

Mark Nelson Tuba Recital

Program Notes

April 21, 2005 7:00 P.M.
Music Building Recital Hall
Pima Community College

Tuba Concerto (1976).....Edward Gregson (b. 1945)

The Gregson *Tuba Concerto* was commissioned by the Besses o' th' Barn Brass Band with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain. Since its premiere, hundreds of performances have been heard all over the world both with brass band and with piano accompaniment. It rivals the Vaughan Williams tuba concerto in popularity and has also been arranged for solo tuba and symphony orchestra as well as solo tuba and concert band. The three movements follow a typical pattern of fast-slow-fast and the other movements each have a quasi-cadenza. What stands out in all three movements are the lyrical qualities of the tuba solo and the interchanges between solo and accompaniment that compliment the tuba range and dexterity. There is even a quote from the Vaughan Williams tuba concerto in the first movement and several jazz-like chords and progressions in the third movement. It has been recorded several times with brass band including the Besses o' th' Barn Band with the late John Fletcher as the tuba soloist (Chandos chan4526).



Edward Gregson (born 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.

--biography from www.edwardgregson.com

Escapement for Solo Tuba (1980)*.....Ronald D. Hanson (b. 1945)

Escapement for Solo Tuba was written for Mark Nelson while he was an undergraduate at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. Dr. Nelson approached his then music theory instructor about writing a solo work for him for his last recital at PLNU. The composer wrote a

challenging unaccompanied solo completed a couple of months before the recital that features a recurring ascending melodic line, perhaps signaling that soon graduation would take place and escapement from college to further adventures would be possible. According to Dr. Hanson, it is not a solo for a player with weak knees! This performance is a tribute to a great teacher and composer on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the premiere.



Ronald Hanson has a BA in music from California Baptist University (1967), a Master of Music (1972) in Choral Conducting and a Doctor of Musical Arts (1976) in Music Theory and Composition (with a minor in the Radical Reformation) from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX. He was a graduate assistant in both choral activities and music theory at SWBTS, taught at Point Loma Nazarene University from 1977-89 (all music theory, electronic music, and Male Chorale), and most recently teaches at Miramar College as an adjunct in music (2002-present).

Être ou ne pas Être.....*Henri Tomasi (1901-1971)*

Être ou ne pas Être is one of the more interesting tuba in chamber music compositions as it features what amounts to a low brass symphony section of three trombones and a tuba. The solo can be played either by a tuba or bass trombone. The music features extensive muting by the trombones and is based in part on Hamlet’s soliloquy of the same title. The single movement work is brooding and contemplative with slow tempi and rubato playing. In 1971, a definitive recording with the trombone and tuba section of the Chicago Symphony was released as part of a LP disc of low brass symphonic excerpts. It has recently been re-released in CD format as *Chicago Symphony Trombone and Tuba Sections Plays Concert Works and Orchestral Excerpts* available at www.windsongpress.com.



Born in 1901, **Tomasi** received his initial musical training at the Marseilles Conservatory. Further instruction was obtained at the Paris Conservatory under Caussade, Vidal, d’Indy, and Gaubert. Tomasi was also fortunate to be numbered among the composition students of Dukas. Although remembered primarily as a composer, Tomasi attained early renown as a conductor, having been associated with such organizations as the Monte Carlo Opera, Radio-Paris, Casino de Vichy, and the Radio-Colonial. Many prestigious awards mark Tomasi’s dual career: the Halphen Prize in 1925, the Second Prix de Rome in 1927 (the same year he also won the prize in orchestral conducting from the

Paris Conservatory), the Prix des Beaux-Arts in 1929, the Grand Prix de la Musique Francaise in 1952, and in 1960, the Grand Prix Musical de la Ville de Paris.—biography from Jane Eschrich, *The Solo Compositions of Henri Tomasi for Double Reed Instruments*

Angels' Carillons (2004)*+.....Adriana Figueroa Mañas (b. 1967)

Angels' Carillons is Nelson's second commission for a tuba work from this talented composer from Argentina. Dr. Nelson premiered *Tango Images* for tuba and piano two years ago at a Pima recital and now has the honor and privilege of premiering this new work for tuba and marimba. It is a single movement work featuring some unusual effects such as imitating the wind by blowing air through the tuba and affecting the pitch up and down through changing the mouth aperture. The marimba has several virtuosic passages with four mallet playing while the tuba is featured primarily as a melodic instrument. Hints of tango rhythms and extensive syncopation make the unusual combination of tuba and marimba exotic and exciting.



