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Upstream/About Two Miles

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Upstream/About Two Miles

for

Large Orchestra

Commissioned by the Schuylkill Symphony Orchestra
Donald Spieth, Conductor

Supported by a grant from the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo
Flute
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in Bb
2 Bassoons
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in Bb
2 Tenor Trombones
1 Bass Trombone
1 Tuba
Drum Set
3 Percussion
Electric Guitar (alt.: Harp or Synthesizer)
Bass Guitar (alt.: Synthesizer)
Pianoforte
Strings

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PERFORMANCE NOTES

The score is in C. All instruments are notated at sounding pitch except for the piccolo which sounds an octave higher than written. The contrabasses and bass guitar sound an octave lower than written.

The Drum Set includes bass drum, high and low tom-toms, snare drum, hi-hat, ride cymbal, sizzle cymbal, crash cymbal, and cowbell.

Percussion 1 plays vibes and toy piano (if no toy piano is available the toy piano part can be played on vibes with metal mallets).

Percussion 2 plays ride cymbal, triangle, tambourine, cowbell, and woodblock

Percussion 3 plays high bongo, high tom-tom, shaker, and timpani (D, A, G)

+ indicates left hand pizzicato for players and applies only to the note marked.

+ for horn players indicates hand-muting and applies only to the note marked.

H indicates Haput-Stimme or primary voice. It is cancelled by a bracket.

N indicates Neben-Stimme or secondary voice. It is cancelled by a bracket.

It is important for the success of the piece that some of the layers of instrumentation recede into the background on occasion. For instance, the toy piano, woodwind, and horn riffs in the first section should remain under the trombone trumpets, and high strings when they enter starting at letter C. They will begin to re-emerge naturally at F. A similar process occurs in the last section between letters O and Q. I believe that all this will happen if the dynamics indicated are followed; it may mean subverting the natural tendency for those playing the repetitive licks to get loud as the rest of the ensemble enters and crescendos. Those climactic crescendos for the repetitive parts are marked. Of course, the conductor should use her/his good judgment in balancing the primary, secondary, and background voices at any given moment. Also note that it is important to have the ostinato line in the bass in the outer sections always present enough to provide counterpoint to the primary voices.