

Hail the Emperor

Instrumentation: Symphony Orchestra: (2,2,2,2-4,2,2,1, timp, 4 perc, hp, str)

Duration: 8'50"

Completed: 2008

Hail the Emperor was my first work for symphony orchestra I wrote during my undergraduate studies at the University of Tennessee. If you think the title is a little on the grandiose side, you are right. I was attempting to convey the feeling of pride, pomp, awe, and splendor. I was imagining an emperor returning from his conquests, entering the city gates with great pageantry and spoils of victory.

To this end I have utilized the power of the brass section in multiple solo fanfares and as a unit. I also scattered driving triplets throughout all orchestra choirs and the percussion. The emperor (anticipation) theme sweeps widely across horns and strings. I attempted to evoke an oriental feel by employing the pentatonic scale and parallel voice leading. And to top off the drama, I threw in a few crashes of the Chinese gong, also known as Tam-tam.

The middle section of the work gives stage to the string orchestra where I transform the emperor theme into a lyrical counterpoint culminating in a dissonant outburst. The final section brings back the driving triplets and the testosterone-driven emperor returns with more force and drama. Everything ends with grandiose fireworks (musically speaking) with the audience hailing the Emperor. Did I mention "grandiose"?