Concerto for Wind Ensemble

PERUSAL SCORE - NOT FOR PERFORMANCE USE

RENTAL MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM
STEVEN BRYANT: rental@stevenbryant.com
Concerto for Wind Ensemble

I.
Commissioned by the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America, Cdr. Donald Schofield, conductor

II. – V.
Commissioned by a consortium of ensembles organized by Jerry Junkin, University of Texas at Austin:

Baylor University
Eric J. Wilson, Director of Bands

Bowling Green State University
Bruce Moss, Director of Bands

California State University
Mitch Fennell, Director of Bands

Crane School of Music, SUNY-Potsdam
Brian K. Doyle, Director of Bands

Ridgewood Concert Band
Chris Wilhelmi, Conductor

Southern Methodist University
Jack Delaney, Director of Bands

James E. Taylor High School
Katy ISD, Katy, TX
Christopher Bailey, Director of Bands

Tennessee Tech University
Joseph Herrmann, Director of Bands

Texas Tech University
Sarah McKoin, Director of Bands

The Ohio State University
Russel Mikkelson, Director of Bands

University of Colorado
Allan McMurray, Director of Bands

University of Georgia
John P. Lynch, Director of Bands

University of Kansas
Paul Popiel, Director of Bands

University of Miami Frost School of Music
Gary Green, Director of Bands

University of Michigan
Michael Haithcock, Director of Bands

University of New Mexico
Eric Rombach-Kendall, Director of Bands

University of North Carolina – Greensboro
John Locke, Director of Bands
Kevin Gerald, Director of Orchestral Activities

University of South Carolina
Scott Weiss, Director of Bands

The United States Military Academy at West Point
LTC Jim Keene, Commander/Conductor
CPT Dae Kim, Deputy Commander
LTC Timothy J. Holtan, former Commander/Conductor

University of Texas – Austin
Jerry Junkin, Director of Bands

Willamette University
Grant Linsell, Director of Bands

Performance materials available from Steven Bryant
rental@stevenbryant.com
www.stevenbryant.com
INSTRUMENTATION

SURROUND BAND

Flute 3 (TACET, Mvt. I)
Flute 4 / alto / Piccolo
Flute 5 (TACET, Mvt. I)
Clarinet in Bb 4
Clarinet in Bb 5
Clarinet in Bb 6
Trumpet in Bb 4
Trumpet in Bb 5 / Bb Piccolo Trumpet
Trumpet in Bb 6
Horn in F 3 (TACET, Mvt. II)
Horn in F 4 (TACET, Mvt. II)

STAGE BAND

Flute 1 / Piccolo
Flute 2 / Piccolo
Oboe 1
Oboe 2
Bassoon 1
Bassoon 2 / Contrabassoon
Clarinet in Bb 1
Clarinet in Bb 2
Clarinet in Bb 3 / Eb Clarinet
Bass Clarinet / Bb Contrabass Clarinet
Alto Saxophone 1 / Soprano Saxophone
Alto Saxophone 2
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone
Trumpet in Bb 1 / Bb Piccolo Trumpet
Trumpet in Bb 2 / Bb Piccolo Trumpet
Trumpet in Bb 3
Horn in F 1 (TACET, Mvt. II)
Horn in F 2 (TACET, Mvt. II)
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Trombone 3
Trombone 4
Euphonium 1-2
Tuba 1-2
Contrabass
Harp

PERCUSSION 1: Crotales (struck and bowed), Bass Drum, Suspended Cymbal, Splash Cymbal, Ribbon Crasher, Tam-tam

PERCUSSION 2: Glockenspiel, Crystal Glasses / Champagne Flutes (2), Xylophone, Tam-tam, Snare Drum, Cocktail Shaker, Suspended Cymbal (shared with Percussion 1)

PERCUSSION 3: Vibraphone, Suspended Cymbal, Toms (3)

PERCUSSION 4: Marimba, Suspended Cymbal, Sandblocks, Crotales (bowed), Xylophone, Vibraphone (shared with Perc. 3), Ribbon Crasher (shared with Perc. 1), shaker attached to drumstick (RhythmTech StickBall or comparable)

PERCUSSION 5: Concert Bass Drum, Bell Plates (Bb, A – must sound in the notated octave), Drumset: Kick BD, Snare, Hi-hat, Sus. Crash, inverted China/Splash stack:

PERCUSSION 6: Cocktail Shaker (shared with Perc. 2), Pitched Gong (C – must sound in notated octave), Tambourine (mounted, played with fingers and sticks, preferably Nickel jingles), Suspended Cymbal (shared with Perc. 3 or 4), Splash Cymbal

N.B.: This is an exact instrumentation (i.e. strictly one player per part).
ABOUT Concerto for Wind Ensemble

