

DANCE MOVEMENTS

by
PHILIP SPARKE

1. Ritmico
2. Molto vivo (for the Woodwinds)
3. Lento (for the Brass)
4. Molto ritmico

Dance Movements was commissioned by the United States Air Force Band and first performed by them at the Florida Music Educators Association Convention in January 1996.

It is cast in four movements which play without a break; the second and third feature woodwinds and brass respectively.

In many respects, the circumstances of the commission itself were the musical inspiration for the piece. I had been asked to write for a very large band which included piano and harp. It was the first time I had used these instruments in a concert band score and (as in Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*) their presence coloured the score and, indeed, the type of music I wrote.

The four movements are all dance-inspired, although no specific dance rhythms are used. The first has a Latin American feel and uses xylophone, cabasa, tambourine and wood block to give local colour. The second Woodwind movement uses a tune that had been plaguing me for some time and is, I suppose, in the style of an English country dance. The Brass movement was composed without specific dance analogy, but I think it can be seen as a love duet in classical ballet. The fourth and longest movement has, I hope, cured me of a ten-year fascination, almost obsession, with the music of Leonard Bernstein and I will readily admit that it owes its existence to the fantastic dance music in *West Side Story*.

1. Ritmico

The opening theme on horns and saxophones is played amidst stabbing chords from the top and bottom of the band. A gentler theme follows on piccolo and clarinet, followed by flute, oboe, trumpet, harp and glockenspiel. The main motif of the movement then arrives, which includes a dotted rhythm which is to recur at all significant moments. A climax is reached and an angular figure follows on oboes, saxophones and clarinets. Previous material then reappears to bring the movement to a close.

2. Molto vivo (for the Woodwinds)

The second movement starts with a rustic dance tune which is continually interrupted. It passes through various keys and stages of development until a bubbling ostinato arrives on piano, harp, glockenspiel and cello. Over this, the oboe lays a languid tune which is then taken up by soprano and alto saxophones. A new idea is introduced by clarinets and lower winds; it is built on 9th and 11th chords, highly syncopated and interspersed by snatches of the ostinato. Eventually the oboe theme reappears, accompanied by the lower wind chords. The dance tune then establishes itself once more and reaches a climax before winding down to a close.

3. Lento (for the Brass)

The third movement opens with whispering muted trumpets, harp and vibraphone. Declamatory statements from horn and trombone answer each other and a slow and majestic chorale gets underway. Trumpets join to reach a climax where the original trombone statement reappears, bringing back the opening trumpets figures.

4. Molto ritmico

The final movement bursts into life with a passage featuring the percussion section. The whole band then joins in until a driving bass ostinato establishes itself. Melodic snatches are thrown around the band until the gradual crescendo leads to a unison passage for the entire band. A robust theme appears on horns and saxophones but eventually the earlier sinister music returns. After a short pause a plaintive tune on the woodwinds leads to a more rhythmic one on the brass but it is not long before the percussion remind us of the opening of the movement and the ostinato reappears. The robust horn tune is this time played by the full band but the moment of triumph is short and a running passage appears which starts in the bottom of the band but works its way to the upper woodwinds. Eventually the brass play a noble fanfare which dispels the darker mood and ends the movement in a blaze of colour.

Philip Sparke

Commissioned by the United States Air Force Band
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I Ritmico (♩ = 134)

The score is arranged for a full symphony orchestra and percussion. The instruments listed on the left are: Piccolo, Flutes (1 and 2), Oboes (1 and 2), English Horn, B♭ Clarinets (1 and 2), E♭ Alto Clarinet, B♭ Bass Clarinet, Bassoons (1 and 2), Double Basses, Soprano Saxophone, E♭ Alto Saxophone, B♭ Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, B♭ Trumpets (1, 2, 3, 4), F Horns (1, 2, 3, 4), Trombones (1, 2, 3), Euphonium, Tuba, Double Bass, Harp, Piano, and Percussion. The percussion part includes S.D., Whop, B.D., Glock., Tamb., S. Cym., and Whop. The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 134 quarter notes per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score is marked with dynamics such as *ff* and *mp*. The percussion part includes various effects like *Whop*, *B.D.*, *Glock.*, *Tamb.*, *S. Cym.*, and *Whop*.

