

SEMPRE LIBERA

DAVID THORNTON

BRIGHOUSE AND RASTRICK BAND
CONDUCTED BY PROF. DAVID KING

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| 1. Fantasy on 'Sempre Libera'* © Gramercy Music | Verdi arr. Peter Graham | 4.28 |
| 2. Symphonic Variants © Jensen Publications Inc. | James Curnow trs. Bryant | 18.05 |
| 3. Andante Spirato* M/s | Enzo De Rosa | 2.12 |
| 4-6. Blue Rider* © Kit Turnbull | Kit Turnbull | |
| i. Untitled (1910) | | 4.32 |
| ii. Several Circles (1926) | | 4.18 |
| iii. Composition VIII (1923) | | 6.09 |
| 7. Ephemeral* † © Hannah Drage | Hannah Drage | 4.23 |
| 8. Wonderful Words** © SP&S | Wilfred Heaton | 4.09 |
| 9. In Christ Alone © SP&S | Richard Phillips | 3.30 |
| 10. Fancy on a Bach Air © G Schirmer Inc. | John Corigliano | 4.57 |
| 11. Hummingbrdd © Gorilla Salad Productions/Steven Bryant | Steven Bryant | 3.15 |

Total CD Playing Time 60.25

* Première recording

† Featuring Le Yu, International Percussion Artist

** Featuring Derick Kane, Principal Euphonium, The International Staff Band

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DAVID THORNTON

BRIGHOUSE AND
RASTRICK BAND

CONDUCTED BY
PROF. DAVID KING

ALSO FEATURING
DERICK KANE
LE YU



Programme

During the 19th century the great instrumental virtuosi reigned supreme. Pianists Liszt and Thalberg and violinists Paganini and Sarasate amazed audiences with their wide-ranging technical and artistic abilities, fuelled by increasingly difficult paraphrases and variations on popular tunes of the day. Peter Graham's *Fantasy on 'Sempre Libera'* uses Verdi's aria from *La Traviata* and looks back with affection to this period as well as providing an opportunity for our present day virtuosi to show their wares to the world! This work also provides the inspiration behind this recording: virtuoso music, both lightening fast and beautifully tranquil, substantial and brief, a platter of euphonium delight performed by one of the world's finest exponents of the instrument.

Although James Curnow's iconic *Symphonic Variants* was written nearly 30 years ago, the piece still remains one of the core repertoire works and is quoted in *The Euphonium Source Book* (R. Winston Morris, Lloyd Bone, Eric Paull) as 'one of the most demanding works ever written for the instrument'. The explosive introduction and lyrical theme is followed by four extended variants. The American Bandmasters Association heralded the work in 1984 with its coveted Ostwald Award (now known as the Sousa/Ostwald Award) and it has gone on to be frequently performed by euphonium players all over the world. The brass band transcription was completed by John Bryant in 1990 at the request of Robin Taylor who recorded the work with Grimethorpe Colliery Band during the same year.

Italian virtuoso concert pianist and composer Enzo De Rosa studied in Naples. He has composed for numerous theatre productions and television shows and he now teaches at the Conservatory of Music in Benevento, Italy. *Andante Ispirato* has been especially reworked for this recording and comprises music taken from his tone poem for cello and piano, *Il Mercante di Venezia*.



Executive Producer: Trevor Caffull

Producer: Daniel Lock

Associate Producer: Kim Lofthouse

Engineers: Melissa Dee and Sam Grainger

Post-Production: Daniel Lock and Melissa Dee

Production Manager: Nicki Tonge

Project Co-ordinator: Neil Brownless

Artwork and Design: GK Graphic Design

Recorded by World of Sound on

14 and 15 September 2013 at Peel Hall, Manchester.

Brighouse and Rastrick Band

It is known that during the mid to late 19th century, amateur music making, in all its forms thrived in the industrial areas of the North of England. In 1881, out of this prospering culture, Brighouse and Rastrick Temperance Band was born.

Today, the band continues to make its mark on the new century, whilst maintaining its great traditions and continued quest for musical excellence. With over 130 years of proud history, the band is still fiercely financially independent and beholden to no one other than itself.

In addition to having a first class and formidable reputation for highly entertaining concerts of wide public appeal, Brighouse and Rastrick Band has many other notable triumphs to its credit in the highly competitive contesting field, including two World titles and two European titles. The band has been National Champion of Great Britain on nine occasions.

