

Doors (2011)

Program Notes

Doors was commissioned by the TCU Percussion Orchestra and composed in 2010. I began to compose the piece by imagining a singular door opening in my mind (this can be heard in the first moments of the piece). This door led to a room with more doors, at which point I would pick one and move to another room with more doors still. I imagined each room as being affected by the previous rooms and reflective of the journey to that point. As motives from each room travel with the piece the sound of slamming doors can be heard, leaving the piece no option but to continue forward into more complex and sometimes disturbing realms. In this way the piece moves from light to dark, from innocence to experience. Instead of returning to simpler material, it continues to gather weight.

A reverent chorale appears in the middle and again at the end that is a harmonic summary of the entire piece. The chorale and the piece as a whole were composed as a requiem for my late father-in-law John Ruppel, who passed away unexpectedly in early 2010 as I had just begun to compose the piece. In an abstract way, *Doors* reflects the idea of appreciating and understanding a deeper form of beauty that can come only with experience, even though experience often comes at the price of such tragic events. As the piece progresses its own increasing darkness and complexity produce what I hope are the most clear and beautiful moments for the listener. The doors that continue to slam behind yield new doors ahead, illuminating the only direction we can go – forward.

-Dave Hall