

More About **INTERLUDE FOR ORCHESTRA**

In the summer of 1966, right after my first year of college, I decided to put what I had learned in Freshman Theory to work and wrote two fairly long (for that time) compositions: a setting of a Christmas poem for soprano and piano and an orchestral essay which I named **Interlude for Orchestra**. The solo was sung once on Christmas Eve that year at my home town church, but having no orchestra available to try it out, I never even copied out parts for the orchestral score. They both promptly disappeared into the drawer of obscurity.

As I learned more about composition over the ensuing years, the likelihood of either of those youthful attempts ever seeing the light of day again got less and less. I eventually all but forgot about them.

More than 5 decades went by. Then one day in 2019, I got an e-mail from the current band director at my old high school in Wells, NY. She had found the manuscript of a transcription of **Interlude for Orchestra** that I had written for concert band and given to my old band director there. That took me totally by surprise, as I didn't then and still do not recall ever having written it. But I must have done it (maybe in my sleep?) because she has it, and she was even in the process of entering it onto a music notation platform.

That got me to thinking about the piece and eventually I dug out the manuscript score of the original orchestra composition. I was actually quite impressed by what I found, so I did some entering of my own and transcribed it onto Finale.

Of course it was naïve and lacking in polish. Some of the material was trite and repetitious. My orchestration was cumbersome, with way too much doubling. Having no coherent form, it jumped all over the place, and I was guilty of introducing ideas then promptly abandoning them (a bad habit that I was cured of a few years later in graduate school by Carlisle Floyd). But...I was shocked to see that in spite of its shortcomings, there was actually a lot of worthwhile material in there, and I thought the piece might be worth saving!

So I set to work to see what I could do with it. I have done a similar process to salvage several of my earlier concert band compositions and arrangements, as well as a truly massive revision project on my 1973 clarinet concerto, so I had a pretty good idea of what to expect and how to deal with it.

I spiced up some boring harmonies, extended the troublesome abandonments, curtailed or varied a few places where repetition got tedious, added some countermelodies, and did a lot of re-orchestration. I wanted to keep the themes and basic outlines of the original piece, so the form is still fairly free, and I may have left in some questionable material...especially the brass flourishes that are reminiscent of so many "epic" motion pictures...although I did some work on that section to make it sound much less hackneyed than the original version.

The final product doesn't much resemble anything I would write from scratch today, but still I am quite satisfied with how it turned out, a "new" composition, 54 years in the making.