

Kedma

Composer: Avner Dorman

Year: 2024

Duration: 4 minutes

Orchestration: Saxophone Quartet SATB or AATB

Publisher: Lyric Row Press

Commission: This work was commissioned by a consortium of saxophonists organized by Matthew Younglove and Joshua Thomas as a part of the Assembly Quartet Pedagogy Project.

Program Note

Kedma was composed as part of the Assembly Quartet Pedagogy Project, an initiative focused on developing new, accessible works for intermediate saxophone quartet players. This project aims to provide young musicians with compositions that are both challenging and rewarding, expanding their repertoire beyond traditional transcriptions. The title Kedma means east in Hebrew, and the piece is inspired by Israeli dance styles, new and old. The composition's title also plays on the words Kedem (meaning "from a long time ago") and Kadma (meaning "before" or an "upbeat" in musical terms), reflecting the intertwining of these concepts in the music. Structured in an ABA form, Kedma maintains a consistent tempo throughout. The middle section, however, features longer durations and a more expressive character compared to the outer sections. The opening introduces a four-note motif within a span of five sixteenths - inspired by rhythmic cycles found in Indian and Middle-Eastern music. This is complemented by an accompaniment based on polyrhythms, played through without ties, drawing influence from the rhythmic theories of Joseph Schillinger. The composition incorporates Middle-Eastern and Jewish musical scales, highlighting the saxophone quartet's capacity for rich contrapuntal textures and a diverse sonic palette. This piece aims to provide performers and educators with an opportunity to explore a blend of traditional and contemporary musical elements.

Avner Dorman

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