

James M Stephenson

You have reached the city limits

Commissioned by the Grant Park Orchestral Association

Wind Ensemble transcription commissioned by "The President's Own" US Marine Band; Lt. Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director, with additional support from the ensembles listed below.

duration: 12 minutes

instrumentation:

Note: the composer suggests doubling of flutes and clarinets is acceptable.

piccolo - 2 flutes - 2 oboes - English horn - 3 Bb clarinets - bass clarinet - 2 bassoons - contrabassoon
saxophone 1 (soprano/alto), alto saxophone 2, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone
4 French horns - 3 C trumpets (trumpet 1 includes Bb cornet and Bb piccolo trumpet)
2 trombones - bass trombone - euphonium (2 players) - tuba (2 players)
timpani + 4 percussion
harp
piano (piano includes concert grand piano + optional (preferred) upright piano. Upright piano should be amplified if needed.)
2 basses - (if possible)

percussion instruments needed:

- Perc 1: Mallets:** Marimba, Vibes (shared), Crotales, Glockenspiel, Xylophone
Percussion: Snare Drum, Wax paper (see note), Sus. Cym
- Perc 2: Mallets:** Marimba, Xylophone, Crotales
- Perc 3: Hi-Hat, Splash Cym, Sus. Cym, Cym a2, Triangle, Wax paper, Bass Drum, Snare Drum**
- Perc 4: Mallets:** Glockenspiel (shared), Vibes (shared)
Percussion: Bass Drum, Triangle, Wax paper, Sus. Cym, Tambourine, Vibra-Slap, Tam-tam, Cym. a2

***Note:** Wax paper preferred (even if amplification is needed);
if not possible, then scraping a wire brush on drumhead can be substituted

Program notes, from the composer:

I'm a proud Chicagoan, through and through. I was born here, and later in life, when the opportunity came about to relocate, there was no doubt that the Chicago area would become home. As such, I've been to hear the Grant Park Symphony many times, and when the opportunity arose to write a piece for the festival, I couldn't have been more thrilled. I wanted to write a piece that would recognize the venue and orchestra for which I was writing, as well as the city I call home. One can't help but notice when attending a GPMF concert that any performance might be accompanied by people chatting, sirens wailing, unexpected weather, and more. I wanted to write a piece that might embrace that, rather than worry about it. Also, I've long known (as we all have) that Chicago is well-known for its blues tradition. From the early 1920s with the Red Hot Peppers, through Muddy Waters a few decades later, through today, Chicago is famous for its down-home and gritty blues. "You have reached the city limits" explores the idea of a young couple deciding to "hit the town". The protagonist (the solo violin) eggs their partner along to have some fun, and make a night of it. The partner (trumpet) complains and hesitates. Finally, they head out, and dash through the city, and happen upon two blues clubs. The first represents the blues from the 1920s, viewed through a smoky lens of history. A solo clarinet, piano, trumpet, and trombone remind us of what that might have sounded like. A little bit later, they enter a club playing the mid-century gritty blues. The music gets a bit edgier, with harmonica-like sounds and again a solo piano representing that era. Finally they are off again on their own, having a great time, and when the orchestra swells to a giant climax, the truth is revealed that all they needed to do was spend some time together, enjoying one another's company, to satisfy their urge for fun. Lastly, I'll mention that I was delighted to learn that Giancarlo Guerrero would be conducting this premiere. I've long admired his work on the podium, and it is a true statement that the energy within this piece was in part due to my imagination of what he would bring to this - as he does to all music - on the podium.

My most sincere thanks to the Grant Park Orchestral Association for this fun opportunity, and to my hometown of Chicago, and all of the people who have made it so, for the inspiration. Thank you as well to Lt. Col. Ryan Nowlin, who listened to the work, and supported the creation of a version for "The President's Own" US Marine Band.

- Jim Stephenson; March 15, 2024, and January 7, 2026.



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My sincere thanks for the additional support coming from the following ensembles and directors:

Southeastern Louisiana University: Robert Schwartz, Director of Bands
The Ohio State University: Russel Mikkelsen, Director of Bands
University of Alabama: Ken Ozzello, Director of Bands
University of Illinois: Kevin Gerdahl, Director of Bands
University of Texas at Austin: Jerry Junkin, Director of Bands
West Chester University: Andrew Yozviak, Director of Bands
Western Illinois University: Mike Fansler, Director of Bands

Score

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freely ad lib

The score is arranged in a standard wind ensemble layout. The instruments listed on the left are: Piccolo, Flute 1-2, Oboe 1-2, English Horn, Bassoon 1-2, Contrabassoon, Bb Clarinet 1-2, Bb Clarinet 3, Bass Clarinet, Alto/Sop Sax 1, Alto Sax 2, Tenor Sax, Baritone Sax, Horn 1-2, Horn 3-4, C Trumpet 1-2, C Trumpet 3, Trombone 1-2, Bass Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Contrabass, Harp, Piano/Guitar/Keyboard, Timpani, and Percussion 1-4. The Tenor Sax part includes performance instructions: *sofa*, *start slowly and gradually increase repeated notes until at a forte; then reverse the process*, *ad lib*, and *quickly*. The score is divided into four measures.

rit. *accel.*

27

Flcc

CL 1,2

CL 3

B. CL

A. Sax 1,2

T. Sax

B. Sax

slowly driving forward with anger and insistence

27

Fla 1,2

Fla 3,4

Tpt 1,2

Tpt 3

Tbn 1,2

B. Tbn

Euph.

Tuba

27

CB

27

Timp.

Perc. 1

3/

A. Sax 1,2

(A. Sax. solo opt)

T. Sax

B. Sax

die again, dramatically accel. to *f*

Allegro

die again, dramatically accel. to *f*

dramatically accel. to *f*

dramatically accel. to *f*