

## **Norman Bolter**

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Norman Bolter was first inspired to play the trombone when, at age four, he saw the Captain Kangaroo television show character, "Mr. Greenjeans," play the same instrument. Mr. Bolter began his formal trombone studies at age nine with Ed VonHoff of the St. Paul Public School System. Later, he studied with Ronald Ricketts and Steven Zellmer of the Minnesota Orchestra and with John Swallow at the New England Conservatory. Mr. Bolter is very thankful to these teachers and to former BSO principal bassoonist, Sherman Walt, not only for their technical and musical assistance but also for their encouragement and nurturance of his love of music and trombone playing.

A Tanglewood Fellow and C. D. Jackson Award winner, Mr. Bolter joined the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1975 at age 20, becoming the youngest member of the orchestra at that time. As well, he is principal trombonist of the Boston Pops Orchestra and was a founding member of the Empire Brass Quintet, which won the prestigious Walter H. Naumberg Award in Chamber Music, the first brass ensemble ever to win this award. Mr. Bolter has appeared, as a member of the Boston Pops Orchestra, on the televised PBS favorite "Evening at Pops" with Arthur Fiedler, John Williams and Keith Lockhart as conductors. He has toured extensively in the U.S., Europe, Asia and South America with the BSO, the Pops and the Empire Brass and has made many recordings with them. He also appears as principal trombonist on recordings with Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine. Furthermore, Mr. Bolter appears as soloist and conductor on four recordings of his own compositions, "Experiments in Music," "Anew at Home," "Occurrences" and "In Living Continuance." In addition to his numerous trombone solos, Mr. Bolter performed the acclaimed euphonium solo in the BSO recording of Mahler's "Symphony No. 7" (Philips Classics Productions, 1990) and also played euphonium on the Minnesota Orchestra recording of "Ein Heldenleben" by Richard Strauss.

Mr. Bolter has composed music from a very early age, with the last fourteen

years witnessing an outpouring of new works winning him acclaim as a composer both in the US and abroad. In addition to his own recordings of these works, Mr. Bolter's compositions have appeared on recordings by New York Philharmonic principal trombonist, Joseph Alessi; former Boston Symphony Orchestra principal trumpeter, Charles Schlueter; Boston Symphony Orchestra bass trombonist, Douglas Yeo; Boston Symphony Orchestra principal trombonist, Ronald Barron; Los Angeles Philharmonic co-principal trombonist, James Miller; and the New England Brass Band. Further, his compositions have been performed throughout the world, with performances in Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South America and the US. Amongst the many who have given live solo performances of Mr. Bolter's works are: Joseph Alessi ("Arctic Emanations" for trombone and piano), Ronald Barron ("Sky Dreams" for alto trombone and piano), Scott Hartman ("Trees" for alto trombone and orchestra), Randall Montgomery ("Clouncey" for tuba and piano and "Keepers of the Cosmic Sea" for solo tuba and brass ensemble with percussion), Richard Sebring ("Nautilus" for solo horn and brass ensemble with percussion), Charles Schlueter ("On the Cusp" for solo trumpet and brass ensemble with percussion, "Immersion" for solo trumpet and "Marsha's Gift" for trumpet and piano), Charles Vernon ("Of Mountains, Lakes and Trees" for solo bass, tenor and alto trombones and orchestra, and "Sagittarius2" for bass trombone and piano), R. Douglas Wright ("Solar Voyages" for solo trombone and brass ensemble; "Lakes" for solo tenor trombone and orchestra) Douglas Yeo ("Of Mountains" for solo bass trombone and orchestra) and Jacques Zoon ("In the Place of Wild Lavender" for flute, horn and cello).

Mr. Bolter's works have been commissioned by Joseph Alessi ("Arctic Emanations" for trombone and piano), Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston ("IOURS" for trombone and chamber orchestra), the Zellmer-Minnesota Trombone Competition ("Morning Walk" for tenor trombone and piano, "Sagittarius2" for bass trombone and piano), Mike Roylance ("Night of the Soul" for tuba trio), Peter Chapman ("Immersion" for unaccompanied solo trumpet), the Online Trombone Journal ("The Joy in Being Able" for trombone and piano)

and the University of St. Thomas ("A White Company Overture" for concert band) and others. In his numerous compositions (over 200 created to date), Mr. Bolter explores creating "essence music" (music as a living thing) inspired by the natural worlds and the human story. His compositions have a broad range of instrumentation, including works for a variety of solo instruments (trombone, trumpet, tuba, horn, flute, didjeridoo, ram's horn, serpent and others), brass ensemble, trombone choir, concert band, brass band, mixed chamber ensemble and orchestra. Notably, Mr. Bolter has composed more music for the trombone than any other composer.

A renowned teacher, Mr. Bolter serves on the faculties of the New England Conservatory and Longy School of Music. Many of his students hold positions in major symphony orchestras, chamber music groups and universities around the world. In addition to conducting regular master classes, Mr. Bolter holds special Frequency Band workshops and concerts, often co-conducted with Dr. Carol Viera. He also is co-author, with Dr. Viera, of several papers and booklets, including "Methods of Effective Practice," "High Range Exercises," "It's Not All in the Air," and "The Metronome Meditation." He also has written a unique sight reading book for advanced trombone players, "Reading at the Speed of Sight." Mr. Bolter offers private lessons, as his schedule permits, in which players can experience for themselves his unique and effective one-on-one instruction.

As if all this did not keep him busy enough, Mr. Bolter now has a blog, "Frequency Bone." Here the reader will find, in diary format, his ongoing musings about music as a living thing--whether during a lesson, practicing, playing outdoors or even eating breakfast! A variety of sound clips, photos and videos, posted along the way, make for a lively, entertaining and informative experience.