

Danson, A: Just for Starters for Horn Quartet

Good music for beginners. These six miniatures, entitled 'Horns on Parade', 'Promenade', 'The Sunday Walk', 'Tick-Tock March', 'Pastorale', 'Song' and 'The Wild Goose Chase', provide the student with plenty of dynamics and a playing range from G below middle C to D, the ninth above middle C. There is a good variety of meters, tempos, rhythmic and melodic content. Students are introduced to note values and their importance in the first movement, while the fourth movement gives the opportunity for the student to experience the classical/natural horn part. Finishing with a wild goose chase in 6/8 time, the beginner also encounters a 'D.S. al Coda' - a good example of musical geography.

“Alan Danson is a composer, horn player and teacher. He is well aware of the problems encountered by people of all ages who decide to tackle this fiendish instrument. His 'Just For Starters' is aimed at Grade 1 and 2 pupils and consists of six movements for horn quartet. Each movement has a title. Children will be far more interested in playing 'Tick Tock March' and 'Wild Goose Chase' rather than just plain movements 3 and 6. They have time signatures of 2/4, 4/4, 6/8 and Alla Breve to cope with, and plenty of variation in tempo between the six movements. The range covered is from G below middle C for the fourth horn up to D on the fourth line for the first. Each player has to count rests and cope with first and second time bars as well as a D.S. and Coda in the final movement. In fact, all the things that we need to concentrate on for the dreaded sight reading tests are here: dynamics galore, accidentals in abundance and several challenging intervals to develop the sense of pitch. Staccato and legato passages, together with accelerando and rallentando markings could all help with aural tests at a later date.” - Vivian Davies in *The Horn* September 1994

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