

Program

Overture on a Shaker Tune	John Higgins
TIME in the Balance!	Stephen Melillo
Air for Band	Frank Erickson
Three Ayres From Gloucester	Hugh M. Stuart
I. The Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley	
II. Ayre for Eventide	
III. The Fiefs for Eventide	
Thundercrest March	Eric Osterlmg

Notes about tonight's selections:

Overture on a Shaker Tune

"Tis' the gift to be simple, tis' the gift to be free." These famous words encapsulate the emotion behind the famous Shaker tune *Simple Gifts*, a song that dates back to the Quaker culture of the late eighteenth century. Quakers were a culture noted for their strong values towards family and God. Listen for fragments of the melody throughout this work. John Higgins is not new to the published world of band music as he has held high posts with major music publication companies.

TIME in the Balance!

Simply stated, many of Mr. Melillo's compositions are unique! His music is exciting, haunting, and technically challenging. As a composer of over 940 separate musical works, he has written a wide variety of pieces for an even wider variety of ensembles. Melillo's music can be heard on marching band fields, background music to movies, full length orchestral symphonies, and on television shows such as Home Improvement, General Hospital, and Doogie Howser.

"Time in the Balance" is a piece whose name is derived from its compositional style. The piece is an all around balancing act. During certain passages, the balance exists between the time spent playing rests, and the time spent playing notes, while other sections stress the balance between high and low sounding instruments. Many of the musical ideas are strongly interjected by quick rests and short yet aggressive snare drum solos. The use of an electronic keyboard is an extra bonus that Melillo includes in many of his scores. He considers the keyboard to be an integral part to the band of the third millennium.

This piece of music is just one movement of a sixteen piece suite called Stormquest. This interrelated and progressive suite consists of 16 pieces for "Young" Bands. Each of these pieces, while exploring new frontiers for "young" band, also embodies a specific musical concept which is offered as a teaching strategy in the score notes.

Air for Band

There are certain songs within the band repertoire that are timeless classics, songs that students will always remember. Frank Erickson certainly achieved such status with his Air for Band. While deceptively simple looking on the page, this piece requires high levels of focus and musical sensitivity to truly capture the simple elegance of the music. The music in this piece gives musicians that ability to breathe life and emotion into slow and lyrical writing. First published in 1956, this work has withstood the critical tests of time.

Three Ayres from Gloucester

This three movement work came to life as a result of Hugh Stuart's fascination with an old 10th Century couplet, "There's no one quite so comely, as the Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley." A word from old English, comely means pleasing and wholesome in appearance, or attractive. Comely is a very appropriate adjective for this piece, as it is an attractive work full of catchy melodies and a diversity of emotion.

The first movement, *The Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley* (pronounced Chum-lee) is representative of the nobility that once surrounded Cholmondeley castle. The music begins with a fanfare-esque sound that lends itself to visions of nobility and busy life within a castle's walls.

In contrast to the first movement, *Ayre for Eventide* is a beautiful presentation of smooth and melodic music. While an ayre typically refers to a piece of English instrumental music, Ayres can also be sung. The word Eventide is old English for "evening." Listening to this third movement, you can almost see the sun setting on a peaceful evening in the country.

The third movement has a bit of deception built into its title. *The Fiefs of Wembley* at first glance sounds as though it would refer to the high pitched wooden flute, the fife. (Note the spelling difference!) A "fief" is actually another old English term for fee or if you refer to the dictionary's definition: in feudal law, an estate in land granted by a lord to his vassal on condition of homage and service. You may now be asking yourself, "where is the confusion coming from?" When you listen to this movement, the majority of the writing is for the flutes, which is extremely representative of the fife! The location Wembley is part of London and is today most famous for the Wembley Stadium, home of the English national soccer team. Whether it be soccer stadiums, fifes, or fiefs that fit your fancy, you'll surely enjoy this toe tapping tune.

Thundercrest

Composed by Eric Osterling in 1964, this march is an energetic adventure from start to finish. Voted into the prestigious "100 Most Popular Marches" list by the *Instrumentalist Magazine*, the work compliments its buoyant rhythmic drive with deceptive harmonic progressions. Credited with over 69 compositions for band, Osterling recently passed away in July 2005 after having taught as a public school teacher and at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida.