



# Jonathan Dove

## Airport Scenes

Orchestral suite from *Flight*

Airports are gateways to adventure, strange micro-cities between countries. They are places where stories meet, imbued with the magic of flight – perfect for opera.

*Flight* was inspired by the extraordinary true story of a refugee living in Charles de Gaulle airport (the character later played by Tom Hanks in *The Terminal*). During the course of the opera, the refugee tries to make friends with travellers passing through, hoping to enter the country and begin a new life. The travellers are at first hostile, later sympathetic but ineffectual. Ultimately it is the refugee's own story that softens the Immigration Officer's heart. The refugee may not enter the country, but he can stay at the airport indefinitely.

### 1. *Take-off*

At the last moment, a diplomat's pregnant wife feels unable to board the plane, and the diplomat leaves without her. The travellers watch the plane take off, and marvel at the miracle of flight.

### 2. *Storm*

The travellers are grounded overnight during electrical storms. The turbulence outside seems to affect them and leads to some strange behaviour, with violent consequences for the refugee.

### 3. *Dawn Landing*

The diplomat returns with a message of love for his wife. He has realized she is more important than his career.

### 4. *Departures*

Satisfied they have done all they can for the refugee, the travellers take to the air.

Paul McGrath conducted *Flight* in Belgium, and I am delighted that he had the idea of commissioning this orchestral suite.

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