

A Piedmont Celebration

I. Fanfares

II. Nocturne-impressions of the foothills

III. Celebration - a la concertante

Aldo Rafael Forte

A Piedmont Celebration was commissioned by and is dedicated “To Maestro Robert Simon and the Piedmont Wind Symphony of Winston-Salem, NC on the occasion of their 10th Anniversary”. Maestro Robert Simon contacted me in 1999 about composing a work for his band’s 10th Anniversary. This wonderful ensemble had previously performed my music and was one of the first groups to give a post premiere performance of my *Van Gogh Portraits*, a work also published by TRN. Therefore, I was well acquainted with their musical excellence and was thus delighted to accept the commission. Robert and I discussed the parameters of the piece and I set out to compose it. The Piedmont Wind Symphony (PWS) premiered ***A Piedmont Celebration*** on November 2, 2000 in the Brendle Recital Hall at Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, North Carolina and subsequently released it as the title cut of a CD in May 2002. The composition was written during the year 2000. ***A Piedmont Celebration*** is approximately thirteen minutes in length and is cast in three movements. The material for all the movements is derived from similar intervallic relationships.

The first movement, *Fanfares*, is bright and celebratory. It contrasts characteristically fanfare-like rhythms with sudden shifts in mood to dramatic modal passages. A processional and cantabile section adds to the festive “anniversary” atmosphere! Even this section is permeated with the fanfare-like rhythms.

The slow second movement, *Nocturne-impressions of the foothills* is cast in ABA form. It opens with a solo horn playing “quasi lontano” declamatory calls across the foothills (piedmont) at sunset. Afterward there are espressivo passages for the horn soloist over lush and atmospheric harmonies. This leads directly to the B section which develops previously stated material (first introduced by the solo horn) featuring various instrumental groupings. After a tutti climax the A section returns once again featuring the solo horn. The movement ends quietly as nightfall arrives on the Piedmont!

The final movement, *Celebration - a la concertante*, is jubilant and highly energetic. As the name implies, this movement features various instrumental groupings as well as soloists in a concerto-like fashion. The form of this movement is dictated by the kaleidoscopic “collage” of several motifs and festive themes. Like in the first movement, there are once again sudden dramatic and modal harmonic changes. Occasional and unexpected excursions into 10/8 time add to the celebratory feel. The movement ends in joyous fashion commemorating the 10th anniversary of this illustrious ensemble.

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Composer