

"When Dreams Take Flight" (2022) - Ron Mallory

NOTES ON THE COMPOSITIONS

Eternal Hope was originally written in 1998, and I've adapted the piece for a variety of instrumentations including handbells, solo piano, and this version for instrumental chamber ensemble. The intertwining contrapuntal lines and chromaticism are intended to convey a sense of buoyant optimism; the middle section moves into a minor key to imply a time of struggle before returning to a major tonality for a joyful close.

The title of **Fantastica** is taken from the name of the imaginary world in Michael Ende's 1979 novel "The Neverending Story" (translated as "Fantasia" in the 1984 movie version). I've always loved Klaus Doldinger and Giorgio Moroder's score for the film, which somewhat inspired the style of this piece. I came up with the melody in the mid-1990's, and experimented with using it in several different contexts before it found its final home in this version for synthesizer and rhythm section.

A few years ago, my parents and I attended a concert at which one of the pieces was dedicated to the composer's father. My own dad turned to me and jokingly said, "You've never written me anything!" So I wrote **Fidelity** in 2019 as a gift for him and my mother shortly after their 56th wedding anniversary. I feel blessed to have parents who have stayed true to each other for so many years.

Contrast (2021) is the one piece that was written specifically for this album project. After listening to my first rough cut of the album, I realized that all the pieces were upbeat and in Major keys; but sometimes you need a little "oscuro" to contrast with your "chiaro." I also realized that I had a piano-only track, but not a handbell-only track, and decided that adding one would help round out the picture of the things I do as a musician.

Discover started out as one of several sketches I wrote after seeing the 2015 Disney movie "Tomorrowland," with its inspiring musical score by Michael Giacchino. I eventually turned these sketches into my own "score" for some video footage I shot in early 2020 of the space shuttle *Endeavour* on display at the California Science Center in Los Angeles. The title "Discover" is an amalgam of the names of the shuttles *Endeavour* and *Discovery* (the other shuttle I've seen in person) and is dedicated to the brave men and women of Earth's space program.

I've always enjoyed experimenting with astrophotography, and in 2018 I started using my digital SLR to create timelapse videos of the constellations rising and setting. I now aim to create one such video per season, and I compose a short piece of electronic music to accompany each video. **Astro Timelapse Suite #1** is a medley of the first 5 of these mini-compositions, re-mastered with some added synth effects (intended to be reminiscent of the sound effects from my favorite Disneyland ride, Space Mountain) to fill the interstices. You can check out my Ron Mallory Music YouTube or Vimeo channels for the accompanying videos.

When my children were infants, I would often hum improvised lullaby tunes to them as I walked them to sleep, and sometimes incorporated these tunes into my compositions. **The Brightest Star** (2020) is based on a melody I created for my son Rigel, who shares his name with the brightest star in the constellation Orion.

In 2007 I wrote a hymn, titled "**You Are There with Me**," as a graduation gift for four students who were involved in music ministry at a church I was serving. The lyrics were based on Psalm 139: "If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there" (NIV1984). I later turned the hymn into a choral composition. David Harsh provides guitar accompaniment for this instrumental version of my hymn tune.

When Dreams Take Flight (2012, rev. 2020) was inspired by a small FAA booklet I was given years ago entitled "How We Made the First Flight," which contains a reprint of a first-person account by Orville Wright about he and his brother Wilbur's invention of the first airplane. I felt that his account would translate well into music, and wrote this piece to celebrate their struggle and accomplishment. I have created versions of this piece for handbell choir and for solo piano.

From 2012-2015 I was privileged to direct the Rainier Ringers Community Handbell Choir in Tacoma, WA, and composed **Mount Rainier Triptych** for them in 2016. The piece consists of three movements, named after three different landmarks within Washington state's beautiful Mount Rainier National Park (Reflection Lakes and the Sunrise and Paradise Visitor Centers). I later created an arrangement of this composition for instrumental chamber ensemble, which was used as the basis for the electronic version on this album.

-Ron Mallory

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ALBUM INFORMATION

Musicians:

Ron Mallory: acoustic piano, synthesizer, handbells, and percussion
David Harsh: acoustic guitar on "Fantastica" and "You Are There with Me"
Susan Murphy: flute on "Eternal Hope," "Fidelity," and "The Brightest Star"
Shannon Spicciati: oboe on "Eternal Hope" and "Fidelity"
Shelley Weiss: violin on "The Brightest Star"
Michael Tavani: cello on "Eternal Hope," "Fidelity," and "The Brightest Star"

Recorded in Maple Valley, Bellevue, and Marysville, WA and in Mulvane and Overland Park, KS, November 2020 through November 2021

Acoustic piano tracks recorded at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Des Moines, WA, November 2020

Recorded and mixed by Ron Mallory

Mastering by Carter Green at Greenjeans Studios, Wellington, KS - <http://www.greenjeansstudios.com>

Cover photograph by Vivian Mallory, winner of the 2020 Spirit of Flight Youth Photography Competition, Museum of Flight, Seattle, WA

*Sheet music for most of the compositions on this album is available from Paraboloid Press:
<http://www.paraboloidpress.com>*

A few years ago, my wife Emily and I were watching a documentary about the history of Pixar. One of the interviewees theorized that Pixar was so successful because the filmmakers were "making the kinds of movies they themselves would want to see."

Over my 30 years as a professional musician, I've been privileged to write in a number of styles and genres for a variety of musical ensembles. For this, the first formal album of my original works, I've created new recordings of some of my own compositions to which I personally most enjoy listening. I hope you enjoy them as well.

What dreams of yours will you work to make a reality?

To God be the glory, -Ron Mallory

Special Thanks to:

My wife, Emily, and our children, Vivian, Miles, and Rigel, for their constant love and inspiration;

My parents for their support;

My many excellent music teachers over the years;

The fine instrumentalists who contributed their musicianship to this album, and also to Bob Avant and Jason Krug for their feedback during the mixdown process;

Carter Green at Greenjeans Studios;

The many composers, past and present, whose works have inspired me;

And, most of all, the God who created music and redeemed me through His Son, Jesus Christ. Soli Deo Gloria.

Ron Mallory is a composer of music and science/arts educator. For more about Ron and his music, visit <http://www.ronmallorymusic.com>.

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