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Concert: Ithaca College Concert Band

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Mark Fonder

Alexander Shuhan

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ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERT BAND

Mark Fonder, conductor
Alexander Shuhan, horn

Ford Hall
Wednesday, April 26, 2006
8:15 p.m.
"Celebrations"

Music for a Festival (1951)  
I. Intrada  
II. Overture  
III. Round  
IV. Air  
XI. Finale  

The Solitary Dancer (1970)  

Concerto No. 1, Op. 11 (1883)  
Allegro  
Andante  
Allegro

Alexander Shuhan, horn

INTERMISSION

Celebrations (1991)  

Gloriosa (1990)  
Oratio  
Cantus  
Dies Festus
About the Program

Originally consisting of eleven movements, *Music for a Festival* was commissioned by the Arts Council of Great Britain for the Festival in Britain in 1951. The general structure of the composition is an alteration of movements between a brass choir and full band. The writing for brass players calls on their several resources: brilliance, fullness and at times, a choral style. The sections for band are written as a contrast to the brass demanding careful articulation and attention to intonation. The suite is reminiscent of the classical suite both in arrangement and in the style of several of the movements. In this performance the brass choir trumpeters are Alexander Lee-Clark, James Covington, Christopher Post and Judson Hoffman. Brass choir trombonists are Alice Rogers, Nicholas Kelly and Ryan Pangburn with Jason Taylor on timpani.

*The Solitary Dancer* is considered a masterpiece in economy of resources, sensitivity for wind and percussion colors and subtle development and recession of instrumental and musical frenzy. The work refers to “the quiet, poised energy that one may observe in a dancer in repose, alone with her inner music,” Benson stated about the work, “like when a group of people get together and whisper, there is a lot of intensity and excitement, but it never gets loud. It never goes anywhere in that sense. It may bubble and cook but it never really blows the lid off. There are a lot of situations in life like that – just quiet moments.”

Richard Strauss was the first major composer after Mozart to bring the horn out from the shadows and to promote it to a central musical figure. With a sensitivity to instrumental innovations, Richard Wagner magnificently exploited the technical possibilities of the valved horn, which had been developed around 1820. From Wagner, the 19-year-old Richard Strauss found a model in 1883 for his Horn Concerto No.1 in E-Flat Major, op.11. Also a powerful influence was Strauss' father, Franz, who was the first horn player of the Munich Court Opera. Franz initiated his son into the horn's wealth of expression and color, immense tonal range, and technical tricks. The First Horn Concerto captures much of the heroic quality we find in mature Strauss compositions, especially in the fanfare-like introduction. Nonetheless, the texture and style of composition hearken back to Mozart in clarity and simplicity, contrary to the ornate style that would eventually become a trademark of Strauss. The influence of his father would eventually lead Strauss to write another horn concerto nearer the end of his career, in 1942.
Celebrations was commissioned in 1988 by Earl Benson, conductor of the Medalist Concert Band of Bloomington, Minnesota, to commemorate that community band's 20th anniversary. This composition is a spirited and challenging work which alternates two main themes, the first fluid and technical, the second sustained and lyrical. The tempo moves at a rapid pace throughout, concluding with a rousing presto which employs elements of both themes.

Regarding Gloriosa, Ito has interwoven Latin chants and traditional Japanese folk songs sung by early 17th century Japanese Kirishitan (Christians) to depict the plight of believers who, in the face of death and despair, exhibited valor, endurance and strength. Ito's work is symbolic of any religious persecution. The first movement, a Gregorian Chant theme and 13 variations in the form of a chaconne represents the journey that believers take. It is marked by contrasts of the sinister ruthlessness of persecution and undying faith. The second movement, based on a corrupted form of chant by Saint John, is a song becoming ever closer to that of a secular folk song. The final movement is based on a transformed melody of the folk song Nagasaki Bura-Bura Bushi in which the believers overcome persecution to celebrate their strength and faith.

About the Soloist

Alexander Shuhan is Associate Professor of Horn at Ithaca College and principal horn with the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra. He is a founding member, hornist and pianist of Rhythm & Brass, with whom he has recorded six CD's on the d'Note, Koch and Bear Claw labels. He also performs frequently with the Skaneateles Chamber Music Festival, the Rochester Philharmonic and the Syracuse Symphony Orchestras. He has studied at Southern Methodist University, the Eastman School of Music and the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School.
ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERT BAND
Mark Fonder, conductor

Piccolo
Aimee Shorten

Flute
Becca Frost
Meaghan
McTammany
Jocelyn Kraus
Sara Holmes
Tracy Kirschner
Maggie Gallagher

Oboe/English Horn
Alicia Rockenhauser
Kathleen Michel
Margaret Westreich

Clarinet
Jillian Bushnell
Jennifer Micelli
Kristen Schussler
Meaghan Garbay

Baritone Saxophone
Tom Hauser
Steve Mathews

Coronet/Trumpet
Alex Lee-Clark
Christine Gregory
James Covington
Christina Rosati
Christopher Post
Mike Conerty
Judson Hoffman
Alejandro Barnard-Papachrysanthou
Erin Alvey

Horn
Bryn Coveney
Tom Peters
Beth Roorda
Lori Roy

Trombone
Alice Rogers
Rick McGrath
Emily Selman
Nicholas Kelly
Hank Currey
Patrick Bradley
Ryan Pangburn
Edward Swider

Euphonium
Matt Feinberg
Aaron Rivkin
Jacqui Best
Justin M. Falvo
Greg Lewandowski

Bass Clarinet
Matthew Gibson
Sarah Leidy

E-Flat Clarinet
Meaghan Garbay

Bassoon
Jillian Bushnell
Jennifer Micelli
Kristen Schussler

Euphonium
Matt Feinberg
Aaron Rivkin
Jacqui Best
Justin M. Falvo
Greg Lewandowski

Tuba
Nicholas Gann
Diana Dodd
Alfred A. Hadinger
Alex Mitchell

String Bass
Xander Lott

Piano
Tracy Kirschner

Timpani
Jason E. Taylor

Percussion
Alison Hannah
Jason Hunt
Kaye Sevier
Colleen Clark
Nathan Guerin

Alto Saxophone
Jason Bellott
Brett Fleury
Ian Michael Cruz
Gabriel Fadale