

2018

Master's recital: Chase Pebworth, tuba

Chase Pebworth
University of Northern Iowa

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MASTER'S RECITAL:
CHASE PEBWORTH, TUBA

An Abstract of a Recital
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Music

Chase Pebworth
University of Northern Iowa
May 2018

This Abstract by: Chase Pebworth

Entitled: Master's Recital: Chase Pebworth, Tuba

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Music

_____	_____
Date	Dr. Anthony Williams, Chair, Thesis Committee
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Alison Altstatt, Thesis Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Randy Grabowski, Thesis Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Jesse Orth, Thesis Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Patrick Pease, Interim Dean, Graduate College

This Recital Performance by: Chase Pebworth

Entitled: Master's Recital: Chase Pebworth, Tuba

Date of Recital: March 7, 2018

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Music

Date

Dr. Anthony Williams, Chair, Thesis Committee

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Dr. Alison Altstatt, Thesis Committee Member

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Dr. Randy Grabowski, Thesis Committee Member

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Dr. Jesse Orth, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Patrick Pease, Interim Dean, Graduate College

ABSTRACT

Introduction

This recital is divided into two parts; two pieces prior to intermission and three afterwards. The first two pieces *From Jewish Life* and *Concerto for Bass Tuba* have more traditional connotations. *From Jewish Life* is originally a cello piece and has been adapted for tuba. The *Concerto for Bass Tuba* is one of the most standard pieces in the tuba repertoire. For the purposes of this recital, both are accompanied by piano. The last three pieces are more contemporary and personal. *Polka.com* is a short, high-energy work for unaccompanied tuba. *Cuba* and *That's a Plenty* feature solo tuba with CD accompaniment. The accompaniment for *Cuba* is provided by the composer while I created my own accompaniment for *That's a Plenty*. I feel the juxtaposition of a more traditional first portion of the recital with a contemporary and personal second portion accurately reflects my goal to leave this program as a more accomplished and well-rounded musician.

From Jewish Life (Ernest Bloch, 1924)

Ernest Bloch was an American composer and educator of Swiss origin. Bloch served as founding director of the Cleveland Institute of Music in the early 1920s and proposed educational reforms such as the removal of textbooks and examinations. After resigning from this position, he moved on to direct the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he won several awards for his compositions. Bloch spent most of the 1930s composing and conducting in Europe; during this time the Ernest Bloch Society was founded with Albert Einstein as honorary president. To avoid growing anti-Semitism and

to keep American citizenship, Bloch returned to the United States in 1940 and to teaching at the University of California at Berkeley. After his retirement he continued to receive numerous musical honors and pursued a wide variety of hobbies until his death in 1959.¹

From Jewish Life is one of several of Bloch's "Jewish works of the 1920s."² It is a small-scale work for cello and piano with three movements: *Prayer*, *Supplication*, and *Jewish Song*. David Kushner suggests this work conjures the portrait of a *shtetl*,³ which is a small Jewish village in eastern Europe. He goes on to specify:

Prayer consists of two contrasting themes, each of which is announced by the cello and repeated by the piano...*Supplication* is monothematic, but the melody, which contains two distinct parts, undergoes several metamorphoses...*Jewish Song*, also monothematic and with the theme divided into two parts, is in the *Ahava Rabba* mode on C. The many quarter tones create a generally melancholic mood. It is this quality above all others, presented in an intimate environment by two instruments, that makes this piece clearly identifiable as Yiddish.⁴

From Jewish Life is a simple and expressive work dedicated to New York Philharmonic cellist Hans Kindler.

Bloch cemented his identity as a Jewish composer between 1910 and 1930 by composing a variety of Jewish works such as *Baal Shem: Three Pictures of Chassidic Life* and *Meditation Hebraique*. He also conducted extensive library research with hopes

¹ David Z. Kushner, "Bloch, Ernest (USA)," *Grove Music Online*, Edited by Deane Root, Accessed 1 March, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

² David Z. Kushner, *The Ernest Bloch Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 6.

³ *Ibid*, 59.

⁴ *Ibid*.

to “distill the essence of Jewish traditional music.”⁵ The concept of what constitutes Jewish music was not well-defined at this time, and members of the Jewish community pushed for authenticity through use of traditional Hasidic melodies. Bloch quoted traditional melodies in his works but felt more success when creating his own melodies. He did not believe his duty was to uncover preexisting melodies as a type of musical archaeologist but instead felt Jewish melodies should flow from his own intuition.⁶

Concerto for Bass Tuba (Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1954)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) is known as the most important English composer of his time. His other contributions include collecting and recording folk songs, conducting, teaching, and writing. Vaughan Williams composed several works for unlikely instruments later in his life. His Eighth Symphony includes vibraphone and his Ninth uses flugelhorn and saxophones. Vaughan Williams composed a *Romance in D♭ for Harmonica* in 1951 and the *Concerto for Bass Tuba* in 1954.

