BRUCE ADOLPHE

TYRANNOSAURUS SUE

A CRETACEOUS CONCERTO
for Chamber Orchestra or Ensemble
(2000)

SCORE

Note: May be performed by chamber ensemble with one string player per part

Duration ca. 27'

The Learning Maestros
Tools for creative thinking
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KEISER CLASSICAL
I  BIRTH OF SUE

Let’s travel back in time – to before there were movies or e-mail, before zippers or umbrellas, before books, mummies and hieroglyphics, before the first lullaby was sung to a baby, before there were humans, before India crashed into Asia creating the Himalayan Mountains, before the Atlantic Ocean existed, to a time when Africa and South America were one continent…

Now we are there – the Cretaceous Period – when dinosaurs roamed the earth!

This is the story in music of a *Tyrannosaurus* named Sue. In this Cretaceous concerto, Sue is represented by the trombone. We begin the very day she came into the world. Imagine that moment – how the earth trembled; how the clouds fled in terror. Imagine…the birth of Sue!

II  YOUTH – SUE EXPLORES HER WORLD

Sue sets out to explore the world around her. Roaming across Montana, she gets a peek at pterodactyls flying high above the earth. From a safe spot behind some trees in Wyoming, Sue peers at packs of *Pachycephalosaurs*, and admires an *Edmontosaurus* that passes by rather closely. “What fun,” thinks Sue, as she dreams of growing up to be a big *Tyrannosaurus rex* like her parents. “Everything looks delicious!”
III COMPETING FOR FOOD WITH THE TROODON

Now a teenage T. rex, Sue picks a fight with a feisty Troodon over whose dinner is whose. After all, if Sue kills something for dinner, she wants to eat all of it. But the Troodon, who is a smaller, smarter, faster dinosaur, keeps stealing ribs and pieces of thigh. (The tricky Troodon is musically portrayed by the slippery clarinet.)

IV CHASING THE PARASAUROLOPHUS

Enter the Parasaurolophus, blowing a wild tune from the built-in bassoon in the top of its duck-billed head. Sue is hungry, and so the chase begins. They gallop across meadows and plains, up and down mountains, through lakes, swamps and forests, knocking down trees and crushing everything in their way.

V BATTLE WITH THE TRICERATOPS

Pounding the earth and roaring its deafening battle cry, the monstrous Triceratops charges at Sue. Imagine the battle – sword-sharp horns rip into flesh, eleven-inch teeth bite to the bone, massive tails swipe at armored bodies. Suddenly, a cry of agony pierces the air! Sue stalks her weakening victim, circling for the kill. A dying Triceratops roars its last. Sue settles in for a fine repast. (The Triceratops is portrayed by the French horn.)
VI OLD AGE AND DEATH OF SUE

Sue has grown old. Her roar is less ferocious now. Her bones ache. Her head is heavy. But she will not die alone. The whole world that Sue knew is about the end. What is that terrible thunder? What is it that rips through the earth and sets the world on fire? A volcano erupting? As asteroid crashing into the earth? In one horrific moment, all the dinosaurs will perish! But if you listen, you can hear Sue’s ghost moving across the plains.

VII DAWNING OF THE NEW WORLD (AFTER THE DINOSAURS)

Let’s time-travel together again, but forward – to long after the dinosaurs became extinct, after humans began telling each other stories and cooking over fires, after the pyramids, after the printing press and telescope were invented after top-hats and telephones, after radios and rockets, after microwave popcorn, computers and cell phones…

We finally arrive at this moment, here and now, listening to music about a dinosaur named Sue, who lived more than 65 million years ago.

As long as there are humans who can discover the past, and humans who can be amazed by it, the dinosaurs live on. Sue’s bones may be standing in The Field Museum in Chicago, but her story, like music, lives in our imaginations. This last piece of music is about us – humans, keepers of memory.
Tyrannosaurus Sue

I. Birth of Sue

Commissioned by
The Chicago Chamber Musicians

By Bruce Adolphe

Score in C

1

(Glissandi should be independent, unsynchronized)
Ob.  
Cl.  
Bsn.  
Tpt.  
Hn.  
Tbn.  
Perc.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Cb.  

Quickly
hushed, with drive

∑

‰

P  p  p  p  p  p  p  p

ff

ff

p  p  p  p  p  p  p  p

BASS DRUM
(Conduct as 4 plus 3)
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Tpt.
Hn.
Tbn.
Perc.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
III. Competing for Food with the Troodon

Bruce Adolphe

Quick, Sassy

Oboe

Clarinet

Bassoon

Trumpet

Horn

Trombone

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass
[Musical notation image]
Perusal
Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.
Tpt.
Hn.
Tbn.
Perc.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

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IV. Chasing the Parasaurolophus

Driving, energized

Oboe

Clarinet

Bassoon

Trumpet

Horn

Trombone

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass

Adolphe
Ob.  

Cl.  

Bsn.  

Tpt.  

Hn.  

Tbn.  

Perc.  

Vln. I  

Vln. II  

Vla.  

Vc.  

Cb.
Slowly - a cry of anguish
V. Battle with the Triceratops

Driving, with energy

Oboe

Clarinet

Bassoon

Trumpet

Horn

(screaming triceratops)

Trombone

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass
A Tempo

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.
Triumphantly, majestically long
40

*cadenza tragically*

110

Perusal
(Note: Glissandi are phrased differently here than before.)
VII. Dawning of a New World (After the Dinosaurs)

Bruce Adolphe

Flowing, majestically

Oboe

Clarinet

Bassoon

Trumpet

Horn

Trombone

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass