

CONCERTO LOGIC

Piano and Wind Symphony

2007/8

- www.shatteringmusic.com (800.444.2408) – full score only
- Parts available from the composer

Commissioned by a consortium of 20 University Wind Symphonies under the auspices of CBDNA, led by Kevin Sedatole at Michigan State University.

DURATION: 20 minutes

3 Flutes (3. doubles picc.)
2 Oboes
4 Clarinets B-flat
Bass Clarinet B-flat (with low C extension)
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon
Soprano Saxophone B-flat
Alto Saxophone E-flat
Tenor Saxophone B-flat
Baritone Saxophone E-flat
3 Trumpets B-flat
4 Horns F
2 Tenor Trombones
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba

SOLO PIANO

Contrabass
Timpani
3 Percussion

Program Note:

CONCERTO LOGIC (2007/8) was commissioned by a consortium of 20 or so university wind symphonies around the country via CBDNA. The work is largely inspired by games of chance, logic and strategy, both ancient and contemporary. Cast in four movements, the piece lasts about 20 minutes.

I. *Dogs and Jackals* is an ancient Egyptian game from between the 9th and 12th dynasties. Each player has his own pegs or counters to keep position while moving around a pegboard. The game is a race to see who gets to the last peg first by way of a chance device (like dice). The most common chance device of the era was a set of 4 *throw-sticks*, each with a curved and a flat side. This first movement does not portray any kind of game play, but instead uses the images of both animals, carved onto each set of pegs, as musical characters in dialogue.

II. *Ērno Rubik's Magic Cube* is a musical depiction of what it's like to work on the Rubik's Cube until finally, after several days, the last few turns are found and the puzzle is solved. In the fall of 2007 I decided to wrestle with this cube until I brought it down. This slower movement has a

pensive, contemplative feel for the most part. The little *Scherzetto* in the middle can be likened to the mid-cube adrenaline I experienced as I realized it was within reach. There is a romantic resolution near the end with rushes of ascending arpeggios, leading to the final solo. A last clustered harmony in the piano is slowly peeled away, revealing the tonic sonority (the last few turns of the cube).

III. *Rondo Capriccio: "Rage over a Lost Pawn"* (piano solo) is an extended concert *cadenza brillante*. I used the title of Beethoven's famous "*Rage over a Lost Penny*" and reassigned it as an introduction to the final movement of the work. This cadenza is full of unhinged ragtime and Lisztian sweep. It lies right at the outer limits of my pianism.

IV. *Dancing with Caissa* is the largest and most ambitious movement of the work. Caissa is the patron goddess of chess players, as depicted for the first time in a poem of the same name written in 1763 by English poet and philologist Sir William Jones. The chess bug grabbed a hold of me in my twenties (fairly late for a chessplayer) and never let go. For the last ten years I have spent too much money on too many chess books, played in several stressful tournaments, spent too much time playing online games, you name it. The depth of the game is stated eloquently in a famous Indian proverb, "Chess is a sea in which a gnat may drink and an elephant may bathe." This final movement came about after studying a legendary game played by Georg Rottlewi and the tactical master Akiba Rubinstein. Rottlewi isn't prepared for the sacrificial onslaught by his opponent, and finally breaks under the strain. The final position in the game is a marvel of latent pressure!