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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Instrumentation

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

Duration - ca. 4:40



www.stephenhillcomposer.com stephenhillmusic@icloud.com (562) 412-0906 <u>About the Work...</u> 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 reinterprets 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 parttime 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)

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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; 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.... reallylong, long.....looooong, 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!..."

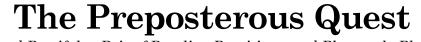
(Impassioned) Perceval and Parsifal began to shake and tremble and soon began to waddle and waddle and waddle as fast as they could and soon scurried and slipped and tumbled over each other as they headed down to the water.

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!"

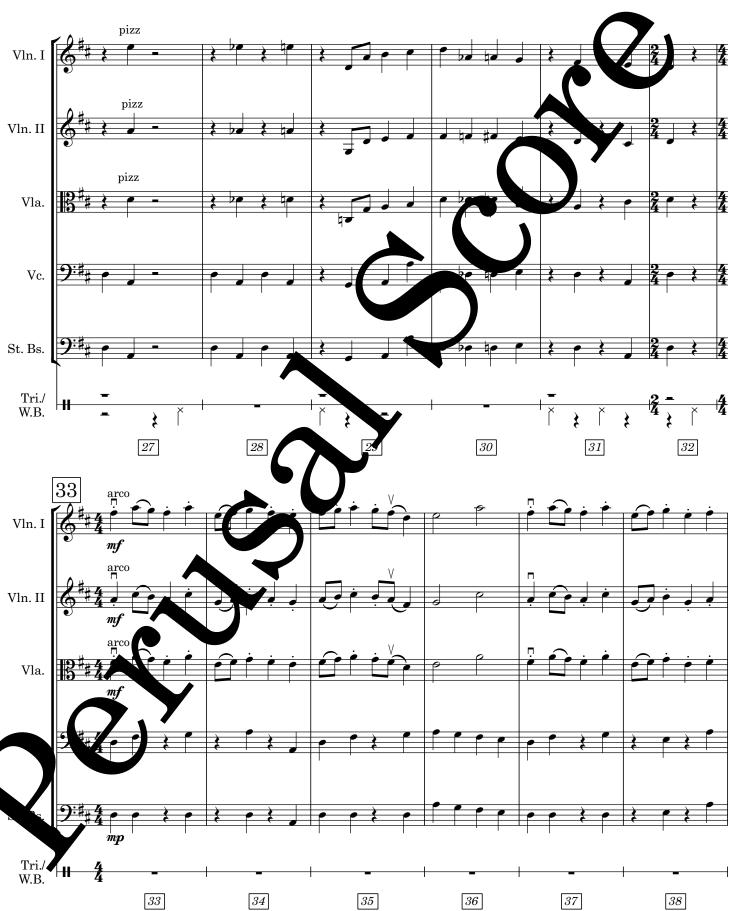
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The Preposterous Quest Full Score 3

