

CHAPTER THREE

THE SELECTION PROCESS, PERSPECTIVES ON INSTRUMENTS, INHERITED IMBALANCES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Considerations concerning repertoire choice and instrument selection

While the contents of this chapter may appear at first glance to be somewhat disparate in nature, all the included topics find an association in the process of syllabus compilation. This association or relationship is strengthened when one takes into account the peculiar socio-political and cultural circumstances obtaining in South Africa in the first decade of the 21st century, as well as the geographical location of this country.

A casual glance at the wind music catalogue of any major music publisher will reveal that, of all today's wind instruments, the flute enjoys the lion's share of solo repertoire – even though in this regard it does not even begin to compare with that of the violin. This is also an acknowledged fact among wind players. The contents of *Syllabus 2000* provide evidence, as a result of appropriate research, to support the writer's strongly-held contention that the so-called "sectional" instruments of the concert band also have the right to be regarded as soloists in the hands of a competent player; the available repertoire has been found to support this contention.

As is the case with any syllabus claiming to cover the full spectrum of winds, the search continues for additional suitable material for instruments such as the E(alto clarinet and baritone saxophone; there is a paucity of original compositions for these, even in comparison to *other* winds that are not particularly well catered for in terms of repertoire. In a number of cases considered use has been made of transcriptions, as was suggested in the IDMAC brief. The contents of Appendix B have already been mentioned with regard to original compositions.

Other relatively "low-profile" but highly colourful winds such as the flügelhorn, bass trombone, bass clarinet, cor anglais, soprano saxophone and even the piccolo are catered for in the new *Syllabus 2000*, placing bandsmen and -women who wish to specialise in these instruments (rather than the better-known and more widely played ones) in the favourable position of being able to pursue their service band career on the wind instrument of their individual choice.

The individual *timbres* of the instruments just mentioned cannot be duplicated on any other instrument, and composers and arrangers have become more aware of this as the second half of the 20th century progressed. This is clearly revealed in the wind band scores of prominent composers for wind band such as Norman Dello Joio, Vincent Persichetti and Robert Jaeger in the United States, and especially in the writing of Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882-1961), whose acute awareness of these differences in *timbre* are manifest in works from far earlier in the 20th century, such as *A Lincolnshire Posy*, *Hill Song No. 2*, *Colonial Song* and other paragons of wind writing. Instrumentalists, in response, have extended their talents and technique to the hitherto "low profile" instruments in the interests of wider musical expression.

The 20th century American composer Vincent Persichetti is particularly well-known among protagonists of the symphonic band movement, largely on account of his *Symphony No. 6 for Band* which has become one of the staples of the post-1950s repertoire. Progressive students of harmony, likewise, will find his name a familiar one. In the foreword to his *Twentieth Century Harmony* (1962: 9), Persichetti writes of the symphonic band repertoire:

Works of high calibre are plentiful in the twentieth century. The rich mixture of materials and styles is made up of many ingredients: rhythmic energy, vivid harmonic fabric, melodic colour and fresh linear writing. There are bold statements and delicate embellishments, moments of fancy, and developmental forces that refuse to be bound by a severe formal plan. There are

daringly experimental and strongly traditional forces which bring divergent materials together.

All these elements can be found in the symphonic band repertoire – and even instrumentation – of our current era.

A practical demonstration of these often vivid distinctions in instrumental *timbre* could be found in asking a bassoonist, a bass clarinetist and a baritone saxophonist to play the same phrase, at the same pitch and with the same volume and articulation. These differences are more than subtle; they are "ear-opening". A similar exercise might be carried out between a cor anglais, an alto (or tenor) saxophone and an alto clarinet. This concept is expanded upon in Chapter 5.

As performing musicians and composers/arrangers have become more demanding of the various wind instruments, it must be acknowledged that instrument manufacturers, too, have risen to the challenge and today the lesser-used instruments are made to the same exacting standards as the traditional "big four" of the woodwind, i.e. flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon. In the past, the commercial laws of supply and demand obtained – as indeed they do today. But in this age of specialization a manufacturer is at least as likely to extend his reputation *via* the manufacture of a lesser-employed instrument that will attract public acclaim in the hands of a specialist virtuoso, than with his already well-known "bread-and-butter" products. The more popular winds are, after all, already familiar to professionals and amateurs alike, being well catered for in terms of international manufacturing standards.

Conversely, in order for a celebrated performer to adequately display his art on an "ancillary" instrument that is manufactured in relatively small volumes, the manufacturer must ensure that said ancillary instrument is manufactured to precisely the same exacting standards of tone quality, intonation and

mechanical reliability as that of his "mainstream" products. This can be a daunting and time-consuming task, even in our computerized milieu, particularly as the capital and time invested will take longer to recoup, due to the proportionately small number of instruments manufactured and marketed.

The winner in this situation is, of course, the performing artist, who is today assured of an "off-the-shelf" flügelhorn or double-trigger bass trombone that is as perfectly in tune as a brass instrument can be. Similarly, a tenor or baritone saxophonist can expect a key action that is every bit as well-regulated as that of a top quality flute – albeit proportionally heavier. And bass clarinetists can avail themselves of an instrument that is *almost* as homogeneous in tone between its three registers as the most expensive Bb clarinet; a similar analogy can be drawn with respect to the cor anglais.

The writer, in collaboration with colleague Y-G Li, has in recent times (2004/5) exhaustively tested a number of newly-imported woodwind and brass instruments for consistency of intonation, tone quality, ease of response, finish and build quality, thus establishing an empirical framework for the evaluation of these instruments.

Today, a repertoire for these less-utilised wind instruments unquestionably exists, and these have been included – with varying degrees of consistency and efficacy – in symphonic band scores from the 1950s onwards, as even casual perusal will reveal. This is the case not only with North American band music: the "augmentation" of British military band instrumentation continues apace when it comes to "non-military" compositions and arrangements. In Europe, provision has nearly always been made for "extra" instruments when circumstances, conductors or arrangers required their presence. Indeed, it is likely that the previously "ancillary" wind instruments will become even better catered for as the 21st century progresses.

