

## CHAPTER FIVE

### AESTHETIC AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE CONCERT BAND REVIEWED

#### 5.1 Rationale of repertoire choices made in *Syllabus 2000*: the compiler's perspective

In order to compile a syllabus that is functional in practical terms as well as aesthetically satisfying, it is decidedly advantageous for the compilers to have a reasonably intimate working knowledge of each of the instruments concerned, their attributes and eccentricities, their standard and transcription repertoires, and an awareness of international trends regarding the use of the instrument within and without its traditional milieu.

The compilers should also have an aesthetic respect and even a love for the nature of the instrument for which they are compiling a syllabus, and an appreciation of its physical characteristics. Thus equipped, the compilers will be in a position not only to make intelligent and appropriate choices, but to make aesthetic judgements when expanding the instrument's repertoire. This would include identifying and making transcriptions of works for other wind, string or even keyboard instruments. Also, as has been found necessary in the absence of sufficient original repertoire at a given level, to write such transcriptions themselves.

While there may still be a few purists who frown at transcriptions, suffice it to say that Handel used the same material in his 4<sup>th</sup> organ concerto and his 4<sup>th</sup> flute (recorder) sonata, and J. S. Bach transcribed Vivaldi works for his own use. While these are well-known examples taken from the Baroque era, the case for transcriptions remains a compelling one even today, most justifiably in the cases of the less frequently-used woodwind and brass instruments which

have a solo repertoire that is a mere fraction of that of the violin, and a smaller fraction yet compared to that of the pianoforte.

In certain cases it may even be argued that, in the case of an "ideal" transcription, the work has the potential of sounding yet more convincing than it did on the original instrument. While a fair degree of subjectivity on the part of the compiler is inevitable, a number of empirically-tested examples have been found by the writer to be effective, and are quoted here:

- Hindemith's *Drei Leichte Stücke* (published by Schott): a work that is extremely effective when sensitively and expressively performed on the bass trombone or bass clarinet (rather than on the 'cello, for which it was written).
- Bellini's Oboe Concerto in E( (published by Ricordi) can be performed on the high E( clarinet, the alto clarinet (the solo voice sounding for the most part one octave lower than the original) or the soprano saxophone (which it fits like the proverbial glove) with equal success.
- Two of the three Albinoni Oboe Concerti (published by IMC) lend themselves to performance on the soprano saxophone, namely the B( major and D minor. The D major *is* feasible, but the *tessitura* is high, and fingering in the upper fourth of the work's range is demanding.
- Although not technically demanding other than in the area of good tone production, Schumann's *Träumerei* performed in the lower register of the viola or alto clarinet, or the tenor register of the bassoon or euphonium, does full justice to the *bel canto* aspect of the work, as well as the nostalgic nature thereof, with a *cantabile* that is simply not possible on the piano.
- Mahler's *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen* (Songs of a Wayfarer, published for medium or high voice by IMC) are, as a cycle, a

highly effective vehicle for low brass and low woodwind (the writer has performed them publicly on trombone, and on bass and alto clarinets), as well as being material appealing to the orchestral musician.

- Hugo Wolf's *Three Michelangelo Lieder* (1897) for bass-baritone voice make an excellent vehicle for low brass or low woodwind instruments, the euphonium or bass trombone in the former instance, and the bassoon or bass clarinet in the latter. Similar observations can be made in connection with the following composition.
- Brahms' *Vier ernste Gesänge* (1896), a popular choice among undergraduate student trombonists in the USA, as revealed by the *Recent programmes* sections of International Trombone Association (ITA) Journals from 1981 to 2005.
- Hindemith's *Sonate* (1938) for Bassoon and Piano (published by Schott) is almost equally successful when performed on an instrument of identical range but somewhat different *timbre*, the bass clarinet.
- The Mozart Bassoon Concerto (K. 191) falls naturally under the fingers of both the bass clarinetist and the baritone saxophonist (a slightly edited version, in the original key, for E( instruments is published by Edition Musicus).
- The same can be said of the B( major Bassoon Concerto by J C Bach. Similarly, the first movement of Brahms' first 'cello Sonata (Op. 38 in E minor) might almost have been conceived with the bass clarinet in mind, with the exception of a few rather high counter-melodies. These secondary lines can in most cases be safely taken down the octave.

Adding further perspective to the transcription issue: it is this writer's conjecture that, had the creative and pioneering efforts of early bass clarinet

manufacturers Gilles Lot, Heinrich Grenser, Johann Christoph Denner, or Desfontenelles of Lisieux (who manufactured a 13-keyed bass clarinet in 1807) enjoyed greater success and more widespread publicity than they did, Mozart and his contemporaries may well have written solo works for that instrument. As it happened, it was left to Meyerbeer to publicise the capabilities of Adolphe Sax's "improved" bass clarinet in Act V of *Les Huguenots* (1836) and in *Le Prophète* (1849). The "modern" or "perfected" bass clarinet of Adolphe Sax appeared in June 1838, just too late to attract the attention not only of Mozart, but of Danzi, Spohr and Mendelssohn as well, who instead wrote copiously for the basset horn (as had Mozart before him), a tenor-voiced member of the clarinet family pitched in F that had reached a fairly stable and developed state by the early 1800s. (Rendall 1978: 139-144.)

An inviting case presents itself for the transcription – from tonic solfa to staff notation – of selected vocal and instrumental African works for the various instruments of the concert band, for the simple reason that there is virtually no tradition of notating musical compositions *via* any method other than tonic solfa among the majority of the indigenous composers. For example, the multi- and cross-rhythms found in most indigenous Southern African music presents a challenge to the most accomplished Western percussionist.

The aural transmission of North and South Indian instrumental music (and, of course, the *oral* transmission of Hindi and Karnatik *vocal* music) is another factor supporting the concept of transcriptions that would be apposite in South Africa's multi-cultural context. If a number of *raga*-based compositions could be committed to staff notation, they might in selected cases prove to be suitable for performance on modern Western wind instruments. The same can be said for examples of both North Indian and *Karnatic* (South Indian) vocal art.

The experience gained in compiling instrumental syllabuses for UNISA, the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department and other bodies, plus the stimulation of "discovering" a viable repertoire for virtually every wind instrument, contributed to this writer's background and experience in the domain of syllabus compilation.

Subsequent to this commission to create a comprehensive new syllabus, the scope of this undertaking for the public sector soon became apparent to all concerned. Assembling practical repertoire lists for instrumental students at the primary and secondary level was a demanding task in itself; prescribing an entire syllabus for one's professional peer group was considerably more onerous. If not tackled thoughtfully and with a definite aesthetic in mind, the possibility existed of ending up in the invidious position where, in an attempt to please *everyone*, the results please *no-one*.

## **5.2 The instrumental groups of the concert band and their repertoire individually considered**

This chapter does not presume to be a mini-treatise on wind and percussion instruments. Nonetheless, the writer is convinced that a concise description of the characteristics of these groups and sub-groups of instruments is a necessary and intrinsic part of this thesis, not only in the process of justifying some of the less obvious choices made in the compilation of *Syllabus 2000*, but in highlighting the traditional or inherited imbalance in usage between the "mainstream" and the "ancillary" winds. These considerations are directly linked to the creation of a repertoire that will be meaningful to the performer, and one that will successfully interface with accredited professional standards for these instruments. The practical unit standards that may be established by the NQA (UK) and SAQA (RSA) in the foreseeable future are likewise anticipated.

The writer claims a first-hand working knowledge of all low brass and low woodwind instruments, having performed professionally on them in the various cycles of his career, and having taught them in an academic context for over three decades. Having had a close affinity with these instruments for over half a century elevates their qualities and attributes from the impersonally professional to the individually aesthetic.

While the writer has in the past performed on the flügelhorn and E( horn, and continues to perform on the higher woodwind in the form of the B( clarinet, soprano and alto saxophones, a thorough working knowledge of the remaining high brass, high woodwind and percussion has been gained through interaction with friends, colleagues, and competitors in the symphony orchestras and service bands of South Africa.

The desirability and sheer common sense of coupling the player's personality and mode of expression with that of a specific musical instrument is underscored by Dennis Bamber, the president of a massive musical instrument marketing organisation in South Bend, Indiana, USA. In his introductory editorial to the 2001 *Woodwind & Brasswind* catalogue he writes (Bamber 2001):

Every flute, every clarinet, every saxophone has its own personality – the way it looks, the way it plays, the way it feels. This is why an instrument that might be totally wrong for one player may be ideal for another. The *Woodwind & Brasswind* offers every musician the opportunity to find that ideal instrument – to experience the perfect fit between instrument and player.

Bamber is making two points here. The first is that the type of instrument chosen by an individual should accord with their personality, aesthetic or psyche. The second is, in a way, a *caveat*: there are tangible differences between one model of instrument and another; even greater differences in characteristics between one *maker* (of the same type of instrument) and

another. This viewpoint on coupling the individual personality with the appropriate choice of musical instrument was, in fact, documented by Marin Mersenne as early as 1636. In the English translation by Roger E. Chapman of *The Books on Instruments*, from *Harmonie Universelle*, Mersenne (1964: 23) writes:

The difference of temperaments which are found in me causes the sound of some [musical instruments] to seem more agreeable to that one more than the others ... Inasmuch as one can only judge what is the most agreeable of the sounds of all instruments if he has heard them all and compared them with one another.

In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the range of instruments offered by manufacturers to the public is so wide as to be confusing to the inexperienced player or teacher. By the same token, one can say that precisely the "right" model of every instrument is available to today's performers. Indeed, as Nora Post has contended, this is the first time in recorded history where the manufacturers' efforts are in advance of the composers' efforts (Post 1986: 39).

In the face of the profusion of woodwind and brass instruments available to the full concert band today, the writer views the following table as a useful adjunct to the topic under discussion. All the "extra" instruments that one is likely to encounter – with the exception of the string bass and the percussion section – have been listed.

TABLE 6: Practical working ranges of concert band winds

Instrument	Written Range	Sounding Range	Comments
Ficcolo	Written: C <sub>4</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: C <sub>4</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	The piccolo lacks the low D note in the flute.
Flute	Written: C <sub>4</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Some flutes are equipped with the low B.
Alto Flute in G	Written: G <sub>3</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Occasionally found in concert band scores.
Oboe	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Some oboe mechanisms lack the low B.
Cor Anglais	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	With very few exceptions, the Cor Anglais lacks the low B.
Clarinet in E <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Clarinet in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Some Full Bottom models have a low written B <sub>2</sub> in addition.
Clarinet in A	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Alto Clarinet in E <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Bass Clarinet in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	The stage manufacturers often provide for low written B.
Soprano Saxophone	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Not yet included in standard concert band instrumentation.
Alto Saxophone in F <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Tenor Saxophone in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Baritone Saxophone in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Baritone equipped with the low concert C <sub>3</sub> lacks the low D rather than the low B <sub>2</sub> written.
Bass Saxophone in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Not yet included in standard concert band instrumentation.
Hassoon	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Contrabassoon	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	A contrabassoon would be found only in the most affluent of concert bands.
Horn in F	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	
Horn in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	E <sub>b</sub> horn parts in concert band scores are normally transposed 1 staff space (the B <sub>b</sub> horn is a brass band instrument).
Trumpet in E <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	A competent player can add a major 2nd or 3rd (or more) to the upper range.
Coronet in B <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	A competent player can add a major 2nd or 3rd (or more) to the upper range.
Flügelhorn in F <sub>b</sub>	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	With the 4-valved model the range can be extended downwards to the practical concert.
Tenor Trombone	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	When equipped with the F attachment (tuning valve), the range can be extended downwards a major 3rd.
Bass Trombone	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	When equipped with 2 thumb valves, the bass trombone is fully chromatic to below pedal B <sub>2</sub> .
Euphonium	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	Most concert band scores have noble and bass clef parts for the euphonium.
Tuba	Written: B <sub>2</sub> to G <sub>5</sub>	Sounding: AS WRITTEN	A euphonium equipped with only 3 valves will lack the low C <sub>3</sub> , D <sub>3</sub> , E <sub>3</sub> , and F <sub>3</sub> . The range of a tuba depends largely on the way it is constructed and the number of valves with which it is equipped.

(Source: [unclear])



### 5.2.1 *The Flutes*

Of all the woodwind instruments - indeed, all the *wind* instruments - the flute has the lion's share of published repertoire. Whether this is due to the genuine popularity of the instrument over the past three centuries or to the fact that composers in general find it approachable and relatively easy to write for, is moot. A more likely and simplistic explanation is that the flute, in its various forms and guises, is by nature a solo instrument that has been in the public eye since its origin over two millennia ago, with a prominence that has remained uninterrupted all the way to the present era of eclectic and truly accomplished soloists.

A rich variety of material exists from which to choose in compiling repertoire lists; unlike the situation that obtains for many of the lower winds or that comparatively modern invention, the saxophone, the flute repertoire does not suffer from a hiatus in any of the recognised style periods of composition. One may begin with the Baroque Sonatas of Handel, Telemann, J.S. Bach and others, progress through the Mozartian era, early and late Romanticism, to 20<sup>th</sup>-century impressionism, modernism, and certainly the full-scale jazz-oriented works of the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Claude Bolling's Sonata for Flute and Jazz Trio and John Rutter's deliberately anachronistic *Suite Antique*. Both have become worthy additions to the standard repertoire. In accord with the declared policy of ongoing improvement, and the wish for a syllabus that moves in the direction of "world music", both these compositions are earmarked for addition to the IDMAC flute repertoire shortly.

Flute specialist John Hinch of the University of Pretoria adds perspective on the flute repertoire in general (Hinch 1998: 34):

The nineteenth century flute repertoire is contaminated with the ubiquitous "Variations on a Theme" type of piece; usually far too many predictable variations on too mundane a theme. Luckily there were a few composers who considered the flute in a more melodic light and have left us with so-called "character pieces".

Fair comment indeed, additionally underscoring the present writer's contention that the flute is an instrument for which composers have found it easy to write – perhaps *too* easy. Clearly, the more popular an instrument is among composers and performers, the more selective one needs to be in assembling repertoire lists.

The piccolo is a far more problematical instrument for which to cater when compiling a balanced performance syllabus. The three Vivaldi concertos (published by IMC) were composed with the *Exilent* (sopranino) recorder in mind, but provide excellent fare for the piccolo soloist. While unaccompanied works were generally avoided as a matter of policy in compiling the list of prepared pieces, the writer found that in the case of the piccolo repertoire a small number of unaccompanied works had to be included in order to offer the candidate an acceptable variety of choice.

A contemporary (but not *avant-garde*) work which *should* have been included is the Piccolo Concerto by the Cape Town composer Alan Stephenson. The writer has approached him some years ago for a piano reduction of the orchestral score; the composer, in turn, offered the writer a copy of the score on a 3½-inch "stiffy" disc, with the invitation to devise a piano reduction. Time permitting, this may well take place within the foreseeable future, for the benefit of IDMAC and other piccolo candidates.

The possibility of accommodating the flute candidate offering alto flute or bass flute for a portion of the evaluation was considered, but apart from the Ahlgrimm Sonata for Alto Flute, no suitable repertoire has yet been identified.

Such an addition is likewise a distinct possibility for the future, as new material for the low flutes is discovered and the lists become amended accordingly.

From the Senior Musician level upwards, an attempt has been made to accommodate the piccolo player who has elected to specialise on that instrument, with a discrete repertoire distinct from – but parallel to – that of the concert flute. The choice of repertoire is more limited than in the case of the flute, for the reasons given in the previous paragraph, but a sufficient variety exists in order to compile a viable piccolo syllabus. Again, 21<sup>st</sup>-century trends are likely to expand the piccolo syllabus within the next decade or less.

### 5.2.2 *The Oboes*

The position of the oboe specialist in a service band is a variable and occasionally controversial one. While it is generally accepted that the oboe should not be taken "on the march", the alternative within the ranks of the parade band is one which should be negotiated with the individual player. All too often – and this has become a practice that is entrenched in British and Anglophile service bands – the oboist is required to play the cymbals or some other percussion instrument in the marching band. The writer's question is: surely the oboist's musicianship and technique could be put to more productive use, such as "doubling" on the soprano saxophone (or any other single-reed instrument that does not upset the oboist's embouchure), playing cornet or clarinet parts in the absence of designated soprano saxophone parts? A more acceptable percussion option for the oboist is the marching glockenspiel – provided it is within the player's physical "comfort zone" – which has the advantage of a printed part that is usually almost identical to the oboe's in marching band literature.

