

Excessive Force

for Wind Ensemble

INSTRUMENTATION:

piccolo
flute I
flute II
oboe I
oboe II
bassoon I
bassoon II
Eb clarinet
Bb clarinet I
Bb clarinet II
Bb clarinet III
bass clarinet
alto saxophone I
alto saxophone II
tenor saxophone
baritone saxophone

cornet I
cornet II
cornet III
trumpets I-II
horn I
horn II
horn III
horn IV
trombone I
trombone II
trombone III
euphonium
tuba
double bass

timpani
percussion I (2 players--not drum set):
1. hi hat
snare drum
ride cymbal
marimba
water gong
bass drum
2.
percussion II:
suspended cymbal (yarn mallets, stick, & triangle
beaters)
crash cymbals
xylophone
shaker (cylindrical)
percussion III:
3 tom toms (sticks, hard felt mallets)
large tam tam
crotales
triangle
chimes
wind chimes
percussion IV
chimes
marimba
xylophone
glockenspiel
vibraphone (1 bow & 3 yarn mallets)

ABOUT THE WORK:

Excessive Force is a short concert overture in two sections. It was premiered on November 1, 2002 by the Utah State University Wind Orchestra with the composer conducting. The work demonstrates a strophic form of two “verses” based on similar material but in different resultant themes, each concluded by a summative melodic statement based on the original theme. Each of the two sections includes a highly-charged melody of its own, based on the octatonic scale, followed by a more sustained canonic section based on the second theme.

The work begins with an introduction that solidifies the octatonic melodic character. After a tutti interjection, the first theme appears in the horns, euphoniums, and clarinets that leads to a fanfarish tutti led by the brass. After a second statement of the tune—this time accompanied by a bebop-like motor rhythm, the second theme appears in triple canon in the subsequent sustained section, first in the clarinets, then in the saxophones. The section continues with an eight-measure ground bass, first alone, then with a modal triple canon by the trumpets and woodwind trio, respectively.

The opening section ends with a modified restatement of the first theme, leading directly to the second section, defined rhythmically by sixteenth notes—derived from the bebop countermelody—distributed over a mixed metered version of the triple canon theme in the horns and euphoniums. The sustained canonic section then returns, highlighting soloists in the woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, alto sax) and the brass/percussion (trumpet, horn, trombone, and cymbal).

The final summation occurs after a fermata-like chord based on stacked major triads a major second apart, a common vertical structure in the work. The closing material contains two variants on the first theme, separated by a drumset-like fill. The ending presents fragments of both themes, including the bebop countermelody that flashes to the very end.

Excessive Force is written for and dedicated to the students of the Utah State University Bands, for their dedication to the craft, sincere interest in the best in music, and personal support of my family and myself. The technical demands are not intended to be “excessive,” but they are instead designed to the talents of specific individuals in the Utah State University Wind Orchestra as a personal compliment to their musical skill.

— Thomas P. Rohrer, November 1, 2002