Four Rivers of Paradise

for Wind Ensemble (2014)

Ryan Diefenderfer (b.1990)

Instrumentation

Piccolo

Flutes 1-2

Oboes 1-2

English Horn

Bassoons 1-2

Contrabassoon

Eb Clarinet

Bb Clarinets 1-3

Bb Bass Clarinet

Soprano Saxophone

Alto Saxophones 1-2

Tenor Saxophone

Baritone Saxophone

Trumpets in Bb 1-3

French Horns in F1-4

Trombones 1-2

Bass Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Double Bass

Harp

Timpani (4 drums)

Percussion (Six players)

1. Marímba

2. Glockenspiel, Tam-tam, Bass Drum

3. Vibraphone

4. Bass Drum, Congas (2), Tam-tam

5. Triangle, Suspended Cymbal, Timbales

6. Tam-tam, Tom-Toms (2), Crotales

Duration: ca. 9:00

Score is Transposed

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Program Notes

Four Rivers of Paradise is inspired by a Baroque painting of the same name by Peter Paul Rubens, completed in 1685 and located in the Kunthistorisches Art Museum in Vienna, Austria. The four rivers of paradise to which both works refer are the four rivers of antiquity that are believed to have flowed from the Garden of Eden. These four rivers are the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Ganges, and the Nile. Within this piece, each river is depicted with its own unique motive. These motives serve as the basis for the entire piece, as each motive is altered, transformed, and combined with the other motives in different ways. Each motive is introduced one by one throughout the piece, until finally, the four motives transpire simultaneously during the climax of the work. Below, for the conductor's benefit, are the four primary motives that make up the piece, in addition to the 'water' motive that serves as transitional material.

Because the Euphrates was the first river to be discovered by mankind, it is the first motive to be introduced. Of each motive, it is heard perhaps most prominently throughout the piece.



The Tigris is an offshoot of the Euphrates, and much shorter in physical length than any of the other rivers. As a result, the Tigris is the shortest of the motives utilized in the piece.



The Ganges, located in India, borrows elements from Carnatic music. All notes from this motive use notes from the tanarupi raga, the sixth malakarta raga. Additionally, the Ganges section (beginning at m.65) introduces three rhythmic talas in the percussion that build and serve as accompaniment.



The Nile River is one of the only rivers on the globe to flow northward, and is the longest river of those present in the piece. As a result, the Nile motive is ascending, and it continues to grow longer and longer as the Nile section (beginning at m. 101) progresses.



Additionally, the piece uses a 'water' motive that serves as introductory and transitional material.



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