

*Commissioned by the Omaha Conservatory of Music*

# The Preposterous Quest

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



String Orchestra and Narrator  
(Grade 2-2.5)

Stephen Hill  
(ASCAP)

SARAHTIM Music Publishing





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# The Preposterous Quest

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

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## Instrumentation

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
String Bass  
Wood Block  
Triangle  
and  
Narrator

Duration - ca. 4:40

  
SARAHTIM Music Publishing  


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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. He studied composition with Philip Westin at Cerritos College (CA), W. Francis McBeth at Ouachita Baptist University (Arkansas), and Byong Kon Kim at California State University, Los Angeles. Stephen's studies with these composers connect him to a lineage that includes their teachers, Roy Harris, Ingolf Dahl, Clifton Williams, Bernard Rogers, Bernhard Heiden, and Howard Hanson. Stephen composes for the simple joy of it.

For over 40 years, Stephen taught K-12 instrumental music in the Private Christian School (Whittier Christian) and Public School (California High School) settings. Although semi-retired, Stephen continues to work with students by teaching 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 in La Habra, CA., where Stephen attends. When teaching full-time, he was primarily a "summer" composer. No longer teaching full-time, Stephen has the privilege of composing beyond just the summer months and publishes through his company, SARAHTIM — a title that comes from simply combining the names of his daughter, Sarah, and son, Timothy. (*Notes by Dr. John Burdett, Azusa Pacific University*)

**Permission to Copy Parts...** With a licensed and branded Master Set of Parts, you will have permission to print as many copies of a part as needed for your specific school, ensemble, or organization. Permission to copy does not apply to the Score. Additional scores will need to be purchased separately.

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

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want..." (Psalm 23)*

**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.

*(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.

*(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*)

*(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 have a big...big....**BIG theme** to begin our Quest. **A Big Grand Theme** as written by an old dead composer who wrote.... really ....long, long.....loooooong, operas that last 5 hours and needs 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*) 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.

*(Conductor raises their hands, 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 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 THE HOLY...MACKEREL!**

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

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

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# The Preposterous Quest

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

Stephen Hill (ASCAP)

Narrator: ...our story begins with a simple theme. **Simply** Nar. WAIT! Not a simple theme. ...a Moderato theme. **Moderato** Nar. WAIT! That's not it.... a bit more thought.

Violin I *p* *mp* (Whisper to Orchestra... Thumbs up!)

Violin II *p* *mp*

Viola *p*

Violoncello *p*

String Bass *p* *mp*

Triangle Wood Block

2 3 4 5 6

Nar. I get the point! ...a serious story. Quests. **Majestically**  $\text{♩} = 80$  So...there you have it. The stage is set.....Let the waddling begin.

Vln. I pizz *mp* *mf* *f*

Vln. II pizz *mp* *mf* *f*

Vla. pizz *mp* *mf* *f*

Vcl. pizz *mp* *mf* *f*

St. Bs. pizz *mp* *mf* *f*

Tri./ W.B.

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14



15 **Allegro** ♩ = 140

Vln. I pizz *mp* arco *p* pizz.

Vln. II pizz *mp* arco *p* pizz.

Vla. *mf* *p* pizz.

Vc. *mf* *p* pizz.

St. Bs. Pizz *mp* *p* pizz.

Tri./W.B. 4/4 Wood Block *p*

15 16 17 18 19 20

Vln. I *mp* arco

Vln. II *mp* arco

Vla. *mp* *p*

St. Bs. *p*

Tri./W.B. 21 22 23 24 25 26

Score for measures 27-32, featuring 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. The strings play a pizzicato (pizz) pattern.

Measures 27-32 are marked with measure numbers in boxes: 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

Score for measures 33-38, featuring 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. The strings play an arco (arco) pattern. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Measures 33-38 are marked with measure numbers in boxes: 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

Full Score for *The Preposterous Quest*, page 4.

The score is written for the following instruments:

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

Measures 39 through 50 are shown. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

Measure 39: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 40: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 41: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 42: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 43: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 44: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 45: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 46: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 47: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 48: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 49: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Measure 50: Vln. I and Vln. II play a sixteenth-note figure. Vc. and St. Bs. play a quarter-note figure. Tri./W.B. is silent.

Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Performance instructions include *pizz.* (pizzicato) and *arco* (arco).

Measure 45 includes the instruction "Snap Fingers (L. Hand)" for Vln. I and Vln. II.

52 arco

*mf*

arco

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

Tri./W.B.

51 52 53 54 55 56

After a long morning  
.....I'll do some  
thinking on it.

*molto rit.*

61 Andante  $\text{♩} = 80$  *rit.*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

Tri.

*p*

57 58 59 60 61 62

Score for measures 63 to 68. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., and Tri./W.B. The tempo markings are *a tempo*, *rit.*, *a tempo*, and *rit.*. The dynamic markings are *p* and *Tri.*. The measures are numbered 63, 64, 66, 67, and 68.

Score for measures 69 to 74. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., and Tri./W.B. The tempo markings are *a tempo*, *rit.*, *a tempo*, *Divisi*, and *molto rit.*. The dynamic markings are *pp*, *p*, and *Tri.*. The measures are numbered 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, and 74.

*The Preposterous Quest*

Full Score

7

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

**78** Allegro ♩ = 150

Vln. I *p* *pp* *mp*

Vln. II *pp* *mp*

Vla. *pp* *mp*

Vc. *pp* *pizz.*

St. Bs. *pp* *pizz.*

Tri./W.B. *p* *mp*

Tri. Triangle

**75** **76** **77** **78** **79**

Vln. I *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

St. Bs. *mf* *mp*

Tri./W.B. *mf*

**80** **81** **82** **83**

86

Score for measures 84-88, measures 86-88 are shown.

Instrument parts: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B.

Measure 86: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *mf*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 87: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *p*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 88: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *mf*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Score for measures 89-93.

Instrument parts: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B.

Measure 89: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *f*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 90: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *f*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 91: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *p*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 92: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *p*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Measure 93: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs. are marked *p*. Tri./W.B. is marked *arco*.

Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass parts, measures 98-102. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The dynamics are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The Violins I and II parts feature a melodic line with a crescendo from *mf* to *mp* in measure 98, followed by a series of eighth notes. The Viola part plays a similar melodic line. The Cello and Double Bass parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The Double Bass part has a *mf* dynamic in measure 98 and a *mp* dynamic in measure 99. The score is marked with a large 'Rehearsal' watermark.



103

Vln. I *f* *p* *pp* *f*

Vln. II *f* *p* *pp* *f*

Vla. *f* *p* *pp* *f*

Vc. *f* *p* *pp* *f*

St. Bs. *f* *p* *pp* *f*

Tri./W.B. *f* *p*

103 104 105 106

Vln. I pizz. *p* Shout: arco The End! *ff*

Vln. II pizz. *p* Shout: arco The End! *ff*

Vla. pizz. *p* Shout: arco The End! *ff*

Vc. pizz. *p* Shout: arco The End! *ff*

St. Bs. pizz. *p* Shout: arco The End! *ff*

Tri./W.B. *f* *p* *ff*

107 108 109 110 111