

*Kenneth Fuchs*

# ON SILVER WINGS

*Fanfare-Overture for Winds, Brass and Percussion*



FULL SCORE

## INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo	E♭ Alto Saxophones I-2	Bass Trombone
Flutes I-2	B♭ Tenor Saxophone	Euphonium
Oboes I-2	E♭ Baritone Saxophone	Tuba
English Horn	B♭ Trumpet I	String Bass
Bassoons I-2	B♭ Trumpets 2-3	4 Timpani
B♭ Clarinets I-3	Horn in F I-3	
B♭ Bass Clarinet	Horn in F 2-4	
	Trombones I-2	

*Percussion (five players):* Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Xylophone, Snare Drum, Tambourine, Wood Block, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Triangle

*Duration:* 7 minutes, 30 seconds

## HIGH FLIGHT

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air.  
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue,  
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew—  
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod  
The high unsurpassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

*In December 1941, Pilot Officer John G. Magee, a 19-year-old American serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force in England, was killed when his Spitfire collided with another airplane inside a cloud. Several months before his death, he composed his immortal sonnet "High Flight," a copy of which he had mailed to his parents in the United States.*

In January 2006, Lieutenant Colonel Larry H. Lang, commander and conductor of the United States Air Force Band of Liberty at Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts, contacted me about the possibility of composing a work for his ensemble that would have “something to do with the Air Force, our history, our people, our aircraft.” He suggested the subject of the Flying Tigers as the source material for our project. My response was immediate and affirmative. I had always been fascinated by the Flying Tigers, their lofty mission to assist the nascent Chinese Air Force at the outset of World War II and their aircraft smartly painted with shark teeth across the nose. Lang’s father had been a member of the outfit, so it was appropriate that the Flying Tigers would serve as the inspiration for the new composition. This is my second musical collaboration with Lt. Col. Lang. The first, *Burning Blue*, was composed at his request in 2003 for the Heritage of America Band at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia.

I wanted to compose a work that would reflect the nobility of purpose of the United States Air Force as well as the romance of the skies and protecting our nation from the air. I remembered the sonnet “High Flight,” which served as the inspiration for *Burning Blue*. The sonnet expresses in words the bold sentiments that I wished to express again in music. The second line of the poem inspired the title of the new work, *On Silver Wings*.

*On Silver Wings* is cast in one movement in three sections. It is unified by a vigorous fanfare-like statement that opens and closes the work. The statement is based upon a motive characterized by the interval of the augmented fourth, particularly as it is embodied both melodically and harmonically in the Phrygian scale. Following the initial fanfare, a noble High Flight theme, characterized by the rising interval of a perfect fifth, is presented by the French horns. The theme is then variously taken up by all instruments of the ensemble, providing the basis for musical development and transformation throughout the middle section of the work.

I am indebted to my colleague Jeffrey Renshaw, Professor of Conducting and director of the Wind Ensemble at the University of Connecticut, for his advice on the fine points of wind ensemble orchestration. *On Silver Wings* was composed from June through September 2006 in Mansfield, Connecticut. — *Kenneth Fuchs*



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This page of a musical score, numbered 13, features a large ensemble of instruments. The woodwind section includes Piccolo (Picc.), Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Oboe 1 (Ob. 1), Oboe 2 (Ob. 2), English Horn (Eng. Hn.), Bassoon 1 & 2 (Bsn. 1 + 2), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone 1 (A. Sax. 1), Alto Saxophone 2 (A. Sax. 2), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Baritone Saxophone (B. Sax.). The brass section consists of Trumpet 1 (Tpt. 1), Trumpet 2 (Tpt. 2), Trumpet 3 (Tpt. 3), Horn 1 & 3 (Hn. 1 + 3), Horn 2 & 4 (Hn. 2 + 4), Trombone 1 (Tbn. 1), Trombone 2 (Tbn. 2), Baritone Trombone (B. Tbn.), Euphonium (Euph.), Tuba (Tba.), and Double Bass (Db.). The percussion section includes Timpani (Timp.), Suspended Cymbal (Susp. Cym.), Triangle (Tri.), and Tambourine (Tamb.). The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The woodwinds and strings play a complex, rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often in triplets. The brass instruments play sustained notes with dynamic markings such as *f*, *fp*, and *mf*. The percussion instruments provide a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the instruments are grouped by horizontal lines.