Amongst the general public Brighouse and Rastrick is perhaps most popularly known for its famous 1977 hit parade success *The Floral Dance* for which it won both Silver and Gold discs for massive record sales and tremendous national and international acclaim.

Very firm roots were re-established in the town of Brighouse in 1995 with the building of its own purpose-built headquarters, 'West Ridings'. In 2010 and 2011 the Band won the highly competitive Yorkshire Area Championship before being crowned Champion Band of Great Britain at the Royal Albert Hall in the same two years. So successful was 2011 that Brighouse and Rastrick was voted Band of the Year and Professional Conductor David King, Conductor of the Year, by the readers of the 4barsrest brass band website.

It is still true to say that no other public subscription band has held such high status for as long as Brighouse and Rastrick Band!

In 1911, the artist Wassily Kandinsky (along with the German painter Franz Marc), founded a society called 'Der Blaue Reiter' (Blue Rider). Named after one of Kandinsky's paintings, the aim of the society was to promote new ideas in the arts and 'destroy barriers between the different forms of art'. Kit Turnbull's *Blue Rider* is written in three, distinct movements, although some of the melodic and harmonic material is shared. Throughout, the work adheres to the concept of the euphonium soloist as the 'artist'. Each movement bears the title of one of Kandinsky's paintings: *Untitled (1910)*, *Several Circles (1926)* and *Composition VIII (1923)*.

Ephemeral for euphonium and marimba was written in 2013 by tenor horn soloist Hannah Drage. The music is inspired by the Swiss based 'Duo Synthesis' which consists of euphoniumist Thomas Reudi and percussionist Raphael Christen. The music begins with stillness, the arching melody intensifies before finally dying away with one simple note, giving the piece its title, *Ephemeral* – meaning 'short lived'. David is joined by award winning Chinese percussionist Le Yu for this recording.

Professor Edward Gregson wrote, 'Wilfred Heaton was a distinguished composer of immense importance during the last 50 years. He was undoubtedly one of the most original compositional voices to emerge in the creation of new repertoire for brass bands after the Second World War.' It could be said that there are two sides to Heaton's music: the substantial symphonic works such as his *Partita* and *Contest Music* and then a more conservative one, sometimes even witty and light in nature. First published in 1954 and based on Philip P. Bliss's *The Wonderful Words of Life*, the charming *Wonderful Words* certainly falls into the latter category. David's duet partner here is Derick Kane, long standing Principal Euphonium with The International Staff Band.

In Christ Alone is a modern hymn written in 2001 by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. It opens with the evocative words: *In Christ alone, my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song*. This majestic setting is by Richard Phillips, Bandmaster of Kettering Citadel Band.



Fancy on a Bach Air began in celebration and ended in memoriam. Robert Goldberg and his wife Judy, commissioned a multi-composer set of new 'Goldberg' variations, based on Bach's famous work, as a 25th wedding anniversary present to themselves. Tragedy struck and Robert succumbed to a sudden illness and passed away all too soon.

His wife's spirit and love led her to transform what might have been a requiem into a celebration of her husband's life, and Yo-Yo Ma along with Emanuel Ax premièred the complete set of variations preceded by the Bach theme in Boston where the Goldbergs live. On this recording we hear John Corigliano's contribution, originally for unaccompanied cello.

Corigliano writes, 'My Goldberg Variation, *Fancy on a Bach Air*, transforms the gentle arches of Bach's theme into slowly soaring arpeggios of almost unending phrase-lengths. Its dual inspiration was the love of two extraordinary people and the solo cello suites of a great composer – both of them strong, long-lined, passionate, eternal and, for me, definitive of all that is beautiful in life.'

The final work on the programme is Steven Bryant's virtuosic *Hummingbrdd*. The work was commissioned by American euphonium soloist Robert Benton and is an adaptation of Bryant's original vocal composition. This version of *Hummingbrdd* for solo Euphonium and pre-recorded backing track takes vocals that are all sung and recorded by the composer himself – he stresses there are no synthesizers, drum machines or samplers in use at all!

In 2002 David King was appointed Musical Director of the Massed Bands of the North West of England to perform in the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. He was also guest conductor at the World Expo, Switzerland 2002.

Regarded by his peers as a leading interpreter of wind music, Professor David King has commissioned, choreographed, directed and premièred award winning thematic projects for the concert platform working in collaboration with internationally acclaimed composers for the genre including Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen, Peter Graham, Philip Sparke, and Robin Dewhurst.

