

Somewhere Unknown

for orchestra

Liz Lane

Somewhere Unknown is the last movement of a large-scale symphonic work for orchestra and the central focus of my PhD; although it is integrally linked to the preceding movements, it is also intended to stand-alone in its own right. It was written in 2004 during the two months following the sad death of my Mother and was partly a direct emotional response to that period in my life; however, despite these sad circumstances, it also aspires towards a positive and more optimistic future.

The overall concept is of a broad, continuously evolving landscape, intentionally rich in orchestral texture and tonality but with a bitter-sweet contemporary twist. There are four indistinct sections, each with its own musical characteristics but bound together by linking music threads. Low juxtaposing and slow-moving pedal notes, occasionally brightened by harp motifs, set the scene for an expansive and gradually expanding film-like sequence, followed by an extended lyrical section in which solo instrumental phrases intertwine as the music becomes more impassioned. A sparser change of mood features unison horns and a slow, intense, build-up of orchestral colour, further characterized by tubular bells ostinati and culminating in a fleeting climax highlighted by a sparkling trumpet motif. In the closing section, violins soar above a modified version of the opening sequence whilst the bells continue unremittingly; the coda is sustained by an ebb and flow of dissonance but near resolution is only partly achieved before the music gradually dies away, leaving the bells to fade to nothing.

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May 2009

Orchestra:

2 Flutes (2nd dbl. piccolo)
2 Oboes (2nd dbl. cor anglais)
2 Clarinets in Bb (2nd dbl. bass clarinet)
2 Bassoons
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in Bb
3 Trombones
Tuba
Timpani
2 Percussion [bass drum, tam tam, tubular bells]
Harp
Strings (minimum 12.10.8.6.4)

Duration: 9 minutes

Score is transposed

Somewhere Unknown was first performed by the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera,
conductor Andrew Greenwood, Wales Millennium Centre, 19th October 2008.