In an unpublished paper written for MEUSSA, Dr Chats Devroop of the University of Pretoria wrote (Devroop 2001):

A high degree of bias exists within the [Western music teaching] system itself – some instruments are glorified, especially piano, organ, violin and sometimes singing *at the expense of the other instruments* – which are treated merely as peripheral ones [emphasis added by the present writer].

Clearly, this alleged bias is not a figment of the present writer's imagination, and the deliberate attempt at dealing with it was one of the specific aims borne in mind during the compilation of *Syllabus 2000*, as has previously been pointed out.

In this context it might be useful to reiterate the *New Groves* quotation contained in the previous chapter (Baines 1980: 316):

The "wind symphony" is a recent American modification [of the 'military' band] dedicated to the performance of weightier compositions and transcriptions, and giving **equal opportunities to players of each orchestral wind instrument** ... extra clarinetists are easily switched to alto, bass and contrabass clarinets" [emphasis added by the present writer].

Whilst concurring that the above is a lucid account of the *status quo* in 1980, this writer would nonetheless differ slightly with some of the assumptions contained therein. Firstly, it is clear that Baines means *North America*. Secondly, it is questionable whether the concert wind band was ever conceived as a "modification" of anything, least of all the military band. Its aesthetic genesis was in effect antithetical to this, the "new" concept being one of a mid-20th century orchestra *sans* strings with a relatively discrete repertoire.

Thirdly, while most competent and experienced clarinet players *could*, in theory, "switch" to the lower clarinets, the majority of clarinet players never touch the lower clarinets. Today a fair number of players exists who seldom perform on the ordinary Bb soprano instrument, having elected to specialise in the lower clarinets. This is likely to include any, all or a combination of the following: the basset horn in F, the alto clarinet in Eb, the bass clarinet in Bb, the contra-alto clarinet in EEb, and the contrabass clarinet in BBb, each with its own character and idiosyncrasies.

An additional spur to the implementation of the new syllabus was the fact that, as a direct result of IDMAC's initiative, applications were beginning to be received from the Commanding Officers of service band members and aspiring bandmasters from neighbouring states in Southern Africa (certain members of the SADC countries) for instrumental and other tuition from their South African counterparts. The SANDF has begun to cater to these requests, and it is felt that with the unambiguous standards propagated in the new syllabus, these visitors will qualify with a certificate of tangible musical worth, rather than just another "course attendance" certificate.

3.2 Problems that required special consideration in the course of compiling *Syllabus 2000*

As the wording of the introductory paragraph of Chapter 1 intimated, factors other than the purely musical had to be taken into account in the compilation of *Syllabus 2000*. The sociological and demographic changes that ensued after the 1994 elections are still under way today, and accommodation needs to be made for South Africa's somewhat idiosyncratic brand of democracy. In cultural terms, the disparate products of semi-tribal socialism and Western capitalism have to be reconciled into one of creative co-existence.

3.2.1 *Sociological imbalances*

The implementation of *Syllabus 2000* by IDMAC should be perceived by no party as an arbitrary or one-sided dispensation inflicted on the service band musician; even less can it be regarded as a "system imposed from above", which is the manner in which progressive developments tend to be viewed by non-achievers in any organisation. In addition to the remarkably democratic process that was employed in the compilation and implementation thereof, it should be pointed out that in acknowledging the socio-political, geographical and logistical anomalies of the past, the governing committee of IDMAC has now made adequate provision for the ongoing in-service training of less advanced band members.

This is aimed in particular at those who might be described as having been "previously disadvantaged". This expression refers primarily - but not exclusively - to one of the legislated inequalities of the *apartheid* system that obtained in South Africa between the early 1950s and 1990, wherein government-funded provincial music centres were not accessible to people of colour, with the sole exception of the Paarl (Western Cape) centre which was designated for the music tuition of so-called "coloured" students only.

The aim of the training instigated by IDMAC is twofold:

- To raise the instrumental performing abilities of band members to the prescribed standard of musicianship for the category in which they are employed, should their musical performance be noticeably below the required standard; and
- To specifically assist band members in their preparation for their next IDMAC evaluation/examination, or any other job-related musical aspirations.

In addition, there is a very real wish – extending from the majority of service band members to Senior Directors of Music – to come as close as possible in standards of performance to those of their British, North American and European colleagues as described in the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* quotation appearing in Chapter 2.2 (Apel 1970: 821). There is strong motivation in virtually all quarters to align themselves with international musical standards. There is recognition at the highest levels, too, that this calls for extensive further training and development, and at the time of writing there is evidence that action has been taken to ensure an ongoing programme for the training of band members, albeit on a largely *ad hoc* basis at this juncture.

There are two further sociological realities which place limitations on the completeness of this study and the full implementation of *Syllabus 2000*. The resolution of the first might require a further ten years of democracy and education. While the strength of the South African Rand has improved markedly over the five years that *Syllabus 2000* has been in circulation – beyond the expectations of most observers, in fact – there is still resistance from the "previously disadvantaged" and other factions concerning the cost of published sheet music. This resistance appears to be due more to the collectivist mindset of those concerned than to the actual monetary cost, as many among the less educated still entertain unrealistic expectations of what the "New South Africa" can provide for its citizens. Photocopying is legally and morally indefensible, and the ease with which this was done in the past has indirectly affected the expectations of some candidates.

The second sociological reality that places a limitation on the effective *application* of this study, is this: within the lower echelons of one or two service bands there exists a faction which can never be accommodated in *any* viable dispensation, and that is the "pass one, pass all" collectivist mentality that entertains the mindset that band members (and others) should be promoted as a matter of course, without having to undergo any evaluation

process, let alone a fairly demanding examination in practical instrumental skills. It is one manifestation of the unfortunate South African "entitlement" syndrome, the prevalence of which grows in inverse proportions to the productivity – musical or otherwise – of the faction that indulges in it. As Marilyn Ferguson put it, there is more to balance than not falling over (Ferguson 1982: 87).

