

AHABI!

STORMWORKS[®]

Stephen Melillo
Composer



**AHAB!, for Actor & Wind Ensemble of the 3rd Millennium
#621 at 24:16 © Stephen Melillo IGNA 26 March 1992... 2nd & 3rd Millennium**

**A Tribute to Herman Melville and his novel, MOBY DICK
with text by Herman Melville**

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steve@stormworld.com www.stormworld.com www.stormworks.net

Thank you for believing in, and investing in the body of work called **STORMWORKS**. Once you've tasted the possibilities and experienced the reactions from your students and audiences, a large body of work awaits you. If you've gone for the whole package or Suite... **Bravo**. It was the best way to go. The **STORMSite** at www.stormworld.com provides up-to-date info on all that is happening with **STORMWORKS®**. Thanks so much for championing this Music and Godspeed in the journeys ahead.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

One wouldn't think of buying software without having the appropriate hardware. With this same common-sense thinking, conductors rendering "Storm" Works should be properly equipped.

In the **Band of the 3rd Millennium**, the orchestration employed in the body of work called **Stormworks**, we find the standard wind and percussion ensemble augmented by the use of 2 synthesizers. A seemingly innocent leap, it is replete with functionality. The generic sounds ascribed to the synthesizers are: **PAD Bass**, (*sometimes Piano and/or Chorus*) and **Harp**. Comments about the types of sounds and manner of interpreting the varied notation may be found in the *Brief Intro to the Music of Stephen Melillo... with FAQ's* residing on the **STORMSite** at stormworld.com or stormworks.net.

In 1980, the cost for such an undertaking was significant. Now, for a cost-effective, multi-useful investment, your program can be readily equipped. Of course, this is only if you are completely **un**-equipped right now! Most music programs will have at least one student who owns a synthesizer, or at least knows someone who does. In the early 1980's, I was able to recruit a great number of students simply by suggesting that there was a place for them in the "*electronics*" section! I invite you, *now with Music that calls for it*, to be champions of a wider and fuller Music Education.

On the **STORMWORKS CD's**, you will hear how these sounds, placed in stereo around the band... *as in the diagram on the seating chart page*... enhances the overtone hierarchy and resonance of the band while remaining somewhat "*traditional*" in its orchestral usage. Two speakers, lying flat on the floor, should be placed so that the sound is directed back into the ensemble.

As we approach all of the new tomorrows, students need to play Music which excites them... Music which sonically *competes* with the inundation of supremely produced sounds heard on the radio, on the computer, on the TV set and in the movies theaters.

Now, as always, it's up to you. Only *you* can be the guide your students need, and only *you* can deliver this Music to that limitless realm we refer to as Music. To that Quest, noble and honorable, Godspeed!

Stephen Melillo, Composer

AhAB!

by © Stephen Melillo IGNA 26 March 1992
#621... at 24:16, Music Only Version... at 10:33

AHAB! is set to the abbreviated but unaltered text of Herman Melville. The work is not technically difficult. There are moments where certain players are challenged. The essence of **AHAB!** lies in its call for an emotionally charged rendering. In **AHAB!**, the **ensemble** is the challenge... the colour, the mix, the mutually felt terror and tenderness. This is where the difficulty lies, and of course... **Between ensemble and actor!** It is necessary that "**AHAB!**" be sufficiently amplified to allow for subtlety while at the same time allowing the Musicians to play comfortably. Obviously, staging and positioning become a concern.

The Pad Bass is **very** important in establishing the tone of the piece. Please see the **Brief Intro Notes**. The **acoustic piano sound** is a must. If one is not available, a good sounding synthesizer will do. The drama and tone of the **Piano** as it moves from terrifying to tender is most important. There is one section where I have doubled the Piano with Vibe. It is notated as being an **OPTIONAL** doubling and should be observed as such. I defer to the conductor. As usual, the **percussion section** will serve as a **vital** component of the drama waiting to emerge from this piece. The timpanist will be challenged to play "**melodic**" material and **exceed** the notation by providing exaggerated swells... low lows and high highs.

As always, dynamics are exaggerated and dramatic, the line often suggesting the inner sequential dynamics, the inner, vital swelling that is so much a textural component in this writing.

NOTES FOR REHEARSAL #1

The first session should be dedicated to developing a working set of cues for the ensemble. I have provided the following for the conductor and actor:

SCORE, TEXT with Measure Markings to illustrate approximate locations. I suggest having a copy of the STORMWORKS... Chapter Two CD: Wende. The rendering by Actor Kurtwood Smith and the timings provide an excellent model.

