

ORCHESTRATION

Piccolo

Flutes 1, 2, 3

Oboes 1, 2

English Horn

E♭ Clarinet

B♭ Clarinets 1, 2, 3

B♭ Bass Clarinet

Contra Bass Clarinet (Optional)

Bassoons 1, 2

Double Bassoon

E♭ Alto Saxophone 1, 2

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

E♭ Baritone Saxophone

Timpani (1 player)

Percussion (5 players)

B♭ Trumpets 1, 2, 3, 4

Horns in F 1, 2, 3, 4

Tenor Trombones 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Euphonium (1)

Tuba (2)

Double Bass (2 or more)

Harp

Piano

Instruments required

*2 Snare Drums, Tenor Drum (or Field Drum), Bass Drum,
Small, Medium & Large Tom Toms (or Congas)
2 Suspended Cymbals, Crash Cymbals, Wind Chimes, Claves
1 Large Triangle, 1 Small Triangle (or Chinese Finger Cymbals),
2 Tam Tam (or 1 Tam Tam plus Small/Medium Gong), *
Xylophone, Vibraphone, Glockenspiel, Tubular Bells,*

** This Tam Tam (or Gong) is to be submerged into a tub of water to create an upward glissando effect at various points in the work*

Duration: 25 minutes

PERFORMANCE DIRECTIONS

Notes on Instrumentation and Interpretation

Instrumentalists should only use alternative cue orchestration if the appropriate instruments are not available.

All instruments in the score are transposed.

More than one Double Bass is desirable, more than two would be ideal.

The Piano and Harp parts are deemed important. A 'Clavinola' or suitable synthesiser can be used if a real instrument is not available.

I have scored 'Black Fire' in a way that covers the Contra Bass Clarinet part at all times, thus if the ensemble does not have this instrument, the performance is not unduly affected. I have also cued in the parts various instruments.

Timpani should avoid using soft sticks. The Timpani part should always sound clear and not too muffled.

All metronome and tempo markings are intended as an approximate guide, as the acoustic in different concert venues will vary.

All trills in the score are to be treated as fast semitone trills.

It should be noted that this work is not a concerto but a symphonic drama and at various points the violin is part of the overall concert ensemble, however great care should be taken at all times to balance the violin against the ensemble. It is important that the Double Bass, Timpani and Bass Trombone crotchet figure in bars 1 to 9 always dominate the musical landscape. This applies to all other occasions when this figure occurs in 'Black Fire'. When instruments are marked *mp*, *p*, *pp*, and *ppp* during the faster sections (from bar 202 to 247, 329, to 463) an intensity of performance should be maintained. A feeling of darkness and foreboding must always be present throughout the work. The *Arabesque* (bar 247) should be the only moment in the piece where a sense of celebration and fun should be portrayed. Certain bars of both violin cadenzas should be played in a mechanical style (Cadenza I: Bars 104 – 123 Cadenza II: 370 – 407). The section at bar 416 is the climax of the work, each brass instrument should be in competition with one another to create a huge golden timbre. The upper woodwind chromatic scales should be heard above the brass! I would also encourage the conductor to find imaginative ways of performing and staging 'Black Fire'.

Multi-Media (Optional)

To enhance 'Black Fire' in performance a series of slides taken from the etchings that *Gustav Doré* made for *John Milton's 'Paradise Lost'* have been prepared, which also include extracts from the poem. It is noted on the score where the slides should be shown. To perform 'Black Fire' with this multi-media element a disc can be obtained from Studio Music Company on request.