

# Risen Angels

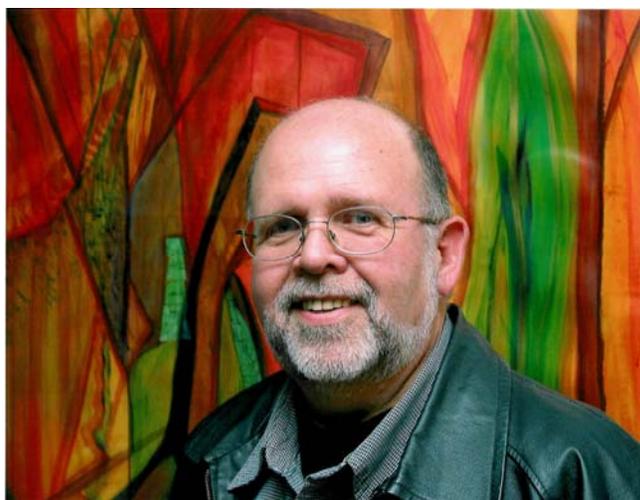
by Dr. Tom O'Connor

## Program Notes

*Risen Angels was commissioned by Rod Plunkett, Director of the Westside (Jonesboro, AR) High School Band in remembrance of the shooting at that school in 1998. The piece reflects the innocence of childhood and the intrusion of worldly issues into that childhood. The five note rising motive at the end of the piece is in memory of the five individuals who lost their lives in the shooting.*

## Rehearsal Suggestions

- The tempo changes may be interpreted at gradual changes instead of abrupt changes
- The overall dynamic need not get too loud; the musical effect of the piece depends on the fuller sections standing out from the quieter moments.
- The repeated eighth-note patterns may tend to rush. Students should be encouraged to rehearse this part with a metronome, both in and out of class.
- The percussion section should always be sensitive to their place in the sound. The drum parts should be heard distantly, like echoes. Mallet parts should equalize with the winds, but never overpower them.
- This piece uses the Bb Lydian mode extensively; this would be a great teaching opportunity to introduce young musicians to this mode.
- Students should also be made aware of the terms **Ostinato** and **Motive**, as both of these terms are important to their understanding of the overall work.
- It is strongly encouraged that the director inform the students about the programmatic content of this work to heighten their emotional awareness and investment into the music



**Dr. Tom O'Connor**, assistant professor of music, joined the ASU music faculty in 1978. His current teaching assignments include Music Theory, Orchestration, Form and Analysis, Graduate Theory, and Composition. He received both his BME and MSE from Arkansas State University and his DMA in Composition from the University of Memphis. Prior to joining the ASU faculty, Dr. O'Connor taught public schools in Arkansas and Missouri serving as band director at high schools in Marked Tree (AR), East Prairie (MO) and West Plains (MO). He began work at ASU as Director of the Marching Indian Band and Director of Jazz Studies. In 1982 he was appointed Director of Bands. While in this position, his Symphonic Band performed for the Arkansas ASBOA Convention in Pine Bluff as well as the College Band Directors National Association Regional Convention in Lawrence, Kansas. Under his direction, the ASU Jazz Band has twice performed for the ASBOA State Convention.

Dr. O'Connor is an active composer with numerous concert band publications available through Counterpoint Music Publishers and percussion ensembles available through Barnhouse Music Publishers. He writes several commissioned band pieces each year. In addition to the published works, he writes extensively for marching band, concert band, jazz band, orchestra and varied instrumental ensembles. Dr. O'Connor studied composition with Don Freund, John Baur, Claude T. Smith and Jared Spears. In addition to responsibilities at Arkansas State, he is both a contributing writer and managing editor for Counterpoint Music Publishers, a band music publishing company based in Jonesboro, AR.