

With All Thy Might

Ralph Hultgren

Commissioned by the Co-Curricular Activities
Branch, Ministry of Education of Singapore, for the
Singapore Youth Festival Central Judging of
Concert Bands (Primary Schools) 2006

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Program Note:

Membership of a school band demands much of the student. They have to practice to improve their technique, practice to master the band music, learn new skills to develop their contribution to the band and then they also have to learn the theory and associated matters to understand what they are doing when playing the band repertoire.

At the school my two youngest children attend there is an award that is made that comes from teacher nominations. The award recognises a student's demonstration of "outstanding attitude and behaviour" and the nomination criteria state that the student:

- Gives their best
- Has an excellent work ethic
- Is cooperative
- Is well mannered
- Wears the uniform properly

The student may not be the top student in any one subject but they give of their best. In band they could be the third clarinet player or the triangle player. They may be new to band and inexperienced. Much of what confronts them might be frightening or confusing but they commit to the band and the teacher and to their own sense of what is right. In fact, they have to give of themselves with all their might!

This work is a tribute to those students and the teachers who inspire them to such heights. This work is my personal "With All Thy Might" award to those people around the world, especially in Singapore, who commissioned it, and at Kelvin Grove State College in Brisbane who inspired the title (and my children).

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Rehearsal Notes:

The piece is written to be played by full concert band **or** by brass and percussion alone. Therefore:

- E flat horns should be used in the brass and percussion setting.
- The instruction "play only when no clarinets" (50) should be heeded in the concert band performance.

The following considerations should be taken into account.

- Ensure the tempo is not rushed (around 96 minims per minute please) and the style is in a processional mode.
- This is music of ceremony and celebration and should be approached with that in mind (please read the program note thoroughly).
- All accents and dynamics are to be played with an awareness of the style and with solid breathe support.
- The melody at 11 (f.f.) should be presented with confidence and purpose.
- The counter melody presented against it (31) must reflect the style of the work but as a new idea within that style.
- At 50 the music becomes more reflective and smooth but the accompanying figures should continue the musical pulse in a supportive manner.
- At 81 the style changes dramatically and the heroic nature of the music must be reflected in the breath support given to the notes and accents.
- The music then recapitulates earlier material and the finish should remain in style and with consideration of what has been presented in these notes.