

MERIDIAN ARTS ENSEMBLE



ANDREW RINDFLEISCH IN THE ZONE

ANDREW RINDFLEISCH

IN THE ZONE

innova 850

The first piece Andrew Rindfleisch wrote for the Meridian Arts Ensemble was *In the Zone*. For us Meridians, it was love at first sight. Andy had written us a piece that was visceral, energetic, fun to play, fun to listen to, and just all-around satisfying. The piece found its musical voice at some intersection between the old and the new. The "zone" referred to in the title is a *canzon* – a Renaissance song. The two movement titles sound old. Some of the harmonic language sounds old. The attitude, however, is completely of our own era. The brass writing is muscular, with rich dissonance working together with (and against) an almost and tuba enter in a different key, we know something strange is happening. Andy is able to ride right on the edge between old and new sounds, leaning at one moment one way, and then immediately the other. The second movement, *Canons*, opens a fast moving canon theme played loud on a muted trumpet, and repeated – this is, after all, what happens in a canon – in the horn, also muted. The sound of brass instruments playing loud with mutes provides a nice chew to the music, like getting your teeth into taffy-coated peanuts. When the mutes finally come off, it is like the moment in the Wizard of Oz when the color comes on:

As our collaboration with Andy developed, music started coming to us by mail. Some of it was arrangements of 19th century songs, some was new brass quintet music, and some was brass quintet music that Andy had written in the past. And some of it was music for just two instruments. I kind of wish those duos had included horn, because I would have liked to play them. But the *Four Fanfares for Two Trumpets* really does exist in the world of trumpet. The piece captures, in a brief period of time, this world, giving us four sides of the trumpet coin. Does the piece look back to the fanfare tradition? Yes. Does it look ahead to the modern world? Yes. As in *In the Zone*, the composer has managed to perch himself at some hitherto undiscovered intersection where old and new meet to form something else entirely.

Andy wrote the *Fanfare for Brass Quintet* in 1988 for the Wisconsin Brass Quintet. For us Meridians, learning this piece was like discovering a friend's past. The hallmarks of the later Rindfleisch are all there: power, sharp contrast, brassy textures, even some sounds reminiscent of the early music sounds that were to prove such an inspiration to the composer later. Scored for trumpet and trombone duo, *A Little Fanfare Music (by Lady MacBeth)* is a piece with a program or story behind it, so I will let Andy tell the story in his own words.



ANDREW RINDFLEISCH IN THE ZONE WITH THE MERIDIAN ARTS ENSEMBLE

In the Zone (2009) for Brass Quintet (7:08)

- I. Introitus (2:14)
- II. Canons (4:54)

Four Fanfares for Two Trumpets (2011) (5:16)

- I. Strict, relentless (1:21)
- II. Intense (0:34)
- III. Driving, articulated (0:49)
- IV. Austere (2:32)

7 **Fanfare** (1988) for Brass Quintet (1:10)

8 **A Little Fanfare Music (by Lady MacBeth)** for Trumpet and Trombone (2:46)

Four Vintage Songs (Arranged by Andrew Rindfleisch) (2011) for Brass Quintet (15:08)

- I. Warte, warte, nur ein Weilchen (1922) by Walter Kollo (3:45)
- II. Gentle Annie (1856) by Stephen Foster (5:09)
- III. When You Were Sweet Sixteen (1898) by James Thorton (3:00)
- IV. Ring de Banjo (1861) by Stephen Foster (3:14)

12 **Abide With Me** by Henry Monk (1861) (5:24)
Arranged for Brass Quartet by Andrew Rindfleisch (2011)

All tracks composed and arranged by Andrew Rindfleisch
Meridian Arts Ensemble: Jon Nelson and Tim Leopold, trumpets,
Daniel Grabois, horn, Benjamin Herrington, trombone, Raymond Stewart, tuba

innova is the label of the American Composers Forum.
© Andrew Rindfleisch, 2013. All Rights Reserved.

innova Recordings, 332 Minnesota Street E-145, St. Paul, MN, 55101, USA
www.innova.mu andrewrindfleisch.com manzomusic.com



ANDREW RINDFLEISCH

IN THE ZONE

innova 850



CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Producer: All tracks produced by Andrew Rindfleisch

Engineer: David Yost

Mastering: Matthew Zimmerman, David Yost

Cover Art: *Collage Cube 2* by Edwin Wade

Design: Gusto Designs, LLC, Lakewood, Ohio

Notes: Daniel Grabois

Innova Director: Philip Blackburn

Operations Manager: Chris Campbell

Publicist: Steve McPherson

Innova is supported by an endowment from the McKnight Foundation

All composition copyrights owned by Andrew Rindfleisch (ASCAP)

All compositions published by Manzo Music: manzomusic.com

Also by Andrew Rindfleisch (with Zeitgeist) on innova: NIGHT SINGING (innova #785).



Andrew Rindfleisch



Meridian Arts Ensemble

— Daniel Grabois, hornist in the Meridian Arts Ensemble

your thoughts about life. Which is just what music is supposed to do.

It is fitting that, after so many toes have been dipped in the world of older music, the disc should conclude with the genuine article, which sounds so good, so rich, and so deep on brass instruments that it will leave you whistling the tunes and thinking a song about real life masquerading as a song about God.

The closing work on the CD is *Abide with Me*, a hymn given the kind of treatment you will have come to expect from Andy by the time you finish the CD. In this version, all the players are muted, which immediately pulls the church out of the music. The horn uses a technique called hand-stopping, which makes a buzzing sound that you can hear in the middle of the texture. There is a stark quality to the group sound that, to me, expresses much more about the real world than the spiritual one. Andy has created

ample opportunities to change the sound of the instruments. The CD ends with *Four Vintage Songs*, followed by a 19th century hymn. The arrangements all bear the Rindfleisch stamp: lots of tempo changes, shifts in character, and dynamic contrasts. The German song *Warte, warte* builds to a rollicking waltz, and like most waltzes, it is able to express a little sadness while seeming happy on the surface. The ending turns in the direction of American old-time show music in a classic bit of Rindfleischian genre bending. *Gentle Annie* feels like Civil War era brass band music, with many open intervals. There is a long unison duo between the horn and trombone that erupts into full harmony – this is a moment that is extremely emotionally satisfying to play and shows off Andy's arranging chops to the fullest. *When You Were Sweet Sixteen* was the first of these arrangements to reach us by mail, and we all responded immediately to the ebb and flow of the piece. The trombone is featured as soloist here, and that instrument, slurrpier than the rest of us, perfectly captures the spirit of the melody. The final song in the set is *Ring de Banjo* by Stephen Foster. Like the rest of the set of these songs, this arrangement sounds simple while in fact requiring tremendous concentration, with shifting characters and tempo changes and

other. As an example of mockery disguised as pomp, this piece cannot be beat.

When I heard Ben and Tim start to record this piece, it sounded incredibly strange to me. Happily, that strangeness never went away. I would never have thought Andy had inside of him this wonderfully twisted appreciation of the dark side of humanity. The trumpet and trombone, while supposedly collaborating to express the nobility of royalty, are almost constantly at odds with each

Shakespeare's Lady MacBeth, having just assumed the throne alongside her husband King, conceives of a fanfare to be played at his every entrance. Her music is scored for two, as of yet, un-invented instruments and she spares no expense to have them hastily and awkwardly constructed. This, coupled with her tortured psyche (of power-lust, murder, paranoia and guilt), produces a fanfare that is grotesque, lop-sided and deranged. But to her sticky ears, and to those of her newly crowned husband, it is a stately fanfare of elegant royalty and refinement. Music fit for a King.