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William A. Peacock
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# On the Presence of Christ 

by<br>William A. Peacock

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Music in Music Composition in the School of Music, Jordan College of Fine Arts of Butler University

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Committee:
Dr. Michael Schelle, Chair and Advisor
Dr. Frank Felice, Reader


Dr. Jeffrey Gillespie, Reader


Dr. Nicholas Johnson, Reader


Date of Final Thesis Approval:
 Advisor:


On the Presence of Christ is an exploration of Christ's presence throughout all time as described in Scripture, wherein the individual movements are thematically grounded and arranged from ancient past to coming future: "In the Beginning" is based on Genesis 1:1-2 and John 1:1-5; "At the Throne" is based on Revelation 4:2-11; and "With His Saints Forever" is based in Revelation 21:1-5a and 22-23. ${ }^{1}$ I use these chosen Scriptures to guide my musical exploration, allowing my reflections and perspectives on them to give this music its substance and form. Each set of verses is provided in the front matter of the score and is read before each movement begins, giving the audience context to appreciate the music in conjunction with and to help them to come to know these Scriptures more fully than their words alone allow. My hope is that these works point beyond my limited perspective concerning these Scriptures, and even the Scriptures themselves, to their divine source, and the goodness, beauty, and truth therein.

## Portraying God's Presence Musically

The central theme of each of these Scriptures is that of God's presence. I use several devices to convey this theme, the first of which occurs before any music is played. Unlike general concert convention wherein an audience may take their seats inside the performance space before the music begins, for this work I require that the audience be held outside of this space, instead beginning the music just before the audience enters. By creating extra separation between the audience and the performance space, I am subverting the audience's likely expectations to create an extra level of awareness of the space as set apart for a special purpose, creating an artificial sacred space by connecting it to things set apart or holy which, in turn, I associate with the presence of God. ${ }^{2}$

[^0]The opening of "In the Beginning," the first movement, is directly related to Genesis 1:2, how God's spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters. The text does not give an indication of time passing, neither how much nor for how long, while God hovered. I use three means to convey this sense of God's timeless presence: First, by starting the music just before the audience enters, I am not allowing the audience to know exactly when the music began or how long it had been going before they entered, much as the text does not indicate exactly when or for how long God's spirit hovered over the waters. Second, the chords played in mm. 1-23, listed in Figure 1, are set at irregular rhythmic intervals, denying the chance to hear a tempo, and thereby making the passage of time difficult to feel and measure. This rhythmic instability is augmented by the instrumentation; these chords are played on vibraphone with bows, causing each new note to envelope in dynamic from no sound to full sound at slightly different rates for each player, and each is allowed to vibrate into silence. The physical nature of bowed vibraphone obscures each chord's beginnings and durations, further obscuring the tempo. Third, the members of the Chords of Presence, though sharing some of the principles of traditional harmonic phrasing, such as voice-leading between chords and the creation and release of harmonic tension, are not grounded tonally. Traditional tonal harmonic language creates a sense of expectation, as in the tension of a dominant chord resolving to tonic. In the Chords of Presence, the release of tension is unexpected, as when the tension of the major seventh in Chord III is dissipated in Chord IV, a quartel chord. Voice leading between these chords also does not create a sense of expectation, as in the leading tone of a dominant chord, but creates connections between the Chords of Presence to keep them from sounding wholly random. These three devices combine to convey the floating, unmeasured timelessness of God's presence expressed in Genesis 1:2.

Figure 1: "Chords of Presence." From "In the Beginning," mm. 1-23.


As the presence of God is the unifying factor in the chosen Scriptures, the Chords of Presence are reused in various places in each movement to convey God's presence throughout the work. In "In the Beginning," chords I through IV return in mm. 211-215 which I relate to God's continued presence within creation. In "At the Throne," starting at m. 34, the strings glissando to and through chords I through VII to convey God's presence on his throne in heaven. And, at mm. 29-49 of "With His Saints Forever," chords I through IX are played on the vibraphone to express the presence of God filling New Jerusalem.

