

Egress

for orchestra

Christopher Churcher

(2025)



Egress was commissioned by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

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Instrumentation

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in B-flat

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

2 Trumpets in B-flat

2 Tenor Trombones

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Strings

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Egress is a short, high-energy overture. Extended techniques are used sparingly; the primary focus should be on maintaining momentum and dynamism, with particular attention to sudden changes in dynamics and texture.

Harmonics

Natural harmonics for strings are notated using diamond noteheads, indicating the stopped note and the string on which it is to be played, rather than the resulting sounding pitch. For example, in the example below, the cello should stop the note G on the D string, producing the pitch D two octaves above the open D string. Artificial harmonics are notated in the conventional manner.



Composed February 2025

First Performance: 27/7/25 by the CBSO Youth Orchestra at Birmingham Town Hall

Egress

an overture for orchestra

Egress began life as a short overture titled *BREAKWATER*, written for the Southbank Sinfonia to mark the opening of the Levinsky Hall in Plymouth in February 2023. The commissioner called for a five-minute concert opener with a thematic connection to Plymouth—a city defined by its deep maritime heritage and the steady presence of the Tamar. From the outset, I was drawn to the image of water: the quiet strength of a river as it meets the restless pull of the sea.

In *Egress*, the ideas from *BREAKWATER* are distilled into a fuller, more expansive musical form. The piece reflects the great, paradoxical power of a river—by turns delicate and forceful, poetic and overwhelming—as it rushes toward the ocean. The title, *Egress*, evokes this sense of departure: the inevitable journey from source to open water, from containment to release.

The music is shaped around two principal motifs. The first is a light, flowing semiquaver figure introduced by the clarinets, suggestive of the flickering play of light on water. In contrast, the brass presents a more weighty, insistent rhythmic motif, embodying the river's underlying momentum and force. These two ideas evolve and intertwine, driving the piece toward a broad, expansive closing passage—a moment where tension gives way to release, and the music seems to find its own egress into the open expanse beyond.

Christopher Churcher

Duration: 5'30"

This publication is available for purchase privately through the website
of the composer www.christopherchurcher.com

for orchestra

Christopher Churcher
b.2004

Slow; glassy and suspended $\downarrow = 66$

gentle, airy tone

PPF

PPM

gentle, airy tone

PPR

PPP

— *ppm*

Slow; glassy and suspended $\downarrow = 66$

con sord.

pp *flautando*

pp flav

CONS OF

DD Nov

PK

PR

Double speed, with a surging, unrelenting flow $\text{♩} = 12$

Fl. 1 *ppp*

Fl. 2 *pp*

Ob. 1 *pp*

Ob. 2

Cl. 1 *pp*

Cl. 2 *pp*

Bsn. 1, 2

Hn. 1, 2 *ppp*

Hn. 3, 4 *ppp*

Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tba.

Timp. gently

Double speed, with a surging, unrelenting flow $\text{♩} = 12$
sul pont.

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *pp* sul tasto III

Vla. *pp*

Ve. *p*

Cb. *ppp*

Fl. 1 *p*

Fl. 2 *p* airy tone *ppp*

Ob. 1 *pp*

Ob. 2 *pp*

Cl. 1 *p* *ppp* *ppp*

Cl. 2 *p* *ppp*

Bsn. 1,2 *pp*

Hn. 1,2 *p* *pp* *ppp*

Hn. 3,4 *p* *pp* *pp*

Tpt. 1,2 *pp*

Tbn. 1,2 con sord. *pp*

B. Tbn. *pp*

Tba.

Timp. *pp*

Vln. I *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *ppp* *ppp*

Vln. II *p* *pp* *p* *pp*

Vla. *p* *ppp* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *pp*

Cb. *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

ord. III IV

senza sord. sul tasto III

unis. II

Perusal score for performance

A

19

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1.2

Hn. 1.2

Hn. 3.4

Tpt. 1.2

Tbn. 1.2

B. Tbn.

Tba.

Tim.

A

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Ve.

Cb.

pp

poco cresc.

p
sul
tasto
III

pp

24

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1, 2

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Ve.

Cb.

pp

pp

ppp

pp

pp

senza sord. or d.

div.

pp

p

Perusal score only for performance

29

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1, 2

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Ve.

Cb.

pp

p veiled

mp

poco cresc.

mp

senza sord. III

mp

p

mp

Perusal score only for performance

33

Fl. 1 *pp* *p* *f*

Fl. 2 *pp* *p*

Ob. 1 *p* *f*

Ob. 2 *p* *f*

Cl. 1

Cl. 2 *p* *f*

Bsn. 1, 2 *pp* *p* *f*

Hn. 1, 2 *pp* *f*

Hn. 3, 4

Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tba.

Timp. *ppp* *pp*

Vln. I *molto* *f*

Vln. II *div.* *molto* *f*

Vla. *div.* *molto* *f*

Ve. II *p sempre cresc. poco a poco* *molto* *f*

Cb. II *p* *molto* *f*

Perusal score for performance

[illegible]