II Molto vivo (♩ = 134)
(for the Woodwinds)

12

attacca ♩ = ♩

114

Picc. 1, 2

Fl. 1, 2

Ob. 1, 2

Eng. Hrn.

B♭ Cl. 1, 2

E♭ Alto Cl.

B♭ Bass Cl.

Basn. 1, 2

D. Bass

Sop. Sax.

E♭ Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

E♭ Bar. Sax.

B♭ Trpt. 1, 2, 3, 4

F Horn 1, 2, 3, 4

Trbn. 1, 2, 3

Euph.

Tuba

Cello

D. Bass

Harp

Piano

Timp.

1. Solo

2. Solo

3. Solo

4. Solo

pp, cresc., ff, mp, mf, sf, f, sfz, p, pp, cresc. molto, sfz, pizz., (F major), B. D., Trl., Bell., Chck.,

snare on

This page of a musical score, numbered 20, contains the following instruments and parts:

- Picc.** (Piccolo)
- Fl.** (Flute) 1 and 2
- Obs. 1, 2** (Oboe)
- Eng. Hrn.** (English Horn)
- B♭ Clar. 1, 2, 3** (B-flat Clarinet)
- E♭ Alto Cl.** (E-flat Alto Clarinet)
- B♭ Bass Cl.** (B-flat Bass Clarinet)
- Basn. 1, 2** (Bassoon)
- D. Bsn.** (Double Bassoon)
- H. Sep. Sax.** (Half-Soprano Saxophone)
- E♭ Alto Sax.** (E-flat Alto Saxophone)
- B♭ Ten. Sax.** (B-flat Tenor Saxophone)
- E♭ Bar. Sax.** (E-flat Baritone Saxophone)
- Dr. Typs.** (Drum and Tympani) 1, 2, 3, 4
- F. Hrn.** (F Horn) 1, 2, 3, 4
- Tbn.** (Trumpet) 1, 2, 3
- Euph.** (Euphonium)
- Tuba**
- Cello**
- D. Bass** (Double Bass)
- Harp**
- Piano**
- Timp.** (Timpani)
- Perc.** (Percussion) 1, 2, 3, 4

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Key markings include *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). A *Solo* instruction is present above the H. Sep. Sax. staff. The page concludes with a *p* marking at the bottom left.

III Lento (♩ = 60) (for the Brass)

409

BB Bass Cl. Harmon mutes *ppp*

1.2

B♭ Tpt. Harmon mutes *ppp*

3.4

1.2

F Hsa. *ppp* *decrescendo*

3.4

1.2

Thos. *ppp*

3

Euph.

Tuba

Cello

D. Bass

Harp *ppp* (L.V.)

Piano

Timp.

Perc. *ppp* Vibraphone

3

4

410

1.2 *ppp*

B♭ Tpt. *ppp*

3.4 *ppp*

1.2 *ppp*

F Hsa. *ppp*

3.4 *ppp*

1.2 *ppp* *decrescendo*

Thos. *ppp*

3

Euph.

Tuba

Cello

D. Bass

Harp *ppp*

Piano

Timp.

Perc. *ppp*

3

4

This page of a musical score, numbered 44, is arranged for a large orchestra. The instruments are listed on the left side of the page, including Piccolo, Flutes (1 and 2), Oboes (1 and 2), English Horn, Clarinets (Bb 1, 2, and 3), Bass Clarinet, Bassoon (1 and 2), Double Basses, Saxophones (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Baritone), Trumpets (1, 2, 3, and 4), Horns (F, 1, 2, 3, and 4), Trombones (1, 2, and 3), Euphonium, Tubas, Cello, Double Bass, Harp, Piano, and Timpani (1, 2, 3, and 4). The score is written in a common time signature and features complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *sim.* (sforzando) are used throughout. Performance instructions include "all open" for brass instruments and "mutes on" for the timpani. The bottom of the page shows the percussion section with specific drum patterns and dynamics.