

Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra
Presents

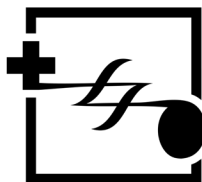
ONCE AND AGAIN

Saturday, May 17, 2025 6:00 PM ET

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
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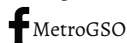
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN

Gamer Symphony Orchestra

The Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra (WMGSO) is a community orchestra and chorus whose mission is to share and celebrate video game music with a wide audience, primarily by putting on affordable, accessible concerts in the D.C. area.

Game music weaves a complex melodic thread through the traditions, shared memories, values, and mythos of an entire international and intergenerational culture. WMGSO showcases this music that largely escapes recognition in professional circles.

The result: classical music with a 21st-century twist, drawing non-gamers to the artistic merits of video game soundtracks and attracting new audiences to orchestral concert halls.



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About Our Music Director



Jamin Morden attended Northwestern University, dual majoring in French Horn Performance and Music Education. After he completed a master's degree in French Horn Performance at Yale University, he moved to Maryland to teach instrumental music in Montgomery County Public Schools. Jamin is also involved with Symphony of the Potomac and the Maryland Band Directors' Band.

About Our Choir Director



Anthony Khong is an active musician, educator, and arts administrator and is native to the D.C. area. Prior to his work in community choirs, he served as a chorus teacher in Fairfax County. Anthony holds a master's in Arts Management from George Mason University, and a bachelor's in Music Education from James Madison University, where he studied voice and clarinet.

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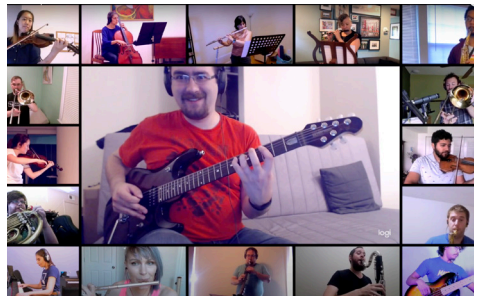
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In Memoriam

Every member of an orchestra brings something unique. Not just through their instrument, but through their energy, perspective, and presence. JP Zavodny brought his voice through the acoustic and electric guitars, adding a sound that stood out and reminded us how diverse and dynamic orchestral music can be.

When he was with us, it was clear that this group meant something real to him. You could see it in the way he played, the way he listened, and the way he connected through music. That connection, however brief or scattered across time, left a mark.

We may not have all known JP deeply, but we shared the same stage, the same goals, and the same joy of playing together. And, in the end, that's what music does. It unites us, even in silence. We carry forward his part in our ensemble, grateful for the time he shared with us.



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START!

Scars of Time

Chrono Cross (1999)

Yasunori Mitsuda

Arr. Anne Marie Porter

Angelus Errare: “Where angels lose their way.” At the beginning of *Chrono Cross*, the protagonist Serge is suddenly swept through a dimensional rift in space-time, transporting him to an alternate universe, where love, sorrow, and FATE await him. “Scars of Time,” the opening title of the game, captures the mystery, excitement, and romance of starting a new and epic time-traveling adventure.

As “Scars of Time” begins to play, the following poem appears onscreen:

*What was the start of all this?
When did the cogs of fate begin to turn?
Perhaps it is impossible to grasp that answer now,
From deep within the flow of time.*

*But for a certainty, back then
We loved so many yet hated so much
We hurt others and were hurt ourselves.*

*Yet even then we ran like the wind
Whilst our laughter echoed
Under cerulean skies..*

This arrangement consists of two songs from the game. The beginning features “Garden of the Gods,” which plays at the game’s start menu; then, the piece moves on to “Scars of Time,” the soundtrack for the opening cinematic.

Witchyworld and Mr. Patch

Banjo-Tooie (2000)

Grant Kirkhope

Arr. Alex Song

Banjo-Tooie is the second game in the *Banjo-Kazooie* series. The game takes place two years after Gruntilda (a wicked witch with magical spells and the main antagonist of the series) is defeated by the two protagonists: Banjo, a brown bear wearing yellow shorts, a black belt, and a blue backpack; and Kazooie (Banjo's sidekick), a red-crested breegull who mostly resides in Banjo's backpack. As in *Banjo-Kazooie*, *Banjo-Tooie* features nine worlds, one overworld/hub world, and one starter world. Witchyworld, the third level in *Banjo-Tooie*, is a rundown, dilapidated theme park featuring dangerous rides and attractions. The arrangement thus opens with a carousel waltz—but it is obvious from the slightly sinister tone and instrumentation that this isn't a place to relax!