My Concerto for Wind Ensemble came into existence in two stages, separated by three years. The first movement came about in 2006, when Commander Donald Schofield (then director of the USAF Band of Mid-America) requested a new work that would showcase the band’s considerable skill and viscerally demonstrate their commitment to excellence as representatives of the United States Air Force. From the outset, I decided against an outright depiction of flight, instead opting to create a work that requires, and celebrates, virtuosity. Initial discussions with Cdr. Schofield centered on a concerto grosso concept, and from this, the idea evolved into one of surrounding the audience with three groups of players, as if the concerto group had expanded to encompass the audience. These three antiphonal groups, along with the onstage ensemble, form the shape of a diamond, which, not coincidentally, is a core formation for the USAF Thunderbirds Air Demonstration Squadron. As a further analog, I’ve placed Trumpet 5 and Clarinet 5 in the back of the hall, serving as an “inversion” of the ensemble onstage, which mirrors the role of the No. 5 pilot who spends the majority of the show flying inverted. The musical material consists of a five-note ascending scale-wise motive and a repeated chord progression (first introduced in the Vibraphone about 2’30” into the work). The rhythm of this chord progression (inspired by a fairly popular band these days) informs the rhythmic makeup of the remainder of the movement.

As the piece took shape, I realized I wanted to write much more than the “five to seven minutes” specified in the original commission, so I intentionally left the end of the work “open,” knowing I would someday expand it when the opportunity presented itself. That chance came in 2009, thanks to Jerry Junkin: shortly after his fantastic 2009 performance of Ecstatic Waters at the College Band Directors National Association conference in Austin, we discussed my desire to write more movements, and he graciously agreed to lead a consortium to commission the project.

In expanding the work, I planned to reuse the same few musical elements across all five movements. “Economy of materials” is a guiding principle of my approach to composing, and I set out to tie this work together as tightly as possible. The original ascending five-note motive from movement I returns often (in fact, the number 5 insinuates itself into both the melodic and rhythmic fabric of the entire work).

In Movement II, this scalar passage is stretched vertically, so that its total interval now covers a minor seventh instead of a perfect fifth. The F♯ Phrygian harmony eventually resolves upward to G major, acting as five-minute expansion of the F♯-G trills introduced in the Clarinets at the beginning of Movement I. The second movement exploits the antiphonal instruments for formal purposes, as the music gradually moves from the stage to the surrounding instruments. Extended flute solos permeate the movement.

Movement III is bright, rhythmically incessant, and veers toward jazz in a manner that surprised me as it unfolded. The accompaniment patterns revisit the Vibraphone rhythm from movement I, which various scalar threads swirl around the ensemble. The melodic material for this movement comes from a trumpet solo my father played years ago, and which I transcribed in 2006, while composing the first movement. I knew from the beginning that this would end up in the work, though my original plan was to set it in toto in the fourth movement. Instead, it wound up in the much brighter third movement, and led the music into a completely unexpected direction.

Movement IV’s weighty character, then, comes from that initial plan to set my father’s solo. I soon realized, however, that it wasn’t going to sound as I had anticipated – I had envisioned something similar to Ives’ The Unanswered Question, but it simply wasn’t working. Once I let go of the solo and focused on the surrounding sonic landscape, the music formed quickly, recalling various fragments from earlier in the piece. The movement also pays homage to Webern’s Six Pieces for Orchestra (elements of which appear in other movements), and Corigliano’s score to the film Altered States. Both of these have been early, powerful, lasting influences on my compositional choices.

Movement V returns to the opening motive of the entire work, this time with a simmering vitality that burns inexorably to a no-holds-barred climax. Where the first four movements of the work only occasionally coalesce into tutti ensemble passages, here, the entire band is finally unleashed.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Jerry Junkin and the consortium members for allowing me the opportunity to create this work – all 54,210 notes of it.
ANTIPHONAL PLACEMENTS

NOTE TO THE CONDUCTOR:

The antiphonal players should be placed in three groups around the audience to form a roughly equidistant diamond shape with the stage. Do not spread the players out around the audience - each group should be clumped together as closely as is comfortable for the musicians.

This work is designed to display the virtuosity of every member of the ensemble, and thus the numbering of parts does not necessarily indicate their relative range or difficulty. For example, Trumpets 1, 2 and 5 contain high-range passages, and call for Piccolo trumpets in spots.

Please contact me if you have any questions or discover errata:
steve@stevenbryant.com

version 1.0.2 (January, 2011)
www.stevenbryant.com
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Medium-fast pulsing.
Do NOT synchronize.

Medium-fast pulsing.
Do NOT synchronize.

Medium-fast pulsing.

(continue pulsing)
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Do not synchronize with other players.

Slow cresc. and decresc. - never above pp

(stagger breathe as necessary, sneak back into the texture)
Do not synchronize with other players.

SLOW slide vibrato, approx. a quarter-tone above and below this pitch. Gradually increase speed and aggressiveness of vibrato.

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