

## **BY STEAM OR BY DREAM**

BY STEAM OR BY DREAM is an in-your-face wake-up call of a piece. Its simple purpose is to be energetic, vital, involving and fun. The main rhythm feel that drives and propels the piece is equal parts Beethoven scherzo, jig and rock shuffle. It's inspired by ideas of invention, progress and forward momentum.

BY STEAM OR BY DREAM is built from three major themes that develop, compete and interact over time. The first theme, initially presented on solo bassoon, is a happy and industrious major-key melody. It's always accompanied by its companion bass line, a punctuated exo-skeleton presented either by staccato voices or in driving triplets.

The second theme is a floating chorale. It's optimistic in nature, and grows throughout the piece, first being portrayed very gently in the winds, then growing louder and more majestic in each successive appearance. Its arrival is heralded by two short rhythm hits in the orchestra.

The third theme is an aggressive and annoying march with a repetitive melody and chromatic harmonization. It interrupts the proceedings again and again to interject itself into the spotlight.

In the first part of the piece, all three themes take the spotlight in turn, dancing around one another in various variations and iterations. After a pianissimo center section that serves as a resting place, the chorale, which has by now morphed into a heroic rising two-voice figure, ascends in the horns, eventually growing and leading to an all-out celebratory recapitulation of all the themes in the grand style.

The final coda of BY STEAM OR BY DREAM extends and then surpasses the progress and invention ideas by bringing us to an entirely new and unexpected place. After its initial surprising appearance, it rapidly accelerates and moves through unforeseen wonders as it races towards whatever our destination may be.