

OLYMPUS – four mythological legends - Aldo Rafael Forte (ASCAP)

Olympus is a four movement work for concert band inspired by four characters from Greek mythology, thus “four mythological legends” as in Sibelius’s “Four legends from the Kalevala”. *Olympus* was commissioned by the Kansas State University Symphony Band and its conductor, Frank Tracz. Thus began Frank’s great championing of my music for which I am so grateful. He was one of the first to perform my *Van Gogh Portraits* and later went on to commission other works from me and to lead superb performances of several other compositions of mine. *Olympus* has been performed by a host of bands ranging from high school and honor band ensembles to college bands as well as having been recorded by the Air National Guard Band of the Southwest, Captain Eric Patterson, on their “American Songs” CD.

The first movement of *Olympus, I. Vulcan – of fire and metal*, depicts Hephaestus, the blacksmith and deformed armorer of the gods with a forge below Mount Olympus. Hammered rhythms and “metallic sounds” dominate this movement which is dedicated to John Moser, the Louisville metallurgist.

In contrast, *II. Hermes – swift of motion* presents light and flighty often thinly scored music symbolic of Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

The third movement, *III. Aphrodite – of love and beauty* is the slow expressive movement of the set featuring the alto saxophone. The soft and sensuous music speaks of her role as the Goddess of Beauty and Love, the beguiler of men.

IV. Poseidon – of horses and the sea, opens with the snare drum depicting the horses’ hooves as they pull Poseidon’s chariot smoothly across the ocean with flowing melodies (smoothly) atop the drum rhythms. Eventually the music gets tense and breaks into a cacophonous chord when Medusa finds out that Poseidon has been in Athena’s temple!

REVISED PROGRAM NOTES

November 2005

Aldo Rafael Forte, Composer