3.2.2 *The varied nature and efficacy of in-service training*

In considering the contents of this study, the writer was obliged to take into account the skewing effect caused by the lack of consistency in "official" musical training methods of IDMAC band members. In spite of a well-prepared and strongly-motivated attempt to establish one within the past decade, no permanent School of "Military" Music yet exists in South Africa. The current situation is one where specialist instructors on the various service band instruments are engaged on an *ad hoc* basis by the Head Office of Military Music in Pretoria from civilian and academic society, as the need for tuition arises. In-house evaluations and "mock" examinations are held regularly, to orient the aspiring candidate in the formal examination process, and to assist him or her in forming a personal "examination strategy".

It has been found by instrumental music teachers, including the present writer, that this practice also stimulates self-awareness, increases the candidate's confidence and – in the majority of cases – boosts self-esteem and provides the candidate with a solid frame of reference within which to operate. Service band musicians are actively encouraged to present themselves as candidates for examination, and not merely on account of the increment in their salary that a pass will bring. There is the status factor as well, and in the majority of cases a keen sense of competition exists among band personnel in South Africa.

Over the decades as instrumental educator it has become abundantly clear to the writer that an important part of the examination "strategy" is commencing one's preparation in good time. The famous British racing driver Stirling Moss, in an interview in *Autocar* in the late 1950s, stated that "The race does not begin on the race-track. It begins the moment the participants receive the rules in the post". This philosophy is easily and logically transposed to the instrumental candidate, the accent being on strategy, and the proof existing in the fact that the most successful candidates to date are those who have taken the trouble to peruse the contents of *Syllabus 2000* the moment it was published (July 1999), and who have followed it up with the requisite action.

3.2.3 The scarcity of non-Western music in print and of original works for certain wind instruments

Examples of original compositions by the writer for woodwind and brass instruments, written with the illustration of a specific competency level in mind, are supplied as Appendix B. In this second edition of *Syllabus 2000* – a reprint of the original that has been modified and expanded to accommodate the many detail changes and additions that have taken place since 1999 – repertoire lists have been slightly enlarged where possible for most instruments, while the search continues for published instrumental works that fall *outside* the purview of Western art music, with particular emphasis on appropriate Southern African indigenous compositions.

In the repertoire lists (conducting) for Bandmaster and Director of Music, three available Concert Band works by South African composers have so far been included: the *South African Folk Song Suite* by Noël Stockton (Bandmaster's examination) and the *Bon Esperanza Suite* and *Variants for Concert Band* by Paul Loeb van Zuilenburg (Director of Music examination). The present writer's *Maverick Sonata for Bass Clarinet & Piano* (found in Appendix B) is to be added to the Chief Musician's repertoire list for that instrument. Whilst the percentage of "indigenous" South African music is

admittedly a small one at this juncture, the process of searching for additional material of the requisite quality is ongoing, and appropriate compositions by South (and Southern) African composers will certainly be added to *Syllabus 2000* as they come to light.

3.2.4 *Necessary omissions: extreme register woodwinds*

A minor shortcoming that nonetheless deserves mention is a purely practical one. In spite of the writer's and the compilers' wish to promote the full spectrum of "lesser-used" wind instruments, the two most "extreme" members of the reed family have had to be regarded as "out of reach" for purely practical reasons. The high Ab clarinet is scarcely used outside Italy, and the contrabassoon – though a worthy asset to any concert band – is just too expensive to be included in a service band's budget.

Other conscious, reluctant but necessary omissions are those of the alto and the bass flute. While improved manufacturing standards have made these instruments very approachable to almost all flautists (some basses are even available with low Bb, their repertoire has not yet grown sufficiently to warrant their inclusion in a service band syllabus. In spite of the *bel canto* capabilities of these two low flutes, the little original repertoire that exists for them tends to be generally *avant-garde*, and would be difficult (but not impossible) to accommodate in *Syllabus 2000*.

A similar situation exists in connection with the Bb bass saxophone. While this instrument – another fourth lower than the baritone in pitch – has been a regular member of Paris' *La Garde Republicaine* (Hind 1954: 772) and is currently used in some of the bigger North American symphonic wind bands, it has never been in regular use in South Africa. To the writer's knowledge only two examples exist in this country: one belonging to the S. A. Police

Band in Pretoria (which the writer played occasionally in the Concert Wind Band); the other is in private hands in Cape Town.

Burton (1982: 420) describes the bass saxophone as being "rare today". While this is indeed the case in South Africa, the fact that major manufacturers such as Keilwerth (Germany), Selmer (France), Leblanc (France), Holton (USA) and, latterly, Eppelsheim (Germany) offer a professional quality bass saxophone in their respective catalogues, must be regarded as significant.

While the service band may not currently provide a home for the very largest of the woodwind instruments, it must be noted that the progressive soloist is actively extending boundaries in this regard. In her report on the Darmstadt 1984 Summer Course for New Music, oboist Nora Post wrote of a concert entitled *The New Wind*:

Possibly the most enjoyable event of the course – bordering at times on a musical circus – this concert presented new works for large woodwind instruments. Pierre-Yves Artaud, the Parisian flute virtuoso, played the contrabass flute; he also premiered his octobass flute. I played the bass oboe, Englishman Roger Heaton played the bass clarinet, and the extraordinary French saxophonist, Daniel Kientzy, played the bass and contrabass saxophone ... It was wonderful to watch a small Frenchman tame an instrument almost twice his size.

These large woodwinds present an interesting challenge in that this is one of the few moments in history when the instrument makers/players are ahead of the composers. (Post 1986: 37/8).

