

Mp3 Benjamin Pierce - Wheels Of Life



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Classical music performed on the tuba and euphonium. 22 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: Traditional Details: Biography, Benjamin Pierce Dr. Benjamin Pierce is a member of the music faculty at the University of Arkansas, where he teaches applied tuba and euphonium and directs the tuba/euphonium ensemble. Pierce holds a bachelors degree in euphonium performance from Bowling Green State University, a masters degree in euphonium performance from the University of Michigan, and a DMA in tuba performance from Michigan. Pierce has performed with several major ensembles including the Detroit Symphony, the Detroit Chamber Brass, the Brass Band of Battle Creek, the Toledo Symphony, and the Flint Symphony. He has frequently been a featured soloist with the Toledo Concert Band. He has served as principal tubist of the Ann Arbor Symphony and the Ann Arbor Brass Quintet and is currently principal tubist of the Northwest Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. He is also a founding member of Boston Mountain Brassworks, the University of Arkansas faculty brass quintet. Pierces first love is solo playing, and he maintains an active performing career that has taken him across the United States and abroad. He has performed concerti with numerous ensembles abroad, including the Tokyo Symphony, the Oulu Symphony of Finland, and the Friuli Veneziano Giulia Symphony Orchestra of northern Italy. As a student, Pierce won first place in a large number of national and international tuba and euphonium competitions. Pierce currently resides in Fayetteville, Arkansas with his wife Clarisa, daughter Lily, and two beloved mutts. Biography, Jun Okada Internationally sought after as a professional pianist, Jun Okada enjoys an active career, being involved in over one hundred performances annually as a soloist, in duo ensembles, and as a chamber music specialist. She has received critical acclaim for her expertise in the performance of string, low brass, and woodwind literature. A native of Hiroshima, Japan, she began her musical studies at Yamaha Music School and received the Bachelors and Masters

degrees from Michigan State University under the tutelage of Deborah Moriarty. Ms. Okada is particularly noted for her command of the contemporary saxophone repertoire and has performed with numerous internationally recognized artists throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Thailand, Belgium, and Slovenia. As a member of Rhythmicity, a saxophone and piano duo with saxophonist Joseph Lulloff, she has performed at Carnegie-Weill Recital Hall, the Thailand International Saxophone Conference, and many other international and national venues. Also an avid promoter of low-brass repertoire, Ms. Okada performs annually at the Leonard Falcone Festival held in Twin Lakes, Michigan. She frequently premieres new works at national and international conferences. Ms. Okada has previously been a faculty member of the Music Department at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. She maintains a teaching studio in Lansing, Michigan.

Track Listing for *Wheels of Life* Benjamin Pierce, tuba and euphonium Jun Okada, piano Arthur Butterworth (b. 1923) Partita, op. 89 1. Prelude (1:21) 2. Capriccio (1:18) 3. Sarabande (2:25) 4. Bourre (1:28) 5. Scherzo (2:04) 1991 Comus Edition Arthur Butterworth is a prolific English composer in a variety of genres from symphonies to a string quartet to solo instrumental pieces. Partita, his only work for the euphonium, takes a Baroque form and applies to it a twentieth-century tonal and rhythmic language. The sarabande has a decidedly romantic quality, brief but intensely expressive. From this eclectic backdrop, Partita has resonated with euphonium players and has become a staple of the repertoire. Its difficulty has made it a frequent choice as a competition piece.

