

A NIGHT ON CULBIN SANDS
A short introduction by the composer

The barony Culbin was once the most fertile part of its region, Western Moray in Northern Scotland. But it all changed from one day to the next. During an autumn night in 1686, just before the harvest was to be collected, a heavy storm broke out; a tempest, carrying enormous amounts of sand, which all came down on the barony. All at once the harvest was completely ruined.

But this proved to be only the beginning. Many similar sand storms followed, and as a result the whole region, including all houses, farms and the barony's mansion, became completely buried under the sand within a few years' time.

In 1931 the Scottish playwright Gordon Bottomley wrote a one act play entitled 'Culbin Sands'. In this play he introduced four witches, descendants of the witches

...who prophesied King Duncan's death;

Indeed: descendants of the witches appearing in Shakespeare's Macbeth (which is enacted in more or less the same region). In Bottomley's play the sand storms appear to have been evoked by witchcraft

*Because Kinnaird (then baron of Culbin) had driven us off his land
Calling us witches.*

The combination of the historical facts and Bottomley's one act play gave me an idea for a piece of music for large wind orchestra. A rather simple idea, by the way: the listener witnesses a night on Culbin Sands, a place that is obviously bewitched. At first everything is quiet, even though one can feel a certain tension. But then a storm breaks loose. This storm reaches a climax and then dies down. At the end of the piece everything is 'quiet' again...

Alexander Comitas, September 1999

A NIGHT ON CULBIN SANDS
Een korte toelichting door de componist

Het landgoed Culbin, gelegen in Western Moray in Noord Schotland, was ooit het meest vruchtbare gedeelte van de hele omgeving. Maar dat veranderde van de ene dag op de andere. In een herfstmacht in 1686, net voordat de oogst zou worden binnengehaald, stak er een storm op; een orkaan die enorme hoeveelheden zand met zich meevoerde, en op het landgoed liet terechikomen. In één klap was de hele oogst bedorven.

Maar dat was nog maar het begin. Er volgden nog veel meer van dergelijke zandstormen, en zodoende werd de hele streek, inclusief alle huizen, boerderijen en de baronie, binnen een paar jaar tijd volledig bedolven onder het zand.

In 1931 schreef de Schotse toneelschrijver Gordon Bottomley een éénakter genaamd 'Culbin Sands'. Hierin liet hij vier heksen optreden, opvolgers van de heksen

...who prophesied King Duncan's death;

oftewel: van de drie heksen die voorkomen in Shakespeare's Macbeth. (Inderdaad speelt Macbeth zich af in ongeveer dezelfde streek.)

In dit toneelstuk wordt gesuggereerd dat de zandstormen zijn opgeroepen door hekserij

*Because Kinnaird (de toenmalige baron van Culbin) had driven us off his land
Calling us witches.*

De combinatie van het historische gegeven en de éénakter gaven me het idee voor een muziekstuk voor uitgebreid blaasorkest. Dit idee is overigens heel eenvoudig: de luisteraar maakt een nacht mee op Culbin Sands, een plek die duidelijk behekst is. In het begin is alles rustig, al is er wel een zekere beklemming voelbaar. Maar dan breekt er een storm los. Die storm bereikt uiteindelijk een hoogtepunt en neemt vervolgens af. Aan het eind van het stuk is alles opnieuw 'rustig'...

Alexander Comitas, september 1999

... the dreaded, unnatural sands that Isobel Goudie and the Cromarty witches have piled up on the fair holms of Culbin, mile after mile...

extract from Gordon Bottomley's play 'Culbin Sands' (1931)

to Maurice Hamers and the Marine Band of the Royal Netherlands Navy

A NIGHT ON CULBIN SANDS

for large wind orchestra

Alexander Comitas
op. 38 no. 1 (1999, rev. 2001)

Slow ♩ = ca. 50 (always in a flexible tempo) Somewhat faster ♩ = ca. 58 **1** Tempo I poco rit.

