The Donald Hunsberger Wind Library

CUBAN OVERTURE

GEORGE GERSHWIN®

ARRANGED BY MARK ROGERS





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INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 C Piccolo
- 2 1st C Flute
- 2 2nd C Flute
- 2 3rd C Flute
- 1 1st Oboe
- 1 2nd Oboe
- 1 English Horn
- 3 1st Bb Clarinet
- 3 2nd B Clarinet
- 3 3rd B Clarinet
- 1 Bb Bass Clarinet
- 1 B Contrabass Clarinet
- 1 Eb Contra Alto Clarinet
- 1 1st Bassoon
- 1 2nd Bassoon

- 1 Contrabassoon
- 1 1st E Alto Saxophone
- 1 2nd Eb Alto Saxophone
- 1 Bb Tenor Saxophone
- 1 Eb Baritone Saxophone
- 3 1st Bb Trumpet 3 2nd Bb Trumpet
- 3-3rd Bb Trumpet
- 1st Horn in F
- -2nd Horn in F
- 3rd Horn in F
- 1 4th Horn in F 2 - 1st Trombone
- 2 2nd Trombone

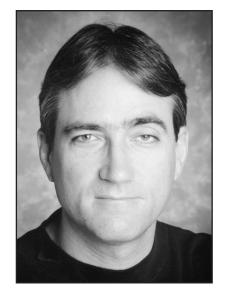
- 2 3rd (Bass) Trombone
- 1 Euphonium
- 4 Tuba
- 1 String Bass
- 1 Timpani
- 2 Percussion I (Xylophone, Bells)
- 2 Percussion II
 - (Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
- 2 Percussion III (Cymbals, Wood Block)
- 2 Percussion IV (Claves, Guiro,
 - Maracas, Bongos) (4)

ADDITIONAL WORLD PARTS

- 1st Horn in E
- 1 2nd Horn in E
- 1 3rd Horn in Eb
- 1 4th Horn in E
- 1 1st Trombone in B Treble Clef
- 1 2nd Trombone in Bb Treble Clef
- 1 1st Trombone in Bb Bass Clef
- 1 2nd Trombone in Bb Bass Clef

- 1 3rd (Bass) Trombone in Bb Treble Clef
- 1 3rd (Bass) Trombone in Bb Bass Clef
- 1 Euphonium Treble Clef
- 1 Euphonium Bb Bass Clef
- 1 Tuba in Eb Bass Clef
- 1 Tuba in Eb Treble Clef
- 1 Tuba in Bb Bass Clef
- 1 Tuba in Bb Treble Clef





Mark Rogers was born in Littlefield, Texas, and has degrees in instrumental music from Texas Tech (bachelor's and master's degrees) and the University of Texas (doctorate in wind conducting). He has served as band director on the faculties of South Plains College and the University of South Alabama. He is currently director of publications for Southern Music Company, San Antonio, Texas, where his editions of band music of Percy Grainger and John Philip Sousa and transcriptions of orchestral music have drawn widespread acclaim.

In his spare time Rogers plays bassoon and contrabassoon with orchestras in Corpus Christi, Victoria, Seguin and New Braunfels. He has performed with the San Antonio Symphony on numerous occasions. He also serves as choir director of the Thousand Oaks Baptist Church, San Antonio, and has appeared in local productions of music theatre and operettas.

Rogers' work in transcriptions for wind band is substantial, including Kodaly's *Dances of Galanta* (recorded by Frederick Fennell and the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra), Bartok's *Miraculous Mandarin* and Stravinsky's *Fireworks* (both recorded by the U.S. Air Force Band), Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and *Second Horn Concerto*, and Aaron Copland's *Hoe-Down* from *Rodeo* and *Danzon Cubano*, among others. On the lighter side, he has created adaptations of Robert Russell Bennett's orchestral selections from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific*.

DONALD HUNSBERGER

Donald Hunsberger is the Conductor and Music Director of the Eastman Wind Ensemble and the Eastman Wind Orchestra. He has conducted the EWE in sixteen recordings released on Sony Classical, CBS Masterworks, DGG, Phillips, Mercury and Decca among others and has led the Ensemble on numerous highly acclaimed concert tours, including seven to Japan and southeast Asia and one, with Wynton Marsalis as soloist, to the major concert halls of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Montreal and Toronto. June 2000 marked the Ensemble's most recent concert tour to Japan, Okinawa and Taiwan, once again under sponsorship of the Sony Music Foundation and Eastman Kodak Japan.

He has been deeply involved in wind band development and repertoire stimulation throughout his career. As a Past-President of CBDNA and as a Board member of CBDNA, WASBE and the Conductor's Guild, he has created opportunities for composers and performers alike to perform and hear new compositions written with contemporary instrumental techniques currently available to conductors today.



Hunsberger is also the Music Director of the Eastman Dryden Orchestra, an ensemble specializing in live orchestral accompaniment to silent films. He works with the Film Department of the George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography, and has scored more than a dozen major silent films. He has conducted silent film-with-orchestra concerts featuring such classic silent masterpieces as *The Phantom of the Opera, The Mark of Zorro, City Lights, Potemkin, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, The Gold Rush* and *The General* with the National Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Utah Symphony Orchestra, San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Virginia Symphony and the North Carolina Orchestra, among others.

PROGRAM NOTES

In mid-February 1932, George Gershwin left New York with several friends to take a vacation in Havana, Cuba. He had just presented a successful show on Broadway—"Of Thee I Sing"—and the premiere of his *Second Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*. While there he became fascinated with the native music of Cuba and returned to New York armed with Cuban percussion instruments and musical ideas.

