

About James Beckel, Composer

James Beckel graduated from the Indiana University School of Music and has been the Principal Trombonist with the Indianapolis Symphony since 1969. He is also on the music faculties at DePauw University. In addition to these responsibilities he has been a very active composer and arranger. Hal Leonard Music publishes several of his works. He was born in Marion, Ohio, July 16, 1948.

Many original works have been performed by several professional orchestras such as Minneapolis, Boston, St. Louis, Atlanta, Houston, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Detroit, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Rochester, Charlotte, Fort Wayne, Rhode Island, Springfield, Evansville, Tampa, Arkansas, Oklahoma City, Phoenix, New Mexico, Chautauqua, Terre Haute, South Bend, Omaha, Knoxville, Delaware, West Virginia, Jacksonville, etc. His works have been broadcast nationwide via television and radio broadcast by groups including the Cincinnati Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Nashville Symphony, and the U.S. Coast Guard Band.

Beckel's works have been recorded by the Indianapolis Brass Ensemble, the Houston Symphony, and the Indianapolis Symphony. In addition, some of his works for band have been recorded by the Coast Guard Band and the DePauw University Band. Greg Hustis and members of the Dallas Symphony recorded ***The Glass Bead Game*** horn concerto for a CD released in November of 2004 and Velvet Brown recorded ***Concerto for Tuba and Percussion***, which was released early in 2007. The Texas Horns recorded a work, ***Portraits of the American West***, which was especially commissioned for a CD released in 2008.

Mr. Beckel has received many composition grants. He has been an Individual Arts Fellow through the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, and was one of 50 composers chosen nationwide to be part of the *Continental Harmony Project*. ***Liberty for All*** was written for that commission from *Composers Forum* in 2000 and has been broadcast multiple times on national television with the Nashville Symphony performing. ***The Glass Bead Game: Concerto for Horn and Orchestra*** was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. ***The Glass Bead Game*** was premiered by the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra on November 10, 1997. Kent Leslie was the horn soloist. ***The Glass Bead Game*** is now available with orchestra, wind ensemble, piano, and chamber ensemble. The wind ensemble version of this concerto, written in 1999 was nominated for the Grawemeyer Award in that same year and was recorded by the DePauw University Band in 2000.

Liberty for All and another patriotic work entitled ***The American Dream*** were featured works on a national A&E TV broadcast in the summer of 2003 with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra. Over 27 million people watched that program. The band version of this work was completed in 2002 and the United States Coast Guard Band is released 10,000 copies of this work on one of their CD's. Mr. Beckel's Concerto for Tuba and Percussion was composed in 2003. One of many performances of this Tuba/Percussion Concerto occurred at the 2004 Indiana MENC Convention in Indianapolis. In the summer of 2003 Mr. Beckel completed a band transcription of Samuel Barber's ***Toccata Festiva*** which was recorded by the DePauw University Band along with a new band

composition entitled ***Make a Joyful Noise***. ***Make a Joyful Noise*** is a band transcription from a previously composed orchestral work of the same name.

Another recent work by Mr. Beckel, ***Fantasy after Schubert***, was premiered in September of 2004 by the Indianapolis Symphony with Mario Venzago conducting. It was commissioned for the ISO's 75th anniversary season. The local Indianapolis critic wrote the following review of this work:

“Unlike most music premieres, this one deserves noteworthiness. Beckel incorporates themes from Schubert’s Wander Fantasy, plus a prominent one from the composer’s C major symphony, into a most engaging display of contemporary sonic splendor. His employment of the 12-tone row as rapid filigree overlaying a basically tonal idiom makes the best use of that generally unloved serialist device that I have heard to date. Beckel’s 10-minute Fantasy deserves to join the new music repertoire and stay there.”

Another work, a three-movement sonata for Trumpet and Organ was completed in 2005. Mr. Beckel has also written several works for brass choir and brass quintet. In June of 2006, James completed a commission by the Air Force Band of Flight for a narrated patriotic work entitled ***Gardens of Stone***. Later that year, the Indianapolis Chamber Winds performed the world premiere of his work, ***Music for Winds, Percussion, and Piano***. And in March of 2007 two more world premieres took place. The Indianapolis Symphony premiered ***Toccata for Orchestra*** and the Peaceful Valley Chamber players premiered a work for string quartet, percussion, and trombone entitled ***Musical Masque (for the Seasons)***.

Several of his works from his catalogue are listed below:

Partial Catalogue of Works

By

James A. Beckel Jr.

“The Glass Bead Game”	<i>A three movement concerto for Horn and Orchestra. Also available for Band, Piano reduction, and Chamber Ensemble. The Piano reduction is published by Hal Leonard Music.</i>
“Night Visions”	<i>A four movement programmatic work for Orchestra.</i>
“The American Dream”	<i>A patriotic overture written for Orchestra. This work is also available for Band through Hal Leonard Music.</i>
“Waltz of the Animals”	<i>A Children’s work for Orchestra and Narrator.</i>
“Celebrations”	<i>A jazz pops overture for Orchestra.</i>
“A Christmas Fanfare”	<i>A Christmas overture for Orchestra. Also available for Brass Choir.</i>
“A Gospel Christmas Medley”	<i>A medley of Gospel songs arranged for Orchestra.</i>

“Freedoms Hope”	<i>A work for Brass Quintet and optional Percussion.</i>
“Musica Mobilis”	<i>A work for Brass Choir. (Also available for Orchestra.)</i>
“Inaugural Fanfare”	<i>A regal festive work for Band.</i>
“Three Sketches for Orchestra”	<i>A three movement work for Orchestra featuring jazz Trombone soloist</i>
“Amazing Grace”	<i>An arrangement of this hymn favorite for Orchestra.</i>
“Make a Joyful Noise	<i>A lighthearted symphonic overture for Chamber Orchestra. This work is also available for Band.</i>
“Liberty for All”	<i>A Patriotic work for Symphony Orchestra & Narrator. This work is also available for Band and Narrator.</i>
“Concerto for Tuba and Percussion”	<i>A three movement work for 3 Percussion and Tuba solo.</i>
“Overture for a New Age”	<i>An upbeat pops overture for Symphony Orchestra.</i>
“Primitive Modern”	<i>Solo work for French horn and recorded synthetic sounds with optional percussion.</i>
“Lament for Two Trombones and Piano”	<i>Recital work for Trombone duet and Piano.</i>
“Lost Dreams and Rainy Days”	<i>A pops orchestral ballad for tape and Orchestra.</i>
“Fantasy after Schubert”	<i>A classical orchestral piece using themes from Schubert’s 9th Symphony and his “Wander Fantasy”</i>
“Gardens of Stone”	<i>A patriotic work for band and narrator. This work is also available for symphony orchestra and narrator.</i>
“Music for Winds, Percussion, and Piano”	<i>A three movement work for chamber winds, percussion, and piano.</i>
“Toccata for Orchestra”	<i>A nine to ten minute classical show piece for orchestra.</i>
“Musical Masque (for the Seasons”	<i>A chamber work for string quartet, percussion, and trombone. Can be played between stanza readings of James Whitcomb Riley’s delightful poem, “Masque of the Seasons”.</i>
“Symphony for Band”	<i>An 18-minute work in three movements for Wind Ensemble.</i>
“Fanfare of Honor”	<i>Overture for mid-level band.</i>
“In the Mind’s Eye: Images for Horns and Orchestra”	<i>A three movement Konzertstück for horns and orchestra.</i>