

The Fifth Element

Composer: Avner Dorman

Year: 2022

Duration: 9 minutes

Orchestration: Picc.2.2.EngHn.2.3(3BsCl).2.Cbn/4.3.3.1/Timp.2perc/harp/strings

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Commission: Commissioned by The Thüringen Philharmonie Gotha-Eisenach
Intendant & General Manager, Michaela Barchevitch Music Director, Markus Huber

Program Note

When Michaela Barchevitchova suggested that I write a piece exploring the idea of “The Fifth Element” I was intrigued by the notion of an aethereal, intangible element in addition to the accepted four physical elements. Reading about the history of this idea, I found commonalities from around the world, aether in ancient Greece, void in Japanese Buddhism, and references to the human soul and love in other traditions. In Vedantic Hinduism, akasha means the basis and essence of all things in the material world and according to the Samkhya school, akasha is one of the five grand physical elements having the specific property of sound. I particularly connected with the idea of finding a void, a quietness, that enables us to truly listen to the world and truly perceive the world through love and through our soul. Moreover, that sound is the access point to the other elements that seemed particularly real to me, being a composer.

Avner Dorman

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