

TRANSPOSED SCORE

CRIMSON EARTH (1997-99) for Symphonic Band

Instrumentation

Violin Soloist

Note: Oboe 1 may play the opening and closing violin solos if a violinist is not available (see program and performance notes).

- Piccolo (sounds 1 octave higher than written)
- 8 Flutes
- 2 Oboes
- English Horn
- 2 Bassoons
- Contrabassoon (sounds 1 octave lower than written—Contrabass Clarinet may be used instead if a Contrabassoon is not available)
- E♭ Soprano Clarinet
- 8 B♭ Clarinets
- E♭ Alto Clarinet (note: cues for Alto Clarinet are inserted into other parts; these cues may be played if an Alto Clarinet is not available)
- Doubling Large Triangle
- B♭ Bass Clarinet
- 2 Alto Saxophones
- Tenor Saxophone
- Baritone Saxophone
- 6 C Trumpets: four off-stage and two on-stage
 - Trumpet 1-6 will need straight mutes.
 - Trumpets 2 and 3 (the two on-stage players) will need whispa, harmon and solotone mutes.
 - Trumpets 5 will need a B♭ Trumpet as well as a C Trumpet. The B♭ Trumpet should be placed near the stage for easy access.
 - Trumpet 6 will need a D Trumpet as well as a C trumpet. The D Trumpet should be placed near the stage for easy access.
- 4 F Horns
 - French Horns 2 and 4 will need mutes.
- 2 Trombones
 - Trombones will need straight and harmon mutes.
- Bass Trombone
- 2 Euphoniums
- 2 Tubas
- Timpani (5: 20", 23", 26", 29" & 32")
 - In addition to soft, medium and hard timpani mallets, the timpanist will need:
 - snare drum sticks
 - medium suspended cymbal
 - a Roto Tom or piccolo timpani that reaches a high E♭ above middle C.
- 6 Percussion: four off-stage and two on-stage.
 - The set of chimes and the large tam tam are the only instruments shared by Percussion 1 and 2.

Percussion 1:

- Chimes (shared with Perc. 2)
- Xylophone (sounds one octave higher than written)
- Orchestra Bells (sound 2 octaves higher than written)
- Bass Drum
- Snare Drum (approximately the same pitch as Perc. 2 and Perc. 3 Snare Drums)
- Large Tam Tam (shared with Perc. 2)
- Large Crash Cymbals
- Large Suspended Cymbal
- Medium Suspended Cymbal
- small triangle

Percussion 2:

- Chimes (shared with Perc. 1)
- Weight for Chimes pedal (if necessary)
- Xylophone (sounds one octave higher than written—shared with Perc. 3)
- Crotales ("high" set, sound 2 octaves higher than written)
- Bass Drum
- 4 Concert Tom Toms
- Snare Drum (approximately the same pitch as Perc. 1 and Perc. 3 Snare Drums)
- Large Tam Tam (shared with Perc. 2)
- Large Crash Cymbals
- Medium Suspended Cymbal
- Medium Suspended Sizzle Cymbal
- Metal Wind Chimes (*not* a "Mark Tree")
- Medium Triangle

Percussion 3:

- Vibraphone (with working motor)
- Weight for Vibraphone pedal
- Xylophone (sounds one octave higher than written—shared with Perc. 2)
- Orchestra Bells (sound 2 octaves higher than written)
- Snare Drum (approximately the same pitch as Perc. 1 and Perc. 2 Snare Drums)
- Medium Suspended Cymbal
- Small Suspended Cymbal
- Finger Cymbals (a finger cymbal machine may be used if necessary)
- Glass Wind Chimes
- Small Triangle
- 2 Single-Handed Slapsticks
- Sand Blocks

Percussion 4:

- Marching Field Drum (Military Drum), with snares (Lowest-Pitched)

Percussion 5:

- Marching Field Drum (Military Drum), with snares (Medium-Pitched)
- Bass Drum (under stage)

Percussion 6:

- Marching Field Drum (Military Drum), with snares (Highest-Pitched)

Crimson Earth Total Duration: Approximately 12'00".

Program Notes

In *Crimson Earth*, my primary concerns are the exploration of exotic sonorities and textures, the spatial placement of instrumental groups and the process of moving musicians throughout the hall to create interesting textural juxtapositions.

Although no specific programmatic associations are intended in *Crimson Earth*, two specific references were influential: Pieter Bruegel the Elder's gruesomely detailed painting *The Triumph of Death* (ca. 1562), and the following short verse I came across in a book of quotations from the Old Testament (Job, Proverbs, 24):

“He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.”