Burton (1982: 189) reminds us that "the oboe, with its rich overtones, blends less well with other instruments". However, in the concert band, the oboist is both indispensable and unduplicatable. This highly soloistic woodwind has a very special repertoire, but not a particularly large one. And, while virtually every service band flautist doubles on the piccolo as part of their job, it should not automatically be assumed that every oboist plays the cor anglais – a decidedly "specialist" instrument – as well.

"Every oboist possesses this most glamorous of the woodwind 'extra' instruments" wrote Anthony Baines (1957: 96). If only this *were* the case in South Africa today! Wherever possible, extracts for the cor anglais have been included in the lists, and in the list of prepared pieces the cor anglais has its own repertoire at all four of the professional levels. It is hoped that in due course, after further research, a sufficient variety of band part extracts will be identified to eventually create totally separate lists for oboe and cor anglais, for those who may wish to specialise rather than double.

It may be argued that, due to its size and pitch, the cor anglais is slightly more viable "on the march" than the oboe (in the rather unlikely event that there were marching band parts written for it). Accordingly, it is worth noting that there is one manufacturer (Fox of the USA) who offers a polypropylene instrument that could withstand outdoor usage. The Czech firm of Amati did, in the late 1950s, offer a perspex option on most of their woodwind instruments, including their cor anglais. From the budgeting point of view, there is decidedly no such thing as a "student model" cor anglais; the polypropylene Renard (Fox, USA) instrument probably comes the closest to this description.

As this thesis is being completed, an importer of wind instruments manufactured in Beijing reports that a *professional* – i.e. not student – quality oboe is now available in ebonite, making it virtually impervious to the

vagaries of weather and climate. Empirical tests by professional players in Johannesburg have pronounced the instrument to be of top quality in terms of intonation, tone quality, and constructional integrity (Zack 2005). The instrument has also been tested by professional oboist Kobus Malan in Pretoria, whose only objection was that it was not a standard Conservatoire model (J. Malan 2005). The search for affordable "intermediate" student models of the requisite quality continues.

### 5.2.3 *The Clarinets*

Among all the woodwind instruments, the clarinets are the only "family" of instruments to be represented in "full consort" in the concert band. The function of the B( clarinets in the wind band can be seen as analogous to that of the violins in the symphony orchestra, as regards their numbers *vis-à-vis* the rest of the ensemble, melodic responsibility and, to a lesser extent, voice divisions.

While North American bands normally satisfy themselves with a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> clarinet part, the British military band divides them into solo clarinet, repiano clarinet (a sort of "shared" responsibility, reinforcing the Solo clarinet when required but often blending with the 2<sup>nd</sup> clarinet when harmonic passages need strengthening), plus 3<sup>rd</sup> clarinet and - very often in the march repertoire - 4<sup>th</sup> clarinet as well (Hind 1954: 772). This arrangement remains virtually unchanged in British service bands over half a century later.

Conversely, British bands have not included the alto or bass clarinet in their standard instrumentation since revising it in 1929, these two sizes of low clarinet having been officially replaced by the alto and tenor saxophones as a result of what Rendall (1971: 136) has condemned as ill-considered reforms:

... the alto clarinet has had a long and honourable career in military music and still maintains its place in many continental bands. But not in England, where its useful service was unwisely terminated not long since in favour of the saxophone with consequent impoverishment of variety and tone-colour.

Even though the alto clarinet does not have the out-of-doors stridency and projection of the saxophones, Rendall's remarks are well justified in terms of musical expression and versatility. In the USA, however, the alto and bass clarinets remain "standard" instrumentation in post-1950 concert band scores, and Britain appears to gradually be following suit, largely due to the volume of published concert band repertoire emanating from North America. Honey (1972: Part II, 6) quotes Berlioz as describing the alto clarinet as "a very beautiful instrument, and one regrets not to find it in all well-constituted orchestras". The writer has found it useful in chamber music groups.

While the alto clarinet part is often "covered" or cued in to the parts of other woodwinds in the same range, the bass clarinet has emerged as a solo instrument in its own right and is today regarded as indispensable in any "serious" band, military or civilian. In the 1990s the Yamaha Corporation of Japan went to some lengths to develop a "new generation", professional model bass clarinet, largely on the recommendations and suggestions of Dutch virtuoso Harry Spaarnay (with whom the writer has corresponded). Yamaha was largely successful in this venture; the example which the writer has played in Johannesburg, while falling short of a "breakthrough" in design, was certainly more consistent in tone quality between the instrument's three registers.

A very recent development was reported to the writer in April 2005 by Mr Dan Zack, a prominent dealer in and repairer of wind instruments in Johannesburg, and owner of an instrument hiring facility known as "The Instrument Library". Mr Zack took interest in a new bass clarinet of compact design on display at the Frankfurt Music Trade Fair, which he visits on an annual basis. This novel instrument has the "turnaround" of the tubing taking

place at an earlier stage of the bore length, and a wooden joint continuing upwards to the bell. Linkages and other mechanism was reportedly improved, and less prone to distortion. Ironically, the compact format was a feature of the Jacques Albert (Brussels) bass clarinets manufactured in the 1880s, of which the writer owns an example. Mr Zack and the present writer are enthusiastically awaiting further details from the manufacturer, Herr Guntram Wolf of Kronach.

In spite of the physical presence of the bass clarinet in South African service bands since the 1950s, no attempt had been made in previous audition syllabuses to accommodate a clarinet candidate wishing to double on this instrument, even less one who might care to specialise in it. As for the alto clarinet, its existence was barely acknowledged, and it began to become known to South African bandsmen solely through its inclusion in a few of the larger student wind bands established by the Education Department Music Centres in the 1970s and 1980s, making predominant use of North American scores. These omissions have been remedied in *Syllabus 2000*.

On opposite sides of the musical spectrum are the high E( clarinet – pitched a fourth above the B( clarinet and an octave above the E( alto clarinet – and the contrabass clarinet in BB(, an octave below the bass. There is also a contra-alto in EE( (the hyphen is mandatory, as it is patently not a "contralto" instrument), an octave lower than the alto clarinet in pitch. Specific parts are nearly always included for the high E( clarinet, while contrabass parts are found in about 40% of the contemporary scores perused by the writer in the music library of the SAPS Band in Pretoria, particularly those from North America.

An advantage of the contra-alto clarinet is that the player can very easily learn to read concert pitch parts in the bass clef (rather than transposed parts in the treble clef), by making a mental clef and key-signature substitution: the "lines

and spaces" remain the same. Similarly, this mental substitution is effective when performing bass clef, concert pitch parts on the E( baritone saxophone.

While it would be unrealistic to expect to find the even larger BB( contrabass clarinet in a marching band, one does find all the other sizes, particularly in the USA, and the high E( features prominently in the British military band tradition as what could be regarded as the equivalent of a single-reed piccolo. Accordingly, full extract and repertoire lists for high E(, E( alto and B( bass clarinets have been compiled for *Syllabus 2000*, in addition to those for the ordinary B( clarinet. In the interests of a wider choice for candidates, transcriptions from works for other instruments of the same or similar range have been included where considered musically and technically viable.

It is interesting to note that many of the early bass clarinets were pitched in C rather than B(, being intended as replacements for the bassoons in the military bands of the period as much as additional members of the woodwind section (Rendall 1978: 141-144). Cecil Forsyth (1948: 274), in his book on orchestration, informs us of the practice of that era before British military bands abandoned the alto and bass clarinets in favour of the alto and tenor saxophones:

It may be mentioned [...] that army musicians have actually effected that most difficult of all tasks, a reformed notation. Their bass clarinet players are taught to finger their B( instruments in the same way that a euphonium - or a BB( bass player would, that is to say, at concert pitch. The consequence is that, as they are all taught in the bass clef, the two bass clarinetists in a military band can play and do play off the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bassoon parts respectively.

The present writer wishes to point out that reading at concert pitch in the bass clef on the B( bass clarinet is no more difficult than doing the same on the B( trombone (in place of reading the treble clef in Brass Band style); it is simply a matter of pitch awareness and practise. By the same token, reading parts for



basset horn in F on a E( alto clarinet, or reading oboe parts on a B( soprano saxophone is an easily acquired skill that the writer teaches his students from the Grade VI level upwards.

Regarding open-air use of the alto and bass clarinets, the catalogues of Selmer (USA), Leblanc and Yamaha (USA) offer a plastic "student" version of both – usually with a one-piece body – for the previously stated reason that these instruments are standard instrumentation in the North American Symphonic Band. Selmer (USA) offers a plastic EE( contra-alto, while Leblanc (USA) offers a plastic contra-alto and a BB( contrabass. These remarkably agile low clarinets are pitched an octave below the E( alto and B( bass respectively. With the benefit of experience, the writer contends that the contra-alto is perfectly viable as a marching band instrument, capable of audibly reinforcing tuba, bassoon or baritone saxophone lines as required; its weight is little more than that of the bass clarinet, and palpably less than the 5 kilograms of a baritone saxophone.

#### *5.2.4 The Bassoons*

"Of the Woodwind group the Bassoon is the most attractive member" wrote Archie Camden (1965: v), the first professional bassoonist in Britain to adopt the Heckel-system instrument. However, largely on account of its being a double-reed instrument, there is still a degree of dissention regarding the effectiveness of the bassoon "out of doors", and in certain service bands the players – as in the case of some oboists – are given the ignominious task of playing a percussion instrument in the marching band. Happily, this is by no means general practice in South African bands, and the Heckel- or German-system bassoon in the hands of a competent and robust player is perfectly audible on the parade-ground.

Two manufacturers of bassoons (Fox and UMI in the USA) produce models constructed from a composite material – polypropylene, in one case, which is impervious to moisture (but unfortunately not to prolonged heat) – which are ideal for parade band work.

A characteristic of many transcriptions of orchestral works for military or concert band is the tendency to favour the flat keys, as the majority of winds are built in the key of E( or B(. This can be ironic for the bassoonist, who has spent a good deal of time and effort mastering fiendish passages in the original keys, only to find them transposed up or down a semitone (or, less frequently, a tone) in the military or concert band arrangement. Although the "natural" scale of the bassoon can be said to be Lydian F major, the extra keys and cross-fingerings required for keys on the flat side of B( make considerable demands on the player's technique. This, however, is accepted as normal; a fact of life in the very individual world of the bassoonist.

Regarding "inimical" transpositions, a case in point is the notorious passage shared by the bassoons and 'cellos with which the overture to Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* begins: originally in D major, the service band bassoonist is now confronted with this familiar passage a semitone higher in E(, making it technically even *more* awkward than it was in the original key. In fact, this particular extract, along with one from the Concert Band transcription of the Tschaikovsky Fourth Symphony, was one which prompted IDMAC to re-visit the lists of extracts for woodwind and brass in August 2004.

When it comes to solo repertoire the bassoonist can draw on a fair-sized body of original compositions, ranging from very early Baroque (Bertoli, Dard) through the 38 sonatas and concertos of Vivaldi and Mozart's evergreen Concerto (K. 191) to post-1950 works (Pauer, Zaninelli, Grøndahl). In addition, bassoonists have at their disposal virtually all the gamba and 'cello music of the Baroque, plus selected works from the repertoires of the

trombone and euphonium, all being instruments of similar range whose parts – like those for the bassoon – are normally written in the bass clef, at concert pitch.

In his *Orchestration*, Cecil Forsyth (1948: 246) wrote:

In modern times (*sic*) the introduction of the bass clarinet and the tuba, as well as the perfection of the valve-horn mechanism, has contributed to set the bassoon free from its drudgery as a purely bass-instrument. Hence comes a greater polyphonic independence in the bassoon parts as well as an undoubtedly increased plasticity in the whole woodwind mass.

Said plasticity has certainly become a feature of wind band bassoon writing ever since, although in a parade band the option of doubling both bassoon parts with bass clarinets remains a viable and pragmatic option.

A contrasting appreciation of the instrument comes from the avant-garde Frank Zappa (1981: 71), whose whimsical observations from the standpoint of a jazz/rock artist add perspective to the reasons behind the choice of the bassoon by a student, candidate or professional:

I looked at these folks [in the orchestra], and the instruments they had chosen to play, and tried to imagine what strange forces had produced these choices ... I don't think there are too many cases where parents have *demand*ed that their children learn to play ... the bassoon. Not too many parents dream of the day when little Waldo will enthrall the neighbours by blowing on a brown thing with a metal doodad poking out the side of it.

The bassoon is one of my favourite instruments. It has the *mediaeval aroma* (*sic*) – like the days when *everything* used to sound like that. Some people crave baseball – I find this unfathomable – but I can easily understand why a person could get excited about playing a bassoon. It's a *great noise* – nothing else makes that noise.

I don't think that in the beginning musicians worry about "how am I going to make a living from playing this?" They get

charmed by the sound of an instrument, and mutate, over time, into victims of its "behavioural tradition".

However eccentrically or colourfully put, these views accord directly with those of Bamber (2001) and even Mersenne (1964). The present writer certainly shares Mr Zappa's enthusiasm about the "great noise" produced by the bassoon.

In Chapter 5.1 the writer speculated on the possibility of a larger classical repertoire for the bass clarinet, had the makers of the time perfected their products a decade or so earlier. A similar speculation with regard to the bassoon was made by C. S. Terry (1958: 119), when he commented on J S Bach's "Independence in handling the bassoon". In fact, he surmises that had he been born into a later generation there could be little or no doubt that he would have anticipated Mozart's Concerto for the instrument.

The contrabassoon, still occasionally and anachronistically - in the writer's opinion - referred to in certain circles as the "double" bassoon (which, of course it *is* in terms of air-column length), is an asset to any concert band or wind ensemble, just as it is an essential contrabass woodwind voice in the symphony orchestra. Certain concert bands outside of South Africa may be in the enviable position of being able to afford such a magnificent instrument, or to have the musical services of one of those rare individuals who actually owns a contrabassoon. Regrettably, that is not the case in South Africa, although there is a privately-owned Heckel with low A in Cape Town and another instrument - currently undergoing repairs - in the hands of a University of Pretoria student.

While the writer saw fit to include a Grade VI to Licentiate syllabus for the contrabassoon in the examination syllabus of the University of South Africa (UNISA), to have drawn up lists for it in *Syllabus 2000* would have been an

exercise in wishful thinking. While the instruments do not exist in South African service bands at this period in their history, a repertoire for the contrabassoon *does* exist, and will be applied to the syllabus should the need arise. John Philip Sousa used a contrabassoon in his band of 1900; judging by the photograph it was a Heckel to low C (Baines 1994: 136). Whether it was used "on the march" is dubious, and it is reasonable to assume it was a regular member of the concert band.

Dr Albert Honey (1972: Fig. 62) illustrates the presence of a contrabassoon (as well as a bass saxophone) in a photograph of Gilmore's Concert Band of 1875 (taken in New York); this, too, appears to be a model to low C (rather than B). Regarding possible use in marching bands, Will Jansen (1978: Vol.V, 103) shows a line drawing of a plan for an all-metal contrabassoon, named the *Tritonikon*, designed by the Czechoslovakian firm of Červený - well-known for their rotary-valve tubas today - "for military use". Additionally, Langwill (1965: 123) mentions this instrument, but adds that a *Tritonikon* was also manufactured by Schöllnast of Pressburg (now Bratislava) in 1839, equipped with a piano-type keyboard (*Klaviaturl-kontrafagott*), a drawing of which also appears in Jansen's book.

### 5.2.5 *The Saxophones*

While the alto saxophone in E( has by far the most substantial original repertoire of all the saxophones from which to choose, the other three members (or "sizes") of the Saxophone Quartet are catered for to a fair degree. Unfortunately, the quartet of saxophones *per se* appears only occasionally in band scores, but all four - the B( soprano, E( alto, B( tenor and E( baritone - are in regular use in South African service bands, albeit in varying capacities, and not always performing parts written specifically for saxophones.

The reason for this "imbalance within the consort" is that, while the Europeans and the British quite logically envisage their quartet as consisting of one each of the four sizes mentioned above, the North Americans – presumably for reasons of availability – had, until very recently, virtually abandoned the soprano in favour of a second alto. A glance at the scores of the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will validate this observation.

This strikes the observer as ironic, as North American scores make provision for a baritone but not a soprano, while selected British scores – such as Percy Grainger's *Lincolnshire Posy* – feature the soprano prominently in a soloistic capacity. Adolphe Sax did, after all, envisage his invention being deployed in *all* sizes, even the high E( soprano) and the sub-baritone B( bass). When it comes to the marching band, however, British standard instrumentation includes alto and tenor saxophones only. As previously mentioned, these replaced the alto and bass clarinets – not all that successfully, in the opinion of this and other writers (Baines 1957: 129 and Rendall 1971: 136 *inter alia*) – after the change in British military band orchestration that took place in 1929. Incidentally, this change coincided with the abandoning of the old military band "high pitch" (A=452c/s) and the re-adoption of standard concert pitch (A=440c/s).

