MICHAEL MARKOWSKI

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS

FOR 3 SOLO TRUMPETS & WIND ENSEMBLE
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KINGS

INSTRUMENTATION FOR 3 SOLO TRUMPETS & WIND ENSEMBLE

WINDS
Piccolo
Flute 1 & 2
Oboe 1 & 2
Bassoon 1 & 2
B♭ Clarinet 1 - 3
B♭ Bass Clarinet
B♭ Contrabass Clarinet
E♭ Alto Saxophone 1 & 2
B♭ Tenor Saxophone
E♭ Baritone Saxophone

BRASS
B♭ Trumpet 1 - 3 (Solo)
B♭ Trumpet 1 - 3 (Ensemble)
F Horn 1 - 4
Trombone 1 - 2
Bass Trombone
Euphonium 1 & 2
Tuba 1 & 2

KEYBOARDS
Organ (Optional Part)

PERCUSSION
Timpani
1. Suspended Trash Cymbal, Snare Drum, Glockenspiel
2. Chimes, Tam-Tam, Triangle
3. Marimba, Crash Cymbals (shared), Two (2) Concert Toms
4. Xylophone, Vibraphone, Crash Cymbals (shared), Suspended Cymbal
5. Bass Drum

Duration: ca. 7:00

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COMMISSIONED BY

The Divine Right of Kings was commissioned by the Symphonisches Blasorchester der Landesmusikschule Ötztal; Klaus Strobl, director.

PROGRAM NOTE

This commission was very unique — it’s not everyday that someone asks you to write a piece for wind orchestra featuring three solo trumpets. What on earth was I going to write about?

When I think about ‘trumpets’ and what they have symbolized over the centuries, I immediately think about ‘fanfares,’ I think about ‘royalty,’ and I think about that one time a few years ago that I saw the changing of the guards outside Prague Castle. For a long time, trumpets have symbolized ‘power’ and ‘strength,’ but rather than write heroic, romantic passages (many composers have already written hundreds of majestic pieces that glorify leaders like this), I wanted these three trumpets to live in a darker world. I wanted to write something where the trumpets represented something not praiseworthy but something a bit more dastardly, something perhaps even villainous.

In the Middle Ages, many kings in Europe believed in an idea known as the “Divine Right,” which was the idea that kings and queens were ultimately chosen by God and therefore only had to answer to God rather than to the people or to a Parliamentary system. There wasn’t anything particularly bad about this idea until some monarchs started to abuse the idea and abuse their power. For instance, King Charles I of England almost fanatically believed in his own divinity, in his own self-righteousness, that whenever he disagreed with Parliament, he simply had Parliament dissolved in order to uphold his own absolute decisions. But of course, after King Charles’ arrogance eventually led to a civil war, it also ultimately ended with his execution. Sometime during my research into this topic, I came across a painting of King Charles I — a “triple portrait” which shows the king from three different angles all on one canvas: left profile, head-on, and right profile. I immediately thought of the three solo trumpets I was writing for! Together, I think they represent the split personality of a man plagued by his own hubris, a man obsessed with his own superiority.

MICHAEL MARKOWSKI
February 19, 2018
The Divine Right of Kings premiered on January 26, 2018 in Oetz, Austria conducted by Klaus Strobl, featuring Romed Ennemoser, Markus Kuen, and Georg Klieber on solo trumpet.
THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS
For Three Trumpets and Symphonic Band

MICHAEK MARKOWSKI

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The Divine Right of Kings
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Solo Tpt. 1
Solo Tpt. 2
Solo Tpt. 3

Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Euph. 1

Euph. 2

Trumpet

(Timpani)