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Consortium Commission Proposal: *Starry Wanderers* for wind ensemble (2014)

Duration: 15-17 minutes (in ten movements)

1. Resonating Quicksilver
2. Venus
3. Earthly Hope
4. We Were There
5. Martian Meditation
6. Jupiter
7. Rings
8. No Names, Please
9. Neptune
10. Stillness at the Edge

Instrumentation: full wind ensemble instrumentation (suitable for “concert band” performances)

Grade Level: Grade 5-6, although individual movements vary in difficulty

Artistic Statement: In 2008, I composed a cycle of ten piano pieces entitled *Starry Wanderers*, each a scientific or sociological picture of one of our Solar System’s eight planets, Earth’s Moon or Pluto. The various movements aim to depict facts about these celestial bodies. While I hold Holst’s *The Planets* in high musical esteem, and pay homage to that work in three movements, I find his astrological associations distasteful on both spiritual and intellectual grounds. My impressions of the planets rest firmly in the scientific discoveries of the past century and the cultural reactions those discoveries have engendered. This work received its premiere in November 2009 by Dianna Anderson at Minot State University (North Dakota, USA). Both the complete work and selected movements have been performed and recorded by Dr. Anderson and by pianist Avguste Antonov as part of their recital repertoires. I have for some time been considering a wind ensemble transcription of a piano cycle that could hold a similar place in the repertoire to Ravel’s orchestral transcription of Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and after considering works by Rzewski, Janacek, and others, I have come to believe that my own work offers an excellent opportunity in this respect.

Timeline:

Assemble Consortium (limited to ten ensembles): Winter 2013-2014

Compose: Spring-Summer 2014

Deliver Score and Parts: September 1, 2014

Window for Consortium Performances: November 1, 2014 through October 31, 2015

Web Resources:

Composer’s Website:

www.martiandances.com

Recording of Piano Version:

<http://youtu.be/hGhpk5cWIYk>

Recording of *Moriarty’s Necktie* for concert band:

<https://soundcloud.com/matthew-saunders-9/moriartys-necktie-for-concert>