

Epiphany

Instrumentation

- 3 Horns in F, 3 Trumpets in Bb, 3 Trombones, 1 Tuba
- Timpani (also Suspended Cymbal); Perc. 1: Glockenspiel, Snare Drum, Crash cymbals, Tom-toms (high-medium-floor tom), Tubular Bells;
- Perc. 2: Tubular Bells, Triangle, Tam-tam, Snare Drum, Suspended Cymbal
- Solo Piano
- Strings

Epiphany, concertino for piano, strings, brass and percussion. Published by Filarmonika.

Duration: 15 minutes.

Epiphany, in its original meaning, refers to a "sudden realization or comprehension of the essence or meaning of something". The term is used in either a philosophical or literal sense to signify that the claimant has "found the last piece of the puzzle and now sees the whole picture".

The piece could be understood as a metaphor for artistic creation. Its first movement, Spark, represents the very moment of inspiration, when ideas come to mind at great speed and in great quantities. The second movement, Depth, refers to those moments following this brief instant of inspiration, when it is time to reflect and meditate on those ideas that have come to being but which are still in a primitive state. It is in Glow that one can start to experience the birth of new ideas, which are not anymore the result of a sudden moment of inspiration, but of deep and thorough meditation. Frolic is the playground in which new ideas are tried and shaped over and over again. It is the moment during which imagination is let free and ideas derived from the initial material flow naturally and effortlessly. The last movement, Epiphany, (which also gives the whole piece its name) is a more 'serious' approach to the act of composing. It is an attempt to round up all the ideas that have been presented previously in an organic and coherent way. It is the moment when connections are made and in which elements that appeared to be disconnected at first, are suddenly presented under a new and revealing light. It is the moment in which the listener realizes -at once- the link between all previous movements. It is at this point that the piece gains a more intellectual dimension in the frame of great emotional depth.

This piece is not called 'Concerto' because, due to its brevity and directness, the title of 'concerto' would generate inadequate expectations. And although virtuosity is not one of the main features of this piece, it can still prove to be challenging to the pianist. The first movement is an outburst of energy, the piano serving as a catalyst to the ever-shifting orchestral textures. In the second movement, however, there is extreme simplicity of texture. The pianist is asked to press silently certain notes of the low register with the left hand and then to play forcefully one note every few seconds in the middle

and upper register. The time span between each note, combined with the resonance effect produced by the natural harmonics (which vibrate in empathy) creates a sense of expansion rare to piano writing. Here, the pianist invites the audience to enter a state of meditation out of which a fragile and lyric third movement emerges. The playful fourth movement features fleeting chromatic scales on almost all instruments, including of course, the piano, but these scales are played at such a speed that only the contour and overall shape of phrases can be perceived. During the last movement, and after a long solo (accompanied by subtle glissandi on all string instruments) the pianist is asked to play only with the fists for almost two uninterrupted minutes converting the keyboard into a sort of pitched drum set and the hands and arms of the pianist into mallets. Here, the melody that first appeared in the second movement is played by the brass section against its own 'octatonic' permutation, which is assigned to the strings. This concerto is dedicated to my dear friend Javier Arrebola.

"Epiphany" was premiered on March 31, 2007 in Helsinki, Finland, by Javier Arrebola and the 'kohoBeat Orchestra' conducted by Leo McFall. This piece was awarded the '2008 Nicola de Lorenzo Prize for Music Composition' (University of California, Berkeley) and the '2008 Morton Gould Young Composer Award' (ASCAP, New York).

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