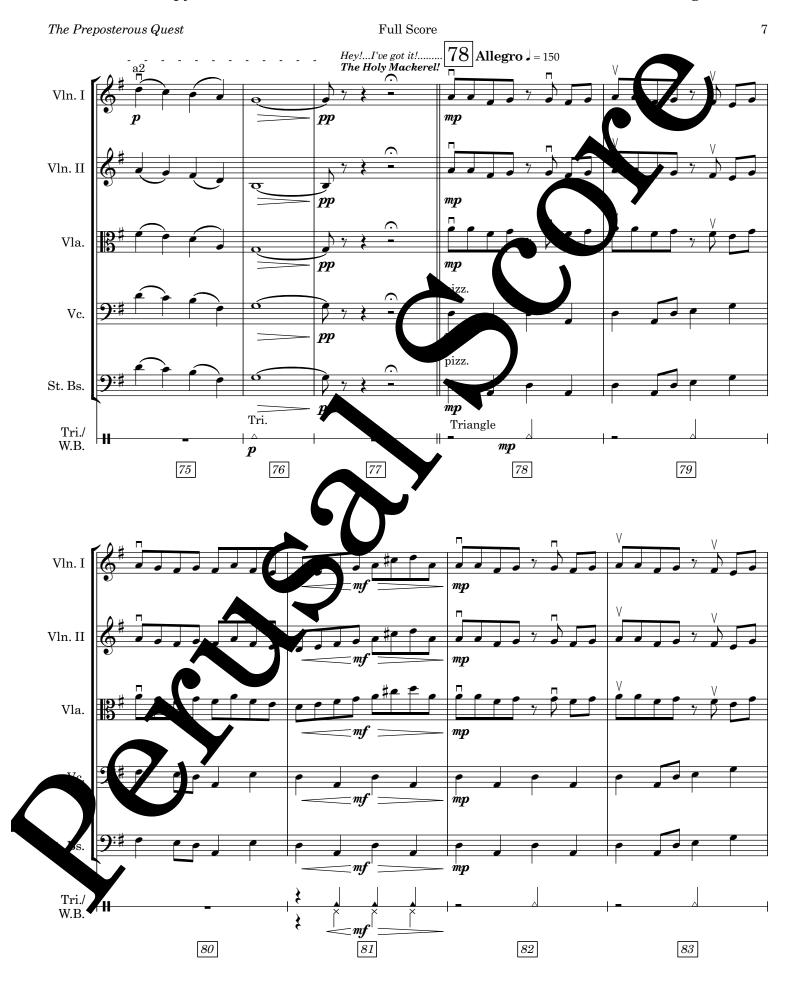




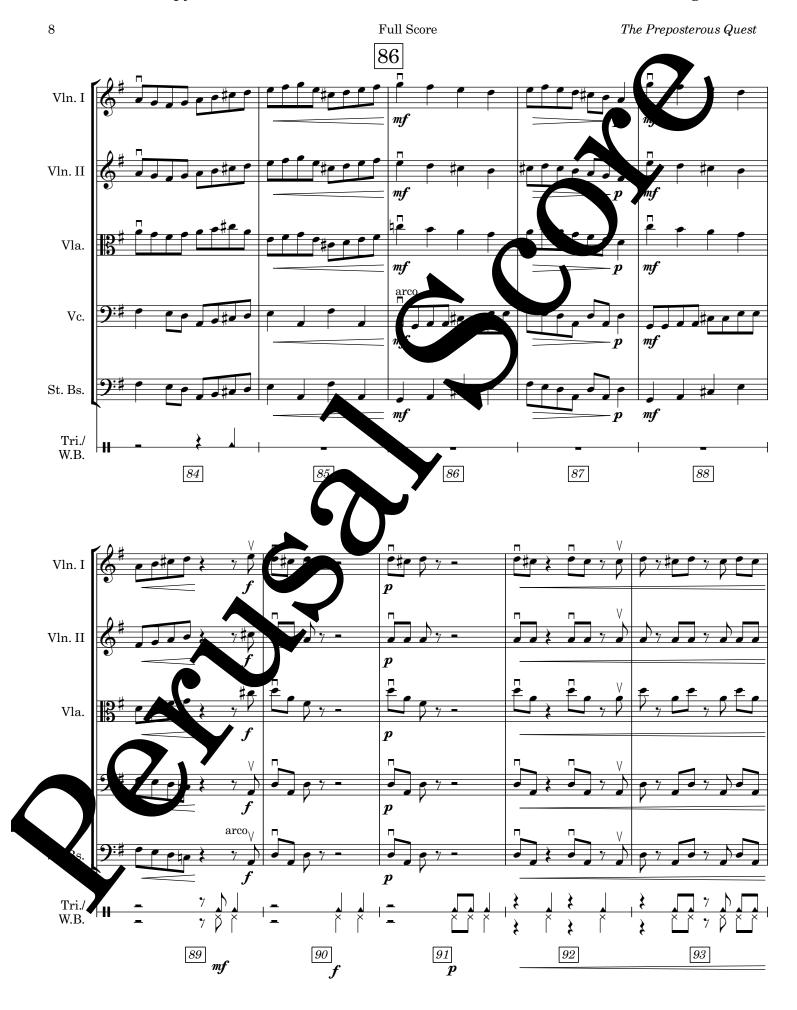




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