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## Hannaford Band a true wonder

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A brass ensemble, 27-strong, is a dazzling sight to behold under the lights of a concert stage. The Hannaford Street Silver Band, touted as Canada's premier professional brass ensemble, lived up to its impeccable reputation with a dynamic performance as polished and sparkling as the instruments gleaming in the musicians' hands.

There wasn't a spare seat in the house last Saturday as Barrie Concerts welcomed this acclaimed British-style brass band, along with world-renowned euphonium virtuoso, David Childs and new principal guest conductor Alain Trudel.

In a program that literally danced through a vast array of styles and moods, the HSSB displayed flawless technique and crystal precision.

The band also s commendable, long-standing tradition of supporting young musicians and composers by premiering not one but two original works.

The first, Euphonium Concerto, by Karl Jenkins, was a work of four whimsical and varied movements written, apparently, to challenge the euphonium soloist to touch upon every variation of sound, abstract effect, technical strategy and musical contortion available to the instrument, a tenor of the tuba family.

Fortunately, this premiere presentation was in the magically nimble hands of Britain's David Childs, who delivered this eclectic collection with the casual aplomb of a true master.

Wall of Fire, a work by young Canadian composer, Robert Teehan and commissioned by the HSSB, was a blast of energy and contemporary rhythms which highlighted the play between brass and percussion.

Wood block melodies mingled with a vast and intriguing array of percussive instruments set against the striking, rapid-fire pulse of the brass.

The evening culminated with the excellent presentation of Holst's, The Planets, arranged by Stephen Roberts.

One could not remain unmoved by the familiar, relentless forward march of Mars, The Bringer of War, or the gorgeous, soaring theme of Jupiter, The Bringer of Jollity. This was truly a remarkable performance by all, and a welcome treat to all those in attendance.