

Harmelodic Configurations

II. Idyll - The Eastern Sierras



Eastern Sierras along HWY 395, CA. (Photo by Stephen Hill)

Concert Band
(Grade 3-4)

Stephen Hill
(ASCAP)

SARAHTIM Music Publishing



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II. Idyll: The Eastern Sierras

Instrumentation

Piccolo
Flute 1-2
Oboe
Bb Clarinet 1-3
Bb Bass Clarinet
Bb Contra Bass Clarinet
Bassoon
Eb Alto Saxophone 1-2
Bb Tenor Saxophone
Eb Baritone Saxophone
Bb Trumpet 1-3 (Flugelhorn)
French Horn 1-4
Trombone 1-3
Euphonium
Tuba
String Bass
Timpani
Percussion
(Triangle, Wind Chimes, Cymbals, Gong)
Mallets
(Vibraphone, Glockenspiel)
Piano

Duration - ca. 5:30


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About the Work... (Notes by the composer and by Dr. John Burdett, Azusa Pacific University)

In the spring of 2006, influential music educator Gary Scudder asked if I would consider writing a piece for his band that somehow included the tones CBDAAG derived from the acronym CBDA (California Band Directors Association). The additional A and G were added as it was the 'Anniversary Golden', the 50th anniversary, of the organization's conference. The work began in late June 2006, with sketches of harmonic and melodic configurations of the tones. The entire work being performed today originated in this initial request.

The sketching continued while my wife and I were on our annual camping and fishing trip. Sketches were worked out in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, in a motel room in Missoula, Montana, and while fly fishing the Lochsa River in Idaho and at a campground at the base of Mt. Hood in Oregon. The actual writing took place in July and was finished in late August. Each movement reflects the musical influence of my teachers and the composers I was studying at the time.

Harmelodic Configurations is an illusion to composer Howard Hanson (1896-1981) and his book, *Harmonic Materials of Modern Music*. In the preface, Hanson writes, "If consistency of harmonic-melodic expression is important in musical creation, this theory should bear the most intensive study, for it sets up a basis for the logical expansion of tonal ideas once the germinating concept has been decided upon in the mind of the composer." For the title, I combined the two words harmonic and melodic into one made-up word, **Harmelodic**. By adding the word, configuration (noun - an arrangement of parts or elements; "the outcome depends on the configuration of influences at the time"), I completed the concept in the "mind of the composer" as Hanson proposed.

I. Fanfare and Canon (Con Slancio)

The term "Con Slancio" (Italian) translates to "with vehemence" or "impetuously." It is sometimes written as "islancio" for the sake of euphony, according to the *Dictionary of Musical Terms* (1895 Edition) by Dr. Theo Baker.

I first encountered the term "slancio" in the music of John Barnes Chance, who employs it in several of his works, including **Blue Lake Overture** and **Symphony No. 2.** During my studies with Francis McBeth at Ouachita Baptist University, he and Band Director Marvin Lawson shared stories about their classmate, John Barnes Chance, from their time at the University of Texas, where they studied with Clifton Williams.

The commissioned work is based specifically on the tones CBDAAG. The first movement opens with a fanfare that firmly establishes this series of notes. The canon then passes the tones throughout the brass section and the entire ensemble. In contrast to the aggressive opening, the first movement concludes with a cascading interpretation of the tone row, leading seamlessly into the quiet and peaceful second movement.

II. Idyll: The Eastern Sierras (Reflectively, with Ebb and Flow)

This piece musically reflects my "Spring Break" trips to the Eastern Sierras for a bit of fly fishing. The Eastern Sierras are a majestic mountain range located in the heart of California. The opening "Quintal" chord and the pulsing timpani part are inspired by Howard Hanson's "Lament for Beowulf."

III. Sturm and Drang: Angst (Pesante, Slancio)

Sturm und Drang, which translates from German to "storm and stress," refers to a style of composition that conveys emotions such as stress, fear, horror, and anxiety. This style is typically associated with German music from the Romantic era. This movement reflects the significant influence my composition teacher, Dr. Byong Kon Kim, had on me during my graduate studies at California State University, Los Angeles.

