

STRANGE JOURNEYS PROGRAM NOTES

STRANGE JOURNEYS was written on a commission from the Texas Woman's University/Brookhaven Flute Choir, to be premiered at the 2024 National Flute Association Convention in San Antonio. It's a three-movement suite, structured fast-slow-fast, written for the full range of flutes, from piccolo all the way down to contrabass flute. The flute choir phenomenon is driven by the musicians, and their passion and love of the instrument, so making it fun for the players was top-of-mind for me as I wrote it.

Movement I, Magical Scherzo, is light-hearted and playful, colorful and fun, and built to show off both the lyrical and the agile, dancing nature of the flutes. The basic harmony is major – doubly so, with many of the themes being derived by stacking one major chord on top of another. The character is *VERY* optimistic. Rhythmically it drives forward in a fast triple meter, as scherzos do, with a little bit of three against two sprinkled in to keep things moving.

Movement II is the slow movement, titled THE ANCIENT ROAD. It is deliberately reverent, hushed and leaning towards the sacred. All of the flutes gather together at the beginning to create a large, padded chord pattern, over which the high flutes play a lonely and contemplative melody. The contrasting center section features a high-register chorale accompanied by moving lines in the lower flutes.

RENEWAL, the finale, is a fast-paced thriller, inspired by many an action soundtrack. It's driven by a propulsive ostinato figure especially tailored to be idiomatic for the flute. The ostinato gets passed back and forth between the different flutes as various melodies and patterns fly over the top.