CRITICAL COMMENTARY

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Peter Graham
Cheadle Hulme, 1999
INTRODUCTION

The pieces [on this recording] guide the listener along a 15-year musical time-line, from his first major brass band composition, Dimensions, to his latest work, On Alderley Edge. ¹

When I first read those comments in late September 1997 I realised that the works being reviewed represented a distillation of my compositional practice. As I write these words eighteen months later it occurs to me that in fact twenty years have passed since my first composition for brass band, a concert march, was written and subsequently published by the Salvation Army.

Being brought up in the Salvation Army it was almost inevitable that I would join the local corps brass band and ultimately arrange and compose music for it. Despite receiving piano and theory lessons independently it was my musical experiences within the Salvation Army, as brass performer, singer, pianist, conductor and arranger, which I now believe have shaped my approach to composition. The majority of Salvation Army music is functional, providing both accompaniment to congregational singing and concert music at various levels of difficulty (a latter-day *gebrauchsmusik* perhaps). Almost exclusively tonal, the music serves to communicate with audiences and rarely exploits what may be considered the more esoteric twentieth century compositional techniques.

There are obvious parallels with many of the 'functional' test-pieces contained in this collection, though the music under review here is not unique in this respect.

...for the most part, brass bands play fine and rarified proletarian music... ²

Fundamentally it is the need to communicate which I believe is the key part of my compositional make-up. This in turn dictates what some may consider the conservative

¹ Philip Maund, *Music Composed by Peter Graham (CD notes)* (Oldham: Doyen, 1997)
² Alan Jenkins, *Composer of the Nineties - An interview with Philip Wilby* (Brass Band World, July/August 1997) p.8-9
style of most of the music. That is not to say that I believe the music should stand still in
terms of some kind of musical 'time-warp'. I have a particular sympathy with the view
held by Philip Wilby, that:

Composing for brass bands demands that there is a consensus between the composer, players and
audience. With each new test-piece the composer can provide the audience with increasing
demands without repelling them. If you break this consensus then I'm afraid it doesn't work and
you are back to square one.3

In deciding which works to include in the collection, a number of factors came into play.
The degree 'by published works' is without precedent at Salford and, perhaps inevitably,
the publications bestride the previously mentioned musical time-line of around fifteen
years. Another factor in determining the choice of material was the decision that the
collection should be seen to both relate to current Music Department teaching and
research, and satisfy the criteria outlined in the University Regulations:

1. That the collection be a “coherent” body of work and a natural extension of the
portfolio requirements of the MA compositional studies programme at Salford;

2. That the collection be seen to foster an ethos in which band styles are seen as
susceptible to the same serious and dedicated study as accorded to classical “art”
music genres.

Both brass and wind works are included, the brass music being genre type contest pieces
of the kind previously discussed. The characteristics of the latter include the exploitation
of specific instrumental techniques (triple-tonguing etc.) and wide dynamic, stylistic and
tempo ranges. These parameters are dictated by the rules and pragmatics of contests and
may appear to present an unacceptable restriction of compositional freedom. Ironically,
my experience has been that, confronted with such a wide range of constraints, the

3 Ibid, p. 9
creative process is actually strengthened. This experience is one which is not uncommon to composers of all kinds:

...my freedom will be so much the greater and more meaningful the more narrowly I limit my field of action and the more I surround myself with obstacles. Whatever diminishes constraint, diminishes strength. The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one's self of the chains that shackle the spirit.4

Technical challenges aside, the works demonstrate a range of compositional techniques including exploration of colour and texture, symphonic argument embracing tonal conflicts and resolutions and (briefly) more contemporary techniques including minimalism and aleatory music.

It is with these points in mind that the following works are presented:

Brass Band

**Dimensions (1983) 9’**  
*Symphonic Study No. 1*  
Boosey & Hawkes

**Prisms (1988) 13’**  
*Symphonic Study No. 2*  
Rosehill Music Publishing

**The Essence of Time (1990) 13’**  
*Variations*  
Rosehill Music Publishing

**On Alderley Edge (1997) 17’**  
*Tone Poem*  
Gramercy Music Publishing

Wind Band

**Symphony for Winds (1998) 17’**  
Rosehill Music Publishing

**Pentium (1998) 6’**  
*Overture*  
Gramercy Music Publishing

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Dimensions was written in the summer of 1981 and was awarded first place in the Young Composer of the Year Competition run by the West Glamorgan Education Authority. It was published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1983 and set as the test-piece for National Brass Band Area Championships Section 2 in 1984. The style of the music reflects a number of influences, perhaps most significantly that of Edward Gregson, whose music I had admired for a number of years and who was a major figure in brass band composition, and policy making generally, in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