With the exception of the Timpani player's response to "**HE TASKS ME**", "**HE HEAPS ME**", which the timpanist should play out of time and in direct response to these phrases, the Music is designed to work as **downbeat responses** and is therefore left to the conductor. The players, therefore, will simply have to notate their parts as to where certain cues, applicable to them are.

Other portions of the Music are internal to the cue... the middle of a Musical scene interacting with the middle of a dialogue. There is no need for the players to be aware of this nuance in any way other than an emotional one. The conductor will "**play**" with these feelings.

I felt the score would be too busy to contain text. This is **NOT** a narrated piece! It is a dramatic theater piece, a work for **AHAB! and Winds!** I'm certain that the conductor will develop his/her own, efficient system given the tools and direction provided.

Between **measures 217 and 225**, you can include an optional repeated "vamp" to allow for your actor's interpretation of the text.

At measure **76**, I originally used a dynamic shaped like the slope which is graphed in the Brief Intro to Melillo Music. It is to suggest an "**opening up**" of the sound, like something immense... breathing. Quarter note triplets are, to me, by their very nature a struggle against the pulse and are therefore accented and separated. I usually undo this effect by writing legato markings over the notes, but in **AHAB!** no such marking appears. The quarter-note triplets are about **impetus** and **struggle** throughout. You will note the indication: **SWIPE!** An example of a swipe would be what a violinist does as he/she pulls the entire bow across a note. A trumpet player might very quickly half-valve into the pitch, a trombone player, a quick violent slide, the woodwinds might rip 3 or 4 chromatic grace notes... but it should "**sound**" like a long slap across the face!

During **Scene 1**, the mm=46 section, the percussionists may ad lib with various effects in response to the actor. Care should be taken not to over do it however.

At measure **166**, the glock and piano interchange a very mechanical part. They must screen everything out and focus only on beat! The actual pitches written **are not vital** to the desired effect. *Yet in other sections, the very last thing called for is "**mechanical**" playing.*

MUSICAL

AHAB! and **A WALK IN JURASSIC PARK... which has since been renamed IN THE BEGINNING...** were composed precisely **150** years after Ahab's meeting with Moby Dick, during the New Moon of April. Both works are connected to **SON of the STORM**, an orchestral theater work which premiered exactly one year prior. These pieces shared a common form. In the "**storm**" metaphor, there was life, then death, then life again... a resurrection. **AHAB!** is a continuation of a body of works which I call **STORM Works**.

Another hero of mine, Teddy Roosevelt said, "**It's not the size of the man in the fight. It's the size of the fight in the man.**" In Ahab lies the great struggle, the noble fight and in *this* telling of the story, Ahab is a hero. Or as Director, John Ford might say, an "**antihero**".

When first reading *Moby Dick* as a 7th grader, Sister Mary Ann was quick to point out the significance of Ahab. He was a wicked king mentioned in the Bible. The 1956 film portrays Ahab as a man tending more to the "**dark**" side of humanity... as will portions of this piece. But Ahab is a **hero!** The creature he faces is **not** a symbol of the One God, as is often suggested by some interpreters, but rather a metaphor for the **false** gods that stand in the way of truth. In spite of this clear vision, he places the false god in front of the One... and *that* is the tragic flaw of his "earthquake life".

A Quixote of sorts, Ahab mounts not a horse but a ship. Into Hell, he sails, confronting the darkest portion of the unknown. Though he must die for having faced it, he becomes the symbol of obsessed bravery, the very spear of courage and purposeful living that must be sacrificed before his life is drowned out and we are once again left with that unanswerable question... "**what is there, beyond?**"

Godspeed... 

What tune do ye pull to?

1 SCENE 1, mm=142 3 4 5 6

Piccolo
Flute
Oboe
Bassoon
Clar 1
Clar 2
Clar 3
B. Clar
Alto 1
Alto 2
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Bari Sax
Horn 1
Horn 2
Horn 3
Horn 4
Tr 1
Tr 2
Tr 3
T-Bone 1
T-Bone 2
Bass TB 3
Baritone
Tuba
PAD Bass
Voices
Timpani
Chimes
Glock/Vibe
Piano
Snrac
Large TAM
Triangl
Tambourin
Crash Cymbal/Scrapes
Bass Drum
Congas