



Winner of the Lindley Clock Tower Competition

The Seven Wonders of the World



for Brass Band



Graham Cole



The Seven Wonders of the World

Programme note

A work in seven sections, to be played as one continuous movement.

Each section is based on one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

A number of themes and motifs run throughout the work.

The Pharos at Alexandria

The Colossus of Rhodes

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon

The Pyramids of Egypt

Pheida's Statue of Zeus at Olympia

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

The Pharos of Alexandria was a lighthouse built by Sostratus of Cnidus during the 3rd century B.C. on the island of Pharos off the coast of Egypt. It was destroyed by an earthquake in the 13th century.

The Colossus at Rhodes was a bronze statue of Helios (Apollo), about 105 ft high. The work of the sculptor Chares, who reputedly laboured for 12 years before completing it in 280 B.C., it was destroyed during an earthquake in 224 B.C.

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus was begun about 350 B.C., in honour of a non-Hellenic goddess who later became identified with the Greek goddess of the same name. The temple, with Ionic columns 60 ft high, was destroyed by invading Goths in A.D. 262.

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus was erected by Queen Artemisia in memory of her husband, King Mausolus of Caria in Asia Minor, who died in 353 B.C. Some remains of the structure are in the British Museum. This shrine is the source of the modern word "mausoleum."

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were supposedly built by Nebuchadnezzar around 600 B.C. to please his queen, Amuhia. They are also associated with the mythical Assyrian queen, Semiramis. Archaeologists surmise that the gardens were laid out atop a vaulted building, with provisions for raising water. The terraces were said to rise from 75 to 300 ft.

The Pyramids of Egypt are three pyramids at Giza, outside modern Cairo. The largest pyramid, built by Khufu (Cheops), a king of the fourth dynasty, had an original estimated height of 482 ft (now approximately 450 ft). The base has sides 755 ft long. It contains 2,300,000 blocks; the average weight of each is 2.5 tons. Estimated date of completion is 2680 B.C. Of all the Ancient Wonders, the pyramids alone survive.

The Statue of Zeus at Olympia was made of gold and ivory by the Greek sculptor Phidias (5th century B.C.). Reputed to be 40 ft high, the statue has been lost without a trace, except for reproductions on coins.

...and an inside note on the compositional process!

Originally partly scored as a brass octet, this piece was re-written and extended for full brass band and was the winning entry for the Lindley Band's 'Clock tower Composition competition' of 2004.

The composition was partially restricted by a set of guidelines for the composition, which are outlined below.

- *Be between 5 and 8 minutes in duration*
- *Be aimed at 1st section standard bands*
- *Be written for standard brass band instrumentation with a maximum of two percussionists*
- *Be musically accessible to the ear of the general public*

The composition followed a style similar to the tone poem with each section being descriptive of its title. Although there are a number of central themes and motifs running throughout the work, a style of pictorialism was used rather than following a holistic method. Some examples are highlighted below -

- Pharos - *Shimmering cymbals and tremolos + a bold fanfare using 5ths and 4ths*
- Colossus - *a bold tune representing the heroic Apollo + busy serialistic motifs representing the city*
- Artemis - *playful and semi-dance like*
- Mausoleum - *slow (grave) & in a minor key with a soulful reflective cadenza*
- Babylon - *Use o the whole tone scale with a beauty of line shaping*
- Pyramids - *Rhythmic and architectural, alternating 3 and 4 time representing the alternate views of a pyramid*
- Zeus - *Chromatic 'lightning bolts' and powerful themes of the ruling God & recap of previous melodies*

This use of word painting would help assist in keeping the music of an 'audience friendly' nature as requested in the rules. The shape of the piece was also of importance, creating loud and quiet sections, a slow melodic middle section, highlights to build towards and the big loud ending that is often culturally expected in the brass band world. Strong melodic themes and sections of rhythmic interest were also used to keep the piece accessible to the ear of the general public whilst keeping the musicians interested both in rehearsal and on the concert stage.

Unlike the standard brass band 'test piece' the intention was not to try and test every player or section in the band, but just to keep them interested for a concert performance. Therefore care was taken writing appropriate parts for the players 'lower down the ranks' (such as 3rd Cornets, 2nd Horns) as these, even in a first section band, are often at a lesser standard. In this case, parts were mainly just kept with a hierarchical pitch range in mind - the higher notes going to the solo cornets and lower 'easier' notes going to the 2nd and 3rd cornets. Generally however, rhythmic complexity, melodic interest and technicalities remained on the whole keeping an interest for musicians of a first section standard. Solos were kept for principal players and the duet in Mausoleum was written with two specific Euphonium players in mind.