Instrument list and dynamics:

- Piccolo I
- Flutes I, II
- Flute III
- Oboes I, II
- Bassoon I
- Bassoon II
- T. Clarinet
- 1st Clarinets in Bb
- 2nd Clarinets in Bb
- 3rd Clarinets in Bb
- Alto Clarinet in Eb
- Bass Clarinet in Bb
- Contrabass Clarinet in Bb
- Alto Saxophone I in Eb
- Alto Saxophone II in Eb
- Tenor Saxophone in Bb
- Baritone Saxophone in Eb
- E- Trumpet
- Trumpets I, II in Bb
- Trumpet III in Bb
- Cornets I, II in Bb
- Cornet III in Bb
- Horns I, II in F
- Horns III, IV in F
- Horn V in F
- Trombones I, II
- Trombone III
- Bass Trombone
- Baritone I, II
- Baritone III, IV
- Eb Basses I, II
- C/Bb Basses I, II
- String Bass
- Harp
- Keyboards
- Timpani
- Percussion I
- Percussion II
- Percussion III
- Percussion IV

Somewhat faster again

The score is for a full orchestra and soloists. It includes parts for Piccolo I, Flutes I, II, III, Oboes I, II, Bassoons I, II, Eb Clarinet, Clarinet in C, Clarinet in Bb, Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Contrabass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone I, Alto Saxophone II, Tenor Saxophone, Eb Trumpet, Trumpet I, Cornet I, II, III, Horn I, Horn II, III, IV, V, Tuba I, II, III, Bass Trombone, Tenor Basses I, II, Contrabass I, II, String Bass, Harp, Keyboard (Celesta), and Percussion (Perc. II, III, IV). The score features various dynamics such as *pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *sf*, *mp*, and *ff*, along with performance instructions like *smorz.*, *arco*, *mf*, *ff*, and *Motor off throughout the piece*. A box labeled "3" is at the top center, and the tempo marking "Somewhat faster again" is at the top left. A note at the bottom center reads: "Note for the conductor: please ensure an equal balance among glockenspiel, marimba, celesta, vibraphone and harp." The page number "3" is in the top right corner.

Note for the conductor: please ensure an equal balance among glockenspiel, marimba, celesta, vibraphone and harp.

28

Picc. I

Fl. I

Fl. II

Fl. III

Ob. LI

Bsn. I

Cbsu

1st Cl.

2nd Cl.

3rd Cl.

Alto Cl.

Bass Cl.

Cb. Cl.

A. Sax. LI

T. Sax.

Corn. LI

Corn. III

Trsn. I, III

Trsn. I

Trsn. II

Bar. II, III

Bar. III, IV

E. Basses LI

C/B. Basses I, II

Sr. Bass

Harp

mp

p

f

fpp

smorz.

mf

div.

unis.

poco f

B♭ C

B♭ C



38

Picc. I *solo* *mp* *f* *poco, f* *mp*

Fl. I *pp*

Fl. II

Fl. III *f* *p*

Bass Cl. *smorz.* *pp*

Cb. Cl. *smorz.* *pp*

Tpts. I,II *With harmon mutes, stem in* *solo* *poco, f* *poco*

E♭ Basses I,II

C/B♭ Basses I,II

Str. Bass *smorz.* *pp*

Harp

Keybds (MIDI Comb.) *len.* *sim.* *mf*

Timp.

Perc. IV (Vibr.) *extremely soft throughout!* *ppp* *poco* *pp* *lento effect!* *ppp* *p* *p* *p* *p*

42

Picc. I

Fl. I *len.* *sim.* *pp* *pp*

Fl. II *len.* *sim.* *pp*

Fl. III *pp*

Bsn I

1st Cl. *All* *ppp* *murmurando* *poco* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2nd Cl. *pp*

Bass Cl. *smorz.* *pp*

Cb. Cl. *smorz.* *pp*

Tpts. I,II *a2* *pp* *Mutes off*

Hns I,III *With straight mu*

Hns II,IV *With straight m*

E♭ Basses I,II

C/B♭ Basses I,II

Str. Bass *smorz.* *pp*

Harp

Keybds (MIDI Comb.)

Perc. IV (Vibr.) *p* *p*



Score for Percussion and Woodwinds, including parts for Piccolo I & II, Flute I & II, Oboe I & II, Clarinet in Bb, Clarinet in A, Saxophone, Bassoon, Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Baritone, Euphonium, Percussion (Gong, Maracas, Vibraphone), and Tuba.

Key features of the score include:

- Piccolo I & II:** Complex rhythmic patterns with dynamic markings from *pp* to *ff*.
- Flute I & II:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Oboe I & II:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Clarinet in Bb:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Clarinet in A:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Saxophone:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Bassoon:** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Horns (I, II, III, IV, V):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *mp* to *f*.
- Trumpets (I, II, III):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Trombones (I, II, III):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Baritone (I, II, III, IV):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Euphonium (I, II):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.
- Percussion:** Includes Gong (Gl.sp.), Maracas (Mar.), and Vibraphone (Vibr.) with dynamic markings from *sf* to *pp*.
- Tuba (I, II, III):** Melodic lines with dynamic markings from *pp* to *f*.

