

## The Composition

**The Game** is a character piece that seeks to describe the interplay between two opponents in a game of strategy. When I was 12 years old, I enjoyed playing a board game called *Risk* with my next-door neighbor. *Risk*, a board game made by Parker Brothers, is a game of military conquest in which the object is world domination.

My opponent, Glenn, always chose the black playing pieces, and I always chose blue. Though Glenn was my best friend, his insistence on always using the black pieces seemed to have a sinister overtone. I was blue, the color of peace, and he was black, the color of darkness. Each took his turn deploying his 50 armies around the map until both blue and black game pieces covered every continent and their territories. With two sets of dice as weaponry, we would engage in combat by attempting to out roll each other. Winning in combat meant increasing the size and coverage of your army until you dominated the world. The strategy was knowing what borders to heavily fortify, and when and where to attack your enemy. Added to this there was the “luck of the dice” in determining the outcome of each battle.

Playing several hours a day, many of our games would last two or more days until one of us would win. Emotions always ran high and at times our friendship was taxed. A bit of this was understandable; after all this was war - World War! My opponent was very gifted and aggressive, so winning was never easy. Win or lose, life goes on, and in the end if you don't get to rule the world, things aren't too bad when it's your best friend who does!

In **The Game**, I have attempted to create a musical snapshot of one very memorable contest. The opening syncopated motif with its tremolo “dice roll” occurs throughout the piece and signals that a turn has begun. The subsequent material depicts the emotion, strategy, and excitement of each turn. The first 74 measures of the work are full of confidence and success. By measure 75, things have turned against me and the music portrays a scene of doubt and indecision as I consider my options (represented by short tremolos in which the dice are shaken without being thrown). It is a futile situation. In the end I have lost.

This piece is dedicated to my oldest, and dearest friend, Glenn Epis, in gratitude for his many years of friendship, and for the countless adventures we've shared (both on and off the “battlefield”).



Brendan McBrien

## Rehearsal and Performance Suggestions

In performing **The Game**, there are a few effects that may need some explanation. “Col legno” asks the player to turn the bow over and “tap” the string with the wood of the bow. The term “ord.” refers to ordinary or normal bowing. “Sul pont.” (sul ponticello) means to bow close to the bridge for a more strident or harsh tone. All “slides” should be completed on the beat, not before. The “snap” or “Bartók pizzicati” in measures 46-49 ask the player to pull the string in such a way that on its release it will strike the fingerboard with a loud snapping sound. All of the accompaniment figures (opening motif, measures 6, and 27, as well as the viola, cello canon in 46-69) should be played in a steady, unemotional fashion (mechanical). All of the other melodic lines overlapping these and other sections should be played with phrasing and musicality. The stark contrast between these “robotic” accompaniments and beautifully phrased music is quite effective. Above all have fun with this piece, engage your students in describing in words what they hear happening in the music. Best of luck.

NOTE: Page 12 of this score features a Learning Bank. It offers extended learning opportunities for you and your students. It can also be used as a springboard for your ideas or additional projects. The Learning Bank is provided on page 3 of all student parts.

for Glenn Epis

# The Game

Full Conductor Score  
Approx. time – 3:30

Brendan McBrien

1 **Allegro** ♩ = 124

2 *col legno*

3

4 *(col legno)*

Violins 1

Violins 2

Viola\*

Cello

String Bass

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

5

6

7

8

9

Vlins. 1

Vlins. 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

*ord.*

*p*

*p*

*sul pont.*

*p*

*sul pont.*

*p*

2 - 2

1

*v*

*v*

*v*

*v*

\*A 3<sup>rd</sup> Violin (Viola T.C.) part is included in this set.

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10 ord. 11 12 13

Vlns. 1 *p*

Vlns. 2

Vla.

Cello *nat.* *p*

Str. Bass

14 15 div. 16 17

Vlns. 1 *p*

Vlns. 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass *nat.* *p*

18 19 20 21

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

22 23 col legno unis. 24 25 (col legno) 26

Vlins. 1 *p*

Vlins. 2 *p*

Vla. *mf*

Cello *mf*

Str. Bass *mf*

sul pont. *p*

27 ord. 28 29 30

Vlins. 1 *p*

Vlins. 2 *p*

Vla. *mf*

Cello *mf*

Str. Bass *f*

nat. *f*

slide

31 32 33 34

Vlins. 1 *mf*

Vlins. 2 *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Cello *mf*

Str. Bass *f*

slide

35 36 37 38

Vlins.  
1  
2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

*f*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*

v  
v  
v  
v  
v  
v  
v  
v

slide  
slide

39 40 41 42

Vlins.  
1  
2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

43 44 45 46 47

Vlins.  
1  
2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

*mf*  
*mf*  
*p*  
*p*  
*p*  
*p*  
*p*

col legno  
col legno

sul pont.  
sul pont.  
sul pont.

pizz.  
pizz.  
pizz.  
pizz.  
pizz.