These ideas culminated in a symphonic work he entitled *Rumba*; its first performance was presented in an all-Gershwin concert in Lewisohn Stadium on August 16, 1932, conducted by Albert Coates. Later, on November 1 of the same year, it was performed at the Metropolitan Opera under the title *Cuban Overture*. Gershwin provided these program thoughts:

In my composition I have endeavored to combine the Cuban rhythms with my own thematic material. The result is a symphonic overture, which embodies the essence of the Cuban dance.

It has three main parts. The first part [Moderato e Molto Ritmato] is preceded by a [forte] introduction featuring some of the thematic material. Then comes a three-part contrapuntal episode leading to a second theme. The first part finishes with a recurrence of the first theme combined with fragments of the second.

A solo clarinet cadenza leads to a middle part, which is in a plaintive mood. It is a gradual developing canon in a polytonal manner. This part concludes with a climax based on an ostinato of the theme in the canon, after which a sudden change in tempo brings us back to the rumba dance rhythms.

The finale is a development of the preceding material in a stretto-like manner. This leads us back once again to the main theme.

The conclusion of the work is a coda featuring the Cuban instruments of the percussion.

As is the case with *Second Rhapsody*, *Cuban Overture* portrays a composer in transition—trying out new ideas in harmony and counterpoint and streamlining his orchestration. Doubtless a major source of this change—and historians will argue how much or how little—was due to Gershwin's studies with Joseph Schillinger, which started in 1932.

Certainly, Gershwin's musical interests were widening at this point since his music library now included Bach's *Art of the Fugue*, Schubert, Beethoven, Brahms and the then avant-garde works of Berg and Schoenberg. For many years he had been an irregular student of music, and now he surprised his friends with his knowledge of the inner workings of the classics. While linear aspects of his music revealed a growing confidence, Gershwin's orchestral technique was making even greater strides. It may very well be that this is the area in which Schillinger influenced Gershwin the most. *Cuban Overture* has the fewest examples of the excessive instrumental doublings that Gershwin overused in his orchestration of the *Concerto in F, An American in Paris* and *Second Rhapsody*. However, Gershwin, remaining true to his own spirit, continued his orchestral palette and sound in addition to his bad habits in orchestration.

Gershwin also highlighted the formal aspects of his music since he was obviously aware that even critics praising his work were not happy with the sometimes awkward construction of some of his orchestral music. This was an aspect of his creative efforts that he constantly sought to improve. Thus, *Second Rhapsody* and *Cuban Overture* were opportunities to experiment in form, imitative counterpoint and more effective transitions.

In Cuban Overture, Gershwin was thus able to demonstrate a great leap forward in musical maturity as well as show how his interest in new and different musical cultures could affect his own creativity.

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

This wind setting of *Cuban Overture* is complete in that it utilizes all of Gershwin's original music and orchestration. The only change has been one to avoid inherent tuning problems; thus certain sections have been transposed down a whole step. However, in no way has any of Gershwin's creativity been simplified or altered in any manner.

It is a great tragedy that no one ever approached Gershwin during his lifetime to write a work for wind band; therefore it is hoped that this setting may possibly correct that unfortunate oversight and that this exciting work of twentieth-century or chestral music may enter the basic repertory of the contemporary wind band.

This orchestration of *Cuban Overture* was transcribed at the request of Ray C. Lichtenwalter, music director and conductor of the Texas Wind Symphony, who presented an all-Gershwin concert in April 2000.

There are numerous tools at our disposal that can lead to a better understanding of Gershwin's compositional techniques and thus provide a more informed interpretation format for wind conductors. It is well known that Gershwin composed primarily at the piano, often writing his first scores for duo piano as live performances by himself and his friends, which enabled him to "try out the pieces in real time." Thus, we have as a resource the composer's original piano duet version (usually a two-piano version; in this case a score for two performers on one piano). Only when he was satisfied with the overall form and flow of the piece did he proceed with the orchestration. (Another most effective study tool is the duet form score of *American in Paris*, which provides, in addition, a "short, or condensed" score for study purposes.)

As an orchestrator, he was wonderfully inventive but often in a crude sort of fashion. After his death in 1937, many of his scores were "worked on" by others, including Frank Campbell-Watson, Ferde Grofé and Robert Russell Bennett. In 1987, in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Gershwin's death, Warner Bros. Publications issued a facsimile edition of the original manuscript score to *Cuban Overture*. In the introductory material to the score (among much other pertinent material) one reads: "Frank Campbell-Watson has stated that, of Gershwin's major orchestral works that he prepared for print, *Cuban Overture* required more house-cleaning than anything else." Conductors wishing to prepare a thorough study of this score are advised to consult this invaluable document.

Of particular interest to conductors wishing to perform this setting is that the instrumentation should be followed carefully with English horn, contrabassoon (EE-flat contralto and BB-flat contrabass clarinet parts have been provided as substitutes) and the complete, albeit large, percussion section necessary for proper realization of the score. The percussion has been divided into several parts with the Cuban (Latin) instruments all on one part, requiring four percussionists.

Perhaps the greatest conducting challenge will be found in negotiating tempo changes that occur in the final pages of the score; for example: m. 339—a slightly faster tempo of the third section (half note = 104)—must be relaxed back to the original tempo (half note = 92) and then with an immediate tempo change at m. 335 to half note = 120.

Mark Rogers



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