This last paragraph finds resonance with the present writer's comments in chapter 1.7.5 on the quality that manufacturers are achieving in the manufacturing of their "ancillary" instruments at this period in our musical history. Additional validation of this trend towards the "unusual" woodwind was provided to the present writer by Steffen Schorn on his first visit to South Africa in September 2005. Herr Schorn is Professor of composition and arranging at the *Musikhochschule* in Nürnberg, and visited South Africa with

his group *Triosphere* as a guest of the *Goethe-Institut*, Johannesburg. Herr Schorn – himself a low woodwind specialist, performing on bass clarinet, and baritone and bass saxophones – informed the writer that a small, specialist factory in the south of Germany is producing some very unusual woodwind instruments. The owner/technician is one Benedikt Eppelsheim, who is producing an improved, more compact *contra*-bass saxophone in E \flat , one octave lower than the baritone (the *Tubax*), and a "piccolo" saxophone in B \flat , one octave *higher* than the soprano. Eppelsheim has also applied a radical new design to the contrabassoon, named the *Kontraforte*, with the bell pointing upwards rather than downwards as in the current Heckel models and their derivatives (Schorn 2005).

These developments are a continuation of the "extended boundaries" demonstrated at Darmstadt in 1984, and augur well for individualism in musical expression, and for the world of woodwind performance in general.

3.3 Alternative evaluation structures in the examination process

Before describing the nature and content of the IDMAC evaluation and examination system itself, the writer wishes to point out that, while being specifically applied to the professional service bands of South Africa, the competency levels presented in *Syllabus 2000* are in relatively close accord with the commensurate unit standards being established by the MEUSSA team of the University of Pretoria. A final decision and ruling on the precise nature of the competency levels was not implemented until some time after the MEUSSA team had been established, and at the time of writing the dividing lines between general education and training, and further education and training had not been completely finalised by the SAQA standards generating bodies.

As previously stated, the syllabus also accords with the MEUSSA team philosophy of reflecting wherever possible the values and principles of a broad spectrum of Southern African society and culture. For instance, the prescribed unaccompanied piece for all instruments in the Learner Musician syllabus, *Umculo Ojabulani*, being a *Kwela* or *Mbqanga* item, can be regarded as a minor case in point, providing as it does a small degree of balance in an area traditionally dominated by Western art music in general and the accepted "military" band repertoire in particular.

3.3.1 *Trinity College, London (TCL)*

By the same token, and with possible NQA (UK) accreditation in mind, the five categories of the IDMAC examinations which fall within the purview of this study are now being aligned as directly as is practicable with the equivalent examinations of Trinity College, London. There is a strong possibility that the IDMAC examination panels will be augmented in the very near future to accommodate a visiting Trinity examiner, and that workshops and seminars for service and civilian examiners will be held in South Africa, under the auspices of the visitors. Appropriately, the IDMAC repertoire lists cover an even wider range of instruments than do those of Trinity College, due to the accommodation of the "specialist" instruments catered for in *Syllabus 2000*. Clearly, the IDMAC repertoire lists for piccolo, cor anglais, E(clarinet, alto and bass clarinets, soprano and baritone saxophones, and probably bass trombone will need to be retained, as Trinity does not examine these specific instruments throughout the grades.

The reader might legitimately enquire as to why IDMAC is negotiating specifically with Trinity College, London (TCL), on the issue of joint examinations. The writer is at liberty to point out that, in the recent past, overtures were made by IDMAC to the University of South Africa, the University of Pretoria, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), the

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and TCL. While ongoing negotiations regarding full-course students are under way with the TUT, it was only with TCL that anything approaching an accommodation could be made with regard to a "tailor-made" joint examining system with IDMAC.

3.3.2 The University of South Africa (UNISA) Department of Music

While acknowledging the underlying tensions between the various music examining institutions operating in the Pretoria region, it must be pointed out that responses from the institutions under discussion were very different. The University of South Africa's Music Examinations Department were not able to accommodate IDMAC's request other than to offer a non-certificated evaluation report to individual candidates. This can be seen as being largely due to UNISA's previously-mentioned theory prerequisites which place an additional burden on the band member, and are regarded by IDMAC and other involved parties as being of dubious value to the wind and percussion instrumentalist. The sentiment has also been expressed in service band circles that the majority of UNISA's examiners does not have the requisite specialist knowledge of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments to be effectual in an IDMAC-based examining capacity.

3.3.3 The University of Pretoria (UP) Department of Music

During the early stages of the writing of this thesis, the University of Pretoria's Department of Music was considering the creation of module courses in various facets of instrumental performance, including those of the concert wind band. However, only one of these modules – a post-Grade VIII unit which is approximately on the level of Principal Musician – might possibly be introduced within the foreseeable future. No further developments are envisaged at the time of writing (Hinch 2005).

3.3.4 *The Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) School of Music*

In carefully selected cases, success has been experienced by IDMAC in financing the musical training of motivated and productive band members through courses at the Tshwane University of Technology's School of Music. A characteristic of the music courses offered here is that they are geared principally towards the turning out of *practical* instrumentalists, with training and qualifications that provide them with the tools for survival and development in the "real" world of commercial music and the recording studios. These courses include arranging and compositional skills, recording technology and arts administration, as well as the heavy emphasis placed on practical instrumental skills and the participation in a variety of ensembles. Another characteristic worth mentioning is that the TUT School of Music is the only tertiary music department in the country that from the outset provided a series of courses where *bona fide* jazz is not presented as "the poor relation" of Western art music.

The Staff Officer for Music, Lt-Col Roger Buczynski, and the present writer began talks in 2003 with the Head of Music at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Mr Marc Duby, to jointly investigate the possibility of a series of modules which, on completion, would qualify Army musicians in the same manner as do the IDMAC examinations. The conclusion was arrived at that the majority of the necessary modules already existed within the TUT courses, but that certain modifications to the existing third and fourth year curricula would need to be made to accommodate the qualifications needed for band members.

Subsequent meetings between the writer, the TUT Head of Music (Marc Duby) and the SAPS Head of Music Training (Senior Superintendent Jan Coetzer) revealed the possibility of equivalency between the five levels of

service band musicians' competency, and the five accumulative years of study available at the TUT School of Music. This can be gauged from the following table:

Table 1: Equivalencies between IDMAC levels and TUT qualifications

Existing TUT Music Course	IDMAC Level	Modification (if any)
Access course in music (preparatory year)	Learner Musician	None
National Certificate in Music (1 st year)	Musician	None
National Higher Certificate in Music (2 nd year)	Senior Musician	Modules on arranging specifically for concert wind band
National Diploma in Music (3 rd year)	Principal Musician	Modules on synthesis arranging/ technique replaced by instrumental teaching method
Bachelor's Degree in Technology: Music	Chief Musician	Digital audio course replaced by sectional training method; production technique and analysis replaced by conducting and rehearsal techniques.