Another musical factor used to express the presence of God is resonance, which I view as analogous to the numinous: that which has a strong spiritual quality suggesting the presence of the divine. As a numinous presence inhabits a space without the divine itself being seen, so I spatialize unseen sound to fill the performance space to suggest the presence of the divine. Each statement of the Chords of Presence is written using my analogous understanding of resonance.

The initial statements of these chords in "In the Beginning" are written for two vibraphones set on opposite sides of the stage. This staging spacializes the sound, creating both an interesting stereophonic effect and helping to spread the resonance of the vibraphones throughout the performance space. In "At the Throne," the cellist and bassoonist switch chairs,
helping to spread the string's A7 unison and the glissandos through the Chords of Presence across the performance space. ${ }^{3}$ And, in "With His Saints Forever," the Chords of Presence are struck on the vibraphone to create resonating harmonies which fill the space behind the other instrument's Klangfarbenmelodie. ${ }^{4}$ In m. 109 of this movement, the percussionist and bassoonist return to playing on spacialized vibraphones, using staggered bowing to hold a unison.

## Sounding Christ's Incarnation

While not all the Scriptures chosen for this work mention Christ by name, my understanding of the Scriptures, particularly regarding John 1:1-5, is informed by my understanding of the Christian faith, wherein Christ is equal with and is the visible incarnation of God. ${ }^{5}$ To become visible, Christ took human form, living as a man, and was therefore made more fully relatable to humanity. Relatability is important in my symbolization of Christ, as he further humbled himself by using earthly parables to reveal the divine to humanity. I symbolize Christ's incarnation with several musical devices.

The violin's entrance and subsequent melody in mm. 48-58 of "In the Beginning" are the first specific representation of Christ in this work. The violin's entrance interrupts several minutes of unbroken vibraphone chords, highlighting the differences in their timbres. By comparison, the violin's bow-on-string timbre is an altogether fuller, more present timbre than the glassy, thinner timbre of bows on vibraphone, especially given the violin's use of vibrato. This comparison is also used in representing Christ's presence in "With His Saints Forever;" At. m. 15, the violin plays a rhythmic elaboration on the previous bowed vibraphone melody, offering an even more direct comparison between their timbres.

[^1]In addition to the differences in timbre, the violin's melody in $\mathrm{mm} .48-58$ of "In the Beginning" also points to Christ's incarnation. The first melodic representation of Christ is based on a mis-remembered version of the hymn-tune "For the Beauty of the Earth," a simpler, easier remembered, and more relatable tune set against the vibraphone's more complex and surprising sonorities (see Example 1). ${ }^{6}$ The melodic pitch content sounds diatonic, especially in comparison with the chromatic vibraphone harmonies. The melody's rhythms are also more definite, starting precisely on each beat rather than enveloping up from silence, and are simpler, more recognizably metric and therefore more relatable. The violin's fuller timbre and the relatability of its melody stand in stark contrast with the vibraphone's thin timbre, irregular rhythms, and surprising sonorities, and, therefore, serve as my musical analogy for the visible incarnation of the invisible God.

Example 1: Original tune of "For the Beauty of the Earth" compared with my memory of it.


To give expression to my understanding of both Christ's humanity and divinity, in m. 59 of "In the Beginning," the violin elaborates its previous statement of the hymn-tune, pushing it into less relatable pitch content, as shown in Figure 2. Starting with the initial half-step neighboring tone in m .59 , the violin pushes the melody upward into a whole-tone based scale before returning to a half-step neighboring tone near the end of the phrase and cadencing on a perfect forth double-stop. In the second elaboration of the hymn-tune, at m. 76, the violin plays

