**Occasion**

**Occasion** was commissioned and published in 1986 as the test piece for the Youth Finals of the Boosey & Hawkes National Brass Band Championships, held that year in the Royal Albert Hall, London. The material was drawn from three different sources: *Fanfare* was written in 1981 as a wedding present for his friend and fellow composer Paul Patterson; *Elegy and Dance* was commissioned a year later for a new brass band competition in Scotland, whilst *Festivities* was freshly added to complete the Suite. As Paul Hindmarsh has commented: ‘It is a true *occasional* work and seems to summon up all the ingredients of Gregson’s early style in a thoroughly entertaining and surprisingly coherent fashion, given the circumstances of its creation’.

*Festivities*, cast in ABA form, projects, a highly rhythmic idea with dissonant syncopations before giving way to a more lyrical melody before its return. The intense *Elegy* unfolds a modal folk-like tune which, after a brief introduction, is heard on flugel horn, then euphonium, before building to a powerful climax – the melody now being heard on the full band, then subsiding to a reprise of the introduction. The exuberant *Dance* is the composer’s tribute to Malcolm Arnold - again in ABA form, its exuberant main tune in 7/4 time is contrasted with an elegant melody, interrupted by echoes of the dance tune, before a repeat of the dance tune and a brief coda bring the work to its joyful conclusion.

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