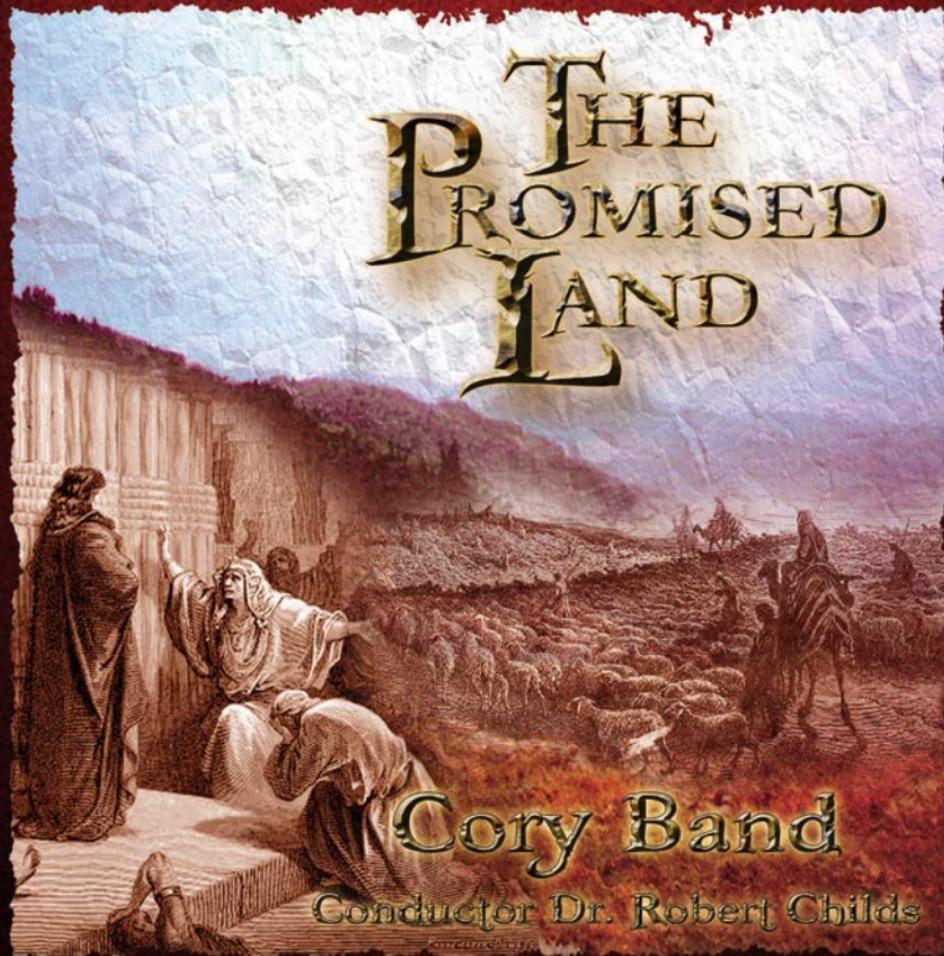


The Promised Land

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|--|----------------|-------|
| 1. The Promised Land ©SP&S Ltd. | Kenneth Downie | 16.13 |
| 2. Of Men and Mountains ©Novello & Co. Ltd. | Edward Gregson | 17.47 |
| 3-5. The Year of the Dragon ©Studio Music | Philip Sparke | 14.52 |
| 3. <i>I. Tocatta</i> | 3.15 | |
| 4. <i>II. Interlude</i> | 7.39 | |
| 5. <i>III. Finale</i> | 3.58 | |
| 6. Trittico for Brass Band ©Rosehill Music | James Curnow | 11.56 |
| 7. A Tear in the Fabric of Time ©Prima Vista Musikk | Gareth Wood | 11.41 |

DOY CD218



Introduction

The idea of cataloguing five substantial works on one compact disc is an extension of Cory Band's successful 'Classic' series of recordings. The disc aims to recreate the idea of a listenable varied programme of substantial Brass Band works, using living composers from the same era. Curnow, Gregson, Downie, Wood and Sparke were all born within eight years of each other and their maturity and experience in writing for the Brass Band idiom is clearly evident throughout this disc.