Mr Duby has pointed out that such a development would need to be financially self-sustaining, and that it would require a commitment from the SANDF to enrol a minimum number of candidates annually. All parties are positively disposed towards this development, and once a firm decision is reached by IDMAC, the TUT Senate will be approached for its approval. Negotiations between IDMAC and TUT were still under way at the time of

writing, and a presentation by Mr Duby and the writer was favourably received by the IDMAC Committee on 23rd February 2005.

3.3.5 *The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM)*

The Associated Board, too, was approached by Col Williams whilst in England during 2002, but indicated that they were disinclined to modify their current curriculum in any way in order to accommodate the IDMAC levels. In contrast, Trinity College, London, welcomed IDMAC's approaches, and much progress has been made in the interim with regard to a common syllabus (with minor adjustments) and joint examination process. While the feature of orchestral/band excerpts is a point of commonality in the brass syllabuses, it appears at this stage that the IDMAC examinations will need to incorporate an unaccompanied study *in addition* to their existing examination/ evaluation components in order to conform to Trinity's specifications. An unaccompanied study, usually an item in List C of the Trinity (or ABRSM) syllabuses, is a component currently missing from the IDMAC syllabus, as the emphasis is on ensemble rather than solo performance (an opportunity for unaccompanied performance is provided in the extracts section). As chief compiler, the writer is of the opinion that it would be a relatively simple matter to effect the further revision of adding an unaccompanied technical or *bel canto/legato* study to the IDMAC instrumental lists, and such an adjustment is likely to be carried out once the next stage in the current negotiations with Trinity is reached.

3.4 Training the previously disadvantaged

Notwithstanding the success of the provincial music centres and secondary schools in turning out wind and, to a substantially lesser degree, percussion instrumentalists over the past three decades, the reality was that this specialised tuition was still limited to large and medium urban centres only.

While a far wider spectrum of scholars was reached, there remained virtually no coverage of rural areas. The reasons for this were not ideological, but purely logistical and financial.

From the 1980s onwards a genuine attempt was made to extend these facilities to the communities that had been disadvantaged by past legislation, and a number of outreach programmes were formed by organisations such as the South African Music Education Trust (SAMET), many of which continue this work today.

As alluded to elsewhere in this study, the demise of the majority of South Africa's full-time symphony orchestras, as well as the rationalisations within provincial education departments' music centres has inspired – by dint of necessity in many cases – a new generation of musical entrepreneurship in South Africa. The services of qualified, competent private instrumental music teachers are now more in demand than ever, and are being marketed with greater or lesser degrees of success (such are the inconsistencies found in private enterprise). It is upon such teachers – rather than on assistance from colleagues within the ranks – that aspirant incumbents of a military band post must rely if they are to reach a solid Grade 6 standard of proficiency, or even the entry level of Learner Musician. The reason is simple: very few instrumentalists in South African Service Bands – even at the Chief Musician level – have formal (or even informal) qualifications as instrumental tutors, in spite of their advanced level of proficiency as a performer. A successful teaching methodology is certainly not a quality or a commodity that can be conferred by rank or title.

Regarding the so-called "homeland" bands, an explanation is due. During the so-called Verwoerdian era (1958-66) legislation was passed by the South African Government supporting the ideology of "separate and equal development" – an attempt at a blueprint to "legitimise" *apartheid* – under

which dispensation the non-European and indigenous racial groups would be provided with their own geographically-separate, tribally- or ethnically-based "homelands". Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd was an intellectual and a brilliant debater, and as Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa (1958-61) and the Republic of South Africa (1961-66) he attempted to take Afrikaner nationalist policy to its logical – or what posterity has adjudged illogical – conclusion. The official policy of the Verwoerd government became one of "separate but equal development", in which the four "identified" racial groups – whites, Indians, "coloureds" and Bantu (Africans) were supposed to live within their "own" socio-economic and political infrastructures. This included – in theory, at any rate – an ethnically-based police force, army, education department and all other facets of the public service, tailored to whatever the nationalist government decided were the particular needs of the communities concerned. One of the products of this expensive and divisive exercise was the formation of "non-white" service bands in all the separate provinces of the pre-1994 South Africa, with most arms of service being represented.

Being stationed mainly in tribal or rural areas, there was virtually no training provided, other than the purely military or police functional training. Predictably, "homelands" service band members could not read staff notation, and learned their band parts by rote. There was likewise no formal instrumental instruction, and musicians had to pick up what they could in terms of technique, correct embouchure, instrument maintenance – all the musical basics, in fact.

With the partial absorption of members from these previous "homeland" bands into the professional bands in 1994, the discrepancy in musical backgrounds and standards became starkly apparent. As just mentioned, and almost without exception, the rural bands in South Africa (Polokwane [formerly Pietersburg], Mtubatuba, Mmabatho, Mthatha [formerly Umtata], Kingwilliamstown, etc.) had up until 1994 no method of learning their band

parts other than by memorising them. Members were (and to a large extent, still are) dysfunctional when it comes to reading staff notation. Even now, with in-house or in-service training having been implemented by the SANDF with a view to bringing the skills of these ex-homelands members up to the required standard, their "previously disadvantaged" status often remains unhappily obvious. The musicians from the renegade *Mkhonto We Sizwe* ("Spear of the Nation") band were an even more unknown factor in terms of musical training, and remain so to this day.

Bearing this in mind, the implementation of *Syllabus 2000* must be seen as a beneficial step for these incumbents, as it has focused on the need for the training necessary to "bridge the gap" and make the established standards attainable for those without previous formal musical education. How? By bringing about the availability of instrumental training to all band members who formally request it or who, in the Bandmaster's or the Director of Music's considered opinion, are in need of such training. Group classes in aural training and "workshops" on subjects such as the new repertoire, and strategies for entering the IDMAC examinations, have also begun to be held on a fairly regular basis since the implementation of *Syllabus 2000*.