The quartal influence of Gregson is obvious as are the pyramid-type chords in vogue in band music at that time, but essentially the music is largely diatonic; in fact, the S.A. influence seems clear as most of the tunes are readily singable. Only from this distance am I aware of the further harmonic flavouring which absorbing much of Gregson's music provided, the modal inflections (mainly the Mixolydian flattened 7\(^{th}\) and occasional Lydian tritone). Maund has also highlighted the importance of the influential American band composers through their S.A. work (Broughton, Curnow, Himes and Bulla). He suggests that the breezy cosmopolitan style...jazz-influenced harmony ... gradually became the vernacular of mainstream 'modern' brass band music, and can be seen in the works of many composers writing in the 70's and 80's.\(^1\)

I would add that the Curnow Psalm 100 (A Psalm of Praise) provided a structural model for Dimensions.

The work consists of three continuous sections, the first playing the role of a modified (and much condensed) monothematic sonata exposition, hence the symphonic

\(^1\) Maund, op. cit.
element of the subtitle. The work may also be described as cyclical in that themes from
the first two sections recur in the final section. The key signature of Bb major reflects the
music's main tonal centre although much of the material passes through related (and
unrelated) keys.

The thematic material is clearly presented at the outset by the trombones (Example 1.1).

These two superimposed fourths are treated in a variety of ways in the introduction
(inverted, augmented, ornamented etc) each of which is developed in some form through
the remainder of the work. A jaunty first subject at B is contrasted, following a transition,
by a Cantabile second subject at E. The symmetry of the phrases (8 x 8), although fairly
obvious, has the advantage of engaging the listener to the extent that, in addition to
hearing events as they in take place in real-time, they also define what the listener may
expect to hear. This in turn provides an opportunity to occasionally add the unexpected
(for example, the constantly shifting harmonies through E - perhaps what Tony Swainson
calls the 'delightful twists')\(^2\). A recapitulation at letter I (now with the first subject in
euphoniums) functions as a coda to the first section.

The misterioso acts as a bridge to the second section, a ternary Andante mesto in a
Dorian Eb. More harmonic shifting takes place and both solo cornet and euphonium
soloists have a conversational role to play with canonic counterpoint. The Poco piu
mosso introduces a new theme, again based on superimposed fourths, which will be
recapitulated in the final section.

\(^2\) See Appendix 2
The finale at R is introduced by a rhythmic, ostinato-type passage which builds tension by developing the initially sparse two-quaver motif until it reaches saturation point with a quartal pyramid-chord climax. R itself can be thought of as a mini-rondo theme which perhaps displays mild elements of jazz. Certainly the rhythmic element is probably the most influential in terms of maintaining a sense of propulsion in the final stages of the music. There is a suggestion of contrast with the reprise of the Poco piu mosso from the second section at U although no change of tempo is evoked. The second phrase at V now heightens the tension by the addition of the earlier snare drum rhythm and counterpoint derived from the finale rondo theme.

W is, in effect, a coda, the aim of which is to continue to generate some degree of excitement, culminating in the broad Grandiose theme at Y. Elements of the first subject, inverted pyramid chords and various other motifs, both rhythmic and melodic, are developed here. The Grandiose theme simply augments the main quartal theme, momentarily passing through the flattened mediant as a means of further maintaining some element of tension as the music winds down. With a final reference at Z to the very beginning of the work, the music concludes with a strong Bb major chord.

*Dimensions* was my first extended work for brass band. The largely episodic, closed-form type of writing was quite common during this period in band music and the sequel to *Dimensions*, *Prisms*, displays similar characteristics, while beginning to stretch and ultimately dissolve the symmetry of phrasing.
Prisms was commissioned by the conductor Ray Farr and was first performed at the Madley Festival in the summer of 1986. Farr's brief was for a sequel to Dimensions which he had performed and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 with the Grimethorpe Colliery Band. The piece was forwarded to the test-piece selection panel of the National Brass Band Championships by my publisher Rosehill Music and was set as the Area Championship Section Test Piece in 1989. The published work differs from the original in that almost three minutes of music were added to develop some of the truncated ideas, the scoring pared down considerably and, in view of its forthcoming test-piece function, technical passages inserted.

