



PHILIP COBB

FANTASY

THE CENTRAL BAND OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

INTRODUCTION

From the moment man began to fashion animal bones into crude instruments, tens of thousands of years ago, we have been driven to invent instruments that are capable of expressing sound in ways different to the human voice. Each of the many varied instruments that comprise a modern orchestra belongs to a tradition and lineage that harkens back to our earliest beginnings. In the case of the mighty trumpet, what likely began as a ram's horn in Africa, evolved to a natural metal horn of some sort, which then became a keyed bugle, only to end up as a valved post horn, which led to what we now know as the cornet. From there, it was and remains a very short step to the modern trumpet.

All along the way, people created parallel and far deeper traditions that advanced the playing on these evolving instruments. More sophisticated individual performers formed schools that created pedagogies. Compositions were written to satisfy pedagogic requirements and those practices created a lineage of music and performers. A lineage of this type was a source of great pride for its descendants and much was

made of whose was the best and which school was the finest. For trumpet players, although pioneers like Gottfried Reiche, Anton Weidinger, Francis Johnson and Ned Kendall, played before recording was invented, they remain omnipresent. Their technical prowess and innovations inspired a roll call of great cornet soloists. Even though we've never heard what they really sounded like, discoveries made by these greats form the foundation of our way of playing today.

Today, there is a worldwide investment in playing our instrument on the highest level. That requires us, wherever we are, to return time and time again to fundamentals developed in the late 19th century – a time when cornet soloists were the stars of every Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon band concert. Across countries and cultures, we are kindred spirits: a trumpeter in Japan in 2016 studies from the Arban method book written by a French master in the mid 19th century. The unique bond that comes from hours of long tones, slurs, and double and triple tonguing exercises brings us together and identifies us.

There has always been a strong tradition of brass playing in Britain. Perhaps the greatest of all soloists in the cornet

tradition, George Swift, is part of this lineage. And the list of British brass bands is endless, including the legendary Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. We are blessed today with a young hero of this tradition; Phil Cobb. He comes from a family of musicians and the clarity, expressiveness, and virtuosity of his playing offers a shining new voice. His stellar playing speaks to all that has come before, and is a dynamic step forward for the heritage we share.

With this excellent recording, Phil has realized the aspirations of generations of trumpeters. He plays with lyric sweetness; unerring tone (in all registers) deep attacks and clear double and triple tonguing. Above all, he plays with the bravura majesty that is the province of the trumpet. His playing elevates our instrument, and elevates us.

Wynton Marsalis



ABOUT PHILIP

Philip is a fourth generation Salvationist and comes from a family that is intrinsically linked with Salvation Army music making at its highest level. From a young age, Philip regularly featured as a cornet soloist, appearing alongside his brother Matthew and father Stephen, accompanied by his mother Elaine. However, in the ensuing years he found himself making more regular appearances as a soloist in his own right.

In 2000, he gained a place in the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, where he became Principal Cornet on a number of courses and won the prestigious Harry Mortimer award on four occasions. As a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Philip studied with Paul Beniston (Principal Trumpet of the London Philharmonic Orchestra) and world-renowned trumpet soloist Alison Balsom. In 2006, he took part in the prestigious Maurice André International Trumpet Competition and was awarded one of the major prizes in the competition as the Most Promising Performer. While

studying, Philip played in The Salvation Army's International Staff Band. He was awarded the Candide Award at the London Symphony Orchestra's Brass Academy and also played with the European Youth Orchestra as Principal Trumpet. Prior to leaving the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Philip was already working with orchestras such as the London Philharmonic, London Chamber and BBC Symphony orchestras however by the time he had completed his Bachelor of Music degree he had already secured his current post in the London Symphony Orchestra. Philip has also played 'guest principal' at The Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Despite his heavy schedule with the orchestra, Philip continues to maintain his solo career and a continued interest in brass bands and has, previous to *Fantasy*, released two solo CDs; *Life Abundant* with Cory Band and *Songs from the Heart* with The International Staff Band of The Salvation Army. Philip's solo career has seen him perform at both Carnegie Hall and David Geffen Hall in New York as well as the Royal Albert Hall, O2 Arena, Barbican and Cadogan Hall just to name a few.

