

JOHN MACKY

Some treasures are heavy with human tears

Concert Band / 2021

Commissioned by a consortium led by Bellbrook High School
Barbara Siler, Director of Bands
Andrew Soloman, Associate Director of Bands

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Instrumentation

2 Flutes
Oboe (alternate soprano sax part also included)
Bassoon

3 Clarinets
2 Bass Clarinets
Contrabass Clarinet (optional)

2 Alto Saxes
Tenor Sax
Baritone Sax

3 Trumpets
2 Horns (doubling encouraged)
3 Trombones (2 tenor, 1 bass if possible)
Euphonium
Tuba

7 Percussionists

Player 1: Timpani and 2 Crystal Glasses (pitched D5 & G5)
Player 2: Whirly (pitched G5 – octave placement important!) *
Player 3: Whirly (pitched D5 – octave placement important!) *
Player 4: Crotales
Player 5: Suspended Cymbal
Player 6: Vibraphone
Player 7: Bass Drum

* To find the latest source for the “whirlies,” including alternatives, please visit:
www.johnmackey.com/music/treasures

This work received its world premiere in Bellbrook, Ohio, with the bands at Bellbrook High School, conducted by Barbara Siler, on October 21, 2021.

Commissioned by Bellbrook High School, Barbara Siler, Director of Bands

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Wright State University, Dr. Shelley Jagow, Director of Bands

Miamisburg High School, Steve Aylward, Director

Northmont High School, Brian Wissman, Director

Springboro Wind Symphony, Josh Baker, Conductor

University of Dayton, Dr. Patrick Reynolds, Professor of Music

Program Note

(CONTENT WARNING: This program note describes an act of public mass violence and may be traumatic or uncomfortable to some readers. Discretion is advised.)

At 1:05 AM on Sunday, August 4, 2019 in the Oregon Historic District of Dayton, Ohio, a man armed with a semi-automatic AM-15 approached a crowded neighborhood bar and opened fire. In under thirty seconds, he fired 41 rounds, killing nine people and injuring another 17.

That's where the story of John Mackey's **Some treasures are heavy with human tears** begins.

One of the victims of the shooting was Megan Betts, a 22-year-old woman who had played trumpet in her high school band in nearby Bellbrook. The Bellbrook program reached out to Mackey to commission a work that would commemorate the tragedy, a task he approached with some reluctance:

I've been asked on several occasions to write pieces in response to tragedies, but I've rarely felt like it was appropriate. Something about this, though—happening in Dayton, where I've been many times, and so close to Columbus, where I grew up—that I felt like I wanted to try to say something musically, even though I was at a loss for what I could say verbally. Fortunately, Abby (my spouse) found this incredible title, which says so much before the music even starts. The last thing the community needed was a piece of music that relived the event. The piece isn't trying to sound like what happened; it's trying to convey what it feels like to know that it happened.

The piece is not programmatic. Rather, it exists in abstraction: a meditation on grief. In framing the work in this way, Mackey's music transcends elegizing a singular horrific event and instead provides an artistic representation of how we cope with all tragedies, both those that are intensely personal and the ones that are communal. It explores a wide range of emotions, from denial through shock, fury, and anguish before finally finding an incomplete peace.

Some treasures are heavy with human tears begins with a simple motivic gesture: a rocking oscillation between flute and vibraphone that sounds akin to a lullaby. This principal motive carries throughout the piece, acting as the listener's avatar through the emotional journey. A melody spins out from it, accompanied by ethereal ringing provided by crystal glasses and whirly tubes, and although the overall mood is one of melancholy, the atmosphere is also peaceful until a disorienting fog of trombone glissandi passes over. The songlike melody continues, at times abruptly shifting from the resigned mood of the home key of G minor to the distantly bright C major, evoking a fleeting remembrance of a more hopeful spirit, before just as quickly dissipating back. The simplicity of the opening returns, but this time fuller, with more voices joining before the glissando cloud returns (this time augmented by timpani), ushering in a new mood: confusion. The opening gesture reemerges, ceaselessly rocking in a rhythmic nature, oblivious to a building torment in the surrounding harmonies which become brasher and angrier as the piece approaches its dramatic climax. The apex of the piece is a wail, acknowledging the reality of the trauma in a moment of agony bordering on rage. This too, however, subsides, and the peacefulness of the beginning of the work returns to stay with one exception: as the final phrase of the work cadences and the last tones decay, a single muted trumpet rises from the silence in a bright flash and is suddenly extinguished.