As previously mentioned, as a sequel to Dimensions, the work shares many features of the latter including tonality (though now written in open key), structure (the modified sonata outline, albeit slightly more sophisticated in this case) and thematically (the fourth used as the dominant interval). The extended introduction presents various motifs and rhythmic figures which are developed throughout the rest of the work (Examples 2.1, 2.2, 2.3).

The Allegro first subject at letter B is a main theme which will recur at various stages through the piece. The harmonic background is constantly changing here (almost
bar by bar) and the scoring relatively light. The *Energico* transition is developed from a motif (Example 2.2) in the introduction and the *Cantabile* second subject at D in turn is an extension of the main theme in the transition. Until this point the phrasing, as in *Dimensions*, has been symmetrical (8 x 8 in the main). Now, however, at the tail end of the first presentation of the second subject new material is presented which disrupts the continuity of phrase (denying the *expected*). The horn figure is mirrored by an inverted version in the solo euphonium which leads to a fully scored reprise of the second subject. A new section follows, F - *Rhythmically*, which extensively develops many of the previous ideas. Harmonies are extended (jazz-inflected 13th chords now become dominant) and rhythmic motifs are transformed. For the first time various metre changes are incorporated. Looking afresh at this section I recall that the original idea at F ended a mere 10 bars later. The continuation of material (including reprise with canonic counterpoint at G) creates a much better balance within this section, something I was perhaps not aware of at the time.

At letter I a series of cadenzas are included as technical challenges for individual soloists. These amendments were made during the revision of the piece at the request of the Boosey & Hawkes advisors, and although they relate thematically to the rest of the work they seem a rather obvious device in retrospect. The functional nature of test-pieces leaves little room for preciousness at times, however.

A lyrical theme, derived from earlier material (Example 2.1) appears at letter J. As with the second section in *Dimensions* this treatment features cornet and euphonium soloists in a conversational role. Unlike *Dimensions* however, the style is more romantic and less 'cool', particularly in the passionate middle section (L) which, using shifts of harmony over a pedal, has deliberate echoes of early Wilfred Heaton (most significantly
his variations Celestial Prospect). The lyrical theme is reprised at M as a cantabile lower brass line supported by bell-effect muted cornets which create a series of chord clusters. The codetta at N features the opening motif from the lyric theme, the original tritone now resolved.

A ten-bar rhythmic bridge passage follows, introducing a rising semiquaver figure which becomes the main theme in the (rondo) finale. The B section of the rondo (at letter Q) is an accelerated and modified version of the original second subject interrupted by octave cornets and syncopated horns. References to the lyric theme are made mid-way through Q and the full ensemble at R further develop the second subject theme, which returns in its original form at T, surrounded by a florid semiquaver counterpoint. The music builds up tension by a syncopated rhythmic interlude at V which telegraphs the reprise of the first subject at W, now with full tutti and Majestically as the stylistic directive.
The Essence of Time

Variations for Brass Band

Of all the works contained in the collection under review The Essence of Time is probably the closest in character to the S.A. music I was involved with at the time. The piece was conceived during a period when I was working for the S.A. in New York as a music editor and arranger for the New York Staff Band. A more obvious jazz influence than had featured previously in my music can be detected, the jazz coming, ironically, not from the local environment as might be expected (the Blue Note club being a couple of blocks away) but actually from many of the S.A. composers I encountered in my work as a music editor. The hymn-like 'big tune' is also stylistically close to the type of themes prevalent in some of the S.A. publications. Upon my return to the UK in late 1986 I eventually completed the work for use at the 1990 Boosey & Hawkes European Championships held, that year, in Scotland (and won by the Black Dyke Mills Band). It is customary for the host country to nominate a National as composer (six years earlier Thomas Wilson's Refrains and Cadenzas had been set) and I was honoured and delighted to accept the assignment.