The baritone saxophone, in spite of its 5kg weight being suspended from the player's neck, is utilised quite freely as an additional "reed tuba" in many bands, while in the European scores it invariably has individual "legitimate" parts written for it. In the hands of a skilled performer, the baritone saxophone can do justice to the majority of military band bassoon parts, albeit with a rather different *timbre*. It cannot, however, supply the two lowest semitones (B) and B(♭) of the bassoon.

In the writer's estimation, the ideal low saxophone for military band use – one which bassoonists could handle with minimum adjustment to embouchure or

fingering – would be a resuscitation of the "orchestral" baritone saxophone in F. This was envisioned – and actually produced in relatively small numbers – by Sax, built in the "orchestral" key of F rather than the "military band" key of E(, which would allow bassoonists to read their normal bass clef, concert pitch parts on this instrument without transposition, and with minimal fingering adjustments. Apparently very few F baritones survive, even in Europe (Schorn 2005).

Even more ideally, such an instrument should be further developed in a purpose-made manner by having a downward extension to concert B( (which would be written low F for the F baritone saxophonist), with most of the keys for the extra semitones operated by the right-hand thumb, as is the case with extended-range bass clarinets. A serious attempt to reduce the instrument's weight through using slightly lighter-gauge brass could be made at the same time. Such a development is unlikely to take place in the West, as it would entail a fairly substantial additional investment in equipment by the manufacturer, and the "minority appeal" that the new instrument would enjoy would scarcely recoup the expenditure. However, during 2004 contact was established between the writer and a new musical instrument factory in Beijing, People's Republic of China, who have indicated a willingness to consider the manufacture of experimental models (Li 2004). Practical considerations, however, dictated that a firm order for at least ten such instruments would have to be placed.

The addition of a low written A (concert C) to the baritone's range was first put into production by the firm of Henri Selmer, Paris, in 1954 – along with the introduction of the *Mark VI* range of saxophones, and "low A" baritones are now more common in manufacturer's catalogues than the "standard" instrument which descends only to low B(.

Parenthetically, it is pertinent to mention that a parallel phenomenon regarding the modern bass trombone has taken place in the last 50 years: the second thumb valve was added by the firms of Vincent Bach and F E Olds in the early 1950s, and Holton less than a decade later, in order to make the instrument fully chromatic down to the pedal B( (it previously lacked the B), unless the player resorted to the cumbersome action of fully extending the F-section tuning-slide). Today, the B(/F/D double (thumb-) valve bass trombone is the industry norm, with "single-trigger" basses in the minority, just as the baritone saxophone with low A has now become more commonplace than the model that descends to low B( only. In the case of both instruments, the slight extra weight of the extended-range models is not regarded as significant.

While the baritone saxophone was not originally an "official" member of the British military band instrumentation, it has been a stable member of a number of European bands virtually since its inception, such was the need for an audible woodwind bass. Spanish military bands regularly employ two baritone saxophones - as well as two bass clarinets - and, since 1982, a baritone has been a regular member of the RAF Central Band in the UK. Anthony Baines mentions that wind band scores today customarily include "an optional part for the increasingly popular baritone" (Baines 1995: 316).

Even closer to the military band bassoonist's heart than a baritone saxophone in F might be the re-introduction of the sarrusophone - which can usefully be described as resembling a brass bassoon with saxophone fingering - invented by the French bandmaster Sarrus in 1856, ten years after Sax patented the saxophone. Similarly, the sarrusophone came in a variety of sizes, from the oboe-pitched soprano down to the contrabassoon-pitched contrabass. And, like Sax, bandmaster Sarrus envisioned the full "consort" of his own invention being fully deployed.



The United States firm of G C Conn manufactured an E( contrabass sarrusophone which was used in many of the larger concert and military bands up until the 1940s. Anthony Baines (1957: 166) writes that the family of Sarrusophones was capable of

bestowing upon a band a cheerful reediness which the smoother, though in some respects not dissimilar tone of the saxophones does not [...] In Paris, the civilian band, the *Fanfare la Sirène*, still musters a team of sarrusophones [...] today, 'sarrusophone' means simply the contrabass, which is still manufactured and is employed in a number of the larger French and American bands.

In South Africa the soprano saxophone, when it is utilised in the marching band, is often used to play B( cornet (in the SA Naval Band, Simonstown) or repiano clarinet parts (in the North-West Province Band of the SAPS), as it has the very real capability of "filling out" a section that might be under strength, be it in the upper brass or upper woodwind (Seveso 2001). In the concert band its function is somewhat different, and will be used wherever there is a "legitimate" part for it. Nonetheless, a complete and independent syllabus has been compiled for all four sizes of saxophone. In the case of the baritone, the bassoon repertoire has been selectively drawn upon. Eminently tractable works for bassoon and 'cello by Galliard, Telemann, Vivaldi, J C Bach and Mozart are a pleasure for the progressive performer on the baritone saxophone, and manage not to sound overly anachronistic, bearing in mind that the saxophone was invented only in the 1840s.

While mild complaints were received by IDMAC during the early days of *Syllabus 2000* that certain works containing high F#s and Gs appeared in the Chief Musician lists, this should certainly not hinder any competent player at this level. There are, after all, eight or nine *other* works to choose from in the same lists. Over and above the selection of repertoire from which the candidate may choose, it is commonly held among saxophone teachers in the

Johannesburg/Pretoria area that these third harmonic notes should ideally become part of the student's technique from the Grade VI level onwards, and can reasonably be expected from a player from the Grade VIII level upwards (Davidson 2003). Professional jazz players extend their range as far as super C - with fingerings that vary considerably from one player to another - almost as a matter of course.

Most saxophones of contemporary manufacture are in any event equipped with a high F# key, although most advanced players prefer to use their own "favourite" cross-fingering. The same observations apply to certain expensive makes of soprano saxophone that are equipped with both a high F# and a high G key: the cross-fingered version is more reliable than opening a tiny hole at the very top of the bore with an additional side key.

It is worth mentioning that one or two earlier models of saxophone, prior to the standardisation of the "automatic" double-octave key, were equipped with a third octave key to facilitate the production of these third-harmonic tones, right up to the super C. Whether or not the re-introduction of this facility on modern instruments would be economically viable, is open to conjecture. In the meantime, the employment of "complex cross-fingerings and special embouchures" will continue, to use Baines' description. It should also be noted that the third harmonic fingerings that may work on one size or make of saxophone, is not automatically successful on another size of saxophone or even on another make of the same size. This is due to small variations in the bore dimensions as well as minute differences in tone-hole placements.

"[Adolphe] Sax normalised the bass clarinet, and also invented the saxophone to strengthen the middle and lower registers of the military band woodwind" writes Baines. "Saxophones, by supplying a powerful, filling-out reed tone - almost an open-air string tone - would pull the band together ... In British bands the former prejudice against them has been dispelled sufficiently to

admit an alto saxophone and a tenor regularly, and a baritone occasionally" (Baines 1992: 142). The saxophone quartet (S-A-T-Baritone) is remarkably effective as a medium of artistic expression, and the present writer has written a number of original compositions for this medium, one of which forms part of Appendix B.

### 5.2.6 *Contrasting woodwind tone-qualities within the same range*

Whilst considering the qualities of members of the various woodwind families, the writer offers some examples of the very real timbral differences between cylindrical-bore single-reeds, conical-bore single reeds, and double-reeds.

Here follows a number of examples, given at concert pitch, of some characteristic phrases that might be played on three different concert band instruments of similar pitch and working register, but which display distinctly different tone qualities. These fall into the categories of

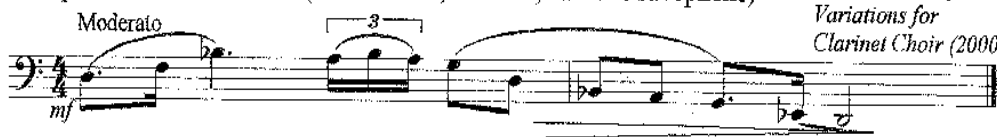
- Low woodwind: bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, bassoon (examples 1a and 1b)
- Alto/contralto/tenor-voiced reeds: cor anglais, alto clarinet, tenor saxophone (examples 2a, 2b and 2c)
- Soprano-voiced reed instruments: oboe, B( clarinet, alto saxophone (examples 3a and 3b)
- Super-soprano (or "piccolo") register reed instruments (high E( clarinet, soprano saxophone, high register oboe).

#### **Example 1a and 1b**


Examples 1a and 1b present subtle but clearly distinguishable differences in *timbre*, chiefly brought about by the differences in overtones that are characteristic of a cylindrical bore (bass clarinet), a pronouncedly conical bore

(baritone saxophone) and a mildly conical bore combined with a double reed (bassoon).

Example 1a: Low woodwind (bass clarinet, bassoon, baritone saxophone) David Galloway  
*Variations for  
Clarinet Choir* (2000)



Example 1b: Low woodwind (as above) Gustav Mahler  
*Ninth Symphony  
Adagio, b. 93* (1909)

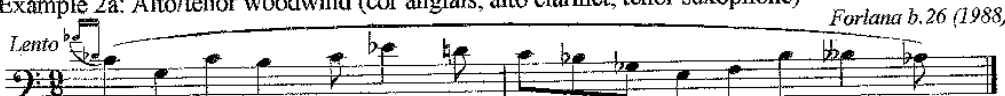


It may be noted that, while both examples were conceived for the bass clarinet, the legato nature of these passages, lying principally in the 12<sup>th</sup> below middle C, are almost equally well suited to both the bassoon and the baritone saxophone. This is one reason for the aptness of the *Wolf Three Michelangelo Lieder* as recital pieces for these three instruments, with the *tessitura* lying as it does in a very similar register, as well as the *bel canto* aspect of the composition.

### Examples 2a, 2b and 2c

The term "alto/tenor", as applied to the working range of the cor anglais, alto clarinet and tenor saxophone in Examples 2a, 2b and 2c, while used loosely in this context, is nonetheless felt to be appropriate. While the cor anglais descends only to the E below middle C, it is in the instrument's lowest 12<sup>th</sup> or so that its most characteristic passages in the standard repertoire have been written (Sibelius' *The Swan of Tuonola*, Berlioz' *Roman Carnival*, Rossini's *William Tell* overture, the slow movement of Dvořák's "New World" symphony, etc.). The alto clarinet and the tenor saxophone have almost identical working ranges, but very different tonal characteristics.

Example 2a: Alto/tenor woodwind (cor anglais, alto clarinet, tenor saxophone) Norman Heim  
*Alto Clarinet Sonata:  
Forlana b. 26* (1983)



Example 2b: Alto/tenor woodwind (as above) Percy Grainger  
Hill Song No.2, b.85 (1902)

Example 2c: Contralto reeds (cor anglais, alto clarinet) Julie Giroux  
Culloden III b.219(2000)

In Examples 2a and 2b, the *bel canto* aspect is again stressed, to which all three alto/tenor instruments are well suited. Example 2c, however, is included partially for its agile nature and to illustrate contrasting articulation demands. This passage is alternated between the cor anglais and the alto clarinet; while it is a straightforward passage in the top fifth of the alto clarinet's second register, it presents slightly awkward fingering to the cor anglais player (due to the flat key signature) and articulation would differ audibly between the two instruments, in addition to *timbre*. It is also a relevant example of contemporary writing for wind band; this commissioned composition was published in 2000, by *Musica Propria*, San Antonio, Texas, USA.

### Examples 3a and 3b

A more incisive *timbre* is required for passages of the more declamatory nature illustrated by Examples 3a and 3b. A fleetness and agility is required that includes clear articulation, while a soloistic volume level is likewise a prerequisite. All three of the listed instruments are more than capable of delivering these qualities, each with its own highly characteristic tone quality.

Example 3a: Soprano woodwind (oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone) Vincent Persichetti  
Symphony No.6 for Band,  
from 1st and 4th mvts.(1956)

Example 3b: Soprano woodwind (as above)

David Galloway  
*Wind Sextet, 3rd mvt. (1962)*

It is notable how Persichetti (Example 3a) extends the legato articulation throughout these rapid and slightly technical passages, the result (in the 4/4 passage) being a nimble and unbroken musical sentence. The extract from the present writer's *Sextet* aims at an unexpected contrast between *legato* and *staccato* passages; a decidedly incisive tone quality is created by the *forte* unison of oboe and clarinet.

### Examples 4a and 4b

The coloratura register reeds, while retaining their individual characteristics at all volumes when heard *solo*, blend into a fierce and almost bagpipe-like nature when combined *forte*. Indeed, this was Grainger's precise intention in *Hill Song No. 2* (Example 4b); the "open-air" quality of his music speaks for itself (Stevenson 1963). The present writer was introduced to the wind music of Grainger by the Scottish composer Ronald Stevenson, during the period Stevenson was a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town's College of Music in the early 1960s, when the writer was a composition student of Stevenson. The writer's *Maverick Sonata* can be regarded as belated progeny of that formative era.

David Galloway  
*Maverick Sonata, Rondo (1999)*

Example 4a: High soprano reeds (oboe, Eb soprano clarinet, soprano saxophone)

Percy Grainger  
*Hill Song No. 2, b. 90 (1902)*

Example 4b: High soprano reeds (as above)

The *timbres* of the soprano saxophone and the oboe have a tendency to meet at certain volume levels, and in certain registers (which is one reason why the Bellini Oboe Concerto in E( makes such an attractive vehicle for performance on the soprano saxophone). The high E( clarinet is arguably less effective in *legato* passages in this register than the other two instruments. It may also be noted that Grainger's use of the flat 7<sup>th</sup> at a *fff* level reinforces the "bagpipe" effect, with the *crescendos* and *decrescendos* adding to the dramatic ebb and flow of the music.

The writer recently – and purely by chance – heard some examples of new woodwind writing in a film sound-track from the studios of Tambre Productions in Toronto, Canada, which were both enterprising and aesthetically delightful: a whimsical duet between contrabassoon and soprano saxophone, and a compelling unison between two contralto-voiced woodwind, a cor anglais and an alto clarinet (*Coming Unglued* 1997).

A similar exercise to that just described in the above examples could usefully be carried out with selected brass instruments. A passage involving the French horn, flügelhorn and tenor trombone in the identical register, and bass trombone and tuba in a register one to two octaves below middle B(, would clearly demonstrate characteristic differences in *timbre* and even articulation at the identical pitch.

### ***5.2.7 The soprano and mezzo-soprano brass: Trumpets, Cornets, Flügelhorn***

What would a military band be without trumpets? One answer is: more mellifluous, were it to use cornets almost exclusively. There is a clear distinction to be heard between the *timbre* of the two, principally due to their physical construction. The trumpet's bore remains cylindrical for the first two-thirds of its length, becoming mildly conical from the beginning of the bell joint onwards, and culminating in the bell flare. The cornet, conversely,

begins its length with a fractionally smaller bore than the trumpet, which immediately begins a gradual expansion throughout the total length of the instrument. Unlike that of the trumpet, the cornet's bore is in fact conical throughout its length (other than in the two parallel branches of the tuning slide which must, for the physical reasons of withdrawal for tuning purposes, be cylindrical - if not always identical - bore).

These physical facts account for the "martial", bright sound of the trumpet on the one hand, and the rounded, more mellifluous and "vocal" tone quality of the cornet on the other. Indisputably, these are two different instruments, and there is more than adequate room for them both. The repertoire reflects an awareness of this among composers and arrangers: cornet parts are characteristically melodic, while the trumpet section is often featured within the wind band in fanfares and bright flourishes that are quite independent of the cornet parts.

The flügelhorn, while built in exactly the same pitch as the trumpet and cornet, is actually the soprano member of the Saxhorn family, and is yet more pronouncedly conical in bore than the cornet, although the fingering is identical (except when a fourth valve is added as an option on some of the larger-bore models). It can be used to reinforce the lower cornet voices, or - more typically - to extend the French horn texture upwards into a register that might be uncomfortable or insecure for the French horns. In the art of mezzo-soprano ballade and *cantabile* playing, the flügelhorn has few competitors.

The flügelhorn will not produce its characteristic timbre unless played with the correct deep-cup mouthpiece; neither will it play in tune if a shallower trumpet-type mouthpiece with a smaller throat is used. As in *all* brass instrument design, the interior dimensions of the mouthpiece must match the



instrument's bore dimensions; it must assist the vibrations produced by the player's embouchure in coming to terms with the air column.