He is also actively involved with the recently formed Superbrass, Eminence Brass and Barbican Brass ensembles. One of his other passions is film music and he

enjoys the opportunity of pursuing this area of music-making with the LSO and also as a freelance trumpet player. Recent soundtracks on which Philip can be heard include: *Harry Potter*, *Twilight – New Moon*, *The Pirates*, *Shrek*, *A better life*, *Rise of the Guardians*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Angry Birds*, *42* and *The Monuments Men*. He was also featured in the opening and closing ceremonies of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

PHILIP COBB IS AN OFFICIAL ENDORSER
FOR B&S AND A. COURTOIS.



Antoine Courtois
Paris

THE MUSIC

The inspiration for this album came from Wynton Marsalis' cornet solo album *Carnaval*.

I know from talking to colleague musicians that *Carnaval* had a huge impact and influence on so many players. Wynton's breath-taking playing, the fantastic arrangements, superb programming, excellent band accompaniments and the exciting way in which the whole thing was recorded and presented are all things that still overwhelm, excite and inspire me when I listen to it.

While I realise that many other great players have also recorded similar albums, Wynton's CD was played and played – and eventually worn out – in my family home. The album was released in 1987, which was also the year in which I was born! I felt that this was another lovely link – and am naturally delighted that Wynton has also agreed to be involved in this project. The brass band scene in the UK, both in Salvation Army and secular terms, is a wonderful

tradition and one that I am very proud to be a part of. The opportunity to record a few of the solos that I grew up playing in a slightly different format, with accompaniment from The Central Band of the Royal Air Force, filled me with huge excitement.

Music can trigger many thoughts, feelings and emotions and, as on my other discs, there is a reason and purpose behind every track chosen for this album. Memorable concert performances, influential people and their recordings and compositions or simply the fact that it's just great music are all reasons for inclusion on *Fantasy*.

The disc starts with *Slavische Fantasie*. My memories of this piece are of Richard Marshall and his debut CD with the Grimethorpe Colliery Band. For me, this is a great 'crossover piece' for cornet and trumpet players and I think back to my years in the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain and playing this solo for various auditions. I am so fortunate to have The Central Band of the Royal Air Force accompanying me on this disc. They demonstrate tremendous energy, particularly in the introductions.

The Debutante is one of the many tracks that are on this disc simply because of Wynton's *Carnaval* album. A brilliant traditional cornet solo with everything from melodies to cadenzas – and containing so many technical challenges.

The programming of solo CDs and recitals is pivotal, and is something that I still admire when listening to *Carnaval*. The circular breathing and breath-taking finger technique in items such as *Moto Perpetuo* and *The Flight of the Bumblebee* are always followed by very 'simple' tunes that give the listener a rest, whilst also revealing a completely different facet of his playing. These simple tunes are always placed at a point on the album when the listener just needs a few moments of rest or a change of acoustic scenery. Leroy Anderson's *A Trumpeter's Lullaby* was one of two or three pieces that I felt would provide that invaluable 'rest' for the listener before delivering another 'blockbuster' cornet solo in *Grand Russian Fantasia*. *A Trumpeter's Lullaby* is a very simple tune, but also with real challenges. I have a recording of Roger Webster playing this lovely melody and it is just a beautifully measured performance!

Since first hearing Håkan Hardenberger playing *Hora Staccato* I wanted to include it in my concert repertoire. It's two minutes of pure fun! Andrew Pearce has written a number of pieces for me now. An extremely talented composer and a good friend, I always look forward to working with him because he has such passion and energy for music that I find so refreshing. Andy is an extremely versatile composer, but I believe he has a special talent for writing beautiful tunes. This is demonstrated on the flugel in his melody entitled *A Spring Lullaby*. I believe Andy came up with the inspiration for this tune whilst on a walk through Hadley Wood in Barnet – which is very close to where Andy and I both grew up and currently live. I would like to thank Andy for his friendship and music over the last few years.

