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'Luminosity' radiates love of Pittsburgh people

By [Bob Karlovits](#), TRIBUNE-REVIEW
Thursday, December 4, 2008

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[Working in concert](#)
Andrew Russell/Tribune-Review

'And the Angels Sing'

Who: River City Brass Band

When and where: 7:30 p.m. today, Heinz Hall, Sixth Street at Penn Avenue, Downtown; 8 p.m. Friday, Carson Middle School, 200 Hillvue Lane, McCandless; 8 p.m. Saturday, Palace Theatre, 21 W. Otterman St., Greensburg; 3 p.m. Sunday, Bethel Park High School, 309 Church Road; 8 p.m. Tuesday, Upper St. Clair High School, 1825 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair; 8 p.m. Dec. 11, Gateway High School, 3000 Gateway Campus Blvd., Monroeville; 3 p.m. Dec. 14, Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center, 450 Schoolhouse Road, Johnstown

Denis Colwell would like to make a special project by the River City Brass Band something of a new year's resolution.

"If I could find a way to keep this going, it would be great," he says of the band's premiere of a new work at each of its concerts this year. "It makes musicians feel like musicians and is very important for the future of the band. But it isn't easy."

That program will come to a close with the band's Christmas concerts that end the calendar year. The series begins this evening at Heinz Hall, Downtown.

The concert series, "And the Angels Sing," will feature a new work, "Luminosity," written by Nancy Galbraith, professor of composition at Carnegie Mellon University in Oakland.

The series of premieres was created by a \$50,000 grant from Pittsburgh250, the group that put together a celebration of the city's 250th anniversary. Having the brass band play new music is an important function, Colwell says, because it gives new life to an ensemble that sometimes can seem a little too bound by tradition.

But finding the money to do that isn't easy, he says. That means regular premieres of commissioned works probably will come to an end with the Galbraith work.

But to give his concerts a steady dose of new music, Colwell is considering importing new brass-band works from Great Britain, where that genre of work is a little livelier.

In the meantime, he and the composer think "Luminosity" will give the band a work that can be played at more concerts than Christmas ones.

Like the other composers, Galbraith was not asked to write any specific type of work. But she did know it would be part of the Christmas concert.

Galbraith says the work isn't specifically holiday-oriented, but adds it is "my spirit of Christmas."

"The title is a play on words of 'Luminous City'," she adds. "I was thinking about what I like about Pittsburgh the most, and I decided it was the people. So I wrote a piece about them. It is nostalgic, and I wanted it to be radiant."

Besides the new work, the concert also will feature classic and not-so-traditional Christmas music.

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