A Transcription for Band of Enescu's Second Rumanian Rhapsody In D Major

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A TRANSCRIPTION FOR CONCERT BAND

OF ENESCO'S RUMANIAN RHAPSODY IN D MAJOR

OPUS 11, NO. 2

by

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B. Mus. Ed., Montana State University, Missoula, 1951

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Music Education

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

1955

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Aug 15 1955
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is indebted to Mr. Eugene Andrie for his suggestion of the work, and to Mr. Justin Gray and Mr. Gerald Doty for their critical reading of the paper. To Mr. Hubert P. Henderson, he is especially indebted for the kind assistance and guidance throughout the transcription.

H. G. P.
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INTRODUCTION

In many small communities, the orchestra is an unknown commodity. Because of the lack of funds, qualified teachers or interest, the string program has not been initiated. However, nearly every one of these areas has a band, it being very firmly established as a part of the school curriculum. Obviously, the orchestra literature remains undiscovered for the majority of students in these locales.

Transcriptions of orchestral works for band may be of some help in bringing music of this nature to the school and community. While this is by no means a completely satisfactory solution to the problem, it can act as a stop-gap until the orchestra comes into its own.

In transcribing Enesco's Rumanian Rhapsody in D Major, Opus 11, No. 2 for band, one axiom of band transcribing has been uppermost in the author's mind. There is no set of rules that will apply in all cases; clarinets cannot be substituted for the violins throughout the entire composition, or the alto clarinet for the viola. Rather, the attempt has been to reorganize the work so as to make it intelligible, using the band as the medium; to make it sound as a band performing band music, rather than a band imitating an orchestra.

Cross-cueing has been utilized extensively, on the assumption that ideal instrumentation is not to be found in every situation.

The saxophones have been used only when necessary, either as
solo, ensemble or cued instruments. Note that the baritone horn is
cued in the introduction for the bassoon, the idea being that it would
blend more subtly in this range than would the baritone saxophone.

Since the trumpets in the orchestra score are used largely for
doubling or percussive effects, they were not included in the band
transcription, and the parts were delegated to the cornets or French
horns.

The piano part was included in the hope that it would enhance
the total sound of the band, and serve as a substitute for the harps.
However, some of the harp chromatics are impossible for the piano to
reproduce; these were simply eliminated.
FORMAL ANALYSIS OF THE WORK

Contrary to the general idea, Rumania is not a Slavic but a Latin country. Settled two thousand years ago, it has maintained its completely Latin character, in spite of its insignificant size, and though surrounded on every side by alien communities, Slavic and Teutonic. So entirely, indeed, has the preservation of its identity seemed to absorb its energies, that it has hitherto found little leisure for the cultivation of the arts. Most of the creative work by Rumanians has been done within the past fifteen years. Our music, curiously enough, is influenced not by the neighboring Slav, but by the Indian and Egyptian folk songs, introduced by the members of these remote races, now classed as gypsies, brought to Rumania as servants of the Roman conquerors. The deeply oriental character of our own folk music derives from these sources, and possesses a flavor as singular as it is beautiful.

The work was originally scored by Enesco for orchestra as follows: three flutes, two oboes, one English horn, two clarinets in A, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, two tympani in D and A, two harps, first and second violin, celli (two solos), viola, and bass viol.

The transcription for band was scored as follows: two flutes in C; piccolo in C; two oboes; E flat clarinet; first, second and third B flat clarinets; alto clarinet; bass clarinet; two bassoons; first and second alto saxophone; tenor saxophone; baritone saxophone; piano; three cornets; four French horns; baritone; three trombones

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1Louis Biancolli (ed.), The Analytical Concert Guide (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1951) p. 204

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bass tuba; tympani and cymbals.

The tempo of the Second Rhapsody, save for its close, is slow. A broad opening phrase for the clarinets is followed by the main theme, played by the woodwinds in harmony. Cues were included here for the bassoon, alto and bass clarinet in the baritone and saxophone parts.

At Number Two the theme is repeated and the flutes and piccolo enter for the first time.

Number Three is a tutti. The brass section enters here for the first time; this being the second and most important reiteration of the theme.

Five measures after Number Four a rather difficult passage for oboe and flute occurs. There was no attempt made to simplify this section since any compromise would have destroyed the musical intent. The parts were cross-cued in the clarinets, however.

The English horn solo shortly after Number Six was rescored for French horn (with cornet cues). This was done for two reasons: The English horn is a very rare instrument in high school bands; the solo was quite low for muted cornet, ordinarily a reasonable substitute. It also lent itself very well to the best sounding range of the French horn.

At four measures after Number Nine the introductory phrase and the main theme are heard together. Although only the first and second cornets and French horns are playing the introductory theme, it was felt that because of their tone quality and the upward swoop of the theme the part could be heard through the rest of the band.

At Number Eleven a problem arose in re-scoring the viola part.
It could not be played by a single wind instrument, since no allowances were possible for breathing; therefore, the figures were divided between the second and third clarinets.

The presto section was very lightly scored, beginning with a cornet solo, the woodwinds accompanying.

Number Fifteen presented another problem in that the octave sixteenth notes in the violins are next to impossible to reproduce on a wind instrument. This part was finally given to the flutes and simplified to the extent that the sixteenths were restricted to the same octave.

Generally, the original rhythms were adhered to, with one exception in the second measure of Number Three, fourth beat. A triplet figure was used throughout the entire band, there being no good musical reason for duplicating Enesco's use of two sixteenths against an eighth note triplet. Also, the mordants were eliminated, as the author's experience with this type of ornamentation in a Class B band has not been a happy one.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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