

# Cathedrals

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(2007)

## Program Note:

*Cathedrals* is a fantasy on Gabrieli's *Canzon Primi Toni* from the *Sacrae Symphoniae*, which dates from 1597. Written for St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice, the canzon is scored for two brass choirs, each comprised of two trumpets and two trombones. The choirs were stationed in opposite balconies of the church according to the antiphonal principal of *cori spezzati* (It. 'broken choirs'), which forms the basis of much of Gabrieli's writing.

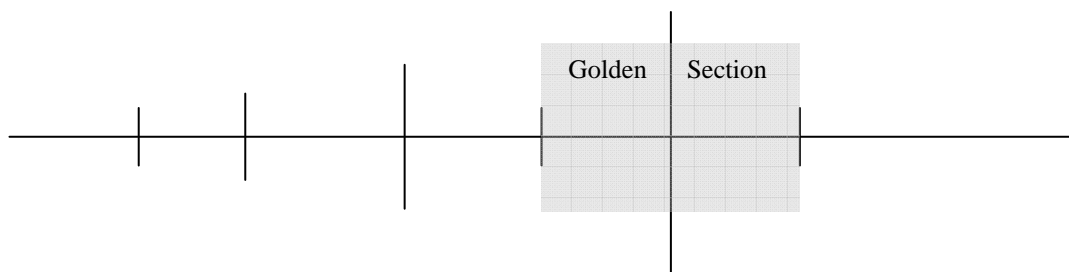
*Cathedrals* is an adventure in 'neo-renaissance' music, in its seating arrangement, antiphonal qualities, 16<sup>th</sup> century counterpoint, and canonic textures. Its form is structured on the golden ratio (1: .618), which is commonly found not only in nature and art, but also in the motets and masses of Renaissance composers such as Palestrina and Lassus. The areas surrounding the golden section and its series of extrapolated subdivisions have audible characteristics, often evidenced by cadences, changes in texture, or juxtaposition of ideas.

The work is a synthesis of the old and the new, evoking the mystery and allure of Gabrieli's spatial music, intertwined with the rich color palette, modal harmonies, and textures of woodwinds and percussion.

## To the Conductor:

The following chart depicts the proportions of the work. Although the listener's ear may be drawn to moments that coincide with these golden sections, it was only after *Cathedrals* was completed that I came to the realization the work followed these proportions. Below is a formal guideline (with calculations based on a total duration of 6'02'' at ♩ = 120)

The golden ratio exhibits dynamic symmetry, in that the ratio of the small segment to the large segment is the same as the ratio of the large segment to the whole. Therefore, *Cathedrals* contains not only a principal golden section, but a series of extrapolated subdivisions, each a further extension of the golden section. As in Renaissance motets, the duration of the fourth subdivision has been used to symmetrically frame the area surrounding the principal golden section.



Bar: 1

36

57

95

114

141

177

222