

# PROGRAM NOTES BY THE COMPOSER

## THE ELLACOMBE CHRONICLES

*Commissioned by the Brass Band of Columbus (Ohio) and dedicated to its current and former members and Founding Director Dr. Paul E. Droste on the occasion of the band's 25th Anniversary.*

The hymns of Isaac Watts (1674-1748) have been a source of inspiration for musical thought and development by composers for over two-hundred years. His glorious hymn “*I Sing the Mighty Power of God*” has been coupled with the hymn tune Ellacombe (from Gesangbuch der Herzogl, Wurtemberg, 1784) in many hymnals over these two centuries. The powerful progression of thought in the text, amplified by the elegant tune, to some degree chronicles the Creation story and might have been influenced by the scripture found in Exodus 20:11: *The Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sun, and all that is in them.*

The Ellacombe Chronicles was created and inspired by Isaac Watts’s text and chronicles the three verses of the hymn through a set of diverse variations on the tune Ellacombe. The opening fanfare is intended to capture the joy and exuberance of the first phrase of the first verse... *I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise.*

The developmental material following the fanfare gives a hint of the three large variations that are extracted from the hymn tune, which is first presented during the opening exposition of musical material.

### VARIATION 1: Scherzando: chronicles verse 1

*I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.  
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at His command and all the stars obey.*

### VARIATION 2: Adagio espressivo, Andante espressivo: chronicles verse 2

*I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;  
He formed the creatures with his word and then pronounced them good.  
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed where'er I turn my eye:  
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!*

### VARIATION 3: Allegro spiritoso: chronicles verse 3

*There's not a plant or flower below but makes Thy glories known;  
And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from Thy throne;  
While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care,  
And everywhere that man can be, Thou, God art present there.*

*Amen!*