A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND BRIEF ANALYSIS OF
THREE CHAMBER WORKS FOR WIND BAND

A CREATIVE PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF MUSIC

BY
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MUNCIE, IN
MAY 2013
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INTRODUCTION

Many composers have created wind chamber ensemble compositions across several centuries. *Canzon duodecimi toni* by Giovanni Gabrieli, *Overture for Winds, Op. 24* by Felix Mendelssohn, and *Serenade for Winds, Op. 7* by Richard Strauss have become staples of the wind literature. This study consists of three chapters that each present a different work. Each chapter includes historical details, and theoretical aspects about the work, and biographical information about each composer.
CHAPTER 1

*Canzon duodecimi toni* by Giovanni Gabrieli

Giovanni Gabrieli was born in Venice, Italy, in 1557 and was instructed in music by his uncle, Andrea Gabrieli. Gabrieli succeeded his uncle as the music director at St. Mark’s Basilica in 1585, where he was organist and teacher, and was responsible for the creation of music for the liturgy, political occasions, and vocal/instrumental chamber ensembles. Gabrieli was widely regarded as the leading composer of the Venetian School and was known as the “father of orchestration” because of his ability to compose and arrange for instruments.

Tone color, rhythm, and texture are important aspects of Gabrieli’s antiphonal style. His works are dominated by contrast in many musical aspects, including space, range of voices, dynamics, tutti, and separate choirs.¹ He created particular antiphonal placements and combined varying instrumental timbres to highlight the contrast of tonal colors. Gabrieli created his musical language by relying on rhythmic emphasis and an alternation between homophonic and polyphonic textures.²

Based on Gabrieli’s contributions, instrumental music was brought to a position of importance in the sixteenth century. He was a pioneer in the field of antiphonal music, was the first to assign specific instrumentation in a musical score,

and the first to write for more than eight parts.\(^3\) Gabrieli introduced polyphonic technique to instrumental writing for alternating choirs, changing it to a block-harmony style. Choruses were arranged on opposite sides of the sanctuary for antiphonal effects as a result of the influence by the antiphonal experiments of his predecessor, Adrian Willaert, and the architectural design of St. Mark’s Cathedral. The canzon, one of the earliest forms of instrumental music, was developed through Gabrieli.

Gabrieli’s *Sacrae Symphoniae* (1597), a collection of compositions, led to the popularity of large-scale instrumental music in the early part of the seventeenth century.\(^4\) *Canzon duodecimi toni* (1597) was first published in this collection, which was one of the first publications containing music specifically scored for brass instruments. It contained sixteen instrumental works with ten written for “double choir” and three for three groups of instruments. Of the fourteen canzoni included, five are written for eight voices, six for ten, two for twelve, and one for fifteen. *Canzon duodecimi toni* is the only work in the collection that is scored for antiphonal brass alone and is the oldest brass antiphonal work having precise instrumental specifications. The composition was written for eight cornetti, two sackbuts, and an organ; the instruments separated into two choirs. It is an example of the polychoral style of sixteenth-century Europe.\(^5\)

\(^3\) Kenton, *Life and Works of Giovanni Gabrieli*, 471.
The composition is in a free-sectional form and contains seven distinct chain canzonas (A B C D E F G) (Example 1A). There are four solo-choir sections with five tutti passages (Example 1B) that begin with a strong statement of the canzona rhythm (Appendix A-Example 1). There are frequent occurrences of contrapuntal imitation in the cornetti lines of each chorus, creating an echo effect throughout the composition (Appendix A-Example 2). The brass instruments in each chorus enter alternately throughout, causing the phrases to alternate in one-count intervals. Dotted eighth notes and quarter notes continued in the inner voices provide rhythmic emphasis, and the trombones in each chorus provide structure by maintaining a sustained bass line in octaves. This combination of contrasting rhythmic figurations illustrates the essence of Gabrieli’s genius for instrumental writing.⁶