The boss of this level, Mr. Patch, is a large, inflatable T-Rex covered in colorful, mismatched patches. His theme, four brief fragments put together and reminiscent of Witchyworld's own theme, evokes this patched-up nature. To Mr. Patch's dismay, Banjo and Kazooie discover that these patches are his weakness, and after the duo fires some impressive shots, Mr. Patch deflates and flies out of sight: the boss is defeated, and the duo scores a Jiggy.

The Princess

Slay the Princess (2023)

Brandon Boone

Arr. David Crisler

"You're on a path in the woods, and at the end of that path is a cabin. And in the basement of that cabin is a Princess. You're here to slay her. If you don't, it will be the end of the world." So begins the narrator of the 2023 horror visual novel *Slay the Princess*, speaking over the title track, "The Princess."

While the details of the plot are best left unspoiled, the game's branching paths ensure the player experiences this narration many times over the course of a full playthrough. Each time, the music expresses beauty, mystery, and melancholy, while leaving open space for the story that is about to unfold.

Yoshi's Railroad

Super Mario World (1990); *Yoshi's Story* (1997)

Kazumi Totaka & Koji Kondo

Arr. Thomas Ashcom

Yoshi first appeared as a sidekick in *Super Mario World*, then continued to appear in several of his own titles. Games in the *Yoshi* series have modest gameplay, but lots of color and vibrancy. As these games are tailored to very young gamers, the melodies are highly recognizable. This solo piano arrangement plays around with some of Yoshi's earliest themes, starting with the menu music from *Yoshi's Story* and evolving into a graceful variant of the memorable "Athletic Theme." Fun fact: the original composer not only wrote the music that would define Yoshi for years to come, but literally voiced the character as well.

This arrangement is performed by Thomas Ashcom on the piano.

I Am Gonna Claw (Out Your Eyes Then Drown You to Death)

Darren Korb

Hades II (2024)

Arr. Samantha Ballard, Transcription by Mollie Cave

Hades II is a rogue-like game that pulls its story beats heavily from Homer's *Odyssey*. The game brings together gods, sea monsters, and legendary heroes from a wide array of Greek mythology—some friends and some foes—to tell an entirely new tale about the plight of the Princess of the Underworld against the Titan of Time. Among the obstacles in our heroine's way are Scylla and her Sirens, women known for luring sailors to watery graves with their doomed chorus. In this interactive and gamified reimagining of these mythical figures, the Sirens' cursed performance underscores a theatrical boss battle where the music isn't just setting the scene, but is also part of the arsenal.

True to the characters who perform it, the original version of "I Am Gonna Claw" by Korb is an unapologetic hard-rock anthem about revenge and, in Scylla's words, "comes from a real personal place." Unlike the version heard in the game, this performance features instruments one would hear if joining Odysseus on his journey. By choosing to arrange this song for voice and harp, Ballard advocates for a more tactful interpretation, trading raucous defiance for graceful disdain and boisterous rage for smoldering vitriol. As you listen to the sirens' song, "let the music fill your soul and the brine fill your lungs!"

This song is dedicated to those who inspired it. May you drown in the River Styx.

"I Am Gonna Claw" is performed by Mollie Cave on vocals and Kara Welch on harp.

*You
Can't stay away
Seems every day
You keep coming back here*

*Now it's plain to see
You wanna be
Under the sea
With your favorite sirens*

*You're so obsessed with me
Not that I can blame you for it
I would be too
If I were you
Too bad you must
Die now*

*I am gonna claw out your eyes
then drown you to death
I am gonna claw out your eyes
then drown you to death*

*You
You're such a mess
That little dress
Looks like it's from the garbage*

*Just like that hair
Don't mean to stare
Were you aware
Looks like something died there*

*That's why you're jealous of me
Not that I can blame you for it
I would be too If I were you
Too bad you must
Die now*

*I am gonna claw out your eyes then drown you to death
I am gonna claw out your eyes then drown you
I am gonna claw out your eyes then drown you to death
I am gonna claw out your eyes then drown you to death*

*Pinched by a crab
Strangled by an octopus
Bitten by a shark and
Stung by a jellyfish*

*Poked by an urchin
Stabbed by a marlin
Sawed by a sawfish
and Crushed by Charybdis and*

*Slapped by a bass
Sliced by a sturgeon
Clobbered by a charp and
Stomped by hippocampus and*

*Smacked by a knucklehead and
Poisoned by a scuffer and
Burned by a slavug and
Swallowed by a whale*

*Drown
Drown*

The Light We Cast

Everybody's Gone to the Rapture (2015)

Jessica Curry

Lyrics: Dan Pinchbeck

Everybody's Gone to the Rapture is a short experience, akin to an interactive novel, in which you explore a small English village whose inhabitants have all mysteriously vanished. As you follow floating lights through empty homes and gardens, telephones and radios replay conversations, recordings, and broadcasts that weave together to tell the stories of the people who once lived here.