Penderecki, Krzysztof (b.1933) 6. Capriccio (4:44) 1987 Schott Musik International Krzysztof Penderecki is one of the most well-known and celebrated composers to have written for the tuba. The frequency with which Capriccio is performed attests to the large favor it has found with tubists and audiences alike. Upon first glance at the score, Capriccio appears to be a ferocious romp without meter or melody. There is no time signature indicated, nor are there bar lines. In fact, the piece is quite full of melody and motivic development, and its meter is quite clear if not pervasive. Often the melodies are blurred by extreme registral displacements; a movement of a half step may leap an extra three octaves. These enormous leaps (eg. E1-F4) make things quite difficult for the tubist. Penderecki's confusing style marking, *scherzo alla pollacca*, adds to a sense of schizophrenia in the piece. Its desire to go fast tugs at the *pollacca*, or Polonaise, which is traditionally a rather slow dance. Capriccio's second half brings respite in an eerily chromatic waltz before recapping the first theme and coming to a furious conclusion. Capriccio was written for and premiered by Cdzislaw Piernik in 1980.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) *Fantasiestücke*, op. 73 7. Zart und mit Ausdruck

(3:32) 8. *Lebhaft, leicht* (3:50) 9. *Rasch und mit Feuer* (4:05) Schumann wrote *Fantasiestücke* for the clarinet, but it was later published in editions for cello. Schumann, who wrote several pieces for horn, cello, and clarinet with piano, seemed to have preferred the timbres of those instruments. One might assume that dropping the clarinet piece down an octave would be ok with the composer. We might go one step further and assume that since he liked the mellow, conical timbre of the horn, he would enjoy the euphonium as well. In any event, *Fantasiestücke* is now performed regularly on the euphonium (and down an additional octave, on the tuba), as are Schumann's *Drei Romanzen*, op. 94 and even more often, *Adagio and Allegro*, op. 70 and *Fünf Stücke im Volkston*, op. 102. Schumann's approach to lyricism and mastery of writing for the piano make his music work very well for low brass, which due to balance considerations favor a more substantial partner in the piano than do many other instruments. Kenyon Wilson (b. 1970) 10. *Tubaku* (3:56) 2002 Kenyon Wilson Tubist and composer Kenyon Wilson wrote *Tubaku* while teaching at the Baku Music Academy in Azerbaijan, where he spent six months as a Fulbright Scholar. The piece was a gift to Ali Hajiev, Professor of Tuba at Baku. It was premiered in December 2002 and receives its first recording here. *Tubaku* opens with slow passages that treat the tubas as equal partners, followed by a middle section which features melody in the lower part, performed on a contrabass tuba. The fast concluding section is influenced by Azerbaijani scales and rhythms. Benjamin Pierce plays both parts in this recording, the high part on F tuba and the low part on CC. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) *Concerto for Bass Tuba* 11. *Prelude* (4:49) 12. *Romanza* (4:34) 13. *Finale- Rondo alla Tedesca* (3:12) 1955 Oxford University Press Premiered in 1954 by Philip Catelinet and the London Symphony Orchestra, Vaughan Williams's *Concerto for Bass Tuba* became and has remained a pillar of the tuba repertoire. The piece has enjoyed numerous recordings by established tubists and professional orchestras, but has not appeared on a published recording in its reduction form until *Wheels of Life*. Although the *Concerto* is performed far more often with the piano accompaniment than with orchestra, the piano part itself is extremely difficult and lies awkwardly on the keyboard. When performed by a virtuosic pianist, however, the music is still moving and effective. Marcel Bitsch (b. 1921) 14. *Intermezzo* (5:08) 1968 Alphonse Leduc Marcel Bitsch was a professor at the famed Paris Conservatoire. Bitsch wrote many pieces for wind instruments, including low brass. His best-known work amongst low brass players is probably his *15 études de Rythme*, a collection of extremely difficult études for trombone. Bitsch intended *Intermezzo* for the bass saxhorn in Bb. Parallel to the saxophone family but

