

***Dance Movements
for Tuba and Two Percussionists***

ALDO RAFAEL FORTE

I. Overture II. Kimonos III. Gargoyles IV. Nocturne V. Tropical Moves

Dance Movements is a suite of five diverse dances for tuba and two percussionists. It was commissioned by the Spokane Symphony Orchestra for three of its members; Leonard Byrne, tubist, Adam Wallstein and Paul Raymond, percussionists at the request of Leonard Byrne for a premiere at a concert of the *Chamber Soiree Concert Series* in Spokane, Washington on March 27 and 28, 2007. The piece is dedicated to the performers.

Leonard and I were high school classmates at Lee High School in Huntsville, Alabama from 1968 – 1971 and played together in the school band and various other ensembles during that time. In 2006, while I was in Tacoma, Washington attending a premiere of one of my works Leonard and I met up again for the first time in years and he asked me to compose this work. The composition is about 14 min. in duration and uses a large array of percussion instruments. The tuba writing runs the gamut from the expressive to the brash and barbaric over the entire practical range of the instrument. Special care has been taken to employ most large percussion in more than one movement so as to make it worthwhile to “drag” those cumbersome instruments out on the stage!

The work opens with the festive and spirited ***I. Overture*** which employs bright harmonies and energetic motifs using mostly Xylophone, Vibes, Tom Toms, and Suspended Cymbal in concert with the Tuba. The second movement, ***II. Kimonos***, makes use of pentatonic scales and other “oriental” harmonic and melodic devices. There are extensive passages for six Thai Gongs, Temple Blocks, Vibes, and Xylo. Suspended Cymbals round out the roster of percussion used. ***III. Gargoyles*** is the noisiest and most aggressive movement of the composition making use of timpani and snare drum, among other percussion. The mood is often ominous and mysterious with quick modal harmonic shifts. ***IV. Nocturne*** is the expressive, sensual, and pretty movement of the set. The music of this movement weaves a web of expressive and sensual themes in a hypnotic fashion. It is cast in a sort of ABA form. The A sections employ vibes and marimba with the tuba while the B section creates richer and darker harmonies by pitting the tuba against timpani and Thai gongs. Finally, the work ends with ***V. Tropical Moves***, a Latin romp of a movement wherein the tuba takes to the Caribbean cabaret backed up by marimba, vibes, and bongos hammering out all sorts of Latin rhythms.

Aldo Rafael Forte