**Example 1A:** Giovanni Gabrieli, *Canzon duodecimi toni.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canzona Sections</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 1B**: Giovanni Gabrieli, *Canzon duodecimi toni*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solo Choir &amp; Tutti Sections</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutti 1</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo 1</td>
<td>6-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutti 2</td>
<td>10-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo 2</td>
<td>15-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutti 3</td>
<td>22-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo 3</td>
<td>29-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutti 4</td>
<td>40-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo 4</td>
<td>49-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutti 5</td>
<td>66-76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 2

*Overture for Winds, Op. 24* by Felix Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn was born into one of Germany’s most cultured nineteenth-century families in Hamburg, Germany, on February 3, 1809. He was the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn, a famous Jewish philosopher, and son of Abraham Mendelssohn, a prosperous banker of the time. In only thirty-eight years of life, he became a vital musical figure of the early Romantic era through his numerous compositions. Mendelssohn’s musical models included early Romantic composers of the day, particularly Carl Maria von Weber, and eighteenth-century composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig van Beethoven.7

Mendelssohn enjoyed a successful career as a composer, performer, and conductor. He began as a concert pianist at the age of nine, and soon became known for his performing ability on the piano and organ. As a performer, he popularized Bach’s organ music and created organ compositions, which are the cornerstone of the post-Baroque repertory for the instrument.8 Mendelssohn began composing at the age of ten under the tutelage of Karl Friedrich Zelter, a

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German composer and music teacher. By the following year, his compositions were being performed frequently throughout Germany.

Mendelssohn was a prolific composer who created music for almost every performing medium, including music for piano, organ, and string quartets. His popular concertos include Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 25; Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 40; and Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E Minor, Op. 64. Two of his most familiar concert overtures are Overture to a Midsummer Night’s Dream, Op. 21 and The Hebrides (Fingal’s Cave), with popular oratorios including St. Paul and Elijah. He completed eleven works for solo instrument and orchestra, composed 135 songs, and was involved in the string quartet genre consistently throughout his life.

Mendelssohn also had a career as a conductor. He frequently utilized a baton and conducted without a score, which were both novelties during his time.9 He conducted the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, which became Germany’s leading orchestra and one of the most influential musical institutions of Europe. Under the guidance of Mendelssohn, the orchestra became one of the early nineteenth century’s clearest models for the modern professional symphony orchestra.10 As a conductor, he exercised a higher degree of control over the ensemble than previous conductors, oversaw the direction of rehearsals, and worked toward insuring better pay for the orchestra musicians. One of the conductor’s crowning

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achievements was the 1829 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. This performance not only brought public attention to the work, but also aroused acknowledgement of the works of J.S. Bach, which works were largely ignored at the time.\(^\text{11}\)

*Overture for Winds, Op. 24*, is a prime example of Romantic-era music, which is unrestrained, highly emotional, and subjective. Romantic composers reacted against the rationalism of Classical art, which emphasized order and restraint. Their musical response influenced form, of which composers freely expanded established settings. They created three important new forms, including the character piece for piano, the art song, and the symphonic poem for orchestra.\(^\text{12}\)

The Romantic movement created new harmonic and rhythmic compositional techniques. Rhythmic techniques were expanded through cross-rhythms and syncopations, while altered seventh, ninth, and other chord progressions broadened the harmonic language. Modulation came to be used as an effect rather than a means to an end. Chromaticism was used more frequently and gradually resulted in the disintegration of the major-minor tonal system.\(^\text{13}\)

The movement furthered the development of the *Harmoniemusik* ensemble, which consisted of pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns. In Mendelssohn’s *Overture for Winds*, the wind octet expanded to include a flute, English basshorn, and trumpet. In most instances, the term “overture” is defined as an instrumental


\(^\text{12}\) Garofalo, *Guides to Band Masterworks*, 56.

work that is composed as an introduction to opera, oratorio, or a stage play, but Mendelssohn used the form as a title for an independent instrumental composition.

