**Instrumentation**

Piccolo  
2 Flutes  
2 Oboes  
2 Bassoons  
Contrabassoon (optional but preferred)

3 Clarinets in Bb  
2 Bass Clarinets in Bb  
Contrabass Clarinet in Bb

2 Alto Saxes  
Tenor Sax  
Baritone Sax

3 Trumpets in Bb  
4 French Horns  
3 Tenor Trombones  
Bass Trombone  
Euphonium  
Tuba

Double Bass  
Bass Drum

Performance notes: The tempo should be very fluid throughout. Ritardandos at the ends of phrases should slow to a tempo below the "arrival" tempo of the next bar. (An example of this is explicitly notated in measure 42 into 43.) Although tempos are indicated with great precision, try to avoid thinking (or showing) strong beats. The music needs to gently flow throughout. The end of sustained notes should taper as if sung by a large choir. Although the climax is notated fortissimo, the result needs to be "strong and powerful" rather than "blasted," always played with a full, non-harsh tone. (Think of the dynamic markings as indicating strength and energy even more than volume.) Finally, the beginning and ending of the piece should be played one-player-per-part wherever possible.

The "blue hour" refers to the period of twilight each evening when there is neither full daylight nor complete darkness. "Hymn to a Blue Hour" was commissioned by Mesa State College, and premiered by their wind ensemble, with Calvin Hofer conducting, on December 3, 2010.
with a little more motion
a tempo, but even more freely, stretching the end of phrases

(3)