

*js* | James Stephenson

**AMERICAN EMBERS**

FOR CONCERT WINDS

**JAMES M. STEPHENSON**

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*Stephenson*  
Music

## AMERICAN EMBERS

for concert wind band

duration: 6'

instrumentation:

piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 3 B♭ clarinets, bass clarinet  
 2 alto saxophones, 1 tenor saxophone, 1 baritone saxophone  
 2 B♭ trumpets, 2 french horns, 2 trombones, 1 bass trombone, euphonium, tuba  
 timpani + 6 percussion (see specifics below), piano  
 offstage ensemble (preferred):  
 piccolo, 2 oboes (opt), 3 B♭ clarinets, bassoon, 2 alto saxophones, triangle, upright piano

percussion needed:

Mallets (2 players): marimba, orch. bells, chimes, xylophone, crotales, + snare drum  
 (Vibes in Perc. 2)  
 perc. 1: sand blocks, triangle, snare drum (not shared w/ mallets)  
 perc. 2: tamtam (bowed and rolled), small block of wood - played with quarters, cymb. a2, vibes  
 perc. 3: bass drum (shared w/ perc. 4), sus. cymb., small tamtam (offstage triangle cued in this part)  
 perc. 4: bass drum (shared w/ perc. 3)  
 NOTE: also needed -- bubble wrap for three percussionists

### Program notes - from the composer:

One thing that always informs my work (probably true for most artists) is the current environment or circumstances in which I live. I want to make my work both relevant and long-lasting, at the same time. At the time of this collaboration, I also felt a need to compose slow music, and to focus on melody. It is all of these factors that led to "American Embers".

In the fall of 2017, I was very much struck by the images of the terrible fires that had destroyed so many homes in the Santa Rosa, CA area. I could only imagine what it must have been like to walk among the ruins, thinking not necessarily of the material things, but of all the memories that were left behind - things that went up in smoke, or were reduced to ashes.

This got me to thinking of my own childhood, when I, my mother, and my siblings, would sit in the living room, while my father would play his favorite show tunes on the piano. Many times because I was too young - he would invite me over to play a one-finger melody, while he supplied the accompaniment. I can't even imagine how hard it would be to think of this house full of so many memories - reduced to nothing but a chimney tower.

Given my now "mid-life age", it's hard not to get overly sentimental or nostalgic about a time that coincided with my childhood, when America seemed simpler, when communities and families seemed so much more attached to one another. I know this probably happens every generation - it just so happens that now it's my turn.

And so "American Embers" is a distinctly American tune that grows and then becomes intimate - that gets lush and romantic, or just remains simple, much like memories do. The offstage music that interrupts the tune near the end are direct quotes from what I recall of my father's playing. One might imagine strolling through the streets after the fires, imagining the faint sounds of music hearkening forth from the now-gone living rooms.

Throughout the work is the percussion imitation of an old-fashioned, scratchy record player (again, this is my generation). It accompanies most of the piece, but at the end, suffers the ever-present reality of the skipping record. This is not just for effect: it is a reminder that the mistakes and difficulties of every generation seem endlessly destined to repeat themselves, and make us all just long that much more for the innocent childhood we once enjoyed.

I am delighted to have been contacted by Thomas Rohrer, and asked by the W/NW division of CBDNA to compose this work for their 2018 conference. My sincerest appreciation goes out to all those who co-commissioned the work (listed here) for their continued support of us living composers in the creation of new music.

- Jim Stephenson; January, 2018

The following ensembles contributed to bring this piece into fruition, and I am forever grateful for their support:

Astronaut High School, Titusville, FL.....Justin Davis  
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 California State University, Los Angeles.....Emily Moss  
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 Pomona College.....Graydon Beeks  
 University of Delaware.....Heidi Sarver  
 University of Minnesota.....Emily Threinen  
 University of Nevada, Reno.....Reed Chamberlin  
 University of Utah.....Scott Hagen  
 University of Wyoming.....Robert Belser  
 Wake Forest University.....Kevin Bowen

Score

# AMERICAN EMBERS

James M. Stephenson

for concert wind band

Andante espressivo ♩ = 72

The score is arranged for a concert wind band and includes the following parts:

- Piccolo
- Flute 1 & 2
- Oboe 1 & 2
- Bassoon 1 & 2
- B♭ Clarinet 1, 2, & 3
- Bass Clarinet
- Alto sax. 1 & 2
- Tenor Saxophone
- Baritone Saxophone
- B♭ Trumpet 1 & 2
- Horn 1 & 2
- Trombone 1 & 2
- Bass Trombone
- Euphonium
- Tuba
- Timpani
- Piano
- Mallets + S.D. (2 players)
- Percussion (4 parts):
  - 1: Marimba (p)
  - 2 (+ Vibes): bowed tam-tam (p)
  - 3: B.D. (plyr. 1 plays single stroke with slightly harder mallet)
  - 4: B. Drum (pp, plyr. 2 rolls with very softly w/ large/soft mallets)

Performance notes for the percussion section:

- Marimba:** NOTE: the desired "old scratchy record player" effect was best achieved in performance by having three players constantly rubbing bubble-wrap in their hands, instead of sand blocks (sempré throughout the piece). Sand Blocks: plyr slowly contunually and softly rubs blocks in a circular motion.
- bowed tam-tam:** plyr bows tam-tam edge continuously, but w/ little pressure, so as to NOT create the harmonic.
- B.D.:** plyr. 1 plays single stroke with slightly harder mallet.
- 4: B. Drum:** (plyr. 2) rolls with very softly w/ large/soft mallets.

17 poco accel... rit. **A** a tempo

Picc. *p*

Fl. 1 *Solo* *mf* *p*

Fl. 2 *mf* *p*

Ob. 1 *p*

Ob. 2 *p*

Bsn. 1 *p*

Bsn. 2 *p*

B. Cl. 1 *mp* *mf* *f* *p*

B. Cl. 2 *mp* *mf* *p*

B. Cl. 3 *mp* *mf* *p*

A. Sax. 1 *p* *mp* *mf* *p*

A. Sax. 2 *p* *mp* *mf* *p*

Tenor Sax. *mf* 2. tutti

Bar. Sax. *mf*

B. Tpt. 1 *p* Solo Con sord.

B. Tpt. 2 *p*

Hn. 1 *Open* *p*

Hn. 2 *p*

Tbn. 1 *mp*

Tbn. 2 *mp*

B. Tbn. *mp*

Euph. *p*

Tuba *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*

Timp. *p* *mf*

*poco accel...* *rit.* **A** a tempo

Mal. *mp* *mf* *f* *p*

Perc. 1 *mp* (quit early, if needed) *quarters on a small block of wood*

Perc. 2 *mp* *p*

Perc. 3 *Sus. Cymb. - w/ wire brushes, spread wide* *p*

B. Dr. *mp* *p* *mf*

29 *rit.* **a tempo**

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Picc.

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2

B. Cl. 1  
2  
3

B. Cl. 1  
2

A. Sax. 1  
2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tuba

Timp.

no.

Mal.

Perc. 1  
2  
3

B. Dr.

add Bells (non-rolled) **pp**

Sand Blocks (sim.) **pp**

bowed tam (sim.) **pp**

B.D. **pp**

*mp*, *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *rit.*, **a tempo**

38

*accel.*

**B** *piu mosso* ♩ = 88

The musical score for page 4 of "American Embers" includes the following parts and instructions:

- Woodwinds:** Picc., Fl. 1 & 2, Ob. 1 & 2, Bsn. 1 & 2, B♭ Cl. 1, 2, 3, B. Cl., A. Sax. 1 & 2, Tenor Sax., Bar. Sax., B♭ Tpt. 1 & 2, Hn. 1 & 2, Tbn. 1 & 2, B. Tbn., Euph., Tuba.
- Brass:** Timp., B. Dr.
- Percussion:** Mal., Perc. 1, 2, 3.
- Keyboard:** Piano.
- Performance Instructions:**
  - accel.* (twice)
  - B** *piu mosso* ♩ = 88
  - Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *f*, *mf*
  - Articulation: accents, slurs
  - Special instruction: "Sand-Blocks becoming a roll here."

**C** Maestoso

47 *rit.*

Picc.

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2

B♭ Cl. 1  
2  
3

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1  
2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B♭ Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tuba

*rit.* **C** Maestoso

T. P.

Pno.

Mal.

Perc. 1  
2  
3

B. Dr.

soft mallets  
Sus. Cymb.

55

Picc.   
 Fl. 1   
 2   
 Ob. 1   
 2   
 Bsn. 1   
 2   
 B. Cl. 1   
 2   
 3   
 B. Cl.   
 A. Sax. 1   
 2   
 Tenor Sax.   
 Bar. Sax.   
 B. Tpt. 1   
 2   
 Hn. 1   
 2   
 Tbn. 1   
 2   
 B. Tbn.   
 Euph.   
 Tuba   
 Timp.   
 Pno.   
 Mal.   
 Chimes   
 Perc. 1   
 Triangle   
 2   
 Cymb a2   
 3   
 B. Dr.   
 B.D.