Mendelssohn acquired his inspiration for *Overture for Winds* while on his vacation at the resort of Bad Doberan. The composer listened to daily concerts of the resident wind band and felt compelled to compose a work for the group. Scored for eleven instruments, Mendelssohn created his first wind composition in 1824 at the age of fifteen and titled it *Nocturno*. The original instrumentation consisted of one flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, one trumpet, and one English bass horn. The work belongs within a sequence in which he was exploring and developing his skills in writing for wind instruments.¹⁴

The original score and parts of the 1824 version were lost, but the work was recopied in 1826. The new version was published by Simrock and entitled *Ouverture fur Harmoniemusik, Op. 24*. The composition is in sonata-allegro form and consists of an introduction, exposition, development, recapitulation, and a coda. There are four main themes within the work, which can be found in Appendix B.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Themematic Material</th>
<th>Key Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-67</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Themes 1 and 2</td>
<td>C Major &amp; G Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68-112</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>Theme 3 and 4</td>
<td>C Major &amp; G Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113-149</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>G Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-192</td>
<td>Recapitulation</td>
<td>Themes 1 and 2</td>
<td>C Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193-226</td>
<td>Coda</td>
<td></td>
<td>C Major, G7, &amp; C7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1838, Wilhelm Wieprecht’s appointment of Director-General of the Prussian Guards Bands brought demand for new repertoire, which led Mendelssohn to revise his composition. He created a new version for twenty-three winds and percussion (snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, and triangle). The original instrumentation included one piccolo, one flute, two clarinets in F, two clarinets in C, two oboes, 2 basset-horns in F, two bassoons, one contrabassoon, one basshorn, two horns in C, two horns in F, two trumpets in C, one alto trombone, one tenor trombone, one bass trombone, one side drum, one bass drum, triangle, and a cymbal. Mendelssohn’s re-orchestration reflected rapid changes occurring in the instrumentation and size of wind bands in Germany during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\) Garofalo, *Guides to Band Masterworks,* 10.
By the end of the century, large wind bands with mixed woodwind, brass, and percussion instrumentation emerged and established the foundation of the modern concert band. Over time, Wieprecht rearranged the work for a larger band. He was one of the first reformers who attempted to systematize the wind band. The full score to *Overture for Winds, Op. 24*, was not published until 1852, five years after Mendelssohn’s death.

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CHAPTER 3

Serenade in Eb, Op. 7 by Richard Strauss

Richard Strauss was born on June 11, 1864, in Munich, Germany. He began composing at the age of six, creating simple songs, piano pieces, and movements for chamber groups. His first two compositions, Schneider Polka (Tailor’s Polka) and Weihnachtslied (Christmas Song), were for piano. In 1875, Strauss began music theory studies with Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer, an assistant conductor at the Munich Court Opera. Serenade for Orchestra, Strauss’ first orchestrated work, was dedicated to Meyer in 1877. Strauss’ influences included Ludwig van Beethoven, Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Jean-Baptiste Lully, François Couperin, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Richard Wagner was a musical model for Strauss.\(^\text{17}\)

Strauss wrote for a variety of performing mediums and musical genres. He created works for winds, choirs, orchestras, operas, and chamber groups, but composed only four chamber wind compositions. His most familiar works include Serenade in Eb, Op.7; Suite, Op. 4; Sonatina No. 1 in F – From an Invalid’s Workshop; and Sonatina No. 2 in Eb – The Happy Workshop. The Serenade and Suite are viewed as keystones in Strauss’ career as a composer.\(^\text{18}\) His instrumental music repertoire accounts for over one-third of his compositional output and includes symphonies, concert overtures, orchestral pieces, concerted works (for horn, violin, cello, and trombone), and chamber music.\(^\text{19}\)

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clarinet, piano), solo sonatas (for violin, cello, horn), pieces for many of the
standard chamber ensembles, and a large body of piano music.

Strauss composed numerous tone poems and found an original voice in this
genre. These works mark the beginning of an interest in poetic music that would
dominate his output until the final decade of his life.¹⁹ Between 1889 and 1915,
Strauss composed Macbeth, Don Juan, Tod und Verklärung, Till Eulenspiegel, Also
sprach Zarathustra, Don Quixote, Ein Heldenleben, Symphonia domestica, and
Eine Alpensinfonie.