The *Concerto for Bass Tuba* was the first concerto composed for solo tuba. It showcased the soloistic capabilities of the tuba, paved the way for more composers to write tuba repertoire, and continues to be performed today. Although the *Concerto for Bass Tuba* is frequently performed and is considered standard repertoire for tubists, it has received mixed reviews since its premiere performance. On June 13 of 1954, soloist Philip Catelinet and the London Symphony Orchestra under direction of Sir John Barbirolli performed the *Concerto for Bass Tuba*. The audience received the performance

⁵ Joshua S. Walden, ““An Essential Expression of the People’: Interpretations of Hasidic Song in the Composition and Performance History of Ernest Bloch’s *Baal Shem*,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, No. 3 (Fall 2012): 777-820.

⁶ Ibid.

quite well while critics delivered a somewhat harsh response. A response from Donald Mitchell of *The Musical Times* described the composition as ugly and unmusical and suggested the tuba should not be used as a solo instrument.⁷ Another source of criticism comes from Clifford Bevan's important tuba resource *The Tuba Family*. Bevan's sarcastic attitude towards the work is exemplified by his statement that "[a]t least 'Uncle Ralph' made the effort."⁸ He continues by questioning if it is appropriate for the tuba to be used as a solo instrument, asking, "can it give enough variation in timbre to sustain a recital?"⁹ Despite such criticism, the tuba community continues to acknowledge *The Concerto for Bass Tuba* as standard repertoire.

America quickly became interested in Vaughan Williams's *Tuba Concerto*; the New York Philharmonic and the Little Orchestra Society were the first American groups to request parts for performance. The American premier occurred November 7, 1955 by the Little Orchestra Society and was met with fairly positive reviews. The positive reception of this first American performance set a course not only for future performances of this work but also for exploration of the tuba's possible role as a solo instrument.¹⁰

⁷ Matthew Joseph Sbalcio, "Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Tuba Concerto*: Its Conception, Performance, and Significance to the Tuba Repertoire" (master's thesis, Arizona State University, 2010), 103-105.

⁸ Clifford Bevan, *The Tuba Family* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), 182.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Matthew Joseph Sbalcio, "Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Tuba Concerto*," 106-118.

Polka.com (Jim Self, 1996)

Jim Self is perhaps best known for his freelance work as a studio tubist; based in Los Angeles, Self has worked at all major Hollywood studios and has performed on over 1500 motion pictures as well as television shows and recordings. He has been featured in solos on major films including *Jurassic Park*, *Home Alone*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Among the many artists and groups he has performed with are Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, and the L.A. Philharmonic. Self has also produced many of his own critically acclaimed albums in jazz and classical styles. An active doubling career and composing career add to Self's impressive resume.¹¹

Polka.com is originally composed for brass quintet. The one-movement quintet is a short one, at only two minutes and forty seconds long, but requires advanced players. The piece was premiered at the International Brass Quintet Festival held at University of Georgia; the players were Tim Morrison, Fred Mills, David Ohanian, Scott Hartman, and Jim Self. The arrangement for solo tuba appears on Self's CD *The Big Stretch*, released in 1999.¹²

¹¹ SAI SEO & Web Solutions, "Basset Hound Music" Basset Hound Music 2017, Accessed March 5, 2018, <http://www.bassethoundmusic.com/>.

¹² Ibid.

Relentless Grooves: Cuba (Sam Pilafian, 2008)

Sam Pilafian is an incredibly accomplished musician and tubist. He is a founding member of the Empire Brass Quintet, has performed and recorded with major orchestras, and has released many CDs as a solo jazz artist. Pilafian has also produced and written for groups such as the Boston Brass and the United States Air Force Band and is co-author of the pedagogical books *The Breathing Gym* and *The Brass Gym*. He recently taught at the Miami School of Music at Arizona State University, and taught previously at Boston University and The Tanglewood Institute.¹³

Cuba is part of *The Relentless Grooves* series. This series was introduced in 1999 and was designed to give instrumentalists the opportunity to perform ethnic music with backing tracks of the indigenous percussion instruments of the country or region being depicted.¹⁴

Pilafian recounts the circumstances in which he was first introduced to Cuban music:

My hometown of Miami, Florida changed almost overnight when Fidel Castro came to power in late 1959. The huge influx of Cubans fleeing the turmoil of a revolution only a few hundred miles away infused Miami with a cultural revolution of its own that has profoundly enriched South Florida to this day. My musical world would be shaped by all of this into a melting pot of styles. I spent much time listening to Cuban music recordings with my neighborhood friends. We also heard some of the great “Mambo Kings” live at the Little Havana street festivals (and in the alley behind the grand Fountainbleu Hotel’s Boom Boom Room)! *Cuba* portrays two sound pictures utilizing vivid dance forms from those Miami nights.¹⁵

¹³ Sam Pilafian, *Cuba*, *The Relentless Grooves Series* (Mesa, AZ: Focus on Music, 2008).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

In *Cuba*, Pilafian attempts to portray an image of palm trees swaying in the distance while a couple enjoys a lyrical Cuban dance in the stately opening “Bolero” movement.¹⁶ The second “Mambo” movement has a driving rhythmic intensity and a 3-2 clave. The two-bar clave consists of emphases on the downbeat of one, the upbeat of two, and the downbeat of four in the first bar, then emphases on downbeats two and three of the second bar.

