

Commissioned by and Dedicated to Mr. Richard Bergman and the Herndon (VA) High School Wind Ensemble

Ithaca

From The Odyssey (Symphony No. 2)

Robert W. Smith (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
- C Piccolo 1
- 3 1st C Flute
- 2nd C Flute 3
- 1 1st Oboe/English Horn
- 2nd Oboe 1
- 1st B_b Clarinet 3
- 2nd B_b Clarinet 3
- 3 3rd Bb Clarinet
- 2 Bb Bass Clarinet
- E Contrabass Clarinet
- 1 1st Bassoon
- 1 2nd Bassoon
- 2 1st E_b Alto Saxophone
- 2 2nd E_b Alto Saxophone
- 1 Bb Tenor Saxophone
- 1 Eb Baritone Saxophone
- 3 1st B_b Trumpet
- 3 2nd B_b Trumpet
- 3 3rd B_b Trumpet

- 1st Horn in F
- 2nd Horn in F
- 3rd Horn in F 1
- 4th Horn in F
- 2 1st Trombone
- 2nd Trombone
- 3rd Trombone 2
- 2 **Baritone**
- Baritone Treble Clef 1
- 4 Tuba
- 1 Piano
- Mallet Percussion (Chimes, Brake Drum[s])
- Timpani
- Percussion I

Wind Chimes, Spring Drum, Bass Drum, Snare Drum, Low Concert Tom, Wind Whistles)

Percussion II

(Bell Tree, Ocean Drum, Tambourine, Gong, Bodhran)

3 Percussion III

(Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbals, Triangle, Wind Wands)

WORLD PARTS

Available for download from www.alfred.com/worldparts

1st Horn in E

2nd Horn in E♭

3rd Horn in E

4th Horn in Eb

1st Trombone in Bb Bass Clef

2nd Trombone in Bb Bass Clef

3rd Trombone in Bb Bass Clef

1st Trombone in B_b Treble Clef

2nd Trombone in B, Treble Clef 3rd Trombone in Bb Treble Clef

Baritone in Bb Bass Clef

Tuba in E♭ Bass Clef

Tuba in E♭ Treble Clef

Tuba in B♭ Bass Clef

Tuba in B_b Treble Clef





PROGRAM NOTES

"Ithaca" is the fourth movement from *The Odyssey* (Symphony No. 2) by Robert W. Smith. Based on Homer's literary epic of the same name, *The Odyssey* brings to the listener an incredible series of adventures and torments as seen through the eyes of Odysseus, King of Ithaca.

The adventures of Odysseus continue following his extended stay on the Isle of Calypso. Zeus, from Mount Olympus, sends Hermes to rescue Odysseus from Calypso. Hermes persuades Calypso to let Odysseus build a ship and leave. Odysseus sets sail for home, enduring storms of wrath from Poseidon, who has harbored a bitter grudge against Odysseus since the hero blinded his son, the Cyclops, earlier in his travels. Athena intervenes to save Odysseus from Poseidon's wrath, and the beleaguered king lands at Scheria, home of the Phaeacians. Odysseus receives a warm welcome, particularly after he reveals himself as the King of Ithaca. His gracious hosts have heard of his exploits at Troy and promise to give him safe passage to Ithaca after he shares the story of his adventures.

Odysseus spends the night relaying the incredible sequence of events leading to his arrival on Calypso's island. He recounts his trip to the Land of the Lotus Eaters, his battle with the Cyclops, his love affair with the witch-goddess Circe, his temptation by the deadly Sirens, his journey into Hades, and his fight with the sea monster Scylla. When he finishes his story, the Phaeacians return Odysseus to Ithaca. Though the goddess Athena has disguised Odysseus as a beggar, he is warmly received by his faithful swine-herd, who feeds and shelters him following his final journey home. Odysseus also finds his son Telemachus and reveals to him his true identity. Odysseus and Telemachus devise a plan to regain control of Ithaca and massacre the suitors who have invaded his home and family.

Still disguised as a beggar, Odysseus arrives at his palace the next day, enduring insults and abuse from the suitors who have invaded his home. Penelope, his queen, takes an interest in this strange beggar, suspecting that he might be her long-lost husband, because he possesses similar strategic skills to Odysseus. Penelope organizes an archery contest the following day and promises to marry any man who can string Odysseus's great bow and fire an arrow through a row of twelve axes, a feat that only Odysseus had ever been able to accomplish. At the contest, each suitor tries to string the great bow and fails. Under a verbal assault of insults, Odysseus, still dressed as a beggar, steps up to the bow. With little effort, he strings the bow and fires an arrow cleanly through the eyes of all twelve axes. In a firestorm of fury, he then turns the bow on the suitors. He and Telemachus, assisted by a few faithful servants, battle the suitors to their death.

Odysseus reveals himself to the entire palace and reunites with his loving Penelope and family. With his power secure and peace restored to Ithaca, Odysseus's long ordeal, The Odyssey, comes to an end.

"Ithaca" was commissioned by and is dedicated to Mr. Richard Bergman and the Herndon High School Wind Ensemble of Herndon, Virginia. The work was premiered in November 2003 at the Virginia Music Educators Association Conference in Norfolk, Virginia.

Symphony No. 2 (The Odyssey) premiered in its entirety with the New York All State Symphonic Band on December 3, 2003. The performance was presented in the historic Eastman Theater (Rochester, New York) under the baton of the composer.