IV. Valse: Political Circus (Seriously, but not too seriously)

Valse: Political Circus is intended as a witty musical commentary. This movement blends the musical influences of *La Valse* by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) with the middle waltz section of *Blue Lake Overture* by John Barnes Chance.

V. Toccata: Driving the 5 (With Drama, Faster)

The phrases "Take the 5," "Driving the 5," and "Get on the 5," among others, are commonly understood by those who drive in California. This movement begins with the gentle sounds of wind chimes. I often hear the soft chiming of the small wind chimes that my wife placed in the patio breezeway whenever the breeze picks up. This gentle sound soon transforms into a loud cacophony, signaling that the day has begun and it's time to get on the 5 to dash to your destination. Whether heading North or South, you'll encounter the hectic driving habits of Californians weaving in and out of lanes while "Driving the 5." The final part reflects the frantic effort it takes to change lanes in time to catch your exit off the 5.

VI. Elegy: Thank you, Howard Hanson (1896-1981) (Reflectively)

Howard Hanson, a native of Nebraska and the first Director of the Eastman School of Music, began teaching at the age of 19 at the College of the Pacific in San Jose, California. In the early 1970s, I discovered a copy of "Song of Democracy" in the piano bench of our family piano. At the time, I was not a piano player, I struggled to play the melodies and harmonies. Nevertheless, the piece left a strong impression on me. I feel fortunate to have been exposed to the musical influence of Howard Hanson through my teacher, Francis McBeth, who was one of Hanson's students.

VII. Fanfare, Canon, and Flourishes (Con Slancio, Heroic)

The seventh and final movement is modeled after the structure used in Janáček's Sinfonietta. It begins by restating the opening fanfare and canon from the first movement before progressing into an extended flourish based on the tones C, B, D, A, A, and G. This movement showcases bravura and culminates in a grand cadence in G Major.

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)*

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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)

[illegible]

Rehearsal Score

A Tempo poco rit. A Tempo

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cb. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1,2

Hn. 3,4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tba.

St. Bas.

mp.

Tri., Cym.
W.Dr., Gong

Vib.

Pno.

ten.

ppp

a2

p

mp

1st Hn

3

2

4

4

4

3

2

4

4

3

2

4

4

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

4

poco rit. A Tempo

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cb. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1,2

Hn. 3,4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tba.

St. Bass

mp.

Tri. Cym.
W.C., Gong

Vib.

Pno.

Solo

mp

mp³

ppp

mf

p

pp

ten.

a2

Flugelhorn Solo

31

[illegible]

37

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cb. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tba.

St. Bass

Piano

Tri., Cym., W.C., Gong

Vib.

Pno.

Flugelhorn Solo

p

mp

mp

mp

ppp

ppp

mp

58

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cb. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1,2

Hn. 3,4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tba.

St. Bass

Comp.

Tri. Cym.
W.Chr. Gong

Bells

Vc.

Pno.

59

60

61

62

63

64

65

10

67

Picc. *mp*

Fl. 1 *mp* *mf*

Fl. 2 *mp*

Ob.

Cl. 1 *mp* Solo *mf* *p*

Cl. 2 *mp* *p*

Cl. 3 *mp* *p*

B. Cl. *mp* *p*

Cb. Cl. *mp* *p*

Bsn. *mp*

Alto Sax. 1 *p*

Alto Sax. 2 *p*

Ten. Sax. *p*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *p*

Tpt. 1 Solo Trpt. *mf* *mp*

Tpt. 2 *mp* Flugelhorn Solo *p*

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1,2

Hn. 3,4

Tbn. 1 *mp* *p*

Tbn. 2 *mp* *p*

Tbn. 3 *mp* *p*

Euph. *mp* *p*

Tba. *mp* *p*

St. Bass *mp* *p*

Imp. *pp*

Tri. Cym. W.C., Gong

Vib. *mf*

Pno. *mp*

66

67

68

69

70

71

76

12

12

Picc.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cb. Cl.

Bsn.

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1,2

Hn. 3,4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph.

Tba.

St. Bass

Imp.

Tri. Sym.

W. Ch. Gong

Drums

Vib.

Pno.

77

78

79

80

81

82