War Chant

Evan Ziporyn

War Chant
for orchestra by Evan Ziporyn

Length: 14 minutes

Instrumentation
3 Flutes (one doubling Piccolo, one doubling Alto Flute)
2 Oboes
2 B-flat Clarinets
2 Bassoons
4 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C
2 Tenor Trombones
1 Bass Trombone
Percussion 1:
- Timpani
- 4 temple blocks
- Sleigh bells
- Chinese flat cymbal
- Tambourine
- Snare drum

Percussion 2:
- Sleigh bells
- Guiro
- 2 Bongos
- Cowbell
- Triangle
- Snare drum
- Bass drum
- Glockenspiel

Percussion 3:
- Sleigh bells
- Suspended Cymbal
- Guiro
- Tamtam
- Crotales
- Glockenspiel
- Xylophone
- Log Drum

Piano
Harp
Hawaiian Steel Guitar (w/slide)
Strings: minimum 8-8-6-6-3

Program notes by the composer

We live in an age of war; sadly, we all know this now. The airport is the new battlefield and the jumbo jet the weapon of choice, so we are told, and so we believe. But this is really nothing new: the fear of death has always been a traveling companion. The screams of the machinery soothe us, and nothing is more terrifying than the wrong type of metallic scrape, knock, or, worst of all, silence. Recently, the US Airways shuttle from Logan to LaGuardia began force-feeding its passengers the Fox News Network, and it seemed clear to me that this was the perfect battle music for the new frontline.

I recorded a recent shuttle trip, a symphony of mechanical accelerations, punctuated by the gentle beeps of the seatbelt sign and the reassurances and warnings of the flight attendant. The engine's primal howl is subsumed by soothing corporate lyricism, and we probably wouldn't be able to have it any other way. As will be apparent, the structure of War Chant is based on this necessary dialectic. As for the content, it concerns a similar musical opposition. On the one hand there is Xenakis, who speaks only the raw truth; on the other Juan Garcia Esquivel, master of pleasure and fantasy. I had a crazy dream of trying to write music that somehow paid homage to both, without compromise or irony. This is my attempt at that reconciliation.

War Chant was commissioned by the Catherine and Paul Buttenwieser Foundation.

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War Chant

Evan Ziporyn

♩ = 60

Piccolo
Flute 1
Flute 2/Alto Flute
Oboes 1.2
Clarinet in B♭ 1.2
Bassoon 1.2
Horn in F 1.2.3.4
Trumpet in C 1.2
Trombone 1.2
Bass Trombone
Timpani
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Percussion 3
Piano
Harp
Hawaiian Steel Guitar

♩ = 60

Violin I 1
Violin I 2
Violin I 3
Violin I 4
Violin I 5
Violin I 6
Violin I 7
Violin I 8
Violin II 1
Violin II 2
Violin II 3
Violin II 4
Violin II 5
Violin II 6
Violin II 7
Violin II 8
Viola 1
Viola 2
Viola 3
Viola 4
Viola 5
Viola 6
Violoncello 1
Violoncello 2
Violoncello 3
Violoncello 4
Violoncello 5
Violoncello 6
Double Bass 1
Double Bass 2
Double Bass 3

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Fl. 1
Fl.2/A.F.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
B. Tbn.
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Vln. I 1
Vln. I 2
Vln. I 3
Vln. I 4
Vln. I 5
Vln. I 6
Vln. I 7
Vln. I 8
Vln. II 1
Vln. II 2
Vln. II 3
Vln. II 4
Vln. II 5
Vln. II 6
Vln. II 7
Vln. II 8
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vla. 4
Vla. 5
Vla. 6
Db. 1
Db. 2
Db. 3

mp solo *mp* solo *mp*

Glockenspiel *p*

xylophone *p*

n.v. *pp*