I see the work unequivocally as 'brass band music' - that is to say that while certain pieces may make relatively successful transitions to other media (Dimensions is published for wind and fanfare bands in Holland for example) I do not believe The Essence of Time would. The reasons for this are not clear-cut; technically it would be quite straightforward to assign the various lines for winds and in some instances they may even lie more comfortably than they do in the brass version. However, in terms of style and character I cannot see the work in a form other than that conceived. Perhaps it has
something to do with the explosive nature of this type of virtuoso display piece (what Philip Wilby has described as a 'white-hot heat') and the fact that so much ground has to be covered (lyrically, technically, rhythmically etc.) in a relatively short space of time. The piece also relates closely to the programmatic tradition of band music at the beginning of the century in the 'picture-painting' type of writing.

The five-note motif in the opening phrase in unison (octave) cornets and trombones supplies the main idea for the subsequent variations (Example 3.1)

Example 3.1

One of my students, working on the piece as a conducting assignment, asked about the significance of the '12 note row' with which the piece commences. It is interesting how independent analysis can throw up all kinds of fascinating insights into a composer's work. The best explanation I can provide is that in attempting to deny any sense of key I inadvertently covered all the available tones. (Nevertheless I think of the opening as initially having a Db tonal centre, the key in which Prisms concluded. All of my series of brass band test-pieces relate to each other in this way).

Following the initial statement the five-note motif is reprised in the lower brass in augmentation supported by a canonic rhythmic backdrop in the cornets which also makes reference to the motif. The lower-brass motif is extended and prepares the ground for the first of many 'mini' climaxes at figure 2. These climaxes, or waves, though not designed with the Golden Section rigour of later pieces, nevertheless are a conscious attempt to cultivate and maintain the previously mentioned 'white heat'. Many of the ideas which are presented in figure 2 will feature later in the piece: the triplet figuration in the cornets, low brass semiquaver passage work and so on. The fugal section commencing at figure 5
winds the music up to peak at the transition (figure 7) and prepares for the first variation, subtitled *A Time to Dance*. This explores the colour contrasts of brights (bell front instruments: cornets and trombones) and mellows (bell up instruments: euphoniums, basses). The contrasts of register are also explored here. All of these ideas culminate in a march-like theme at figure 11, the middle section of which (12) features some virtuoso solo lines for cornet and euphonium. Another transition sets the scene for the second variation, *A Time to Love*, which features various solo voices and demonstrates the more subtle soft playing of which brass instruments are capable.

The *Ritmico* section (figure 18) unusually (at that particular time) features a solo Bb bass whose line is echoed by the two Eb bass instruments. This leads to a Latin-style section with trombones and percussion holding the stage in *A Time to Hate*. The writing throughout here consciously tries to emulate 'big band' instrumentation with cornets imitating trumpets and horns replacing saxophones. Euphoniums are kept very low key for the simple reason that, of all the instruments in the band, I believe the euphonium gives the brass band its unique character and sound. This instrument apart, bands can often emulate symphonic brass ensembles and jazz brass sections with a large degree of success.

The main theme of the entire work follows at figure 24, *A Time to Mourn* (later resurrected as *A Time for Peace*). This is written in a late nineteenth century hymn style and while it has been acclaimed as a very strong theme which is well suited to the medium, objectively I have some reservations regarding the 'gear crashing' of style (what Peter Dickinson calls 'style-modulation').

A martial type of music follows, *A Time for War*, almost a 'patrol' in the way it builds up tension layer by layer. This leads into another section, perhaps best described as
a jig. (Although untitled, *A Time to Dance* would probably have been appropriate). Here more of the motifs which were introduced at the beginning of the work are developed and extended. The jig figure appears in augmentation at figure 40 and ultimately builds to a climax, reintroducing the 'big tune' at 42 (*A Time for Peace*). The drama is retained until the very end of the work when various descending chords create dissonance against the F pedal, this dissonance only resolved with the sounding of the final F major chord.
On Alderley Edge

On Alderley Edge was commissioned for the 1997 Boosey & Hawkes National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain held in the Royal Albert Hall. For quite some time I had been keen to write a quasi-romantic tone poem; a traditional brass band test-piece - and this commission seemed to provide the ideal opportunity.