[^2]the familiar half-step neighboring tone that closes the phrase, but, rather than ending the phrase with downward melodic motion as it had done in both prior phrases, at m .77 , the violin leaps up an augmented octave, from F4 to F\#5, followed by two major seconds in mm. 77-78, to A\#5, outlining a major third. In the previous melodic context, the $\mathrm{F} \#$ sounds distantly related to the F to E half-step neighboring tone, but the $\mathrm{F} \#$ sounds stable in the later context as the base of the major third with the A\#. This melodic motion creates ambiguity, wherein the F\# forms an imperfect octave which may at once be heard as both distantly related in one context and harmonically stable in another. ${ }^{7}$ The juxtaposition of simpler intervals commonly associated with diatonicism and more complex intervals associated with synthetic scales, particularly the free use of the tritone, and the ambiguous interaction between distance and stability point to the mystery of Christ's taking on humanity and yet remaining equal with God.

Figure 2: First and second elaborations of the hymn-tune, mm. 59-65 and 70-78, respectively.


The pitch relationships resulting from elaborations of the hymn-tune, mm. 59-79 of "In the Beginning," serve as the basis for most of the melodic pitch content in the rest of the work. For example, in m. 22 of "At the Throne," the flute's melody suggests multiple tritone relationships without moving directly by tritone, instead using traditionally consonant leaps, such

[^3]as the perfect forth and minor third (see Figure 3). This melody concludes with three notes that form imperfect octaves with the first three notes of the melody. These imperfect octaves are made to sound stable by the introduction of the Bb , forming a perfect fourth below the Eb and a major third with the Gb and $\mathrm{A} b$, and by the major second ascent from the Gb after the leap.

Figure 3: Comparison of melodic pitch material in flute, m. 22.


As shown in Figure 4, in mm. 4-7 of "With His Saints Forever," the vibraphone creates imperfect octaves between A 4 and B 4 and $\mathrm{A} b 5$ and $\mathrm{B} b 5$. The $\mathrm{A} b$ is made to sound stable not only by its movement by step to a major third, but also by its being approached by leap from Eb5, a perfect forth below. The subsequent $\mathrm{B} b 5$ is made stable by its inclusion in the formation of the major third. As God's and Christ's presence is a unifying theme in the Scriptures chosen for this work, my expression of Christ's incarnation in the first violin melody and its subsequent variations is used throughout the rest of the melodic material to musically unify the work.

Figure 4: Comparison of melodic pitch material in percussion, mm. 4-7.


## Musical Form from Scripture

While musical elements analogous with Christ's incarnation and the presence of God tie the three movements together, much of their individual structure and form is derived from their
individual Scriptures, my understanding of them as informed by the biblical narrative, and their relation to the Christian perspective.

The first part of the form of "In the Beginning" is taken from my reading of Genesis 1:12 and John 1:1-5. God's hovering over the waters is analogous to the floating, irregular trichords and septachords on bowed vibraphone, m. 1-23, and Christ as the visible incarnation of God is analogous to the entrance and subsequent elaborations of a hymn-tune by the violin, m. 51-79.

The rest of the form of "In the Beginning" comes from my understanding of the full creating narrative recorded in Genesis 1 and 2, and the Christian narrative of the Gospel: that the universe was created flawless and good; that the disobedience of Adam and Eve caused creation, themselves, and humanity to fall from this state of inherent goodness; and that Christ's birth, life, and death have made redemption from the fall available to humanity. ${ }^{8}$ The section marked "Dance-like, Articulate, Excited," m. 101, to its climax in m. 164, comes from the complete creation narrative in Genesis 1, which describes the near-infinite variety of creation, all of which God calls "good." I represent the variety of creation with the variety of instrumental timbres, rhythms, and melodic variations, and their goodness by the cooperative character of their counterpoint. The climax at m .164 begins a transition which ends the counterpoint and turns toward a contemplation of creation's fall. At m. 177, the violin begins a quasi-cadenza, mourning the loss of the inherent goodness of creation. The sound of mourning is achieved by the free use of tight, minor second groupings, shown in Figure 5. Prior to this section, these groupings were spaced out with leaps and resulted incidentally from the formation and use of imperfect octaves (see, for example, the E4, F4, and F\#5 in mm. 186-188, shown in Figure 2). In contrast, the

[^4]groupings in this section are tightly spaced and never form imperfect octaves. The differing use of these groupings helps delineate the character between this and previous sections. The mourning concludes with the cello's droning B resolving down by step to the A of chord I of the Chords of Presence at m. 211. Chords I-IV, previously played on the vibraphone, are now sounded in each instrument, following my understanding that, despite the fall, God did not abandon or discard the universe but remains present in creation.