Cuban dance music became more popular in the United States beginning in the 1980s. “Salsa” became an umbrella term for many types of Afro-Latin music, and salsa performers won music awards and were featured in several major films from the mid-eighties to early nineties. Raul A. Fernandez traces salsa music back to a “marriage of southern Spanish and West African forms known as the *son*,”¹⁷ which was developed in turn-of-the-twentieth-century Cuba. Fernandez describes some of the features of Afro-Cuban music that distinguish it from other styles, “First, arrangement and improvisation...are built around a two-bar rhythmic pattern called the *clave*. Second, the ‘melody’ instruments...are utilized so as to maximize their rhythmic potential. Third, the ‘rhythm’ instruments (all percussion) are played so as to exhaust their melodic capacity.”¹⁸ The combination of the three features can be rather challenging for listeners and performers from outside the Afro-Cuban tradition.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Raul A. Fernandez, *From Afro-Cuban Rhythms to Latin Jazz* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: The University of California Press, 2006), 13-14.

¹⁸ Ibid.

That's a Plenty (Lew Pollack, 1914)

That's a Plenty was written by songwriter Lew Pollack in 1914. This is a standard in the tradition of New Orleans jazz and Dixieland. New Orleans jazz has a unique and somewhat mysterious history. Dancing and music have been important in New Orleans since the 1840s, when over eighty ballrooms offered dancing at least occasionally. Interestingly, in writings about these ballrooms the music was rarely mentioned and never praised. The French Opera House on Bourbon Street, which remained open until a fire in 1919, was held in higher regard. It featured an orchestra made up largely of well-trained Creole musicians who gave New Orleans music a distinct character as genres melded and changed.¹⁹

Other important music and dancing in New Orleans before the turn of the century took place in Congo Square. Here, after the Louisiana purchase and before the Civil War, enslaved people were allowed to gather for social and recreational purposes. Enslaved Africans performed dances from Africa and played large tom-toms called “bamboulas.” After the Civil War, many previously-used military marching instruments came into New Orleans and were obtained by the black community there. By 1880, the African American bands that had learned to play by ear found themselves engaged to play for dances and on riverboats.²⁰

These black musicians heard a wide variety of music outside of the opera and of Congo square as well. German immigrants brought the tradition of using brass bands to

¹⁹ Samuel Charters, *American Made Music: Trumpet around the Corner: The Story of New Orleans Jazz* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 18-20.

²⁰ Frederic Ramsey, Jr. and Charles Edward Smith, *Jazzmen* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939), 6-8.

accompany funeral processions. Interestingly, it was German brass bands that played dirges on the way to the burial and standard marches after the deceased was laid to rest. Some suggest this is the source from which black brass bands adapted the same practice, which has been linked with New Orleans culture ever since. Mexican bands and syncopated banjo tunes from rural areas also influenced New Orleans musicians, and exposure to these new rhythms led to the creation of the pre-jazz genre of ragtime.²¹

The story of Alphonse Picou, a New Orleans clarinetist who attended his first band rehearsal in 1894, provides a caricature of the early days of jazz in New Orleans. Picou could read music and played in a wide variety of ensembles. He played in many “downtown” dance orchestras. A “downtown” group read and owned their own sheet music and played a variety of popular music, including ragtime - a music with complicated rhythms resembling those of jazz. Picou also played in “uptown” groups that did not read sheet music. He recalls that many of these groups had one member that would read sheet music and then teach the other members of the band the melody. The music readers of these groups often made mistakes, which led to the creation of different versions of written tunes. These bands usually played the chorus of a tune in unison three times for performances; they played the second chorus quieter than the other two, a practice inspired by the trio section of marches. Picou’s experiences in both types of bands and his recollections of their practices give us a view into the time when New

²¹ Samuel Charters, *American Made Music*, 36.

