

TABLEAUX

BALLET FOR DOUBLE QUINTET

*Prologue - Dances in Pairs - Mandarin Dance - Harlequin Dance -
Levitation (love theme) - Danse Finale*

Aldo Rafael Forte

Tableaux is a ballet for double quintet consisting of six contrasting scenes which are played virtually without pause. The work was completed in late 1999 and is dedicated to Conductor 2Lt Keelan E. McCamey and the Heritage Brass Quintet and Tradewinds Woodwind Quintet of the USAF Heritage of America Band, Capt Larry H. Lang, Commander. 2Lt McCamey and the quintets gave the world premiere of the piece in November 1999.

Several months ago 2Lt Keelan E. McCamey, Deputy Commander of the USAF Heritage of America Band, approached me about writing this work. When he introduced me to the "Concertino for Woodwind and Brass Quintets" by Robert Washburn, I was immediately intrigued by this unique grouping of instruments and its varied possibilities. **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 word **Tableaux** means not only scenes but also ballet scenes which are "frozen" in time. Thus, scenes 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 as in each of the tableaux of Stravinsky's "Petrouchka". The material for the entire work is derived from an ascending or descending second followed by a third or fourth in the opposite direction. The pitches of D and A are central to the tonal structure of the work, with Bb also providing some influence. Throughout the piece there are periodic intrusions of Spanish gypsy music, an idea suggested to me by 2Lt McCamey.

"*Prologue*", the first scene, functions as an "overture" to the ballet. It begins with a solo clarinet cadenza signifying one lonely 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 "*Mandarin Dance*" has a decidedly oriental flavor with its piquant use of pentatonic scales and the "forbidden" parallel fifths!