso Ferrabosco II and Others: Elizabethan Consort Music

During the reign of Elizabeth I and continuing with James I, the arts in England flourished. Literary figures—Shakespeare, Ben Johnson and Bacon—as well as composers—Dowland, Morley, and Holborne—have irresistible appeal to us today and easily depict the exuberance of Elizabethan life. Insight into the style of English performance practices can be gained from Morley's **Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Music** (1597) and the **First Book of Consort Lessons**. A composer of incidental music for Shakespeare's plays, Morley, in his **Consort Lessons**, includes many arrangements of popular tunes and vocal pieces to be played by a "broken" (assorted) consort of instruments. In his madrigals he includes the footnote "to be sung or played by viols or other winde instruments"—encouraging instrumental performances of these pieces. Included in our set of pieces is Morley's own instrumental setting of **Joyne Hands** and two madrigals by one of the most illustrious of English madrigalists—Thomas Weelkes. The other pieces in this set with "dance" titles (**Almain** and **Pavan**) were probably never danced to at all. These works resemble the earlier dance forms in title and characteristically rhythm only. Occasionally they even express some of the most contemporary ideas as in **Dovehouse Pavan** by the English born Alfonso Ferrabosco II.

As in all of their editions of early music the American Brass Quintet is adhering to many of the practices of the day. Florid ornamentation and the use of other brass instruments in producing varied consorts certainly enhance the vitality and spirit of this music of Elizabethan England.

Three Fantasias in Church Mode

Both Thomas Stoltzer and his collection of eight Motet-like pieces in the church modes, from which these four have been taken, have in common the characteristic of being little-known today although extremely important representatives of early 16th century music. Born in Silesia, he spent his early life in Breslau as a priest and composer, and was the chief musician at the court of Louis II of Hungary. A composer of mostly liturgical music, he was greatly influenced by, if not a pupil of, Heinrich Finck, although there is an indication of later influences of the Netherlands School of Composition. The **Octo Tonorum Melodiae** is the earliest specimen of a cycle of instrumental works. In their handling of imitation, harmonic implications, rhythmic fluidity, balance of all five parts, and nobility of character, they foreshadow the great polyphonic forms of a later age.

Dance Movements

David Snow studied composition at the Eastman School of Music, the Yale School of Music, and at Brandeis University. He is a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Composers Fellowship and a grant from Meet the Composer, and has received numerous composition prizes.

The composer provides the following notes: **Dance Movements** was written during a particularly unaccommodating period of my career, while employed full-time as a data-entry clerk for one of those consulting firms that proliferate around Washington, D.C. Just what effect sitting at a CRT for eight hours a day had on my genetic make-up is yet undetermined, but it probably influenced the schizoid nature of this work, which turned out much better than I had any right to expect. Under the circumstances, I should be excused the occasional tendency to "papaphrase" during the course of the piece ("plagiarism" is such an ugly word), references to Bartok and Stravinsky being the most frequently pointed-out by former friends of mine. The piece is modelled superficially after Stravinsky's **Agon** in ways that will be obvious to anyone familiar with that work, including the fact that it was written to be choreographed. But **Dance Movements** is a relatively brief work, and it should not be burdened with too much commentary. Suffice it to say that like most good dance music, it swings, and it swings hard.

Americana Suite

During the American Bicentennial year, a great deal of music was resurrected from America's past. Much of this music was not of great musical significance but is interesting historically as a reflection of the social life of the times. From the 19th century came a wealth of material for brass instruments, much of which was written for the "Town Band." The repertoire included music for all occasions—parades, weddings, funerals, etc.

The Ellen Bayne Quick Step, of G.W.E. Friederich, comes from a collection of such music called the "Brass Band Journal." Although published in his day, this collection is long out of print and was discovered in the library of Congress. The Schottisch and Blondinette Polka come from an unpublished collection discovered in the N.Y. Public Library. They were done by Hosea Ripley and performed by his band in Bethel, Maine.

