

The Lord of the Rings Symphony: Six Movements for Orchestra and Chorus
Composed by Howard Shore

Composer Howard Shore's epic score for the *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy is a monumental effort that expresses J.R.R. Tolkien's books and Peter Jackson's films as an immense symphonic work. The result is a uniquely all-encompassing vision created from centuries of stylistic tendencies, each treated with the utmost respect.

After four years of writing, *The Lord of the Rings Symphony: Six Movements for Orchestra and Chorus* was realized. Together with conductor John Mauceri, Shore adapted the form and transitions from the longer film scores, molding them into a series of tone poems free of the specific visual linkage with the films and adhering more to the traditions of the programmatic orchestral works of Strauss, Liszt, Smetana and Sibelius.

The work's vast scope calls for symphony orchestra, mixed chorus, boys chorus and instrumental and vocal soloists singing in the Tolkien-spawned languages Quenya, Sindarin, Khuzdûl, Adûnaic, Black Speech, and Old and modern English. Shore's writing assumes an earthy, grounded tone built on sturdy orchestral structures and a sense of line that is at once fluid yet stripped of frivolous ornamentation.

Each of the symphony's movements corresponds to one book within Tolkien's tome. Adding to the drama of the performance, and at Shore's request, video artist Davey Frankel has incorporated the breathtaking imagery of renowned Tolkien artists, Alan Lee and John Howe.

Shore stated: "It is very gratifying to see the music from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy find a new life on the concert stage. The music was conceived in Wellington through collaboration with Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens and it is only fitting that the piece had its premiere in Wellington, New Zealand, which is the home of Middle-earth. Since the premiere, the symphony has played in sold out performances in North America, Europe, Far East, and Australia.

-Doug Adams

Doug Adams is a Chicago-based musician and writer. He is the author of the book *The Music of the Lord of the Rings Films*.