
Composer's note

Once upon a time...

Andrew Schultz

Opening a door on an orchestra playing is, to me, to step into a magical realm. A world in which fantastic and endless possibilities are at work just as much as in the enchanted forests of fairy tales. Stories – abstract or simple, familiar or unknown – are told in this space. Dreams unfold and are crushed, characters ridiculous and sublime strut the stage, the tragic and the bizarre are juxtaposed, and the heroic and the desolate stand together. And all of this in a language that is ineffable and mysterious yet absolutely powerful and direct. Meaningful and meaningless at once. Amazingly, the story is different for every pair of ears that hears.

So in this piece the spirit of musical story telling informs all parts of the work. It is about seventeen minutes in duration and in one movement. Individual wind and brass parts play very prominent roles in the piece. Once upon a time...

The work was composed in 2006 for The Queensland Orchestra in response to a commission from Symphony Australia and is score for an orchestra with triple wind and brass. It was composed in part during a residency at the Leighton Studios, Banff Centre for the Arts, in Alberta, Canada. This was the fourth period, over the last ten years that I have spent in Banff. The northern landscape and the evanescent alpine light have crept more and more into my music as a result.

The orchestration of the work was subsequently revised in a reduced version for the Tasmania Symphony Orchestra to record in December 2008.