115

Fl. II

Ob. LI

Bsn I

Cbsu

E♭ Cl.

1st Cl.

2nd Cl.

3rd Cl.

Alto Cl.

Bass Cl.

Cb. Cl.

A. Sax. I

A. Sax. II

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

E♭ Tpt

Tpt I

Tpt II

Cort I

Cort II

Cort III

Hrn I, III

Hrn II, IV

Hrn V

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

B. Tbn.

Bar. I, II

Bar. III, IV

T. Basses I, II

C/B. Basses I, II

Sr. Bass

Harp

Keybds

Perc. I (Cymb.)

Perc. III (Sn. Dr.)

116

117

118

119

120

121

122

123

124

125

126

127

128

129

130

131

132

133

134

135

136

137

138

139

140

141

142

143

144

145

146

147

148

149

150

151

152

153

154

155

156

157

158

159

160

161

162

163

164

165

166

167

168

169

170

171

172

173

174

175

176

177

178

179

180

181

182

183

184

185

186

187

188

189

190

191

192

193

194

195

196

197

198

199

200

201

202

203

204

205

206

207

208

209

210

211

212

213

214

215

216

217

218

219

220

221

222

223

224

225

226

227

228

229

230

231

232

233

234

235

236

237

238

239

240

241

242

243

244

245

246

247

248

249

250

251

252

253

254

255

256

257

258

259

260

261

262

263

264

265

266

267

268

269

270

271

272

273

274

275

276

277

278

279

280

281

282

283

284

285

286

287

288

289

290

291

292

293

294

295

296

297

298

299

300

301

302

303

304

305

306

307

308

309

310

311

312

313

314

315

316

317

318

319

320

321

322

323

324

325

326

327

328

329

330

331

332

333

334

335

336

337

338

339

340

341

342

343

344

345

346

347

348

349

350

351

352

353

354

355

356

357

358

359

360

361

362

363

364

365

366

367

368

369

370

371

372

373

374

375

376

377

378

379

380

381

382

383

384

385

386

387

388

389

390

391

392

393

394

395

396

397

398

399

400

401

402

403

404

405

406

407

408

409

410

411

412

413

414

415

416

417

418

419

420

421

422

423

424

425

426

427

428

429

430

431

432

433

434

435

436

437

438

439

440

441

442

443

444

445

446

447

448

449

450

451

452

453

454

455

456

457

458

459

460

461

462

463

464

465

466

467

468

469

470

471

472

473

474

475

476

477

478

479

480

481

482

483

484

485

486

487

488

489

490

491

492

493

494

495

496

497

498

499

500

501

502

503

504

505

506

507

508

509

510

511

512

513

514

515

516

517

518

519

520

521

522

523

524

525

526

527

528

529

530

531

532

533

534

535

536

537

538

539

540

541

542

543

544

545

546

547

548

549

550

551

552

553

554

555

556

557

558

559

560

561

562

563

564

565

566

567

568

569

570

571

572

573

574

575

576

577

578

579

580

581

582

583

584

585

586

587

588

589

590

591

592

593

594

595

596

597

598

599

600

601

602

603

604

605

606

607

608

609

610

611

612

613

614

615

616

617

618

619

620

621

622

623

624

625

626

627

628

629

630

631

632

633

634

635

636

637

638

639

640

641

642

643

644

645

646

647

648

649

650

651

652

653

654

655

656

657

658

659

660

661

662

663

664

665

666

667

668

669

670

671

672

673

674

675

676

677

678

679

680

681

682

683

684

685

686

687

688

689

690

691

692

693

694

695

696

697

698

699

700

701

702

703

704

705

706

707

708

709

710

711

712

713

714

715

716

717

718

719

720

721

722

723

724

725

726

727

728

729

730

731

732

733

734

735

736

737

738

739

740

741

742

743

744

745

746

747

748

749

750

751

752

753

754

755

756

757

758

759

760

761

762

763

764

765

766

767

768

769

770

771

772

773

774

775

776

777

778

779

780

781

782

783

784

785

786

787

788

789

790

791

792

793

794

795

796

797

