

(4) STYLISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

The composer stipulates that *In Memoriam* should be played “in a broad cantabile manner.” Tune the contrapuntal lines and unify the style of articulation, especially in the *marcato*, *maestoso* sections. Because much of the music is forte, conductors must be careful to pace the dynamics, and not confuse majestic with bombastic. Also, because the music is somewhat thick and contrapuntal, be careful not to play too strongly: the busier the music, the lighter and more transparently we need to play. If you are considering any works by Bach (such as the chorales arranged by Alfred Reed or the Preludes and Fugues arranged by Roland Moehlmann), *In Memoriam* could be a fine complement. Due to its title and background, *In Memoriam* could also serve effectively whenever an occasion warrants a solemn, yet majestic, piece.

Symbiopholie!

Jonathan Dagenais (born 1978) is a Montreal-based composer, conductor, and percussionist. In 2005, he founded L’Orchestre à Vents Non Identifié (The Unidentified Wind Orchestra). This past year, Dagenais served as acting conductor of the McGill Wind Symphony. *Stella*, a symphonic poem for wind orchestra he wrote in 2005, was discussed in *Canadian Winds 7/2* (Spring 2009). You can obtain copies of the score and parts, and find out more about his music at www.jonathandagenais.net.

Symbiopholie! was written in 2008 for the 160th anniversary of the St-Jérôme Concert Band, the oldest community band in Canada. Dagenais comments: “[Symbiopholie] has two words in it: symbiosis and craziness. For the band to go through the different eras, a symbiosis of passion for music by the members was necessary. On the other hand, to get together every Monday night to play and have fun for two hours requires a certain dose of craziness, a musical delirium!”

(1) FORM / STRUCTURE

Taking its cue from the dichotomy in its title, *Symbiopholie!* is in two contrasting parts: a slow march to emphasize the symbiosis of the ensemble, and a double-time second section illustrating unbridled craziness. A *da capo* leads back to the stern, march-like atmosphere, and a coda mixes in trombone *glissandi* for a circus-like finish.

(2) MUSICAL ELEMENTS

RHYTHM

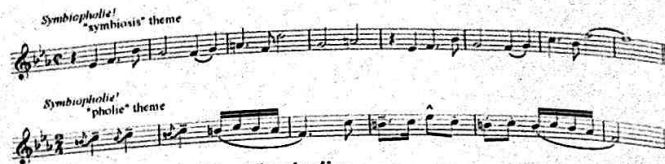
Symbiopholie! is in a stately cut-time (half-note = 84) for the march portion and a rather giddy (*avec énergie et une certaine folie*) 2/4 section (quarter note = 144-152). Sixteenth-notes are used in the 2/4 section, but only in short bursts of four notes each. Off-beat eighth-notes in a fast tempo, dotted 8th and 16th-note rhythms, and both triplet quarter- and triplet eighth-notes are also commonly used. Interestingly, Dagenais includes many instances of the percussion playing triplet eighth-notes against duplets in the winds.

TONALITY AND HARMONY

Symbiopholie! is in C minor, ending on a C major chord. Although the piece is quite tonal, there are numerous accidentals, “sus” chords, and flat-sixth chordal relationships.

MELODY

The main march melody contrives to be both lyrical and solemn, while the “pholie” melody is giddy in its use of grace-notes, augmented seconds, and three-bar phrases.



Music Example 6. *Symbiopholie*.

COLOUR

Most of the piece is quite safely scored in *tutti* fashion. There is one solo melody for the first trumpet, and the trombones play *glissando* three-note chords at the end (bringing to mind the ending of Ravel’s *Bolero*). Percussion adds the most timbral variety, especially the zany hand percussion: ratchet, flexatone, and slide whistle. The percussion section is also called upon to perform in *solis* fashion, providing a rhythmic introduction to the first strain of the march proper.

In addition to the clever and idiomatic percussion writing, Dagenais provides lots of other colour interest, including a saxophone section *solis*, echo effects, pointillistic entrances, trills, grace notes, *cuvrez* brass entrances, flutter-tonguing trumpets, and the aforementioned trombone *glissandi*. Finally, the composer leaves the tone colour of one section of the piece up the ensemble: a twelve-bar *solis* section can be given to either cup muted trumpets or to clarinets – the choice is yours.

(3) TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Highest written notes for brass instruments are as follows: trumpet 1: Bb above the staff (optional high D at the end); horn 1: G above the staff; trombone 1: Bb above the staff; euphonium: F above the staff. The horn writing is usually independent of the saxophones. The euphonium part is frequently written *divisi*. The percussion section requires five players, and each makes important contributions. There is a wide variety of dynamics and styles of articulation called for. Also, due to the use of silence and independent writing, there is considerable demand placed upon the ensemble’s ability to feel time and subdivision together.

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Unifying articulations, maintaining control of *tempi* (poised and somewhat pompous in the march, frenetic and breathless in the “pholie” section), and making sure that all the colour effects are clearly heard will be the main style considerations. *Symbiopholie!* would make a great end to any concert, and would be especially useful for community and military bands. One could describe it as *Darth Vader* meets *Puszta*. It is a fun and stylish march.



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