



Commissioned by and dedicated to Mr. Tom Mitchell
and the Challenger Middle School Band, Huntsville, AL

To Challenge the Sky and Heavens Above

Robert W. Smith (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
- 3 1st Flute
- 3 2nd Flute
- 2 Oboe
- 3 1st B $\flat$ Clarinet
- 3 2nd B $\flat$ Clarinet
- 3 3rd B $\flat$ Clarinet
- 1 E $\flat$ Alto Clarinet
- 2 B $\flat$ Bass Clarinet
- 2 Bassoon
- 2 1st E $\flat$ Alto Saxophone
- 2 2nd E $\flat$ Alto Saxophone
- 1 B $\flat$ Tenor Saxophone
- 1 E $\flat$ Baritone Saxophone
- 3 1st B $\flat$ Trumpet
- 3 2nd B $\flat$ Trumpet
- 3 3rd B $\flat$ Trumpet

- 2 1st F Horn
- 2 2nd F Horn
- 3 1st Trombone
- 2 2nd Trombone
- 2 Baritone
- 1 Baritone Treble Clef
- 4 Tuba
- 4 Mallet Percussion
(Bells, Vibraphone, Chimes, Marimba)
- 1 Timpani
- 4 Percussion I
(Wind Chimes, Snare Drum, Bass Drum,
Congas)
- 3 Percussion II
(Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbals,
Large Beaded Gourd)

SUPPLEMENTAL AND WORLD PARTS

Available for download from
www.alfred.com/worldparts

- 1st Horn in E $\flat$
- 2nd Horn in E $\flat$
- 1st Trombone in B $\flat$ Treble Clef
- 2nd Trombone in B $\flat$ Treble Clef
- Tuba in E $\flat$ Treble Clef
- Tuba in B $\flat$ Treble Clef

TO CHALLENGE THE SKY AND HEAVENS ABOVE

ROBERT W. SMITH (ASCAP)

PROGRAM NOTE

TO CHALLENGE THE SKY AND HEAVENS ABOVE draws its inspiration from the rich aerospace history surrounding the Huntsville, Alabama area. The creative seeds for the composition were found in the novel *OCTOBER SKY* by Homer Hickam, a West Virginia native who made his home in Huntsville and the aerospace industry. Through the eyes and courage of a young boy, Mr. Hickam captured the fascination that we all find in our dreams of flight. Mr. Hickam was inspired as a young man by the work of Wernher von Braun and dreamed to follow in his footsteps through the space program.

This piece draws upon the vision and bravery of those who soared through the heavens above. The Huntsville area has continually affected our world because visionaries such as Wernher von Braun and his team of scientists laid the foundation for modern space flight and exploration. Von Braun (1912–1977) was one of the world's foremost rocket engineers and a leading authority on space travel. Von Braun directed teams that built the rockets that sent the first American into space and landed the first astronauts on the moon.

In 1945, von Braun led a group of German scientists who surrendered to the United States Army. He and 116 others were sent to the United States to work on guided missile systems. In 1950, the Army assigned von Braun and his team to the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, to develop the first large U.S. ballistic missile. Von Braun became a U.S. citizen in 1955.

In 1960, the Army transferred von Braun and his team to Huntsville's new George C. Marshall Space Flight Center, operated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Von Braun's team developed the four-stage Jupiter rocket that launched Explorer 1, the first United States earth satellite. Another of the group's rockets, the Redstone, launched America's first astronaut, Alan B. Shepard, Jr., in 1961. Other von Braun projects included the Saturn rockets. In 1969, a Saturn 5 rocket launched the astronauts who made the first landing on the moon.

This piece was commissioned by and dedicated to Mr. Tom Mitchell and the Challenger Middle School Band. This talented ensemble premiered the work in May of 1999. As the name of the school suggests, this is a very special band in a very special place.

NOTE TO CONDUCTOR

The introduction should be as majestic as possible. The opening statement in the horns should build into the very strong impacts at bar 3. A slight separation on each note of the horn statement will heighten the effect. The bells and vibes in bar 3 may be staged on either side of the band for a more "surround sound" effect.

The hymn beginning at bar 9 should be flowing yet with a sense of freedom. The horn solo should interact with the woodwind melody in an almost playful fashion. The conclusion of the hymn should be freely interpreted to maximize the percussion entrance into bar 20.

The tempo at bar 20 should be brisk. However, the tempo should never be so fast that a frantic feeling permeates the ensemble. Special care should be given to the tuba/timpani/low reed response on the second half of beat 4 to beat 1 of the following bar. I suggest rehearsing with a metronome with an eighth-note subdivision to reinforce the maintenance of tempo.

The timpani/horn/marimba ostinato is crucial at bar 28. I suggest moving the marimba to the front section of the stage for optimum clarity and projection. Careful attention should be given to each of the three parts for rhythmic accuracy and dynamic balance.

