CHILDREN OF CHAOS: THREE MOVEMENTS FOR ORCHESTRA

I. AMELIA
II. COLIN
III. EXIT

A THESIS IN
Music Composition

Presented to the Faculty of the University of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

By
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CHILDREN OF CHAOS: THREE MOVEMENTS FOR ORCHESTRA

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University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2017

ABSTRACT

Two characters from The Chronicles of Chaos trilogy by John C. Wright inspire these three movements for orchestra, “Amelia,” “Colin,” and “Exit.” The characters in the story are not human and have different powers allowing them to manipulate their reality. The first movement, “Amelia,” is based on clever and adventurous Amelia Armstrong Windrose, a Phaethusian or radiant being, who can travel inter-dimensionally giving her the ability to travel quickly, lift heavy objects, and become invisible. This implies an enigmatic depth to her reality and her musical character sketch will use different orchestrations and texture shifts to illustrate this sense. Her movement explores different forms of musical depth including range, density, and timbral shifts based on a flowing melody used throughout the three movements. The next movement, “Colin” is based on boisterous and loyal Colin Ibilus mac Firbolg, Prince Phobetor the son of King Morpheus of the dream realm. Colin is the Prince of Nightmares and can manipulate reality with disbelief. In his movement, there is a war between high and low, bright and dark, consonant and dissonant, dream and reality. The structure of the piece begins with a glissandi motiv that lilts the music into a dream of sudden contrasts. The music rolls through rock motives, modal melodies, and remembrances of Amelia’s melody. Progressing through the dream the music starts to awaken in the last movement, “Exit,” with a return of the glissandi motiv. In this movement remembered textures and new ideas are brought together, cumulating in the last wave of Amelia’s thematic material and marching with fanfares to the end.
The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the Conservatory of Music and Dance, have examined a thesis titled “Children of Chaos” presented by Aubrie Powell, candidate for the Master of Music degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ................................................................. iii
INSTRUMENTATION ..................................................... vi
PERCUSSION NOTES ..................................................... vii
PERFORMANCE NOTES ............................................... vii
SCORE ........................................................................ 1
   I. AMELIA .............................................................. 1
   II. COLIN ............................................................... 24
   III. EXIT ................................................................. 52
VITA ....................................................................... 79
*improvised rhythm, smooth and even gliss
Aubrie Powell (b. 1993, Los Alamos, New Mexico) is a music composer and collaborator whose music has been described as colorful and spiked with humor. Ms. Powell frequently works with artists in many fields to combine mind power and artistry. Two of her most fruitful collaborations were with artist Taylor Fourt on the music for her short animated film Birthmark and with librettist Gaby Radak on a chamber opera The Raindance Café. Additionally, she has explored the world of music and dance with choreographers on works presented in the Baldwin Wallace University (BWU) Fyoo zh en dance concerts, the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) Dance Collaboration, and the Charlotte New Music Dance Collaboration Workshop. She is also influenced by theatre and literature and has written incidental music for two Shakespeare productions at BWU. She has worked with many ensembles including the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the BWU and the UMKC Symphony Orchestras, Ars Futura, Bent Frequency, Apeiron Guitar Quartet, and the American Modern Ensemble. Ms. Powell is a student in the Masters of Music Composition program at the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance where she studied with composition faculty Dr. Zhou Long, Dr. Chen Yi, Dr. Paul Rudy, and Dr. James Mobberley. She holds a B.M. degree, Music Composition, from BWU Conservatory where she studied with Dr. Clint Needham and Dr. Jonathan Sokol. Additionally, Ms. Powell has attended and studied with music faculty at various festivals and conferences. During her time at the UMKC, Ms. Powell was an active leader in the essential work of the Composers’ Guild as Treasurer and Vice President. Ms. Powell is also an accomplished double bassist who has studied with Jeffery Kail, principal of the Kansas City Symphony, as well as Henry Peyrebrune and Charles Carlton, members of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. In addition, Ms. Powell enjoys kaizen practices like cat training, crossfit, and baking.