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## THE HISTORY OF WIND ENSEMBLES

**WHEN** you watch a stage full of musicians performing music written in times past—and quite often in the far distant past—you might think the musical instruments and their combinations are as old as history itself, or at least the history of Western culture. We have always known this music, and we have always heard these particular instruments, so we don't often think about a time when they weren't heard in public as a group. But everything has a genesis.

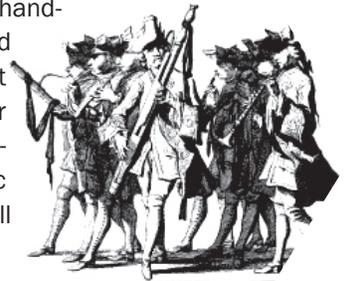
The genesis of the wind ensemble as we know it today began to take shape in the 1700s with military bands. These groups, which had been used to sound a call to action, were doing double duty as entertainment at royal courts. The idea caught on and even became a status symbol—each royal house was expected to maintain its own music staff, just as it would maintain a kitchen staff or staff devoted to the livery stable. Soon even the middle classes who didn't keep full-time musicians on hand would hire bands for special occasions. The ensembles were called "harmonies," taken from a German word for "wind instrument," and they would provide entertainment at banquets and garden parties, completely removed from military function.

The groups usually consisted of no more than eight musicians, and they performed new music by the likes of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven who began composing for harmonies. Initially, the ensembles included two oboes, two clarinets, two horns and two bassoons; but eventually Turkish instruments were incorporated, providing a certain

balance with piccolos, heavier brass and percussion. A merger was inevitable, and harmonies were blended with string sections to perform for operas—and presto, the birth of the full symphony orchestra.

In the 19th century, harmonies were slipping out of fashion in Europe, and musicians began immigrated to the United States. The new environment provided new life for the groups and new appreciation for their distinctive musical brand. The groups grew in size, newer instruments were incorporated, new music was written exclusively for the bands; and by the turn of the 20th century, the modern wind ensemble, or concert band, had become a fixture in American society.

On June 1, we'll present the Tuscarawas Philharmonic High School Honors Wind Ensemble, merging our own wind section with high school musicians hand-picked by their band directors. You won't want to miss our ensemble's contribution to this historic musical genre—it will be timeless.



Right: Dover Concert Band, 1924

Below: The Philharmonic Wind Ensemble, 2012

**BRIGHT AND BRASSY | June 1 | 7:30 P.M. | Performing Arts Center**



# ARTIST PROFILE HONORS WIND ENSEMBLE

ON JUNE 1, high school students will join the Philharmonic wind and percussion players to form the Tuscarawas Philharmonic High School Honors Wind Ensemble. On stage, 48 young musicians representing six area high schools will be seated for performance.

Selecting these students was no simple task, and Steven Stroup, the orchestra's principle horn player, took on the role of coordinator. He has organized several honor bands throughout his career as music educator, Stroup said, and he used his experience and access to various student evaluation tools to hone the process and to help him gather the finest area school musicians.

Stroup provided school band directors with an evaluation form, and they were able to thoroughly describe the musicians they recommended

for the ensemble. Stroup then reviewed each form and sorted the players for appropriate seat assignment.

"The purpose of the Philharmonic honor wind ensemble is to give the students a musical experience they cannot get in their individual school programs," said Stroup. "These kids have performed in other honor bands, but in no other case are students able to play beside professional or semi-professional musicians." He added that allowing students to play alongside mature musicians gives them a rare opportunity to learn more refined musical skills. And playing under the direction of Eric Benjamin will give students a beneficial perspective in their music education.

The students will join the orchestra players in full rehearsal, but they will also be treated to a special sectional rehearsal designed just for them. Each section will be given expert instruction by principle players from the orchestra, and the group will also combine to be led by Benjamin. "They will have had private practice time, of course, but this rehearsal allows them to run through the music in context," said Stroup.

