



Divertimento for Winds & Percussion (1993)

Grade 5 • 12:00

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PROGRAM NOTES

Divertimento for Strings, Winds, and Percussion was commissioned by the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra and composed in the summer of 1993. The piece, in four movements, is a tribute to three American composers, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, and George Gershwin who were all intrigued by jazz and incorporated elements of the idiom into their music. The use of the musical notes c (Copland), b (Bernstein), and g (Gershwin) form the nucleus for much of the thematic as well as harmonic material. The composition uses jazz elements as the basis for a classical composition. Extensive use is made of the flatted third, fifth, and seventh from the blues scale both in thematic and harmonic structures. Written meters are often altered by grouping notes in a manner that displaces normal agogic accents. Typical is the eighth note grouping of 3 + 3 + 2 in a 4/4 measure. The interval of the seventh derived from the C-B note relationship is a prominent unifying element in each movement. The third movement, Remembrance, strays from extensive use of the blues scale, idiomatic jazz rhythms, and extensive use of the c, b, and g note combinations. Here, the intention is to contrast the other three movements (movement three is in the key of G, all others are in C) but continue the use of idiomatic jazz elements in the form of a jazz ballad. The Divertimento for Strings, Winds, and Percussion was later transcribed by the composer in December of 1993, retitled Divertimento for Winds and Percussion and performed by the Iowa State University Wind Ensemble at the College Band Directors National Association North Central Convention in Omaha. The work immediately drew national attention and selected to be used at the prestigious Cincinnati College Conservatory Conducting Symposium during the summer of 1994. The work is recorded and released by the North Texas Wind Symphony on the Klavier label (Klavier KCD-11070).

INSTRUMENTATION

Winds: Piccolo, Flute 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, English Horn, Bassoon 1 & 2, Eb Clarinet, Bb Clarinet 1 - 3, Bb Bass Clarinet, Bb Contrabass Clarinet, Eb Alto Saxophones 1 & 2, Bb Tenor Saxophone, Eb Baritone Saxophone

Brass: Bb Trumpet 1 - 3, F Horn 1 - 4, Trombone 1 - 3, Euphonium, Tuba

Percussion: Timpani, Percussion 1 (snare drum, bass drum, wood block, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, temple blocks), Percussion 2 (crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, 4 toms, triangle, splash cymbal, tambourine, sandpaper blocks, vibra-slap), Percussion 3 (4 toms, suspended cymbal, xylophone, chimes), Celesta & Orchestra Bells

Strings: Harp