Whether Friederich and Ripley were primarily composers or simply arrangers is not too clear. Stephen Foster, however, is one of America's best-known composers. His name and songs are familiar throughout the world, and he is particularly recognized for his contribution to that unique American form, the minstrel show. A widely published composer, Foster had a collection called "The Social Orchestra," played at parties and in the home and was arranged for violin, flute, piano or other instruments.

Contrapuncti III and IX from "The Art of Fugue"

"The Art of Fugue" was composed the year before Bach's death. His illness apparently paralyzed him to the extent that he was unable to finish the composition; therefore it comprised 15 fugues, 4 canons, and an incomplete fugue, all of which are based on one cantus firmus. Each contrapunctus employs a wide variety of contrapuntal devices, such as the theme altered rhythmically or melodically; stretto; straight-forward and contrary motion answer; diminution and augmentation; double fugues at the octave, tenth, and twelfth; and triple fugues.

The two fugues presented today show Bach's adept and original craft in two contrasting ways. Contrapunctus III is introspective in mood with the inverted cantus firmus stated without a great deal of complexity. Bach also hints at an early classical style with shorter phrases and some lines taking precedence over others. One might expect analytical and technical prowess in a cold and calculated manner, but just the opposite is the case. Bach uses harmonic dissonance to build tension to an almost impossible height then releases it in the final chord in his best enthusiasm.

Miniature Suite

William Lovelock was born in London in 1899, although he now counts as an Australian composer. Miniature Suite for Brass Quintet was written in 1967 for the Laiton Brass Quintet of Brisbane, all of whom are members of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. The first movement, **Prelude**, is cheerfully rhythmical. The second is a fairly complex **Fugue**, serious in feeling. Its writing was actually prompted by the **Fugue** (in the same key) in Elgar's "Severn Suite" for brass band—though I don't claim to have achieved Elgar's intensity. The third movement, **Intermezzo**, has the instruments muted throughout. It is rather elusive in style and acts as a bit of relaxation between the gravity of the **Fugue** and the rumbustiousness of the **Finale**.

Kalamazoo April 3, 1985

Quartet shows technique, variety

DEAN KNUTH
GAZETTE REVIEWER

In the arts, few things are harder to explain than popularity. Some groups seem to have everything going for them, yet languish unnoticed for years without any obvious reason.

While the following for classical chamber music has surged in the last decade, brass chamber ensembles have been mysteriously overlooked.

Tuesday's appearance of the American Brass Quintet before about 300 people in the Dalton Center Recital Hall showed that locally, at least, this oversight may be a thing of the past. It was a pleasantly diverse program performed with flair, versatility, and masterful technique.

From the colorful opening dis-

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play of Elizabethan era songs to an encore of Scheidt's stirring "Battle Galliard," the quartet built and sustained audience interest, not only in the playing itself, but in the wide variety of possibilities which brass voices offer.

The most immediately impressive were the showy, fanfare-derived selections from the 16th century, replete with florid trills and razor-sharp double-tonguing. Equally powerful but more complex modern derivations were included in David Snow's "Dance Movements" and William Lovelock's "Suite", both written specifically for this quintet.

A suite of 19th century songs, while musically less innovative,

demonstrated the wide range of applications brass literature enjoyed in its American heyday.

The rigorous beauty of contrapuntal writing was represented by works of Thomas Stolzer and J.S. Bach. While the quintet did an excellent job sustaining each fugal statement gently into its neighbor, these works almost begged for a different concert hall to allow it to build resonance and deliver the writing's full emotional impact.

The most interesting and important works were those of Lovelock and Snow, since it is in these novel compositions rather than in adaptations of older pieces that an exciting future lies. Lovelock's Toccata had the flicking, wispy touch of fingers racing over Braille-like dots of melody; the Finale combined fugal style with elements of classic British harmonization. Snow's work was the more intriguing with its abundance of action, at first smooth and glassy, then swift and sharp.