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Consortium Commission Proposal: *The Magical Land of Oz* Piano Cycle (2014)

Duration: 15-17 minutes (in five or six movements)

Instrumentation: piano solo

Difficulty: College undergraduate

Artistic Statement: Like so many American children of the late 20th-century, I was introduced to the work of L. Frank Baum through the 1939 MGM film *The Wizard of Oz*. Like many children since, though, I was shocked to find that Baum's original vision differs tremendously from Hollywood's Technicolor spectacular. As I rediscovered Baum's books with my son as bedtime stories, I recognized a satirical, subversive, and often highly unconventional side to the Land of Oz that is largely absent from the film, and in this cycle of piano pieces, I hope to capture a truer, earlier Oz, through a series of character sketches depicting the inhabitants of Baum's land. Following my 2008 cycle *Starry Wanderers* and my 2010 *Piano Sonata*, and my 2013 concerto for piano, I am eager to return to the medium of solo piano, which suggests at once the compactness of Baum's stories and the breadth of his characters' lives.

Timeline:

Assemble Consortium (limited to five performers): Winter 2013-2014

Compose: Summer-Fall 2014

Deliver Score and Parts: December 1, 2014

Window for Consortium Performances: February 1, 2015 – January 31, 2016

Web Resources:

Composer's Website:

www.martiandances.com

Recording of *Starry Wanderers*:

<http://youtu.be/hGhpk5cWIYk>

Recording of *Piano Sonata*:

<https://soundcloud.com/matthew-saunders-9/piano-sonata-2010>