

HOW SWEET THE SOUND

BRIAN BALMAGES

INSTRUMENTATION

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Conductor Score | | |
| 1 | Piccolo | 2 | F Horn 1 |
| 4 | Flute 1 | 2 | F Horn 2 |
| 4 | Flute 2 | 2 | Trombone 1 |
| 2 | Oboe | 2 | Trombone 2 |
| 1 | English Horn (opt.) | 2 | Trombone 3 |
| 2 | Bassoon | 2 | Euphonium |
| 4 | B \flat Clarinet 1 | 2 | Baritone T.C. |
| 4 | B \flat Clarinet 2 | 4 | Tuba |
| 4 | B \flat Clarinet 3 | 1 | Timpani
(Outdoor Wind Chimes) |
| 2 | B \flat Bass Clarinet | 1 | Chimes |
| 2 | E \flat Alto Saxophone 1 | 1 | Bells |
| 2 | E \flat Alto Saxophone 2 | 1 | Vibraphone |
| 2 | B \flat Tenor Saxophone | 1 | Percussion 1
(Triangle) |
| 2 | E \flat Baritone Saxophone | 3 | Percussion 2
(Crash Cymbals, Finger Cymbals,
Ocean Drum, Rainstick,
Suspended Cymbal, 2 Tom-toms) |
| 3 | B \flat Trumpet 1 | | |
| 3 | B \flat Trumpet 2 | | |
| 3 | B \flat Trumpet 3 | | |

SUPPLEMENTAL and WORLD PARTS

The following instruments and transpositions
(all parts) are available to download from
www.alfred.com/supplemental

- E \flat Alto Clarinet
- E \flat Contra Alto Clarinet
- B \flat Contra Bass Clarinet
- E \flat Horn
- Trombone in B \flat T.C.
- Trombone in B \flat B.C.
- Euphonium in B \flat B.C.
- Tuba in B \flat T.C.
- Tuba in B \flat B.C.
- Tuba in E \flat T.C.
- Tuba in E \flat B.C.
- String Bass





THE COMPOSER

Brian Balmages is known worldwide as a composer and conductor who equally spans the worlds of orchestral, band, and chamber music. His music has been performed by groups ranging from professional symphony orchestras to elementary schools in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Sydney Opera House, Toronto Centre for the Arts, and many more. He is a recipient of the A. Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association, won the 2020 NBA William D. Revelli Composition Contest with his work *Love and Light*, and is an elected member of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. Balmages was awarded the inaugural James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts. In the same year,

he was commissioned by his other alma mater, the University of Miami, to compose music for the inauguration of the institution's 6th president, Dr. Julio Frenk. His music was also performed as part of the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service, which was attended by both President Obama and Vice President Biden.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys regular engagements with all-state and regional ensembles as well as university and professional groups throughout the world. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, Maryborough Music Conference (Australia), College Band Directors Conference, American School Band Directors Association National Conference, numerous state ASTA conferences, Teatro dell'Aquila (Italy), and others. Currently, he is Director of MakeMusic Publications and Digital Education for Alfred and MakeMusic.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

As its title implies, *How Sweet the Sound* is largely based on the melody from *Amazing Grace*, though a great deal of original music is also present throughout the work.

When Robert Herrings, band director at Artie Henry Middle School, asked me to write this piece for his Texas honor band performance, he wanted to honor his late grandma and also reflect on his upbringing and faith. This work draws heavily on gospel styles while also layering in numerous contemporary devices.

The opening draws heavily on elements of nature. The sounds of an ocean drum, rainstick, and outdoor wind chimes create a sonic background on which I paint additional colors using metallic keyboard instruments. This slow building of sound sets the stage for the opening fanfare in the brass, which is based on the exact pitches used for the lyrics "how sweet the sound" and forms one of the motives used throughout the work.

The music ebbs and flows, moving through several transitions before a long, steady musical build begins at measure 70. A portion of *Amazing Grace* cuts through the wash of sound as everything moves toward a reprise of the opening fanfare. This leads to a soft chorale, which ironically was not present in the initial draft until I got the following note from Robert:

When I think about playing it, I envision my grandma having that moment to sing along with it. She loved the song and sang it all the time. I feel like it's missing that moment. That moment when you truly know it's based on "Amazing Grace."

That note was all the inspiration I needed, and resulted in what is arguably the most emotional part of the piece. Once that was added, everything else just made sense. The piece ends largely as it began, returning to a soft ethereal soundscape while the winds play the final three chords.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The opening does not need to follow the dynamic markings exactly. They are provided as a guide, but players should just let the sound grow naturally from the beginning to measure 15 when the brass enter. Similarly, there is a slow and steady crescendo from measure 70 into 86. The music will begin to get louder as additional instruments enter. Don't fight this; let it happen naturally, but take care that the music doesn't get too loud too quickly as the group will suddenly have nowhere to go.

At measure 101, conductors have the option of either using full sections or pairing this down to a few players per part, or even a single player per part. The full group should resume at measure 117.

Finally, the last 4 measures in percussion do not have to be exact. It is written as a guide. It is perfectly acceptable for the conductor to slow the tempo down, delaying those final chords just a bit. If so, the percussion should continue in tempo, independent of any ritardando. If needed, they can simply extend this general pattern, but should be out before the final chord. I personally hear the last few notes in percussion slowing down just a bit.

—Brian Balmages

Preview Only
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DURATION: 6:20

commissioned by the Artie Henry Middle School Honors Band
Cedar Park, Texas; Robert Herrings, Conductor

HOW SWEET THE SOUND

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)

Distantly, slowly building (♩ = 96)

Piccolo

Flutes 1 2

Oboe

English Horn (opt.)