Not far from my home in Cheadle Hulme lies the North Cheshire village of Alderley Edge. Dominated by a 600 foot wooded escarpment (known locally as 'The Edge'), evocatively entitled landmarks such as Wizard's Well, Stormy Point and The Devil's Grave have inspired storytellers for centuries. This work presents a musical portrayal of many of these sites and also recalls some of the legends which have arisen from them. In dealing with the subjects of the forest, myths and legends, parallels with the German Romantic Opera tradition became apparent to me and it seemed appropriate to draw upon sources and in some cases the language of that particular period in music history. Hence the references to Weber's masterpiece Der Freischütz and the ideas of a redemption theme and the triumph of good over evil. Structurally the work is balanced as follows:

Prologue
The Armada Beacon
The Golden Stone
Engine Vein Mine
The Holy Well
Stormy Point
Devil's Grave

Epilogue
In general the pacing of material alternates between slow and fast in each section.
The Prologue sets the forest scene in the various atmospheric effects (mixed muting in the brass and sturm percussion sounds) and also in the offstage horn call. The latter is a programmatic reference to the most enduring of the legends of Alderley Edge. (A subterranean cavern is said to house a sleeping army who will rise if ever England is in peril. Local tradition has it that music (the horn call) from the cavern can still be heard at nights). The bitonal chord, based on the written tonal centres C and F#, with which the work opens is also an oblique reference to the Wolf's Glen scene in Der Freischütz where the descent from good to evil is represented by a harmonic descent from C major to the remote F# minor. (On Alderley Edge contains various symbolic references and allusions which, in a sense, are for my own amusement only. I will point out those which I think have some relevance).

The horn call is important as it provides much of the thematic material within the work. (Example 4.1)

![Example 4.1](image1) ![Example 4.2](image2)

The opening tritone undergoes various transformations, resolving to a perfect fourth or major third at different stages in the piece. The first of these resolutions allows the cornet and euphonium soloists to feature at the Poco piu mosso e cantabile (letter A) (Example 4.2). This theme will be developed further in the section entitled The Golden Stone.

*The Armada Beacon* (the highest point on the Edge from where the advance of the Spanish Armada could be sighted) presents some musical fireworks with a Spanish twist. The opening bars make reference to the main theme at B while the skyrocket figuration in antiphonal cornets could be considered picture-painting of the lighting of the beacons in
the surrounding countryside. The main theme itself is thinly scored and propels itself forward in the manner of *Dimensions* and *Prisms* (semitone shifts in the harmony). The bass section provide an undercurrent of tension (again with material derived from the main theme) while above the cornets and horns similarly build towards the triplet figure climax. By letter E there is a resolution of the uncertainty of all of this music when a solid Lydian Eb tonality is established. The Spanish dance flavour of this section is coloured by tambourine and triangle in the percussion.

The section is curtailed suddenly and a new one commences at F (*Tranquillo e cantabile*), a major contrast from the previous aggressive style of writing. Structurally the new section operates on three planes, firstly taking the form of a chaconne with a sequence of five recurring chords (Cb, C, A, Gb, Eb), secondly having a ternary surround and thirdly, taking a cue from the section's title (*The Golden Stone*), Golden Section proportions are applied. The latter is based on the Lucas series of mathematical ratios (1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 18, 29) which are simply linked, in this instance, to bars. Various climaxes or significant events coincide with the Golden Section points, the main one, coincidently, occurring at letter G.

The cornet theme commencing bar 2 of F (derived from the *Poco piu mosso e cantabile* of the introduction) recurs at H with a full canon at the octave in the trombone.

Taking its cue once more from the title (*Engine Vein Mine*) the music here is relentless (unswerving percussion effects adding to the colour). The trombone figure (in imitation) is derived from the major 7th first heard in the horn call. The section is abruptly interrupted by the mood-setting bell effects (in both percussion and brass) of *The Holy Well*. This is the central point in the music (as well as being at the centre of 'The Edge' itself) and pastiche Wagnerian harmony is employed in addition to the 'holy' picture-
painting in the chant figures and tubular bell. The horn call transformation is now complete (at O), the softer minor 7th replacing the major 7th, and an Ab tonality is established. This theme will be reprised as a 'redemption' theme but for now there remain some darker moments. Upon the reprise at Q a new counterpoint is introduced, a quotation from the Bach chorale *Zeuch ein zu deinen Toren* (Enter Thy Gates). This alludes to the iron gates, the hidden entrance to the cavern on 'The Edge', but within the context of *The Holy Well* symbolises entrance through the gates of Heaven (by redemption).

*Stormy Point* follows and here a nightmarish journey through the forest ensues. Thunderclaps sound, the relentless bass ostinato maintains a sense of urgency and the upper brass make distorted reference to the Dies Irae. The climax (*sostenuto*) makes reference to the main thematic material and *The Devil's Grave* refers to the opening of the Wolf's Glen scene and, more obliquely, to a musical representation of a mathematical formula known as the Devil's Staircase.