These characteristics – indeed, idiosyncrasies – need to be borne in mind by bandmasters and examiners alike, with a clear understanding of the disparate nature of these three soprano/mezzo-soprano brass instruments. It will be found that these differences are more often than not reflected in their published literature. There are, in addition, high E( versions of the trumpet, the cornet, and even the flügelhorn; while the E( soprano cornet is a staple of the Brass Band, these higher brass are seldom found in concert band scores.

#### *5.2.8 The French Horn and Alto horns*

While a good French horn section is a major asset to any symphonic or concert band, there is a very good case for the use of a substitute instrument in the marching or parade band. The modern F/B( double horn is a heavy, relatively bulky instrument that can only be held in the correct manner when the player is seated; there is considerable compromise to the player's tone production and control of intonation when the instrument is played on the march – or even standing.

Further elucidation may prove useful: with the player seated, there is no problem in holding the instrument correctly, as the knuckles and the back of the right hand fingers can comfortably remain in contact with the inside of the bell flare, and the wrist movement for "stopping" the horn and/or regulating the intonation is a natural and unimpeded movement. With the player standing or marching, however, the weight of the instrument is no longer supported by the bell rim resting on the player's right thigh, and has to be borne by the right hand almost in its entirety, with the main contact points being the right hand thumb and the side of the index finger. This makes it

very difficult – if not impossible – to regulate intonation *or* tone quality with the right hand (as one would do in the seated position).

A further objection to the double French horn on the march is the excessive weight of two sets of valve tubing, scarcely necessary as marching band parts for the instrument rarely venture outside of a comfortable 2-octave range, which is playable on a single F or B $\flat$  instrument. Thirdly, as specifically mentioned in the text, the French horn's bell points downwards and backwards at an angle when in the playing position, rendering much of the detail (and volume) dispersed in an "out-of-doors" performing situation.

For some decades now, marching bands in the USA and parts of Europe have been substituting E $\flat$  alto horns (still referred to as "tenor horns" in the UK), Mellophones or B $\flat$  "marching" French horns for the double horn. There are various advantages to this:

- The weight of the instrument is considerably less (not having the additional set of valve tubing that is a characteristic of the double French horn);
- The instrument's bell is pointing in the right direction (i.e., not into the ground), with the musical balance being maintained;
- The player need not disturb his embouchure with a "strange" mouthpiece, as a short adapter shank is usually provided with the better makes of alto horn that will allow a French horn mouthpiece to be fitted into the mouthpipe of the marching band "substitute".

For the service band player who habitually plays on the B $\flat$  (rather than the deeper F) side of the horn, the B $\flat$  "marching" horn – rather than a single B $\flat$  French horn – may offer a tenable solution. The Mellophone, on the other hand, retains the visual impact of a large, French horn-type bell, but is basically an F alto horn in circular format.

It is the writer's considered opinion, based on personal experience in the field, that the very best "marching" substitute for the French horn is the 4-valved, oval-shaped German type of alto horn, such as the "Egerlander" type manufactured by the firm of Amati in the Czech Republic, and by the Miraphone Company in Germany. Even the very desirable 4-valve model with red brass (*Goldmessing*) option is considerably less expensive than a double French horn, and will perform with considerably more sonic success on the march into the bargain. While the piston-valved E( horn has the appearance of a small euphonium, the oval, rotary-valved version appears like a smaller version of the Wagner tuba.

Since the 1950s, sets of band parts normally include parts for both horn in F and horn in E(, not in order to accommodate players of the anachronistic E( French horn, but for the convenience of players using the abovementioned "substitute" E( horn, in whatever format.

The E( horn is well catered for by British composers writing for Brass Band instruments, where it is known as the E( *tenor* horn – the only part of the world in which this nomenclature still obtains.

### 5.2.9 *The Trombones*

In the words of Philip Bate (1962: cover), a proper understanding of the trombone depends on a clear grasp of its acoustical behaviour, as influenced by the properties of mouthpiece, [mouth]pipe, and bell. As regards the tenor trombone, a distinction needs to be drawn between the medium or medium-large bore models that are today normally used on the march, and the larger symphony bore models required in the concert band and, of course, the symphony orchestra. The small-bore tenor trombone is no longer in vogue – in or out of doors – other than in "period" ensembles, one example being the New Orleans or "Dixieland" band. Trombones with a slide bore of

.508"(12,9mm), .522"(13,26mm) or .525"(13.34mm) would be considered the norm in medium-bore instruments today. The large bore or "symphony" tenor trombone is almost invariably equipped with a bore of .547"(13,9mm), although fractionally larger instruments are used by some players. It is not uncommon for the larger service bands to standardise their tenor trombones, using symphony models for all but stage band work. The Band of the National Ceremonial Guard in Pretoria is one example of this practice. The sonic advantages are patent.

As in the case of the clarinets, a fully-equipped service band will ideally have two sets of instruments: one for parade work, and another (generally of a superior quality and commensurately more expensive) for concert work. A B(/F) tenor is generally preferable for all but the first trombone, but individual tastes differ and many principal players opt for the versatility and superior fore-and-aft balance of an instrument with the F attachment.

The bass trombonist in the marching band will normally use a full bore "single-trigger" B(/F) instrument, and switch to a "double-trigger" B(/F/D) instrument for indoor work. The second valve – usually providing G( in first position if the valves are independent, and providing D in first position with both valves activated – is desirable for two reasons. Firstly, the instrument lacks the low B) without it; secondly, it makes the low C available in normal 4<sup>th</sup> position, with both valves in operation, thus obviating the need to "stretch and hope" in extended 7<sup>th</sup> position in the case of single-valve instruments.

Trombone slides, like the piston valves of other brass, are manufactured to extremely fine tolerances, and are particularly vulnerable to out-of-doors conditions that may deposit detritus on their moving parts.

An unmistakable distinction is discernable in the printed repertoire for the tenor *vis-à-vis* the bass trombone. While the length of the basic trombone is

that of a B( instrument in both cases, the interior dimensions vary considerably, beginning with those of the mouthpiece, the mouthpiece receiver and slide bore, through the entry to the bell section, the degree of taper in the bell core, and the diameter of the bell rim. While the bore of both tenor and bass begin to expand significantly only in the bell joint, the degree of conicity is noticeably more pronounced in the case of the bass, particularly in the section immediately after the tuning-slide bow and approaching the bell rim (the bell core).

The resistance - or lack thereof - in the mouthpiece receiver pipe, and the metal from which the bell is made, are additional factors influencing the comparative brightness or darkness of the *timbre*. A greater copper content (rose brass or red brass) will mellow the sound and increase projection, while an increased zinc content (yellow brass or nickel silver) will increase the immediacy and brilliance of the sound, paying a certain penalty in terms of musical sound projection. The bass trombone, as in the case of the flügelhorn, requires a mouthpiece with a deeper, more V-shaped cup, a larger throat, and a slightly more flaring backbore, in order to realise its characteristically more sonorous *timbre*. A bass trombone played with a large-shank tenor mouthpiece will sound closer to a large tenor than a true bass and, indeed, is very often utilised as such under certain circumstances, such as unusually large ensembles.

Again, the equipment used is principally a question of personal taste, tempered by the exigencies of the musical job at hand. For instance, an instrument with too *small* a bore used in works by Brahms or Mahler would result in a sound lacking in resonance and nobility, while too *large* a bore in works of Berlioz or Elgar would be lacking in brilliance and vitality as far as the listener is concerned. Indeed, half a professional lifetime can be dedicated to achieving the "ideal" blend in a three- or four-piece trombone section, orchestral or otherwise.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, most of the solo literature reflects these characteristic differences between tenor and bass. While the spectrum of tenor trombone literature is measurably broader in terms of style periods and sheer volume of compositions, there is a bass trombone literature in existence today that operates in a very different *tessitura* to – and virtually independent of – that of the tenor trombone. This "separate identity" is generally welcomed and, in musical terms, capitalised on by specialists on both tenor and bass trombones. There are many players who actively pursue a career as "specialist" bass trombonists (the writer was a pioneer in this regard, importing the first large-bore King B(/F trombone to South Africa in 1961).

An awareness of the dynamic range of the trombone is advantageous, too: "... a pianissimo and expressive middle C played by a solo viola has musical impetus, while a rough, staccato and loud middle C played by three trombones has a quite different kind of musical energy" (Persichetti 1961: 276).

While marching bands exist which use valve trombones, the poverty of tone and inconsistency of intonation in comparison to the slide instrument have become so noticeable to the discerning ear that this practice is undergoing a natural decline, even in the third world. The valve trombone is usually of a medium-small bore; the only medium-large-bore valve trombone ever built was G C Conn's "marching trombone", an upright instrument equipped with the popular 8-H symphony model's bell. Unfortunately, this model was discontinued after Conn's merger in the 1980s with Benge and King into what became United Musical Instruments, and which is now part of the Steinway organisation. In Italy, true bass trombones in F with four rotary valves are used as the bass of the section. These are built with the valve section at a 45° angle, making them more tractable in a marching band (the writer noted these

models in an Italian catalogue of the 1960s; the firm could have been Orsi, Meazzi, Grassi or Rampone).

#### 5.2.10 *The Saxhorns*

The flügelhorn, which has been described as the soprano of the Saxhorns, has been discussed. Two other specific members of the Saxhorn group, the bass/baritone and contrabass of the group, will be described in the following sub-section 5.2.11, under the heading of *tubas*.

Today, the term "Saxhorn" is used principally to describe the alto- and tenor-voiced brass instruments that are not generally included in the concert band, i.e. the E( alto (tenor) horn and B( baritone horn, both stalwarts of British brass band instrumentation. In the brass band milieu they have a repertoire of their own, justified by their individual tonal characteristics.

The E( horn – in essence an alto Saxhorn – effectively closes the tonal gap between the cornets and the trombones. In the military or marching band, the use of the E( horn as a substitute for the French horn has been discussed in 5.2.8. The B( baritone – the next largest in the Saxhorn family – possesses a nature that is considerably lighter and even more flexible than that of the more robust (and occasionally stentorian) euphonium, lending itself admirably to *cantabile* playing. The comparatively few sonatas that are written specifically for the B( baritone are of a perceptibly different nature to those written for the more ubiquitous euphonium, Henry Jarman's *The Privateer* (published by Bosworth, after being out of print for a few years) being a case in point. The B( baritone, when used as a solo voice within the ensemble, is regarded by many players as possibly the most typical of British brass band instruments.

While most professional model euphoniums are equipped with four valves – the fourth valve lowering the basic pitch a perfect fourth, as in the case of the thumb valve or "trigger" on the trombone – the B( baritone is generally a three-valve instrument, lacking the downward extension to its pedal notes. Two exceptions are the top-of-the-range Besson model of the 1960s and the professional model Yamaha in the current catalogue. Thus, its range is that of the B( trumpet, one octave lower; in addition, most players have a range of "pedal" notes, as in the case of the tenor trombone. \*

Provision was made in *Syllabus 2000* for both the B( baritone horn and the E( alto horn. While neither is a standard member of the concert band or even the military marching band, they were included to accommodate certain members of previous SANDF and SAPS brass bands which had used these instruments.

#### 5.2.11 *The Tubas: B(, EE(, CC and BB(*

The euphonium, although built in tenor-baritone B( (as are the trombones) is more correctly described as a tenor tuba. It has the pronouncedly conical bore of the true tuba, the range of the tenor and bass trombones combined in the hands of an excellent player, and a full-bodied yet mellifluous *bel canto* voice that will make its presence heard in most *tuttis*. It has its own repertoire, but is able to make use of much of the bassoon, trombone, and even some of the 'cello literature. In the military and concert band, the euphonium is the solo voice *par excellence* among the low brass, and composers and arrangers exploit it accordingly. In the compiling of repertoire lists of this instrument, great selectivity was required in identifying works which called for a modicum of musicality in addition to technique.

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\* The writer recently acquired a Bb Baritone manufactured in Tianjin, Peoples' Republic of China; a German-style, oval model with rotary valves, the tone-quality is excellent and the intonation impeccable.



The euphonium, like the trombones, has its range of fundamental or "pedal" tones that are often usable down to a good "pedal" F or lower – as is the case with a competent bass trombonist.

The tubas found in service bands are traditionally built in the keys of either E( or B(. Traditionally, the term "EE(" – *double E*(, is employed in the case of extra-large bore instruments equipped with four valves, and "BB(" – *double B*-flat – in the case of the low tubas (or "basses") as they are pitched one octave lower than the B( euphonium. In all models designed for professional use, the EE( is equipped with four valves – either piston or rotary – as are the majority (but not all) of professional BB( models.

An interesting tendency that has emerged in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been for the more progressive service bands to acquire at least one "orchestral model" CC ("double-C"), 5-rotary valve model tuba, the principal reason being that this is the one tuba that can "do it all". The writer owned two such instruments in his brass-playing years and can vouch for their versatility, having employed them in a brass quintet, a German-type *Bierstube* band, and a full-sized symphonic concert band. Also, in a solo capacity, while taking the four upper grades of the Associated Board's practical examinations.

Since the 1970s German, USA and Japanese firms have gone out of their way to produce "a really good tuba" that would satisfy players who need a reliable, in-tune instrument with rapid, positive valve action and above-average tone quality that can be used for solo work, chamber music *and* in a full-size symphony orchestra. The "new generation double-C" has the sonority of most of the big BB( tubas combined with the comparative nimbleness of the E(, and in most cases is offered in three or four different bore sizes by the manufacturers, to suit the size of the ensemble and the player's taste and requirements. This instrument would not normally be taken on the march, not

due to its weight (it is, in fact, constructed of relatively light-weight brass) but because of the close tolerances of its moving parts and the vulnerability thereof to the vagaries of the weather and South African parade-ground conditions.

Due to savings both fiscal\* and *avoirdupois*, many service bands utilise fibreglass sousaphones in their parade bands. The sousaphone, which is simply a tuba with its tubing arranged in such a way that it can be draped over the player's shoulders, has a raised bell that projects forward, making it more effective in terms of portability and sound projection compared to the more compact standard tuba. The drawback with the fibreglass instruments, even in the hands of competent players, is that they very rarely produce a tone quality that is totally acceptable – particularly in the open air (J P Sousa's instruments were of medium-light gauge brass construction). Ideally, what is called for here is the heavy, "velvety" tone-quality of the German rotary-valve tubas, but in a practical, marching-band format.

A possible – and affordable – manner in which to achieve this ideal state would be to equip marching bands with modern-day Helicons, which are manufactured solely of brass, and are offered with three or (preferably) four rotary valves. These instruments would deliver the "required" tone quality with acceptable intonation. The Helicon is the direct progenitor of the Sousaphone: circular in construction, but without the exaggerated bell flare of the Sousaphone, and is still produced by German (Kühnl & Hoyer) and Czech (Amati) manufacturers due to a sustained demand in those countries, as well as Russia. They are also considerably less expensive and certainly a little lighter in weight than the average brass Sousaphone or upright tuba. These recommendations are outlined in Chapter 7.

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\* Converse to the practice of Western manufacturers, a Tianjin firm now offers Sousaphones of fibreglass construction at a price higher than their brass counterpart (Zack 2005).

It is interesting to note that helicons were in general use in the regimental and volunteer bands active in South Africa during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A photograph taken in the 1890s, reproduced in S. J. Jooste's doctoral thesis, shows their presence in the Free State Artillery Band (Jooste 1987: 272).

#### *5.2.12 Percussion instruments*

It is generally accepted in the world of percussion that there are four identifiable categories of percussion instruments: the untuned percussion (all drums other than timpani, and all other sound-producing instruments of *indefinite* pitch); timpani (with the possible inclusion of tuneable tom-toms); mallet/keyboard percussion (marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, glockenspiel) and that less-than-a-century-old device that tests the coordination of all who tackle it, the drum kit (drum set), the components of which having been standardised since the 1950s.

According to the syllabuses of TCL and the ABRSM, percussion candidates from approximately Grade V upwards are required to perform in three out of these four "recognised" categories of percussion instruments. While snare (side) drum, timpani, and mallet percussion are to be presented, the opportunity exists for the candidate to perform most of the examination on his or her "principal" percussion instrument, whichever of the three it may be. The fourth category of the drum kit, on the other hand, is regarded as a separate examination subject altogether, and is not included as a component of the "normal" percussion grade examination.

Understandably, the policy of IDMAC in this regard has always been a little different to that of "civilian" institutions. Initially, the candidate was expected to prepare a solo (usually with band accompaniment) on his or her main instrument, and to perform a selection of extracts and sight-reading on any

additional *two* of the possible four percussion categories, the drum kit being one of these.

