RICE UNIVERSITY

The Four Winds for Orchestra

by

Luke Carlson

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

Master of Music

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ABSTRACT

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It is my intent to portray the “Four Winds” in an abstract way, painting a musical impression in each movement. To facilitate this, I am treating each wind as a unique character and featuring one of the four families of orchestral instruments in each movement. The first, entitled “Squall,” is brisk and energetic, like a coastal breeze blowing from the West. It is represented by the string section which soars in dense clouds of pitch clusters. “Zephyr” is calm and light, like a cold and bitter Northern wind. The percussion propels the motion in a subtle and delicate fashion. The third wind is a warm, sweltering Southern wind, featuring richly orchestrated woodwind chorales; it is entitled “Sirocco,” after the hot, dusty and humid Saharan wind. “Cyclone” is the final wind that blows from the East. Its mood is unrelenting, fierce and overpowering; it features the brass as apocalyptic messengers.
Instrumentation

3 Flutes
  Fl. 1 doubles Alto flute
  Fl. 3 doubles Piccolo
3 Oboes
3 Clarinets in B♭
  1 Bass Clarinet
3 Bassoons
  Bass. 3 doubles Contrabassoon
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
2 Tenor Trombones
1 Bass Trombone
  Tuba
  Timpani
Percussion:

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<th>Percussion 2:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Slapstick</td>
<td>Snare Drum</td>
<td>Marimba</td>
<td>Small Bass Drum</td>
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<td>6 Tom Toms</td>
<td>Suspended Cymbal</td>
<td>Large Bass Drum</td>
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<td>Vibraphone</td>
<td>Tam Tam</td>
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Piano
Celesta
Harp
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Performance Notes

The gesture on the timpani (Mvt. III) is achieved by placing a cymbal on the drum head, as shown in the illustration.

Program Notes

"The Four Winds" takes its title from the Bible. They are mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments: from the Old Testament, Ezekiel 37:9, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." And from the New Testament, Revelation 7:1, "I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree." These "winds" are physical and spiritual; constructive and destructive; literal and figurative. They refer both to giving life and causing death and it is this mysterious dichotomy, as well as the wondrous imagery of the winds, that serves as the inspiration for this music.

It is my intent to portray these "Four Winds" in an abstract way, painting a musical impression in each movement. To facilitate this, I am treating each wind as a unique character unto itself and featuring one of the four families of orchestral instruments in each movement. The first, entitled "Squall," is brisk and energetic, like a sudden coastal breeze blowing from the West. It is represented by the string section which soars in dense, but not overly dissonant, clouds of pitch clusters. "Zephyr," the second movement, is calm and light, like a cold and bitter Northern wind. The percussion propels the motion in a subtle and delicate fashion. The third wind is a warm, sweltering Southern wind, featuring richly orchestrated woodwind chorales; it is entitled "Sirocco," after the hot, dusty and humid Saharan wind. "Cyclone" is the final wind that blows from the East. Its mood is unrelenting, fierce and overpowering; it features the brass as apocalyptic messengers.

Luke Carlson
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The Four Winds

I. Squall

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II. Zephyr

Coldly ($\text{\textbf{\textit{\red{\textbf{j}}}} = \text{c. 46}}$)

- 3 Flutes
- 2 Oboes
- 2 Clarinets in B♭
- Bass Clarinet
- 3 Bassoons
- 4 Horns in F
- 3 Trombones
- 3 Trumpets in C
- 9 Trombones
- Tube
- Timpani
- Vibraphone
- Marimba
- Percussion
- Harp
- Piano
- Violin I
- Violin II
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass

*Note: The notation includes various dynamics, articulations, and markings specific to the composition.
Warmly \( \dot{\text{j}} \approx c. 60 \)

- 3 Flutes
- 3 Oboes
- 2 Clarinets in Bb
- 2 Bass Clarinets
- 2 Bassoons
- 2 Horns in F
- 3 Trumpets in C
- 3 Trombones
- Tuba
- Timpani

Vibraphone

Marimba

Percussion

Nay

Viola I

Viola II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass
IV. Cyclone

Furiously \( \left( \frac{\text{\textendash}}{} \right) \approx c. 144 \)

*All gliss. should be played as written, not as port.*
accel. Tempo I (\( \frac{4}{4} \) c. 144)