A

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Picc. *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Fl. 1 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Fl. 2 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Ob. 1 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Ob. 2 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Eng. Hn. *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff f*

Bsn. 1 + 2 *ff marc.* *mf marc., cresc.* *ff*

Cl. 1 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Cl. 2 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

Cl. 3 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

B. Cl. *ff marc.* *ff*

A. Sax. 1 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

A. Sax. 2 *p* *ff* (sim.) *f*

T. Sax. *p* *ff marc.* *mf marc., cresc.* *ff*

B. Sax. *ff marc.* *ff*

Tpt. 1 *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff*

Tpt. 2 *ff marc.* *mf marc., cresc.* *ff*

Tpt. 3 *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff*

Hn. 1 + 3 *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff*

Hn. 2 + 4 *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff*

Tbn. 1 *ff marc.* *mf marc., cresc.* *ff*

Tbn. 2 *ff marc.* *mf marc., cresc.* *ff*

B. Tbn. *ff marc.* *ff*

Euph. *ff marc.* *mf marc.* *ff*

Tba. *ff marc.* *ff*

Db. *(pizz.) f* *ff marc.* *ff*

Timp. *mf* *f*

Cr. Cyms. *f*

S. D. *f*

Xyl. *f*





Picc. *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Fl. 1 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Fl. 2 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Ob. 1 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Ob. 2 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Eng. Hn. *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

Bsn. 1 + 2 *ff* *mf* (*sim.*) *ff* *mf* *ff*

Cl. 1 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Cl. 2 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

Cl. 3 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff*

B. Cl. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

A. Sax. 1 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff* *f marc.*

A. Sax. 2 *p* *ff* (*sim.*) *p* *ff* *mf marc.*

T. Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

B. Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

Tpt. 1 *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *f marc.*

Tpt. 2 *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

Tpt. 3 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *f marc.*

Hn. 1 + 3 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *f marc.*

Hn. 2 + 4 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *mf marc.*

Tbn. 1 *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

Tbn. 2 *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

B. Tbn. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

Euph. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf marc.*

Tba. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*

Db. *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*

Timp. *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Xyl. (*gliss.*) *mf* *f* (*sim.*) *mf* *f*



Picc. -

Fl. 1 -

Fl. 2 -

Ob. 1 -

Ob. 2 -

Eng. Hn. -

Bsn. 1 + 2 -

Cl. 1 -

Cl. 2 -

Cl. 3 -

B. Cl. -

A. Sax. 1 -

A. Sax. 2 -

T. Sax. -

B. Sax. -

Tpt. 1 -

Tpt. 2 -

Tpt. 3 -

Hn. 1 + 3 *mf nobilmente*

Hn. 2 + 4 *mf nobilmente*

Tbn. 1 *mp*

Tbn. 2 *mp*

B. Tbn. *mp*

Euph. *mp*

Tba. *mp*

Db. *mp*

Timp. *p*

Susp. Cym. (scrape) *mp*

W. Bl. *mp*

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Picc. *f cantabile*

Fl. 1 *f cantabile*

Fl. 2 *f cantabile*

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Eng. Hn. *f cantabile*

Bsn. 1 + 2

Cl. 1 *p* *f cantabile*

Cl. 2 *p* *f cantabile*

Cl. 3 *p* *f cantabile*

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1 *f cantabile*

A. Sax. 2 *f cantabile*

T. Sax. *f cantabile*

B. Sax.

Tpt. 1 *mp* *mf espr.*

Tpt. 2 *mp* *mf espr.*

Tpt. 3 *mp* *mf espr.*

Hn. 1 + 3

Hn. 2 + 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tba. *mf*

Db. *mf*

Timp. *p* *mf*

Susp. Cym.

Tri. *f*

W. Bl.

Glock. *mf*

