From Marathon to Athens

for orchestra

by

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A Musical Composition Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved November 2010 by the Graduate Supervisory Committee:

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ABSTRACT

*From Marathon to Athens* was inspired by the legend of Pheidippides, a Greek messenger who ran approximately twenty-six miles between the cities of Marathon and Athens in ancient Greece to deliver an important wartime message. According to the legend, he died shortly after completing the journey. The marathon races of today were inspired by his story, though it may be more myth than reality.

There is a great deal of inherent drama in the undertaking of such a feat, whether it be a marathon or any other test of strength and endurance. There is the rush of adrenaline when it begins, followed by the excitement and exhilaration of the first few miles. Then, there is a period of settling in and finding a groove – when the runner realizes that there is a long way to go, but is determined to pace him or herself and stay strong. All too often, there is the “wall” that appears about three-quarters of the way through, when it seems that there is no strength left to finish the race. Finally, there is the final push to the finish line – where the runner decides that they are going to make it, in spite of fatigue, pain, or any other obstacle.

In this piece, I used a simple melody that was very loosely modeled after a melody from ancient Greece (the tune inscribed on the *Epitaph of Seikilos*). I used both Phrygian and Dorian modes, which, according to Plato, were most appropriate for soldiers. Throughout the piece, I used different instruments, mostly percussion, to represent the heartbeat of the runner. In the legend, the
runner dies – in the piece, the heartbeat becomes very fast and then rather erratic. It then slows and, finally, stops. Though I find the story of Pheidippides inspiring, I wish all marathon runners and athletes of every kind (myself included) a safer and happier outcome!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The composition of this orchestral piece, as well as that of the other materials required for this degree, was greatly assisted by the help of my committee members.

I would like to thank Dr. Glenn Hackbarth and Dr. Jody Rockmaker for their guidance throughout this process. During the past few years, I have grown as a musician and a composer, and I realize that studying composition with both of them has been a significant part of that experience. I truly appreciate their knowledge and expertise and would like to thank them for sharing it with me.

I would like to thank Dr. Benjamin Levy and Dr. Kay Norton for their assistance with my research paper. Both of them, in different ways, have helped me grow as a teacher (by serving as excellent examples) and I am grateful for that. During my doctoral studies, I feel I have developed a true interest in the integration of music with other areas of study, such as psychology. The research paper is a reflection of this interest. I would like to thank them for helping me to explore something that I find both interesting and meaningful.
INSTRUMENTATION

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
English Horn
2 Clarinets (B-flat)
2 Bassoons
4 Horns
2 Trumpets (C)
2 Trombones
Tuba
Timpani

Percussion – 3 Players

Player 1 – glockenspiel, crotales, marimba

Player 2 – bass drum 🎷, triangle 🎷, wind chimes 🎷

tam-tam 🎷, vibraphone, tubular bells,

suspended cymbal 🎷, tambourine 🎷

Player 3 – four tom-toms 🎷, small bass drum 🎷

Harp

Strings

This is a transposed score.

Duration: approximately 9 minutes
From Marathon To Athens

Kim Osteen-Petreshock

with solemnity

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

English Horn

2 Clarinets in Bb

2 Bassoons

Horns 1 & 2

Horns 3 & 4

2 C Trumpets

2 Trombones

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Percussion 3

Harp

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass
with growing energy

A
with a calm sense of forward motion
with growing agitation
with a sense of being under extreme duress
passionately and dramatically
with an high level of
determination and focus
as if winding down
N
with tragic nobility
and grace