During 2003 IDMAC decided, in order to encourage greater versatility among service band percussionists, and with a view to increasing their usefulness to the Bandmaster or Director of Music, that a component from all *four* categories of percussion instrument would form part of the evaluations from the level of Senior Musician (Grade VIII) upwards. At the same time the dispensation was granted wherein the candidate would declare, on entering for the promotional evaluation, which two of the four percussion instrument categories he or she was presenting as the *principal* two. The remaining two categories were to be presented at one level of musicianship lower when it came to the performance of prepared extracts and of sight-reading. This development has been favourably received by percussionists and examiners alike.

There is a fair repertoire for the side drum as a solo instrument within the concert band. There is also a "traditional" repertoire of xylophone solos and duets with band accompaniment, which in many cases compensate in audience appeal for what they lack in musicality.

A welcome addition to the percussion repertoire as a whole would be a wider selection of solo items for the marimba. Although superficial appearances are similar, this is a very different instrument to the xylophone, and deserves a discrete repertoire to demonstrate its intrinsic qualities. While the xylophone is generally played with hard-tipped beaters of plastic, wood, or *very* hard rubber, the marimba produces a resonant, projecting quality of sound when played with the correct type of mallet, usually of medium-soft rubber wound with wool or other material. When played with a controlled *tremolo* between the two hands, the marimba is capable of producing a genuine *bel canto*

quality in sustained melody playing, a quality frequently overlooked or discounted due to the fact that it is nominally a percussion instrument.

There are indications that contemporary composers have become aware of its properties, however, and a revision of the percussion repertoire to accommodate the marimba in a solo capacity is overdue. The South African composer Peter Klatzow has written a very effective concerto for the instrument. A limited-range, portable "marching marimba" appears in one or two manufacturer's catalogues, and may well make an effective addition to a parade band when used in a manner that contrasts with that of the xylophone.

### *5.2.13 String instruments in the Concert Band*

In the larger concert or symphonic band, the string bass has become an accepted component of the standard instrumentation, as has the pianoforte or some form of electronic keyboard. Whereas the keyboard – along with the drum kit and possibly the amplified guitar – has found its way into the concert band due to the more eclectic, show-business-oriented literature that is the norm rather than the exception today, the same cannot be said for the string contrabass. Initially, it was introduced to the concert band in order to reinforce the tubas' bass line, not in terms of volume but in terms of an alternative texture and articulation.

Latterly, however, the larger professional and amateur wind bands have increasingly made use of contra-alto and contrabass clarinets and – when procurable – the contrabassoon to complement the tubas and to introduce a more variable woodwind texture in the bass line. The Fulham Symphonic Wind Band, a largely amateur organisation with high musical standards, was an example of this in London during the 1960s (Bannister 1963). Notwithstanding the presence of the contrabass reed instruments, the string

bass remained, due to its flexibility and capacity to blend with the lower winds. The South African Police Band, under the directorship of the late Brigadier Sam Holmes, expanded during the 1980s and early 1990s to include not only three or four string basses, but four 'cellos, who added colour to the band's texture by doubling the euphonium parts.

A rather different scenario facilitating the inclusion of all bowed strings in a South African service band was created by Dr. Naudé Burger in the late 1980s, during the final years of compulsory national service for white male South Africans. In a well-considered attempt to harness the musical talent of school-leavers who were proficient on an orchestral or band instrument, the South African Army Chamber Orchestra was formed, offering professional employment to those who qualified musically. Their basic military training was truncated (or in certain cases deferred indefinitely) and within a remarkably short period of time a functional orchestra had taken shape, one which was effectively deployed in supplying morally-uplifting shows and concerts to the conscripted troops and permanent force units all over the country.

Subsequent to the installation of a fully democratically-elected government in South Africa in 1994, with the system of national service having in the meantime become optional once again, an attrition rate began to become evident in the Chamber orchestra as the more accomplished players were attracted to symphony orchestra posts. There were other reasons too: string players who had tolerated the military *milieu* for one reason or another now saw their way clear to leaving the music profession and becoming involved in computer programming (this was prior to the market becoming over-traded) or some other lucrative activity.

Numbers within the Army Chamber Orchestra dwindled steadily until the army was left with what amounted to a double string quartet plus string bass,

which remained functional until 2001, by which time they had become bereft of violas and 'cellos. *Sic transit musica* in the face of socio-political changes.

### **5.3 Viable 21<sup>st</sup>-century additions to the instrumentation of the concert and marching band**

During 2001 the writer was approached by the IDMAC Chairman and asked to identify any of the indigenous instruments of sub-Saharan Africa (or their popular offshoots) which might conceivably be incorporated into standard South African military band instrumentation, for ceremonial purposes.

After perusing various catalogues and conferring with major musical instrument retailers in the greater Johannesburg-Pretoria area, as well as percussion players in the Bands of the National Ceremonial Guard and the South African Military Health Services, the writer arrived at the conclusion that the only practical addition at this juncture would be the *Ndjembe*, a waisted, single-vellum drum from the region of Nigeria, but which is probably of Egyptian or Nilotic origin. This is of approximately the same size and pitch as a tenor drum, although slightly longer, lighter in weight and tapered, a drum which can conveniently be taken on the march using a shoulder-strap similar to that used on amplified guitars. An advantage for the parade band is that the *Ndjembe* can also be obtained in aluminium. This is felt to be a more prudent choice than the marching tom-toms appearing in certain percussion catalogues.

In the interim, the Band of the Western Province Command in Cape Town has equipped itself with numbers in excess of two dozen wooden *Ndjembe* drums, on which every concert band member is expected to perform in addition to their "Western" instrument. These instruments are now manufactured commercially as a result of demand from all sections of the musical public. Adjudicating at an Army Bands Competition on 26 November 2003, the writer was singularly impressed when, for their second Concert Band

offering, the entire personnel of the WP Command Band left the stage and took up a drum on the auditorium floor, performing an indigenous composition that was as well-endowed with cross-rhythms as it was with percussive surprises. The item was simply entitled "African Drumming Feature". It is worth mentioning that this band is comprised of white, "coloured", Indian and black bandsmen and -women, and the band members' overall enthusiasm for this percussion medium was tangible.

The compact marching marimba has already been mentioned; this is likely to be more effective than the "marching xylophones" already on the market. Another instrument indigenous to sub-Saharan Africa that was briefly considered was the *Mbira*, the Zimbabwean/Malawian thumb piano which, if built in a large enough size and fitted to the top of a gourd or wooden resonator, might *just* be audible in a military band context. The *kudu* horn - from the animal of the same name - which might be described as a side-blown *cornetto* lacking finger-holes, or an elongated *shofar*, was also briefly considered. The *kudu* horn features strongly in Zulu ceremonial occasions, and when blown in groups produces an impressive - if not particularly musical - effect. Like the bugle, the *kudu* horn is effective as a signal and ceremonial instrument, and may well be a candidate for future inclusion in a unit such as the Band of the National Ceremonial Guard.

To whatever extent indigenous African instruments *can* be usefully integrated into service bands, it is fairly clear that there are moves afoot to do just that in South African bands.

#### **5.4 Further observations**

The inequity of solo repertoire between the various woodwind and brass instruments notwithstanding, the result of this research leads one to the conclusion that a stylistically equitable and idiomatically proper repertoire for



each instrument does indeed exist, one which can be documented in a manner useful to the compilers of an fundamentally practical syllabus.

From piccolo to bassoon, from solo cornet to CC or BB( tuba, varied and musically attractive lists have been compiled for every wind instrument, and at every designated level of competency, in *Syllabus 2000*. The capacity exists to compile additional or alternative lists, even for instruments not yet incorporated in South African service bands (see Limitations of the Study, Chapter 1.17). As additional compatible material is published, the abovementioned lists are augmented or updated accordingly.

With regard to the writer's secondary designated mission, much has been accomplished in the past five years in regard to "popularising" the previously little-known instruments. The culture of specialising in a non-mainstream wind such as the piccolo, cor anglais, bass or even alto clarinet, baritone saxophone or bass trombone can be seen to have taken root in all the major professional bands in South Africa. These include the SA Army Bands of the NCG and Western Province Command, the bands of the SA Medical Health Services, the SA Navy, and the SA Police College Band in Pretoria. An impartial observer would have little trouble in agreeing that professional wind players in South Africa have progressed beyond the state of affairs that obtained at the first two performances of Stravinsky's *Threni* in Venice and Hamburg during the last quarter of 1958. Roman Vlad (1961: 217f) specifically mentions the "less orthodox" wind instruments used in this composition, namely the alto clarinet, the bugle (flügelhorn) and sarrusophone, and some of the problems encountered as a result. In a footnote, Vlad adds that for the performance in Venice the sarrusophone part was divided between two contra-bassoons. The reason for this was that the part proved to be too difficult for the sarrusophone players engaged by the Hamburg orchestra. Today, it is likely that there are players in Europe who have specialised in such parts, keeping the art of Sarrusophone playing alive.

What has become very clear in the course of this study, is the degree to which the compiler must acquaint himself with the acoustic and even mechanical characteristics of the instruments of the full concert band (as delineated in the third research sub-question) as well as their individual repertoires. Only then is one in a position to make a useful and meaningful decision on what to include and what to omit. The specialist panel members need to have a vital interest in, and awareness of, the characteristics of all the members of the family of their specialist instrument, as well as their published repertoire.

The chief compiler and coordinator of the syllabus – in this case the present writer – has to ensure that all possible gaps are filled and omissions avoided. However, two or three of the instrumental repertoire lists for the lesser-used wind instruments remain very slightly below par regarding variety of content, having a choice of six or seven solo works compared to ten for all the others. These minor *lacunae* are being filled as this is being written, as new material comes to light in publisher's catalogues and original compositions are produced where most needed (Appendix B). None of this can adequately be accomplished without a proactive and realistic approach to the instruments themselves, as well as a genuine love for the subject. What is arguably the aim of the art critic obtains here: the need to report objectively on what has been experienced subjectively.

Those who make a profession of music are not in agreement on this difficulty [of what is the most agreeable sound of all the musical instruments], and a great diversity of opinion is met which comes from the different affections that the musicians bring to the instruments, to which they are more given, and which they know better how to play.

Thus wrote Marin Mersenne in 1636 (1964: 23).

## 5.5 Summary

Today, in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the wind player has a wider choice of instruments than at any other time in recorded history. The choice

offered is not only of different manufacturers' models, each with their own personal characteristics and physical qualities, but is also a choice of different members of each "consort" that has not been seen since Renaissance times.

More than ever, the opportunities exist for an instrument that will match the performer's personality as well as the special nature of his or her life and career as a professional musician; this is indeed the age of free choice. As technique progresses and evolves, so too does the vital quality of individuality in self-expression. Matching these developments every step of the way are the instrument manufacturers; techniques have not only kept pace with those of the new generation of performers and composers, but – as has been elucidated by Post (1986: 39) and Schorn (2005) – actually anticipated their needs.

With a sonic range from super-sopranino to sub-contrabass in the winds, the concert band of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has the potential to reach new heights – and depths, musically speaking. The compilers of any syllabus for winds should unhesitatingly welcome the more esoteric members of the brass and woodwind families with open arms, and make provision for their inclusion wherever practicable. The world has entered an age of enthusiastic personal musical expression, and the range of equipment for facilitating this expression is wider, more accessible, and more reliable in quality than ever before.

## CHAPTER SIX

### PRACTICAL INSTRUMENTAL COMPETENCY LEVELS IN SOUTH AFRICAN SERVICE BANDS

#### **6.1 An internal approach by IDMAC to unit standards in practical instrumental performance**

The aim of this chapter is to describe an approach to unit standards in musical performance that was formulated and arrived at quite independently of the SAQA process of accreditation. It will be some considerable time – if ever – before the South African Qualifications Authority applies itself to the establishment of unit standards for musical evaluation in service bands. In the United Kingdom, however, tangible yardsticks of performance have already been established by the ABRSM, Trinity College (London) and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

While it is the wish of IDMAC to encompass any local developments with regard to the actual establishment of unit standards in music, the practicalities of the situation – the need for major revision of the audition syllabus – dictated that IDMAC and its associates move ahead independently of SAQA in this regard. Through the present writer, IDMAC was kept informed of the MEUSSA team's progress in the planning of unit standards.

#### **6.2 The University of Pretoria's MEUSSA team**

On 17 July 1999 a group of music academics, teachers, performers and post-graduate students met for the first time at a launch meeting of what would eventually become known as the *Music Education Unit Standards for Southern Africa* – known by its acronym MEUSSA – research project. This consisted of a somewhat disparate group of individuals who nonetheless had a similar aim in mind: to utilise "the unique opportunity to re-think, re-plan and re-structure the music education plan holistically" in South Africa, via the

formulation of unit standards for music. On completion, it was planned that these would be submitted to and registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

The architects of this team were Professors Caroline van Niekerk and Heinrich van der Mescht of the University of Pretoria's Department of Music. Supporting the project was a number of South African and international "critical friends", which included the present writer. On being apprised of this project, however, it was this writer's express wish not merely to be an adjunct to the process but to become directly involved therein, being already engaged in syllabus design for IDMAC and, previously, UNISA and the erstwhile Natal and Transvaal Education Departments. This in turn led to the writer registering as a doctoral candidate at the University of Pretoria, and to producing the current thesis.

The initial research team consisted of the following members:

- Ms AnnNoëlle Bennett
- Ms Ronelle Bosman
- Ms Elma Britz
- Ms Mandy Carver
- Mr Chats Devroop
- Ms Jeanette Domingues
- Mr Marc Duby
- Dr Dave Galloway
- Ms Vinayagi Govinder
- Ms Petro Grové
- Ms Antoinette Hoek
- Mr Zabalaza Mthembu
- Ms Zenda Nel
- Mr Paul Potgieter

- Ms Daniela Pretorius
- Ms Annarine Röscher
- Mr Dag Sumner
- Ms Nita Wolff.

Professor van Niekerk's executive summary (Van Niekerk & van der Mescht 1999: 1) of the project, circulated to team members in November 1999, is particularly enlightening *vis-à-vis* the status quo of music within the new educational dispensation in South Africa. It was an inspired effort to ensure the creation of cogent and relevant unit standards in a discipline which had in the past been bedevilled by inconsistencies, bias and, in some cases, by sheer neglect at the hands of the educational authorities. She writes:

A novel way is proposed of ensuring the writing of coherent unit standards for Musics, across the board, for South Africa, using a team of approximately two dozen Master' and Doctoral students, registered for this purpose at the University of Pretoria. The development of this team's work will be further overseen by large groups of South African and international Critical Friends, already recruited for this purpose.

Funding for standards generating activity for musics is not readily available, and the representative body of individuals sitting on the Standards Generating Body (SGB) for Musics – when such is approved by the relevant national Standards Body – are unlikely to be able to write the standards themselves. Spontaneous and independent standards generating activities cannot conceivably result in a coordinated national system. A large team's unified work is thus the most likely way to achieve a desirable product.

This work will be submitted to the SGB who, in the foreseen total absence of other proposals, should be likely to accept the suggested unit standards, with possibly a few minor changes according to their particular preferences. However, based on thorough research, the product of the team's work will be able to stand on its own as the academically acceptable result of a well-structured research project, regardless of whether it is deemed acceptable by the SGB.

While this purview proved prophetic to a large degree, contradictory elements and viewpoints emerged in the course of the MEUSSA meetings, as can be expected in a pioneering academic exercise of this nature. Relatively early in the proceedings an amiable but clearly definable polarisation took place between factions within the MEUSSA team. The majority of members came from an institutional, primary or secondary school-teaching background with comparatively limited experience as professional performers. A natural affinity in terms of values and goals between these members appeared to exist, although individual dynamics and paradigms varied considerably.

More difficult to integrate into the team was a small number of members who did not appear to have any particular goal or discernable contribution of their own, and who were perfectly happy to fall in with the majority view. In fact, the team has lost numbers since its inception. A third contrasting element was that of the individualist performers who had been privileged enough to have received a training in *bonafide* jazz in addition to Western art music, namely Chats Devroop, Marc Duby and the present writer, a trio which tended quite naturally to band together as a moderately iconoclastic *Brüderschaft*. Although finding itself opposed on one or two occasions to certain proposals which were perceived as being unfeasible and excessively academic, this group endeavoured at all times to perform a stimulating and productive function in the proceedings, albeit from a contrasting perspective, and to make a useful contribution to the team effort.

Further to Professor van Niekerk's vision of the standards generating bodies (SGBs), the abovementioned trio ended up serving on two of these bodies themselves. This succeeded to a significant extent in counter-balancing the presence of the industry-related attendees who were deemed unlikely to be able to write the unit standards themselves. In fact, the lethargy within the SAQA organisation that was experienced by MEUSSA participants

necessitated an outside facilitator being called in to hold workshops on the actual writing of unit standards (Ms Leonie Vorster of Evolution Enterprises, Johannesburg). Only after an exhaustive three-day workshop held during the last weekend of April 2003 did SGB members feel empowered to actually begin writing unit standards.

