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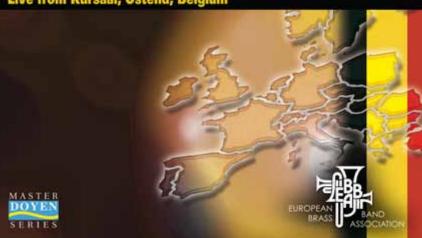
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DOY CD260

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EUROPEAN BRASS BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009

EUROPEAN BRASS BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009

Live from Kursaal, Ostend, Belgium



This year the European Brass Band Championships packed up its touring caravan and parked it in the Belgian resort of Ostend. Despite this, being the 32nd such event it was pitched in Belgium for only the second time.

Great weather greeted not just the many visitors to this Flemish coastal town on a national holiday weekend but also the many brass banders whose arrival had ensured that the 'no vacancies' signs were in evidence everywhere.

The previous Belgian hosting in Brussels 2002 had been won by Yorkshire Building Society Band en route to its double hattrick and supreme domination of the European crown. Belgian Bands have played a major role in the destination of this title over the last two decades with Brass Band Willebroek emerging as the most successful Continental band of all time, with three wins since 1993 under its founder and conductor Frans Violet. Perversely, here in their own back yard, having been dethroned as Belgian Champion, they had failed to qualify,



CD 2

۱.	Spirits of Puccini M/s	Hermann Pallhuber	15.40			
	Own-choice Test-piece, Championship Section, Brass Band Oberösterreich, Conductor Hannes Buchegger					
2.	Sunrise Over Blue Ridge ©Prima Vista Musikk	Dan Price	4.08			
	Gala Concert, Cory Band, Conductor Dr. Robert Childs					
В.	The Promised Land ©SP&S	Kenneth Downie	16.06			
	Own-choice Test-piece, Championship Section, Festival Brass Band, Conductor Manu Mellaerts					
ŀ.	Piazzolatino M/s Astor Piazzolla an	r. Van Haegenberg <mark>he</mark>	9.02			
	Gala Concert, Belgian Brass					
5.	Siegfried's Funeral March M/s Richard	Wag <mark>ner a</mark> rr. Hendriks	7.05			
	Farewell Concert, European Youth Brass Band, Conductor Benny Wiame					
ì.	Standing on the Shoulders of Giants ©Gramercy Music	Peter Graham	16.58			
	Winner of Own-choice Test-piece, Championship Section, Cory Band, Conductor Dr. Robert Childs					
	The label to The cap a control					
	Total Playing Time CD 2 68.59 Total Playing Time of Double CD 2hr 25.09					
	Total Laying Time of Double CD 2m					

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CD 1

1.	Enter the Galaxies ©Prima Vista Musikk	Paul Lovatt-Cooper	3.19
	Gala Concert, Cory Band, Conductor Dr. Robert Childs		
2.	From Ancient Times ©De Haske Music	Jan Van Der Roost	18.05
	Winner of Set Test-piece, Championship Section, Cory Band, Conduc	tor Dr. Robert Childs	
3.	Branwyn M/s	Cai <mark>Isfyn</mark>	2.36
	Gala Concert, Cory Band, Conductor Dr. Robert Childs		
	Soprano Cornet Soloist Bert Van Thienen		
4.	Irish Mood M/s	Stijn Roels	6.24
	Farewell Concert, Brass Band Willebroek, Conductor Frans Violet		
	Tenor Horn Soloist Stijn Berbé		
5.	Catedrales M/s	Bert Appermont	6.51
	Winner of B-section Set Test-piece, 3BA-Brass, Conductor Franz Mat	vsiak	
6.	Canzona Omagio a Giovanni Gabrieli M/s	Jan Van der Roost	8.16
	Gala Concert, Belgian Brass		
7.	Masters of Space and Time ©Novello & Co Ltd.	Bruce Broughton	12.16
	Farewell Concert, Brass Band Willebroek, Conductor Frans Violet		
8.	The Firebird Suite ©Kirklees Music	Igor Stravinsky arr. Farr	10.18
	Farewell Concert, European Youth Brass Band, Conductor Benny Wi	те	
9.	Credo ©SP&S	Lorne Barry	8.05
	Farewell Concert, Brass Band Willebroek, Conductor Frans Violet		

Total Playing Time CD 1 76.10

and as such they and their many supporters had to be content with their appearance at the Farewell Concert.

The 11 competing bands in the Championship Section had 81 appearances to their name, although only Cory (Wales) and Eikanger-Bjørsvik (Norway) have been victorious in the past. Grimethorpe Colliery (England) and Whitburn (Scotland) have claimed the runners-up spot in the past and Treize Etolies (Switzerland) and Tredegar (Wales) have made it into the bronze medal position. Lyngby-Taarbaek (Denmark) has the most appearances with eight but although the other contenders are relative newcomers to European banding at this level, this didn't lessen the anticipation, nor the whetting of the collective appetites of the gathered spectators.

Despite a line up full of genuine contenders, Cory Band carved out a victory with a massive margin of eight points from their nearest rivals, winning both the Set Testpiece and Own-choice Test-piece to claim, for a second successive year the European crown. Celebrating their 125th anniversary year, Cory showed itself to be in top form not just in the competitive disciplines but also on the concert stage. The large and enthusiastic audience in the Kursaal Concert Hall thrilled to the sound of their opening contribution to the Gala Concert. Paul Lovatt-Cooper's tailor-made show opener *Enter the Galaxies* introduced the band and its various soloists and also



kicks off this collection of audio highlights from this festival weekend.