The repertoire featured here represents two World Première studio recordings and three of the five titles; *A Tear in the Fabric of Time*, *The Year of the Dragon* and *The Promised Land* were commissioned by the then Buy As You View (Cory) Band.

BAND PERSONNEL

Soprano Cornet	Flugel Horn	2nd Trombone
Michelle Ibbotson	Joanne Childs	Suzanne Hathaway
Principal Cornet	Solo Horn	Bass Trombone
Ian Williams	Owen Farr	Andrew Williams
Solo Cornet	1st Horn	Eb Bass
Christopher Turner	Lynne Turner	Gavin Saynor
Darren Thomas	2nd Horn	Austin Davies
John Southcombe	Lucy Rogers	Bb Bass
Shamus Gallagher	1st Baritone	Fraser Bish
Repiano Cornet	Susan Thomas	John Prosser
Richard Davies	2nd Baritone	Percussion
2nd Cornet	Geraint Chamberlain	Alun Horgan
Lisa Childs	Euphonium	Dave Danford
Phillip Harris	David Childs	Simon Brittlebank
3rd Cornet	Matthew Jenkins	Adam Davies
Laura Davies	Solo Trombone	Alun Hathaway
Travis Griffiths	Christopher Thomas	Graham Bradley

Executive Producer: Trevor Caffull

Producer: Keith Farrington Engineer: Richard Scott

Project Manager: Kevin J Coates MBE Cover Design & Artwork: GK Graphic Design

Recorded at Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Aberdare during October 2006

the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and have since performed in many of the world's finest concert venues including the Grieg Hall, Stravinsky Hall, the Royal Albert Hall and Birmingham's Symphony Hall. In 2003 they performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Last Night of the Welsh Proms and were more recently featured during the opening celebrations of the new Welsh Millennium Centre.

The Cory Band are recognised as one the Principality's finest and most innovative music ensembles. Their numerous CD recordings and live concert performances have received worldwide acclaim.

*For further information on the
Cory Band visit
www.coryband.com*



The Promised Land

Kenneth Downie

The Promised Land was commissioned by the then Buy As You View Band and first performed at the European Brass Band Championships in Belfast May 2006.

The story of Moses leading the Hebrews out of Egypt to find the Promised Land is one of the most dramatic to be found in the Bible. *The Promised Land*, although continuous is in seven main sections.

I. Exodus - The music begins in a spirited and lively way full of optimism. *II. Dreams and Nightmares* - exposing fragmentary and disturbing echoes of Parry's song *Myfanwy*. *III. Barren Land* - Although the Israelites were free they were living and travelling through the desert. This short variant is atmospheric and is a stark contrast to *IV. Miracles and Hell's Destruction* - probably the most tempestuous variant, played at high tempo initially portraying some of the miracles God empowered Moses to act. The music gradually builds via rhythmic discourse to dramatic conflict. After the excitement subsides the golden section of the piece is revealed; *V. The Land of Milk and Honey* - This variant epitomises love and everything that is good. Solos and love duets set an idyllic scene. *VI. Dawn of a New Age* - is a reprise of the opening section, capturing all of the initial drive and enthusiasm but now the fragments of *Bread of Heaven* are even stronger giving it an air of triumph. After a theatrical statement from the tuba the music solemnly processes to the celebratory arrival in *VII. The Promised Land*, the land to which every soul aspires to reach after negotiating the many challenges of life.

© Kenneth Downie

Of Men and Mountains

Edward Gregson

Of Men and Mountains was commissioned by the Netherlands Brass Band Championships for their 10th Anniversary Contest, which was held in Drachten in December 1990. The first British performance was given by the Britannia Building Society Band, conductor Howard Snell, at the Fifth Conference of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, held at the Royal Northern College of Music in July 1991.

The title of the work and its genesis came about as a result of a train journey which my wife and I made in July 1989 across Canada from Toronto to Vancouver. The awe-inspiring journey through the Rocky Mountains, with its high peaks and shafts of sunlight breaking through the clouds, with its canyons and ferocious rapids, made me understand a little more about the majesty of nature and the fragility of humanity. The eternal struggle between man and nature was personified in the building of this incredible railway, hence my title (after Blake).

