

Music for a Modern Quintet featuring composers Malcolm Arnold and Bill Douglas

First of all, what's a wind quintet? It's a group of five musicians, and includes the instruments flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn. Composers have been writing music for this combination of instruments for a long time. Two of them: Anton Reicha and Franz Danzi, helped establish the wind quintet as a viable chamber group by writing significant woodwind quintet music in the early 1800's. However, the composers of the 20th and 21st centuries have taken wind quintet music to new and exciting heights. Our "Modern Wind Quintet" concert features original music by two of these composers: Malcolm Arnold and Bill Douglas.

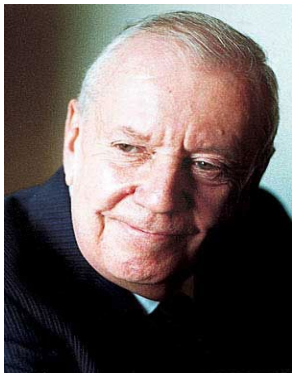


British composer **Sir Malcolm Arnold** lived from 1921-2006. His *Three Shanties* for woodwind quintet are the earliest of his many chamber works. They were composed in 1943 and first performed by the Wind Quintet of the London Philharmonic Orchestra in an aircraft hangar during a lunchtime shift in August that year. The *Shanties* are characterized by catchy tunes, sensitive, but unexpected, use of the instruments, and the light-hearted humor which permeates the first and third movements especially. Each movement quotes a different sea shanty, the first being 'What Shall we do with the Drunken Sailor?' This movement departs from the shanty at several points, notably to include a tango. Though British, Arnold became enamored early in his life with the American art form of jazz, and this influenced his writing quite a bit. As a composer, he felt that the categorizations of music into classical, jazz, pop, etc...should not exist, but that music should have a more melded quality in all its forms.

Find out more about Malcolm Arnold at:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/sir-malcolm-arnold-417455.html>

<http://www.malcolmarnold.co.uk/>



Malcolm Arnold



Bill Douglas

In 1944, one year after Arnold wrote the *Three Shanties*, composer **Bill Douglas** was born in London, Ontario Canada. His parents were both musical, and Bill started his musical studies at the age of four, playing the piano, ukulele and guitar. As a kid, he composed songs influenced by early rock musicians such as Little Richard and Elvis. At age thirteen, he started to play bassoon and became interested in both classical and jazz music. During his college years, he started composing pieces influenced by 20th century composers Elliott Carter, Stravinsky, and Webern. He played in the Toronto Symphony, and attended Yale from 1966-69, receiving degrees in both bassoon and composition. For many recent years now, Bill has been writing pieces that have characteristics of African, Indian and Brazilian music, as well as classical, jazz and funk. The *Suite Cantabile* for woodwind quintet was written in 2007. The word 'cantabile' which means "in a singing style" refers to the long melodic lines that occur throughout most of the piece. In the first movement, these melodies are combined with African rhythms. The second movement is based on a half tone/whole tone scale and has sections influenced by funk rhythms alternating with smoother, more lyrical sections. The third movement is based on a modal minor blues progression, and the fourth combines lyrical melodies with rhythms reminiscent of South American music and jazz.

Find out more about Bill Douglas at:

<http://www.billdouglas.cc/>

Compare Two Composers

Use the information provided on this website and in the other websites listed to compile a list of similarities and differences between the two composers. Many categories have been provided for you, plus you may add others that you might think of at the end of the chart.

Composer: Years lived: Nationality:	Malcolm Arnold	Bill Douglas
Childhood musical training		
College(s) attended		
Instrument(s) played		
Types of groups/ musicians he has written for		
Influences on his music		
Style(s) that he writes in		
Musical beliefs (or personal beliefs that affect his music)		

Listening Guides

Use the information below to help you follow recorded and/or live performances.

***Three Shanties for Wind Quintet* by Malcolm Arnold**

To hear a performance of the first movement of “Three Shanties”, visit the audio clips page on the Jewel Winds website.

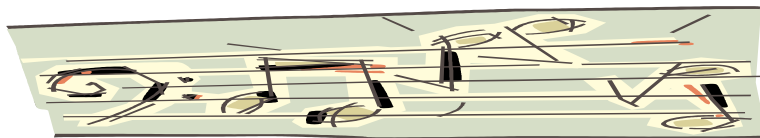
Movement 1 - The tempo is “Allegro con brio” meaning “fast and with fire!”

The theme is based on the old folk song “What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor?” and begins in the flute. The other instruments enter with melody at different times, creating an effect like a canon, or round in the first section of the piece.

Soon we hear a loud, raucous section of repetitive triplet figures, which change to repetitive 16th notes, underneath fragments of the melody. This section has a dizzying quality to it, sort of depicting that stumbling sailor.

Next, the sailor tries to regain his balance and dignity and we hear little variations of the melody coming back here and there in a softer section of the music. This is interrupted by short, fast technical spots and leads to another loud section in which our sailor has become even more overly obnoxious.

He tries to subdue himself with a little tango music, in a section of the music that has a slower “1-2” feeling. He’s too far gone to be complacent for long, however, and ends the piece with a faster-than-ever version of the original melody as the sailor tries to dance himself to sobriety.



***Suite Cantabile for Woodwind Quintet* by Bill Douglas**

To hear a performance of this piece by Jewel Winds, visit the “Audio Clips” page on our website.

Movement II - Funk Ben Ritmico - The tempo is quarter note = 104-108 (or moderately fast). The entire piece is characterized by rhythmic sections alternating with lyrical sections. The rhythmic sections are mostly funky and syncopated and the lyrical sections are smooth and flowing, but still fast.

The rhythmic melodies map out as follows, with other instruments either resting or providing the groove underneath. Each of the following is presented in an 8-measure (of four beats each) phrase:

Clarinet/Bassoon → Flute/Oboe/Clarinet → Oboe alone → Flute alone → Clarinet/Horn → Clarinet/Oboe/Flute added in

During the measures mentioned above of oboe and flute each playing alone, the underlying parts are less rhythmic and more lyrical, which foreshadows the next 16 measures. This part, which is split into distinct 4-measure phrases, is smooth and in a “singing style” throughout. The last fifteen measures recall rhythmic figures from earlier in the piece.

Most of the parts sound improvisatory, but are actually all written out. The feeling of improvisation in the piece lends to its jazzy feel, as does its “form” - which if anything follows that of a jazz standard, with:

- An Introduction (first 8 bars, with the clarinet/bassoon melody)
- Statement of the main theme, or “head” as we’d say in jazz (next 16 bars with the Flute/Oboe/Clarinet melody)
- Players take turns ‘improvising’, only in this case the solos are written out and many are actually done by more than one player at once
- Restatement of the theme (back to the ‘head’) and end with a short, definitive little Coda.