Adriana Figueroa Mañas is flautist & singer-songwriter from Argentina, and graduated from the School of Music at the National University of Cuyo. As well as having played classically in various settings, including for the Symphonic Orchestra of Mendoza, she enjoys playing jazz, fusion and pop. In addition to the flute, she plays alto & soprano sax and piccolo. Her jazz band, "West Jazz Band" won the prize for the best band in Mendoza, and a woodwind ensemble that she was part of won first prize in the 1998 Antorchas Chamber Competition, playing a selection of her own compositions. She teaches music and flute at the English-German school, Konrad Lorenz, where she greatly enjoys working with children. She has recorded two albums of songs for children, including *Canciones para los inquietos*.

Dance of the Ocean Breeze.....Roger Kellaway (b. 1939)

Dance of the Ocean Breeze was originally called *Esque* and recorded by the Roger Kellaway cello quartet in the 1970s. It was re-written for the bass horn, horn, and piano specifically for Roger Bobo and Frøydis Lee Werke and premiered at the eleventh International Horn Workshop held in Los Angeles in 1979. It was later recorded on the *Prunes* LP (Crystal LP126) now only available on cassette as C-126. It has been re-released on the *Gravity is Light Today* CD recording (Crystal CD396). The melodies and ostinato piano part are easy to listen to and almost hypnotic alternating between 9/8, 12/8, and 15/8 time.



Roger Kellaway has been described as "a musical chameleon", and "the most awesome jazz pianist quite possibly anywhere on earth". His discography runs to more than two hundred albums. He's performed with everyone from Elvis to Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie to Yo-Yo Ma, Joni Mitchell to Henry Mancini, Maureen McGovern to Natalie Cole, Quincy Jones to Michael Tilson-Thomas.

Kellaway is not only a major pianist, he is a composer of protean ability, writing in the jazz, classical and popular music fields, and scoring for films and television. His acclaimed "Cello Quartet" albums for A&M (Piano/Cello/Bass/Marimba) described by some as "crossover", "chamber jazz", and by others as the beginning of

“New Age”, were the first of an eclectic array of projects in the ‘70’s, ‘80’s, and ‘90’s. Roger’s commissions include a ballet for George Balanchine and the New York City Ballet, orchestral pieces for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Symphony (soloist: Paquito D’Rivera), the New American Orchestra, and The N.Y POPS. He was Musical Director / Composer / Performer for several Carnegie Hall concerts honoring Stephane Grappelli. His commissions include “Nuages” written for and performed with Nadia Salerno-Sonnenberg; and “2 Moods of Blues”, written for and performed with Yo-Yo Ma. The latter composition led to a project as arranger/pianist for the acclaimed CD “Anything Goes” teaming Stephane Grappelli with Yo-Yo Ma. Also during this period Roger performed in Israel with Dizzy Gillespie and the Israel Philharmonic; recorded 2 CD’s with his famed two-piano partner, Dick Hyman; and world premiered “Songs of Ascent”, his Tuba Concerto commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta, conductor.

Kellaway was born in Waban Massachusetts, November 1, 1939. He fell in love with the piano at the age of 7 and began studying. By the time he was 12, and already listening equally to jazz and classical music, he decided that he wanted to spend his life in music. He attended Newton High School, at that time ranked the number 3 high school in the United States, studying college -level music theory and playing double bass and percussion in the school orchestra, performing works by Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach. (Meanwhile, he was playing bass in an extracurricular jazz band). From high school, he went on to the New England Conservatory where he studied piano, double bass, and composition.

After two years at the conservatory he left to go on the road, playing bass. After two more, he settled in New York City and began freelancing on piano. By the age of 22, he was one of the busiest and most highly respected pianists in New York, playing record dates, jazz clubs, and working with singers such as Lena Horne.

In the mid ‘60’s Kellaway moved to Los Angeles to continue doing studio work, which soon included playing on, and then writing film scores. He became musical director for Bobby Darin, and in 1968 arranged and conducted Darin’s album of songs from the film “Dr. Doolittle”. Writing songs and arrangements for wonderful singers is a passion that sometimes expands into producing, as was the case for the Carmen McRae album, “I Am Music”. The relationship had started with Roger’s song “I Have The Feeling I’ve Been Here Before”, written especially for her, with a lyric by the great Marilyn and Alan Bergman. Kellaway has also had a long association with the brilliant lyricist Gene Lees, and more recently with K. Lawrence Dunham, and singer songwriter Amanda McBroom.

