

Clarinet in Bb

**Three Fugues
and a Dirge
for Richard III**

for woodwind quintet

Christopher Coleman

I. Fugue a4:

"Now is the winter of our discontent"

II. Permutation Fugue a5:

"Within the guilty closure of thy walls"

III. Prelude: Distant Fanfares:

Double Fugue:

"A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

Dirge for Richard III

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duration ca. 20 minutes (4 + 8 + 8)

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Dirge for Richard III

Three Fugues and a Dirge for Richard III began as a mere amusement. While waiting for my Baroque counterpoint students to correct their work, I had the curious idea to attempt a fugal subject in the style of J. S. Bach both requiring a tonal answer and working in stretto but in 7/8 meter. The challenge was surprisingly simple. I quite liked the subject and wanted to continue it, but it needed a context. My son suggested that because of the limping rhythm I call it "Fugue for Richard III"; and suddenly the shape of the entire piece came to me.

Known to the world through William Shakespeare's play, Richard III is reviled as one of history's great villains; a man who deliberately kills relatives and friends for mere amusement, whose vile and bloodthirsty reign caused his people to rise against him, and who was so deliberately evil that even his physique was twisted by his amorality. But as another English leader, Winston Churchill, noted, "History is written by the victors." Shakespeare's portrait, however dramatic, has been proven false; it should be remembered that Shakespeare's monarch was a Tudor, and it was the first Tudor king who vanquished Richard III. More recent research shows that Richard was innocent of most of the murders claimed to him, and those that he did have killed were guilty of treason. He was no coward, and his final defeat was certainly caused by his betrayal at the hands of two of his closest allies.

Three Fugues and a Dirge for Richard III celebrates this dichotomy between the historical and fictional Richards. Each of the three fugues is titled with a quotation from Shakespeare's play, and over the course of the three movements the music becomes increasingly dissonant and twisted in its melodic shape, mirroring the descent of the fictional Richard's soul. But following the final climax the music becomes a lament for the man himself. Perhaps the real tragedy of Richard III is that a man who tried to be a good and decent king has been cast as one of the most amoral men of all time.

Christopher Coleman (b. 1958, Atlanta, GA) composer, conductor, trombonist, is currently Composition Coordinator of the Hong Kong Baptist University Department of Music. He has also taught at the University of Chicago, DePaul University, Columbia College, and in the Interlochen Center for the Arts summer program. He earned his Ph. D. from the University of Chicago where he studied composition with Ralph Shapey and Shulamit Ran. While at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned the M.A. in composition, he studied with George Crumb, George Rochberg, and Richard Wernick.

While most of Coleman's works are scored for traditional forces, recent efforts at Hong Kong Baptist University have resulted in two large scale multimedia/improvisation pieces: September Variations and Prophecies for a New Millennium. He has received commissions from the Hong Kong Wind Philharmonia, the Hong Kong Bach Choir and Orchestra, the Hong Kong Composers' Guild, the DuPage Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago-area chapter of the American String Teachers' Association, and the University of Georgia Trombone Choir, among others. He has been awarded first place in the Percussive Arts Society Percussion Ensemble Composition Contest and the ASUC/SESAC Composition Contest. His music is published by Maecenas Music, Theodore Presser, Ensemble Publications, C. Alan Publications and Crown Music Press. As a trans-media artist interested in the creative process, Coleman has worked in sculpture and computer graphics, and performs stand-up comedy. He is a founding member of People's Liberation Improv, Hong Kong's first and only regularly performing comedy improv troupe.

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I. Fugue a4: "Now is the winter of our discontent"

Maestoso (♩ = c. 50-60)

5

8

10

12

16

18

23

27

32

34

35

39

40

44

f

mf

mf

f

mf

sfz

ff

mp

mf

2
53 53

mf

56

mp ————— *ff*

60 61

ff *ff*

63

ff

66 *rit.*

ff

II. Permutation Fugue a5: "Within the guilty closure of thy walls"

3

Grave $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 54$

8 9 8 17

18

22 25

26

31 33

36

40 42

45

49 51

mp

mf

f

fp

f

mp

mf

f

Clarinet in B \flat

53 4

58

60

64

68

70

75

79

80

85

88

mf

90

95

100

101

mp

senza vibrato

Clarinete in B \flat

III. Prelude: Distant Fanfares

Adagio ma non troppo (♩ = c. 69)

Musical score for the first system of 'Prelude: Distant Fanfares'. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *pppp*. A fermata is placed over the first measure. The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *pp*. A fermata is placed over the first measure. A box containing the number '8' is located above the second staff. The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Double Fugue:

"A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

19 Allegro non troppo, ma agitato (♩ = c. 108)

Musical score for the 'Double Fugue' section. It consists of eight staves in 6/8 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *fp*. A box containing the number '19' is located above the first staff. The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *f*. A box containing the number '27' is located above the second staff, followed by the text *brutale!*. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *sim.*. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *f*. A box containing the number '37' is located above the fourth staff. The fifth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *sf*. The sixth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *sf*. The seventh staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *f*. A box containing the number '48' is located above the seventh staff. The eighth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a wavy line and a dynamic marking of *f*. A box containing the number '48' is located above the eighth staff. The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Clarinet in B \flat

6
55 57

mf *fp* *mf*

61

66 71 3

74

78 *f*

82 *ff* 84 *mp*

87 *f*

93 93

97

102 4 107

f *ff*

108

112

116 119

Clarinet in B \flat

121

4

129 *leggerio*

7

Musical staff 121-132. Measure 121 starts with a 4-measure rest. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics including *f* and *mf*.

133

mf

139

Musical staff 133-139. Measure 133 starts with *mf*. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f* and *ff*.

140

Musical staff 140-143. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *ff*.

144

ff

Musical staff 144-147. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *ff*.

148

149

f

ff

f

ff

Musical staff 148-152. Measure 148 is marked with a box containing '149'. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f* and *ff*.

153

ff

ff

Musical staff 153-155. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *ff*.

156

Musical staff 156-159. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *ff*.

160

Musical staff 160-164. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f*.

165

168

staccatissimo!

Musical staff 165-169. Measure 168 is marked with a box containing '168'. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f*.

170

brutale!

Musical staff 170-174. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f*.

175

ff

Musical staff 175-178. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *ff*.

179

182

Clarinet in B \flat

Musical staff 179-181. Measure 182 is marked with a box containing '182'. The staff contains a melodic line with dynamics including *f*.

184 ⁸ 189 *leggerio*
3
f *fp* *ff* *mf*

192

198 202
ff *p*

204
f *mp* *f*

208 212 2

214
f

222 225
ff

228

232 235
fff

236 *trm* *trm* *trm* *trm*

Clarinete in B \flat

244 244

250 254

260 *Adagio* (♩ = c. 60)

Dirge for Richard III

268 268 *L'istesso tempo*

273 275

279 285

286 *mf*

291 292

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