In addition to his career as a composer, Strauss was also a conductor. He
made his conducting debut with the Meiningen (Germany) Orchestra at the Munich
Odeon on November 18, performing the Suite in Bb Major, Op. 4. Early in his
conducting career, his gestures lacked sophistication, prompting his father to offer
suggestions for improvement. Franz Strauss stated that a conductor’s left hand had
no other function but to turn pages and that it should be motionless when
conducting from memory.²⁰ Strauss used a long, thin, tapered baton and believed
that shorter movements of the arm ensured the players’ complete attention. He
emphasized the need for the conductor to prepare the music with a decisive upbeat
from the wrist, followed by an “extremely precise” downbeat.²¹

Serenade in Eb for Thirteen Wind Instruments, Op. 7, was composed in 1881
and first performed on November 27, 1882, in Dresden, Germany. It began to

²⁰ Ibid, 267.
²¹ Ibid, 267.
attract attention when it became Strauss’ first composition to meet the approval of Hans von Bülow, conductor of the Meiningen Court Orchestra. Bülow included the selection in the touring repertoire of the orchestra in the winter of 1883-1884 and invited Strauss to conduct his composition at a concert. It soon became one of the first of Strauss’ compositions to win widespread praise. Although the Serenade remains one of Strauss’ most attractive early works, he once referred to it as “nothing more than the respectable work of a music student”.22

The Serenade is scored for two flutes two oboes, two clarinets, four horns, two bassoons, and contrabassoon with optional bass tuba. The bass tuba is not frequently used and could have been included in the original score due to the rarity of contrabassoons at the time. A string bass is called for in the last two measures, yet there was no string bass part for the premiere performance.23 The overall form of the piece is in sonata form, with an exposition, development, and recapitulation, modulating through the keys of E-flat major, B-flat major, and B-minor. The work contains four themes, with music examples of the themes located in Appendix C.

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23 Kenneth Gregory Lee, *An Analytical Examination of Selected Chamber Works by Stravinsky, Beethoven, and Strauss* (Fullerton: California State University, 1979), 53.
**Example 3:** Richard Strauss, *Serenade in Eb, Op. 7*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Themematic Material</th>
<th>Key Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-81</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>Themes 1, 2, 3, and 4</td>
<td>Eb &amp; Bb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-114</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Themes 3 and 4</td>
<td>b-g-F#-d-G-g-C-Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122-158</td>
<td>Recapitulation</td>
<td>Themes 1, 2, 3, and 4</td>
<td>Eb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

The three compositions of Gabrieli, Mendelssohn, and Strauss have endured the test of time and are frequently performed by wind band ensembles across the world. New musical aspects were discovered and created through the effort of the composers. Antiphonal music was developed, instrumental specifications were assigned, the role of the conductor advanced, musical forms were expanded, and many compositions were created for a variety of ensembles. These works were created in diverse musical periods and reflect the musical influences of the time. These composers have given gifts to the musical world that will have a profound impact on the wind chamber ensemble works of the future.
APPENDIX A

_Canzon duodecimi toni - Musical Examples_

**Example 1:** Giovanni Gabrieli, _Canzon duodecimi toni_, m. 29.

Canzona Rhythm

**Example 2:** Giovanni Gabrieli, _Canzon duodecimi toni_, mm. 11-14.

Cornetti Imitation
APPENDIX B

Overture for Winds, Op. 24 - Musical Themes

Example 1: Felix Mendelssohn, Overture for Winds, mm. 1-6.

Introduction Chord Progression

Example 2: Felix Mendelssohn, Overture for Winds, mm. 7-15.

Theme 1

Example 3: Felix Mendelssohn, Overture for Winds, mm. 26-36.

Theme 2
Example 4: Felix Mendelssohn, *Overture for Winds*, mm. 68-76.

Theme 3

![Clarinet in B♭](image)


Theme 4

![Flute](image)
APPENDIX C

Serenade in Eb, Op. 7 - Musical Themes


Theme 1


 Theme 2


Theme 3

Example 4: Richard Strauss, Serenade in Eb, Op. 7, mm. 70-76.

Theme 4
BIBLIOGRAPHY