65 *rit.* **D** Adagio espressivo ♩ = 66

65 *rit.* **D** Adagio espressivo ♩ = 66

Picc.

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2

1  
B. Cl.  
2  
3

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1  
2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tuba

Timp.

Perc.

Mal. *Crotales - soft mallets*

1

2 *Vibes - 3/4 motor*

3

B. Dr.

75 E

Picc.

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2

B. Cl. 1  
2  
3

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1  
2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tuba

Timp.

Mal.

Perc. Vib. 1  
3

B. Dr.

*p* *mp* *mf* *pp* *tutti*

Solo

Con sord.

Open

Marimba

Triangle

wire brushes  
Sus. Cymb.

85      *rit.*      **F a tempo**

**Picc.**

**Fl. 1 2**

**Ob. 1 2**

**Bsn. 1 2**

**B. Cl. 1 2 3**

**B. Cl.**

**A. Sax. 1 2**

**Tenor Sax.**

**Bar. Sax.**

**B. Tpt. 1 2**

**Hn. 1 2**

**Tbn. 1 2**

**B. Tbn.**

**Euph.**

**Tuba**

**Timp.**

**Perc.**

**B. Dr.**

*mf* *f* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *pp* *mf* *p* *pp* *pp* *p* *rit.* *p* *mf* *pp* **F a tempo** *mf* *p* *p*

*a2*

*mf* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *pp* *pp* *p* *rit.* *p* *mf* *pp* **F a tempo** *mf* *p* *p*

*Open* *Con sord.*

**Marimba**

**Sand Blocks** (*sim.*)

**bowed tam-tam** (*sim.*)

**B.D.**

*pp*

**G** playful, in one ♩. = 66  
Solo [offstage ensemble]

**H** Adagio espressivo ♩ = 66

95

Picc. *p*

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2 (play if no one available for offstage ensemble) *p* (onstage) *pp*

B♭ Cl. 1  
2  
3 *pp* [offstage ensemble] *p* *pp*

B. Cl. *pp* [offstage ensemble] *p* Solo [offstage ensemble] *p*

A. Sax. 1  
2 *p*

Tenor Sax. *p*

Bar. Sax. *p*

B♭ Tpt. 1  
2 *p* Open *pp*

Hn. 1  
2 *p* *pp*

Tbn. 1  
2 *p* *pp*

B. Tbn. *p* (onstage) *pp*

Euph. *p* *pp*

Tuba *pp* *p* *pp*

**G** playful, in one ♩. = 66 **H** Adagio espressivo ♩ = 66

Pn. offstage upright piano played with thimbles on fingers *p*

Mal. Bells *pp*

Perc. 1  
2  
3

B. Dr. *p*

106 **I** again in one ♩. = 66

*rit.* **J** Adagio ♩ = 66

106 **I** again in one ♩. = 66

*rit.* **J** Adagio ♩ = 66

Picc. *p* *pp*

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2 (play if no one available for offstage ensemble) *p* *pp*

Bsn. 1  
2

B♭ Cl. 1  
2  
3 (offstage ensemble) *p* *pp*

B. Cl. *mp* *p*

A. Sax. 1  
2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B♭ Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2 *Open* *p*

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph. *Solo* *p*

Tuba *Solo* *p*

Timp.

**I** again in one ♩. = 66

*rit.* **J** Adagio ♩ = 66

Drum (thin) *p* *pp*

Mal. *p* *pp*

Perc. 1 Sand Blocks *pp*

2 bowed tam *pp*

3 (offstage ensemble) Triangle *p* soft mallets Sus. Cymb. *p*

B. Dr. *p*

117 *poco a poco accel...* *rit.*

117 *poco a poco accel...* *rit.*

Picc.

Fl. 1 2

Ob. 1 2

Bsn. 1 2

B. Cl. 1 2 3

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1 2

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Tpt. 1 2

Hn. 1 2

Tbn. 1 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tuba

*poco a poco accel...* *rit.*

Timp.

Mal.

Perc. 1 2 3

B. Dr.

Dynamic markings: *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *a2*, *b2*.

Performance instructions: *rit.*, *poco a poco accel...*.

Instrumentation notes: *(onstage)*, *w/ normal beater(s)*, *Tamtam*, *S.D.*, *Sus. Cymb.*

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Largo, pained  $\text{♩} = 56$

poco mosso (a tempo)  $\text{♩} = 66$  rit.