The next couple of tracks, *Napoli* and *Song to the Moon*, were both featured in a Jim Shepherd solo book that I still use today for solo concerts. *Napoli* is such an iconic cornet solo and this is such a fantastic arrangement of it, taken from Wynton's *Carnaval*. Again, my thanks to The Central Band of the Royal Air Force for the energetic backing that they give. The restful melody, *Song to the Moon* provides another opportunity for the listener to draw breath!

The next track on the disc features Peter Graham's *Whirlwind*. Early playing days for me consisted of learning solos by ear as I hadn't really started to read music then. I remember playing a recording of this solo by the Egon Virtuosi Band, with Richard Martin as soloist, over and over and over again on my Philips sound system so that I would give myself the best opportunity to learn this solo. It must have driven my family mad!! This is one of the first solos I learnt and performed, and it's still a great little solo that seemed to fit perfectly into the programme and theme of the album. Thanks to Peter Graham for this arrangement.

Maurice Murphy was my predecessor as Principal Trumpet at the LSO and I have recordings of both him and Rod Franks playing the Harry James *Concerto for Trumpet*. Rod Franks was Co-Principal for both Maurice and myself, and so I'm pleased to record this as a tribute to both Rod and Maurice. This is the only track on the album on which I play trumpet and hopefully you can tell that it's one of my favourite solos.

Versatility as a musician has always been something that has interested and inspired me. I have been fortunate to work with some of the most fantastically versatile musicians: musicians who are able to cover so many styles and have such a wide knowledge of different

musical genres, which is a lesson in itself. Another early memory is of Martin Winter's album entitled *Winter's Tale* on which he demonstrates exactly that. A favourite track of mine on that album is the song *Springtime can really hang you up the most*. I'm privileged to have a colleague of mine, Sam Walton join me in this beautiful flugel and vibraphone piece. I hope this brings something completely fresh to you, in the same way that Martin's performance did for me on his album. Thanks to Sam for joining me – and of course to Martin for his arrangement.

Ole Edvard Antonsen is another terrific trumpet player who, along with Wynton, has recorded a CD of cornet classics with wind band. My CD finishes with a solo that I first heard on his album, *The Golden Age of the Cornet*. It is called *The Bride of the Waves*. This is another brilliant classic cornet solo that I felt was the right choice to finish this CD.

I hope that you enjoy listening to this collection of solos that reflect players and composers whose performances and compositions have inspired me and played a part in shaping my own musical journey.

Philip Cobb

THE CENTRAL BAND OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

CONDUCTED BY WING COMMANDER DUNCAN STUBBS AND SQUADRON LEADER PIERS MORRELL



Music has always been an integral part of military life and since its formation in 1920, the Central Band of the Royal Air Force has boasted a proud and distinguished heritage. Now based at purpose built, state of the art facilities at Royal Air Force Northolt, the Central Band continues to demonstrate its

versatile and unique role. The band is at the forefront of many State Ceremonial events, from 'Changing the Guard' at Buckingham Palace to the National Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph. Central Band musicians have been privileged to participate in many high-profile national events, including the

Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the Royal Wedding and the 2012 London Olympics.

In 1922, the Central Band became the first military band to broadcast on BBC Radio and remains the most frequently featured on the airwaves. Recent popular broadcasts include a live BBC Radio 3 concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London's South Bank Centre and a celebration of 100 years of Military Aviation and Music on BBC Radio 2's Listen to the Band programme. The band also played a leading role in marking the 70th anniversary of the 'Dambusters' with a performance on BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*.

