

Tilting at Windmills for Concert Band

Composed May 29—August 10, 2015

Duration: about 9 minutes

In May 2015, Hugh Partridge, music director of the Triangle Youth Philharmonic here in Raleigh, North Carolina, asked me to write a piece with the theme of Don Quixote for performance in the fall. The maximum duration was to be ten minutes, and the instrumentation was for all of his musicians, minus the strings. (This was because they were playing a string orchestra piece, and he wanted everyone to have the chance to play.)

To allow for more chances of performance, I have this edition scored for a more standard concert band. The instrumentation is piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 alto saxophones, tenor and baritone saxophones, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 trombones, bass trombone, euphonium, tuba, timpani, glockenspiel, and castanets.

The programmatic aspects of this piece are rather general. The first movement is a relatively gentle and lyrical movement, reflecting the portrayal of Dulcinea (in the illusory version perceived by Don Quixote). The second movement, although clearly written by a composer whose heritage is far from the Iberian tradition, shows some Spanish influences, and is based on the Sevillana dance form.

In general I do not compose for unpitched percussion, but I made an exception in this piece in order to include two percussionists in addition to the timpanist. It works pretty well, and I might allow myself more excursions into this in the future; but do not expect a trap set in any of my concerts.

Performance notes

Accidentals apply through the measure and not beyond, and do not apply to octaves. The score is at concert pitch. If a conductor requires a transposed score, I can provide a special edition, but in general all my larger scores are at concert pitch. Updated versions of score and parts are posted on my website's music page.

Bill Robinson

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