

Stephen Hill

The Preposterous Quest

*of Perceval, and Parsifal, a Pair of Peculiar, Propitious,
and Pleasantly Playful Penguins*

String Orchestra and Narrator
(Grade 2)


SARAHTIM Music Publishing


Instrumentation

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

String Bass

Wood Block

Triangle

Narrator

Duration - ca. 4:40


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About the Work...

Commissioned by the Omaha Conservatory of Music for OCM SoundWaves 2022 Summer Music Camp.

By way of a rather liberal retelling and a bit of satirical humor, this work re-interprets the heroic exploits of Parsifal, Perceval, and the search for the Holy Grail through the eyes of two Peculiar, Propitious, and Pleasantly Playful Penguins.

About the Composer...

Stephen Hill (b.1958) was born and raised in Southern California. His compositional lineage includes the likes of Roy Harris, Ingolf Dahl, Clifton Williams, Bernard Rogers, and Howard Hanson through study with Philip Westin (Cerritos College, 1976-1978) and most notably with W. Francis McBeth at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas (1978-1980). Stephen continued with graduate work at California State University, Los Angeles (1980-83) with composers Dr. Byong Kon Kim and William Hill. He composes for the simple joy of it.

For over 40 years, Stephen taught K-12 instrumental music concurrently in both the Private Christian School (Whittier Christian) and Public School (California High School) settings. Though semi-retired, Stephen still works with students by continuing to teach part-time at California High School and maintaining his private music studio, where he plays and teaches Woodwinds, Brass, Strings, and Piano. Stephen also plays with the church orchestra at Calvary Chapel, La Habra, CA. where he attends. When teaching full-time, he was primarily a "summer" composer. No longer teaching full-time, Stephen has the privilege to compose beyond just the summer months and publishes through his company, SARAHTIM—a title which comes from simply combining the name of his daughter Sarah and son Timothy. (*Notes by Dr. John Burdett, Azusa Pacific University*)

Permission to Copy Parts...

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“Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence.” J.S.Bach

“The Lord is my shepherd...” (Psalm 23)

“Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, you are God” (Psalm 90:2)

The Preposterous Quest
**of Perceval and Parsifal, a Pair of Peculiar,
Propitious, and Pleasantly Playful Penguins**
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Narration

Good evening (*afternoon*) and welcome to our performance of the
**The Preposterous Quest of Perceval and Parsifal, a Pair of Peculiar, Propitious,
and Pleasantly Playful Penguins**....our story begins with a simple theme.

(The conductor raises their hands, begins to conduct, and is quickly interrupted)

WAIT!...(*Pondering*) No.....not a simple theme.....(*Pondering*) A medium kind of
Moderato theme.

(The conductor raises their hands, begins to conduct, and is quickly interrupted)

WAIT!... That's not it. Let's give this theme idea a bit more thought. (*Pondering*)

*(The conductor quickly and quietly motions for all the orchestra members to lean in close,
pantomimes whispering to them. Orchestra members give a clearly visible "Thumbs up" that they
understand what the Conductor wants. The Conductor then raises their hands and begins to
conduct meas. 7,8 and is quickly interrupted)*

Okay, Okay...I get the message...this really is a serious story...

I've got it.....we need a **BOLDER** theme. Yes, that would be better.

That's it...a **GRAND** theme. An **ANCIENT** theme of Honor, Glory, Heroic Knights,
and Dangerous Quests. A **BIG** and **BOISTEROUS** theme.

A theme **SOOOO GRAND**, It not only **SOUNDS** like it came from some old and
famous composer.....it sounds, (*Pondering*)....it sounds, (*Pondering*)...it sounds like it
was **STOLEN** from....**Wait!**...I mean **Borrowed** from an old, famous, dead composer.
Let's say...it was borrowed.....from....from....a composer who was born.... in the
year.....ahh.....ahh..... the year.....hmmm, the year 1813.

Let's have a big...big....**BIG theme** to begin our Quest. **A Big Grand Theme** as written
by an old dead composer who wrote.... reallylong, long.....loooooong, operas that last
5 hours and need two 30-minute breaks and an hour intermission for dinner.

And now for our grand theme of Honor, Glory, Heroic Knights, and Dangerous Quests.

*(Conductor raises their hands and conducts a theme from **Parsifal**)*

(Matter of factly) So....there you have it. The stage is set. Let our Quest begin....**The Preposterous Quest of Perceval and Parsifal, a Pair of Peculiar, Propitious, and Pleasantly Playful Penguins** *(With grand gestures)*....Let the **Waddling** begin.
(Conductor raises their hands and conducts at Letter A)

The Narrator: (Ms. 57 fermata)

After a rather long morning of waddling...Perceval and Parsifal have now found themselves at the castle of the Emperor Penguin. The Emperor Penguin proceeds to capture the attention of Perceval and Parsifal with the tale of Honor, Glory, Heroic Knights, and Danger that lies ahead on the quest for the Holy Grail.

