The direction we grow

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THE DIRECTION WE GROW

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Music

in

The School of Music

by
Reid Willis
B.M., Louisiana State University, 2007
December, 2009
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INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo
Flute (2)
Oboe (2)
English Horn
Clarinet in Bb (2)
Bassoon
Horn in F (2)
Trumpet in C (2)
Trombone
Tuba
Timpani
Triangle
Cymbal
Woodblock
Snare Drum
Tenor Drum
Bass Drum
Antique Cymbals
Chimes
Glockenspiel
Marimba
Vibraphone
Piano
Solo Soprano
SATB Choir
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Contrabass

Percussion Key
we said they were like bones
the bones of the earth
pushing up from its soily nest growing
8 heads, 17 arms, 206 twigly fingers
and with its belly below, sucking
gritty water, they all stretch
out and reach up
the direction we grow
the place we instinctively look to
for a reason.

Signed Consent

May 27, 2009

To whom it may concern,

This is to inform that Reid Willis has my permission to use any portion or entirety of the work "After finding the dragon's stream."

Heather Krogsgard
ABSTRACT

The Direction We Grow is a composition for orchestra, solo soprano, and choir. It is a summation of the compositional knowledge I’ve accumulated throughout my undergraduate and graduate programs at LSU. The piece reflects my compositional style, which is characterized by rich melody and complex rhythm. With sweeping melodic motives, climactic builds, and percussive coloration, the piece incorporates characteristics of the Classical, Romantic, and Impressionistic musical periods.

The piece is palindromic in structure. It builds upon a simple, celestial one-note motive and introduces new melodic patterns until it finally morphs into a steady, percussive section. The section builds to a grand climax at the center of the piece, and then falls back into another more tumultuous percussive section. The tension releases as the piece returns to the opening one-note motive. Melodically and harmonically, the piece is tonal, with frequent use of sevenths and ninths and occasional use of dissonant chords and clusters in the percussive sections.

The style of The Direction We Grow is a literal product of my work and development as a composition student in the LSU music department over the last six years.
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Reid Willis was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in April, 1985. He attended St. Cecelia elementary and middle school in Broussard, Louisiana, and graduated from St. Thomas More high school in 2003. The following August he entered Louisiana State University and graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Music degree. That year he also entered the Louisiana State University Graduate School with a focus in music composition. He will be receiving his Master of Music degree in December 2009. After graduation, Reid plans on scoring movies and working with the visual arts.