Bassoon

B♭ Clarinets 1 2 3

B♭ Bass Clarinet

E♭ Alto Saxophones 1 2

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

E♭ Baritone Saxophone

Distantly, slowly building (♩ = 96)

B♭ Trumpets 1 2 3

F Horns 1 2

Trombones 1 2 3

Euphonium

Tuba

Timpani (Outdoor Wind Chimes)

Chimes

Bells

Vibraphone

Percussion 1 (Triangle)

Percussion 2 (Crash Cymbals, Finger Cymbals, Ocean Drum, Rainstick, Suspended Cymbal, 2 Tom-toms)

Large Outdoor Wind Chimes (large metal chimes with wooden circle center - move gently)

w/ medium yarn mallets

Rainstick

Ocean Drum

Measures 1-6



Picc.

Fls. 1
2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1
2
3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1
2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1
2
3

Hns. 1
2

Tbns. 1
2
3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

to Timp.

Picc.

Fls. 1
2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1
2
3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1
2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1
2
3

Hns. 1
2

Tbns. 1
2
3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

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p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *mf* *mf*

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

35 meno mosso (♩ = 84)

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

35 meno mosso (♩ = 84)

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

meno mosso (♩ = 72)

accel.

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

mf *p* *mp*

meno mosso (♩ = 72)

accel.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

p

Picc. *mf* *f*

Fls. 1 *mf* *f*
2

Ob. *mf* *f*

E. H. *mf* *f*

Bsn. *mf* *f*

Cls. 1 *mf* *f*
2
3

B. Cl. *mf* *f*

A. Saxes 1 *mf* *f*
2

T. Sax. *mf* *f*

B. Sax. *mf* *f*

54 con moto (♩ = 84)
play

Tpts. 1 *mf* *f*
2
3

Hns. 1 *mf* *f*
2

Tbns. 1 *mf* *f*
2
3

Euph. *mf* *f*

Tuba *mf* *f*

Timp. (W. Ch.) *mf* *mp* *f*

Ch. *f* *mf* dampen

Bells *f* *mf* dampen

Vib. *f* *mf* dampen

Perc. 1 *f* *mf*

Perc. 2 *f* *mf*

70

70

Picc. *Solo* *p* Picc. Solo

Fls. 1 2 *p*

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3 *p* *tutti*

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3 *Solo* *p*

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3 *play - two players* *p* *tutti* *p*

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.) *pp*

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1 *p*

Perc. 2

Picc. *tutti*
mp cresc. poco a poco

Fls. 1
2 *play*
mp cresc. poco a poco

Ob. *mp cresc. poco a poco*

E. H. *mp cresc. poco a poco*

Bsn. *play*
p cresc. poco a poco

Cls. 1
2
3 *cresc. poco a poco*

B. Cl. *p cresc. poco a poco*

A. Saxes 1
2 *play*
p cresc. poco a poco

T. Sax. *p cresc. poco a poco*

B. Sax. *play*
p cresc. poco a poco

Tpts. 1
2
3 *tutti*
p mp mf

Hns. 1
2 *mf*

Tbns. 1
2
3 *cresc. poco a poco*

Euph. *tutti*
p mp mp cresc. poco a poco

Tuba *mp cresc. poco a poco*

Timp. (W. Ch.) *cresc. poco a poco*

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

72 73 74 75 76 77 78

p

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

cresc. poco a poco

rit.

ff

79 80 81 82 83 84

86 With conviction (♩ = 96)

Picc. *ff*

Fls. 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

Ob. *ff*

E. H. *ff*

Bsn. *ff*

Cls. 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

3 *ff*

B. Cl. *ff*

A. Saxes 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

T. Sax. *ff*

B. Sax. *ff*

86 With conviction (♩ = 96)

Tpts. 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

3 *ff*

Hns. 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

Tbns. 1 *ff*

2 *ff*

3 *ff*

Euph. *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Timp. (W. Ch.) *ff* always dampen

Ch. *ff*

Bells *ff*

Vib. *ff*

Perc. 1 *ff*

Perc. 2 *ff* Tom-toms (w/ sticks)

92

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn. *ff*

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl. *ff*

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax. *ff*

B. Sax. *ff*

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba *ff*

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch. *ff*

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

90 91 92 93



Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

94 95 96 97

51022S

(♩ = 64)

101 Sentimentally

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

(♩ = 64)

101 Sentimentally

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Sus. Cym. (w/ mallets)

mp

ff

98

99

100

101

102

103

116

Picc.

Fls. 1
2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1
2
3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1
2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1
2
3

Hns. 1
2

Tbns. 1
2
3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (w. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

mf

p

mp

E.H. Solo

p

mp

mp

p

two players cup mute

p

116

117

Picc.

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

E. H.

Bsn.

Cls. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells

Vib.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

mp

Euph. Solo

mp

mf

Tuba

Hn. 1, 2

mp

mf

play

mp

mf

mp

Solo

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

w/ stick

mp

mf

117 118 119 120 121 122

Picc.

Fls. 1 2 *no vibrato*
mp

Ob.

E. H. *tutti*
mp

Bsn. *mp*
play

Cls. 1 2 3 *mp*
play

B. Cl. *mp*
play

A. Saxes 1 2 *mp*
play

T. Sax. *mp*

B. Sax. *mp*

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2 3

Euph.

Tuba

Timp. (W. Ch.)

Ch.

Bells *p*

Vib. *p*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

w/ mallets
p *mp*