*The Holy Well* is reprised as an *Epilogue*, initially in Gb and finally in what has proved to be the dominant force, Bb (or more significantly the written C major). In fine brass band tradition (from Percy Fletcher through Eric Ball) good finally triumphs over evil.
5 - Montage

A Symphony for Wind Orchestra

Montage has existed in three different versions. Originally I conceived the work for small chamber group and both second and third movements were sketched accordingly (the second featuring violin and clarinet as the dominant solo lines). During work on the original I received a commission from the All England Masters Brass Band Championships to write the test-piece for the 1994 event. The time scale was short for various reasons (I think around six months) and so I adapted the piece for brass band. The present version is much closer to the one originally conceived since the wind instruments afforded the opportunity to reinstate some of the truncated lines (because of limitations of register) and to create a much wider range of colour than that found in the brass band.

I started work on the first version at a time when I was unclear about the direction my music was taking. Having been influenced by the music of Edward Gregson in the past I made contact and he agreed to take me on as a composition student. To his credit, rather than simply encourage me to continue to write in a style similar to his own (which was in the back of my mind in seeking him out), Gregson helped broaden my experience by encouraging me to study seriously, for the first time, a very wide range of music and compositional techniques. There are obvious dangers in simply continuing to 'pick and mix' but his theory, I think, was that all of these experiences would pass through some kind of personal filter and help define a style I was comfortable with.

The version under review was first performed by the Royal Scottish Academy of Music Wind Orchestra, conductor Nigel Boddice, in Glasgow, November 1997. Nigel
Boddice has also recorded the work with the Royal Norwegian Navy Band and it has received subsequent performances by the National Youth Wind Orchestra of Scotland and The Royal Academy of Music Wind Orchestra.

Like all of my published music the work is tonal. In this case tonality has a much more important role to play than in any previous piece of mine being fundamental to the construction of the final movement. The influences of Lutosławski, Messiaen and particularly James MacMillan are present in varying degrees.

The structure of the Intrada is ABCBA, roughly modelled on Movement I of Lutosławski's *Concerto for Orchestra*. A type of palindrome is employed, the opening rising figure and timpani pedal being mirrored in the glockenspiel and falling figure in high woodwind at the return of A (letter H).

The main five-note figure first heard in bass clarinet and baritone provides the basis of much of the material in all three movements. (Example 5.1)

The build up through this A section, creating layer upon layer of sound, results in a polytonal, 4th based chord which climaxes at letter B. At this point part of the five note figure returns, augmented, in the trombones. This is reprised twice, each re-entry being slightly extended, the final reprise adding trumpets to emphasise the climactic nature of the statement (at letter C). During all of this activity the upper woodwind and glockenspiel maintain an ostinato while low brass and baritone saxophone present two fragments of themes which will recur in movements 2 and 3 (Examples 5.2, 5.3)
A bridge passage at letter D leads to C in the arch shape. This new semiquaver figuration (in the woodwind) is an inverted extension of the bridge passage and will also supply material for the second movement. The various instrumental groups develop the ideas, and colours and registers are explored.

The climax towards letter G reintroduces themes from B in the arch. Now the semiquaver figuration is included as a counterpoint to main material in the horns. As previously outlined, the reprise of arch A has a palindromic relationship with the original statement. The movement closes with a wash of sound, created by a combination of muted and open brass, woodwind and tam-tam. The tonal centre on F is still present but less dominant.

Movement 2, subtitled Circles, like The Golden Stone in On Alderley Edge operates on three structural levels. Circles refers to the timeless nature of the music (the Messiaen influence dominant here) created by a chaconne. A sequence of five chords underpin the unfolding line in the oboe (Example 5.4)

![Example 5.4](image)

The overall structure can also be viewed as being ternary, and finally Golden Section proportions are applied using the Lucas summation series.

