

# *Unvanquished*

## **Program Notes**

*Unvanquished* (2023), commissioned by the New Philharmonia Orchestra, is a concert overture in sonata form based on two very different themes. Originally conceived as a work to celebrate the end of the pandemic and hoped-for future results in Ukraine, the ambiguity inherent in the title is deliberate. While to date we have survived COVID and Ukraine continues to battle valiantly to save its country, our struggles are ongoing, and our losses have been enormous. This work is my attempt to express our continued global uncertainty through a piece of orchestral music.

Sonata form has been in wide use since early in the classical period. Its continued use today is a testament to its effectiveness as a musical structure for presenting thematic materials in a deeply satisfying way. It typically consists of an introduction, an exposition, a development section, a recapitulation, and a coda. *Unvanquished* begins with a brief, slow introduction. The exposition section presents two themes, the first in a minor key and the second in a different major key. The development section contains an elaboration and transformation of these thematic materials. The recapitulation brings back the themes in a form reminiscent of the exposition. In the coda, the second theme is transformed from major to minor, and the two themes are heard simultaneously in the opening minor key. An abrupt change to major at the end reflects my optimistic view of our future.

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