*f*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*

div.

48 49 50 51

Vlns. 1 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

arco (nat.)  
unis.  
*f*

52 53 54 55

Vlns. 1 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

56 57 58 59

Vlns. 1 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

arco *ff*  
div.

*ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

*ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

*ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

60 61 62 63

Vlns. 1 unis. *f* div. V unis. V

Vlns. 2 *f* V

Vla. *f* V

Cello *f* V

Str. Bass *f* V

64 65 66 67

Vlns. 1 div. V

Vlns. 2 V

Vla. V

Cello V

Str. Bass

68 69 70 71

Vlns. 1 unis. V col legno *p*

Vlns. 2 *p* col legno *p*

Vla. *mf* V

Cello *mf* V

Str. Bass *mf*

75 **Meno** ♩ = 92

72 (col legno) 73 74 ord. *p*

Vlins. 1 2 *p* (col legno) ord. *p*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Cello *mf* sul pont. nat. *p*

Str. Bass sul pont. nat. *p*

76 77 78 79 80 rit.

Vlins. 1 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

81 82 **Tempo I** (♩ = 124) 83 84 85

Vlins. 1 2 tip *p* tip

Vla. *p*

Cello

Str. Bass



86 87 88 89 90

Vlns. 1 *p* V

Vlns. 2 *p* V

Vla. V

Cello *p* sul pont. nat. V V

Str. Bass *p* sul pont. nat. V V

91 92 93 94

Vlns. 1 *p* V

Vlns. 2 *p* V

Vla.

Cello *p* sul pont.

Str. Bass *p* sul pont.

95 96 97 98 Tutti

Vlns. 1 *p* Solo V

Vlns. 2 *p* Solo V Tutti *p* pizz.

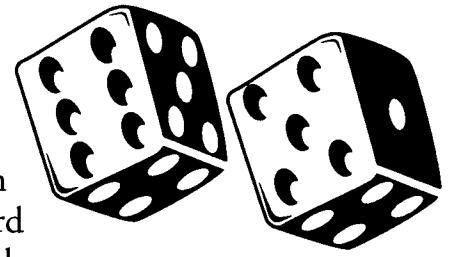
Vla. *p* V *pizz.*

Cello *p* *pizz.*

Str. Bass *p* *pizz.*

## Learning Bank

What is your favorite game? Almost all children and adults enjoy games as a form of recreation. Games have been around for thousands of years and are common to all cultures. Works of art dating back as far as 2500 B.C. show people, including royalty, playing board games with movable pieces. The word “game” comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word *gamen* meaning play or sport. Back in ancient times, a game became popular only if it was easy for players to make their own equipment. The production of some games became easier in Western civilization when printing presses came into use. The Industrial Revolution during the 1800’s marked great advances in game making as it was possible to mass produce many varieties of games. Technological advances in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially the invention of plastic and computers, led to the creation of new kinds of games, than ever before.



There are three basic types of games – those involving luck, skill, or physical endurance. Many games require a combination of all three types! Board games (like *Risk*) probably make up the largest category of games. Other types of games include card games, tile games (dominos), word games, role-playing games, electronic/video games, and games of physical skill that have become organized sports (tennis, football, archery, and so on). The television industry also produces a number of exciting game shows where contestants can win huge amounts of money and valuable prizes such as automobiles, furniture, jewelry, and vacation packages.

Equipment included for board games usually include a flat surface board made of cardboard or wood, dice or spinner, movers, and cards. *Chess* is one of the oldest and most popular board games in the world. *Monopoly* is another very popular board game, originating in the United States during the Depression in the 1930s. For children, an attractive first board game might include *Chutes and Ladders* or *Candyland*. Towards the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, party games such as *Pictionary* and *Trivial Pursuit* became favorites.

Examine the following assignments. Select your favorite and follow the instructions provided.

1. Create your own board game based on your knowledge and research of music theory and/or history. OR Create a board game based on adventures and experiences in your orchestra class and school.

2. The makers of *Monopoly* also produce many other special editions including *NASCAR Official Collectors Edition*, *National Parks Edition*, *Texas Edition*, *St. Louis Cardinals Collectors Edition*, and many more. Create your own Music Edition of *Monopoly*. To start, the movers need to be musical instruments. Your turn...

3. Many games such as *Checkers*, *Scrabble*, and *Backgammon* have remained favorites for many years, yet others seem to come and go quite quickly. What do you attribute to the longevity of these games? Will they ever become extinct? Do you see a particular trend in the future of games? Write an essay addressing this subject.

4. Select your favorite game. Create an advertisement for this game to be printed in a widely-distributed magazine. Use a single sheet of 8½ x 11 size paper. Prepare your ad on computer or draw it by hand using pens, crayons, or pencil. Be creative!

5. Mr. McBrien told a story through his music composition about playing *Risk* with his best friend. Do you have a special memory about playing a game with friends or family members? In one to two pages, tell your story.