The work is dedicated to the memory of Eric Ball who died shortly before I commenced writing it. I greatly admired the man and the music and I am sure he would have shared the feelings behind the inspiration for this work.

Of Men and Mountains is in one continuous movement and lasts about 17 minutes. Its form is difficult to describe because of its motivic and accumulative nature, but it is essentially a symphonic tone poem in search of a theme, which eventually comes in its final and complete state in the majestic ending after an ever-increasingly paced scherzo.

© Edward Gregson

following the appointment of Dr. Robert Childs as their Musical Director. During that millennium year they won both the British Open and the National Championships and made history in taking the British Open Shield home to Wales for the first time in the contest's 148-year history. This triumph was repeated in 2002 when the band won their second British Open title.

The Cory Band has also developed musically outside of the contest field. In 2001, together with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales they were appointed as resident ensemble to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and in the same year appointed Dr. John Pickard as their 'Composer in Residence'. John Pickard's tenure with the band ended in July 2005 when the band made history giving the première performance of his *Gaia Symphony* at the prestigious

Cheltenham International Festival. The *Symphony* was broadcast live on Radio 3, and lasting over an hour in duration, it is currently the largest scale original work in the repertoire.

The band is dedicated to new music, raising the profile of the brass band genre and keeping music alive in Wales. They have an active commissioning policy and have performed works by many of Britain's leading composers; John McCabe, Judith Bingham, Elgar Howarth, Edward Gregson, Alun Hoddinott, Karl Jenkins, Gareth Wood, David Bedford, as well as John Pickard to name but a few. The band's current 'Composer in Residence' is Welshman Gareth Wood. Since his appointment he has written *A Tear in the Fabric of Time*, *A Tenor Horn Concerto* and *Actaeon*.

In 2002 the band were selected to play for



CORY BAND

The Year of the Dragon

Philip Sparke

The Year of the Dragon was commissioned by the Cory Band with funds provided by the Welsh Arts Council. The work was performed by them in 1984 during their centenary celebrations. The first performance was in a concert held in St David's Hall Cardiff.

At the time I wrote *The Year of the Dragon*, Cory had won two successive National Finals and I set out to write a virtuoso piece to display the talents of this remarkable band to the full. The work is in three movements: *Toccata* opens with an arresting side drum figure and snatches of themes from various sections of the band, which try to develop until a broad and powerful theme from the middle of the band asserts itself. A central dance-like section soon gives way to the return of this theme, which subsides until faint echoes of the opening material fade to a close.

Interlude takes the form of a sad and languid solo for trombone. A chorale for the whole band introduces a brief spell of optimism but the trombone solo returns to close the movement quietly.

Finale is a real tour-de-force for the band with a stream of rapid semi-quavers running throughout the movement. The main theme is heroic and march-like but this is interspersed with lighter, more playful episodes. A distant fanfare to the sound of bells is introduced and this eventually returns to bring the work to a stirring close.

© Philip Sparke

Trittico for Brass Band

James Curnow

Trittico was commissioned by the Swiss Brass Band Association for the 1988 Swiss Brass Band Championship.

A tritico is a triptych or group of three paintings or musical compositions based on a common theme and presented or performed together. *Trittico for Brass Band* is a set of three extended variations on the American shaped-note hymn 'Consolation,' first published in a hymn collection entitled 'Southern Harmony' in the 1800s.

The American school of shaped-note solmization (also referred to as fasola) began in the late 17th century and flourished during the 18th century. It used only four of the six Guidonian syllables with the syllables, fa-so-la, being applied to C-D-E as well as to the identical progression, F-G-A, with mi being used for the seventh degree of the scale

The words usually associated with 'Consolation' are: *Once more, my soul, the rising day salutes thy waking eyes; Once more, my voice, thy tribute pay to Him that rules the skies.*

The work is in four sections; *Theme* and three continuous *variations*. The *Theme* is first presented in a rather dark and lugubrious setting that is closely related to its original setting. *Variation I* is a vibrant scherzo based on a somewhat minor version of the first few notes of the theme. *Variation II* is designed to allow the soloists of the band the opportunity to both display their lyrical and technical qualities. *Variation III* begins with reference to an ostinato which appears later as an accompaniment figure. This *variation* also includes an aleatoric section which leads to a majestic conclusion.

