

CREATURES

Brian Balmages

Instrumentation

1 - Conductor's Full Score
8 - Violin 1
8 - Violin 2
5 - Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
5 - Viola
5 - Violoncello
5 - Double Bass
1 - Piano

FJH is now using a high-speed sorting system for parts.
As a result, all single page parts are collated before multiple page parts.





The Composer

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an active composer, conductor, producer, and performer. He received his bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and his master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. Mr. Balmages's works for symphonic band, orchestra, and brass have been performed throughout the world, including College Band Directors National and Regional Conferences, the Midwest Clinic, the International Tuba/Euphonium Conference, the International Trombone Festival, and the International Trumpet Guild Conference. His active schedule of commissions has included groups ranging from elementary schools to professional ensembles, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony Orchestra, the University of Miami Wind Ensemble, Dominion Brass, and others. He has also enjoyed world premieres in prestigious venues including Carnegie Hall.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys engagements with numerous honor bands, university groups, and professional ensembles throughout the country. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, College Band Directors Regional Conference, Mid-Atlantic Wind Conductors Conference, the Atlantic Classical Orchestra Brass Ensemble, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore. He has also served as an adjunct professor of instrumental conducting and Director of the Symphonic Band at Towson University in Maryland.

Currently, Mr. Balmages is the Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company Inc. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He resides in Baltimore with his wife, Lisa, and their son, Jacob.

About the Music

Creatures is a musical representation of a dark and sinister night full of strange happenings and ghoulish encounters. The piece follows the entrance of these menacing creatures as night falls, and continues to track their mischief until the break of dawn with their quiet retreat back into the shadows.

The opening symbolizes a menacing march as the creatures emerge from the darkness. As the mischief unfolds, the mayhem reaches its peak at measure 33 when strong dissonance is introduced in upper strings. This should be raucous and loud as students explore new notes on their instruments. The music then begins to soften as the audience hears footsteps in retreat of the coming dawn.

Allow students to enjoy the opportunity to explore new notes on their instruments. The increased dissonance will enhance the overall effect and is a great way to introduce the concept of aleatoric music. At measure 39, it is important to sustain the dissonance on beat 3 all the way to measure 41—this is the climax of the entire work. At measure 44, celli are given an optional upper octave to avoid an extended 4th finger with the low F#. However, the lower octave is preferable, and ideally no one need play the upper part.

The distant footsteps involve students stomping their feet on the floor, but this should be done lightly at a *piano* dynamic to blend with the rest of the ensemble. Piano is recommended for the general sound of the work, though no additional notes are added to the strings. At the very least, consider having left hand only (down the octave as indicated). It will make a difference in the overall sound, especially if there are no basses in the group.

String Editing: Soon Hee Newbold

for Kevin and Kristin

CREATURES

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)

Dark and menacing (♩ = 92-100)

Violin 1

Violin 2

**Violin 3
(Viola T.C.)**

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

Piano

L.H. 8vb throughout

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

2

3

4

V

V

V

V

5

6

7

8

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ST6144

9

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Piano

9 10 11 12 13

17

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Piano

14 15 16 17 18

25 div. L2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Piano

24 25 26 27

33

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3
(Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Piano

32 33 34 35 36

play any note

play any note

play any note

play any note

Violin 1

Violin 2

Violin 3
Viola (T.C.)

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Piano

42 43 44 45 46

47

Vln. 1 *p* distant footsteps

Vln. 2 *p* distant footsteps

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) *p* distant footsteps

Vla. *p* distant footsteps

Vcl. *p* 3 4

D.B. *p*

Piano *p* distant footsteps

47 48 49 50

Vln. 1 play *p*

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) play *p*

Vla. play *p*

Vcl. pizz. *pp* *ppp*

D.B. *pp* *ppp*

Piano play *ppp*

51 52 53 54 55