

Drew Sperry

Through Sun-Painted Panes

for Solo Bass Trombone

Perusal Score

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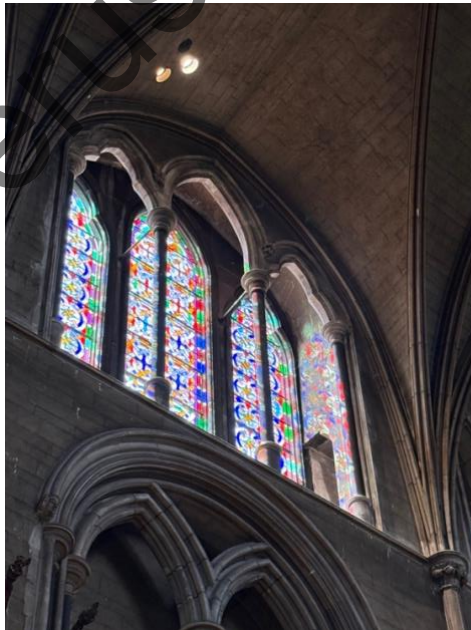
Drew Sperry

Written for the talents of Nick Izor

Program Note:

In writing this piece, I thought a lot about the role that light alone can play in changing the atmosphere of a space, using stained glass as a specific reference point. In the summer of 2025, I was able to visit St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland for several hours and as I walked through the cathedral, I noticed that as the sun moved along its daily path, the ways that its light interacted with the stained glass of the building changed. As a result, the ambiance in the room changed quite dramatically during my visit—what was at first a dark and somber space eventually became illuminated with a colorful brilliance as the sun struck the glass at just the right angle, causing the light to reflect onto the walls of the room I was standing in. While the room itself never changed, the atmosphere of the room was unrecognizable from what it was before.

Through this piece, I wanted to explore the nuance of this change in atmosphere. The beginning of the piece introduces a grand and spacious atmosphere, depicting the vaulted ceilings of the cathedral. When the atmosphere changes (m. 29 with the start of a quicker tempo), the space I depict in the music becomes livelier and more colorful. However, although the focus of the music has shifted, motivic material from the opening remains present, reminding us that we've remained in the same physical space as before, only the atmosphere has changed. The piece ends with the light and liveliness of the room gradually fading away as the sun continues to move, returning the space to how it was at the start.



A wall of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland illuminated by the reflections of stained glass as the sun strikes it at a specific angle.

Performance Notes:

- Meter in this piece changes freely and without the indication of time signatures.
- The marking “air” indicates that the performer should allow air to pass freely through the instrument, producing an unpitched and breathy sound without altering the position used to play the most previous pitched note.
- Arrows () indicate that the performer should gradually change from one playing technique to another. In this piece, this notation is always used to transition between an “ord.” (normal) playing style and an “air” playing style.
- To transition between “ord.” playing and “air” playing, gradually loosen the embouchure and slow down the buzzing of the lips so that a pitched note no longer sounds. Before transitioning to a pure air sound, get as quiet as possible (indicated by the *ppp* marking) and gradually introduce air into the sound, making the transition between techniques as smooth as possible. The *mp* dynamic of the air sound should match the *ppp* dynamic of the “ord.” sound as closely as possible.
- Breath marks (') indicate very short pauses. While still making a clear break/breath in the music and allowing yourself enough time to breathe and prepare for the next note, take as little time as possible.

Duration ca. 6.5 minutes

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Unhurried, placidly ♩ = 76

Bass Trombone

p *mf* *ppp* (*mp*) *n* *p* *mf*

4 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *ord.* *air* *pp* *sempre* *ppp* (*mp*) *n*

8 *ord.* *poco rit.* *a tempo* *p* *f* *pp* *n*

13 *ord.* *air* *pp* *at a whisper* *ppp* (*mp*) *n* *mp* *dolce, with great spaciousness* *ppp* (*mp*) *n* *pp* *at a whisper* *ppp* (*mp*) *n*

17 *ord.* *(pp)* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *f* *p sub.*

23 *ord.* *air* *pp* *ppp* (*mp*) *n* *rit.* *mf*

Slightly more animated ♩ = 69

28 *a tempo* *p* *n* *p* *mf* *p*

32 *5:6* *f*

35 *ppp* *(mp)* *n* *ord.* *p* *mf* *p*

39 *f* *mp* *p* at a whisper

43 *3* *air* *ord.* *ppp* *(mp)* *n* *p* *f*

48 *p* *f*

52 *5:6* *mp* *pp* *mf* *p*

58 *mf* *p* *5:6* *mp*

63 *pp* *f*

67 *pp* *f* *mp* *rit.*

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Through Sun-Painted Panes". It consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a measure number (32, 35, 39, 43, 48, 52, 58, 63, 67). The music is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Various musical notations are present, including slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. A large, diagonal watermark "Perusal Score" is overlaid across the center of the page. The score includes several performance instructions: "air" (breath mark), "ord." (ordine), "at a whisper", and "rit." (ritardando). Dynamic markings include *ppp*, *(mp)*, *n*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, and *pp*. Time signatures *5:6* are indicated on staves 32, 52, and 58. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" on staff 39. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests.

a tempo *molto rit.* *Tempo I* (♩ = 76)

71 *floating to the top*
p *mf* *pp* (pp) 5:6

75 *with a spacious sound*
fp *pp* *mf*

80 *p* *f* *p* *mf*

86 *molto rit.* *a tempo*
pp *mf* *p* *pp*

93 *air* *ord.*
mf *ppp* (mp) *n* *p* *mf*

98 *air* *ord.*
ppp (mp) *n* *p* *3* *mf* *p* *pp*

103 *f* *mp* (mp) *n*

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Through Sun-Painted Panes". It consists of six staves of music, each starting with a measure number (71, 75, 80, 86, 93, 98, 103). The music is written in bass clef. Above the staves, there are tempo markings: "a tempo", "molto rit.", and "Tempo I (♩ = 76)". There are also performance instructions in italics: "floating to the top", "with a spacious sound", "air", and "ord.". Dynamic markings are placed throughout the score, including *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *fp*, *f*, *ppp*, *(mp)*, and *n*. Some measures have a 5:6 ratio indicated. The score is watermarked with "Perusal Score" diagonally across the middle.