Program note by Jake Wallace, used with permission

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Some treasures are heavy with human tears

John Mackey

$\text{♩} = 68, \textit{molto rubato}$

Flute 1 *p* solo

Flute 2

Oboe *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* lower octave optional

Bassoon *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

B♭ Clarinet 1 solo (audible for full duration) *pp* *mp* tutti stagger breath *pp*

B♭ Clarinet 2 stagger breath *pp*

B♭ Clarinet 3 stagger breath *pp*

2 Bass Clarinets

Contrabass Clarinet

Alto Sax I solo *p*

Alto Sax 2

Tenor Sax

Baritone Sax

Trumpet I

Trumpet 2-3

Horn 1

Horn 2

Trombone I

Trombone 2-3

Euphonium

Tuba

Crystal Glasses *mp*

Whirly - G

Whirly - D

Crotales bowed *f* acrylic mallets *mp*

Sus. Cymbal *p* motor on, med. slow soft mallets

Vibraphone *p* *mf* *p* *mf* hold pedal until release indicated

Large Bass Drum

21

poco rit.

B *a tempo*

solo

poco rit.

tutti

Fl. 1 *mp*

Fl. 2 *mp* solo *mp* tutti *mf*

Ob. *mp* *pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

Bsn. *p* *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Clar. 1 *pp* solo *pp* *mp* tutti *mf*

Clar. 2 *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

Clar. 3 *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Bs. Cl. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Cb. Cl. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

A. Sx. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

A. Sx. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

T. Sx. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

B. Sx. *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

poco rit.

B *a tempo*

solo

poco rit.

tutti

Tpt. 1 *mf* solo *mp* *mf* tutti *mp* *mf*

Tpt. 2-3 *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Horn 1 *mp* *p* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Horn 2 *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Tbn. 1 *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Tbn. 2-3 *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Euph. *mp* *mp* *mp* *mf*

Tuba *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *mf*

Glasses

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. bowed *mp* acrylic mallets *mp*

Cymb.

Vib. mallets *mp* *mf*

BD (pedal still fully sustained) *mp* *mf*

lower octave optional
both octaves may be played if div.

mp

37 C

a tempo

rit.

tutti

Fl. 1 *solo* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Fl. 2 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Ob. *solo* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bsn. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Clar. 1 *solo* *p* *pp* *mp* *p* *mp*

Clar. 2 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Clar. 3 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Bs. Cl. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Cb. Cl. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

A. Sx. *Oboe* *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

A. Sx. *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

T. Sx. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

B. Sx. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

C

a tempo

rit.

tutti

Tpt. 1 *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf*

Tpt. 2-3 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Horn 1 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Horn 2 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Tbn. 1 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Tbn. 2-3 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Euph. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Tuba *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

smooth, slow glissando from highest to lowest pitch on indicated drum

Timpani 23" 29"

p *mf* *n.*

Glasses *mp* *p* *mf* *n.*

Whirly *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Whirly *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Crot. *bowed* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Cymb. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vib. *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

BD *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

45 **D** a tempo or a little faster
poco rit. a tempo

Fl. 1 *p* *pp* *p* *mp* *p*

Fl. 2 *pp*

Ob. *pp* *mf* *p*

Bsn. *p*

Clar. 1 *pp* *pp* *mp* *p*

Clar. 2 *pp* *p*

Clar. 3 *pp* *p*

Bs. Cl. *pp* *p*

Cb. Cl. *pp* *p*

A. Sx. *pp* *p* *p* *mp* *p*

A. Sx. *pp* *p* *mp* *p*

T. Sx. *pp* *p*

B. Sx. *pp* *p*

D a tempo or a little faster
poco rit. a tempo

Tpt. 1 *p* *mp*

Tpt. 2-3 *mp*

Horn 1 *p* *mp* *p*

Horn 2 *pp* *p*

Tbn. 1 *pp* *p*

Tbn. 2-3 *pp* *p*

Euph. *p* *mp* *p*

Tuba *pp* *p*

Glasses *mp*

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. *mp* *bowed*

Cymb. *pp*

Vib. *mp* *p* *mp* *mp*

BD *pp*

Crystal Glasses

senza sord.

acrylic mallets

lower octave can be omitted if necessary

Fl. 1 *p* poco a poco cresc. *tutti*

Fl. 2 *p* poco a poco cresc. *tutti*

Ob. *poco a poco cresc.*

Bsn. *poco a poco cresc.*

Clar. 1 *p* poco a poco cresc. *tutti* *fp*

Clar. 2 *poco a poco cresc.*

Clar. 3 *poco a poco cresc.*

Bs. Cl. *poco a poco cresc.*

Cb. Cl. *poco a poco cresc.*

A. Sx. *poco a poco cresc.*

A. Sx. *poco a poco cresc.*

T. Sx. *poco a poco cresc.*

B. Sx. *poco a poco cresc.*

E

Tpt. 1 *poco a poco cresc.* *fp* raise bell

Tpt. 2-3 *poco a poco cresc.* *fp* raise bell

Horn 1 *poco a poco cresc.* *mp* raise bell *molto*

Horn 2 *poco a poco cresc.* *mp* raise bell *molto*

Tbn. 1 *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

Tbn. 2-3 *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

Euph. *poco a poco cresc.*

Tuba *poco a poco cresc.*

Glasses *mf* *ff* Timpani 23" 29"

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. *f*

Cymb.

Vib. *poco a poco cresc.* *p* *mp*

BD *p* *mp*

F ♩ = 54, majestic *molto allarg.* ♩ = 68, *molto rubato*

rit.

