

John Lord  
Boom of the Trembling Strings  
for piano and orchestra

(2002)

Revised and corrected edition by Paul Mann  
(2014)

Study Score  
ED 22052

*To Paul Mann with great affection and gratitude*

First performance  
18 February 1955, Concert Hall  
Luxembourg  
Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra  
Conductor: Paul Mann  
Pianist: Nelson Goerner

Recording:  
Odense Symfoniorkester  
Nelson Goerner, piano  
Conductor: Paul Mann  
EMI Classics 3905282 (2008)

# Orchestra

3 Flutes (3<sup>rd</sup> doubling Piccolo)

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in Bb

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

2 Trumpets in Bb

3 Trombones (TTB)

1 Tuba

Timpani

Percussion (4):

crotales

glockenspiel

xylophone

triangle

suspended cymbal

2 pairs cymbals

tam-tam

tambourine

snare drum

bass drum

wood blocks

sand blocks

whip

Celesta

Harp

Violins I

Violins II

Violas

Violoncellos

Double Basses

1st Violin

2nd Violin

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Conductor

Music Director

Stage Manager

Lighting Designer

Sound Designer

Production Designer

Costume Designer

Hair and Makeup Designer

Production Office

Box Office

Marketing and Promotions

Public Relations

Stagehands

Stage Crew

Stage Manager

Stagehands

Stage Crew

Stage Manager

Stagehands

Stage Crew

## Piano

by D. H. Lawrence  
(1918)

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;  
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see  
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings  
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song  
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong  
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside  
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour  
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour  
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast  
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

### Composer's note

I began this piece after reading Lawrence's *Study in Confession* (1918). The poem's depiction of a small boy sitting under the piano, "the boom of the tingling strings"—a word choice I chose—had an enormously strong resonance with a certain memory I had, with the understanding, I wanted to describe the same nostalgic feeling for small boys, now distant, but what follows might be seen to depict my journey away from childhood, towards a world beyond glances; towards a world beyond Lawrence's "flood of remembrance" or weeping for the past. Although prone to that myself, I wanted to write a more hopeful world where one perhaps learns from the past rather than lives in it.

### Postscript

After the piece had been performed twice, Paul Mann drew my attention to the earlier version of the poem, which seems to justify my decision to end the concerto with positive hope. I am most grateful to him, and with "the great black piano" racing towards a joyful clamorous ending.

Jon Lord

## The Piano

Somewhere beneath that piano's superb sleek black  
Must hide my mother's piano, little and brown with the back  
That stood close to the wall, and the front's faded silk, both torn  
And the keys with little hollows, that my mother's fingers had worn.

Softly, in the shadows, a woman is singing to me  
Quietly, through the years I have crept back to see  
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the shaking strings  
Pressing the little poised feet of the mother who smiles as she sings  
The full throated woman has chosen a winning, living song  
And surely the heart that is in me must belong  
To the old Sunday evenings, when darkness wandered outside  
And hymns gleamed on our warm lips, as we watched mother's fingers

Or this is my sister at home in the old front room  
Singing love's first surprised gladness, alone in the gloom  
She will start when she sees me, and blushing, spread out her arms  
To cover my mouth's raillery, till I'm bound in her shame's charms

A woman is singing me a wild Hungarian  
And her arms, and her bosom and the waltz of her feet  
And the great black piano is clamouring as the mother's hand  
And the tunes of the past are drowned of the present's clamour

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**PREVIEW**  
Low Resolution

## Boom of the Tingling Strings

for piano and orchestra

Jon Lord  
(1941-2012)

# I

Adapted from  $J = 48$ 

The image shows a page from a musical score, likely for a symphony. The score is written for a large ensemble of instruments, including woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings. The instruments listed on the left are: Piccolo, Flutes 1.2., Oboes 1.2., Clarinets in Bb 1.2., Bassoons 1.2., 4 Horns in Bb, Trumpets in Bb 1.2., Three Trombones 1.2., Bass Trombone, Tuba, Timpani, Percussion (with sub-staves for 'FLAMBOYANT TYPICAL' and 'TANG-TANG'), Cymbals, Violins 1., Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso. The score includes musical notation with notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'pp' (pianissimo). There are also performance instructions like 'all ends' and 'deliberate'. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'PREVIEW Low Resolution' is overlaid across the entire page.