Kellaway’s most prized television credit is, “Remembering You”, the closing theme for “All in the Family”. Composed in 1970, it is still being heard on TV around the world. He has also been honored with a Grammy award for his music on the album “Memos From Paradise” for Eddie Daniels. In 1999 Roger was commissioned to compose the music for London’s West End production of “Lenny” starring Eddie Izzard and directed by Sir Peter Hall. He has written twenty-five film scores including Barbara Streisand’s “A Star is Born” for which he received an Academy Award nomination. For the past several years he worked with Kevin Spacey as consultant/musical director in preparation for the upcoming film “Beyond The Sea” based on the life of Bobby Darin, He’s also working again with Marilyn & Alan Bergman on “We The People”, a multi-media project for renowned “Americana” photographer/producer Joseph Sohm.

Roger recently founded his own CD label, Kellaway LightWorks in order to produce new talent & his own eclectic library. He has recorded numerous new CD’s for K LW & others. Meanwhile he continues performing in concerts across the U.S., Europe and the Orient; writing

for film, theatrical productions, songs, arrangements and commissioned works. He resides in Ojai California with his wife (of 38 years) Jorjana.
--from www.rogerkellaway.com

Sonata for Tuba and Piano (1980).....Thom Ritter George (b. 1942)

Thom Ritter George's *Sonata for Tuba and Piano* (CN 307 1980) was composed from March 19, 1980 to June 26, 1980 in Quincy, Illinois. The Sonata is part of the composer's longtime project of writing a solo sonata for every orchestral instrument. The work was written for Daniel Perantoni, an outstanding tuba artist and Thom Ritter George's friend since their student days in the early 1960s at the Eastman School of Music.

The actual pre-composition process for this *Sonata* and others in Dr. George's sonata series stressed two important factors: (1) the formal design was planned first and before looking for specific musical content; and, (2) the musical personality of the solo instrument was studied very carefully so that its resources could be evaluated for musical potential. Let us look at these two factors more carefully.

Most skilled musicians realize that the individual movements of a multi-movement piece should have common elements which bind the piece together. At the same time, the very nature of these movements should provide contrast within the composition. It makes sense to plan the general outlines of the whole composition before looking for specific notes, themes, harmonies, and rhythms. This assumes that the composer views composition as a structure, much like building a house. Of course, other composers search for specific musical materials first, then they try to see how these ideas are best organized for satisfactory musical results. In both cases, composers are trying to bring the musical form and the musical content into the best relationship for the piece at hand.

Thom Ritter George most often uses the first of these methods, outlining the form, choosing the number, tempo, and mood of individual movements. Important key relationships are chosen at this point since they have a powerful effect in the musical outcome. After this groundwork has been established, the composer begins his search for musical ideas which hold the best potential for carrying out the plan.

Dr. George has always found the creation of musical ideas to be the easiest part of the work. Many themes and motives are commonly invented before settling on the most suitable for a specific formal section. It is most important to devise ideas which have the capability of development, ideas which can display more than one personality. For example, sketches for the first movement of the *Sonata for Tuba and Piano* show some forty measures of thematic material which was worked out and finally rejected in favor of the music which forms the finished version of the first movement. None of the music in the initial sketches seemed to have the right development potential, exactly the right focus and forward drive to implement the overall plan which had been invented in the pre-composition stage.

Evaluating the particular characteristics of the tuba was the other necessary pre-composition task. One role of the instrument is its historic one, that of a slow moving, fatherly musical personality in the orchestra and band. It is a personality of considerable authority, and it is probably the predominating personality envisioned by Hindemith in writing his famous tuba sonata. But given recent improvements in the instrument and especially the dramatic advances in playing the tuba, this view is limited. In the hands of a fine artist, the tuba can have

considerable agility, a sense of humor, and a good expressive range. The natural tone production of the instrument is somewhat diffuse in character, and this should be taken into account by any composer writing for the tuba. Also, if a composer is to make a real contribution to the repertoire, he should provide new ways of looking at the instrument through the music he composes for it.

The first movement (*Vivace e con brio*) employs the more agile aspects of the tuba's musical resources. Here we find extensive use of leaps with the piano commenting on the boisterous motives of the solo part. The music is cast in sonata-allegro form, each theme and section being brief in duration. Dr. George chooses to de-emphasize the weight of the first movement in relation to the others. Unlike composers of the Classical and Romantic schools, he prefers to shift the emotional and musical weight of the music to later points in multi-movement works. He feels this gives better balance to the work as a whole. The ending of the first movement gives the feeling that "more is to come," rather than "here we are at a great moment in the composition."