© James Curnow

Cory Band

The Cory Band hails from the Rhondda Valley in South Wales. They were formed in 1884 and originally bore the name 'Ton Temperance'. In 1895 Sir Clifford Cory, Chairman of Cory Brothers heard the band and offered to provide financial assistance for them resulting in the band's change of name to 'Cory'.

In 1920 the band gained championship status and three years later achieved the distinction of performing what is believed to have been the first radio broadcast by a brass band. A significant honour was bestowed on the band in 1976 when they were chosen to represent Wales and the Brass Band Movement on a tour of the USA as part of their bicentennial celebrations.

In 1998 Just Rentals, a locally based company, agreed to support the band, resulting in it being known as the 'Just Rentals' Cory Band. Just Rentals changed their name to Buy As You View to reflect developments in their business and with this the band became known as the 'Buy As You View' Cory Band and in 2004 Cory was removed from the band's name. However when the sponsorship package ended in March 2007 the Band was delighted to return to their traditional name Cory Band.

In 1980 the band became European Champions and in 1984, their centenary year, they won the third in a hat-trick of National titles at the Royal Albert Hall, London. The culmination of their contest successes came in 2000

was a boy. In a short space of time he revitalised brass banding in Wales by steering his new band to win the British Open Championship, the National Championship and runner-up at the European Championship in a single season.

In December, 2002, Robert was awarded the title 'Doctor of Musical Arts' from the University of Salford. Robert is also an Associate of the Royal College of Music, a Fellow of the London College of Music and gained a distinction in a Masters Degree from the University of Leeds. He holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Education from the Open University.



A Tear in the Fabric of Time

Gareth Wood

A Tear in the Fabric of Time is dedicated to Robert Childs and the Buy As You View Band. It was first performed by the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain in the summer of 2006 conducted by Robert Childs.

This is my first work for the Cory Band as their composer in residence. It was inspired by a book called *The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene, in which the most complex ideas in modern physics are put in a form which a layman may try to understand.

I have endeavoured to write a work that reflects my feelings on such a fascinating subject as the physics of the Universe, resulting in a virtual symphony for band.

A brassy, fanfare like introduction provides much of the material for the rest of the work. This leads into a dramatic *Allegro* driving forward with brittle motives and stabbing chords. A euphonium melody accompanied by divided basses attempts to mellow the mood, but is unsuccessful as the music drives ruthlessly on!

The centre of the work is a choral like *Adagio*; maybe the blackness of space or the darkness of human nature. A short episode leads into a *Presto* which is a reworking of the first *Allegro* relentlessly careering to a violent end!

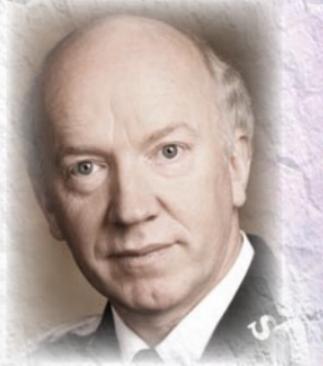
© Gareth Wood

KENNETH DOWNIE b. 1946

was born in Glasgow and educated at Greenock High School, the Royal Manchester College of Music and Durham University. In 2006 he successfully completed a Doctoral programme at The University of Salford, Manchester.

Many of his compositions have been recorded and broadcast on national radio, and are mainly for brass band or choir. In 1997 and 1999 his *Purcell Variations* and *Music for the Common Man* were chosen as First Section regional test pieces for the National Brass Band Championships. In 2001 his *St. Austell Suite* was the Third Section test piece.

In July 2001 he was appointed creative music consultant to The Salvation Army, working for three days each week in the Music Ministries Unit of the Evangelism Department. With his wife Patricia he established the music publishing company 'Kantaramusik' in 2001. Kenneth lives in Winchester with his wife Patricia, also a musician who teaches pianoforte and singing, and they are both active in The Salvation Army Church, Kenneth being Bandmaster and Patricia Songster Leader.