Jan Van der Roost is a very experienced composer and adjudicator who knows how to get the very best out of a brass band. In *From Ancient Times*, this Belgian composer took as his inspiration the Flemish composers of the Renaissance period. The work is some 18 minutes long and in the words of one famous bandsman 'a real workout', with many commenting that it might just be one of the most difficult pieces ever written for band. However, don't be put off, the music is no less enjoyable and at times Jan Van der Roost has created quite wonderful sounds that those in the auditorium will never forget, and Cory's winning performance of the Set Test-piece, under the direction of Dr Robert Childs, literally brought the audience to its feet.

Bert Van Thienen is of course, Belgian, and is a member of the trumpet section of the Symphonic Band of the Belgian Guides and also plays soprano cornet with Brass Band Willebroek. In the Gala Concert, this as well as his superlative playing assured him of an extra special welcome as he stood to play *Branwyn* accompanied by Cory Band. This is followed by another Willebroek soloist, Stijn Berbé, who backed by his own band made *Irish Mood*, a real tour de force for tenor horn.



Saturday saw them presenting the premiere performance of Peter Graham's new work Standing on the Shoulders of Giants. This is a work of contrasting styles charting the progress of brass music through the generations with quotations ranging from diverse composers as Bruckner, Bliss, Miles Davis, Tommy Dorsey and Herbert Clarke, all wrapped in Peter's inimitable and highly engaging musical voice. The climax of the piece, evoking echoes of Sir Arthur Bliss's Checkmate was met with thunderous applause and an extended standing ovation - a clear sign from the international audience that Cory were set to retain their European title.

In the words of one adjudicator, Ray Farr, 'Wow, beautiful and fantastic...Thanks' – a great summing up of the performance and a most fitting way to conclude this our disc of highlights.





National Championships ensuring their presence at this event. Their performance of Kenneth Downie's *The Promised Land* was a great choice by them and especially demonstrated the prodigious talent of their principal euphonium Glen Van Looy, in this their contribution to the Own-choice Testpiece event and a worthy inclusion on this CD.

This is followed by the sounds of Belgian Brass from the Gala Concert. In recent years brass players everywhere have taken to the music of the Argentinean composer Astor Piazzolla. This orchestral brass ensemble prove why with this selection of his most famous tunes put together by Dirk Van Haegenberghe, entitled *Piazzolatino*. The final contribution by the European Youth Brass Band saw them endeavour to bring life to *Siegfried's Funeral March*.

We close this selection of highlights as we opened with the focus once again falling on the all conquering Cory Band. Having made such a huge impression on Friday in the Set Test-piece contest, This year's B-section featured no less than six bands who competed in a contest that includes an element of 'Own- choice' sitting alongside a Set Test-piece. This year Belgian composer Bert Appermont had been commissioned to write the work that would test these emerging bands. In *Catedrales*, he aims to simulate the acoustic experience of a cathedral – echoes, sounds and merging melodies, in a composition that would be played in a normal concert hall acoustic. This performance by 3BA-Brass from the Bavarian Brass Band Academy, under the direction of Franz Matysiak, clearly placed it head and shoulders above the other contestants.

Belgian Brass, a group of professional players under the leadership and direction of trumpeter Manu Mellaerts, made a huge impression with their set in the Gala Concert. Featuring music by man of the moment Jan Van der Roost entitled *Canzona Omagio a Giovanni Gabrieli*, they created some beautiful sounds enhanced by thoughtful stage choreography.

Hollywood composer Bruce Broughton's roots are clearly in the tradition of the brass band both through family heritage and his upbringing in The Salvation Army. Brass Band Willebroek





chose a major work of his, *Masters of Space and Time*, as part of their performance at the Farewell Concert, an occasion that they shared with the European Youth Brass Band. The European Youth Brass Band reconfigures itself as an important and central component of each year's event and was featured this year in various concerts and occasions around Ostend. Under the direction of Benny Wiame they featured Ray Farr's brilliant arrangement of Stravinsky's *The Firebird Suite*.

CD 1 is brought to a conclusion once more by Frans Violet and Brass Band Willebroek in a thrilling performance of *Credo* by Lorne Barry.

One of the great attractions of the European Brass Band Championships is the two Testpiece format with all the bands playing the best work and a day later a work of their own choice.

Drawn to play first on Saturday afternoon was Brass Band Oberösterriech from Austria, conducted by Hannes Bucheggar and with the quite wonderful Hans Gansch as principal



cornet. Herman Pallhuber wrote for them *Spirits of Puccini*, based on three beautiful and readily identifiable arias by the great composer. What followed was 15 minutes of virtuosity that demanded and captured the attention of 1500 or so eager listeners. The quotes from *Tosca*, *Nessun Dorma* and *O Mio Babbino Caro* as well an original theme written in the style of Puccini.

Sunrise Over Blue Ridge is an original composition from the pen of the

exciting young composer Dan Price. This charming piece received its world premiere at The Sage, Gateshead forming part of Cory's winning Brass in Concert 2008 programme, and, as the title suggests, takes its inspiration from the wonderful landscapes which can be seen within the Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia.

The relatively recently formed Festival Brass of Belgium has steadily gained ground and won last year's Belgian