

Chan 4544



CHANDOS
BRASS

Spanish Impressions

The Williams Fairey Band

James Gourlay
Bryan Hurdley



Spanish Impressions

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Martin Ellerby (b. 1957)

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Four Spanish Impressions*

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TT 67:39

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James Gourlay*

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Spanish Impressions

The music of Spain with its lively rhythms, distinctive melodies and exotic harmonies has influenced composers of many nationalities. Spain's folk music is mostly centred around vocal traditions and the dance, with instruments (largely wind, percussion and the familiar guitar) serving as an accompaniment to both. There is even a band tradition to be found in Catalonia where the *cobla* bands (comprising pipe and drum, shawms, trumpets, flugelhorn and double bass) accompany a popular circle-dance known as the *sardana*.

This disc contains musical impressions of Spain seen through the eyes (and heard through the ears) of French and English composers as well as the Spanish themselves.

Amparito Roca

Jaime Texidor, bandmaster of the Catalanian town of Baracaldo, was born in Barcelona in 1885 and died in Baracaldo in 1957. In this brief, lively piece Texidor uses the minor key and melodic inflexions which give a hint of the Moorish origins of much Spanish music.

Alborada del gracioso

Maurice Ravel was the son of a French father

and a Basque mother, and the sounds and colours of Spain permeate his music. This curiously titled piece (which may be translated as *The Jester's Morning Song*) originally formed part of his piano suite *Miroirs*. An orchestration followed and the work has become a popular orchestral show-piece. The music evokes the sound of the Spanish guitar as well as the court jester's caperings and his soulful song.

Maids of Cadiz

The French composer Léo Delibes is best known for his ballets *Coppélia* and *Sylvia* and the opera *Lakmé* but also wrote a number of songs, the best known being 'Maids of Cadiz'. This attractive piece, which seems to borrow its opening phrase from Bizet's *Carmen*, becomes an effective cornet solo at the hands of arranger Gordon Langford.

Ritual Fire Dance

Manuel de Falla's ballet *El amor brujo* (Love the Magician) tells the tale of a gypsy girl haunted by the ghost of her dead lover. The only way the spectre can be laid to rest is for a ritual to be performed. The music begins with eerie trills and an ostinato figure in the bass. A twisting

melody suggests the dancer's movements and, after a moment's stillness, the dance gathers momentum and ends in a wild frenzy.

A Carmen Fantasy

Despite its surprisingly unsuccessful premiere in 1875, Bizet's *Carmen* has become one of the best-loved and most-performed operas in the repertoire. The story of the alluring, flirtatious gypsy girl and her obsessive lover is brought to life by Bizet's richly colourful music which creates the sights and sounds of Seville in its use of Spanish-style melodies and dance-rhythms. Gordon Langford has selected some of the best-known melodies from the opera and arranged them to form a *pot pourri*.

Andalucia

Enrique Granados was one of the most important figures in Spanish music of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. A brilliant pianist, he founded his own academy and wrote much music based on Spanish subjects. His compositional style is elegant and distinctive as may be discerned in this delightful arrangement for flugelhorn by Howard Snell of one of his most popular melodies.

La boda de Luis Alonso

Jerónimo Giménez y Bellido was born in 1854, was a child prodigy on the violin, studied composition at the Paris Conservatoire

and became Director of the Teatro Apolo in Madrid where he mounted the first performance in Spain of Bizet's *Carmen*. His chief interest however was the *zarzuela* – a type of operetta very popular throughout Spain. Here James Gourlay has arranged music from the operetta *The Wedding of Luis Alonso*, one of Giménez's most popular *zarzuelas*.

Bonds of Friendship

In this bright march Texidor brings together a number of themes, one of them in the distinctive minor key which is a feature of so much Spanish music, and combines them skillfully to form a short piece full of life and colour.

Evocations

This work was written in 1996 for the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain during Martin Ellerby's tenure as composer-in-residence. There are four movements whose titles are derived from Spanish art and literature. The composer points out that he has not included any folk elements in his music, but rather has suggested the latter by melody, harmony and rhythm filtered through his own listening experience – the result being more that of 'an affectionate observer than a native correspondent'.

The first movement is entitled *Harlequin's Carnival* and takes its inspiration from a

painting by the surrealist Miró in which 'several disproportionate animal species engage in a capricious dance'. The music is intended to evoke the 'riotous playground of this extravagantly presented study.'

The second movement is inspired by Cervantes and deals with *The Death of Don Quixote*. A funeral cortège is envisaged and the reflective music provides 'glimpses of what was and what might have been'.

The third movement is entitled *Sueño* (Dream) from a gentle poem by Lorca and serves as a quiet interlude before the finale bursts upon us.

This last movement, *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, takes its title from Peter Schaffer's celebrated play about the Spanish conquest of Peru and the relationship between the conquistador Don Pizarro and the Inca king Atahualpa. Savage rhythms evoke the ritual dances of Spain and towards the end the players swap their brass instruments for percussion and chant over and over '*Inti-Inca*' before the movement is brought to a resounding conclusion.

