



CRYSTAL
RECORDS
CD691

New England Reveries

Barton Cummings
Vincent Persichetti
Walter Ross
Neal Corwell
Louis Calabro
MARK NELSON, TUBA

Sylvia Parker, Piano

MARK NELSON, TUBA • SYLVIA PARKER, PIANO

BARTON CUMMINGS

Fantasia Breve (1989) — 11:49
for tuba and piano

1. Allegro assai (3:55)
2. Larghetto (5:22)
3. Molto allegro–marcato (2:27)

pub. by PRB Productions

VINCENT PERSICETTI

4. Parable for Solo Tuba, op. 147
(1981) — 10:16

pub. by Elkan-Vogel Inc.

NEAL CORWELL

5. New England Reveries (1990)
— 9:16

for tuba and synthesizer

WALTER ROSS

Escher's Sketches (1986) — 7:28
for solo tuba

6. Rippled Surface (1:53)
7. Metamorphoses II (2:31)
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9. Magic Mirror (1:24)
10. Metamorphoses I (1:43)

pub. by Mark Tezak Verlag

LOUIS CALABRO

Sonata–Fantasia (1987) — 23:00
for tuba and piano

11. Slow–Fast–Slow (10:57)
12. B Major Paradox (3:11)
13. Quasi Rondo (8:44)

TOTAL TIME — 63:57

Master tape produced by Mark Nelson and Mike Billingsly. Recorded by Mike Billingsly. Digital mastering and editing by Charles Eller. Recorded at the University of Vermont Music Building Recital Hall in December, 1990 and January, 1991 using the F1 direct digital recording process with a Nakamichi DMP 100 and the Crown SASS-B microphone.

This recording is funded in part by generous grants from the University of Vermont Committee on Research and Scholarship and Ellis Music Co., Bethel, Vermont.

Cover Design: Ed Mitchell
Front Cover Photograph: Monica Nelson
Piano tuning by Richard Giroux

 1991 Crystal Records Inc.

Program Notes by Mark Nelson

When I began this project to record original tuba compositions, my first and foremost purpose was to create an atmosphere of a live recital. To this end, Mike Billingsly, the recording engineer, and I decided to capture the tuba sound in a performance hall instead of a studio. We did not use a mixing board, individual mikes, or anything else that could alter the natural sound of the tuba in the hall. Even the synthesizer part to *New England Reveries* was played directly into the hall and captured acoustically. Because of the single mike placement fairly close to the performers, one might detect an occasional breath, a rustle of a page being turned, or even the clicking of fingers on the keyboard and valves. This is keeping with the live presence we have striven to provide the listener. Our wish is that the overall sound palette invites one to imagine being on stage with the performers.

I dedicate this recording to the loving memory of my mother-in-law, Mary G. Carroll.

Barton Cummings (bn. 1946) is a noted tubist and scholar who has commissioned and premiered over thirty compositions and has four solo recordings to his credit, including Crystal S391. He has taught on the faculties of San Diego State University, Point Loma Nazarene College, and Delta State University in Mississippi. He is at present the Music Director of the Walnut Creek Concert Band, free-lance tubist in the San Francisco bay area, instrumental music teacher in the Richmond Public Schools, and a composer and arranger of brass music with over two dozen published compositions and arrangements to his credit. The following notes were supplied by the composer.

Fantasia Breve is in three movements, with the outer movements being fast and the middle movement slow. A "fantasy" is not usually in any kind of strict form. Each movement is tied together, yet each could also be played independently of the others to make a complete piece, albeit short. That they proceed in a logical fashion is, I suppose, because during the time I worked on it, I worked only on it and

with the thought that there would be three movements. I wanted to create, even in the slow movement, a virtuoso work that would contain intense rhythmic activity, harmonic diversity, and a sense of drama. I also wanted to create a work that would display all of the many stylistic potentials of the tuba without reverting to any unusual or extended performance techniques, and at the same time give the piano part its own integrity and independence within the whole. I wrote this piece specifically for Mark Nelson and it is respectfully dedicated to him.