Alongside this broadcasting success, the musicians of the Band are well recognised for their recording prowess. Beginning in 1955 with the release of Eric Coates' *The Dambusters March* (HMV), the Central Band became the first military band to make a long-playing record and remains at the forefront of military band and contemporary wind ensemble recording. The critical and popular success of *Reach for the Skies* (Decca Records) and collaborative efforts with composer Nigel Hess on *New London Pictures* (Chandos) and euphonium soloist Steven Mead with his CDs *Diamonds* and *Pearls*, stand as firm testament to their ongoing commitment to musical excellence and diversity.

Within the United Kingdom, the Central Band enjoys supporting several service charities. Most notable is their partnership with the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust, with whom they undertake an annual concert tour, covering a dozen cities and several of the country's major concert halls. 2013 saw the band make its West End debut at the Dominion Theatre, performing with the casts of many of the current West End shows in a spectacular gala performance in support of 'Help For Heroes'. The band continues to build strong links within the UK's musical community, having presented several highly acclaimed concerts for the British and the World Associations of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles (BASBWE & WASBWE), in addition to performing at many of the country's leading music colleges and conservatoires.

As well as travelling the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, the Central Band maintains a strong international presence; indeed, the band has the distinction of being the first outside the USA to be awarded the 'John Philip Sousa Citation for Musical Excellence'. Having featured in International Tattoos in Quebec (2011) and Basel (2014), the band also took a leading role in the 2015 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Lately the band has represented the British Military for the

Queen's Birthday Celebrations in New Delhi, India, and has participated in the Victory Day Parade in Red Square, Moscow, marking the anniversary of Victory in Europe for Allied Forces. Engagements have also been undertaken in other countries around the world, including Holland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, Australia and the USA.

There is, however, another side to the sterling accomplishments of Central Band musicians. As serving members of the Royal Air Force, musicians also undertake to support key operational roles in less familiar environments such as Afghanistan, Turkey and the Falkland Islands, with many musicians having served in Operation TELIC (the 2nd Gulf War) in Iraq. Our musicians are required to fulfil a diverse range of operational roles, from detainee handling in Afghanistan to driving ambulances in the Falkland Islands.

From the concert stage to operational theatres around the globe, Central Band musicians display, in their conduct and performance, the excellence for which the Royal Air Force has become renowned during its illustrious history.

WITH THANKS

The RAF Central Band and conductors for their fantastic backing throughout the recording.

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Thanks to Adam Goldsmith for your patience until the bitter end.

~

Wynton for the constant inspiration.

~

My dad for your constant support and guidance.

~

David Childs for your ears in the box and continued friendship.

~

Andy Pearce for 'A Spring Lullaby' and your enthusiasm for music.

~

World of Sound for the opportunity to do the album.

~

Lyndon Chapman and The Buffet Group for your sponsorship and fantastic instruments you produce.

CREDITS

Executive Producer: Trevor Caffull

Producer: Adam Goldsmith

Co-Producer: David Childs

Engineer: James Lawrence

Post-Production: Adam Goldsmith

Production Manager: Nicki Tonge

Project Coordinator: Mari Malm Mørkved

Programme Notes: Philip Cobb

Artwork and Design: Mango Graphic Design

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1. Slavische Fantasie 7.40
M/S
2. The Debutante 6.03
© M. Witmark & Sons
3. A Trumpeter's Lullaby 3.07
© Mills Music
4. Grand Russian Fantasia 6.27
© Lubeckano Studio
5. Hora Staccato 2.21
© Carl Fisher
6. A Spring Lullaby 5.39
© Molenaar Edition
7. Napoli 5.49
© Alfred Music
8. Song to the Moon 5.46
© Prima Vista Musikk
9. Whirlwind 2.41
© Gramercy Music
10. Concerto for Trumpet 3.39
© Paramount Music
11. Springtime can really hang you
up the most 5.46
M/S
12. The Bride of the Waves 5.45
© Warner Bros. Inc.

Conducted by Wing Commander Duncan Stubbs
and Squadron Leader Piers Morrell