A minor problem with regard to comparing the musical levels between examining bodies became apparent when attempting to seek equivalency between the examinations of IDMAC, the Associated Board, Trinity College (London), the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the University of South Africa. An additional consideration, one pertinent to this study, is the identification - as closely as is possible - with some of the exit points suggested by SAQA in the new secondary and tertiary music curricula. While the IDMAC levels are usually close enough in *practical* terms to be both representative and useful, they do not always correspond in all facets with those of accredited SAQA unit standards. This problem is being addressed

principally via the current negotiations between IDMAC and Trinity College, London.

As far as the training of the so-called entertainment units is concerned, the focus is currently centred on basic musical literacy and aural training. Improvisational skills are developed in instrumental soloists, while singers are encouraged to embrace as wide a variety of vocal styles and idioms as possible. To this end, the IDMAC syllabus insists on maximum contrast in the repertoire presented, and no more than two songs may be presented in the same idiom. The inclusion of appropriate indigenous musical material is likewise encouraged. The net result of an evaluation recital should be a **marketable musical product** on the part of the performer.

3.5 The course of action followed in compiling *Syllabus 2000*

It is the writer's experience that, in the preparation of compiling a syllabus for professional bandsmen and -women, methodology is of needs inclined towards the empirical rather than the didactic, and action research tends to provide more answers than a primarily theoretical approach. While the instrumental syllabuses of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College (London) and the University of South Africa (UNISA) were consulted as yardsticks regarding the consistency of standards, these graded instrumental lists are themselves in turn the result and outcome of a degree of empirical research and experimentation in this field in the United Kingdom and South Africa. In short, a good deal of action research had already been employed.

Under the sub-title *How is repertoire chosen for syllabuses?*, Trinity College's chief examiner Nicholas King mentions feedback from teachers, comments passed to visiting examiners, the range of cultures being catered for, and availability (and cost) of published music in the countries concerned as being factors in the selection process (King 2002: 4-5). These are almost identical

with the factors that were taken into account by IDMAC. Then, proposals from specialist teachers are assembled and sent for moderation to a further team of advisors. All works are reviewed for compatibility and equivalency of standard, with accessibility of the accompaniments being an additional factor (King 2002: 4-5). All these factors were similarly considered by the IDMAC panels forming the evaluation team, taking South African conditions into consideration.

A significant factor in the preparation of this thesis has been the ongoing expansion of the syllabus itself, plus the developments over the past five years in the area of collaboration and a limited amount of equivalency between IDMAC and Trinity College regarding current and future mechanisms for joint evaluation. Only in December 2004 did it become feasible to impose an arbitrary cut-off point on the research for the thesis itself, and even this has been discounted in the face of the IDMAC/TUT negotiations currently taking place.

Personal research by the writer into the publications for winds and percussion by a number of the major music publishing houses of the USA, the UK, France, Germany and Austria played a major part in this study, as well as in the compiling of *Syllabus 2000*. These catalogues range in date of issue from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s: in the process of perusing the contents of music publishers' catalogues, it was found by the writer and other panel members that there was not a great deal of difference in content between earlier and later editions; in fact, the main corpus of the published repertoire remained very stable in the case of nearly all instruments. In short, the bulk of the contents was not supplanted in later editions.

As far as the instrumental repertoire for *Syllabus 2000* is concerned, the principal contents of the lists are comprised of compositions from the baroque, classical and romantic style periods, and the first half of the 20th century. The post-1950s repertoire in the syllabus was selected chiefly from

works of established composers whose compositions had been in the catalogues for some time, or modern examples which were known to panel members through their performing or teaching activities, independently of perusing any catalogue.

Arguably of more direct value was the receiving of personal feedback from professional colleagues and band members regarding their reaction to, and acceptance of, the new but not necessarily more difficult demands being placed on their musicianship. This feedback from the participating professional musicians themselves is an essential ingredient if such a study is to be of practical value – which is precisely the aim.

Action research was thus the norm in this study – as previously noted –and it is emphasised that the majority of the works prescribed in the new syllabus have been performed by either the panel members themselves or by their students at some stage. In fact, this selection of new repertoire was the result of a good deal more than subjective personal taste and the predilection of panel members. It was a pragmatic, “hands-on” approach to identifying what is being studied, performed and *enjoyed* by the world of instrumental music at large, supported by information such as student and professional recital details published in magazines of a specialist nature like the *Journal of the International Trombone Association* and *The Double Reed*.

This was necessarily tempered by a consideration of what publications are easily obtainable from music dealers in South Africa, Britain and the United States. In many instances, music was purchased from overseas “sight unseen”, although occasionally prompted by reviews encountered in specialist periodicals such as the quarterly *Journal of the ITA* mentioned in the previous paragraph and in the literature review in Chapter 2, and other specialist periodicals catering for the instrumentalist.

A secondary brief to the panels was to identify published compositions by indigenous South African composers that might successfully be transcribed or arranged for Concert Band. A catalogue of such works was provided by the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO). This body additionally offered to commission South African arrangers to transcribe whatever works might be selected by the IDMAC sub-committee. While this gesture was appreciated, it was pointed out at the IDMAC meeting that such work might more usefully be carried out by a number of those present at the meeting, experienced musicians who were recognised composers and arrangers in their own right.