By the time a musician reaches high school grades, he or she has already been playing for several years, in most cases, but their experience with the Philharmonic will further broaden their knowledge of band repertoire. For example, Stroup described Giovanni Gabrieli as being known for his "tower music," and "Canzon Per Sonare #2" (1608) is a prime example of antiphonal playing. Wagner's "Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral" is from the opera *Lohengrin* first performed in 1850. And the ensemble will also perform "Pageant, Op. 59" by Persichetti, a 20th-century American composer, to round out a complete program.

In the end, a new group of consumers is exposed to what a symphony, what the Tuscarawas Philharmonic, has to offer a community.



Photos: the  
2012 Honor Wind  
Ensemble courtesy of  
Terry Barnhill

## WTUZ—99.9 FM

WTUZ proudly sponsors the orchestra each year because we believe in supporting our community organizations and in the opportunity for music lovers to experience something cultural without having to leave the area. Most small communities cannot afford to support their own local orchestra. We are blessed to have this orchestra in our own backyard. The Tuscarawas Philharmonic provides an opportunity for people of all ages to experience, enjoy and/or participate in their shows. (WTUZ is a guarantor of the *Bright & Brassy* concert)

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# Respighi's Celebration

by Eric Benjamin, Music Director



**WITH** the final concert of this season, the Tuscarawas Philharmonic concludes its traversal of the epic tone poems that comprise the “Roman trilogy” of Ottorino Respighi. *The Pines of Rome* was composed in 1924 and is the most popular of the three with its majestic *Pines of the Appian Way* finale. *Fountains of Rome* (1916) has its moments of resonant splendor, but it contrasts with its companions by being mainly pastoral and impressionistic, fading off into a Roman twilight. The final piece of the series, *Feste Romane*, (1928) is the longest of the three (about 25 minutes) and is the most difficult technically. It also is the most “modern”—with rhythms and textures in places reminiscent of Stravinsky—especially in the final, chaotic portrayal of the Epiphany celebrations. All of the music sounds like terrific film score, and I still wonder why Respighi did not do as many of his contemporaries were doing and make for sunny California to compose extravagant film scores and lounge at poolside.

The answer, I think, has to do with Respighi's sense of heritage. *Pines*, *Fountains* and *Festivals* are certainly his

best-known works, and they demonstrate his mastery as an orchestral painter—he uses the instruments imaginatively, and creates a great variety of textures and colors in the depiction of his subject matter. That subject matter was, of course, his adopted hometown, Rome, and the entire project was the fruit of his ardent nationalism and ethnic pride. During a particularly troubled time in Italy, Respighi remained in his homeland out of love for the people, place and its history.

In *Feste*, he celebrates Italian culture by depicting four festivals rooted in four different epochs. *Circenses* (Circuses) refers to the violent spectacles of the days of the Roman Empire, and Respighi leaves no stop unpulled to create a violent image of Christians (represented by a chant melody) being attacked by wild animals in the Circus Maximus. The next festival is *Jubilee*, the special Easter holiday that occurs every seven years, dating from the Middle Ages. Again, a chant (best known as *Christus ist erstanden*) serves as the main material. In *L'Ottobrata*, an 18th-century harvest festival is represented by the sounds of hunting horn solos and a mandolin serenade. Autumn evenings in Italy are still comfortably warm and allow for outdoor feasting and romance, which Respighi evokes with rhapsodic love music.

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“*Pines, Fountains and Festivals are certainly his best-known works, and they demonstrate his mastery as an orchestral painter—he uses the instruments imaginatively, and creates a great variety of textures and colors in the depiction of his subject matter.*”

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The finale, *La Bafana*, is an orchestral tour de force as the Epiphany celebration is portrayed in vibrant, robust tones. Mirroring newly nascent cinematic techniques, Respighi places the listener in the midst of the festivities that swirl about in a kaleidoscopic montage of images—a distinctly 20th-century edition of the ancient holiday. Notable especially is a variation on a dance theme for solo trombone that is a brilliantly off-rhythm depiction of an inebriate. There follows a series of dances that grow wilder, with layers of complexity, leading to a whirlwind conclusion.

It's Respighi's celebration of Italian culture and spirit, and of an orchestra's ability to take your breath away.



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