



Jonathan Dove

Across the Walls

Across the Walls was co-commissioned by six British music colleges for the 2004 "Brass Explosion" at Birmingham Conservatoire. The colleges suggested the choice of instruments (6 trumpets, 4 horns, 3 trombones, euphonium, 2 tubas and 2 percussionists) to match existing brass repertoire.

I noticed that this line-up included two conventional brass quintets and an unusual sextet, and wondered what would happen if these three groups were spatially separated, and called to each other in different ways.

As the piece took shape, I started to imagine that these brass groups were calling from within walled towns perched on three hills, like the Mediaeval towns you see in the backgrounds of Italian paintings. Three contrasting movements depict the sound of these towns signalling and calling to each other – by turns war-like, peaceful and celebratory.

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