For Cendan Dillon

— THE AXE FORGETS —

Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra

Graham Lazorchak

(2026)

— Instrumentation —

2 Flutes
Piccolo (Flute 3)
2 Oboes
English Horn
2 Clarinets in B♭
Bass Clarinet in B♭
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Tuba

Percussion 1
(Bass Drum, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Cabasa)
Percussion 2
(Tam-Tam, Suspended Cymbal, Trashy Stack,
Glockenspiel, Crotales, Crash Cymbals)

Harp

Timpani (Solo)

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabass

— Movements —

I. The Tree Remembers
II. Metal and Wheels
III. Rhythm Aria

— Program Note —

When Cendan Dillon and I first discussed the possibility of writing a timpani concerto together, we were immediately on the same page. We wanted a piece that was melodic, sometimes bordering on Romantic, but with a few technical moments requiring fast retunings, and an overarching fantastical mood. While the piece changed over the course of its development, it never strayed far from those early core ideals.

I decided the piece needed a conceit, a reason for writing music with such a prominent timpani part. I imagined the timpani soloist as the war drums of trees, an image drawn from a shared love of Tolkien and the threat of the climate crisis. Tolkien was responding to the industrialization of the English countryside, but his words ring just as true now as they did when he penned them.

— Performance Notes —

At no time should the music feel self-aware of ironic.

The timpanist should feel free to experiment with a range of mallets and damping techniques.

The “trashy stack” used by Percussion 2 in the second movement should be fairly loose. 2 or 3 cymbals are recommended. Do not use cymbals with jingles or rivets. Crotales passages may be played on glockenspiel instead if desired.

The Axe Forgets was originally written for timpanist Cendan Dillon.

II. Metal And Wheels

Whirring (♩. = 144)

Flute 1 2

Piccolo *sempre*

Piccolo

Oboe 1 2

English Horn

Clarinet in B♭ 1 2

Bass Clarinet in B♭

Bassoon 1 2

Contrabassoon

Whirring (♩. = 144)

Horn in F 1 2

Horn in F 3 4

Trumpet in C 1

Trumpet in C 2 3

(Open)

Trombone 1 2

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Percussion

Percussion 2

Harp

"Mechanical, but not digital"
Very articulate
con sord.

Timpani (Solo)

p

Whirring (♩. = 144)

(Tutti)

Violin I

(Tutti)

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

1 2 3 4 5

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Grace notes *extremely* tight to the beat
R L R R L L R L R R L L
R L R R L L
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

6 7 8 9 10 11

12

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

mf p

12

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.

mf p mf p

12

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

spicc. (non div.)

p mf p mf p mf p

12 13 14 15 16

18

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

1.
a2
f *pp* *mp* *p*

18

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.

(Take straight mute)
mf *f* *p*

Cabasa
Bell Tree
Individual bells (*non gliss.*)
Perc. 1
Perc. 2

Hp.

via sord.
Timp.

18

8va
(sul E)
div. in 2
pizz.
arco
Vln. I
Vln. II

div., ord.
ord.
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

17 18 19 20 21 22

26

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

f
ff
Soli
mf

26

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.

3.
mf
Solo
Tight straight mute
(Mute out)

B.D.
sfz

Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.

Crotales
p

"Like a frame drum"
Timp.
p
R L R R L R

26

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(8)
f
arco

23 24 25 26 27

32

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

a2
p
p
R L R R L R

28 29 30 31 32

33 38

Fl. 1 2 — mf ff
Picc. — mf ff
Ob. 1 2 — mf ff
E. Hn. — f marcato ff
Cl. 1 2 — f marcato a2 ff
B. Cl. — ff heavy
Bsn. 1 2 — f marcato ff
Cbsn. — ff heavy

33 38

Hn. 1 2 — f p a2 ff
Hn. 3 4 — f p a2 ff
Tpt. 1 — Open f brillante
Tpt. 2 3 — f brillante
Tbn. 1 2 — ff
B. Tbn. — ff heavy
Tba. — ff heavy

Perc. 1 — Bass Drum — f ff heavy
Perc. 2 — Bell Tree p — Crotales ff
Hp. — ff
Timp. — f marcato fp f ff heavy

33 38

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla. — div. in 2 ff
Vc. — arco (non div.) fp f ff heavy
Db. — arco fp f ff heavy

33 34 35 36 37 38 39

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

a2
unis.
8va
B♭

40 41 42 43 44

45

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

45

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.

Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.

45

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

45 46 47 48 49

53

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

f

53

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.

mf *f*

Xylophone

Perc. 1
Perc. 2

Trashy Stack

p under Vlns, but still present

Hp.

(Gliss as late as possible)

Timp.

gliss.

ff

53

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

50 51 52 53 54 55 56

59

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2 (a2)
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2 (a2)
Cbsn.

59

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.

Orchestrate *ad lib.*—Be creative but tasteful

59

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Solo

arco

57 58 59 60 61

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timpani
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

a2
1. Solo
Glockenspiel
p

69

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

1.
p
p (w/ B. Cl.)
1.
p (w/ E.H.)
2

69

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.

Vibraphone
p glimmering
Bell Tree
Rubber mallets, dark attack
p

Perc. 1
Perc. 2

Hp.
mp
D♮ C♯ B♮ /
E♮ F♯ G♮ A♮
F♮
C♮

Timpani
Solo
f
ff
p adrift

69

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Tutti
p sub.
p sub.
div. in 2
p sub.
p sub.
2
p
pizz.
p
4

67 68 69 70 71 72 73

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

1.
p agile
1.
p agile
f
p
p
D♯
arco

74 75 76 77 78 79 80

84

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

84

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.

B.D.

Glock.
Hard, bright mallets

Timp.

84

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

81 82 83 84 85

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timpani
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Soli
Orchestrate *ad lib.*—Heavy
gliss.

86 87 88 89 90

91

Fl. 1 2

Picc.

Ob. 1 2

E. Hn.

Cl. 1 2

B. Cl.

Bsn. 1 2

Cbsn.

(1/2 step *down*, start on upper note *sempre*)

f

91

Hn. 1 2

Hn. 3 4

ff

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2 3

f *p* *f*

Solo

Tbn. 1 2

B. Tbn.

ff

Tba.

Perc. 1

Solo

ff

Suspended Cymbal

Perc. 2

ff

Trashy Stack

p *under winds, but still present*

Hp.

Timpani

(Detuned or very low)

91

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

91 92 93 94 95 96 97

101

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.

101

Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.

101

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(1/2 step *sempre*)
(1/2 step *sempre*)

98 99 100 101 102

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Xylophone
Glockenspiel
Db C♮ Bb /
Eb F♮ G♮ A♮
2.
a2
div. in 2
l.v. all? Chaos!

103 104 105 106 107

Fl. 1 2
Picc.
Ob. 1 2
E. Hn.
Cl. 1 2
B. Cl.
Bsn. 1 2
Cbsn.
Hn. 1 2
Hn. 3 4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2 3
Tbn. 1 2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Hp.
Timp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

1.
mp
p
mp reedy
a2
ff
Rip!
Cabasa
(Move fast!)
Xylophone
Bass Drum
(Shared with Perc. 1)
8va
Ab
Db C♮ B♭ /
E♮ F♮ G♭ A♮
l.v.
fff
sffffz raunchy!
pizz.
arco
unis., arco
unis.
div., pizz.
div. in 3
sfpp

108 109 110 111 112