

young symphonic band series

The Message on the Rock

By Robert Sheldon

The Message on the Rock was commissioned by the East Central Middle School Honor Band for a 2004 performance in Brookings, South Dakota. The piece is a musical representation of a rather unusual artwork that can be found in a field west of Des Moines, in Adair County, Iowa.

Artist Ray Sorensen of Greenfield, Iowa discovered a rock that had, for some time, been painted with graffiti. He decided that the rock should be properly painted once and for all and did so with truly remarkable skill. He emblazoned the sides of the rock with battle scenes from our nation's history, including Washington's crossing of the Delaware and a scene from 9-11. Fragments of speeches from American presidents are included and an American flag drapes the rock—now known as "Freedom Rock."

INSTRUMENTATION

1 — Conductor Score	4 — 1st B \flat Trumpet
10 — Flute	4 — 2nd B \flat Trumpet
2 — Oboe	2 — F Horn
2 — Bassoon	3 — 1st Trombone
6 — 1st B \flat Clarinet	3 — 2nd Trombone
6 — 2nd B \flat Clarinet	2 — Baritone T.C.
1 — E \flat Alto Clarinet	2 — Baritone B.C.
2 — B \flat Bass Clarinet	4 — Tuba
2 — 1st E \flat Alto Saxophone	1 — Orchestra Bells
2 — 2nd E \flat Alto Saxophone	2 — Cymbals (Crash Cymbals, Sus. Cymbal, Wind Chimes)
2 — B \flat Tenor Saxophone	2 — Percussion (Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
1 — E \flat Baritone Saxophone	1 — Timpani



The musical inspiration for this piece came from the scenes and speeches on this rock. The piece opens with a military-sounding march that leads to a solemn section over which a narrator reads the speeches seen on the rock while a muted trumpet plays “Taps” in the background:

We confide in our strength without boasting of it; we respect that of others, without fearing it.

–Thomas Jefferson (1793)

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of freedom.

–John F. Kennedy (1961)

We will not waver, we will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

–George W. Bush (2001)

All gave some—some gave all...

The initial march then returns, with fragments of numerous patriotic melodies juxtaposed with the original melody, including “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” “The Battle Cry of Freedom,” “Yankee Doodle,” “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” “The Caisson Song (Army),” “The Marine’s Hymn,” “Anchors Aweigh (Navy)” and “Chester.” Eventually the “Battle Hymn” emerges and a brief statement of “America the Beautiful” brings the piece to a rousing conclusion.

Conductors will want to be sure the players are aware of when they are playing the following phrase fragments:

“The Battle Cry of Freedom” – ms. 73, trumpets

“Yankee Doodle” – ms. 76, alto saxophones

“The Girl I Left Behind Me” – ms. 76, flutes

“The Caisson Song” – ms. 82, trumpets and bells

“The Marine’s Hymn” – ms. 84, trombones and baritone

“Anchors Aweigh” – ms. 87, flute, oboe and bells

“Chester” – ms. 89, trombones and baritone

13

Fl. *mp* *a2*

Ob. *mp*

Bsn. *p*

Cl. 1 *p*

Cl. 2 *p*

A. Cl. *p*

B. Cl. *p*

A. Sax. 1 *p* *a2*

A. Sax. 2 *p*

T. Sax. *p*

Bar. Sax. *p*

Tpts. 1 *mf*

Tpts. 2 *mf*

Hn.

Trbs. 1

Trbs. 2

Bar. *p*

Tuba *p*

Bells *mp*

Cyms. *Sus. Cym.* *p*

Perc. *p*

Timp.

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

Cl. 1 *mf*

Cl. 2 *mf*

A. Cl. *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

A. Sax. 1 *mf*

A. Sax. 2 *mf*

T. Sax. *mf*

Bar. Sax. *mf*

Tpts. 1 *mf*

Tpts. 2 *mf*

Hn. *mf*

Trbs. 1 *mf*

Trbs. 2 *mf*

Bar. *mf*

Tuba *mf*

Bells *mf*

Cyms. *mf* Cr. Cym. *f* l.v.