Four Spanish Impressions

This work was specially composed for the Williams Fairey Band and is dedicated to James Gourlay and Léa Havas. As in the case of Martin Ellerby's *Evocations* no actual folk material is used but a Spanish atmosphere is

evoked by the use of characteristic phrases, harmonies and rhythms.

The piece was inspired by various visits its composer paid to Spain and the four movements bear the names of Spanish towns. The first is *Seville* and the music contains references to *flamenco* vocal and dance traditions. Dissonant fanfares suggest the savage spectacle of the bull-fight.

The second movement, *Xativa*, takes its title from a small town which lies to the North of Valencia. Here it is seen at *siesta* time, sleeping in the heat of the midday sun.

The third movement describes an evening in the Southern port of *Tarragona*. A gentle *habañera* floats to us on the warm air.

In the final movement, *Sant Iago di Compostella*, a procession of medieval pilgrims is imagined approaching the great cathedral of Saint James at dawn. We see the candle-lit interior of the cathedral where priests are singing their morning office. As the pilgrims assemble in the piazza outside the cathedral, the bells ring out and the piece concludes with a great hymn of praise in the light of the newly risen sun.

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After studying at the Royal College of Music **James Gourlay** was a member of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the BBC

Symphony Orchestra and is currently solo tuba in the Zurich Opera House. As a soloist and chamber music player he has performed all over the world, most notably as a member of the Philip Jones and English Brass Ensembles. Solo engagements have included first performances of works written for him by such composers as Gregson, Horowitz and Sparke. Since living in Switzerland James Gourlay has devoted much of his time to conducting and writing for brass band and is one of the most successful conductors on the Swiss brass-band scene.

Bryan Hurdley won a scholarship to the Birmingham School of Music where he gained distinction in teaching, performing and recital diplomas and was the winner of many prestigious performance prizes. A founder member of the English Tuba Consort he has travelled widely in Europe and the USA. In 1993 Bryan Hurdley was appointed Director of the Birmingham Conservatoire Brass Band and is currently tutor in lower brass at the University of Warwick. Over recent years he

has enjoyed an increasing reputation as one of the finest conductors of his generation and from 1989–1995 he was Musical Director of the Sun Life Band before taking up the position of Resident Conductor with the Williams Fairey Band.

Fifteen times British Open Champions, seven times winners of the title 'National Champion Band of Great Britain' and currently All England Masters and Brass in Concert Champions, **The Williams Fairey Band** is in constant demand for concerts both at home and abroad. In 1993 the Band were holders of both the National and British Open titles and in 1994 they were European Champions. Apart from its regular appearances throughout the British Isles the band makes regular trips abroad to countries such as Canada, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. Since its formation the Band has had an illustrious line-up of conductors: James Gourlay is currently Principal Conductor and Bryan Hurdley is Resident Conductor.

principal conductor
resident conductor
principal cornet
solo cornet

James Gourlay
Bryan Hurdley
Brian Taylor
Philip Chalk
Alan Hobbins
Gary Parker

soprano cornet

Alan Wycherley
Iwan Fox

repiano cornet
second cornet

Rob Westacott
Sean Conway
Mark Peacock

third cornet

James Leggat
Ray Peacock

flugel horn

Simon Stonehouse

solo horn

Sandy Smith

first horn

Simon Jones

second horn

Kevin Teers

solo euphonium
second euphonium
solo baritone
second baritone
first trombone
second trombone
bass trombone
E flat bass

David Welsh
Ian Yates
Keith Muggidge

B flat bass

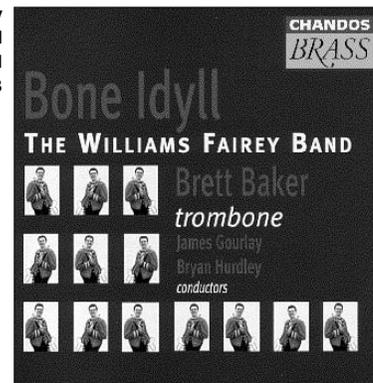
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Andy Gillooly
Jim Cant
Shaun Crowther
Geoff Harrop
Derek Jackson
Gareth Johnson
Jason Jones
Paul Lovatt-Cooper
Stuart Peacock
Rodney Newton
John Cresswell

percussion

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Music on this disc which is published by Chandos Music Ltd is available from Chandos Music Ltd, Chandos House, Commerce Way, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HQ

Producer Ralph Couzens

Sound engineer & editor Jonathan Cooper

Assistant engineer Richard Smoker

Recording venue Dewsbury Town Hall; 29–30 June 1996

Front cover Flamenco Dancer. Photo by Nick White (Daily Telegraph Colour Library, London)

Back cover Photo of the Williams Fairey Band by Tony Carter

Design Guy Lawrence

Booklet typeset by Michael White-Robinson

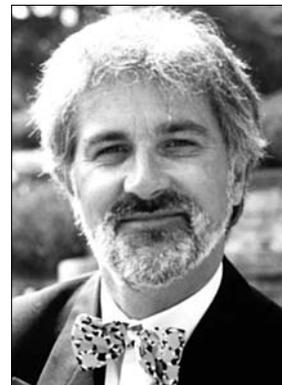
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James Gourlay



Bryan Hurdley

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