The initial key centre is based on Ab, a minor third above the F of the first movement (the final movement will commence with Cb (B) tonality and ultimately various key centres will fight for dominance). The oboe at letter A creates tension by alternating dissonance and resolution, the line propelled by interaction with the common major triads of the chaconne. A series of waves coincide with the Golden Section points (the first bridging bars 11 and 12), the main climax bridging bars 29 and 30). The music winds down to eventually settle on a Cb major chord in preparation for the final movement.
This commences with unison piccolo and bassoon and is an accelerated version of the oboe theme from movement two. A rondo theme in Ab minor is heard at letter A. This theme, in the clarinets, relates to the opening figure of the whole work. (Example 5.5)

![Example 5.5](image)

After passing through a number of key centres the alto saxophone unfolds a line first introduced in the first movement. This is taken up by upper woodwind at letter D (with trumpet and lower woodwind in canon) leading to a conflict of two ideas. The rondo theme, sounding in lower clarinets and alto saxophone, regains dominance. New material is introduced at F and a spiky, jazz-flavoured journey ensues. The main rondo theme returns in staged entries in the horns. Framing this material, the upper woodwind and xylophone try to disrupt the metrical certainty of pulse by a sequence of syncopated stabs (a aural and visual 'montage'). These interjections become more and more insistent (by losing a semiquavers distance between each occurrence) until interrupted by another new section at H. All of the material here is derived from the second movement oboe theme (the bass ostinato an inverted version and the brass a distorted one). Fugal entries increase the tension in this section until the bitonal climax at bar 154 (Bb major sounding with the opposite pole, Fb). The following bars serve as a bridge to the climax of the entire work. The tonal centre Cb has retrieved dominance, the alto saxophone melody from letter C now consolidated in tutti saxophones, bass clarinet and euphonium. In counterpoint with this the rondo theme has returned, now in canon at the octave. The struggle for tonal supremacy enters its concluding stages, and in a final twist the expected Cb is denied by a unison Db.
This mini-overture was commissioned by the West Lothian Schools Wind Band, conductor Brian Duguid, and first performed by them during the 1999 BASBWE conference held at the Royal Northern College of Music. The title refers to the 'silicon glen' near Livingston, the band's homebase, where the manufacture of computer chips is the main local industry.

Superficially the work may be considered to have something in common with the 'minimal' music of John Adams et al (Brian Duguid's programme note on the piece refers to it as 'a short ride on a PC'!). While there are shared characteristics, **Pentium** differs from that type of 'continuous music' because it sees so much change within a relatively short amount of time.

The opening unison clarinet line is tonally ambiguous. The implied Lydian G is rejected only upon the reprise at letter A, where full ensemble (including 'Brittenesque' horn figures) establish the home key of Lydian C. Structurally the piece can be viewed as a type of rondo. The rondo A (Example 6.1), derived from the opening clarinet line, recurs on six further occasions, alternating between the home C and F.

Between these entries various developments unfold, the most extensive at letter F where the tonality becomes unsettled and rhythmic patterns are explored. Here a hint of Stravinsky is perhaps apparent in the background. The horns play an aggressive role in driving the music forwards, alternating time signatures aiding the momentum. The colours are vividly highlighted, the brass superceded almost immediately by high
woodwind. A tritone staccato quaver ostinato, recalling the urgency of the opening of the whole work, is set in motion. In counterpoint to this the horn theme is now presented in the trombones and alto saxophone. Supporting the upper strata is the original rondo theme in inversion and augmentation. This whole section is immediately reprised, the tensions highlighted by tritone-based harmony until resolution to a Db6/Ab chord. This new tonal centre itself soon gives way to the home key Lydian C.

The climax of the overture occurs from letter K. The relentless opening rhythmic figure is reprised by the third clarinets. Subsequent entries in the rest of the woodwind create a layered backdrop to the ever-insistent 'power-chords' in the section marked Ad libitum. These 'power-chords' are a version of the rondo theme, now harmonised in the home key of Lydian C.

The work concludes with a reference to the opening figure, sustained brass sounds and a woodwind flourish.
Appendix 1 - Recordings
Appendix 2 - Reviews

British Bandsman Nov. 1997

Music composed by
PETER GRAHAM
Black Dyke
Conductor: James Watson
(DOYEN) DOYCD 069

Peter Graham and Black Dyke could constitute the perfect marriage. However, on this occasion at least, Graham's music proves to be the dominant partner, successfully documenting a fascinating study of his development.

His first work, Dimensions, is instantly recognisable as fashionable music of the early Eighties, yet immediately sets itself apart by the skilful crafting of the ideas and delightful twists.