The philosophy of the MEUSSA team was drafted by Mandy Carver of Grahamstown (Carver 2001). This was adopted as the team's joint mission to create unit standards that will:

- Reflect the values and principles of South African society;
- Be in keeping with the outcomes-based approach to education;
- Integrate well with other areas of learning, especially with the other strands of the Culture and Arts learning area, i.e. Visual Arts, Drama and Dance;
- Take into account the fact that schools vary greatly in available human and other resources;
- Create a basis for a relevant and balanced curriculum in music;
- Recognise no hierarchy of genre;
- Recognise the variety of purposes and functions of music across cultures;
- Affirm the musicality of all learners, and seek to develop their potential as music makers;
- Cater for the general learner – including those with special needs – as well as for those who aspire to a career in music.

While this serves the needs of educationalists well, it cannot be directly equated with the needs of the service band as far as performing standards are concerned, and IDMAC continued on a relatively independent path in that regard, as will now be described.

### **6.3 A pragmatic approach to establishing unit standards for instrumental performance**

As indicated in the previous paragraphs, the writer was invited to serve on the SGBs for Further Education and Training, and Higher Education and Training: Music, subsequent to his membership of the MEUSSA team, and



attended three such meetings during the period 2002-2003 (this in itself is an indication of the pace at which the process operates). At a mid-2003 meeting of the SGB for music at the latter level, the following attributes for instrumental and vocal performance at SAQA level 6, i.e. the final year of a practically-oriented BMus course, were listed as being desirable:

#### SKILLS

- Play (at least) one instrument (at a graduate level)
- Interpret repertoire appropriately
- Source, select, research and have knowledge of repertoire
- Perform competently in an ensemble situation
- Demonstrate the ability to present one's self as well as the musical material, as well as basic entrepreneurship
- Have the necessary musical vocabulary for improvisatory skills
- Maintenance of instrument(s) and basic repair skills

#### KNOWLEDGE: the qualifying learner should be aware of

- The stylistic conventions of the instrument(s)/voice
- Repertoire in a variety of *genres*
- The acoustic properties of the instrument(s)
- A working knowledge of the music profession and legal aspects thereof
- The evolutionary history of the instrument(s) and family of instrument(s)
- Current performance trends worldwide
- The compilation of programmes
- Embedded knowledge, i.e. the underlying essential knowledge that has brought the performer to their current level of competency.

The SGB jointly reached the conclusion that if the specific competency is applied, the desired outcome is achieved (SAQA 2003).

While the above competencies are very close to those of a professional service band instrumentalist, and bearing in mind the time taken to establish unit standards in music via the SAQA route, IDMAC took note of the announcement by TCL (Stevens 2001) that:

As from 1 September 2000, the full range of Trinity College (London) grade examinations in music has been formally accredited by the English Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) [...] Other examination Boards are now following suit, but Trinity was one of the first, together with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, to secure accreditations.

As a result of representations made to SAQA in the interim by Trinity College (London), the Trinity Grade VII practical music examination - in combination with the Trinity Grade VI written theory examination - is recognised by the South African authorities as the equivalent of music as a matriculation subject on the Higher grade, and Trinity Grade VI practical combined with their Grade VI theory on the Standard grade. This dispensation had initially been granted to the UNISA Grade VII practical/Grade VI theory combination only. The Higher grade carries a maximum aggregate of 400 marks, and the Standard grade 300. Grade VIII was not a prerequisite at this stage, and has since been evaluated separately, independent of matriculation requirements.

The significance of this dispensation is that it offers the senior secondary scholar a very practical alternative to taking music as a co-curricular subject. In addition to being a "regular" Group F subject at some government schools and most private schools in South Africa, matriculation music may be taken as a seventh (or even eighth) subject, over and above the mandatory six. The Associated Board has in the interim successfully applied to SAQA for a similar dispensation with regard to matriculation music accreditation. This was granted during 2005, and secondary school departments of music were informed accordingly (Twyford 2005).

As far as IDMAC's requirements are concerned, it is debatable whether all of the academic considerations required at the SAQA level 6 (tertiary: graduate) could usefully be incorporated into unit standards for service band musicians. In contrast to the unit standards for academic qualifications, it would be

difficult - if not impossible - to accommodate the category of "non-professional" performer, as no such musician exists within the framework of the service band.

With relevance to the requirements of professional service bands, all of which operate under the aegis of IDMAC, it is primarily *practical* (i.e. essentially job-related) unit standards for service band instrumentalists within the established categories of musician that are relevant, and these might be more usefully delineated in the manner outlined in the following section, being essentially outcomes-based.

Where reference is made to the grades or diplomas of Trinity College, London as a yardstick, it is patently because that institution has already successfully run the course of national (UK) qualifications. The equivalent grades and diplomas most significant to this study have already been - or are being - accredited by SAQA after representation by TCL. To submit the contents of *Syllabus 2000* to SAQA for what would in practical terms amount to *re-accreditation*, would amount to what is commonly referred to as "re-inventing the wheel". SAQA accreditation at this juncture is in any event not possible, as the SGBs are drawing up unit standards from the BMus exit level (Level 6) downwards, and have at the time of writing not yet tackled the secondary or post-secondary levels in instrumental music performance.

Petro Grové (2001: 267), the second MEUSSA team candidate to complete her thesis, perceived that

The process of defining, writing, implementing and revising unit standards [...] will go on for many years until all the gaps have been filled and all music practices addressed [...] Unit standards registered will be valid for a period of three years (SAQA 1998b: 11), in which they should be implemented, evaluated and revised before re-registering. They are not, therefore, "cast in stone".

Precisely. It is also clear that were IDMAC to have waited for accreditation of its syllabuses by SAQA, this committee might have remained in their pre-1998 position, i.e. without a syllabus that met the required standards. Being a prime mover in the field of music performance rather than music education, IDMAC does not regard itself bound by the structures of a Department of Education hegemony. Additionally, the various arms of Defence Force and Police services are collectively the largest employer of professional musicians in the country, and with its mandate IDMAC justifiably feels at liberty to pursue its own path in the pursuit of higher and more consistent standards in practical instrumental music performance. Arguably the most tangible manifestation of this policy to date is *Syllabus 2000*.

In the course of her article Grové (2001) mentioned, however, that

The MEUSSA Team [...] barely touched the tip of an iceberg [...] South Africa is in dire need of substantial and unique Music Philosophies. It is recommended that the extended (present as well as future) MEUSSA team, with their collective expertise, address these problems.

The present writer finds himself very much in accord with this view, as does IDMAC, and this body has resolved to continue to address the challenge of "a substantial and unique" music philosophy for the future well-being of the service bands and their incumbents.

The Director and world-famous conductor of the Eastman Wind Ensemble in the United States, Frederic Fennel (1960), in the liner notes of his recording of Persichetti's Sixth Symphony, says:

Persichetti does not consider that his interest in writing music for concerted numbers of wind and percussion instruments is anything particularly unusual for a mid-twentieth century composer – as indeed it should not be.

This was, in its way, a prophetic view: in the 45 years following that recording, the concert or symphonic wind band has become more the norm than the exception in the world of art music.

At this juncture – and there is very little reason to suspect that any major changes are imminent – required outcomes for service band instrumentalists are essentially as they appear in the following sub-sections. It may be noted that the opportunity to perform a recital does not occur until the Principal Musician level.

#### **6.4 IDMAC performance levels: specific competencies required**

With these outcomes in mind, the following competencies were identified by the IDMAC team as being reasonable expectations from service band instrumentalists.

##### **6.4.1 *Woodwind Instruments***

###### **6.4.1.1 Category I: LEARNER MUSICIAN**

- Flute: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively within an instrumental ensemble, either seated or on the march.
- Oboe: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively within a concert band or chamber group.
- Clarinet: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist in all registers at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively in an ensemble of any size, either seated or on the march.

- Bassoon: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively in an ensemble of any size.
- Saxophone: Demonstrate music performance skills at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively within an instrumental ensemble, chamber group or marching band.

In all cases, the Learner Musician must be able to match dynamic levels and instrumental timbres, and respond to a conductor's directions.

#### 6.4.1.2 Category II: MUSICIAN

- Flute and Piccolo: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and make a meaningful contribution as an ensemble player, seated, standing or on the march.
- Oboe and cor anglais: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and make a meaningful contribution as an ensemble and chamber music player.
- Clarinet(s): Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and make a meaningful contribution as an ensemble player in a group of any size, seated, standing or on the march. In the absence of a written part for the low clarinets, players should be able to adapt that of another instrument in the same range (e.g. perform the 2<sup>nd</sup> alto saxophone part on alto clarinet, or the 2<sup>nd</sup> bassoon or the euphonium part on bass clarinet (reading bass clef concert pitch)).

- Bassoon: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and to make a meaningful contribution as a concert band and chamber music ensemble player.
- Saxophones: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate (Grade VI) level, including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and make a meaningful contribution as an ensemble player in a group of any size, including a saxophone quartet and a marching band.

In all cases, Musicians are expected to be able to demonstrate a knowledge of their instrument's history and standard solo repertoire at this level, and to subject themselves to aural and *viva voce* tests. They are at all times expected to perform with the appropriate tone-quality on their instrument, and have a knowledge of the basic maintenance thereof.

#### 6.4.1.3 Category III: SENIOR MUSICIAN

- Flute and Piccolo: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist and ensemble player in all musical styles and all instrumental ensembles at a nominal Grade VIII level, including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level.
- Oboe and cor anglais: Demonstrate instrumental solo and ensemble skills at a nominal Grade VIII level, including the ability to sight read and to play scales and arpeggios at that level, and make a meaningful contribution as a chamber music player.
- Clarinets: Demonstrate music performance skills as soloist and in any ensemble, seated, standing or on the march, including the ability to sight read and to play scales and arpeggios at that level. Low clarinets, in the absence of original parts for their instrument,

should be able to adapt parts from other instruments of similar range, e.g. bass clarinet playing concert pitch bass clef parts such as 2<sup>nd</sup> bassoon or euphonium if called for.

- Bassoon: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist, ensemble and chamber music player at a nominal Grade VIII level, including the ability to sight read and to play scales and arpeggios at that level.
- Saxophones: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist, ensemble and chamber music player seated, standing or on the march, including the ability to sight read and play scales and arpeggios at that level.

Senior Musicians should demonstrate a more extensive knowledge of their instrument's repertoire than is expected at Musician level, as well as the general knowledge required in that category.

#### 6.4.1.4 Category IV: PRINCIPAL MUSICIAN

- Flute and Piccolo: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of playing, including all scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight reading.
- Oboe and cor anglais: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of playing other than marching band (unless doubling on a single-reed instrument), including all scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight reading.
- Clarinets: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of playing, including all scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight reading.



- Bassoon: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of playing, including all scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight reading.
- Saxophones: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of playing, including all scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight reading.

#### 6.4.1.5 Category V: CHIEF MUSICIAN

- Flute and Piccolo: Consistently demonstrate music performance skills at the nominal competency level of Licentiate Diploma in all aspects of playing. In addition, the ability to train and rehearse a relevant section of the full band *or* a chamber group, is required, along with management skills particular to the musical unit.
- Oboe and cor anglais: As above.
- Clarinets: As above.
- Bassoon: As above
- Saxophones: As above.

At the level of Principal and Chief Musician, a more comprehensive knowledge of instrumental repertoire is required than in the earlier categories, plus a thorough general knowledge of the history, development and maintenance of the instrument(s) concerned. At the level of Chief Musician, the knowledge and basic methodology required to train junior members of the section is a prescribed requirement.

## 6.4.2 *Brass instruments*

### 6.4.2.1 Category I: LEARNER MUSICIAN

- Trumpet and cornet: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at the Grade III-IV level, with an acceptable tone quality, plus the ability to perform effectively within a music ensemble, both seated and on the march.
- Horn (French or E( alto/tenor): Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at the Grade III-IV level, and the ability to perform effectively within small or large ensembles, seated or on the march.
- Tenor Trombone and Euphonium: Demonstrate music performance skills at the Grade III-IV level, both as a soloist and as an ensemble player, seated or on the march.
- Bass Trombone and Tuba: As for Tenor Trombone/ Euphonium.

In all cases, the Learner Musician must be able to match dynamic levels and instrumental timbres, and respond to a conductor's directions.

### 6.4.2.2 Category II: MUSICIAN

- Trumpet/Cornet/Flügelhorn: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and make a meaningful musical contribution as an ensemble player, seated, standing or on the march.
- French horn: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist and chamber music players at an intermediate (Grade VI) level, including the ability play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and the ability to make a meaningful musical

contribution as an ensemble player, seated, standing or on the march.

- Trombones (Tenor and Bass): Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate (Grade VI) level, including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level, and to be a useful member of a trombone quartet, as well as the ability to make a meaningful musical contribution as an ensemble player, seated, standing or on the march.
- Euphonium/Tuba: Demonstrate music performance skills as a soloist at an intermediate level (Grade VI), including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and the sight-read at that level, plus the ability to make a meaningful musical contribution to an ensemble of any size, seated, standing or on the march.

In all cases Musicians are expected to be able to demonstrate a knowledge of their instrument's history and standard solo repertoire at this level, and to subject themselves to aural and *viva voce* tests. They are at all times expected to perform with the appropriate tone-quality on their instrument(s), and have a knowledge of the basic maintenance thereof.

#### 6.4.2.3 Category III: SENIOR MUSICIAN

- Trumpet/Cornet/Flügelhorn: Demonstrate instrumental performance skills as a soloist and ensemble player in all musical styles and all instrumental ensembles at a nominal Grade VIII level, including the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read at that level.
- French horn: As above.
- Trombones: As above.
- Euphonium/Tuba: As above.

Senior Musicians are expected to demonstrate a more extensive knowledge of their instrument's repertoire, history and maintenance than is the case at the Musician level.

#### 6.4.2.4 Category IV: PRINCIPAL MUSICIAN

- Trumpet/Cornet/Flügelhorn: Consistently demonstrate instrumental performance skills at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma in all aspects of solo, chamber group and ensemble playing, including scales and arpeggios, aural perception and sight-reading.
- French horn: As above.
- Trombones: As above.
- Euphonium/Tuba: As above.

#### 6.4.2.5 Category V: CHIEF MUSICIAN

- Trumpet/Cornet/Flügelhorn: Consistently demonstrate instrumental performance skills at the nominal competency level of Licentiate Diploma (Recital) in all aspects of solo, chamber group and ensemble playing; in addition, the ability to train and rehearse a relevant section of the full band *or* a chamber group is required, along with management skills particular to the musical unit.
- French horn: As above.
- Trombones: As above.
- Euphonium/Tuba: As above.

At the levels of Principal and Chief Musician, a more comprehensive knowledge of instrumental repertoire is required than at the lower levels of competency, plus a thorough general knowledge of the history, development, current usage and maintenance of the instrument(s) concerned. At the level of

Chief Musician the knowledge and basic methodology required to train junior members of the section is a prescribed requirement.

### 6.4.3 *Percussion instruments*

#### 6.4.3.1 Category I: LEARNER MUSICIAN

- Snare drum: Demonstrate drum rudiments and the basic ability to sight-read at a Grade III-IV level. A demonstration of some ability on the drum kit and/or mallet percussion may be required.

#### 6.4.3.2 Category II: MUSICIAN

- Non-tuned percussion: Demonstrate instrumental and technical performance skills, rudiments, and the ability to sight-read, at an intermediate (Grade VI) level, on the full range of percussion instruments of indefinite pitch.
- Tuned percussion: Timpani: Demonstrate instrumental performance skills, including the ability to tune and re-tune a set of three timpani during breaks in a performance, and to sight-read at an intermediate (Grade VI) level.
- Tuned percussion: Mallet instruments: Demonstrate instrumental and technical performance skills as a soloist and ensemble player, plus the ability to play scales and arpeggios and to sight-read, at an intermediate (Grade VI) level.
- Drum kit (drum set): Demonstrate the ability and physical coordination to utilise the full kit effectively and musically, to maintain a steady beat in any chosen rhythm, and to sight-read any part for drum kit at an intermediate (Grade VI) level of difficulty.

Musicians are required to be well versed in the maintenance and basic repair of their group of instruments and the composite parts thereof.

