

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



The Preposterous Quest

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

Instrumentation

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

Duration - ca. 4:40


SARAHTIM Music Publishing


www.stephenhillcomposer.com

stephenhillmusic@icloud.com

(562) 412-0906

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 in 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 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 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*)

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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)

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.....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

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

String Bass

Triangle Wood Block

2 3 4 5 6

Nar. I get the point! ...a serious story.

And Dangerous Quests.

Majestically ♩ = 80

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

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcllo

St. Bs.

Tri./ W.B.

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

15 **Allegro** ♩ = 140

Vln. I pizz. *mp* arco pizz.

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

Vla. *mf* pizz. *p*

Vc. *mf* pizz. *p*

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

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

Vln. I *mp* arco

Vln. II arco *mp*

Vla. arco *mp* *p*

Vc. *p*

St. Bs. *p*

Tri./W.B. *p*

Score for measures 27-32. Instruments: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B. Performance instructions: pizz.

27 28 29 30 31 32

Score for measures 33-38. Instruments: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B. Performance instructions: arco, mf, mp.

33 34 35 36 37 38

Score for measures 39-44. Instruments: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B.

Measures 39-41: Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. play a melodic line with *pizz.* and *p* markings. Vc. and St. Bs. play a rhythmic accompaniment with *p* marking.

Measures 42-44: Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. play a melodic line with *pizz.* and *p* markings. Vc. and St. Bs. play a rhythmic accompaniment with *p* marking. Tri./W.B. has rests.

Measure numbers: 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44.

Score for measures 45-50. Instruments: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., St. Bs., Tri./W.B.

Measures 45-47: Vln. I and Vln. II play *Snap Fingers (L. Hand)* with *mp* marking. Vla., Vc., and St. Bs. play a melodic line with *arco* and *mp* markings.

Measures 48-50: Vln. I and Vln. II play a melodic line with *pizz.* and *mp* markings. Vla., Vc., and St. Bs. play a melodic line with *arco* and *mp* markings.

Measure numbers: 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50.

52 arco

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

St. Bs.

Tri./W.B.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

51 52 53 54 55 56

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

molto rit.

61 Andante ♩ = 80 rit. . . .

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

St. Bs.

Tri./W.B.

p

p

p

p

p

p

Tri.
p

57 58 59 60 61 62

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

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

St. Bs.

Tri./W.B.

p *p* *Tri.*

63 64 66 67 68

69 *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *Divisi* *molto rit.*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

St. Bs.

Tri./W.B.

pp *pp* *p* *Tri.* *Tri.*

69 70 71 72 73 74

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

78 Allegro ♩ = 150

75 76 77 78 79

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

80 81 82 83

Vln. I *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

St. Bs. *mf* *mp*

Tri./W.B. *mf*

86

84 85 86 87 88

Vln. I *mf* *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *p* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *p* *mf*

St. Bs. *mf* *p* *mf*

Tri./W.B.

89 90 91 92 93

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

St. Bs. *f* *p*

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

95

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf* pizz

St. Bs. *mf* pizz

Tri./W.B.

94 95 96 97

Vln. I *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

St. Bs. *mf* *mp*

Tri./W.B. *mf* *mp*

98 99 100 101 102

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*

107 *f*

108

109 *p*

110 *ff*

111

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*

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

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