

SKETCHES OF THE FAR EAST

A Note from the Composer

Many things have inspired me to create this piece of music. I have spent half of my childhood in China which gave me fond memories and an emotional attachment to the place that I was born. After spending 6 years in Canada, I went back to do a bit of sight seeing.

My excursions involved riding a train through the countryside and visiting various monuments and parks such as the Great Wall and the Imperial Palace. Each of these places will awe the spectator with their magnificence and beauty. Even the train ride through the countryside was a pretty sight. Green rice paddies and vegetable farms stretched for as far as the eye can see, each with their own residential shack. Various fowl and animals fly overhead or paddle through the water. It's a kind of beauty that is unique to its location and not found elsewhere.

The piece starts with a *rit.* An optional gong crash and wind chime shimmer can be used with the notes in the first bar. Listen to each other carefully and move together. At the *rit.* at bar 9, listen to the flute when slowing down together. The syncopated rhythm in the oboe solo should be played lightly without an accent. At 23, there should be a pause before the horn player establishes the new tempo. The clarinet line should be played steadily like a pulse or the rhythm of a train. The flute and oboe phrases should be played as lightly as possible while being heard above the other instruments. Tune the perfect intervals carefully on the whole notes. At bar 56, tongue the triplets vigorously, each with a slight accent as you crescendo. Of all the crescendos in the piece, the last one is the most important. Exaggerate it if you have to in order to come to a flourishing finish.