

# The Horsemen

*for Trombone Sextet*

Zoe Gougousidis

SCORE SAMPLE

# The Horsemen

*The Horsemen* was composed by Zoe Gougousidis in 2023, and was premiered on the 27th of May 2023, in the Verbrugghen Hall at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

The premiere was performed by:

Zac Bonham (Tenor Trombone 1), Riley Smith (Tenor Trombone 2), Eloise Crawford (Tenor Trombone 3), Cailey Soon (Bass Trombone 1), Amy McCarthy (Bass Trombone 2), and Molly James (Bass Trombone 3).

**Duration:** c. 5 minutes 30 seconds.

This work is inspired by the four horsemen of the apocalypse, which are figures that appear in Christian literature. The story describes the summoning of four beings as the first four of seven seals are broken, bringing forth the apocalypse. The first horseman rides a white horse and carries a bow and a crown, which is the figure of conquest.

The second horseman is war, which rides a red horse and carries a sword for bloodshed.

The third rides a black horse and carries scales, representing famine.

The last rider is death, riding on a pale horse. These figures were given authority to kill using famine, war and plague, and bring about the end of the world.

Each section of the piece represents one of these apocalyptic figures.

The first is representing conquest, and aims to reflect a fanfare style that incorporates more dissonance and fragmentation. Fanfares are associated with military signals and ceremonial announcements which reflects the successful battle element of conquest, however the dissonance represents the negative fact that for a successful conquest, someone needs to be conquered.

The second section is famine, and acts as a cadenza feature for trombone 1. This section uses pitch restriction, using F, C and B, which creates intervals of semitones, perfect fifths and tritones.

This allows for very consonant and very dissonant intervals. In addition to this pitch restriction, muted slide vibrato and thin textures are used to represent famine through the lack of musical elements at play. The speed of the slide vibrato should be left freely up to the players whenever it appears throughout the piece.

The third section represents war, and is a feature for the bass end of the ensemble. It is brassy, dissonant and loud, to represent battle and bloodshed. It additionally utilises double tonguing, which enhances this frantic sense of tension. The sense of chaos in this section represents the brutality of war and the damage that comes from it.

The final section represents death. The melody is developed from the Dies Irae, a gregorian chant which is a setting of a medieval Latin poem - this poem is about the signalling trumpet calling souls before God for final judgement. It aims for a tense sound, utilising both consonant and dissonant harmony to create a sense of unease. The work ends on a traditional chordal progression, but stops before the progression can return to the tonic chord, ending on an unresolved harmonic progression to represent that death often leaves things unfinished.

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## I. Conquest

Marcato ♩ = 115

Musical score for Trombone Sextet, measures 1-5. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is Marcato with a quarter note equal to 115 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The parts are:

- Tenor Trombone 1: Starts with a triplet of eighth notes (*f*), then rests, then another triplet (*f*), and finally a melodic line (*mf*).
- Tenor Trombone 2: Rests, then a single note (*f*), then rests.
- Tenor Trombone 3: Rests, then a single note (*f*), then rests.
- Bass Trombone 1: Starts with a triplet of eighth notes (*f*), then rests, then another triplet (*f*), and finally a melodic line (*mf*).
- Bass Trombone 2: Rests, then a single note (*f*), then rests, then a melodic line (*mf*).
- Bass Trombone 3: Rests, then a single note (*f*), then rests, then a melodic line (*mf*).

Musical score for Trombone Sextet, measures 6-9. The score continues from measure 5. The dynamics are *ff* (fortissimo). The parts are:

- Tbn. 1: Starts with a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).
- Tbn. 2: Starts with a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).
- Tbn. 3: Starts with a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).
- B. Tbn. 1: Rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).
- B. Tbn. 2: Rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).
- B. Tbn. 3: Rests, then a triplet of eighth notes (*ff*), then rests, then another triplet (*ff*), and finally a melodic line (*ff*).

10

Musical score for six tuba parts (Tbn. 1-3 and B. Tbn. 1-3) from measure 10 to 12. The score includes dynamic markings *pp* and *p*, and articulation marks such as slurs and accents. A large diagonal watermark "SCORE SAMPLE" is overlaid on the page.

13

Musical score for six tuba parts (Tbn. 1-3 and B. Tbn. 1-3) from measure 13 to 16. The score includes dynamic markings *ff*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. Measure 13 features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and slurs. Measures 14-16 show a dynamic progression from *ff* to *mp*. A large diagonal watermark "SCORE SAMPLE" is overlaid on the page.

3

18

Musical score for six tuba parts (Tbn. 1, 2, 3, B. Tbn. 1, 2, 3) from measure 18 to 20. The score is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats. Measures 18 and 19 feature a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). Measure 20 features a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo). A large slur spans measures 18 and 19. A large watermark "SCORE SAMPLE" is overlaid diagonally across the page.

21

*molto rit.*

Musical score for six tuba parts (Tbn. 1, 2, 3, B. Tbn. 1, 2, 3) from measure 21 to 24. The score is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats. Measure 21 features a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) and a tempo marking of *molto rit.* (molto ritardando). Measures 22 and 23 feature a dynamic marking of *ff*. Measure 24 features a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo). A large watermark "SCORE SAMPLE" is overlaid diagonally across the page.