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CHANDOS



ROBERT CHILDS



PETER PARKES



ROGER WEBSTER



PHILIP SHAW



NORMAN LAW



SANDY SMITH

BRASS

CONCERTO

JOHN FOSTER
BLACK DYKE MILLS BAND

MAJOR PETER PARKES CONDUCTOR

JOSEPH HOROVITZ
Euphonium Concerto

PHILIP SPARKE
Concerto Grosso

NICOLAY RIMSKY-KORSAKOV
arr. Langford : Trombone Concerto

DENIS WRIGHT
Trio - Concerto

GARETH WOOD
Concertino

DIGITAL

JOHN FOSTER
BLACK DYKE MILLS BAND

MAJOR PETER PARKES
Conductor

JOSEPH HOROVITZ

Euphonium Concerto [17:13]

- 1 I Moderato [5:31]
- 2 II Lento [7:30]
- 3 III Con moto [4:05]

Robert Childs, Euphonium

PHILIP SPARKE

4 **Concerto Grosso [15:12]**

Roger Webster, Cornet

Philip Shaw, Cornet

Sandy Smith, Horn

Robert Childs, Euphonium

NIKOLAY RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

arr. Gordon Langford

Trombone Concerto [11:00]

- 5 I Allegro vivace [2:33]
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DENIS WRIGHT

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Norman Law, Trombone

Robert Childs, Euphonium

GARETH WOOD

11 **Concertino [8:55]**

Sandy Smith, Horn

DDD

TT = 64:15

This recording is the result of a chance meeting in 1988 with Joseph Horovitz at the Royal Albert Hall. We were both taking a breather from listening to the bands taking part in the National Finals. I mentioned that we had been working with his euphonium concerto in preparation for Bram Gay's Palace Theatre extravaganza. Joe said how well Robert Childs played it; ten minutes later I had made a list of possible original works for a recording.

The Horovitz concerto is the only survivor from that first list. Why concertos and why original works? The most rewarding recordings for me, and for many of the brass band enthusiasts who write to me, are those which feature original brass band music. Those same enthusiasts also love to hear a top class soloist being stretched to the limit. Original works featuring soloists will, perhaps, satisfy most people?

The modern concerto for one or more solo instrument supported by a contrasting group has its roots in the Baroque Concerto Grosso. This form was developed at the end of the 17th century by the Italian composers Torelli and Corelli. The form reached its fullest expression in the concerti grossi of Handel and Vivaldi. Of particular interest to brass and wind players are the Brandenburg Concertos of Bach. Written at Weimar, where he became court composer in 1709, they feature instruments other than strings: the second concerto, for example, has a marvellous florid part using the upper harmonics of the natural trumpet. By the end of the 18th century the concerto for one solo instrument had taken centre stage and brass instruments had begun to develop away from the single tube 'natural' horns and trumpets. Haydn wrote his trumpet concerto for the Viennese keyed trumpet on which rapid chromatic passages were possible for the first time. A German horn player, Anton Hampel, is credited by some with the development of the system of hand stopping which added notes to fill the

gaps between the natural harmonics. It was for this instrument that Mozart wrote his four horn concertos. However, none of the many attempts at giving the brass a fully chromatic range was really satisfactory until the invention of the piston valve.

The provision of valves which divert the column of air through extra lengths of tubing, thus lowering the pitch of the instrument, was begun by Heinrich Stölzel around 1810-1815 in Berlin. These valves were fitted to bugle horns by the 1820s. The scene was set for the appearance of arguably the most important figure in the development of brass instruments. Adolphe Sax, in Brussels, was a prolific and compulsive inventor and developer of musical instruments. Seeing the possibilities of the valved bugle he conceived the idea of a matched family of instruments covering the whole range of pitches. He set up a workshop in Paris in the early 1840s and by 1844 exhibited a set of five instruments – Eb soprano, Bb contralto, Eb alto, Bb baritone and Bb bass.

In 1851 Prince Albert's brainchild The Great Exhibition took place in Hyde Park in an enormous glass structure which became known as the Crystal Palace. Among the many musical exhibits was a display of more than 80 instruments of Sax's design including a set of saxhorns. Two years later in 1853 the first Belle Vue contest took place. Eight bands entered, one of which, the Mossley Temperance Band, had secretly ordered a set of twelve valved saxhorns from Sax's Paris factory. They received these in time to 'sweep the board' at Belle Vue. From that time they were known as the Mossley Saxhorn Band. The British Brass Band had arrived, and with the exception of the trombone all the brass instruments featured in this recording are developments of the saxhorn.

Euphonium Concerto – Joseph Horovitz (born Vienna 1926).

Horovitz came to England in 1938 and studied at New College, Oxford and at

the Royal College of Music under Gordon Jacob. He followed Jacob as Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music. Composer of ballets, operas and orchestral music, his works for brass include *Ballet for Band*, *Sinfonietta for Brass*, *Music Hall Suite* and this fine Concerto for Euphonium.

Concerto Grosso – Philip Sparke (born 1951).

This work was commissioned by the CWS Glasgow Band. It received its first performance in March 1988 as part of the Glasgow Music Festival. It is written in three short sections, *Vivo – Lento – Allegro*, which are played as a single continuous movement. Philip's many works for Brass include *The Land of the Long White Cloud* commissioned by the New Zealand Brass Band Association, *The Year of the Dragon* and *Harmony Music*. The work featured here is written on the pattern of the Brandenburg Concertos of Bach and the concerti grossi of Handel, where a group of soloists are contrasted with the main band or orchestra.

Trombone Concerto – Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908).

Of all the Russian composers of his period, Rimsky-Korsakov was the most prolific. He wrote fifteen operas, four symphonies, three concertos and many other works, among the best known of which is the Symphonic Suite *Scheherazade*.

The trombone concerto is played in an arrangement for brass band by Gordon Langford. It is in the usual three movement form and it features two extended cadenzas.

Trio Concerto – Denis Wright (1895-1967).

One of the major figures in the development of the brass band, Wright received his musical education at the Royal College of Music. In 1925 he won a 100 guinea prize offered by J. Henry Iles for an original brass band work. He was the first

director of the Bandsman's College of Music launched in 1932 and he founded the National Youth Brass Band also in the 1930s. Among his many works are the Trumpet Concerto and *Tam O'Shanter's Ride*. Echoes of both pieces can be heard throughout the Trio Concerto. Written in three movement concerto grosso form it features a group of three soloists.

Concertino for Tenor Horn – Gareth Wood.

The middle sound belongs to the horns and baritones but they don't often get the chance to steal the limelight from the flashy cornets and trombones. This little work will perhaps help to put that right. Written in one continuous movement, the middle section features an extended passage in free time accompanied by percussion. There is also a marvellous *Threepenny Opera* tune which makes a happy ending for this recording.

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- **A Chandos Digital Recording**
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- Assistant Engineers: Ben Connellan & Richard Lee
- Editor: Ben Connellan
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- Sleeve Design: Penny Olymbios ● Art Direction: Vicky Langdale

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