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Note that Symphony No. 2 (The Odyssey) may be performed in various configurations depending on the performance setting. The four movements are as follows:

- "The Iliad (...in the 10th Year of the Trojan War)"
- "The Winds of Poseidon"
- "The Isle of Calypso"
- "Ithaca"

Each movement stands alone as a single performance piece. In addition, the pairing of two movements offers several performance options that may be appropriate for the concert situation. Please note that "The Isle of Calypso" was composed as the third movement of *The Odyssey*. However, it may be performed as the second movement of the full symphony. In addition, "The Isle of Calypso" may be programmed as a segue between "The Iliad (...in the I0th Year of the Trojan War)" and either "The Winds of Poseidon" or "Ithaca," allowing a setting of three movements. This option affords you several programming options depending upon the performance situation. Finally, if "The Isle of Calypso" is performed as the second movement, it will reconcile the programmatic variation from the original text of Homer. With all due respect to Homer's timeless literary work, I chose to use the "Calypso" theme later in the musical composition to provide the needed musical contrast before the fury of "Ithaca," the final movement.

The opening statement by the piano and bell tree should be rather aggressive. In contrast, the English horn solo should be lamenting and reflective in its interpretation. As an option, you may stage the two horn soloists offstage to heighten the effect.

The dramatic melodic statement at measure 12 should convey a sense of newfound energy and determination. Within the programmatic context of the entire symphony, this melodic motif foreshadows the journey and battle to come. Give careful attention to the balance between the horn/euphonium statement and the muted trumpet solo interaction. The trumpet should be very aggressive and equal in weight to the horns and euphonium. The flute effect in measures 13–16 should be shrill yet not overpowering the horns/euphonium and trumpet. Feel free to adjust the dynamic level or number of flutes to accomplish the desired effect.

The chime part was written for a full two-octave instrument. If a one and one-half-octave instrument is used, please delete the pitches that are out of range.

I suggest isolating the harmonic pyramid effect in measure 20 to ensure balance and musical understanding throughout the ensemble. Please note the divisi in the euphoniums beginning in measure 25. The bottom line was intended to provide depth and darken the melodic statement as it is repeated. Be careful that the lower part does not overshadow the upper octave.

The piano and low woodwinds provide the driving ostinato beginning in measure 33. If additional presence is needed, the piano may double the left hand in octaves. Please note the tuba/trombone/low saxophone effect in measure 33. This figure occurs multiple times in the coming phrases. It should be rather brash in its interpretation. Balance is crucial to ensure the dissonant effect. The trumpet/trombone "biting" figures in measure 40 should be very aggressive. Be sure to balance the muted color of the trumpets with the open sound of the trombones.

The chromatic figures beginning in various sections at measure 45 are drawn from "The Winds of Poseidon" and should be dramatically shaped. The woodwind lines at measure 73 should be carefully rehearsed and balanced to provide the utmost intensity, building to the open harmonic effect in measure 83.

The percussion effects beginning in measure 87 are inspired by the story of Odysseus, the suitors, and the stringing of the great bow. The actual drum shell on the spring drum becomes the resonating chamber as one player strikes the spring with a triangle beater or other metal implement such as a screwdriver. The desired effect is a metallic sound that rises in pitch each time the beater hits the spring. You may wish to assign two players per spring drum. One player should hold the resonating drum shell while the other manipulates the spring with one hand while striking with the other. The tensioning of metal one hears when stringing a very powerful bow inspired this effect. Please note that the timpani also contributes to the rising pitch. However, this effect should be in a supportive role and not overbalanced.

As the last echoes of measure 93 fade in the hall, the wind whistles and wind wands join together to create the sound of arrows as they leave the bow and fly across the room. The wind whistle (#1) should provide a short burst of air as the arrow leaves the bow. The wind wand (#1) should be staged across the room and respond with a short slice through the air. In this case, please note that the wind wand is not played by twirling the instrument in the traditional manner. I suggest that you remove the twirling handle, which will allow for much greater control with the slicing or whip effect. The end effect for the audience will be the sound of an arrow leaving a bow and then flying by them as it travels to its target. Wind whistle #2 and wand #2 should follow from two different positions in the hall to simulate the sound of different archers. This exchange between the two pairs (#1 and #2) should continue while increasing in frequency and intensity. Properly staged and performed, this effect gives the listener the experience of hearing the first arrow from the bow of Odysseus, the second arrow from his son Telemachus, and the resulting firestorm of arrows from the battle with the suitors. Please feel free to add as many wind whistles and wands as personnel and equipment allow. If the setting allows, you may wish to stage multiple pairs of wind whistles and wands throughout the hall, drawing the audience into the middle of the battle. At the appropriate moment, cue the bodhran and timpani to begin the crescendo to the full ensemble statement in measure 98. The brake drum in measure 96 should emulate the sounds of swords as they strike in the heat of battle. You may wish to use several different sizes to heighten the effect. The snare and bass drums enter in measure 97, leading to the full band entrance in measure 98.

The resulting statement beginning in measure 98 should be interpreted with a sense of victory in each and every musical element. The molto rallentando beginning in measure 142 should be extremely dramatic, with the chimes sounding as all of the bells in Ithaca. The final fanfare that opens and closes Symphony No. 2 (The Odyssey) should be as majestic as possible. The final rallentando should be freely interpreted to draw the work to an exhaustive conclusion.

I extend a sincere thanks to Richard Bergman for his assistance in editing the piece. In addition, I extend a special thanks to James Campbell for his creativity and consultation in developing the arrow effect.

I hope you, your ensemble, and your audience find "Ithaca" and the entire Symphony No. 2 (The Odyssey) to be a rewarding musical experience. It is my hope that you will use this opportunity to encourage your musicians to reread Homer's classic literary work. The resulting connection between the literature and the music will make the entire artistic experience more meaningful and enjoyable.

I wish you the very best in all of your musical endeavors.

ITHACA

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by ROBERT W. SMITH (ASCAP)







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Perc. II

Perc. III

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123

125

Susp. Cym.

124

Cr. Cyms.



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