



Great North Overture

Kevin Lau

Instrumentation

Soprano Cornet

Solo Cornet

Repiano Cornet

Cornet 2, 3

Flugelhorn

Solo Tenor Horn

Tenor Horn 1, 2

Baritone 1, 2

Trombone 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Euphonium

E \flat Bass

B \flat Bass

Timpani

Melody Percussion

Percussion

(Tam-Tam, Bass Drum, Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbals,
Snare Drum, Triangle, Wind Chimes)

Duration: ca. 6 min. 13 sec.

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Described as a "self-assured voice" (Barczablog) with a "masterful control over his idiom" (Classical Music Sentinel), Kevin Lau has established himself as one of Canada's leading young composers. In 2012, Kevin completed his doctorate in music composition from the University of Toronto under the supervision of Christos Hatzis. He served as Composer in Residence for the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra (2010-12), the Banff Centre (2012), and was artistic director of the Sneak Peek Orchestra (with conductor and co-founder Victor Cheng) until 2014. He served as the RBC Affiliate Composer for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra from 2012-15.

His music has been programmed and performed by ensembles such as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO), Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, Hannaford Street Silver Band (HSSB), Niagara Symphony Orchestra, Mississauga Symphony Orchestra, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra, TorQ Percussion Quartet, Via Salzburg, and the Afiara and Cecilia String Quartets.

GREAT NORTH OVERTURE was commissioned by Fran Harvey for the Metropolitan Silver Band's 75th Anniversary. Given his background in composing some rather lengthy orchestral works, Lau's idea of doing a short, overture-style piece appealed to him enormously. The structure of the piece unfolds in a fairly traditional manner, with a slow introduction and a majestic coda bookending a sprightly fanfare. At the core of the piece is a lyrical melody, drawn in part from the wellspring of starry-eyed melodies that Lau has fallen in love with over the years.

Great North Overture conveys a sense of joy and exuberance that is not exactly youthful, but suggestive of a deeper wisdom gained through age, and of peace earned through hardship. Somehow, when Lau tried to think of a title for this piece, this sensibility triggered an image in his mind of the vast, northern Canadian wilderness, cold and austere yet undeniably beautiful and majestic in its own way—hence, the Great North Overture.

Cover photo by Kristan Toczko

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