"The Light We Cast" is the solemn hymn that scores the game's final chapter. Though the lyrics are sprinkled throughout this final chapter in various found recordings, the full song only ever plays during the credits, after the player has experienced the entire game and can begin to draw their own conclusions about the mystery of what the titular "Rapture" is and what it means.

*Now everything has come to rest.
The end has come and I am not afraid.
We travel on towards a new beginning.
We slip away and we are unafraid.*

*We're born apart, the waters carry us.
An endless dark, the sovereign galaxies.
The light we cast creates a bridge
that guides the way across the ageless deep.*

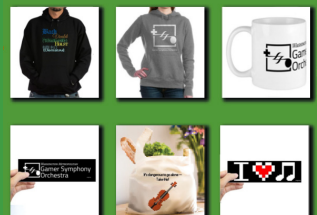
*I see them all, I see them dancing
in the endless numbers of the light.*

*I love you in the ebbing of the tide.
I love you in the quiet immanence.
I love you in the patterned butterfly.*

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Mado Kara Mieru (Through the Window I See)

Christopher Tin

From the Song Cycle “Calling All Dawns” (2009)

WMGSO Orchestration: Jamin Morden

After the composition of “Baba Yetu” in 2005 as the main theme for the game *Civilization IV*, Christopher Tin wrote the song cycle *Calling All Dawns* by isolating motifs from “Baba Yetu,” varying them and developing them individually and together, in a wide variety of musical styles from around the world. The lyrics, congruent with the styles, are in 12 different languages for the 12 parts of the cycle. “Mado Kara Mieru” is the second song in the cycle.

In 2011, *Calling All Dawns* won a Grammy for Best Classical Crossover Album, and “Baba Yetu” won a Grammy for Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocalists, becoming the first ever piece of video game music to win a Grammy.

Within every traditional Japanese haiku is a “kigo”—a word associating the poem with a particular season. “Mado Kara Mieru” is a rondo of five such haiku (by Hattori Ransetsu, Yamaguchi Sodo, Kaga no Chiyo, and Masaoka Shiki) corresponding to spring, summer, autumn, winter, and the return of spring. Each refrain is conceived as being sung by vocalists in a different stage of life—a child for spring, a young woman for summer, a middle-aged woman for autumn, and an elderly man for winter. Following an extended instrumental “transfiguration,” the return of the child’s voice at the end signifies the return of spring, thus completing the cycle of life, death, and rebirth as reflected through the changing of the seasons.

The soloists for “Mado Kara Mieru” are Anne Marie Porter, Tracy Flanders, and Jismeri Castillo.

SPRING:

窓から見える
輝く梅一輪
一輪ほどの
その暖かさ

Mado kara mieru
kagayaku ume ichirin
ichirin hodo no
sono atatakasa

Through the window, I see
one shining plum blossom
that warmth of
one blossom

SUMMER:

窓から見える
まぶしい目には青葉
山ホトトギス
ああ初鰯

Mado kara mieru
mabushii me ni wa aoba
yama hototogisu
aa hatsugatsuo

Through the window, I see
radiant greenery for the eyes
a mountain cuckoo
ah, the first bonito

AUTUMN:

窓から見える
さわやか秋風の
山を回るや
あの鐘の声

Mado kara mieru
sawayaka akikaze no
yama o mawaru ya
ano kane no koe

Through the window, I see
the refreshing autumn wind
churns in the mountains
and over there—a bell’s voice

BRIDGE:

余命
いくばくかある
今宵はかなし
命短

Yomei
ikubaku ka aru
koyoi wakanashi
inochi mijikashi

My remaining days
how much more is there to live?
the night is sad
life is short

WINTER:

窓に見える
冷えた雪の家に
寝ていると思う
寝てばかりにて

Mado kara mieru
hieta yuki no ie ni
nete iru to omou
nete bakari nite

Through the window, I see
cold snow all around the house
in bed I think
only of this

SPRING:

窓から見える
楽しいちはつの
一輪白し
この春の暮れ

Mado kara mieru
tanoshii chihatsu no
ichirin shiroshi
kono haru no kure

Through the window, I see
this cheerful iris
a lone, white flower
in this springtime dusk

Mihaly

Ace Combat 7: Skies Unknown (2019)

Keiki Kobayashi

Arr. David Crisler

In the combat flight simulation game *Ace Combat 7: Skies Unknown*, Mihaly Shilage is a fearsome rival ace pilot who duels the player multiple times over the course of the game. Though Mihaly is heir to the throne of a small annexed kingdom, he shows no interest in his birthright, insisting that his kingdom is the sky. When war breaks out, he returns to the combat despite his old age, supported by an evil scientist who uses his combat data to train autonomous drones that become the game's final antagonists. When the player defeats Mihaly near the end of the game, he finally realizes the errors of his ways and asks the player to stop the global chaos his drones have created.