The full ensemble statement at bar 76 should be rehearsed to ensure the forward momentum of the piece as well as dynamic contrast to the following section of the work. The upper woodwind/vibe effect at bar 80 should be very carefully balanced for clarity. The flutes may need to be adjusted to ensure their presence in this register. The trumpet figure in bar 90 should be slightly separated but not too short!

The mysterious 5/4 statement beginning at 112 will require careful rehearsal between the percussion and the tuba/low reeds. The last two quarter notes in each bar should be slightly separated for clarity. The oboe solo draws upon the melodic material stated earlier in the piece. I have cued the solo in the clarinet and saxophone as needed. If no oboe is available, I particularly like the option of using a soprano saxophone as indicated. Bar 124 will require careful attention to the balance between the first and second flute lines (or alto saxophones if cues are used).

The restatement of the melody at bar 152 requires a careful balance between the melodic line in the upper woodwinds/baritone and the trumpet/trombone countermelodic line. I suggest isolating these two lines in rehearsal for greater understanding from these sections of the band.

The transition statement beginning at bar 174 should be as intense as possible. The *pick-a-note* should be as dissonant as possible for the greatest effect. In addition, the crescendo of the *pick-a-note* should be greatly exaggerated. The ending that follows should be a natural outgrowth of this transition statement. The last note should be as strong as possible without any distortion of tone quality or intonation. The bass drum should be thunderous to provide an exclamation point to the piece.

I hope that you and your ensemble find **TO CHALLENGE THE SKY AND HEAVENS ABOVE** to be a rewarding musical experience. Best of luck in all of your musical endeavors. Best wishes for a great performance!

Robert W. Smith

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Challenger Middle School Band, Huntsville, AL*

By ROBERT W. SMITH (ASCAP)

Majestic! ♩ = 80

C Flutes

Oboe

B♭ Clarinets

E♭ Alto Clarinet

B♭ Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

E♭ Alto Saxophones

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

E♭ Baritone Saxophone

Majestic! ♩ = 80

B♭ Trumpets

Horns in F

Trombones

Baritone

Tuba

Mallet Percussion
(Bells, Vibraphone,
Chimes, Marimba)

Timpani

Percussion I
(Wind Chimes, Snare Drum,
Bass Drum, Congas)

Percussion II
(Suspended Cymbal,
Crash Cymbals,
Large Beaded Gourd)

Wind Chimes S.D. B.D. Cr. Cyms. ch

let all cyms. ring unless noted

Susp. Cym. p

Bells and Vibes (2 players)

1 2 3 4

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9 Gently, yet flowing

1 Fls. 2 Ob. 1 Cls. 2 3 A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. 1 A. Sax. 2 T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 Tpts. 2 3 Hns. 1 2 Tbn. 2 Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

Wind Chimes

9 Gently, yet flowing

9 Gently, yet flowing

Solo Cue: Horn 1 Solo

5 6 7 8 9

1
Fls.

2
Ob.

1
Cls. 2
3
A. Cl.
B. Cl.
Bsn.

1
A. Sax.
2
T. Sax.
Bar. Sax.

1
Tpts. 2
3

1
Hns. 2

1
Tbns. 2
Bar.
Tuba

Mlt. Perc.
Timp.
Perc. I
Perc. II

10 11 12 13 14

pp *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

20 With energy! $J = 172+$

Fls. 1, 2

Ob.

Cls. 1, 2, 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Sax. 1, 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1, 2, 3

Hns. 1, 2

Tbns. 1, 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

1 Fls. 2

Ob.

1 Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts. 2 3

1 Hns. 2

1 Tbns. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Marimba and Vibes (2 players)

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

32

1 Fls. *mf*

2 Fls. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

1 Cls. *mf*

2 Cls. *mf*

3 Cls. *mf*

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes *mf*

2 A. Saxes *mf*

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

32

1 Tpts.

2 Tpts.

3 Tpts.

1 Hns. *mf*

2 Hns. *mf*

1 Tbns.

2 Tbns.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc. *mf*

Timp. *mf*

Perc. I

Perc. II

32 33 34 35 36

1 Fls. 2 Fls. Ob. 1 Cls. 2 Cls. 3 Cls. A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. 1 A. Saxes 2 A. Saxes T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 Tpts. 2 Tpts. 3 Tpts. 1 Hns. 2 Hns. 1 Tbps. 2 Tbps. Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

37 38 39 40 41

42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49

1 Fls. 2

Ob.

