

# *The Ship and the Anchor*

*for Brass Septet*



Zoe Gougousidis

# *The Ship and the Anchor*

for Brass Septet

*The Ship and the Anchor* was composed by Zoe Gougousidis in 2023.

It was premiered on the 11th of October at the Harbin Conservatorium of Music Concert Hall as part of an international tour to China, with a brass septet from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. It was subsequently performed at the Shenyang Conservatorium of Music.

This score is a **transposing score**.

**Duration:** c. 4 minutes, 30 seconds.

## Instrumentation:

Trumpet 1 in Bb

Trumpet 2 in Bb

Horn 1 in F

Horn 2 in F

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Bass Trombone

## Programme Notes:

*The Ship and the Anchor* was composed in 2023 for brass septet. The work is a reflection on the idea of letting go of familiarity and safety in search of meaning in the unknown, and the eternal risk of pursuing new possibilities for the fear of losing the comfort of the life you know.

This is presented through the lens of a ship and an anchor. The anchor keeps the ship safely moored in the harbour - but, despite keeping it safe, the anchor is stopping the ship from doing what it was built to do. The piece reflects on the struggle between these two elements, between safety and excitement, before the ship finally breaks free.

This represents the excitement at the prospect of something new - despite not knowing if what lies ahead is good or bad, the ship continues anyway, in search of more than the harbour.

The work had its international premiere on the 11th of October 2023 at the Harbin Conservatorium of Music in China.

## Performance Notes

The work reflects the idea of letting go of familiarity and safety in search of meaning in the unknown, and the eternal risk of pursuing new possibilities for the fear of losing the comfort of the life you know.

The piece symbolises the above concept through a ship and an anchor - the former is represented by the trumpets when playing in high registers, and the latter by the trombones when utilising the lower and pedal registers. The horns switch between representing the two, depending on register.

The anchor keeps the ship moored in the harbour - it keeps the ship in a protected environment. The nautical theme is represented in the style, utilising a lilting melody with chordal and oompah accompaniment. The harmonies and melodies are fairly stable to represent the element of safety that the anchor gives the ship. The trumpets and bass trombone often play together in this section, representing the link between the ship and the anchor.

Soon safety begins to feel like stagnation, and the stability provided by the anchor begins to feel restrictive. Tension begins as the ship and the anchor struggle - the trombones begin a detached and atonal motif to contrast with the strong harmony of the melody. The tension builds and builds, until the anchor prevails and the ship remains stuck.

The second section is highly emotive and dark, representing the anchor - it reflects the feeling of being trapped, the idea of comfort and safety becoming stifling. The more lyrical and emotional playing style, with moments of sadness and ominousness represents the fear of risk preventing the exploration of excitement and newness.

The tension emerges from within the sadness, with the ship beginning to fight against the anchor again - that change is inevitable, and the risk is worth it. This is shown through the return of the atonal trombone motif, which is additionally picked up by other instruments. The tension is again increased, until the players unify in full, tense chords. The next short section is rushed and explosive, bursting into the final section of the work.

The last section represents the ship breaking free from the anchor - letting go of what is holding you back and embarking on a journey into the unknown to explore the open seas. This section is a transposed and developed version of the first section, with higher pitch lines in the low brass parts to represent the loss of the anchor. The section utilises more running lines and high registers to create energy and excitement at the prospect of something new - despite not knowing if what lies ahead is good or bad, the ship continues anyway, in search of more than the harbour.

# The Ship and the Anchor

Transposing Score

for Brass Septet

Zoe Gougousidis

Lilting  $\text{♩} = 60$

Trumpet 1 in B $\flat$  *f*

Trumpet 2 in B $\flat$  *f*

Horn 1 in F

Horn 2 in F *f*

Trombone 1 *f*

Trombone 2 *f*

Bass Trombone *f*

2 3 4 5 6 7

Tpt. 1 *mf*

Tpt. 2 *mf*

Hn. 1 *mf*

Hn. 2 *mf*

Tbn. 1 *mf*

Tbn. 2 *mf*

B. Tbn. *mf*

8 9 10 11 12 13

Score for Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Hn. 1, Hn. 2, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, and B. Tbn. across measures 14 to 21.

Measures 14-16 show a rhythmic pattern with accents and dynamics *mp*. Measures 17-21 show a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *p*.

Score for Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Hn. 1, Hn. 2, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, and B. Tbn. across measures 22 to 28.

Measures 22-28 show a complex rhythmic pattern with dynamics *mf*, *mp*, *f*, and *p*. Measures 29-34 show a melodic line with dynamics *f* and *p*.