Figure 5: Mourning character made with free use of minor second groupings, mm. 4-7.

"At the Throne" uses Revelation 4:2-11 as its source for form and content, Scripture which depicts John's sudden appearance in heaven at the throne room of God. Because John describes the fantastic environment both visually and sonically, particularly the thunders and lightnings coming from the throne and the continuous chanting of the four creatures with the response of the elders, I craft this movement as a combination of an amorphous sonic environment with song-like material within it.
"At the Throne" makes the most use of auxiliary percussion, particularly the drums, to evoke the lighting and thunder coming from the throne. These are used environmentally rather than metrically, depicting the irregular rumblings, crashes, and resonance associated with thunder and lightning. The strings, staged to disperse their sound, are also largely environmental, acting as my sonic analogy for the unusual, vivid environment and the numinous presence of God. They create an amorphous texture through angled bowing in the cello (mm. 21-28), detunings between the violin and viola (mm. 21-27 and 85-88), and gradual increases and decreases
in unmeasured tremolos at varying rates between them (mm. 30-42, 48-60, 67-68, 75, and 7981). These effects combine to create a colorful, textured resonance which the song-like elements stand noticeably apart from.

First occurring at m. 23, the bassoon and clarinet play melodic segments over the texture of the strings, shown in Example 2. Much as the regularity of the violin's first melody in mm. 48-78 of "In the Beginning" stands out against the irregularity of the vibraphones, creating a sense of relatability to the violin, the regularity of these melodic lines in m. 23 of "At the Throne," particularly the clarinet's line, stand out against the strings, becoming an aural anchor in an otherwise free-floating texture. These anchoring, regular moments also occur on the vibraphone, m. 49 and mm. 63-65, and once in the flute, mm. 51-52. These anchors create interesting interplay between the environmental and song-like elements, and the clarinet's melodic ascents by thirds hint toward the coming use of a reharmonization of the hymn tune, "Holy, Holy, Holy," in mm. 91-107.

Example 2: First instance of regularity in clarinet and bassoon, mm. 23-25 of "At the Throne."


In general, the flute's fragments, while melodic, like the clarinet's and bassoon's, are also irregular, like the percussion's imitation of lightning and thunder. When writing its bursts, I pictured the colorful, indistinct chattering of birds, which personally remind me of the presence of the Creator within creation. As John's vision of God's throne room is described in material terms while also being strange and mysterious, I use the flute's bird-like fragments as a reference
to the material world while also bending its lines away from regularity to point toward the mysterious nature of the divine.

The two sections labeled "Thunderous," mm. 69-74 and 76-80, are my attempt at conveying the terror inherent in God's holiness. ${ }^{9}$ I imagine John's experience to have been both awe-inspiring and terrifying, and I convey the latter musically in these sections by the distortion of the string pitches to scratch-tones, the great increase of the density and intensity of the auxiliary percussion, and the tight, minor second cluster in the winds.
Mm. 91-107 contain a reharmonized quotation of the hymn-tune, "Holy, Holy, Holy," chosen for its shared words with the four creature's continuous refrain and its thematic relationship with these verses. ${ }^{10}$ Example 3 compares the original hymn to my reharmonization. While not directly related to Christ's incarnation, this use of a reharmonized hymn-tune is like my elaborations of the violin's hymn tune in mm. 58-78 of "In the Beginning" in expressing Christ's combined humanity and divinity; the twenty-four elders who respond to the four creatures I read as symbolizing the human worshippers of God across all time. As present-day worshippers may use a hymn in corporate worship of God, so I represent these elders, here mysteriously present in and with the divine, as using my reharmonized hymn in their worship.

