RICE UNIVERSITY

Abstract No. 1 for Orchestra

by

Karl Eric Blench

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Master of Music

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Pierre Jalbert, Chair, Associate Professor
Composition/Theory

[Signatures]

Arthur Gottschalk, Professor
Composition/Theory

[Signatures]

Shih-Hui Chen, Assistant Professor
Composition/Theory

HOUSTON, TX

APRIL 2007
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ABSTRACT

Abstract No. 1 for Orchestra

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Abstract No. 1 is motivated by the study of orchestral colors and solo instrumental timbres. The work is based on the idea of a bell. The first and last sounds of the piece are bell sounds and the large scale formal plan is based on the word “bell.” There are two divisions of the piece, a slow lyrical section, and a fast aggressive section. The first part explores bell sounds, various soloistic colors, and the sonorous properties of tone clusters.

The second part focuses on the sound of drums and the study of articulations. The timpani, tom-toms, and temple blocks are featured playing a melody based upon themes from the opening. Following the percussive opening the brass enter stating a three note motive that the percussion lines are based on. The development focuses on the opening timpani line, this time in the winds, strings, and brass. These melodic fragments are then finally set against the opening theme that leads to a brief return of the brass three note motives, which proceeds directly to the coda.
Instrumentation

3 Flutes (3 doubles Piccolo)
  2 Oboes
3 Clarinets in B♭ (3 doubles Clarinet in E♭)
  2 Bassoons
  Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
2 Tenor Trombones
  Bass Trombone
  Tuba

Timpani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percussion 1</th>
<th>Percussion 2</th>
<th>Percussion 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell (B)</td>
<td>Vibraphone</td>
<td>Tom-toms (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suspended Cymbal</td>
<td>Templeblocks (5)</td>
<td>Brake Drum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chimes</td>
<td>Woodblock</td>
<td>Snare Drum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bass Drum</td>
<td>Triangle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tam-tam</td>
<td>Large/Deep Suspended Cymbal</td>
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Harp

Strings

Performance Notes

Mutes for the brass should be made of metal rather than stone lined straight mutes.
Duration-ca. 8 minutes