

Home is where the heart is. Sometimes, it is a geographical location, and other times, it is simply a thought or feeling of a loved one and the comfort zone their presence affords. *Homeland Suite* reflects on selected locations that the composer called “home” during his career, generalizing the sentiment that all feel for the people and places that meant the most in their lifetime.

*Homeland Suite*, then, is a musical representation of “Home,” beginning with the underlying motive, “The Heart of It All,” which figuratively and literally—in a musical sense—is the basis for the entire work. The four movements travel the gamut of emotions from the inner sanctum (Movement 1) to enjoyable and humorous travels (Movement 2), through the challenging trials of everyday life (Movement 3) and finally to a return home (Movement 4), whether literally or simply in the myriad of fond memories of the individual’s own “Promised Land.”

The work is an active manipulation of the harmonic structure of a suspended fourth triad. The resulting whole step is maximized through the use of ninth chords, and the projection of fourths is also a common melodic motive. Strategic use of this trichord provides the harmonic basis for a variety of melodies, all derived from the initial trichord.

I. “The Heart of It All” The first movement is a fanfare introduced by an initial triplet theme (hereafter referred to as the “fanfare theme”) in the cornets and horns followed by two other themes, stated by the woodwinds and horns, respectively. The movement ends as it begins, with the initial brass “fanfare,” quotes of which return in the other movements to unify the entire work. This movement won the Dallas Wind Symphony’s composition contest in 2003 in a brass ensemble version, written in tribute to the bicentennial of the State of Ohio. The title is a former slogan for the state, prominently displayed on license plates in the early 1990s.

II. “The Black Swamp” The second movement introduces a saxophone ostinato based on the suspended fourth trichord. The movement is capricious. . . sometimes distant, sometimes forthcoming, but never intimate. Described by the term, Subtle Funk, the work begins as an ostinato based on the suspended fourth trichord. The subsequent opening theme appears in the oboes/clarinets and is succeeded by a transparent interlude before restating the opening theme. A fanfare-like transition (quoting the fanfare of “The Heart of It All”) leads to a secondary theme, first stated by a oboe solo. The two themes combine, along with the ostinato, before a climactic build into a coda, which diminishes in energy around the ostinato and quotes of the two themes to a quiet finish.

As an over-generalization, The Great Black Swamp is the Maumee River Valley, comprising most of Northwestern Ohio. The region was the last settled in Ohio, nearly 100 years after statehood was attained in 1803. Large drainage ditches define the region, as well as the fertile farmland that results.

III. “The Grindstone” Although work is motivating in itself, daily challenges in search of the resting place we call “home” are sometimes difficult. The third movement begins with an extended percussion interlude—depicting the patience and solitary perseverance required to achieve the ultimate goal; the section is based on the triplet figure of the opening fanfare. Following is a fast section of brass interjections over a quick-moving bass line based on the suspended fourth trichord. A busy sixteenth-note texture in the upper woodwinds then provides a backdrop for a pyramiding of brass chords. The ostinato bass line then returns before a section of short layered motives, begun by the percussion. The layering builds to a climax on the brass pyramid/woodwind sixteenth-note motive before abruptly ending with a homophonic statement derived from the “fanfare theme.”

IV. “Homecoming” After the joys and sorrows that define the journey away from “home,” the return is ever so sweet. Ironically, the experiences during the time away redefine each stop as having its own identity, becoming a home away from home in itself. “Home” is not the same as we left it, as there are only pleasant reminders of past times; now imbedded with the recent memories of the stops along the journey.

This finale is a modified rondo form (intro-ABACABA), with the A theme itself coming in three parts (“a” “b” “a1”) and—in tribute to the trichord on which the entire suite is based—always cadences with a #4-3 suspension in the horns. On each successive statement of the A theme, one part is removed to result in shorter statements each time (i.e. “a” “b” “a1”; “b” “a1”; then “a1”). The B theme is an extended version of the secondary theme from Movement 2 along with brief quotes of the saxophone’s ostinato, now appearing in other voices in 6/8 meter. The C theme is derived from the opening “fanfare” of Movement 1 following by a 6/8 version of the layered figures of Movement 3. The finale, then, is a fitting synthesis of the entire suite. . . a strategic development of individual musical elements and instrumental colors over a canvas of rhythmic energy.

## **INSTRUMENTATION:**

piccolo	trumpet I	timpani
flute 1	trumpet II	
flute 2	trumpet III	percussion 1
oboe 1	trumpet IV (opt'l)	(S.D., ride cym., B.D.): 2 players
oboe 2	cornet 1-2	percussion 2
English Horn (opt'l)	horn I	(C.C., S.C.)
bassoon 1	horn II	percussion 3
bassoon 2	horn III	(vibes, xylo, glock, C.C., mba,
eb clarinet	horn IV	4 toms, claves, tam tam, tambourine)
Bb clarinet 1	trombone I	percussion 4
Bb clarinet 2	trombone II	(mba, tam tam, 2 tri., glock.,
Bb clarinet 3	bass trombone	grand pno., cylindrical shaker, xylo,
bass clarinet	euphonium	cabasa)
alto saxophone 1	tuba	
alto saxophone 2	cello (opt'l)	
tenor saxophone	double bass	
baritone saxophone		
bass saxophone (opt'l)		