[^5]Example 3: Original version of "Holy, Holy, Holy" and my reharmonization, derived from mm. 91-107.

"With His Saints Forever" uses Revelation 21:1-5a and 22-23 as its source, wherein God dwells in New Jerusalem with his worshippers in peace for all eternity. At this point in Revelation, there no longer exists any separation or conflict between God and his believers. Therefore, because the drums were previously used as a harbinger of the fall of humanity in "In the Beginning," marking the separation between God and mankind, and as a significant part of the terror of holiness in "At the Throne," I do not use the drums in this movement.

An important concept in the verses chosen for "With His Saint Forever" is that God will make all things new, though their appearance will be similar enough to former things that John recognizes them as after the shape of the former things: new heaven, new earth, New Jerusalem. I express this newness in the shape of the old in two ways: First, the form of "With His Saints Forever" roughly imitates the form of "In the Beginning," as shown in Table 1. As there is no more mourning in New Jerusalem, the imitation between forms does not include the free use of minor second groupings from the first movement's "Mourning" section. Second, the Chords of Presence used in the opening of "In the Beginning" are remade in "With His Saints Forever," as shown in Figure 6. After the original Chords are played in the vibraphone in mm. 29-49 of "With His Saints Forever," these chords are altered, having some similarities in pitch placement and voice leading connections to their predecessors while also being new.

Table 1: Comparison of forms between "In the Beginning" and "With His Saints Forever."

| I: | Vibraphone Opening (chords) mm. 1-17 | $\begin{gathered} \text { High Violin A } \\ \mathrm{mm} .48-50 \end{gathered}$ | Violin Solo mm. 48-50 | Instrumental Interaction (counterpoint) mm. 101-163 | Climax with Harmonies mm. 164-174 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Solo over drone } \\ & \text { (mourning } \\ & \text { character) } \\ & \text { mm. } 175-210 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Conclusion } \\ & \mathrm{mm} .211-239 \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| III: | Vibraphone Opening (melody) mm. 1-11 | High Violin A mm. 12-14 | Violin Solo mm. 15-26 | Instrumental Interaction (klangfarbenmelodie) mm. 27-85 | Climax with Harmonies mm. 86-92 | Solo over drone (without mourning) mm. 101-108 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Conclusion } \\ & \text { mm.109-121 } \end{aligned}$ |

Figure 6: Comparison between Chords of Presence in "In the Beginning," mm. 1-23, and in "With His Saints


In New Jerusalem all worshippers of God with be gathered to worship him in unity forever. I express this unity through Klangfarbenmelodie, creating a composite melody, each instrument lending its unique voice for that purpose. At. mm. 26-46, each new instrumental entry makes a new note in the melody. Example 6 shows a reduction of these entries and the melody they form in mm. 54-71. Each note also envelopes dynamically and overlaps with other notes in the composite in imitation of the bowed vibraphone melody, mm. 1-12, whose notes swell up from nothing and overlap because the vibraphone is allowed to vibrate freely. As I link the vibraphone to the presence of God, so the other instruments work together to imitate it, analogous to believers in New Jerusalem working together to worship God. In mm. 54-71, instruments in the composite melody begin regularly having more than one note before another instrument enters, and in mm. 72-82, often have several notes and occasionally enter at a loud dynamic and decrescendo rather than enveloping their dynamic. The additions of notes and alteration of the dynamic pattern help bring the music to its climax in mm. 86-92, wherein the instruments leave off Klangfarbenmelodie and make harmonies.

Example 6: Composite melody formed by klangfarbenmelodie, mm. 54-71.


