Conductor’s Score

James M. Stephenson

Celebration Overture
for chamber orchestra

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Score

Celebration Overture

by James M. Stephenson

Instrumentation:
*2222 - 2210 - t - pf - hp - str

(note: though not preferred, trombone, flute 2 and harp can be optional)

Duration: 10 min.

Program Notes:
[Original program notes were lost, so these notes were written over 10 years later]

In the fall of 1999, I was contacted by my good friend Edward Benyas, with a request to compose a new work to celebrate the 48th anniversary of the Chicago Chamber Orchestra, for a concert he would be conducting. There are three things that pop up in my head when I think back to his requests during our phone conversation.

1) The piece needed to be completed in roughly 2 weeks,
2) please feature the timpanist, and
3) really? a piece to celebrate the 48th anniversary?

The first request needs very little explanation - it was hard and furious work, but was completed on time. I have very fond memories of sitting on the porch of a cabin in Northern Michigan, overlooking a lake, while writing this work.

The second request was amusing to me. The timpanist for the concert was also a mutual friend, and it was already known that in order to play the concert, he would be driving hours from one gig, unloading timpani, then driving elsewhere, playing another job, then driving back to the first, playing, reloading timpani, etc... In other words, could I please reward him with a good part for all of the extra hassles he'd be going through just to play the concert.

The 3rd request, once I got over the initial why's and really's, presented a rather fun challenge and inspiration. Puns and symbolism have always been a part of my "game" when writing music, and so I took advantage of whatever I could with the number 48 (or 48th) when composing this piece. For example, the piece opens with a flurry of 40 eighth-notes in the strings (I was going to go for 48 notes, but it didn't work, so I settled for forty 8th notes instead). Additionally, the harmonic structure of the piece is almost entirely built upon a minor 7th chord; this is because when one counts up 4 semi-tones from the root of the chord, and then another 8, the resulting notes spell out most of a minor 7th chord. For example: C up to E-flat, and then again up to B-flat. Lastly, the one of the main themes is a very catchy tune written to the time signature of 4/8.

Of course, all of the games and symbolism are fruitless unless the piece stands on its own musically. This is first and foremost with every piece I write, and I am pleased to say that this piece was a joy and honor to compose, and to present to the Chicago Chamber Orchestra for its premiere that September of 1999.

I was unable to make the premiere concert, but I am told that the timpanist was in rare form when performing the piece!

On March 4-5, 2011, the piece was performed by the Lake Forest Symphony, under the direction of Alan Heatherington, as an "honorary re-dedication" to the city of Lake Forest, IL, in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the city.

Jim Stephenson, August, 2010
Celebration Overture

Originally composed for Edward Benyas and the Chicago Chamber Orchestra celebrating their 48th season.

Rededicated to the City of Lake Forest, Il., in honor of its 150th anniversary; performed by Alan Heatherington and the Lake Forest Symphony, March 4-5, 2011.

Allegro molto con brio \( \frac{d}{4} = 120 \)

James Stephenson, III

Piccolo
(Fl. II)

Flutes I, II

Oboe I, II

A/B Clar. I, II

Bassoons I, II

Contrabass

Horns I, II

Trombone

Clar. I, II

Flutes I, II

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Harp

Timpani

Piano

\( f \) off the string

\( \text{to Fl. II} \)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)

\( f \) (on)
Celebration Overture / JMS III

Hl. I, II

Ob. I, II

A Clar. I, II

Bsn. I, II

Hn. I, II

Tpts. I, II

Tbn.

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. I

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Play if no Harp

Unis.

Unis.

Unis.

pp

mp

p

(C, E, A)

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp
Celebration Overture / JMS III
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- Fl. I, II
- Ob. I, II
- B. Clar. I, II
- Bn. I, II
- Hn. I, II
- Tpts. I, II
- Timp.
- Vln. I
- Vln. II
- Vla.
- Cello
- C-bass
- Pno.
- Harp

Face if only one flute, go to picc. (this part played by Ob. I)

Ob. I play if only one Flute

Cl. I

Bn. I play if no Timp.

Tpt. I
Solo

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

(Vln. I)

mf

Vln. I

Vln. II

Div.

Vla.

Div.

Cello

mf

C-bass

mf Solo.
Allegretto, with ease $\frac{3}{4}$
Picc. (Fl. II)
Fl. I, II
Obo. I, II
B-Clar. I, II
Bass. I, II
Hrs. I, II
Tpts. I, II
Trbn.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Cello
C-bass

Pno.
Harp

Fl. I plays if there are two flutes

Ob. 1 plays if only one Flute

Bass. I play if no Trbn.

Fl. I plays if there are two flutes

P secco

Unis.

mf secco

Unis.

mf secco

Unis.

mf secco

mf pizz.

mf

mf

mf

mf
Celebration Overture / JMS III
1. Andante moderato

Fl. I, II

Obo I, II

B. Clar. I, II

Bn. I, II

Hrns. I, II

Tpns. I, II

Tuba

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Celebration Overture / JMS III

Fl. I, II

Obo. I, II

B. Clar. I, II

Bn. I, II

Hrns. I, II

Tpns. I, II

Tuba

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.
Fl. I play triplets if no Fl. II

Celebration Overture / JMS III
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P.

F. I, II

Ob. I, II

A Clar. I, II

Bssns. I, II

Hrns. I, II

Tpts. I, II

Bass.

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

Vln. I

Vl. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass
Allegro molto con brio
Celebration Overture / JMS III

Vln. I
- f off the string
- ff (F♯)

Vln. II
- f off the string
- Unis.

Vla.
- f off the string
- Div.

Cello
- f off the string
- C-bass

Timp.
- fp

Harp
- (A Major gliss.)

Pno.
- ff

Tpts. I, II
- fp
- a2
- sfz

A Clar. I, II
- fp
- sfz

Vln. II
- fp

Ob. I, II
- fp

Trbn.
- fp

C-bass
- fp

Horns. I, II
- sfz

Bssns. I, II
- sfz

Viol.
- sfz (con)

Bssns. I, II
- sfz

Perc. (Fl. II)
- sfz

To Fl. II

(A Major gliss.)

ff (F♯)
Celebration Overture / JMS III
Celebration Overture / JMS III
Fl. I, II
Ob. I, II
A Clar. I, II
Bbsn. I, II
Hrns. I, II
Tpts. I, II
Trbn.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Cello
C-bass
Pno.
Harp

(A Major gliss.) (D#, C#, G#)

(D#, C#, G#)
Fl. I, II

Ob. I, II

A Clar. I, II

Bns. I, II

Hrn. I, II

Tpts. I, II

Tbn.

Timp.

Pno.

Harp

(D, Bb, F, G)

(Cb, Bn, Fb)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

C-bass

Play if no Harp

Play if no Piano

Unis.

Unis.

Unis.

Unis.

Div.

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp