David Heuser

Absolutely and Forever

for 17 instruments

2017

Duration approximately 16 minutes

Absolutely and Forever

for 17 instruments

Instrumentation

flute
oboe
clarinet in Bb
bassoon

horn
trumpet in C
trombone
tuba

2 percussion*
harp
piano

2 violins
viola
cello
double bass

* Percussion required:

Percussion 1:	snare drum	maracas
	4 tom-toms	sand paper blocks
	suspended cymbal	xylophone (shared with percussion 2)
	5 temple blocks	
Percussion 2:	ratchet	lion's roar
	slapstick	tambourine
	suspended cymbal	wood block
	brake drum or metal plate	police whistle
	triangle	cabasa
	cowbell	vibraphone
		xylophone (shared with percussion 1)

Program Note

In 2005, I composed an orchestral work for the Texas Musical Festival Orchestra called *A Screaming Comes Across the Sky*, which is the first sentence of Thomas Pynchon's novel *Gravity's Rainbow*. The book's title refers to the parabola made by a rocket or bomb in flight; specifically, Pynchon is referring to the V2 rocket, which the Germans were lobbing at London during World War II. This shape is the central metaphor of the book, signifying many things, including the trajectory of life itself, from birth to death.

At the time, I mapped out some ideas for other possible movements based on the four sections of the book, and I came back to these notes when I decided to re-orchestrate *Screaming* as the first movement of this work. The title of the second movement, *The Past that Makes Demands*, is from the second section of the book, and refers to the inevitable cause-and-effect of an action (like launching a rocket or throwing a roulette ball), which then "demands" a certain result in the future. The third movement is *In the Zone*, which is also the title of the third part of the book. In addition to playing on the idea of being "in the zone," or "in the groove," this movement also reflects my impression of this section of the book (I have not re-read it) being frenetic, picking up speed as the story itself turns and begins its descent. The title of the entire work, *Absolutely and Forever*, comes from the book's final page: "And it is just here…that the pointed tip of the Rocket, falling nearly a mile per second, absolutely and forever without sound, reaches its last unmeasurable gap…the last delta-t."

This is not programmatic music, but uses the central ideas of *Gravity's Rainbow* as inspiration for various musical elements. In particular, the idea of the parabola which can stand in for rising and falling pitch, or softer and louder dynamics, and so on with many other musical elements. *Absolutely and Forever* was commissioned by the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music New Music Ensemble under the direction of David Dzubay.

Although I am gratefully, and continually, influenced by all of the teachers I had the privilege to study with at Indiana, I have dedicated the three movements to the three most influential to my compositional development. Movement II is dedicated to Claude Baker, my first composition teacher (even though neither of us would be at Indiana for several more years), and the person most responsible for me coming to IU as a graduate student. Movement III is dedicated to Frederick Fox, the person I most wanted to study with when I arrived at IU – and got to, for two wonderful years. And the first movement is dedicated to Don Freund, who joined the faculty at IU at just the right time for me to spend my last years as a student under his tutelage. I hope this work lives up to the standards they set for me.

Score is in C

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I. A Screaming Comes Across the Sky

Dedicated to Don Freund

With Furious Energy

♩.= 152

A

Flute
Oboe
B♭ Clarinet
Bassoon
Horn
Trumpet in C
Trombone
Tuba
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Harp
Piano
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Contrabass

snare dr. (sticks)

rachet

D C B♭ / E F G♯ A

accented

8vb
no pedal

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9

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Hp.

Pno.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

sempre

(3+2)

ff

stopped

pp

open

rip

harmon mute (stem in)

mute out

rip/gliss.

xylo. (hard mallets)

lion's roar

mf

metal plate or brake drum (hard mallets)

(8vb)

14 B

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

(3+2)
ff
fp mf p mf
ff
stopped
fp f
harmon mute (stem in)
fp f
fp f
xylo. (hard mallets)
lion's roar
p ff
tambourine
mf
f
ff
accented
8vb
B
14
(3+2)
ff
accented
ff
accented
ff
accented
ff
ff

19

C

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

open

rip

Tpt.

mute out

rip/gliss.

Tbn.

rip

Tba.

xylo. (hard mallets)

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

whistle

rachet

Hp.

gliss.

Pno.

C

19

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

sul G

gliss.

Cb.

sul A

gliss.

II. The Past that Makes Demands

Dedicated to Claude Baker

Slowly, loosely, relaxed

♩= 56-60

Flute

Oboe

B♭ Clarinet

Bassoon

Horn

Trumpet in C

Trombone

Tuba

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Harp

Piano

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

molto rit.

X

a tempo

harmon mute, stem out

very freely, out of time. ad lib port.

sus. cym. (sitck)

snare dr. (brushes) cirular motion, ad lib

vibes, yarn mallets

Ped.

D C♯ B / E F G A♭

8va

Ped.

Ped. with chord changes

pizz.

Slowly, loosely, relaxed

♩= 56-60

molto rit.

X

a tempo

8

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Hp.

Pno.

8

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

ppp

mp

pp

st. mute

p

Ped.

12

rit.

Fl.

flute/oboe/clarinet: do not rit.

Ob.

flute/oboe/clarinet: do not rit.

Cl.

flute/oboe/clarinet: do not rit.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

vibes, yarn mallets

Ped.

Hp.

D C B / E F♯ G♯ A

Pno.

12

rit.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

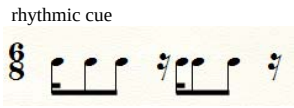
III. In the Zone

Dedicated to Frederick Fox

Driving

♩ = **144**

rhythmic cue



etc.

Flute

Oboe

B♭ Clarinet

ff

Bassoon

Horn

ff

mute out

Trumpet in C

ff

Trombone

ff

Tuba

temple blks. (sticks)

Percussion 1

ff

cowbell (sticks)

Percussion 2

ff

Harp

Piano

ff

no ped.

Driving

♩ = **144**

Violin 1

sim.

ff

Violin 2

sim.

ff

Viola

sim.

ff

Cello

sim.

ff

Contrabass

8

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

ff

ff

pp *ff*

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

pp *ff*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Hp.

Pno.

8

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

gliss.

pp

13

AC

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

D♭ C♭ B♭ / E F G A♭

Hp.

gliss.

Pno.

8vb

13

AC

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

pizz. (somewhat "slappy")

18

AD

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

fp *ppp* *pp* *p* *mf* *f*

G♮ to G♯
A♭ to A♮

temple blks. (yarn)

sul D
sul G
(𝅗𝅥.)
gliss.
ord.
3

Ped.

25

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

ppp

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Tba.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

woodblock (sticks)

f

Hp.

Pno.

25

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

AE 30

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Pno.

ppp *p* *mf* *mf* *pp* *stopped* *fp* *mf* *mf* *pp* cowbell (sticks) *p* *mf* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *f* no pedal

AE 30

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

(pizz. as before) *p*