1 Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Sax. 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts. 2 3

1 Hns. 2

1 Tbn. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Belts and Vibes (2 players)

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

50 51 52 53 54 55 56

60

1 Fls. *mf*

2 Fls. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

1 Cls. *mf*

2 Cls. *mf*

3 Cls. *mf*

A. Cl. *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

1 A. Saxes *mf*

2 A. Saxes *mf*

T. Sax. *mf*

Bar. Sax. *mf*

1 Tpts. *mp*

2 Tpts. *mp*

3 Tpts. *mp*

1 Hns. *mf*

2 Hns. *mf*

1 Tbn. *mf*

2 Tbn. *mf*

Bar. *mf*

Tuba *mf*

Mlt. Perc. *mf* Marimba and Vibes (2 players)

Timp. *mf*

Perc. I *mf* Congas

Perc. II *mf*

57

58

59

60

61

1 Fls. 2

Ob.

1 Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts. 2 3

1 Hns. 2

1 Tbps. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

62 63 64 65

1 Fls. 2

Ob.

1 Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts. 2 3

1 Hns. 2

1 Tbns. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

66 67 68 69 70

p *mf*

1 Fls. 2 Ob. 1 Cls. 2 3 A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. 1 A. Saxs 2 T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 Tpts. 2 3 Hns. 1 2 Tbns. Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

71 72 73 74 75 76

80

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 1 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Sax. 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

80

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

Vibraphone (w/vibrato)

Wind Chimes

77 78 79 80 81 82 83

84

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 1 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

84

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

84 85 86 87 88 89 90

92

1 Fls.

2 Fls.

Ob.

1 Cls.

2 Cls.

3 Cls.

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes

2 A. Saxes

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

92

1 Tpts.

2 Tpts.

3 Tpts.

1 Hns.

2 Hns.

1 Tbns.

2 Tbns.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

91 92 93 94 95 96 97

100

Fls. 1

2

Ob.

Cls. 1

2

3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1

2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

100

Tpts. 1

2

3

Hns. 1

2

Tbns. 1

2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

98

99

100

101

102

103

104

105

112 Mysterious!

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 1 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113

mp *ff* *mf* *pp* *f* *mf*

Congas

Large Beaded Gourd

116

1 Fls.

2 Fls.

Ob.

Solo
mf
Cue: Oboe Solo

1 Cls.

2 Cls.

3 Cls.

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Cue: Oboe Solo
mp
opt. Sop. Sax. (transpose down a fifth)

1 A. Saxes

2 A. Saxes

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

116

1 Tpts.

2 Tpts.

3 Tpts.

1 Hns.

2 Hns.

1 Tbns.

2 Tbns.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

114 115 116 117 118 119

124

1 Fls. *mf*

2 Ob. *mf*

1 Cls. 2

3 A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

1 A. Saxes *mf* Cue: Flute 1 (tutti)

2 T. Sax. Cue: Flute 2

Bar. Sax.

124

1 Tpts. 2

3 Hns. 1 2

1 Tbn. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

120 121 122 123 124 125

1 Fls. 2 Ob. 1 Cls. 2 3 A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. 1 A. Saxes 2 T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 Tpts. 2 3 Hns. 1 2 Tbps. 2 Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

126 127 128 129 130 131

1 Fls. 2

Ob.

1 Cls. 2 3

A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn.

1 A. Saxes 2

T. Sax. Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts. 2 3

1 Hns. 2

1 Tbns. 2

Bar. Tuba

Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139

S.D. B.D. Susp. Cym.

mf *pp*

140

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Sax. 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

140

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc. Chimes

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II Cr. Cyms.

140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147

152

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 1 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

152

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc. Marimba and Vibes (2 players)

Timp.

Perc. I Congas

Perc. II

148 149 150 151 152 153 154

1 Fls. 2 Ob. 1 Cls. 2 3 A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. 1 A. Sax. 2 T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 Tpts. 2 3 Hns. 1 2 Tbn. 2 Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162

168

Fls. 1 2

Ob.

Cls. 1 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

168

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

S.D.

B.D.

pp

f

ff

Bells and Vibes (2 players)

163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170

174 Intense!

Fls. 1, 2

Ob.

Cls. 2, 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxes 1, 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

174 Intense!

Tpts. 1, 2, 3

Hns. 1, 2

Tbns. 1, 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

171 172 173 174 175 176 177

pp ff mp pick-a-note p sfz

182

Fls. 1 2

Ob. 1 2 3

Cls. 2 3

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

A. Saxs. 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

182

Tpts. 1 2 3

Hns. 1 2

Tbns. 1 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. I

Perc. II

178 179 180 181 182 183

1 Fls. 2 Fls. Ob. 1 Cls. 2 Cls. 3 Cls. A. Cl. B. Cl. Bsn. A. Saxes 1 2 T. Sax. Bar. Sax. 1 2 Hns. 1 2 Tbps. Bar. Tuba Mlt. Perc. Timp. Perc. I Perc. II

184 185 186 187 188 189

div. ch

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