**The Trumpets of the Angels**

The Trumpets of the Angels was commissioned by the Fodens (Courtois) Band for their centenary concert at The Bridgewater Hall in 2000. It is based on a work written for the BBC Philharmonic and Huddersfield Choral Society in 1998, the starting point of which was a quotation from the Book of Revelation:

*and I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets*

Thus the idea behind the work is dramatic and I have tried to achieve this by the spatial deployment of seven solo trumpets around the band, four on-stage, the others off-stage. Six of the solo trumpets eventually join the band, but Trumpet 7 remains off-stage and, indeed, has the most dramatic and extended cadenza representing the words of the seventh angel …*and time shall be no more*.

*The Trumpets of the Angels* is a large-scale work, scored for seven solo trumpets, brass band, organ and percussion (deploying ‘dark’ instruments such as tam-tams, bass drum and two sets of timpani). The work opens with a four-note motif announced by off-stage horns and baritones and answered by fanfare figures on solo trumpets. In turn, each of the first four solo trumpets play cadenzas and then all four join together, independently playing their own music. The organ enters dramatically with its own cadenza, leading to the entry of solo trumpets 5 and 6 with music that is more urgent and rhythmic, describing the horsemen of the Apocalypse.

The music reaches another climax, more intense this time, with the horns and baritones (now on-stage) again sounding the transformed motif, before subsiding into what might be described as a lament for humanity, slow music which builds from low to high, from soft to loud, with a melody that is both simple and poignant. At the climax, Trumpet 7 enters playing the opening four-note motif, dramatically extended to almost three octaves. This cadenza (to the partial accompaniment of tam-tams) introduces new material and foreshadows the ensuing scherzo which is fast and aggressive. Despite the somewhat desolate mood of this music, it slowly moves towards an optimistic conclusion, transforming the ‘humanity’ music into an affirmative and triumphant statement.

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