798

799

800

801

802

803

804

805

806

807

808

809

810

811

812

813

814

815

816

817

818

819

820

821

822

823

824

825

826

827

828

829

830

831

832

833

834

835

836

837

838

839

840

841

842

843

844

845

846

847

848

849

850

851

852

853

854

855

856

857

858

859

860

861

862

863

864

865

866

867

868

869

870

871

872

873

874

875

876

877

878

879

880

881

882

883

884

885

886

887

888

889

890

891

892

893

894

895

896

897

898

899

900

901

902

903

904

905

906

907

908

909

910

911

912

913

914

915

916

917

918

919

920

921

922

923

924

925

926

927

928

929

930

931

932

933

934

935

936

937

938

939

940

941

942

943

944

945

946

947

948

949

950

951

952

953

954

955

956

957

958

959

960

961

962

963

964

965

966

967

968

969

970

971

972

973

974

975

976

977

978

979

980

981

982

983

984

985

986

987

988

989

990

991

992

993

994

995

996

997

998

999

1000

This page of the musical score contains the following instruments and parts:

- Woodwinds:** Piccolo I & II, Flute I & II, Oboe I, Bassoon I, Clarinet in Bb (1st, 2nd, 3rd), Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Contrabass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone I & II, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone.
- Brass:** E-flat Trumpet, Trombones I, II, III, IV, Tuba, Baritone I, II, III, IV, E-flat Basses I, II, III, C/B Basses I, II, III, Str. Bass.
- Strings:** Violins I, II, III, IV, Viola, Violoncello (V).
- Percussion:** Timpani (with wooden sticks), Percussion I (P. of Cymb.), Percussion II (Tom), Percussion III (Sn. Dr.).

The score is marked with various dynamics including *p*, *ff*, *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. Performance instructions include "(With wooden sticks)" for the timpani and "(a2)" for some woodwind parts.

156

Picc. I, II

Fl. I

Fl. II

Ob. I

Ob. II

Bsn. I

Cbsu.

E♭ Cl.

1st Cl.

2nd Cl.

3rd Cl.

Alto Cl.

Bass Cl.

Cl. Cl.

A. Sax. II

T. Sax.

Har. Sax.

E♭ Tpt.

Tpt. I

Tpt. II

Tpt. III

Corn. I

Corn. II

Corn. III

Hr. I

Hr. II

Hr. III

Hr. IV

Hr. V

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

B. Tbn.

Bar. I

Bar. II

Bar. III

Bar. IV

E♭ Basses I, II

C/B♭ Basses I, II

Str. Bass

Timp.

f, *mf*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *ff*, *poco f*, *unis.*, *div.*, *a*



163 a2

Hr. I, II *pp*

Bsn I *pp*

Chsn *pp* [Change to Bassoon II]

1st Cl. *p*

2nd Cl. *p* *unis.*

3rd Cl. *p*

Bass Cl. *p*

Ch. Cl. *p*

A. Sax. I

T. Sax. *p*

Trn I *p*

Trn II *p*

Trn III *p*

Trn IV *p*

Trn V *p*

Tbn. II *p*

B. Tbn. *pp*

Bar. I *p*

Bar. II *p*

Bar. III

T. Basses I, II (a2) *p*

C/B. Basses I, II (a2) *pp*

Str. Bass *p*

168

Picc. I *pp* *senza espr.* *smorz.*

Picc. II *ppp* *senza espr.* *smorz.*

Fl. I *ppp* *senza espr.*

Fl. II *pp* *senza espr.* *ppp* *poco* *smorz.*

Ob. I *mp* *smorz.*

Ob. II *mp* *smorz.*

Bsn. I *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

1st Cl. *pp* *ppp* *smorz.*

2nd Cl. *ppp* *smorz.*

3rd Cl. *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

Bass Cl. *pp* *smorz.*

Cb. Cl. *pp* *smorz.*

A. Sax. I *pp* *mp* *mp* *pp*

A. Sax. II *mp* *mp* *pp*

T. Sax. *mp* *pp*

Bar. Sax. *mp* *pp*

Hr. I *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

Hr. II *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

Hr. III *pp* *smorz.* *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

Hr. IV *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

Hr. V *mp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

1. Basses I,II *pp* *pp* *pp smorz.*

CB/B. Basses I,II *mp* *p* *pp smorz.*

Str. Bass *pp* *pp* *smorz.*

Harp *pp* *E: G: A:* *B: C D:*

Keybds (MIDI Comb.) *pp* *smorz.*

Timp. *ppp* *smorz.*

