

TABLEAUX

BALLET FOR DOUBLE QUINTET (wind quintet and brass quintet)

Prologue – Dances in Pairs – Mandarin Dance – Harlequin Dance –

Levitation (love theme) – Danse Finale

Aldo Rafael Forte

(ASCAP)

Tableaux is a “ballet” for double quintet consisting of six contrasting dances which are played virtually without pause. Composed in 1999 it was revised in a new edition in 2019. The work is dedicated to Conductor Keelan McCamey and the Heritage Brass Quintet and Tradewinds Wind Quintet of the USAF Heritage of America Band, Larry Lang, Commander. The group premiered the work in concert in November 1999 and subsequently recorded it on their album titled “Tableaux”. ORIGINAL PERFORMERS: Keelan McCamey, conductor, Wind Quintet: (Sherry Burt - flute/piccolo, Erin Gittelsohn - oboe, Melinda Burts - clarinet, Roger Novak - horn, Michael Bender - bassoon). Brass Quintet: (Michael Huff and Phillip Holland - trumpets, David Crites - horn, Jemmie Robertson - trombone, Phillip Burke- tuba).

Tableaux is indeed an essay into the wide palette of tone color combinations which are to be found in this chamber music medium. The first and last scenes treat the group largely as a "wind ensemble" while the middle four scenes are more chamber-like. Throughout, there are obvious contrasts between the woodwind quintet and the brass quintet. The contrasting dances are held together by motifs derived from similar intervallic relationships. The pitches of D and A are central to the tonal structure with Bb providing secondary influence.

The word tableaux, *short for tableau vivant*, here refers to living pictures or striking scenes where the listener can “see” striking musical scenes coming to life on stage. The scenes (dances) often end with sudden "stops" or on a trill under a fermata. However, the total effect of the piece is one of continuous movement from beginning to end such as in the tableaux of Stravinsky's "Petrouchka". The composition is roughly 16 min. in duration. The work is published solely by Aldo Forte Music Press and available at www.aldoforte.com

"Prologue", the first scene, functions as an "overture" to the ballet. It begins with a solo clarinet cadenza signifying one lone dancer on stage. The music quickly blossoms to expose the full force of the ensemble while it presents a variety of moods laying out the material upon which the entire work is based.

"Dances in Pairs" presents "couples" of dancers (oboe and bassoon, the two horns, flute and clarinet, trombone and tuba, and the two trumpets) and gradually builds up to use the entire ensemble. (The idea of "pairs" is a nod to Bartok's "Game of Pairs" from his Concerto for Orchestra).

The *"Mandarin Dance"* has a decidedly oriental flavor with its piquant use of pentatonic scales and the "forbidden" parallel fifths!

The next dance, *"Harlequin Dance"* is cast in a loose rondo form and largely centered around the pitch of A. The periodic medieval and renaissance inflections recall the days of the medieval and renaissance court jester. In this scene, the bassoon is "our" court jester.

The pitch of A becomes the bridge to the *"Levitation (Love Theme)"*, musically depicting a magician "levitating" his/her subject in mid - air. Cast in an ABA form, the scene features solos for oboe and piccolo which gradually rise in pitch ("levitate") to the upper tessituras of the respective instruments and then "lets the instruments back down" gradually. Between these solos is a lyrical and expressive "love theme" for brass quintet which also "levitates".

The *"Danse Finale"* is highly spirited. It develops and transforms material from the opening clarinet cadenza which has not been heard since the beginning of the work! After energetic gestures in shifting meters, there is a brief chorale-like "Andante Religioso" based on the chords which are found in bars 43 and 44 of the piece. The work ends in a festive mood intoning material from the "Prologue".

CD released on Naxos Records

https://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=75442261572

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Composer

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