with valves and cup mouthpieces, the family of saxhorns is pitched alternately in Bb and Eb. Use of saxhorns has largely died out in the United States, although they are still used by some Civil War era bands. Pieces such as Intermezzo work reasonably well on the euphonium, albeit with an extreme range (G1-Bb4). Intermezzo mixes colorful, somewhat dark harmonies with jazz-inflected rhythms. Especially exciting are two long accelerandi leading up to the climax and the conclusion, respectively. Eugene Bozza (1905-1991) Concertino for Tuba and Piano 15. Allegro vivo (3:50) 16. Andante ma non troppo (4:27) 17. Allegro vivo (2:52) 1967 Alphonse-Leduc Eugene Bozza is known to wind players for his virtuosic writing and the humor with which he presents it. An accomplished violinist and composer, Bozza was the winner of the famed Grand Prix de Rome in 1934. He was a student of the Paris Conservatoire and found employment as a conductor and the head of the Conservatoire in Valenciennes. Bozza wrote the Concertino for Tuba and Piano for the French tuba in C (not CC), an instrument in size closer to a euphonium than to the modern tuba, with a fundamental a step higher than the euphonium. The C tuba has six valves, however, enabling it to play with facility in the low register in addition to its obvious ease of upper register. Bozza wrote the piece with extreme range demands. Few tubists own C tubas nowadays, so the piece is generally performed on the F tuba. Adding to the light-hearted style of the first and third movements, Bozza quotes other composers both directly and indirectly (listen to the third movement cadenza). He also had a tendency to recycle his own music. Movement II of Concertino is largely a twin to the slow section of New Orleans, for bass trombone. Stevens, John (b. 1951) 18. Triumph of the Demon Gods (5:26) 1981 Manduca Music John Stevens is a best friend to tuba and euphonium players, both literally and in the sense that he has provided us with countless quality pieces, both solo and chamber. He has built a large reputation outside the low brass community as well, having been commissioned by the Chicago Symphony at the turn of the twenty-first century to write a concerto for the orchestra with their famed tubist Gene Pokorny as soloist. Triumph of the Demon Gods is one of Stevenss early works for unaccompanied tuba. It was composed in 1980 for Michael Thornton, principal tubist with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. According to Stevens, It is a programmatic work representing the conflict between good and evil. The music is in two distinctly different styles; one of very loud, barbaric passages in the extreme low register, the other of more lyrical, softer music in a higher register. These two styles, or moods, eventually come into conflict, with the outcome being the Triumph of the Demon Gods. Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) 19. Prelude, op. 2 No. 1 (3:55) Prelude is number

one of two pieces that make up op. 2, along with Oriental Dance. It was premiered in 1892. Far better known for his piano works, Rachmaninoff would compose only one more piece for cello and piano, the op. 19 Sonata. Not surprisingly, the piano part to Prelude is beautiful; it may be more memorable than the solo part. The floating, lyrical cello melody adapts well to the euphonium, which is sometimes considered the cello of the brass family. Wendy Wan-Ki Lee (b. 1977) *Wheels of Life: In Reminiscence* 20. *Pensiero* (4:33) 21. *Affannoso* (2:07) 22. *Doloroso* (3:09) 2003 Wendy Wan-Ki Lee Wendy Wan-Ki Lee holds the Ph.D. in Composition and Theory from the University of Michigan. She also holds a Masters degree in Composition from Michigan and the Bachelor of Music Composition from the University of Toronto. Ms. Lees music has been performed throughout Asia, Canada, and the United States, and she has received commissions from performers around the world. Her composition teachers include William Bolcom, Bright Sheng, Christos Hatzis, Susan Botti, and Chan Ka Nin. Drs. Lee and Pierce studied simultaneously at Michigan and developed a friendship and mutual admiration for each others work. Lee wrote *Wheels of Life: in Reminiscence* for Pierce and it was premiered on his final DMA recital in 2003. *Wheels of Life: In Reminiscence* is Ms. Lees first work for tuba. She says, In composing this piece, I was very much inspired by Eastern philosophy. The idea of life as an ongoing wheel, as well as the Chinese proverb, the beginning is not the beginning, and the end is not the end, can be related to the Buddhist belief in reincarnation. In this piece, the three movements represent faded memories or reminiscence of past lives. Although inspired by Buddhist ideas, the piece is composed in the Western style.

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