ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Musica Universalis: An Original Work For Chamber Ensemble

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Musica Universalis is a four-movement chamber work for flute, clarinet, harp, piano, and viola. This twenty minute composition draws inspiration from concepts found in astrology and myths associated with stars found in zodiac signs. Each movement of the work is named after a different star, and has a personality reflective of the unique traits associated with its zodiac sign. At the same time, it uses similar musical material throughout the four movements to create a sense of unity.

The accompanying document provides a review of relevant literature that proved historically, musically, and thematically influential, as well as an analysis of the work that includes formal development, compositional techniques used, instrumentation, harmony, rhythm, and polyphony. The document also provides an analysis of The Wind in High Places by John Luther Adams and Breathless by Chris Arrell and compares/contrasts techniques in these works to techniques used in Musica Universalis. The document also reflects on things the student learned during the composition process and how the work will add to chamber music repertoire.