Perusal of the SAMRO catalogue revealed a dishearteningly small number of compositions that could be considered likely material for Concert Band transcription (Pienaar 2005). A great many of them were primarily choral in nature, while others were simply re-arrangements of "traditional" Southern African folk and popular songs. In the case of those works selected, the need for re-arrangement is minimal as they have been composed specifically for concert band instrumentation. Composers such as Honey, Stevenson, Stockton and Van Zuilenberg are already well-established in South Africa as competent in their craft. The sub-committee ended their perusal with the following short list extracted from the SAMRO Archive which, at the time of writing, had not yet been sampled by all IDMAC Bands:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Anon: | <i>Bayeza Street Parade: Twelve Marches
for Symphonic Wind Band</i> |
| 2. Durrant, John: | <i>Studies and Pieces for Wind Band (1991)</i> |
| 3. Fagan, Gideon: | <i>Festival March, arr. van Zuilenburg</i> |
| 4. Honey, Albert: | <i>Fantasia on Tallis Canon (1978)</i> |
| 5. -- -- : | <i>Passacaglia for Wind Band (1966)</i> |
| 6. Lenguasa, P: | <i>Lefatshe: Fanfare 2 for Symphonic
Wind Band (2004)</i> |

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|----|---|--|
| 7. | -- | -- | : | <i>Poelano: Fanfare 1 for Symphonic Wind Band</i> (2004) |
| 8. | Masiza, Hamilton: | | | <i>Vukani Mawethu</i> (1999), arr. Hankinson |
| 9. | Ndodana, Bongani: | | | <i>Zanemvula</i> (2004) |
| 10. | Stephenson, Allan: | | | <i>Introduction and March Afrique</i> (2004) |
| 11. | Stockton, Noel: | | | <i>Concerto for Stageband</i> (1991) |
| 12. | Zuilenberg, P L van: | | | <i>African Echoes</i> |

IDMAC decided to approach SAMRO for copies of all these works, so that their appropriateness for the intended medium could be assessed. Of these original twelve compositions contemplated, all but one were considered to be promising material for Concert Band. This exercise is to be expanded upon after further consultation with SAMRO.

An ameliorating factor in the quest for more appropriate extracts was that a sizeable number of arrangements for concert band had by 2004 been forthcoming from two Directors of Music within the SANDF Bands. These works were not only musically apposite but their orchestration provided numerous examples of suitable band extracts for the majority of band instruments, applicable to the revision being considered. In addition to including these in the repertoire lists for candidate conductors/bandmasters, instrumental extracts selected from these arrangements will be included in section B of *Syllabus 2000*, availing band members of a more representative variety of material from which to choose when preparing for an evaluation.

As can reasonably be expected, panel members' collective knowledge of the respective instrumental repertoires played a significant part in the selection process. The writer's pioneering efforts in South Africa in having expanded the solo and/or concert repertoire of the bass trombone (in deliberate distinction to the tenor trombone) and the bass and alto clarinets (which have

a miniscule original repertoire in comparison to that of the ubiquitous Bb clarinet) were likewise factors in filling some of the *lacunae*.

The supportive attitude of IDMAC comes to light when it is specifically mentioned in the foreword to *Syllabus 2000* that, in the *viva voce* section of the evaluation, the purpose and intent of the examining panel is to afford candidates

The opportunity of revealing what they know, rather than [the examination panel] attempting to expose what they do not know.

This particular extract is from the *Preface to Syllabus 2000, the Syllabus for Service Bands of the SANDF and SAPS* (see Appendix A), with due acknowledgement to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. While the ABRSM voiced this philosophical concept in the 1986-91 edition of their LRSM Syllabus of Examinations (ABRSM 1985: 21), it is one that is not unfamiliar to those with an objective point of view.

The ability to have accomplished what is by all accounts a balanced syllabus, can be ascribed to the efforts of the compiling team, that is, the Chairman and members of the IDMAC, the writer, and his colleagues on the panel. All concerned were thoroughly familiar with the procedures and practices of the various music examination bodies operating in South Africa, having entered numerous candidates in the immediate past – in some cases themselves included. These institutions (the University of South Africa's Music Examinations Department, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and Trinity College, London), hold two examining sessions per annum in the major centres, and one per annum in most of the minor centres in South Africa.

3.6 The repertoire selection panels

In the compiling of *Syllabus 2000*, the composition of the panels (or instrumental group syndicates) was made up as follows:

Woodwind:

- The present writer (Chairman and low woodwind representative);
- Major Ephraim Katz (Bandmaster: 21 Battalion Military Band and clarinet specialist);
- Ms Anna-Maria Müller, BMus (Hons) (principal flute of the Band of the SA Medical Services; flute and piccolo specialist);
- Captain Chris Nichols (Bandmaster: Western Province Command Military Band and flute specialist);
- Captain Rodney Witbooi (Acting Bandmaster of the Cape Town SAPS Band and saxophone specialist).

Brass:

- Captain Mike Coles (Bandmaster, National Ceremonial Guard Band, and professional trombonist);
- Inspector Christiaan Herbst, BMus (Chairman, Assistant Bandmaster/principal trumpet of the SAPS National Band in Pretoria);
- Mr Young-Guang Li (formerly Principal Trombone, Beijing Opera Orchestra, and currently principal trombone, SAPS National Band, Pretoria);
- The present writer who, in addition to his duties on the woodwind panel, undertook most of the work in the area of low brass (bass trombone, euphonium and tuba).

Percussion:

- Ms Ronel du Plessis, then timpanist with the SAPS Concert Band.

The entire proceedings were presided over by Col Kevin T Williams PhD FTCL, Senior Staff Officer of the National Ceremonial Guard Music Services (South African National Defence Force) and Chairman of IDMAC. Colonel Williams is also a Special Commissioner for the Royal School of Church Music. The events were coordinated by him and the present writer, and were held in the band building of the South African Police Training College in Pretoria.

The writer's role in these proceedings was a multiple one, consisting of

- Coordinator of the entire syllabus;
- Chairman, woodwind selection panel;
- Compiler, low woodwind and saxophones;
- Compiler, low brass;
- Compiler: scales/arpeggios, aural tests, sight reading tests;
- Co-author of the preface to *Syllabus 2000*;
- Composer of the examples submitted in *Appendix B*.