125

Picc.  $ff$   $mf$   
 Fl. 1  $ff$   $f$   
 Fl. 2  $ff$   
 Ob. 1  $ff$   $mf$   
 Ob. 2  $ff$   
 Bsn. 1  $ff$   $ff$   $mf$   
 Bsn. 2  $ff$   
 B. Cl. 1  $ff$   $ff$   $mf$   
 B. Cl. 2  $ff$   $ff$   $mf$   
 B. Cl. 3  $ff$   $ff$   $mf$   
 A. Sax. 1  $ff$   $mf$   
 A. Sax. 2  $ff$   $mf$   
 Tenor Sax.  $ff$   $mf$   
 Bar. Sax.  $ff$   $mf$   
 B. Tpt. 1  $ff$   
 B. Tpt. 2  $ff$   
 Hn. 1  $ff$   $f$   
 Hn. 2  $ff$   
 Tbn. 1  $ff$   
 Tbn. 2  $ff$   
 B. Tbn.  $ff$   
 Euph.  $ff$   $mf$   
 Tuba  $ff$   
 Timp.  $p$   $ff$   
 Pno.  $ff$   
 Mal.  $ff$   
 Perc. 1  $ff$   
 Perc. 2  $ff$   
 Perc. 3  $ff$   $p$   $f$  (Sus. Cymb.)  
 B. Dr.  $ff$

**K** Spirito - ragtime

**L** Adagio meno mosso ♩ = 60

133

Picc. *p*

Fl. 1  
2

Ob. 1  
2

Bsn. 1  
2

B. Cl. 1  
2  
3  
[offstage ensemble] *pp*

B. Cl. *p*

A. Sax. 1  
2  
[offstage ensemble] *pp*

Tenor Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Tpt. 1  
2

Hn. 1  
2  
*p*

Tbn. 1  
2

B. Tbn.

Euph. *p*

Tuba *p*

B. Clar. *pp*

**K** Spirito - ragtime

**L** Adagio meno mosso ♩ = 60

Timp. *pp*

offstage upright piano *p*

Mal. *ppp* Xylo *pp* Bells *pp*

Marimba *pp*

Perc. 1 Sand Blocks *p*

2 bowed tam *p*

3 scrape trgl. (L.V.) *p* beater on face *pp* Smaller tamtam *pp*

B. Dr. *pp*



146 long

Picc. 8

Fl. 1 8

Fl. 2 8

Ob. 1 8

Ob. 2 8

Bsn. 1 [offstage ensemble] 8

Bsn. 2 *pp* *pppp* 8

B. Cl. 1 [offstage ensemble] *pppp* *pp* *niente* 8

B. Cl. 2 [offstage ensemble] *pppp* *pp* 8

B. Cl. 3 *pppp* 8

A. Sax. 1 [offstage ensemble] *pppp* *pp* *niente* 8

A. Sax. 2 *pp* 8

Tenor Sax. 8

Bar. Sax. 8

B. Tpt. 1 8

B. Tpt. 2 8

Hn. 1 8

Hn. 2 *pppp* 8

Tbn. 1 8

Tbn. 2 8

B. Tbn. 8

Euph. 8

Tuba *pppp* 8

Temp. 8

2. *pppp* offstage upright piano *pp* *niente* 8

Mal. *pppp* 8

Perc. 1 *pppp* 8

Perc. 2 *pppp* 8

Perc. 3 *pppp* 8

B. Dr. *pppp* 8

*pppp* plyr. 1 plays single stroke as before

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## Other works for wind ensemble / band

