

Road  
Not  
Taken

Concerto for Bass Trombone  
and Trombone Ensemble

**Piano  
Reduction**

James M. Stephenson

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# Road Not Taken

Concerto for Bass Trombone and Trombone Ensemble - piano reduction done by the composer May 6, 2011

by James M. Stephenson

Three Movements:

- I. Two Roads
- II. Diverged
- III. All the Difference

Duration: Approx. 16 minutes.

Scored for Solo Bass Trombone and 11-player Trombone Ensemble:

- 1 Alto/Tenor Trombone
- 7 Tenor Trombones
- 3 Bass Trombones

## Program Notes:

The title for 'Road Less Taken' was arrived upon after completion of the score, and in a rather 'wandering' manner.

Much of the piece is based on off-beats, set in many different forms; therefore my working title was always "Off the beaten path". This title didn't really hold much water for me, and after a bit of stretching and re-working, I arrived at the current title, based obviously on Robert Frost's famous poem. The more I thought about it, the more connections I began to realize between my musical life, this piece, and the title.

First of all, in my own life, I have chosen the less traveled path. Having been comfortably situated in two steady performing jobs for almost 20 years, my wife and I decided to quit, move to a completely different location, and follow my new-found passion for composing. One might argue also that composing a bass trombone concerto, in and of itself, is a 'road less taken'. It is not the most common choice for a concerto. Lastly, it was my goal to allow for the solo bass trombone to be featured in a manner inconsistent with the often misguided preconceptions: at the request of the dedicatee and co-commissioner, Matthew Guilford, the instrument is presented lyrically, and the upper range is displayed equally, if not more than, the lower.

More technically speaking, the movements themselves are pretty standard in form, with themes, ideas and harmonies recurring and developed throughout the piece to form a consistent whole. An interesting device only used in the slow movement is the introduction of a separate trio of players, who interrupt occasionally with their off-kilter fragments, almost a skipping old record-player. The last movement is quite virtuosic, calling for much endurance, agility and extended range from the soloist.

It is with much gratitude that I dedicate this score to the co-commissioners: the Washington Trombone Ensemble (Sam Woodhead) and Matthew Guilford, the latter of whom I am delighted to reconnect with after our paths again converge more than 20 years after our shared college years at the New England Conservatory.

Jim Stephenson, February 1, 2010

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Piano Reduction

# ROAD NOT TAKEN

## Concerto for Bass Trombone and Trombone Ensemble

James M. Stephenson

### I. Two Roads

Andante - chorale  $\text{♩} = 66$

Solo  
Bass Trbn.

The score is written for Solo Bass Trombone and Piano in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-4) features a Solo Bass Trombone part with dynamics *p*, *mp*, and *p*, and a Piano accompaniment with dynamics *p* and *p > pp*. The second system (measures 5-9) features a Solo Bass Trombone part with dynamics *p*, *mp*, and *p*, and a Piano accompaniment with dynamics *p* and *pp*. The third system (measures 10-14) features a Solo Bass Trombone part with dynamics *pp*, *p*, and *pp*, and a Piano accompaniment with dynamics *p*, *pp*, *p*, and *pp*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, accents, and dynamic markings.

**A** Freely

15

*p*

*p*

*pp*

*ppp*

21

*poco a poco accel.*

*p*

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*mp*

25

*mf*

*mf*

**B** Spirito (♩ = c. 120)

28

*ff* *loco*

28

**C** Tempo Primo ♩ = 66

31

*fz* *mp*

31

35

*p* *pp* *ppp*

35

Road Not Taken

41

*p*

41

46

**D** **Allegro** (M.M. ♩ = c. 144)

*mp* *ff*

46

*ff* *mf*

50

50

54

*mp*

54

*ff*

58

*p* *mf*

58

*mf* *p*

62

*f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

62

*pp* *p*

Road Not Taken

66

mf p p

66

p

Detailed description: This system contains measures 66 through 69. The bass clef staff features a melodic line with dynamics *mf*, *p*, and *p*. The piano staff has a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines, marked with a *p* dynamic.

70

F mp f p

70

p

Detailed description: This system contains measures 70 through 73. The bass clef staff includes a dynamic marking 'F' in a box above measure 71, with dynamics *mp*, *f*, and *p*. The piano staff continues the accompaniment, marked with a *p* dynamic.

74

mf p mp

74

p mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 74 through 77. The bass clef staff has dynamics *mf*, *p*, and *mp*. The piano staff features a melodic line in the right hand and accompaniment in the left hand, with dynamics *p* and *mf*.