**Stepping Out**

*Stepping Out* is a short, ‘up-front’ kind of piece, commissioned specially for the Royal Northern College of Music String Orchestra’s premiere London concert at the Barbican Centre in November 1996.

The piece is based on a short repetitive pattern, heard at the outset, which dominates the music. A second idea, featuring solo strings, is more chromatic and contrapuntal although the basic rhythmic pattern still underpins it. The music gradually loses energy and stops. It starts again, this time a tri-tone away from the opening pitch of A, but then explodes into a wild fugue before the opening returns with a surprise addition to the ensemble.

The style is intentionally eclectic (Adams meets Shostakovich with Gregson thrown in!), but hopefully fits the brief to write a snappy concert opener for string orchestra.

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