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BATTLE-PIECES.

for SATB chorus and string orchestra

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Jonathan Santore

Instrumentation

SATB chorus

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Program Note

When I was asked to write a piece for the New Hampshire Master Chorale commemorating the end of the Civil War, I found myself stymied at first. While this is a topic that resonates strongly with me, I felt that I'd already written works for the NHMC that explored much of the emotional territory I associate with that conflict. Then the NHMC's music director, Dan Perkins, mentioned a text he was interested in having me set—Herman Melville's poem "Shiloh."

"Shiloh" comes from Melville's book of poetry about the Civil War, *Battle-Pieces*. Although Melville's sympathy for the Union cause is plain from the outset, many of the poems in the book that struck me powerfully—as strange, remote, almost forbidding—are written from what I came to think of as a "God's-eye" perspective on the war. They blame the tragedies of battle on horrible decisions by human beings with free will on both sides of the conflict—human beings usually far distant from the battlefields where so many young men died.

I took the final stanza of an early poem in Melville's book, "The Conflict of Convictions," as the epigraph for my settings.

BATTLE-PIECES.

Herman Melville

YEA, AND NAY—
EACH HATH HIS SAY;
BUT GOD HE KEEPS THE MIDDLE WAY.
NONE WAS BY
WHEN HE SPREAD THE SKY;
WISDOM IS VAIN, AND PROPHECY.

Jonathan Santore

I. THE PORTENT. (1859.)

Accusingly (♩ = 60) (Tempo I)

(SATB tacet until m.9)

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass. The second system includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins with a dynamic of *ff* (fortissimo) and includes various articulations such as accents and slurs. The Violin I part features a prominent solo with triplets and a *ff* dynamic. The other instruments provide harmonic support with various dynamics including *ff*, *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *sub. ff* (sub-fortissimo). A large diagonal watermark reading "REVIEW COPY ONLY DO NOT DUPLICATE" is overlaid across the center of the page.

II. BALL'S BLUFF. A REVERIE. (OCTOBER, 1861.)

Steadily (♩ = 88)

27

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

D.B. *mp*

32

Mezzo *mf*

One noon day, at my win - dow in the town,

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mp*

D.B. *mf* *mp*

Battle-Pieces

rall. ----- (♩ = 69)

mp

64

Mezzo

march-ing feet Found pause at last by cliffs Po-to-mac cleft; Wake-ful I mused, while in the

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

rall. ----- (♩ = 69)

p

p

p

p

p

rall. ----- a tempo

69

Mezzo

street Far foot-falls died a-way till none were left.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

rall. ----- a tempo

pp

pp

III. SHILOH.
A REQUIEM.
(APRIL, 1862.)

Radiantly (♩ = 60)

73

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

ff

pp

(pp)

Detailed description: This system contains measures 73 and 74. The Vln. II part has a whole rest in measure 73 and a quarter note in measure 74. The Vla. part features a series of eighth notes with triplets in measures 73 and 74. The Vc. part has a whole rest in measure 73 and a whole note in measure 74. The D.B. part has a whole rest in measure 73 and a whole note in measure 74. Dynamics include ff and pp.

75

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

8va

ff

Detailed description: This system contains measures 75 and 76. The Vln. I part has a whole rest in measure 75 and a quarter note in measure 76. The Vln. II part has eighth notes with triplets in measures 75 and 76. The Vla. part has eighth notes with triplets in measures 75 and 76. Dynamics include ff and 8va.

76

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

8va

Detailed description: This system contains measures 76 and 77. The Vln. I part has eighth notes with triplets in measures 76 and 77. The Vln. II part has eighth notes with triplets in measures 76 and 77. The Vla. part has eighth notes with triplets in measures 76 and 77. Dynamics include 8va.

(8^{va})

77

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

78

S

A

T

B

mp

mf

Skim-ming light-ly, — wheel-ing still, The swal-lows fly low

mp

mf

Skim-ming light-ly, — wheel-ing still, The swal-lows fly low

mp

mf

Skim-ming light-ly, — wheel-ing still, The swal-lows fly low

mp

mf

Skim-ming light-ly, — wheel-ing still, The swal-lows fly low

(8^{va})

78

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

*sffz**p*

ff

sub.

pp

*sffz**p*

ff

sub.

pp

*sffz**p*

ff

sub.

pp

p

pp

p

pp

Brilliantly (♩ = 60)

106

S
A
T
B

Brilliantly (♩ = 60)

106

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

108

(8^{va}) 3 3

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

109

molto rit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*sfz**p*

sub. ff

ff

IV. AURORA-BOREALIS.

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE DISSOLUTION OF ARMIES AT THE PEACE. (MAY, 1865.)

Remotely; steadily (♩ = 48)

Mezzo *mp* 3

What pow'r dis-bands the North-ern Lights Af-ter their stee-ly play?

Vln. I *p* ^{8va} sul A (•)

Vln. II *p* sul D (•)

Vla. *p* sul G (•)

Vc. *p*

Mezzo *mp*

The lone-ly watch-er feels an awe Of Na-ture's sway, As when ap-pear-ing, He

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

D.B. *p* *mp*

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118

Mezzo
marked their flashed up - rear - ing In the cold gloom — Re - treat - ings and ad - vanc - ings, (Like

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

sub *pp* *p*

121

Mezzo
dal - ly - ings of doom), Tran - si - tions and en - hanc - ings, And blood - y ray.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

f

f

f

f

f

rall.-----a tempo

Mezzo
S
A
T
B

142

blades that glowed, The mus-ter and dis-band-ing— Mid-night and Morn.

mp *p*

The mus-ter and dis-band-ing— Mid-night and Morn.

mp *p*

The mus-ter and dis-band-ing— Mid-night and Morn.

mp *p*

The mus-ter and dis-band-ing— Mid-night and Morn.

mp *p*

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

142

rall.-----a tempo

p *p* *p* *mp* *p*

solo

rall. -----

146

The musical score consists of five staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and D.B. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two measures of 4/4 time. The Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. parts have rests in the first measure and enter in the second measure with quarter notes. The Vc. part has a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure and a quarter note in the second. The D.B. part has a quarter note in the first measure and a half note in the second. The dynamic marking *pp* is present at the end of each staff. A large diagonal watermark 'REVIEW COPY ONLY DO NOT DUPLICATE' is overlaid on the score.

5/21/15
Plymouth, NH