At the conclusion of "With His Saints Forever," all instruments join on the same pitch class, A. I end the piece with a single pitch class in part because the variety of chords used over the course of the work makes it difficult to create a successful conclusion with a chord; for instance, a major triad would be out of character. Instead, I express eternity with God through an "impossibly" long bowed vibraphone note, achieved by staggering bowings between the percussionist and the bassoonist on a unison A , which the other instruments join, completing my idea of worshippers being united with God for all eternity. The conclusion of the piece is intentionally somewhat thwarted; the more musically satisfying conclusion would be to end the music at m. 119, cutting it off with the violin's last note. However, the vibraphones keep bowing for two more measures to draw attention to them and, in turn, to my idea that, though the music ends, the reality it points to will go on eternally.

Writing On the Presence of Christ has felt like being a child, asking to borrow money from a father to buy him a birthday present, one he can certainly do without. Likewise, God does not need my music and ideas, but I trust that he, like a father, takes pleasure in them. I hope this work points beyond my perspective on these Scriptures to the divine, and the goodness, beauty, and truth therein.

# On the Presence of CHRIST 

flute<br>clarinet<br>bassoon<br>percussion<br>violin<br>viola<br>cello

## William A. PEACOCK

I. In the Beginning - $13^{\prime} 23^{\prime \prime}$ to $14^{\prime} 29^{\prime \prime}$
II. At the Throne - 6' $42^{\prime \prime}$
III. With His Saints Forever - $7^{\prime} 11^{\prime \prime}$

* The total duration varies according to whether or not the repeat in the first movement is taken once or twice (see Performance Notes). With this fluctuation, and with readings and stage changes, performers should realistically allot 40' to 45 ' for a performance.


## Instrumentation:

Flute
Clarinet in Bb
Bassoon
Percussion (two Vibraphones; Crotales, C4-C5; Bass Drum; Kick Drum; three Toms, floor, low, and high; three Cymbals, large, medium, and small; seven Bows, cello and/or bass; soft, hard, and xylophone mallets; snare sticks)
Violin
Viola
Cello

## Score is Transposed

The following Scriptures are to be read aloud to the audience before they enter the performance area for the first movement (see Performance Notes), and between the second and third movements during stage changes. These may be read by a special narrator or by the conductor. The World English Bible translations of these Scriptures are used here in part for convenience, but the performing party may substitute another translation if they so desire.

Before the audience enters the performance space for the first movement:

Narrator: Genesis 1:1-2,

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty. Darkness was on the surface of the deep and God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters.

John 1:1-5,
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him. Without him, nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness hasn't overcome it.

This is the Word of the Lord.
[Optionally, the audience may be asked to respond after each reading with the following:]

Audience: Thanks be to God.

Before the second movement:

Narrator: Revelation 4:2-11,
Immediately I [John] was in the Spirit. Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne that looked like jasper stone and sardius. There was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald to look at. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones. On the thrones were twenty-four elders sitting, dressed in white garments, with crowns of gold on their heads. Out of the throne proceed lightnings, sounds, and thunders. There were seven lamps of fire burning before his throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal. In the middle of the throne, and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within. The have no rest day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come!" When the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to him who sits on the throne, to him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever, and throw their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, the Holy One, to receive the glory, the honor, and the power, for you created all things, and because of your desire they existed, and were created!"

This is the Word of the Lord.
Audience: Thanks be to God.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice of heaven saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with people, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more. The first things have passed away." He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."

22-23,

I saw no temple in [the city], for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. The city has no need for the sun or moon to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Audience: Thanks be to God.

## Stage Diagrams:

## Key:

$\square$ chair | music stand
$\boxplus$ mallet stand
$\square$ kick drum, low tom, high tom
vibraphone
$\infty 880$ crotales
( floor tom
$\odot$ © three cymbals; small, medium, large
(0) bass drum

## I. In the Beginning


II. At the Throne

III. With His Saints Forever


## Disambiguation of Notation:

Percussion key:

$\oint=\oint$ throughout

- During sections with long tied notes, rebow lightly only as often as is necessary to maintain the dynamic. Rebowing on offbeats is encouraged.