Unquestionably, the piece which catapulted Graham to prominence was The Essence of Time. The dazzling rollercoaster of an introduction, the deliciously spiteful trombones in 'A Time to Hate' and the memorable 'Time for Peace' establish this as the moment he arrived as a spectacularly imaginative and innovative talent.

The 1994 Masters test, Montage, reaches a level far removed from anything before or arguably since. It achieves an exceptional clarity and transparency of texture, producing sounds which are always pleasing, yet is full of melodic interest. I believe when Montage reaches the wider audience next spring, this extraordinary work will become widely appreciated as a masterpiece.

The final work is the tone poem On Alderley Edge. Written in the more familiar language of the test-piece, every bar displays the style and eloquence of a man in complete control of his craft, yet I feel a trifle disappointed that boundaries have not been broadened yet further.

Prisms (1986) and a highly stylised version of Crimond containing magical quotations from Resurgam make up the remainder of this disc.

James Watson shapes the music masterfully, but the band are a touch below their best form with the occasional tuning and balance problem causing minor discomfort. However, as a record of Peter Graham's work this CD is a real gem - a must for collectors.

Tony Swainson

Brass Band World Feb. 1999

COMPACT DISCS

THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN NAVY BAND
Crossover
Conducted by Nigel Boddice
Doyen CD 083

At first glance this appears of interest to wind-band people only, but looking closer you'll notice that most of the programme has strong connections with the brass-band world. For starters it's all conducted by Nigel Boddice, the guest soloist is Roger Webster, and three of the main items were originally brass band repertoire.

Thus Thomas Wilson's cornet solo Cartoon (which Roger Webster performs with professional aplomb and sophistication) here takes on a different format for its accompaniment, and Peter Graham's new version 'for winds' of his suite Cry of the Celts subtly explores the additional tone-colours available.

The music of Graham's fine test-piece for brass bands Montage, here even takes on a new title - Symphony for Wind Orchestra, and certainly the scoring appears to have been completely rethought (rather than just adapted) at times. It is fascinating to follow the progress of the wind band's relaxed and sensitive performance with an eye on the original brass score, and the different (sometimes more transparent) view afforded by this version and the new naming of individual movements seem to throw fresh light upon this finely honed set of musical sculptures. Accordingly, one returns to the brass-band recordings with a sharper perception of the inner workings.

There is also a substantial piece, Artic Landscape, for wind band by Aagaard-Nilsen and we know from his brass compositions how stimulating/imaginative he can be. But to relax with, we have too a wind arrangement of the Norwegian folk-tune In Heaven- by no less a brass-band personality than Tom Brevik.

VERNON BRIGGS
continued from page 31

*Colors of the Wind* (Alan Menken/Paul Lavender, tr. Philip Sparke). Moderate. 3 minutes. This music is taken from the Walt Disney movie Pocahontas.

*Colors of the Wind* is a gentle pop ballad and a nice contrast to the high-powered pieces that are the "meat and potatoes" of a brass band concert. There are practically no technical demands, but some of the ranges get a bit high, so this is not a completely safe arrangement.

The first part of the piece features the flugelhorn, and on the repeat the solo cornet is featured. Both instruments have a short solo reprise at the end. All other melodies are doubled.

The tune will be familiar to the children who have seen the movie or heard the recording. They may want to sing along with the band. On the other hand, adult bands may want to play this type of music only on special occasions.

Gramercy Music

*Praeludium* (Peter Graham), 1996. Difficult. 3 1/2 minutes. By definition, a praeludium is an introductory piece, a prelude leading to a ceremony, or to another piece. In more recent years, the term has lost this specific meaning, but is used, as Peter Graham has, as a short, stand-alone piece. *Praeludium* is similar in duration and difficulty to his earlier *Prelude to a New Age*.

Peter Graham is one of the most significant brass band composers alive today. Any piece of his is worthy of consideration. Many NABBA members will remember the challenges and the ultimate rewards of his *Essence of Time*, the required test piece for the Championship Section of NABBA XIII (1995).

*Praeludium* is a 160 beats per minute allegro from the beginning until the ending. The solo cornets begin, unaccompanied, with a fifteen measure eighth note passage. The mallet percussion and repiano and soprano cornets then join the solo cornets on the same theme. A new, slightly more relaxed theme follows, pushed along by a strong snare drum beat. This section has several meter changes from 4/4 to 3/4 to 2/4 as it is developed.