The Pit and the Pendulum

Michael Story (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

1. Conductor
2. Flute
3. Oboe
4. Bassoon
5. 1st B♭ Clarinet
6. 2nd B♭ Clarinet
7. B♭ Bass Clarinet
8. E♭ Alto Saxophone
9. B♭ Tenor Saxophone
10. E♭ Baritone Saxophone
11. 1st B♭ Trumpet
12. 2nd B♭ Trumpet

4. F Horn
5. Trombone
6. Baritone
7. Baritone Treble Clef
8. Tuba
9. Mallet Percussion (Bells/Chimes)
10. Timpani (Tune: G, A, D)
11. Percussion I (Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
12. Percussion II (Suspended Cymbal, Shaker, Tom-tom)

WORLD PARTS
Available for download from www.alfred.com/worldparts
Horn in F
Trombone in B♭ Bass Clef
Trombone in B♭ Treble Clef
Baritone in B♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in B♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in B♭ Treble Clef
Tuba in B♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in B♭ Treble Clef
PROGRAM NOTES

The Pit and the Pendulum is based upon the short story horror classic of the same name by Edgar Allen Poe. Poe’s tale, written in 1842, tells the story of a prisoner sentenced to death by the Spanish Inquisition for a crime that is not explained in the narrative. He finds himself in a darkened cell, tied by ropes to a wooden board. To his horror, he sees attached to the ceiling a huge swinging pendulum with a sharp blade that is gradually lowering towards him. The quick-thinking prisoner rubs food on the ropes, enticing rats to chew through them and free the man.

The prisoner is next faced with the red-hot walls of the cell moving inward, pushing him towards the brink of the pit. At the last minute, however, an arm grabs him, saving him from plunging into the pit and certain death.

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

The Pit and the Pendulum contains four percussion part utilizing seven players, although the piece can be performed successfully with less than that. If fewer than seven percussionists are available, the following is a list of the instruments, from most important to least:

- Shaker
- Snare Drum
- Timpani
- Suspended Cymbal
- Mallet Percussion
- Bass Drum
- Tom-tom

Take care to ensure that the chords formed by the flute, oboe, 1st clarinet and alto sax beginning in measure 5 are balanced, adjusting the number of players as needed. The crescendos in the percussion in bars 57 and 61 should be as dramatic as possible.

I hope you and your ensemble find The Pit and the Pendulum to be a meaningful and worthwhile musical experience.

Michael Story