When I was a child, my father introduced me to Breugel's work and to the work of other imaginative painters from the 15th and 16th centuries, such as Hieronymus Bosch. I think what originally inspired me the most about this particular work by Breugel was how something so morbid and seemingly prophetic could have been painted hundreds of years ago, before some of the worst wars occurred in the history of the world. Of course, I could not help but think to myself, what would a battle as horrifying as the one in Bruegel's painting sound like? Perhaps more importantly, what sounds do we associate with battles? The sounds that came to my mind for this piece were drums, trumpets, sirens and explosions, all represented in this highly programmatic work. The combination of winds, brass and percussion seemed to be the perfect vehicle to capture the horrific sounds and gut-turning feelings one might experience during a battle. The only other sounds I needed were instrumental voices meant to represent the sounds of both ignorance and innocence. The sound of a solo violin and a solo flute seemed most appropriate, and these instruments end up framing the entire work.

In this work, I attempt to depict a battle in three connected scenes: armies emerging from far away, an ensuing destructive, chaotic battle and the armies' final departure. Three marching “battalions” of military drum and trumpet duos represent the armies. These duos gradually convene toward the stage; the stage represents a battlefield. Once there, a battle begins in which a mostly non-pitched percussion section is highlighted through the use of battle-like sounds. As previously mentioned, two “solos” frame the three middle sections: one on a violin and the other as a duo with flute and violin. (The option of playing the violin part on an oboe is given in the score.) The whole work is essentially in a loose arch form.

The title, *Crimson Earth*, refers to the bloody color of the earth after battle and the power and heroism people often associate with the color red. However, although many cultures have glorified wars and battles, this is not my goal in this work. *Crimson Earth* represents the profound sadness that wars ultimately cause, but this work also tries to represent hope.

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Part I

- (Violin Solo)
- Melting Chimes of Starlight
- Remembrance of Long Ago Idyllic Youth
- Mini Trumpet Bats, Descending
- Rising Darkness
- Brief Sky Opening, Cry for Absolution

Part II

- Calm before the Storm: Glimpses of Despair
- Three Battalions approach from Afar
- War Sirens
- Battle
- Swells of Sadness
- Three Battalions Retreat
- Ashen Rainbows

Part III

- Memorial to the Sacrificial Dead
- Deserts of Ruin
- Breaths of The Everlasting Rising Phoenix
- Peace Wish

Performance Notes

Performance Space

Crimson Earth may be performed either in a concert hall or outdoors. Wherever the piece is performed, the spatial performers should be placed as accurately as possible to the *Suggested Placement of Ensemble* sheet provided.

If the piece is performed in a concert hall, trumpets 4 – 6 and percussionists 4 – 6 should have three clear, unobstructed, unobtrusive paths to follow. A concert hall with two balcony levels is preferred.

It is understood that many concert halls do not have multiple balconies and/or layouts appropriate for a completely accurate rendition of the piece. However, it is hoped that the conductor and performers will make all attempts possible to represent the spatial aspects of the piece as closely as possible.

Percussion 4 and trumpet 1 should move from various positions by corridors outside of the concert hall, assuming that the doors to the hall (if there are any) may be opened and shut silently and unobtrusively.

The marching trumpet players and percussionists should also choreograph their march to the stage so that they arrive by the on-stage percussion solo.

If the piece is performed outdoors, a suitable setting should be acquired. Trumpets 4 – 6 and percussionists 4 – 6 could, for example, march from very far away corners of a field. Percussion 4 could be placed in a nearby ravine. Trumpet 1 could play behind the group (or concert tent, if a concert tent is used) and unobtrusively go to play the second part on a nearby hill.

Monitors & Amplification

Whether *Crimson Earth* is performed indoors or outdoors, video monitors showing a live close-up of the conductor conducting the piece may be used, and are encouraged if needed. This is especially suggested for trumpet 1 who is positioned far away from the conductor whether indoors or outdoors. If *Crimson Earth* is performed outdoors, video monitors could be used to cue in the entrances of trumpets 4 – 6 and percussionists 4 – 6 if they are marching from very far away.

Amplification may also be used if needed, and may prove necessary for trumpet 1 and the initial position of percussion 4 if they are all placed far enough away that there will be a gross imbalance in volume.

Recording

Crimson Earth should be recorded as close as possible to the intended placement of the ensemble, especially all spatial performers. This may be done naturally (recording in a concert hall and miking the performers respective of where they are in the hall) or artificially (aurally placing the spatial performers artificially in a studio). The spatial performers (mostly the violin, Percussion 5 [below stage] and Trumpet 6 [back stage]) may also be placed in the mix of a concert hall recording after the actual recording session.

Unless the piece is recorded in a studio, the marching trumpets and percussion be recorded with a series of mikes along the paths in the hall that they will take for a “surround sound” effect.

Lighting/Multi-Media

Lighting may be used if and when necessary, especially for indoor performances and during evening performances. The lighting may reflect the content of the music. Lighting for the spatial performers should be activated right before each performer's entrance. For percussion 4 - 6 and trumpets 4 - 6, spotlights should follow the marching performers for the entire processional/recessional. Spotlights (white and /or colors) may be used to feature the solo and visible spatial performers.

Suggested Placement of Ensemble

(Not Drawn to Scale)