Orleans bands were playing a variety of music and making small changes that led to the development of jazz.²²

New Orleans style jazz was nearly brought to its death in the 1930s, but fortunately a series of revivals from 1940 through the 1960s renewed American interest in New Orleans jazz. The first revival began in 1940 and continued through the decade, but its effects were seen mainly outside of New Orleans. Many link this revival to the publication of the first history of jazz music, *Jazzmen* by Frederick Ramsay, Jr. and Charles Edward Smith. In 1947, a second 'local revival' began in New Orleans. This is a lesser-known movement during which New Orleans bands playing Dixieland, a subgenre of New Orleans jazz often considered to be more musically sophisticated, could be heard on radio or playing at jazz clubs in the Crescent City. Dixieland, according to Charles Suhor, is the "smoother, often more musically sophisticated style that emerged in the 1920s and continues to be played today."²³ The third revival movement is centered around Preservation Hall began in 1961 with the hall's opening.²⁴

²² Ibid., 61.

²³ Charles Suhor, *Jazz in New Orleans: The Postwar Years through 1970, Studies in Jazz* (Landham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2001), 110-112.

²⁴ Ibid.

Reflections on Recital Preparation

The Bloch and the Vaughan Williams provided me with very different challenges than the Self, Pilafian, and Pollack. Collaboration with a pianist is something I have not done extensively and therefore is still a challenge. In addition, changing air temperatures, the somewhat awkward low-range on f-tuba, the pressure of a Master's recital, and the disagreement of overtones between tuba and piano all intermixed to make intonation a considerable test. The *rubato* nature of *From Jewish Life* allowed me to be relatively free with pulse but meant I had to be deliberate with expressive decisions. The *Concerto for Bass Tuba* required a partially different approach: contrasting rhythms between solo voice and accompaniment such as those in the third movement necessitated strict dedication to pulse.

The second half of the recital featured only myself on stage and presented different challenges. One complication with *Polka.com* is that it provided a single tempo marking but sounded exhausting and monotonous when performed at a constant tempo. I resolved this problem by giving the piece an "ABA" form. To give the piece some contrast, I made a slow *legato* section out of the material in the middle while giving the opening and closing material a technical and upbeat feel. *Relentless Grooves: Cuba* presented an incredible technical challenge. Fast tempo, large intervals, syncopation, and extreme range are some of the technical requirements of the piece. Furthermore, a marriage of technical ability and knowledge of Latin style are required to execute an effective performance. *That's a Plenty* is a relatively uncomplicated song in terms of harmony and melody, but musical expression is paramount in the New Orleans style. I

chose to add some chromatic passing tones, flutter-tongue, and wide *crescendos* to achieve this goal. To push myself a bit further, I decided to transcribe a solo performed by trumpeter Wendell Brunious, one of my favorite New Orleans musicians, from an album entitled *Songs of New Orleans*. Playing a solo originally performed on trumpet in the range of tuba is a challenge worth noting is that of A long eighth-note phrase like Wendell Brunious's requires strategic breathing when performed on tuba.

Summary

I included *From Jewish Life* on this recital to give myself an opportunity to perform something intensely expressive. I have included the *Concerto for Bass Tuba* because of its standard position in tuba repertoire. For me, *Polka.com* is very personal because of its high energy and somewhat comical feel. It is my anticipation that its over-the-top musical antics can bring a smile to listeners' faces. The *Relentless Grooves* series currently contains two pieces: *Armenia* and *Cuba*. I have heard many performances of *Relentless Grooves: Armenia* by my teachers and colleagues and have enjoyed the variety that pieces in the *Relentless Grooves* series can bring to a recital. Because there have been recent performances of *Armenia* at University of Northern Iowa, I felt it was time to present *Cuba*. The addition of *That's a Plenty* serves many purposes on this recital. First, it is a way to share my love of New Orleans music and culture with an audience. Second, I was able to transcribe a solo from Wendell Brunious, one of my favorite New Orleans musicians, to use in performance. Finally, I was able to use my new music technology skills to record my own accompaniment.

I strove to present a recital that reflected my personality as a musician but also included standard repertoire for my instrument. Inspired by teachers and colleagues, I chose pieces that would challenge me technically and expressively. The presentation of a wide variety of musical styles showcased my growth as a well-rounded musician, craftsman, and artist.

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School of Music
University of Northern Iowa

presents

Chase Pebworth, Tuba
In a Graduate Recital

assisted by:
Natia Shioshvili, piano

In partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the MM degree in Tuba Performance
From the Studio of Dr. Jesse Orth

From Jewish Life (1924)
Prayer
Jewish Song

Ernest Bloch
(1880-1959)
arr. Jeff Funderburk

Concerto for Bass Tuba, (1954)
Allegro moderato
Romanza
Rondo alla tedesca

R. Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Intermission

Polka.com (1996)

Jim Self
(b. 1943)

Relentless Grooves: Cuba (2008)
Bolero
Mambo

Sam Pilafian
(b. 1949)

That's a Plenty (1914)

Lew Pollack
(1895-1946)

Davis Hall, at 8:00 P.M.

Wednesday, March 7, 2018