All glissandi are to be played smoothly across their total durations.
ord. . . . s.p. . . . s.t. . . .ord. means to move between playing in the ordinary position to sul ponticello to sul tasto and back to the ordinary
inc. trem. and decr. trem. serve as shorthand for feathered beaming:

$d$ and $\ddagger$ non-specific microtones indicating that the performer should produce a rapidly beating interval against their non-microtone counterpart in another voice
$(\downarrow \bullet)(b \bullet)(\# \bullet) \quad$ courtesy notes given for strings to show how far players would glissando before a change in octave or clef occurs


## Performance Notes:

Tempos: Tempos are relatively strict throughout, with the exception of the "Quasi-cadenza," mm. 177-208 of Mvmt. I.
Sacred Space: The intention of this repeated section is to facilitate the creation of an artificial sacred space. Performers should set up and be ready to play before the audience enters the performance space, and the audience should be held outside of the space before the music begins. The awkwardness of holding the outside of the performance space may be appeased by providing seating and/or refreshments in the outer location, or by performing this work as the second half of a concert and asking the audience to vacate the performance space and gather in the outer location during the intermission. M. 1 begins after the first Scripture has been read when the doors to the performance space are opened and the first audience member enters.

Vibraphone(s): While the score and stage diagrams designate two vibraphones be used, it is possible to perform this work with only one. Non-percussionists have been arranged so that their positions at the vibraphone are relatively stable; only the percussionist is asked to move and play both sides. If using one vibraphone, place this vibraphone at position 1 on the diagrams and ignore all specific vibraphone designations in the score. The unison on pg. 17, mm. 109-121 may be achieved by the percussionist playing a $2: 1$ harmonic one octave below his/her written note. Using only one vibraphone eliminates stereo sound effects and may cause discomfort among the performers due to close proximity; therefore, this should only be done to accommodate small performance spaces or if a second vibraphone cannot be made available.
[Vibraphone(s)]: No string players should be expected to use their own bows on the vibraphones.
Performers should make a copy of their vibraphone parts for their initial performance on the vibraphone so that they will not have to move their music when they take their seats. These parts and stands should be struck from the stage before the performance of the second movement. The bassoonist should also copy mm. 109-121 and leave it on the stand for vibraphone \#2 for the third movement.

Because most non-percussionists will be unfamiliar with bowing the vibraphone, it is strongly recommended that they spend at least one rehearsal practicing the technique with the percussionist.

Both vibraphones' dampening pedals are down throughout. It is therefore recommended that the pedals either be weighed down or disabled for the performance.

Dynamics given for the vibraphone are only piano and forte. Neither dynamic is truly achievable. Piano should be read as "get the least amount of sound," and forte read as "get the most amount of sound." These dynamics are given to designate subtle differences between the dynamics of some chords, as in mm. 4-5.

The durations giving for vibraphone notes are the duration of each bow.
Pg. 1, mm. 1-18: Repeat this section at least once, but no more than twice, to allow the entering audience to take their seats. The House manager (or some suitable person) should cue the percussionist, who should in turn cue the conductor, when the audience has finished entering. At. m. 19, either the percussionist or conductor should cue the House manager to dim the house lights.

Pg. 2, m. 69: Beginning with the flutist, players should lay their bows on their mallet stands, move to their respective seats, and take up their instruments.

Pg. 6, m. 177: "Quasi-cadenza" refers to the violinist's solo between mm. 181-208. The violinist is allowed to be slightly more free with the tempo and phrasing,

Pg. 8, mm. 9, 15: The percussionist is meant to cover the string entrances.
Pg. 12, m. 112: Hold until the crotales fade and allow the music to breath.
Mvmt. III: Care should be taken by performers to ensure their dynamic envelopes are performed as smoothly as possible.
Pg. 17, m. 121: Hold until the vibraphones fade and allow the music to breath.