The second movement (*Vivace assai*) is a quick moving scherzo, probably a distant descendant of the composer's scherzo in his *Quintet No 1 for Brass Instruments* written in 1965. In the *Sonata for Tuba and Piano*, the scherzo is written in A-B-A-B-A structure, a form beloved by Beethoven and used by him in many of his important compositions. Here the music is playful in nature. The piano's characteristic motive is a forte eighth note followed by two piano eighth notes. The tuba has somewhat different music, again using leaps and playing longer phrases. The "B" sections (trios) seem quite sustained in contrast, but the forward motion is always continued. Each return of the "A" and "B" sections is written out since each return is shortened from the previously heard version.

The title of the third movement is *Ballad: Mesto*. The theme itself is an old American folk song known as *Brave Wolfe*, of which the first stanza reads:

Bad news has come to town, bad news is carried,
Some say my love is dead, some say he's married.
As I was a-pondering on this, I took to weeping,
They stole my love away while I was sleeping.

The modal, melancholy nature of the theme is attractive in its own right and makes a striking contrast to the animated themes of the other movements. The composer is partial to muting brass instruments in lyric movements to provide a change in tone color for these moments. The theme itself provides constant and fluid shifts between $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$ meter as each line of the text is sung. This feature is retained in the Sonata, and this movement is the expressive center of the work. The mood is further enhanced by use of A-flat as the tonal center for this Aeolian mode melody. A-flat stands in a minor subdominant relationship to the outer movements. There is an individual color to this key (seven flats) which is unlike others using "white key" notes. This slow movement is in variation form with all the variations being quiet and lyric in character.

The Sonata ends with a fast dance (*Ben ritmato*) similar in nature to other finales from brass instruments found in Dr. George's works. Since many different meters are used ($\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{7}{8}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, $3+3+2/8$, etc.), the composer has not written any specific meter signature. Instead, the music is organized by measure lines for the convenience of the players who are asked simply to play the notes and rhythms they find in each measure.

This final movement is organized in sonata-allegro form, but the first and second themes appear in reverse order during the recapitulation. Interestingly, both the first and second themes are fast and hard-driving. Here, the piano asserts itself more strongly than in the other

movements and has more direct interplay with the musical ideas forwarded by the tuba.

Particular attention has been given to the Coda. It follows closely on the heels of the recapitulation and shorted first theme, rounding off the finale but also providing a brilliant conclusion for the Sonata as a whole.

--from <http://www.isu.edu/~georthom/>



Thom Ritter George was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan where he showed an early interest in composition at the age of 10. He was awarded Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees in composition from the Eastman School of Music, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Catholic University of America. He has written over 350 works from simple songs to large symphonic compositions. From 1966 to 1970, Dr. George served as composer-arranger for the United States Navy Band (Washington, D.C.). During the period 1970 – 1983, he was Music Director and Conductor of the Quincy Symphony Orchestra (Quincy, Illinois). In August 1983, Dr. George was named Music Director and Conductor of the Idaho State Civic Symphony and Professor of Music at Idaho State University.

The Performers



Mark Nelson is an accomplished performer on tuba, bass trombone, and string bass. He has played in several professional symphony orchestras and has given solo tuba recitals at many regional, national, and international conferences. Locally, he recently performed solos with the Arizona Symphonic Winds, Sonoran Winds, Cochise College Band, Catalina Chamber Orchestra, and the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra. In June 2005, he will be a featured soloist with the Las Vegas Brass Band and a recitalist at the Southwest Tuba Euphonium Festival.

In addition to substituting on string bass and bass trombone with Big Band Express, he also is a regular tubist with the Arizona Symphonic Winds, plays with the Southwest Brass Quintet in the Phoenix area, and occasionally plays string bass with the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra. He has premiered over two-dozen new works for tuba and has numerous tuba/euphonium ensemble arrangements, articles, a book, and nearly 200 music reviews published. He has recorded two CDs of original tuba music written for him that have received worldwide attention. On the editorial staff of *I.T.E.A. Journal* since 1985, he currently serves as Editor of New Materials. He is also one of the principal editors of the *Tuba Source Book*. Mark Nelson holds the B.A. from Point Loma Nazarene University; the Licentiate Performer's Diploma from Trinity College of Music, London; the M.M. and D.M.A. degrees from Arizona State University; and the M.Ed. in Education Administration from the University of Vermont. His principal tuba instructors have included Barton Cummings, Roger Bobo, Raymond Nutaitis, Charles Hansen, and Daniel Perantoni. Dr. Nelson is currently Chair of Performing Arts and Director of Bands at Pima Community College where he also teaches courses in electronic

music, theory, and appreciation. Previous academic appointments include Professor of Music at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois and Associate Professor of Music and Director of Bands at the University of Vermont where he was also Principal Tuba of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra.