3.7 Express actions taken by the selection panels following the IDMAC resolutions of November 1998

Apposite to the research incorporated in this study, and expanding on the somewhat concise IDMAC brief, the actions to be taken were to:

- Peruse the old syllabus to determine what material was worthy of retention and inclusion in the new syllabus;
- Identify suitable replacements for the band extracts that were found to be below (or above) standard (this entailed many hours in the

music library of the South African Police Band at Pretoria West and, as a secondary measure, that of the National Ceremonial Guard Band at Thaba Tshwane);

- Discover, evaluate and grade sufficient accompanied compositions for all the groups of instruments, at all five of the competency levels, that would enable a repertoire list of seven to ten works to be listed for *each* instrument at *each* competency level;
- Find suitable transcriptions should the original repertoire for a particular instrument be insufficient;
- Ascertain that selected items were in print;
- Reach consensus in the ancillary areas of prescribed scales and arpeggios, aural tests, *viva voce* and sight reading;
- Develop a strategy, as briefed, to present the new syllabus in a positive and objective manner, in order that it be perceived by bandsmen and -women as being "user-friendly" as well as a decided improvement over the "old" syllabus.

The last-mentioned point was achieved *inter alia* by providing the assurance that *Syllabus 2000*, whilst being a tangible achievement, was by no means an inflexible tome but a living document that would be refined, fine-tuned, modified and upgraded on an ongoing basis, catering for future developments and able to accommodate any reasonable representation from Bandmasters and Directors of Music. These undertakings have been borne in mind, with the result that numerous minor improvements and adjustments have been incorporated during the three years the new syllabus has been operational.

As previously stated in brief, it was decided to retain those musical examples which were considered to be of adequate value when it came to the revision of the published band extracts, adjusting only the length in certain cases where this was considered desirable in terms of consistency. Control sheets were distributed to all participants in the revision process, in which they were

requested to fill in the following sections pertaining to the band extracts as well as the solo repertoire:

- Description of "unsuitable" piece or extract in the (then) current syllabus;
- Reason for perceived unsuitability;
- Suggested substitution;
- Reason for perceived suitability;
- Other remarks; and
- IDMAC approval granted (or not).

This proved to be a productive exercise, with maximum interaction between the panel members. One of the results was that nearly all military march extracts were removed from the lists of extracts (except in the Musician category, which retains a good number of "staple" marches), with the exceptions of Fucík's ever-demanding *Florentiner* and *Entry of the Gladiators*, Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, Wagner's *Under the Double Eagle* and Texidor's *Amparito Roca*. The rationale behind this group decision was that by the time the incumbent band member had reached the second level of service band musicianship, i.e. that of Senior Musician, he or she should in any event be fully acquainted with all the marches in the band's repertoire.

Secondly, the deliberate exposure to the less "military" concert band repertoire was regarded as being more musically rewarding to all concerned; more importantly, it may well afford the prospective candidate additional insight into a repertoire that he or she may rarely be exposed to, should the band concerned be principally a "parade" band.

An interesting by-product of the implementation of *Syllabus 2000*, already discernable at the time of writing, is that certain bandmasters have begun to acquaint themselves more with the Concert Band repertoire listed in the new

syllabus, rehearsing compositions hitherto unfamiliar or even unknown to them, when time allows, not only as sight-reading exercises for their band, but in a positive move to expand the band's repertoire. This, of course, is precisely what IDMAC intended.

The compilers were agreed that certain staples of the concert band repertoire were a *sine qua non* as far as the new syllabus was concerned. Holst's two Suites for Military Band and his *Hammersmith Overture*, Vaughan-Williams' *Toccata Marziale*, Persichetti's Symphony No. 6 for Band, O'Connell's *Songs of the Gael*, and most of Grainger's original works for wind band are examples of these. Accepted transcriptions of certain orchestral works, including those of Albéniz, Bernstein, Copland, Rossini, Tchaikovsky and Verdi were found to yield rich dividends in the field of what can be termed "typical instrumental passages", and were accordingly included.

Also featuring significantly were the "show business" selections, and concert band arrangements of popular film scores, a representative example being John Williams' *Star Wars* Medley - by all accounts a challenging yet appealing work.

3.8 Later revision of band extracts

In August 2004 the lists of band extracts for many of the brass and woodwind instruments again came under scrutiny by IDMAC. There was no fault found with the technical or musical standards of the extracts selected by the instrumental panels of 1999; the input received from senior bandsmen was, rather, in connection with the "job-relatedness" or not of certain compositions and arrangements from which the extracts were selected.

IDMAC members came to the conclusion that many of the available transcriptions of some large-scale symphonic orchestral works, such as the Tchaikovsky symphonies and overtures, were in actual practice rarely performed by Concert Bands anywhere in South Africa. The consensus was reached that Concert Band arrangements of film scores, Broadway productions of the second half of the twentieth century and the like were more relevant and "job-related" than much of the seldom-performed "traditional" repertoire. It was also conceded that technical as well as musical demands are as testing of skills in this type of repertoire as in the symphonic one. More contemporary staples of the Concert Band diet, such as Dave Brubeck's *Studies in Time* and other jazz-oriented but musically sophisticated arrangements and transcriptions, were found to be of more practical value in this context than classical and baroque overtures, for instance.

The decision was subsequently taken at the IDMAC meeting of 25th August 2004 to subject the band extracts to further scrutiny at all four levels, replacing those which had only a marginal chance of performance with more contemporary fare. This was to be effected without compromise to musical or technical standards. A sub-committee, headed by the present writer, was formed with a woodwind specialist from the S A Police Band, a brass specialist and an all-round percussionist from the S A Air Force Band, and the Group Leader of the National Ceremonial Guard's entertainment unit. This exercise has not been finalised, due to the implications of further co-operation with TCL, referred to in section 7.6.2 of Chapter 7.

3.9 Summary

It was acknowledged by all participants that no task of this character is ever truly completed, and *Syllabus 2000* remains by nature a "living document", with further refinements, additions and alterations taking place whenever deemed appropriate. Indeed, further refinements to detail have been

incorporated at virtually every quarterly IDMAC meeting held since the beginning of 2000. Bearing in mind the IDMAC brief to aim towards a more "user-friendly" syllabus, with a choice of accompanied works that would be appealing to most instrumentalists, the empirical approach or *modus operandi* of action research appears to have been well justified. In brief, the Mandarin expression *Kaizen* - constant, ongoing improvement - is felt by the writer to be fitting in this context.