April 2009 saw Professor King take up the position of Professional Conductor with the world famous Brighouse and Rastrick Band, a relationship that has led to two consecutive National titles in 2010 and 2011.



Professor David King

Australian by birth, David King is regarded as one of the most dynamic figures in the world of brass today. With an enviable record of musical accomplishments and successes both as an instrumentalist and conductor he is at the forefront of music education.

David King studied trumpet and cornet at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and music education at Avondale College, NSW, where he studied with Alan Thrift, graduating in 1978.

In 1982 as Australian Cornet Champion he was awarded a scholarship to study music at Salford University College, Manchester, where he graduated with distinction in Performance in 1985.

In Britain David King pursued a distinguished career as a cornet soloist winning the title North of England Solo Champion on three occasions (1983/84/85) and remained unbeaten on Bb cornet at the British Open Solo Championships for five consecutive years (1987-91). He represented the United Kingdom in 1992 as British Open Solo Champion and won the prestigious title International Brass Musician of the Year in Auckland, New Zealand.

As a conductor Professor David King holds a prominent position in Europe and is revered as one of the most successful conductors on the concert and contest platform. He has represented England in the European Brass Band Championships on eleven occasions as a conductor and has won the title ten times, twice with Black Dyke Mills Band (1990/91) and eight times with Yorkshire Building Society Band (1996/97/1999-2004).



“David Thornton is that rare kind of musician - a true artist whose qualities transcend the instrument itself. The listener is carried out of normal music-making into the wide open spaces of real enjoyment.”

**Howard Snell, Conductor, former Principal Trumpet
of the London Symphony Orchestra**

“...David Thornton displayed all his wares with a sublime piece of euphonium work in the ‘Devil’s Duel’ which saw him dispense with all the musical challengers that tried to upstage him in battle throughout the piece – you would have had to kill him with a stake through the heart you suspected such was his brilliance, whilst someone may have to check that he hasn’t got cloven hooves instead of feet the next time he plays the piece like this. Not even old Beelzebub could better this one suspects.”

www.4barsrest.com, Brass Band Internet Magazine

“Thornton’s technique, to be frank, is superb but more than that, it is guided by a deep understanding and love for the music and for his instrument.....Lovers of fine brass playing will find much to enjoy here. If you have never heard the euphonium as a solo instrument before, Thornton will convince you as few others can.”

Music-Web International

“Thornton is now the third generation of players who have joined the ‘inner circle’ of my favourites.”

Joseph Horovitz, Composer

David Thornton

David Thornton is regarded as one of the foremost euphonium players and teachers of his generation and has gained a global reputation. His work as a soloist, conductor and educator is renowned throughout the brass playing world to have a distinct hallmark of extreme virtuosity, professionalism and he has an ability to connect with audiences like few others in his field.

His work within the brass band world has seen him at the top flight for already over a decade. He has held Solo Euphonium positions with Fairey Band (1997-2000) and Black Dyke Band (2000-2010) having won European, National and British Open titles during this time. David is currently the Solo Euphonium player with the world famous Brighouse and Rastrick Band.

Born in Nottingham in 1978, David began his euphonium lessons at just eight years old and only five years later became the first ever euphonium player to gain a place at Chetham's School of Music, one of the UK's most prestigious institutions for specialist musical education.

Since then his success has earned him many awards, such as scholarships from the Countess of Munster Trust and the Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe, a hat-trick of solo awards at the National Euphonium Conference 1995, 1997 and 1999, first prize at the Verso Il Millenio International Euphonium Competition, but most notably as the International Euphonium Player of the Year 2001.



David is constantly working to seek out new solo repertoire in as many different guises as possible. He has given world premières by composers such as Philip Wilby, Peter Meechan, Simon Dobson, Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen, Peter Graham, Phillip Venables, Kit Turnbull, Enzo de Rosa, Cai Isfryn and Lucy Pankhurst.

This is the third solo album released by David. His debut CD, *Three Worlds*, was awarded Solo CD of the Year for 2004 by the British Bandsman magazine. In May 2007 David released his second solo album, *Devil's Duel*. Furthermore, David features as a soloist on 25 different albums of band music, including *Epic Brass* and *Jubilee Brass* - live recordings of two concerts at the Royal Albert Hall.

David Thornton is a Sterling Musical Instruments performing artist and consultant and plays exclusively on the Sterling Virtuoso Euphonium.

www.euphoniumsoloist.co.uk
www.sterlingbrass.co.uk