

Movement I: The Great Acceleration

Widely accepted as the geological epoch that we now live in, the Anthropocene acknowledges the significant impact that humans have had over our planet's ecosystems and geology, as measured by accelerating earth system and socioeconomic trends. The first movement, by far the Symphony's most substantial and extensive, portrays the relentless growth rate in human activity also known as the Great Acceleration, which started in the mid-twentieth century and continues to this day. Or does it?

-Jimmy López Bellido

Movement II: Stillness

"Stillness" suggests a feeling of global sentiment in the months immediately following the World Health's Organization's declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic. A time during which the world came to a halt. Has the Great Acceleration come to a close? Untenable in the long run, some of its exponentially rising trends were already slowing down prior to the pandemic, but one thing we know for sure is that the worldwide health crisis will serve as a catalyst for change that will have lasting consequences on our behavior. In this movement we mostly focus on the pain, loss, and suffering that we have collectively sustained, at times trying to go back to our old ways, only to realize that there is simply no return.

-Jimmy López Bellido

Movement III: Reckoning

"Reckoning" is a profoundly meditative movement with underlying echoes of the Gayatri Mantra (a Sanskrit chant considered sacred) echoing throughout its melodies and rising harmonies. It is an invitation to close our eyes, look inward, and find that inner peace so elusive to contemporary humans accustomed to silencing their inner most thoughts with the never-ending rattle and outward distractions of the modern world. Needless to say, had we not been forced to remain still and confront our deepest thoughts and fears, this moment of rebirth would have never taken place.

-Jimmy López Bellido

Movement IV: Alignment

“Alignment” brings back musical elements from all prior movements, but unlike its predecessors, it is luminous in character and filled with hope. It envisions a world in which humans have finally reached a level of maturity and awareness that allows us to continue our scientific advances and technological development without damaging the planet that gave us life. It is filled with the promise of human ingenuity, pointing toward a future where we have finally mastered the balancing act between our individual desires for a better and more comfortable life, and the greater good of our fellow human beings and our planet. Idealistic? Without a doubt. Impossible? Only we, collectively, hold the answer to that question.

-Jimmy López Bellido

DISPLAY CASE

[Label 1]

Composing the First Movement: The Great Acceleration

The symphony's first movement, *The Great Acceleration*, is a work of confluences, preceded by extensive statistical research, informed by science, and inspired by the art of photography. The acoustic cornerstone of this piece can be found in the Schumann resonances, which are global electromagnetic resonances generated by electric activity within the Earth's cavity (within the ionosphere and the surface) and which emit a continual electromagnetic vibration whose fundamental tone is 7.83 Hertz, equal to the pitch B-Natural. Also notable are the remarkable similarities that our brain waves and their spectral patterns share with Schumann resonances, pointing toward a more intrinsic union between us and our environment. The diagrams and sketches included in this display case reflect the steps López Bellido took while composing the first movement of the symphony.

[label 2]

1. This graph produced by the IGBP (International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme) reveals significant changes to the Earth's temperature, landscapes, and biosphere between 1750 and 2010.
2. This graph reveals changing socioeconomic trends including increased travel, communications, and consumption between 1750 and 2010, all of which show a dramatic increase following the end of World War II.
3. Drawing sketches like this one helps López Bellido visualize the overall form of a given work well before he sets to write a piece. This is an initial loose sketch for movement one, *The Great Acceleration*.
4. This was López Bellido's first attempt at correlating the graphs depicting earth and socioeconomic trends with hertz (the unit of frequency) and beats per minute (a way of measuring tempo). Hz and BPM appear on the y-axis, while the projected duration of the whole movement (14 minutes) and the passage of time (starting in 1945) appears on the x-axis.
5. This is López Bellido's first attempt at manually applying hertz values directly to the Earth System Trends graph.
6. After plenty of statistical research, the first accurate graph emerges. It depicts the correlation between both, socioeconomic and earth trends, with specific frequencies measured in hertz. Image credit: Heleno Leitao.
7. An accurate graph depicting the correlation between socioeconomic and earth trends with a specific tempo measured in beats per minute. Credit: Heleno Leitao.
8. A piano keyboard with its corresponding frequencies in hertz; 27.50Hz being the first note (the lowest A on the left) and 4,186.00Hz being the highest (the top C on the right). The range of a full orchestra is practically identical.
9. The far-left column marks the progression of time in seconds from 0:00 to 14:00 (the duration of the first movement). The second column indicates the corresponding year, from 1945 until 2010—when the data provided ends. The third, fourth, and fifth columns indicate beats per minute, and the annotations in pencil to the right are the projected tempo markings that would go on the full orchestral score.

[label 3—with portrait of Jimmy and Laura together]

About Jimmy López Bellido

An “undeniably exciting composer” (*Opera News*), with “a brilliant command of orchestral timbres and textures” (*Dallas Morning News*) and “a virtuoso mastery of the modern orchestra” (*The New Yorker*), López has created works performed by leading orchestras around the world and in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Kennedy Center, Vienna’s Musikverein, Konzerthaus Berlin, and the Aspen, Tanglewood, and Grant Park music festivals.

López Bellido completed his three-year tenure as the Houston Symphony’s Composer-in-Residence in the spring of 2020. A native of Lima, he studied at the city’s National Conservatory of Music prior to graduating from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki with a Master of Music degree. López completed his Ph.D. in Music at the University of California-Berkeley.

About Laura Jackson

Laura Jackson serves as the music director and conductor of the Reno Philharmonic and continues to win praise for her artistry, leadership, and creative community engagement. Innovative composer-in-residence projects and vibrant performances of traditional repertoire have cemented the Philharmonic’s place in the hearts of northern Nevadans while also raising the institution to new heights in national visibility.

Jackson spent her early childhood in Virginia and Pennsylvania before moving at age 11 to Plattsburgh, NY. She fell in love with the violin in public school, later attending the North Carolina School for the Arts. She pursued an undergraduate degree at Indiana University where she studied both violin and conducting before moving to Boston in 1990 to freelance as a violinist and teach at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire.

[Label 4— portrait of full orchestra]

Instrumentation

- 3 Flutes (3rd doubling Piccolo), 3 Oboes (3rd doubling English Horn), 3 Clarinets in Bb (3rd doubling Bass Clarinet), 3 Bassoons (3rd doubling Contrabassoon)
- 4 Horns in F, 3 Trumpets (in C and Bb), 3 Trombones, 1 Tuba
- Timpani; Perc. 1: Bass Drum (largest available), Triangle (med), Brake Drum, Cabasa, Glockenspiel, Suspended Cymbal, Vibraslap, Tom-toms (hi-med-med lo-lo), Cowbells (hi-low), Ride Cymbal, Güiro, Perc 2: Vibraphone, Tam-tam, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Ratchet, Brake Drum, Vibraslap, Tom-toms (hi-med-med lo-lo); Perc. 3: Bass Drum (largest available), Claves, Triangle (hi-med) Tam-tam, Vibraslap, Cabasa, Ratchet, Mark Tree, Crash Cymbals
- Harp
- Strings