Perc. *mf*

Timp. *mf*

17 18 19 20 21

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cls. 1

Cls. 2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1

A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1

Tpts. 2

Hn.

Trbs. 1

Trbs. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms.

Perc.

Timp.

mf

mf

a2

22 23 24 25 26

29

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cls. 1

Cls. 2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1

A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1

Tpts. 2

Hn.

Trbs. 1

Trbs. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms.

Perc.

Timp.

27 28 29 30 31 32

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cls. 1

Cls. 2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1

A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1

Tpts. 2

Hn.

Trbs. 1

Trbs. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms. l.v. Wind Chimes

Perc.

Timp.

f *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp*

33 34 35 36 37

55 Andante Moderato ♩ = 84

Fl. *mp*

Ob.

Bsn. *mp*

Cl. 1 *mp*

Cl. 2 *mp*

A. Cl. *mp*

B. Cl. *mp*

A. Sax. 1 *mp* *a2*

A. Sax. 2 *mp*

T. Sax. *mp*

Bar. Sax. *mp*

55 Andante Moderato ♩ = 84

Tpts. 1 *mp* *a2 open*

Tpts. 2 *mp*

Hn. *mp*

Trbs. 1 *mp*

Trbs. 2 *mp*

Bar. *mp*

Tuba *mp*

Bells

Cyms. *mp*

Perc.

Timp. *mp*

55 56 57 58 59 60

molto rall. **Allegro Moderato** ♩ = 112

Fl. *a2*

Ob. *mp*

Bsn. *ff*

Cls. 1 *ff*

Cls. 2 *ff*

A. Cl. *ff*

B. Cl. *ff*

A. Saxes 1 *ff*

A. Saxes 2 *ff*

T. Sax. *ff*

Bar. Sax. *ff*

Tpts. 1 *ff*

Tpts. 2 *ff*

Hn. *ff*

Trbs. 1 *ff*

Trbs. 2 *ff*

Bar. *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Bells

Cyms. *ff* l.v.

Perc. *p*

Timp. *ff*

61 62 *ff* *p* 63 64 65

67

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

1
A. Saxes

2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

67

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

1
Trbs.

2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms.

Perc.

Timp.

66 67 68 69 70

Fl. *mf* *a2*

Ob. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

Clars. 1 *mf*

Clars. 2 *mf*

A. Cl. *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

A. Saxes 1 *mf* *a2*

A. Saxes 2 *mf*

T. Sax. *mf*

Bar. Sax. *mf*

Tpts. 1 *mf*

Tpts. 2 *mf*

Hn. *mf*

Trbs. 1 *mf*

Trbs. 2 *mf*

Bar. *mf*

Tuba *mf*

Bells *mf*

Cyms. *p* *mf* 1.v.

Perc. *mf*

Timp. *mf*

76 77 78 79 80

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1
2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

1
Trbs.

2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms.

Perc.

Timp.

86 87 88 89 90

91

rall.

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1

A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1

Tpts. 2

Hn.

Trbs. 1

Trbs. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Bells

Cyms.

Perc.

Timp.

ff *mf* *f* *mp*

91 92 93 94 95 96

97 **Maestoso** **molto rall.**

Fl. *ff* *fp* *ff*

Ob. *ff* *fp* *ff*

Bsn. *ff* *ff*

Cl. 1 *ff* *fp* *ff*

Cl. 2 *ff* *fp* *ff*

A. Cl. *ff* *ff*

B. Cl. *ff* *ff*

A. Sax. 1 *ff* *fp* *ff*

A. Sax. 2 *ff* *fp* *ff*

T. Sax. *ff* *fp* *ff*

Bar. Sax. *ff* *ff*

97 **Maestoso** **molto rall.**

Tpts. 1 *ff* *fp* *ff*

Tpts. 2 *ff* *fp* *ff*

Hn. *ff* *fp* *ff*

Trbs. 1 *ff* *ff*

Trbs. 2 *ff* *ff*

Bar. *ff* *ff*

Tuba *ff* *ff*

Bells *ff*

Cyms. *ff* i.v.

Perc. *ff* *ff*

Timp. *ff* Solo *ff*

ff 97 98 99 100 101 102