Marie Sierra is a professional pianist who accompanies and records extensively. Her most recent recordings include *Seasons* and *An American Patchwork*, both with Yamaha Artist, saxophonist Michael Hester. Marie is in demand as an accompanist throughout the United States and Mexico. She has performed at numerous conferences, including the 1997 ITEC in Riva del Garda, Italy, the 2002 ITEC Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina and the 2003 Regional ITEC Conference at the University of Arizona. Marie has served on the faculties of the Belmont University in Nashville, and the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University. Mrs. Sierra earned her Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Piano Performance at the University of Miami.



Homero Ceron, Principal Percussionist of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, is a multi-talented musician who has been involved with music since age 6. Born in Monterrey, Mexico, he has played professionally since age 12. His undergraduate study was at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and he earned a Master of Music degree at the University of Arizona. He has been a percussionist with the Tucson Symphony since 1979 and continues to play a major role in the Symphony's education programs as leader of the Percussion Quartet and performing with the Brass Quintet.

Mr. Ceron has also performed with Arizona Opera, Arizona Dance Theater, Ballet Arizona, the Phoenix Symphony, St. Paul Chamber

Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, Tucson Pops Orchestra, Arizona Symphonic Winds and the Pima College Wind Ensemble among others. In addition to performing with these ensembles, he has also soloed with several including the Tucson Symphony, Tucson Pops, Arizona Symphonic Winds, and the Pima Community College Wind Ensemble. He has been a performing artist with Young Audiences of Southern Arizona and for the Wolf Trap Institute's Young Childhood Education. He is also a Yamaha Performing Artist. In addition to being a performing artist, he is the leader of Cool Breeze, a group active in the field of popular and jazz music that tours Arizona and Mexico. In 1999, Ceron was the recipient of the Arizona Arts Award.

Homero Ceron is also a prominent music educator in Tucson. He is the percussion instructor at Pima Community College and has been a guest lecturer at the School of Music at the University of Arizona. Since 2002, he leads the TSWA Marimba Band, a traditional Mexican marimba ensemble comprised of young students ages 7 to 14.



Michael Becker is currently the Principal Trombonist of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. Before joining the TSO in 2000, he has held positions with the orchestras of Savannah and Honolulu. As an active tenor and bass trombonist, he has performed concerts all over the US and abroad, including performances with the London Symphony Orchestra, and the World Orchestra, an all-star orchestra created by the late Sir Georg Solti. Mr. Becker also has a strong association with the Chicago and Detroit symphony orchestras. He continues to perform, tour, and record extensively with these orchestras. In the summer, Mr. Becker appears at the Grand Teton Music Festival in Jackson, Wyoming. A native of Chicago, he is also an active performer of solo and chamber music. In his spare time, he enjoys tennis and hiking.



Steven Gamble is Second Trombonist of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. He has been instructor of trombone at Elmhurst (IL) College, Mesa (AZ) Community College, and the University of New Mexico. Mr. Gamble's varied professional career includes ten years as a member of Chicago Chamber Brass and he is at present a member of the brass quintet Heavy Metal. His activities as clinician and performer have included guest appearances at many prestigious musical gatherings, such as the Mid-west Band and Orchestra Clinic, the International Brass Congress, as well as the conventions of the music educators of New York, Texas, and Florida. Mr. Gamble is founder of the Tucson Trombone Troupe, a summer program for young trombonists.



Ryan Williams has most recently been offered a position with the Air Force Band of the Golden West and will begin duties with the band in early September. In addition, he is currently pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Arizona State University and plans to defend his thesis late this year. While at Arizona State University, he has served as a teaching assistant and has been the recipient of the Friends of Music Scholarship. An active performer and freelancer, Mr. Williams has played with the Tucson Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony, the Monterrey (Mexico) Symphony, the Orchestra at Temple Square, and the Utah Symphony. He has also performed at numerous world jazz festivals including the Montreux Jazz Festival, the North Sea Jazz Festival, and the Antieb Jazz Festival. Mr. Williams lives in Tucson with his wife and their two children.



Hornist **Victor Valenzuela** is Third Horn for the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and adjunct instructor of trumpet and horn at Pima Community College. He has played with several other orchestras including Phoenix, Flagstaff, Santa Fe, and others. His undergraduate degree is from New Mexico State University at Las Cruces. His masters degree in horn performance is from Northwestern University where he studied with Dale Clevenger.

*written for Mark Nelson

+World Premiere