

KYLE VANDERBURG

MINIWASHITU

Contrabassoon and Piano





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Contrabassoon and Piano NOT AUTHORITHE FOR PERFORMANCE.

Program Note

CAUSE OF THE BREAKING UP OF THE ICE IN THE MISSOURI RIVER IN SPRINGTIME A Myth of the Dakota Nation

It is said that in the long ago there was a mysterious being within the stream of the Missouri River. It was seldom seen by human beings, and was most dreadful to see. It is said that sometimes it was seen within the water in the middle of the stream, causing a redness shining like the redness of fire as it passed up the stream against the current with a terrific roaring sound.

And they say that if this dreadful being was seen by anyone in the daytime anyone who thus saw it soon after became crazy and continued restless and writhing as though in pain until he was relieved by death. And it is said that one time not a very great many years ago this frightful being was seen by a man, and he told how it appeared. He said that it was of strange form and covered all over with hair like a buffalo, but red in color; that it had only one eye in the middle of its forehead, and above that a single horn. Its backbone stood out notched and jagged like an enormous saw. As soon as the man beheld the awful sight everything became dark to him, he said. He was just able to reach home, but he lost his reason and soon after that he died.

It is said this mysterious "Miniwashitu" (water monster) still lives in the Missouri River, and that in springtime, as it moves up-stream against the current it breaks up the ice of the river. This water monster was held in awe and dread by the people.

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Kyle Vanderburg (2024)



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