#### 6.4.3.3 Category III: SENIOR MUSICIAN

- Non-tuned percussion: Demonstrate instrumental performance and technical skills at a nominal Grade VIII level of competency, with an appropriate sight-reading ability.
- Timpani: As above, plus the ability to tune and re-tune a set of four timpani during the course of a performance, and the appropriate sight-reading ability.
- Mallet percussion: Demonstrate instrumental performance skills at a nominal Grade VIII level of competency, including scales and arpeggios, and an appropriate sight-reading ability.
- Drum kit: As for Musician, but at a nominal Grade VIII level of competency.

#### 6.4.3.4 Category IV: PRINCIPAL MUSICIAN

- Non-tuned percussion: Consistently demonstrate instrumental performance and technical skills, including sight-reading, at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma.
- Tuned percussion: As above, with the addition of scales and arpeggios.
- Timpani: Consistently demonstrate instrumental performance skills, including sight-reading, at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma (Recital), plus the ability to tune and re-tune a set of up to five timpani as may be required in the course of a performance.

- Drum kit: Consistently demonstrate total coordination and control of the full kit, resulting in a musical performance at the nominal competency level of Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma , including sight-reading.

#### 6.4.3.5 Category V: CHIEF MUSICIAN

- Non-tuned percussion: Consistently demonstrate instrumental performance, technical skills and sight-reading at the level of Licentiate Diploma, on all variants in this category of instruments
- Tuned percussion: As above (up to four mallets may be required).
- Timpani: As above (up to five timpani may be required).
- Drum Kit: As above (non-tuned percussion), including the ability to maintain a *bonafide* jazz, Latin or rock beat at various tempos.

Bosman (2001: 6-2), in her thesis *Unit Standards for Aerophones in a Post-modern South Africa*, summed up what she considers essential generic outcomes for winds as follows:

- Deliver a balanced recital of varying time durations (as apposite for each performance level).
- Demonstrate tone control appropriate for the level of study and the instrument (the present writer would have preferred the term "tone production").
- Demonstrate sufficient knowledge and control over technical exercises and scale structures.
- Demonstrate understanding of context according to style, *genre* and history.
- Participate as a member of an ensemble together with other instrumentalists of own choice, at an appropriate level of performance.
- Demonstrate an ability in improvising.
- Demonstrate a sight-reading ability at an appropriate level.
- Demonstrate an understanding of music concepts in relation to repertoire performed.

These specifications correspond in a large measure to the outcomes-based criteria described in 6.4 *supra*, with exception of the improvisational ability (Bosman) and the parade band capabilities (IDMAC). At a late stage of revision (April 2005) the suggestion was made at the IDMAC level that the remaining "entertainment units" be fully incorporated into the military/concert bands, but with the suggestion that an improvisational ability be added to the IDMAC evaluation criteria. This would certainly expedite any remaining barriers between the military and the entertainment sides of professional band performance. Over and above – and quite independent of – the "dance band" capabilities of the entertainment units, a fairly substantial *cadre* of accomplished jazz instrumentalists exists within the ranks of South Africa's service bands, to whom improvisation in the *bona fide* jazz idiom is a regular activity.

#### **6.5 Relevant learning outcomes and criteria in the United Kingdom comparable to the aims of IDMAC**

Dr Roger Bowers, Chief Executive of TCL, quoted by Clare Stevens (2001: 11) states that

We have strengthened and made more direct our statement of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. All our certificates will soon have 'can do' statements on the back explaining what, for example, a grade 5 pass 'proves'.

IDMAC is working towards a similar end, and seeking accreditation through a formal link with TCL in this regard, as they indirectly acknowledge (Stevens 2001):

We are already pursuing recognition through the authorities in such places as diverse as Spain and South Africa, Hungary and New Zealand; they will of course apply their own criteria and procedures.



On the occasion of Trinity's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary as assessor of the performance arts, Dr Bowers wrote (Bowers 2002):

Trinity assessments are benchmarked to national and international frameworks, to professional entry requirements, and to published research and repertoire. Their critical characteristics [...] are now recognised officially by the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

The alliance with teachers and trainers that Trinity is forging will involve joint assessment, the moderation of course provision, and flexible programmes of continuing professional development leading towards Trinity qualifications.

In addition to pursuing these "flexible programmes of continued professional development" with Trinity, IDMAC is studying the practice currently under development in the United Kingdom, where their two Military Schools of Music are linking certain qualifications to those of a University. The Royal Military School of Music at Twickenham, Kneller Hall, has a link with Kingston University. At present this is only with regard to the Kneller Hall Bandmaster's course which, on completion, carries simultaneous accreditation towards a BA or BA(Hons) course at Kingston (Buczynski 2002). This is understood to be over and above purely military credentials.

The Trade Employment qualification (TEQ) used for the Bandsmen examinations in the UK is rather similar to – but by no means identical with – the IDMAC levels of Musician (TEQ3), Senior Musician (TEQ2) and Principal Musician (TEQ1) in its criteria.

The Royal Marines School of Music at Portsmouth has a somewhat different course structure, and has links with the University of Portsmouth. From the School's restructuring in 1953 it took "the best practices of the Army's Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, and the Royal Academy of Music,

London, to form a modern military school, very much geared to introducing civilian music training and performance" (Buczynski 2002).

While certain parallels can be drawn between their Level M (Bandmaster's) course and IDMAC's Director of Music qualification, it is not possible at this juncture to find sufficient close equivalency with the lower and intermediate levels of competency.

A later development has been the ABRSM's reformatting of its Diploma examinations. One of the levels that almost directly corresponds with an IDMAC qualification is the new DipABRSM, which has replaced the Advanced Certificate of that examining body. While IDMAC is not considering a link-up with the ABRSM, the new Diploma provides a useful benchmark for those preparing for the Principal Musician evaluation and – if taken externally prior to applying for a position in a service band – could very well determine the applicant's competency without an internal evaluation.

#### **6.6 Possible joint examination with South African tertiary music institutions**

As detailed in Chapter 2, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) – formerly the Pretoria Technikon – was invited to "come aboard" the IDMAC evaluation process, simultaneously with the cooperative venture between IDMAC and Trinity College, London. The present writer and Lt-Col Buczynski, acting on a brief from Col K T Williams of IDMAC, approached the Head of the TUT School of Music with a view to investigating the possibility of bandsmen and –women obtaining their functional qualifications through existing TUT music courses. Two factors emerged from this proposal:

- The courses would have to be financially self-sustaining, as no subsidies would be forthcoming from the TUT. In order to justify

the employment of additional part-time lecturers, the SANDF would have to guarantee a regular input of 10 to 12 candidates per annum, which was considered by Col Williams to be an unrealistic expectation at this time. However:

- IDMAC, after reflecting on the overall coverage and content of modules and subjects in the standard - i.e. existing - TUT music courses, might very well enter hand-picked band musicians for further qualification *via* the existing curriculum. Although agreement in principle exists, finality on the issue had not been reached at the time of writing.

The aims and objectives of the IDMAC music evaluations are set out in the opening chapter of *Syllabus 2000*, as are the IDMAC criteria for the assessment of prepared work. The current trend of thought is to ultimately align IDMAC evaluations as closely as is practicable with relevant examinations of institutions both in the United Kingdom and South Africa, thus offering candidates a choice or, in business parlance, presenting the customer with a "menu". The African component will, of course, be stressed wherever the opportunity presents itself, and the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) are currently assisting certain members of IDMAC in the identification of compositions - mainly choral at this stage - by African composers that are suitable for transcription and arrangement for Concert Band. The works identified thus far are detailed in Chapter 3.6.

### **6.7 Further refinement of evaluation methods**

Taking the successful negotiations between IDMAC and TCL into account, it appears likely that in the event of further amalgamation of evaluation procedures with TCL the repertoire lists of both IDMAC and TCL will be utilised or possibly amalgamated. This would occur in a manner similar to what is currently taking place as a result of Trinity College joining forces with

the London Guildhall of Music and Drama as far as music examinations are concerned. Certain elements of the South African syllabus will almost certainly be retained, particularly in view of the works of local composers and arrangers being available. Above all, the psychometric advice to "base evaluations on job-related matters" will be heeded, regardless of the makeup of the examining body (De Wachter 1995b: 27).

For somewhat different reasons the repertoire lists of a number of woodwind instruments would in any event need to be retained – subject only to review and approval by Trinity's syllabus team – as TCL has not yet made separate provision for the piccolo, cor anglais, or alto and bass clarinets, some of the very instruments whose use IDMAC is seeking to bring into play on a wider scale.

The full-scale amalgamation of examination efforts between IDMAC and Trinity is by no means a *fait accompli* at this juncture, and a great deal of negotiation remains to be done before matters are finalised. Certainly a fair degree of autonomy in the areas of repertoire choice and, to a lesser degree, the actual component parts of the evaluation process, are bound to remain, whatever the final agreement. There remains, too, the vague possibility that the TUT School of Music will reach an agreement with IDMAC regarding examination procedures and curriculum content.

A factor that emerges as important, and perhaps as one which has not yet received sufficient attention, is the consistency not only of the candidate's performance, but the consistency of the examiner's, too. "Undoubtedly the reviewer should possess some qualifications, too, such as a good audiogram report" said Igor Stravinsky in an interview with the *New York Review* (Stravinsky 1972: 81/2). "You must be able to *hear* (have some conception of what you are listening to)".

This somewhat facetious quotation is not without purpose. The specialists currently employed on the *ad hoc* examining panels of IDMAC are for the most part highly trained musicians with an adequate amount of examining and adjudicating experience, both with service bands and in the private sector. With the competency of the individual examiners *per se* no fault can be found; due to similar backgrounds and involvement in instrumental music, it has been the present writer's experience that examiners generally arrive within five percent of one another's marks in most sections of an evaluation. But, while policy guidelines are generally understood and followed in the evaluation process, there remains the element of a lack of accord in the actual process of awarding marks.

It is the writer's contention that regular seminars should be held in the major examination centres of service bands in South Africa: Pretoria (incorporating the Johannesburg contingent), Cape Town and Durban. In these seminars, guidance from a suitably qualified and experienced expert or experts should be given to all who examine for IDMAC, that is, service personnel and civilians. A series of exercises similar to those employed by the ABRSM and Trinity College in the United Kingdom, in which a "guinea-pig" candidate is examined by the panels of "trainees", and the marks and comment compared, could be of great benefit to IDMAC. The writer gathered from visiting ABRSM examiners that this exercise is continued - with interspersed discussion and guidance - until such time that said marks correspond between individual examiners to the extent of being within 3% to 5% of one another.

The Chairman of IDMAC has expressed himself in favour of a similar training programme for all IDMAC examiners, both those in uniform and from the private sector, and it is hoped that this will be implemented at some time during 2006. There can be little doubt that the consistency gained as a result of such an exercise will further contribute towards the establishment of

equitable, practical and germane unit standards in South African instrumental music.

## **6.8 Summary**

The various factors – musical, technical, administrative and personal – that add up to a viable plan of action in establishing the desired performance levels in South African service bands, have been broadly reviewed in this chapter. The fourth sub-question, regarding the procedures that need to be followed in order to arrive at a clear understanding of the desired outcomes at each level, has been answered in some detail. Further recommendations with regard to the evaluation process are delineated in Chapter 7.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 Introduction

Perspective gained by this study on the compiling of a syllabus clearly indicates that this is an ongoing process, one which must adapt itself to the socio-economic character of – and the cultural milieu surrounding – the service bands of the country concerned.

While it would be unrealistic to expect an immediate enhancement of musical standards to the level of those of the United Kingdom or the USA, observers within the IDMAC bands and in the private sector have noted a groundswell of heightened musical awareness among South African band musicians in the past five years. This is the first tangible dividend paid by the new syllabus. Indistinct areas have been clarified and band members – many of them previously disadvantaged – have gained a fresh insight into the standards of instrumental performance that are taken almost for granted in the developed world. It is quite possible that, for the first time in their chosen career, the majority of the members of South African service bands see a clear path towards the personal attainment of those standards.

In keeping with the policy of South Africa's new constitution, maximum transparency is a management goal; there is little room for ambiguity. As De Wachter (1995c: 23) and others have put it, "cultural diversity" is a catchphrase in the New South Africa. "However, the process of development is akin to the nurturing of children – time-consuming and requiring specific competencies on the part of the leader/parent". Further development of band members' skills – itself a "specific competency" – is urgently required, not merely to meet the exigencies of the new syllabus, but simply to bring the performers up to the consistent level of competency for which they are

currently being remunerated. Clearly, one cannot "confer" culture; even less creativity. One *can*, however, promote, encourage and train, while inculcating an awareness of the musical standards that obtain in the First World.

## 7.2 Response to the first sub-question

The first sub-question was:

What factors need to be taken into account in order to ensure that *Syllabus 2000* remains a relevant and "living" document?

(discussed in Chapter 3).

In Chapter 3 of this thesis the writer endeavours to make it clear that the philosophy of the syllabus team was not to impose but to *share* their knowledge of repertoire, style and pedagogy with all their colleagues who were willing to make the effort to acquire the improved skills being offered them, and who were eager to embrace the new paradigm. The compilers' approach was not only to disseminate and share the knowledge personally and jointly attained, but to adopt and maintain an attitude of encouragement among fellow instrumentalists. The practice of inviting well-argued input from band members is an on-going part of that encouragement; this, it may be argued, is the productive side of democracy.

Designing a repertoire for each instrument of the concert band that would not only stand comparison with international norms, but satisfy the widest possible tastes of the service band musicians themselves, was the major challenge. The success of this was limited by the lack of published material outside the core syllabi of Western Art Music, thus it was deemed that *Syllabus 2000* should be subject to ongoing additions and modifications in order to be – and to be perceived to be – a "living document" in that respect.



### 7.3 Response to the second sub-question

The second sub-question was:

To what extent do previous IDMAC evaluation systems need to be taken into account in order to develop an improved [evaluation system]?

(discussed in Chapter 4).

The answer to this was found to lie in making a choice of which individual items in the repertoire were to be retained, and which to phase out. The previous evaluation process *per se* was not carried over in an indiscriminate manner into the new syllabus, as parts of it were judged to be flawed in terms of balance and repertoire.

Consequently, approximately 25% of the band extracts were retained, and a slightly smaller percentage of the accompanied works. Omissions (rather than inclusions) inherent in the previous evaluation systems acted as a *caveat*: technical work in the form of scales and arpeggios had been absent, aural tests were inadequate and sight-reading tests inconsistent. The accompanied works from which the candidate could choose were in many cases deemed to be unsatisfactory in musical content as well as in technical demands. A major omission was the absence of discrete repertoire lists for the "secondary" woodwind and brass instruments, as has been discussed.

### 7.4 Response to the third sub-question

The third sub-question was the enquiry:

To what degree do the qualities and characteristics of the instrumental groups within the symphonic and concert band need to be reviewed in the process of compiling adequate and representative repertoires for all instruments?

(discussed in Chapter 5).

It was in this area that the major amount of research into repertoire had to take place. The existence and usage of the "secondary" wind instruments referred to in 7.3 had by 1998 become an established reality – which had not been the case when the previous syllabuses had been compiled – and these ancillary instruments urgently needed to find accommodation within the official SANDF and SAPS evaluation systems.

A number of published transcriptions was incorporated into the repertoire lists, along with whatever original compositions could be accessed *via* the publishers' catalogues. Supplementing a number of the lists for "secondary" instruments are the writer's original compositions (Appendix B).

#### **7.5 Response to the fourth sub-question**

The fourth sub-question was:

What procedures need to be followed in order to arrive at a clear understanding of the desired outcomes at each level?

(discussed in Chapter 6).

The various teams and panels engaged in the establishment of unit standards in music for SAQA remain engaged in the process, and finality has not yet been reached in certain post-secondary areas. The paradigm of most subjects being "outcomes-based" is the dominant one in South African education in the new millennium, and this accords with the pragmatic view that a service band musician must be able to demonstrate practical skills at a pre-determined level of musical competency.

Said competencies at the various levels that currently obtain in South African service bands have been delineated in detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis. It is expected that, once the present collaboration with Trinity College, London, has been formalised, NQF levels can be appended to the five practical levels of musicianship, as well as to those of Group Leader, Bandmaster, Assistant Director of Music, Director of Music, and Senior Director of Music levels within the IDMAC structure. Finality has not yet been reached concerning the equivalency of these practical levels.

## 7.6 Response to the main research question

The principal research question addressed in this thesis was:

What components need to be included, and what specific areas need to be emphasised in the design and development of an instrumental music syllabus that will reflect the desired performance standards of South Africa's professional service bands, taking the varied backgrounds of service band musicians into consideration?

Empirical research has revealed that virtually all areas of performance need to be emphasised; it was precisely the over-emphasis of the prepared, accompanied work at the expense of the other components of the evaluation that led to dissatisfaction with, and the phasing out of, the old syllabus as a balanced means of musical assessment.

