

March, Lament and Fugue for Wind Orchestra and Percussion

The original inspiration for this work was coming across a Ladybird book, almost as old as I am, “The History of Railways”, in a second hand shop. I was taken with the illustrations in the book – lively watercolours full of vitality, contrast and atmosphere.

March (“Orient Express”) has something of the grandeur of the railways in their heyday, but it was written following a visit to the Middle East, and it paradoxically uses an Arabic mode, *Maqam Hijaz*, from time to time.

Lament is an early reaction to my new Scottish home and the history of the area: Queen Victoria left Ballater Station on 6th November 1900 on her final journey from Balmoral Castle; moved by sadness and feeling a need to reflect, she asked that the railway platform be cleared of all others before she entered the royal carriage.

The final movement is a four-part fugue subtitled “The Flying Scotsman”. Perhaps there is something of the weight, the energy and the unstoppableness of such a train here as the; lines of music multiply, overlap and grow.