63

Fl. 1 *ff*

Fl. 2 *ff*

Ob. *ff*

Bsn. *ff*

Clar. 1 *ff*

Clar. 2 *ff*

Clar. 3 *ff*

Bs. Cl. *f* *ff*

Cb. Cl. *ff*

A. Sx. *ff*

A. Sx. *ff*

T. Sx. *ff*

B. Sx. *ff* *f* *ff*

F ♩ = 54, majestic *molto allarg.* ♩ = 68, *molto rubato*

rit.

Tpt. 1 *ff* bell up

Tpt. 2-3 *ff* bell up

Horn 1 *ff* bell up bell normal

Horn 2 *ff* bell up bell normal

Tbn. 1 *ff* bell up bell normal

Tbn. 2-3 *ff* *f* *ff*

Euph. *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Timp. *f* *ff* 29" 32" actual pitch 29"

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. acrylic mallets *ff*

Cymb. *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

Vib. *p* *ff* *p*

BD *mf* *f* *mf*

69 *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.* **G**

Fl. 1 *mf* *ff* *p*

Fl. 2 *mf* *ff* *p*

Ob. *mf* *ff* *pp* solo

Bsn. *mf* *ff*

Clar. 1 *mf* *ff* *pp*

Clar. 2 *mf* *ff* *p*

Clar. 3 *mf* *ff* *p*

Bs. Cl. *mf* *ff*

Cb. Cl. *mf* *ff*

A. Sx. *mf* *ff* *pp*

A. Sx. *mf* *ff* *p*

T. Sx. *mf* *ff*

B. Sx. *mf* *ff*

Tpt. 1 *f* *mf* *f* *ff* *p* bell normal

Tpt. 2-3 *f* *ff* *pp* bell normal

Horn 1 *f* *ff* *mf* bell up bell normal

Horn 2 *f* *ff* *mf* bell up bell normal

Tbn. 1 *mf* *ff* *mf* bell up

Tbn. 2-3 *mf* *ff*

Euph. *mf* *ff*

Tuba *mf* *ff*

Timp. *ff* 32" actual pitch

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. *f* bowed

Cymb. *f* *p* *ff* *p*

Vib. *f* *mp* *mf* *f* bowed

BD *f* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

76 *a tempo* *rit.* **H** *a tempo*

Fl. 1 *f* *mp* *p* *mp* *solo*

Fl. 2 *f* *mp*

Ob. *f* *mp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Bsn. *f* *mp* *p*

Clar. 1 *f* *mp* *p* *pp* *solo*

Clar. 2 *f* *mp* *p*

Clar. 3 *f* *mp* *p*

Bs. Cl. *f* *mp* *p*

Cb. Cl. *f* *mp* *p*

A. Sx. *f* *mp* *p* *pp* *solo*

A. Sx. *f* *mp* *p*

T. Sx. *f* *mp* *p*

B. Sx. *f* *mp* *p*

Tpt. 1 *f* *mp* *p* *solo* *con sord. - harmon, no stem*

Tpt. 2-3 *f* *mp* *p*

Horn 1 *f* *mp* *p*

Horn 2 *f* *mp* *p*

Tbn. 1 *f* *mp* *p*

Tbn. 2-3 *f* *mp* *p*

Euph. *f* *mp* *p*

Tuba *f* *mp* *p*

Timp. *mp* *f* *mp* **Crystal Glasses**

Whirly

Whirly

Crot. *bowed* *mf* *mp* *bowed*

Cymb. *f* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p*

Vib. *bowed* *mp* *mallets* *p*

BD *mf* *p* *pp*

26" 32"

solo *p* *mp* *tutti* *rit.*

Fl. 1 *p* *mp*

Fl. 2 *p* *mp*

Ob. *mf* *p* *mp*

Bsn. *p* *mp*

Clar. 1 *mf* *p* *mp* *tutti*

Clar. 2 *p* *mp*

Clar. 3 *p* *mp*

Bs. Cl. *p* *mp*

Cb. Cl. *p* *mp*

A. Sx. *mp* *p* *mp* *tutti* *p* *solo*

A. Sx. *p* *mp*

T. Sx. *p* *mp*

B. Sx. *p* *mp*

Tpt. 1 *mp* *mp* *mf* *p* *solo* *molto ff*

Tpt. 2-3 *p* *mp*

Horn 1 *p* *mp*

Horn 2 *p* *mp*

Tbn. 1 *p* *mp*

Tbn. 2-3 *p* *mp*

Euph. *p* *mp*

Tuba *p* *mp*

Glasses *f*

Whirly *f*

Whirly *f*

Crot. *f* *acrylic mallets*

Cymb. *ppp* *p* *pp* *mp*

Vib. *f* *mf* *f* *ppp* *p*

BD *ppp* *p*

not in time; hold note, piano, saving air for dramatic and almost-harsh crescendo leading to release

(hold pedal until last note has faded)