A reality that has presented itself to the management teams of the various IDMAC-regulated service bands is that the current framework and design of the new syllabus provides improved opportunities for self-advancement through the musical ranks. This has been achieved through clarity, explicitness, transparency and the individual choices presented to candidates, details of which have been documented in the various chapters of this thesis.

By the same token, it is realised by bandmasters and Directors of Music that areas most in need of remedial work are the supportive ones of technical work, aural training and sight-reading. This has to be done if the varied socio-economic factors of the past are to be adequately dealt with in terms of filling the gaps in musical training.

The writer finds that the combination of job-related band extracts, a well-chosen repertoire list for prepared works, plus realistic demands in the areas of scales, arpeggios, sight-reading tests and aural tests, combine in the new syllabus to address the shortcomings of previous syllabuses in a balanced and effective manner. *Syllabus 2000* is felt by those concerned to be palpably more successful than its predecessors as a means of remedying the aforementioned gaps in musical competency that are still exhibited by members of the less well-trained bands. In addition, the system is flexible enough to allow modifications and improvements in any area, should this be considered desirable by IDMAC.

The new syllabus can be credited with generating a healthy spirit of competition among the majority of band members, regardless of socio-economic background. The assurance that they will be evaluated as a result of their own individual efforts – musically, impartially, free from internal agendas and band "politics" – is proving to be a powerful motivating factor. It has become apparent over the past two years that this observable spirit of competition also exists between bands within the same arm of service. The National Police Bands competition organised by the Police Musicians' Association (POLMUSCA) realised higher musical standards in 2002 and 2003 than at any previous competitions in its history. The Army Bands and Choirs competition, held in November 2003 – at which this writer was an adjudicator – revealed a standard of ensemble playing by the two winning bands that might justifiably have been mistaken for the efforts of a British or American band.

The standards set by *Syllabus 2000* have arguably made service bands a more attractive option to the qualified professional. A new development within the South African music profession over the past five years is that, with the demise of the majority of the country's symphony orchestras, the IDMAC bands have conjointly become the largest employer of professional musicians in South Africa. A corollary is that prospective candidates for band membership who may previously have been members of a symphony orchestra, but who may not have previously considered a career in a service band, are now reconsidering the situation (E Malan 2003).

#### **7.7 Value of the study to bands within and outside South Africa**

The value of this study to IDMAC-regulated bands is explicit, and is already being felt. The writer remains a member of that committee, and there is a mutual exchange of information at each quarterly meeting.

The training component that is now a regular part of band members' dispensation has attracted attention from similar institutions in neighbouring states. Beginning with tentative enquiries in the aftermath of the national bands symposium in 1998, approaches have been made to the SANDF by other Southern African states – chiefly countries that are members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for assistance in the training of bandsmen and bandmasters. Training of members of the Botswana and the Namibian defence force bands is currently being carried out by the Western Province Command Band in Cape Town, under Capt Chris Nichols.

As mentioned, in-house training is being employed in addressing the needs of South African band members who have not had the benefit of a formal education in music. Members of the National Ceremonial Guard Band are currently being trained in Pretoria by the writer in collaboration with Col

Roger Buczynski. This encompasses one-on-one instrumental tuition and group aural training classes.

The writer believes it to be worthy of comment that the abovementioned neighbouring countries – with a shorter history of colonialism than our own – are favourably disposed to spending a measurable portion of their defence budget on the training of service band musicians. Even the most cynical observer must view this as an encouraging development, and a validation of the standards professed in *Syllabus 2000*.

## **7.8 Recommendations arising from this study**

Three specific recommendations have arisen from the present research:

### ***7.8.1 Explicit recommendations regarding marching band instrumentation***

Traditions die hard, but it is the writer's observation over 50 years of direct and indirect involvement with service bands that certain facets of traditional instrumentation is less than ideal "on the march". The pertinent observation is made that significant improvements in the areas of tonal balance, intonation and even deployment of musical personnel could be effected through the implementation – fully or partially – of the alternative marching band instrumentation suggested by this writer in Chapter 5.2.7, and which are delineated here. The writer has reached the conclusion – through knowledge of the instruments available – that the following substitutions are guaranteed to result in a superior blend and body of sound from any fairly standard-sized military or civilian marching band. The Bandmaster/Director of Music should endeavour to:

- Ensure that there is a sufficient number of clarinets on the lower (harmony) parts, to effectively balance the Solo and the Ripieno clarinet voices;

- Employ a soprano saxophone to reinforce the Ripieno *or* 2<sup>nd</sup> clarinet parts where appropriate; the soprano saxophone is also effective on (transposed) oboe parts;
- Double the bassoon parts with bass clarinets reading bass clef bassoon parts (this was common practice in Britain during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and many bass clef, concert pitch parts from that era are labelled "1<sup>st</sup> Bassoon or Bass Clarinet", or "2<sup>nd</sup> Bassoon or Bass Clarinet"). The latter is in any event more tractable on the march, being a single-reed instrument, with a relatively large mouthpiece;
- Employ a baritone saxophone and/or a E $\text{E}\flat$  contra-alto clarinet to add a true bass reed voice to the tuba parts (the contra-alto clarinet is comparatively light to carry, and a player will have no difficulty in reading parts in the bass clef);
- Use cornets in place of trumpets throughout, reserving trumpets for specialised, characteristically "martial" fanfares only (this suggestion is likely to meet with resistance from trumpet devotees, but the massed *timbre* of cornets in this context will certainly pay musical dividends);
- Reinforce the third cornet part with the use of at least one flügelhorn, preferably a 4-valved model for improved low-register intonation;
- Use 4-valved, rotary E $\flat$  (alto) horns\* throughout, in place of French horns (band parts nearly always include parts for Horns in E $\flat$ ); alternatively, use alto horns in the key of F;
- Use at least one E $\flat$  alto clarinet to reinforce and add texture to the E $\flat$  horn parts;
- Use medium-large (13,34mm) or symphony-bore (13,9mm) B $\flat$ /F tenor trombones, rather than small or medium-bore (12,9mm) instruments, for a more musical projection out-of-doors, better physical balance, and to obviate the use of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> slide positions on the march;
- Use a full-bore (14,3mm) B $\flat$ /F (single valve) bass trombone on the march (with the double-valve B $\flat$ /F/D instrument being reserved for indoor use);

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\* This is the oval, German-type E $\flat$  horn, resembling a smaller version of the Wagner tuba.

- Use 4-valve euphoniums to minimise intonation problems and to increase range; consider also the German-type oval instruments with rotary valves, which are available in gold-brass;
- Substitute 4-valve brass helicons for upright tubas or BBb Sousaphones, perhaps retaining *one* 4-valve EEb tuba, and/or *one* 4-valve rotary *brass* Sousaphone (rather than fibreglass Sousaphones, which simply do not have the desired sonority).

As a result of perusing the relevant catalogues of two major discount exporters,\* the writer has ascertained that this would not prove to be a particularly expensive exercise when the time came for the re-equipping of bands, or for the replacement of certain instrumental sections. Naturally, these recommendations apply to marching bands only; the concert band has its own rather different set of specifications and requirements. The modifications recommended here are not radical, but essentially *practical*. Even if carried out only in part, they will have a markedly beneficial effect on a band's sonority and carrying power in the concert hall or out-of-doors.

In the case of the low clarinets, Anthony Baines is of the opinion that a wind ensemble can benefit from what he terms "the strange purring quality" of the bass, contra-alto and contrabass clarinets (Baines 1992: 24). It is the writer's experience that the low clarinets are audibly more effective – and physically more tractable – on the march than the double-reed instruments, and their incorporation into the "standard" band instrumentation is strongly recommended.

### 7.8.2 *The standardisation of note value terminology*

A strong recommendation – one that has been proposed in IDMAC meetings – is the standardising of note values nomenclature. With the sole exception of parts of the UK, Southern Africa and other ex-colonial countries, the rest of

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\* *The Woodwind and Brasswind* (South Bend, Indiana, USA) and *Muncie Winds* (Boone, North Carolina, USA).



the English-speaking world today quite logically refers to eighth, quarter, half and whole notes. Afrikaans-speakers likewise refer to *agste-*, *kwart-*, *half- en heelnote*. The quaint Victorian terminology of breves to hemi-demi-semiquavers has long since served its purpose, and now deserves to be relegated to the musical archives where – in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – it belongs. Dr William Lovelock (1954: 24) describes an analogous situation that existed in the 1950s regarding the terminology used in describing Rondo-Sonata form:

Alternative names are Sonata-Rondo, Grand Rondo, Modern Rondo or New Rondo. The two final names afford a singular example of the snail-like quality sometimes achieved by the academic mind. "Modern" or "New" Rondo is only rather more than 150 years old!

Certainly, using the modern "mathematical" terminology for note-values would be of tangible help to candidates whose mother tongue is not English. It is significant that the Associated Board is attempting to standardise this terminology in its Jazz Syllabus (ABRSM 2003: 6/7), ostensibly because of the North American origins of that particular art form.

### **7.8.3 *Future equivalency between examining bodies***

Looking ahead on the evaluation front, most of the South African parties involved in training and examining would consider it an ideal situation were it possible to achieve close on 100% equivalency between certain practical music examinations of IDMAC, Trinity College, London, the Tshwane University of Technology's School of Music, the University of Pretoria's Department of Music, and the University of the Witwatersrand. Certainly, attempts to bring about equivalency in specific areas are continuing. These specific bodies have indicated the possibility of introducing courses and/or modules connected with the training of service band members at an undetermined time in the future. The possibility of the music departments of

other South African tertiary institutions becoming involved in similar developments has by no means been ruled out.

Future equivalency is not mere wishful thinking. In spite of a number of identified differences in syllabus content, the first tangible step in this becoming a reality was reached in August 2004, when IDMAC entered into an agreement with Trinity College, London, to jointly examine band candidates for the Principal Musician level with the ATCL (Recital) syllabus. The desirability of this development speaks for itself in terms of service band standards.

The next step envisaged is to examine Chief Musician candidates with a slightly revised LTCL, one which contains a mentoring component or module, the precise details of which are currently being ratified by Trinity. Should this exercise prove viable, a similar dispensation is to be extended "downwards" to accommodate the Senior Musician examination at approximately a Grade VIII level, and the Musician examination at approximately a Grade VI level.

Alternatively, should a consensus of opinion within IDMAC conclude that these levels are unrealistically high (considering local conditions), it has been recommended by the Committee that a slightly modified ATCL containing the mentoring component may be adopted as equivalent to the Chief Musician evaluation, with Principal Musician becoming a post-Grade VIII practical examination along the lines of a Recital Certificate. Senior Musician evaluation would then take place at the Grade VII (rather than VIII) level, as this was equivalent to matriculation music at the time of compilation. The Musician level would subsequently become the equivalent of a good Grade V practical examination, with Learner Musician remaining at the Grade III level. These readjustments would only take place in the event of the IDMAC evaluations finding full equivalency across the board with those of TCL.

Similarly, as a result of further research, the writer discovered that by adding a minimal number of alternative modules to the Tshwane University of Technology School of Music's current certificate, diploma and degree programmes, equivalency at virtually all levels of the IDMAC evaluations becomes a possibility. Naturally, this would entail course attendance by candidates. The writer is currently involved in ongoing negotiations with the Head of the TUT School of Music, Mr Marc Duby, and the senior training officer of the SA Police Bands, Snr Superintendent Jan Coetzer, with the aim of forging a viable equivalency between the first five IDMAC levels and the TUT School of Music's three certificates, diploma and BTech(Mus) degree. Once the necessary agreement in principle is reached, the initiative will be taken further and attention will be given to the Bandmaster and Director of Music evaluations, at the MTech and DTech levels, once these post-graduate degrees become established at the TUT. The writer is engaged in designing the structure of said degrees in collaboration with the TUT's research professor, Prof. Allan Munro, and Mr Marc Duby.

Whatever agreements are ultimately reached between IDMAC and other examining bodies, these will lend further clarity to the very practical question of outcomes, as cited in the third sub-question.

### **7.9 Suggestions for further research**

The writer sees this study as paving the way for future syllabus design – conceivably in collaboration with other examining bodies – in respect of the specialised requirements of the service bands of Southern Africa. The new syllabus arose as the result of a specific need, and the circumstances and mechanisms leading to the compilation thereof – as well as the results of the first five years of implementation – have been documented in this study, with a view to making that information available to those undertaking (or even contemplating) a similar exercise within the foreseeable future.

A constructive suggestion that has been advanced in Pretoria academic circles is that "The initial MEUSSA team members should remain active as critical friends to an ongoing MEUSSA team, even after they have completed their theses" (Grové 2001). There is every indication that this is in fact taking place, in spite of the contrasting personalities and the ongoing challenges involved in ultimately completing the writing of the SAQA unit standards, a task that is by no means complete.

### 7.10 Conclusions and final observations

While it is not possible to prognosticate with any real degree of accuracy the events that may lie ahead, it does appear that the reality and desirability of the continued existence of service bands has been accepted and endorsed by all significant role players in "The New South Africa". In short, the future of service bands in the traditional sense is secure. A strict proviso, however, is the continuing necessity of catering for the broader spectrum of public audiences. Clare Stevens (2002: 10), deputy editor of the London publication *Classical Music*, underscores the nature of the new *status quo* when she writes: "Jazz ensembles, blues bands and pop groups also have their place in the modern spectrum of military music." Indeed, Raoul Camus (2001: 689) consolidates this viewpoint by pointing out that in Canada "every military band is required to function as a concert as well as a marching band, and to provide small jazz, rock and popular combos for social occasions" (emphasis added).

Maintaining this versatility is not a problem in South Africa, as a very real enthusiasm for – and awareness of – the jazz idiom and the "showbiz" repertoire is shared by the Bandmasters and Directors of Music of all bands operating under the aegis of IDMAC. The stage is being reached where all the senior service bands in the country encompass within their ranks a jazz, rock or "pop" group, usually comprised of performers from the concert or marching bands who effectively double on the instruments required. The

introduction of the RockSchool examinations – conducted by TCL – in South Africa in 2005 presents an additional vehicle for examination and evaluation purposes.

Initial fears of the cultural pendulum swinging in a retrogressive direction since the first fully democratic elections of 1994 have proved to be ill-founded, partially as a result of this more wide-reaching – some might say "populist" – musical approach. While isolated opinions have been aired alleging that service bands represent "a relic from Colonial times", as well as the tediously predictable accusations of Eurocentricity, these negative pronouncements are more the rhetoric of white "neo-liberals" than any cultural protestations from the indigenous peoples themselves. In fact, the future of the service band appears as secure as any other institution. The retired Director of the South African Naval Band, Commander Ron Marlow (2000), wrote "Nothing projects a good image quite like a good Band [...]. Our military bands reflect who and what we are."

The present writer had cause to endorse that view in a magazine article during the same period:

They (our service bands) are the image projectors of our national *status quo*, national pride, and a good deal of our tradition ... They are an indelible part of our musical heritage (Galloway 2000: 7).

While "the process of doing research at this level should be seen as continuously enriching and maturing" to the post-graduate student (Lebakeng 2000: 2), the writer is left with the realisation that the nature of compiling a viable syllabus is an absolutely unremitting one.

Having witnessed and been personally involved in the IDMAC exercise from its outset, and having documented the process in this thesis, the writer ventures the opinion that the IDMAC team has indeed succeeded in its

appointed task. Said task was to create a syllabus encompassing the desirable qualities of being "conservative in its concern for preserving the artistic integrity of musical traditions, yet liberal insofar as it goes beyond particular cultural preferences to confront larger musical ideas, processes and problems" (Elliott 1998: 2). And in documenting it, the writer has likewise striven to maintain the sometimes difficult "balance between originality and conformity in the technical" aspect of this work (Lebakeng 2000: 2).

A further conclusion reached by the writer and his colleagues in the wind band profession, is that a meaningful improvement in service bands' practical musical standards throughout the country has been initiated, to varying degrees, by the implementation of *Syllabus 2000*. Coupled to this can be sensed a commensurate boost in morale among the clear majority of South African band members, right across the sociological spectrum; the feeling of isolation from the management process that was typical of the "old regime" has given way to two-way communication, in the form of feedback and negotiation, with the new. Accessibility to practical global standards has likewise been improved. As Janet Wolff put it (1990: 203), "the idea of Art as a protected realm is, and always has been, a myth".

Drawing an analogy with the inner workings of a musical ensemble, the conclusion can be made that in an exercise of this nature, individual talent and creativity have combined in a united executive body to reach the agreed objective. Said objective, of course, being the evolution and realisation of an equitable system of musical evaluation for South African service bands.