First Plus Band

Grade 11/2



# Ballet of the Gnomes

## Joseph Compello

#### FPS70 INSTRUMENTATION

#### **Program Notes**

Ballet of the Gnomes is an easy concert piece for young bands. It takes its point of departure from Danse Macabre by Saint-Saëns. The imagery is that of a corps de ballet of some not too attractive creatures attempting to be graceful. To that end a successful performance will rely on the proper balance of a graceful lilt in the rhythm with the awkwardness presented in the minor key melodies and harmonies. Young students will benefit from instruction in the sound of tritones and the minor-9th chord.

Note that the mallet part should ideally be covered by two players, although one player can manage both xylophone and chimes easily with the loss of only one measure.

Cymbal crashes should be played with crash cymbals, not a suspended cymbal. The suspended cymbal roll should be played with yarn mallets or timpani mallets.

Thank you for choosing this composition. I hope you and your students find it enjoyable, challenging and instructive.

—Joseph Compello Glen Arm, Maryland, 2008

#### **About the Composer**

Joseph Compello, a native of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, holds degrees in music education from the Peabody Conservatory and Towson University. During his thirty-one year career as an instrumental music teacher in Maryland, he wrote numerous compositions for his students. In 1994, Carl Fischer began publishing many of these classroom-tested pieces including his debut publication Cadets on Parade, and the 1996 best-seller Rock to the Max, Mr. Sax. In 2003, Compello's journey from local band director to internationally published composer was chronicled in the prestigious Baltimore Sun. Now retired from teaching, Compello, continues to draw on his extensive background in music education to compose new music exclusively for Carl Fischer's Performance Series, which now contains eighty-five of his works.

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