The premiere took place on October 11, 1989 by Mark Nelson and Sylvia Parker at the University of Vermont Music Building Recital Hall.

Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987) has been called a giant among 20th century composers for his original style. He taught at the Juilliard School from 1947 until his death in 1987, assuming the chairmanship of the composition department in 1963. In 1952 he was appointed Director of the music publishing firm Elkan-Vogel, Inc. Over 150 of his compositions have been published through this firm. He

was a prolific composer, writing in virtually every medium from opera to solo instruments, including 26 compositions entitled *Parable*. He is the author of the widely read music theory book entitled *Twentieth Century Harmony*. Many of his works are represented on Crystal Records, including his *Parables* for oboe, bassoon, English horn, horn, piccolo, alto saxophone, trumpet, and viola.

Parable for Solo Tuba (Parable XXII), written at the request of Harvey Phillips, noted tuba soloist and impresario, was premiered on April 25, 1982 at Carnegie Recital Hall in New York City. The *Parable* series all refer to earlier works of the composer for melodic and rhythmic inspiration. In a letter to the author, Persichetti describes the *Parables* as “...musical essays that convey a meaning indirectly by the use of comparisons or analogies.” The tuba work is based on sections of *The Creation* for mixed chorus, soloists, and orchestra premiered in 1970. In another letter to the author, Persichetti describes the relationship of the *Parable for Solo Tuba* to *The Creation* as: (continued on other side: Notes)

Mark Nelson has delighted and challenged audiences across the United States and Canada with recitals and guest solo appearances. He has worked extensively with composers to encourage premieres of music written for the tuba, and has extended knowledge about tuba and euphonium compositions and recordings through editing the New Materials Column for the T.U.B.A. Journal. Nelson spent the greater part of his youth in the San Diego, California, metropolitan area. He was active in public school music programs, attended Southwestern College, and holds the B.A. in music performance and education from Point Loma Nazarene College. During this time he studied for four years with Barton Cummings and a year with Charles Hansen. He also holds the M.M. and D.M.A. degrees from Arizona State University studying with Ray Nutaitis, Roger Bobo, and for three years with Daniel Perantoni. His doctoral research paper focused on the brass *Parables* of Vincent Persichetti. Nelson taught instrumental music in the

Scottsdale Public Schools while attending A.S.U. and was appointed to the faculty of the University of Vermont in 1984. At the time of this recording, Nelson was tubist with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Vermont Brass Quintet and Vermont Town Brass. He was also an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Vermont, where he taught applied tuba and euphonium, conducted the Tuba/Euphonium Ensemble, the Vermont Wind Ensemble, and coordinated the Music Education Degree Program. Author of several articles and many reviews about the tuba, he also has several tuba ensemble arrangements published.

Sylvia Parker, piano, teaches applied piano, piano repertoire, and music theory at the University of Vermont. With a background of formal studies at the Universities of Michigan, Colorado, and Arizona, she now appears frequently throughout New England as a recitalist, orchestra soloist, and adjudicator. She currently serves as Vice President of the Vermont Music Teachers Association.

(NOTES: continued from other side)

Think of a tuba player backstage during intermission improvising on a basic segment of **The Creation** having just been performed. Think of the composer (me) shaping the fragments that the original fragment begot into a musical form that stands on its own.

The text of the specific sections quoted in this piece recalls the void before creation gathered from various cultures and sources.

Neal Corwell (bn. 1959) was formerly euphonium soloist and clinician with the U.S. Army Band in Washington, D.C. He is currently (1991) an adjunct faculty member at Shepherd's College, West Virginia, and Frostburg State University, Maryland. He is also working toward completion of a D.M.A. in Brass Pedagogy at the University of Maryland, College Park. The following notes have been supplied by the composer:

As a brass musician with a fascination for both synthesizers and composition, it was only natural that one day I would decide to combine these three musical loves. Unlike many pieces for solo instrument with synthesizer, the

music is tonal, and the synthesizer is not used merely as a source of bizarre sound effects. Instead, analog and digital synthesis techniques are utilized as a means of expanding the timbral palette available to the composer in support of the featured instrument.

