



OLIVERIAN FANTASY

on a theme by Oliver Bartel

Brian Balmages

Instrumentation

- 1 - Full Score
- 8 - Violin 1
- 8 - Violin 2
- 5 - Viola
- 5 - Violoncello
- 5 - Double Bass

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 award-winning composer and conductor. His music has been performed throughout the world with commissions ranging from elementary schools to professional orchestras. World premieres include prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. 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. He is a recipient of the prestigious 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 in 2016 was awarded the James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts (the first year the award was given). 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.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys regular engagements with all-state and region bands and orchestras, as well as university and professional ensembles throughout the world. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, College Band Directors Conference, American School Band Directors Association National Conference and others. Additional conducting appearances have included the Kennedy Center and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall as well as engagements in Australia, Canada and Italy. Currently, he is Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company and Assistant Director of Bands and Orchestras at Towson University.

About the Music

On November 3, 2020, high school sophomore Oliver Bartel passed in his sleep and joined God at the tender age of fifteen. An only child, Oliver was a student at Vero Beach High School where he and his parents were very involved in the orchestra program. It is impossible to comprehend the loss of a child, and the orchestra community rallied around the Bartels. After several weeks had gone by, orchestra director Mark Shuping came up with an incredible way to honor Oliver's legacy forever.

In the spring of 2020, when most schools had gone virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mark posted an assignment that required every student to compose a melody and notate it. He sent me a copy of Oliver's melody, which turned out to be quite beautiful and slightly haunting. He was hoping that I would be able to build a type of fantasy around Oliver's original melody. After looking at it, a ton of ideas immediately started coming to me, and so began *Oliverian Fantasy*.

I have included Oliver's original score (exactly as he submitted it). I chose to use the same key and exact tempo Oliver had indicated. The very first notes of the fantasy are a direct quote from Oliver's melody, a motif that continues to develop throughout the fantasy. The extended introduction explores various textures and tonalities while establishing this motif that becomes the basis of the entire work. Eventually, Oliver's full melody is presented (at measure 19) with minimal alteration. As the piece develops, textures and harmonies change while the melody itself becomes more and more delicate amid a transparent orchestration.

The fantasy then quotes Oliver's secondary theme (measure 35), again with only some minor alterations. Rhythmic elements of this theme ripple through other sections of the orchestra as the music builds into the first powerful statement of Oliver's original theme. The raw power of this passage perfectly portrays the haunting beauty of his melody while hinting at more to come. This leads to a transitional passage that explores the original motif presented in the fantasy. A solo violin further explores elements of Oliver's secondary theme, again rippling through various sections of the ensemble before building to the first arrival of an extended major tonality. This section, the biggest soaring moment of the piece, explores feelings of passion, hope, devastation and grief; all juxtaposed making it difficult to comprehend which feeling is taking the lead.

As the soaring lines subside, the music enters the most beautiful, vulnerable, and intense moment of the work (measure 79). Oliver was a cello player, and this passage features the cello section as the music softly, but confidently rises. This ascension is easily the most transcendent moment in the piece with upward shifting harmonies over the stable embrace of an immovable pedal point in the basses, all representing a rising to Heaven and landing ever so softly on a cloud outside its gates. A cello solo emerges at the end of the work. The solo, a final expression of Oliver's melody, occurs in a different key center than the rest of the orchestra (the orchestra based in the key of D, while the solo is based in the key of A). While these two tonalities seem to exist in separate worlds, three final chords bring the two keys together – a final acknowledgement that these ideas do not exist separately at all; rather, they were always meant to be together, even if the ear did not realize it at first.

Oliverian Fantasy was written for the Vero Beach High School Philharmonic under the direction of Mark Shuping, and is dedicated to Oliver's parents, Scott and Sybil Bartel.

- Brian Balmages

Orchestra Melody Assignment

Oliver B.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. A tempo marking of quarter note = 60 is shown at the beginning. The melody in the treble staff consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter and half notes. Measure numbers 1, 5, 9, and 13 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. A large red watermark reading 'Preview Only - Legal Use Requires Purchase' is overlaid diagonally across the entire page.

commissioned by the Vero Beach High School Philharmonic
Vero Beach, Florida; Mark Shuping, conductor
in memory of Oliver Bartel

OLIVERIAN FANTASY

on a theme by Oliver Bartel

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)

Adagio espressivo e molto legato (♩ = 60)

div. as needed (□)

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

2 3 4 5

poco rit. 9 a tempo

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

6 7 8 9 10 11



Vln. 1 (V) *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vln. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vla. (V) *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vcl. *mp* *mf* *mp*
div. as needed

D.B. (V) *mp* *mf* *mp*

12 13 14 15 16 17

poco rit. **19** *a tempo*

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p* *div. as needed*

Vcl. *p*

D.B. *p*

18 20 21 22

27

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p*

Vcl. *p* *pizz.* *p espress.*

D.B. *p*

23 24 25

43

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vcl. *f*

D.B. *f*

43 *f* 44 45

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

46 47 48 49

rit. 53 a tempo

Vln. 1 *mp*

Vln. 2 *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Vcl. *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

D.B. *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

50 *mp* 51 *mf* 52 53 *p* 54 *mp*

58 animato

Vln. 1 Solo *p*

Vln. 2 (V) *p* *mp* *p* *f* *fp*

Vla. *p* *mp* *p* *fp*

Vcl. *p* *mp* *p* *f* *pizz.* *p*

D.B. *p* *mp* *p* *f* *p*

55 56 57 58 59

Vln. 1 *mp* **tutti** *mp* **poco accel.** **rit.**

Vln. 2 *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vcl. *mp* **arco**

D.B. *mp*

60 61 62 63

64 Tempo I (♩ = 60)

Vln. 1 *ff*

Vln. 2 *ff*

Vla. *ff* 3 3 3

Vcl. *ff* 3 3 3

D.B. *ff*

64 65 66

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.
D.B.

67 68 69 70

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.
D.B.

72

71 75

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.
D.B.

rit. 79 poco meno mosso

76 77 78 79 80 81

86

Vln. 1 *mf* *dim. poco a poco*

Vln. 2 *mf* *dim. poco a poco*

Vla. *mf* *dim. poco a poco*

Vcl. *mf* *dim. poco a poco*

D.B. *mf* *dim. poco a poco*

82 83 84 85 86

poco rit. 92 *a tempo*

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p*

Vcl. *p*

D.B. *p*

88 89 90 91 92 93

Vln. 1 *pp*

Vln. 2 *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vcl. *pp*

D.B. *pp*

94 95 97 98

99

div. (not opt. here)

stagger bow

pp

stagger bow

stagger bow

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

99 100 101 102 103

106

one player

pp

Solo freely

P

pizz.

pp

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

105 106 107 108 109

morendo

morendo

2 players

morendo

morendo

section tutti

section arco

pp

pp

pp

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

110 111 112 113 114