## Program Notes:

On the Presence of Christ is an exploration of His presence throughout all time as described in Scripture, wherein the individual movements are thematically grounded and arranged from ancient past to coming future.
"In the Beginning" opens on God's Spirit hovering over the surface of the waters on the earth, as it had been since time out of memory. Christ's presence in creation is analogous to the violin's entrance, representing Christ's coming incarnation by both quoting rhythmically and melodically relatable, human material, and the violin's earthier, more rugged bow on string contrasting with the glassier timbre of bow on vibraphone. The violin begins bending the hymn-like tune, as light through a prism, inviting listeners into a deeper reality beyond the familiar, as it recalls the variety of "goods" made in creation, followed by mourning the Fall, before moving on to the restrained joy derived from the hope in Christ's incarnation, sacrifice, and expectation of His return.
"At the Throne" is an aural depiction of John's fantastic vision of God seated on His throne in heaven. The hymn "Holy, holy, holy," music by John Dykes (1823-76), is borrowed and transformed for this movement. In addition to the three holy's being shared between the opening verse of Reginald Heber's (1783-1826) text and the four living creatures surrounding the throne of God, there is a correlation between the use of the hymn, somewhat antiquated but still used in worship today, and the response of the twenty-four elders who symbolize the worshippers of God throughout time.
"With His Saints Forever" depicts Christs future eternal presence in the New Jerusalem among those He has saved. In this future, all voices, from every tribe, tongue, and nation, will join together for the purpose of worshipping Him eternally, even as each instrument offers its voice, in single notes and small melodic fragments, for the purpose of forming full melodies of praise. As Christ makes "all things new," so this movement roughly follows the shape of "In the Beginning," without the previous mourning, remaking it in the reality of the absence of conflict in Christ's dwelling with His creation.

## I. In the Beginning

## - $=60$ Atmospheric



[^6]

$=$


$=$

I. In the Beginning








Perc


## II. At the Throne



 VIl.




 VIi.


[^7]
$=$








* Gliss. to approximate pitches, accenting each change in direction.





## III. With His Saints Forever







$=$
Declamatory



Calm, Mysterious


$=$



[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ The word "His" in the title of this movement is capitalized to follow the convention of capitalizing the first letter of pronouns which refer to God or Christ.
    ${ }^{2}$ In Exodus 3:1-5, when Moses approached God's presence in the burning bush, Moses was commanded to remove his sandals before coming closer to God because the place he was standing on was "holy ground."

[^1]:    ${ }^{3}$ Middle $\mathrm{C}=\mathrm{C} 4$.
    ${ }^{4}$ Klangfarbenmelodie is German for "sound-color melody" and refers to splitting a single melodic line between multiple instruments.
    ${ }^{5}$ The "Word," referenced in John 1:1, is generally accepted as referring to Christ.

[^2]:    ${ }^{6}$ Original music by Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872. I believed that I was using the correct tune when I began composing "In the Beginning." By the time I realized my mistake, I had already made significant use of my version and decided to keep it because it worked for the purpose of sounding like a reference, even if an inexact one.

[^3]:    7 "Imperfect octave" here means an enharmonically altered octave in a context where one would be more likely to expect a perfect octave.

[^4]:    ${ }^{8}$ I chose to exclude the full creation narrative from the chosen scriptures in part because of their length, but also to avoid the possibility of audience members attempting to connect moments in the music, such as each instrument's entry and melody in the counterpoint section, mm. 101-164 of "In the Beginning," to the exact days of creation.

[^5]:    ${ }^{9}$ In a similar vision recorded in Isaiah 6:1-4, the prophet Isaiah expressed great fear at being in the presence of God, particularly noting his own uncleanness as the source of his terror.
    ${ }^{10}$ Music by John Dykes (1823-76).

[^6]:    * Vibraphone notes for Clarinet written in concert pitch

[^7]:    ${ }^{*}$ Produce a rapidly beating interval against the violin.
    ${ }^{\dagger}$ Produce a rapidly beating interval against the viola.