New England Reveries, a composition for solo tuba with a taped synthesizer accompaniment, is the product of a commission by Mark Nelson and premiered by him at a faculty recital at the University of Vermont Music Building Recital Hall on October 17, 1990. The score was completed during July of 1990, and the final version of the synthesizer accompaniment was recorded during the first few weeks of the following September, just in time for the premiere.

Though not specifically programmatic in content, the composition was inspired by the scenic beauty of the forests, mountains, and lakes of New England. The music is intended to evoke images similar to those that might be conjured up while contemplating these wonders of nature.

Walter Ross (bn. 1936) teaches composition and music theory at the

University of Virginia at Charlottesville. His brass compositions are extensive. Among them are a tuba concerto, a euphonium concerto, multiple tubas, and several tuba and tape pieces, including the first ever written entitled *Midnight Variations*.

Escher's Sketches for solo tuba was written for the author after years of correspondence with the composer primarily regarding performances of several of his other works for tuba. The premiere by Mark Nelson took place on October 19, 1986 at the University of Vermont Music Building Recital Hall. This multi-movement composition is based upon selected lithographs of the noted Dutch artist M.C. Escher. There are many musical associations with the drawings. For example, the music of *Magic Mirror* is in itself a mirror, as the second half is an inversion at the major third of the first. Each movement in some way reflects the drawing which inspired it.

Louis Calabro (bn. 1926) has taught music at Bennington College, Vermont since 1955. He has a diploma from The Juilliard School where he studied with his long-time friend and colleague

Vincent Persichetti. In addition to being a prolific composer, Calabro also has been the conductor of the Sage Symphony in Bennington and is a member of the Vermont Consortium of Composers.

The ***Sonata-Fantasia*** grew out of an exchange of ideas and correspondence between the author and composer after a Vermont Symphony Orchestra performance of Calabro's *Third Symphony* in 1986. *Sonata-Fantasia* was premiered on September 16, 1987 by Mark Nelson and Sylvia Parker at a faculty recital at the University of Vermont. The piece, in Calabro's words, is *"..sort of a 'macro-minimalist' composition where several melodies are heard over repeating ostinato figures by the pianist, especially in the outer movements."* There are jazz elements such as added note chords and a modified "blues" scale in the second and third movements. He also makes daring use of 16th notes and extended range in fast tempo sections.

Tubas used in this recording:
1982 B & S 5 valve F bass tuba
1984 Mirafone 188 5U CC contrabass
tuba (*New England Reveries*)

Low Brass CDs available on Crystal include:

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Music for Velvet. Velvet Brown, Tuba: CD693. Music by Reynolds, Gomez, Corwell, Silverman, Brown, Ewazen, & Tomasi.

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Toby Hanks, Tuba: CD395. Telemann, Hindemith, Stevens, Tomasi, Wilder, Reck, Fay, etc.

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Bill Booth, Trombone: CD387. Creston, Fantasy; Beethoven, Variations; Schumann, etc.

John Kitzman, Trombone: CD386. Hindemith, Sonata; Defaye, Deux Danses; Creston, etc.

Ralph Sauer, Trombone: CD380. Serocki Sonata; Larsson Concertino; Sulek Sonata, etc.

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Premiere recordings of significant tuba works, all but one written for Mark Nelson, are featured on this compact disc.

"Mark Nelson's performances effectively show the instrument's registers, lyrical qualities, and dynamic range. Highly developed musicianship in this highly recommended recording."

The Instrumentalist

"superb tuba player" Fanfare

"a lively player with a pure and focused tone in all registers." American Record Guide



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