DR. ROBERT CHILDS

Music Director

Dr. Childs' status as a professional musician encompasses many fields of music making: He is Director of Brass Band Studies at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff, Founder and Director of Doyen Recordings Ltd, A Trustee and advisor to the Harry Mortimer Trust, Director of Prima Vista Musikk Publishing.

Robert is a tutor and council member to the National Youth Brass Bands of Wales and Great Britain. In July, 2002, Robert became Musical Director to the National Youth Brass Band of Wales.

Robert conducted and performed with the Yorkshire-based Black Dyke Band

for almost ten years and before that he played under Elgar Howarth with the Grimethorpe Colliery Band. He has also performed with many of the UK's leading orchestras and he regularly gives solo recitals in prestigious halls at home and abroad. He has performed in Carnegie Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, the Grieg Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Sydney Opera House. He frequently delivers master classes at Universities at home and abroad.

In May 2000, Robert was delighted to accept an invitation to become the Professional Musical Director of the Cory Band from the Rhondda in South Wales, thus re-uniting him with Wales and associating him with the band he has held in such high esteem since he

GARETH WOOD b. 1950

was born in Cilfynydd, Wales. He studied composition and the double bass at The Royal Academy of Music, joining the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 1972. Since then Gareth has toured extensively with the orchestra, appearing at all the world's major music festivals. He has also played for many of the world's greatest conductors.

He became Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic in 1991, a post he held for three years.

As a composer, he first came to the attention of the public in 1975 when his overture *Tombstone, Arizona* was performed at the Royal Albert Hall during the National Brass Band Festival. Many works for band followed and included test-pieces for the 1977 Butlins Youth Band Contest, the 1980 New Zealand Brass Band Championships and the 1992 European Championships.

Gareth wrote a fanfare for the 80th birthday of Yehudi Menuhin and has also written a violin concerto as a gift for Menuhin. Also two more bass concertos for Tim Gibbs, a trombone concerto for the NYBBW and a trumpet concerto for the Carmarthen Youth Band.



EDWARD GREGSON b. 1945

is one of Britain's most respected composers, whose music has been performed, broadcast and recorded worldwide. He studied composition (with Alan Bush) and piano at the Royal Academy of Music from 1963-7, winning five prizes for composition.

He received early success with his *Brass Quintet*, which was broadcast and recorded (by the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the Hallé Brass Consort). This was followed by many commissions from, amongst others, the English Chamber Orchestra and the York Festival.

Edward Gregson is Principal of the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, having previously held the position of Professor of Music at Goldsmiths College, University of London. He is an Honorary Professor of Music at the University of Manchester and in 1996 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music from the University of Sunderland (his city of birth). He is a Fellow of the Royal Northern College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music.



PHILIP SPARKE b. 1951

was born in London and studied composition, trumpet and piano at the Royal College of Music, where he gained an ARCM. It was at the College that his interest in bands arose. He played in the College wind orchestra and also formed a brass band among the students, writing several works for both ensembles.

Philip has written for Brass Band Championships in New Zealand, Switzerland, Holland, Australia and the United Kingdom, twice for the National Finals at the Albert Hall, and his test pieces are constantly in use wherever brass bands can be found.

His conducting and adjudicating activities have taken him to most European countries, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the USA. He runs his own publishing company, *Anglo Music Press*, which he formed in May 2000.

In September 2000 he was awarded the Iles Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians for his services to brass bands.



JAMES CURNOW b. 1943

was born in Port Huron, Michigan and raised in Royal Oak, Michigan. His formal training was received at Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan) and at Michigan State University (East Lansing, Michigan), where he was a euphonium student of Leonard Falcone, and a conducting student of Dr. Harry Begian. His studies in composition and arranging were with F. Maxwell Wood, James Gibb, Jere Hutchinson, and Irwin Fischer.

James has won several awards for band and has been commissioned to write over two hundred works for concert band, brass band, orchestra, choir and various vocal and instrumental ensembles. His published works now number well over four hundred.

