# A Vision in a Dream

**Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra**

My Oboe Concerto is based on Coleridge’s famous poem Kubla Khan, completed in 1797 and published in 1816. The sub-title of the poem – ‘A Vision in a Dream’ – gives the concerto its title, and while not being a programmatic work in the usual meaning of that term, the concerto nevertheless follows the main narrative of the poem, the soloist acting as both narrator and character portraying. To this end, quotations from the poem have been incorporated into the score and parts so that all the musicians will have a sense of the drama nature of the poem underpinning the musical narrative.

Like the poem, the concerto is a highly dramatic work, and although the Oboe is undoubtedly the chief protagonist in the drama, the role that the solo percussionist plays is of great importance. Ideally, the percussionist should be placed centrally, near the front of the stage, between 2nd Violins and Violas, not least because of the opening few pages of the concerto (up until rehearsal fig 4), where direct visual and aural connection between the oboe soloist and percussionist is essential. Indeed, this opening passage should have the feeling of an improvisation, hence the nature of the ‘free’ notation. All of this opening section should not be conducted, except perhaps for the odd cue to coordinate entries.

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