

# Once Upon a Time

by John Jay Hilfiger

## Program Notes

My daughter is a skilled and imaginative writer. A few years ago, when she was in her early teens, I sat with her one evening and we talked about some ideas she had for a new story. Some of the ideas were strange and exotic while others were cleverly amusing or even silly. I tried to capture some of the mystery and amusement of her imagination in a musical impression for band. Although I have long since forgotten the particulars of her story ideas, this tone poem will, I hope, preserve some of the inspiration of a young girl on that evening.

The work is in five parts:

theme (measures 1-16)

episode 1 (measures 16-24)

theme (measures 25-40)

episode 2 (measures 41-49)

theme (measures 50-65).

## Rehearsal Suggestions

-The theme should sound familiar each time it comes back, but not exactly the same as before. The conductor should look for the little details that change each time and bring them out, but not make them so prominent as to obscure the theme.

-Some liberties may be taken with tempo in each of the episodes: perhaps a little faster, perhaps some rubato, but make the changes subtle. The whole work should have a sense of mystery about it with a few touches of whimsy.



## **John Jay Hilfiger**

John Jay Hilfiger's career in higher education, as music professor, administrator, and statistical consultant has spanned three decades. His own education has been eclectic, having studied horn at the Eastman School of Music, psychology (B.S.) at the University of Rochester, and biostatistics (M.S.) at Temple University before completing a M.Mus. at Binghamton University and a Ph.D. in music at the University of Iowa. He has been a music professor at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, the University of Minnesota-Morris, and the University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac as well as adjunct music faculty at Cornell University, Binghamton University and several other institutions. Currently, Hilfiger teaches in the music department at Castleton State College of Vermont. Over fifty of his compositions and arrangements have been published by ten publishing houses. He has also been a prolific writer with articles and reviews appearing in such diverse publications as: *Journal of the Conductors Guild*, *Horn Call*, *Journal of Band Research*, *NACWPI Journal*, *Notes*, *American Statistician*, and *Acta Veterinaria Scandinavica*.