(Puzzled) Holy Grail?..... **What!**..... They're Penguins!... What would they do with the Holy Grail? I'll have to think about this for a moment. *(Pondering)*...The Holy Grail.....The Holy Grail. Now....what would be like the Holy Grail to a **Pair of Peculiar, Propitious, and Pleasantly Playful Penguins?**

Well, at the moment, I'm not quite sure. So, you go ahead and listen to the music in the Court of the Emperor Penguin and I'll do some thinking on it.

(The Conductor raises their hands, and begins to conduct at Letter E.)

The Narrator at (Ms. 74 fermata)

HEY!**I've got it!**.....*(Pondering)* No, that's not it.....**I KNOW**
(Pondering) No, that's not it either. *(With wonder)* Then I saw it.....And you know..... it wasn't long before Perceval and Parsifal saw it too. *(Getting excited)* The water was starting to stir....*(with awe and gestures)* It was starting to stir and swirl about. The water was swirling so much so that the Emperor Penguin standing up on its one peg fin could be heard calling out in a loud voice *(very excitedly - a la Captain Ahab)*“She breaches! She Breaches!” Was his cry!...”

(Impassioned) Perceval and Parsifal began to shake and tremble and soon began to waddle and waddle and waddle as fast as they could and soon scurried and slipped and tumbled over each other as they headed down to the water.

It was no longer the search for the Holy Grail of ancient lore! Perceval, seeing the incredible sight in the water, turned to Parsifal and exclaimed in as loud of a voice that any Penguin can make...**Look Parsifal**....we have reached the end of our Quest....we've found it.... **WE'VE FOUND IT!**..... **WE'VE FOUND**.....*(dramatically)*.....**WE'VE FOUND**.....*(dramatically)*.....**THE HOLY....MACKEREL!**

(Conductor raises their hands, begins to conduct at Letter G.)

The Narrator, with the Orchestra shouts at (Ms. 107) - “**The End!**”

The Preposterous Quest

(of Perceval and Parsifal, a Pair of Peculiar, Propitious, and Pleasantly Playful Penguins)

Stephen Hill (ASCAP)

Narrator: First, a little background....a simple theme.

Simply Nar. **WAIT!** Not a simple theme. ...a Moderato theme.

Moderato Nar. **WAIT!** That's not it.... a bit more thought.

Whisper to Orchestra... Thumb up!

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
String Bass
Triangle
Wood Block

.....and Dangerous Quests.

Nar. **Ha! Ha!** ...a serious story

Majestically ♩ = 80

So...there you have it. The stage is set.....Let the waddling begin.

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
St. Bs.
Tri./W.B.

A Allegro $\text{♩} = 140$

Musical score for measures 15-20. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and St. Bs. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' with a quarter note equal to 140 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *mp* to *p*. Performance instructions include 'pizz' (pizzicato), 'arco' (arco), and 'Wood Block'.

Measures: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20

Musical score for measures 21-26. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and St. Bs. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamics range from *mp* to *p*. Performance instructions include 'arco' and 'pizz'.

Measures: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

Vln. I pizz

Vln. II pizz

Vla. pizz

Vc.

St. Bs.

Tri./W.B.

27 28 29 30 31 32

B

Vln. I arco *mf*

Vln. II arco *mf*

Vla. arco *mf*

Vc. *mp*

St. Bs. *mp*

Tri./W.B. 4/4

33 34 35 36 37 38

Vln. I *pizz.*
p

Vln. II *pizz.*
p

Vla. *pizz.*
p

Vc. *p*

St. Bs. *p*

Tri./W.B.

39 40 41 42 43 44

C

Vln. I Snap Fingers (L. Hand) *pizz.*
mp

Vln. II Snap Fingers (L. Hand) *pizz.*
mp

Vla. arco *mp*

Vc. arco *mp*

St. Bs. arco *mp*

Tri./W.B.

45 46 47 48 49 50

a tempo *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
St. Bs.
Tri./W.B.

63 64 65 66 67 68

p *p* *p* *p*

Tri. Tri.

PERUSAL SCORE

F *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *Divisi* *molto rit.*

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
St. Bs.
Tri./W.B.

69 70 71 72 73 74

pp *pp* *p* *p*

Tri. Tri.

PERUSAL SCORE

Hey!...I've got it!.....
The Holy Mackerel!

G

Musical score for measures 75-79. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., and Tri./W.B. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, *mp*, and *pizz.*. A large watermark 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

75 76 77 78 79

Musical score for measures 80-83. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., and Tri./W.B. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*. A large watermark 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

80 81 82 83

H

Musical score for measures 84-88. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (St. Bs.), along with Triangle/Woodblock (Tri./W.B.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a melodic line in the strings with dynamic markings of *mf* and *p*. A large watermark 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid on the score.

Measures 84, 85, 86, 87, 88

Musical score for measures 89-93. The score continues for the same string ensemble as above. The music features a melodic line in the strings with dynamic markings of *f* and *p*. A large watermark 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid on the score.

Measures 89, 90, 91, 92, 93