<b>A Little R &amp; R</b>	for two solo trumpets and wind ensemble 6'	Grade 5
<b>American Embers</b>	for wind ensemble 6'	Grade 3
<b>American Fanfare</b>	for concert band (or brass band) 2'	Grade 4.5
<b>August in York</b>	for solo trumpet and wind ensemble 8'	Grade 4
<b>Bassoon It Will Be Christmas</b>	for two (or three) solo bassoons and WE 5'	Grade 4
<b>Celebration Overture</b>	for concert wind band 10'	Grade 4.5
<b>Concerto Braziliano</b>	for solo trombone and wind ensemble 18'	Grade 5
<b>Concerto for Cell Phone</b>	for cell phone and wind ensemble, or concert band 5'	Grade 4
<b>Concerto Grosso</b>	for solo flute, alto sax, bass tbn, marimba and con. band 10'	Grade 5
<b>Concerto for Piccolo Trumpet</b>	for solo piccolo trumpet and wind ensemble 15'	Grade 4.5
<b>Concerto #1 for Trumpet</b>	for solo trumpet and wind ensemble 22'	Grade 5
<b>Concerto #2 for Trumpet - "Rextreme"</b>	for solo trumpet and wind ensemble, or brass band 18'	Grade 5
<b>Concerto #3 for Trumpet "Concerto for Hope"</b>	for solo trumpet and wind ensemble 20'	Grade 5
<b>Concerto Rhapsody "The Arch"</b>	for solo bass trombone and wind ensemble 18'	Grade 5
<b>Devil's Tale</b> (Sequel to Stravinsky's L'Histoire du Soldat)	for violin, contrabass, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, percussion(1 player)and narrator 25'	Grade 5
<b>Dialogue of Self and Soul</b>	concerto for bassoon and wind ensemble 20'	Grade 5
<b>Dodecafeta</b>	for solo brass quintet and wind ensemble 16'	Grade 5
<b>Duels and Dances</b>	concerto for oboe and wind ensemble 13'	Grade 5
<b>Duo Fantastique</b>	for two solo trumpets and wind ensemble 10'	Grade 4
<b>Fanfare and March</b>	for brass and percussion 4'	Grade 5
<b>Fractured Rondo</b>	for solo flute, solo clarinet and wind ensemble 12'	Grade 5
<b>Glissin' Up!</b>	for 4 solo trombones and concert band 4'	Grade 4
<b>Hanging by a Thread</b>	for solo trumpet, solo tuba and wind ensemble 18'	Grade 5
<b>Heritage of Freedom Fanfare</b>	for wind ensemble or concert band 3'	Grade 4
<b>Holiday Fanfare Medley</b>	for concert band 6'	Grade 4
<b>Homage and Farewell</b>	for wind ensemble or concert band 4'	Grade 3.5
<b>In the Moment</b>	for concert band 6'	Grade 4
<b>In the Moment Too</b>	for concert band 5'	Grade 3.5
<b>Intrepid Promise</b>	for wind ensemble 10'	Grade 5
<b>It's About Time</b>	for two solo trumpets and wind ensemble 12'	Grade 5
<b>Jubilant Light</b>	for wind ensemble and opt. offstage brass 8'	Grade 4
<b>Legend of Sleepy Hollow (The)</b>	for concert band 13'	Grade 4
<b>L'esprit de la Trompette</b>	for solo trumpet and concert band 4'	Grade 4
<b>Life Has Loveliness to Sell</b>	for SAT choir and concert band 5'	Grade 3
<b>Luther - In Canon</b>	for concert wind band 6'	Grade 4
<b>Martha Uncaged</b>	for solo trumpet and mixed chamber winds 18'	Grade 5
<b>Möbius Trip</b>	for solo alto saxophone, and wind ensemble 18'	Grade 5
<b>Queen of the Night Aria (Mozart/Arr. Stephenson)</b>	for piccolo trumpet and wind ensemble 4'	Grade 4
<b>Requiem Dances</b>	for chamber wind ensemble 13'	Grade 5
<b>Road Home</b>	for solo trumpet and concert band 10'	Grade 4
<b>Rhythms of the Spirit</b>	for wind ensemble 9'	Grade 4.5
<b>Second Thoughts</b>	for concert band - grade 2 10'	Grade 2.5
<b>'Smitty's Aweigh' Overture</b>	for concert band 3'	Grade 3
<b>Song of Myself</b>	for solo soprano and wind ensemble 20'	Grade 5
<b>Sounds Awakened</b>	concerto for french horn and wind ensemble 14'	Grade 5
<b>Stars and Stripes Fanfare</b>	for concert band 4'	Grade 4
<b>Symphony for Brass</b>	for large brass choir and percussion 7'	Grade 5
<b>Symphony No. 1</b>	for wind ensemble 25'	Grade 5
<b>Symphony No 2 : "Voices"</b>	for concert band 20'	Grade 6
<b>The Storyteller</b>	for solo trumpet, offstage trumpet, violin, and wind ensemble 9'	Grade 3.5
<b>The Storyteller</b>	for wind ensemble only (no solo instruments) 9'	Grade 3
<b>there are no words</b>	for concert band 13'	Grade 4
<b>this is most certainly true</b>	for concert wind band 6'	Grade 4
<b>Three Bones Concerto</b>	for three solo trombones and wind ensemble 16'	Grade 5
<b>To The Sky (Published by FJH Publications)</b>	for concert band - grade 3.5 6'	Grade 3.5
<b>Trench Coat</b>	for concert band 6'	Grade 4