Mihaly's side of the game's story is slowly revealed over the course of the game, and this arrangement is a journey through that story, built upon various tracks featuring his theme: "Two Pairs," "Gunther Bay," "Sol Squadron," and "Archange." These tracks show his compelling combination of mystery, danger, and dignity, setting up the stakes for the high-octane final dogfight. This arrangement especially develops two melodies associated with Mihaly to lead to a payoff that feels authentic to his narrative development.

In writing for the *Ace Combat* series, Keiki Kobayashi uses an orchestral instrumentation that is very similar to that featured in this arrangement, except with significant electronic elements and no saxophones. The arranger has purposefully stayed with the instrumentation at large, adding in the saxophones to broaden the color palette and compensate for the unused electronics. As such, the saxophones are played classically, intended to blend, while the brass takes the lead.

Structurally, the arrangement develops from the beginning with very subtle color shifts, first with dynamic changes (or non-changes), then with a slow buildup

of expanding instrumentation, all the way to a final “dogfight” between the choir and the instrumentalists.

<i>Protege nos qui</i>	<i>Protect us who</i>
<i>Vitam frugalem agimus</i>	<i>Live a frugal life</i>
<i>O terra nostra</i>	<i>Oh land of ours</i>
<i>Dona nobis perpetua bona</i>	<i>Grant us perpetual good things</i>
<i>O calida lux quae regulat</i>	<i>Oh warm light which regulates</i>
<i>Matutinam quietem</i>	<i>The morning rest</i>
<i>Dormientem illuminat</i>	<i>Illuminate the sleeping</i>
<i>O caelum nostrum</i>	<i>Oh heaven of ours</i>

<i>Protege nos qui</i>	<i>Protect us who</i>
<i>Vitam frugalem agimus</i>	<i>Live a frugal life</i>
<i>Dona nobis perpetua bona</i>	<i>Grant us perpetual good things</i>
<i>O terra nostra</i>	<i>Oh land of ours</i>
<i>Protege nos qui</i>	<i>Protect us who</i>
<i>Vitam frugalem agimus</i>	<i>Live a frugal life</i>
<i>Dona nobis perpetua bona</i>	<i>Grant us perpetual good things</i>
<i>O caelum nostrum</i>	<i>Oh heaven of ours</i>

<i>O terra aeterna qua pulcher</i>	<i>Oh eternal land where the beautiful</i>
<i>Sol matutinus oritur</i>	<i>Morning sun rises</i>

PAUSE

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so far?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ Of course!

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LEVEL 2 – START!

Guardia Millennial Fair

Chrono Trigger (1995)

Yasunori Mitsuda

Arr. Jer Roque & Dan Serino

The Kingdom of Guardia is celebrating its thousand-year anniversary. Join the throngs in the fairground! Challenge the marvelous singing robot! Find a lost pet cat! Eat an old man's lunch! Meet your friends! Make new friends! Try this amazing technological contraption that makes portals—oooops.

This arrangement has its roots in Jer Roque's solo piano arrangement of the Super Nintendo original, which extensively reharmonized and modified the groove to genre-bend the presentation of the Millennial Fair background music from an English country folk tune into the language of jazz. The expanded orchestration features a jazz orchestra consisting of saxophones, trumpets, French horns, trombones, piano, guitar, bass, drums, and auxiliary percussion.

WMGSO is proud to feature Jer Roque as a special guest performer on the piano for this performance.

Chrono Trigger Symphonic Suite

Chrono Trigger (1995)

Yasunori Mitsuda

Arr. Jamin Morden

Lyrics by Zeynep Dilli, Jamin Morden & Ashleah Younker

All Notes by Jamin Morden

Chrono Trigger is an extraordinary game. With character designs by Akira Toriyama (of *Dragonball* fame), supervision by Yuji Horii (creator of the *Dragon Quest* series), designs from Hironobu Sakaguchi (creator of *Final Fantasy*), and some(!) music by Nobuo Uematsu, the “Dream Team” assembled by Kazuhiko Aoki absolutely hit it out of the park. People playing both at release as well as today discover a timeless classic, full of memorable characters, shocking twists, and an absolutely spectacular soundtrack. Composer Yasunori Mitsuda provided the lion's share of the soundtrack, which is crammed end to end with beautiful, powerful, and iconic pieces that are still, after three decades, performed, rearranged, and loved widely.

Though I would hate to spoil anything for anyone, the game is 30 years old, and understanding its plot contributes to understanding this Symphonic Suite as a whole. Therefore, the remaining notes in this concert program contain overarching plot details spanning the entire game.

Chrono Trigger follows a group of adventurers as they travel through time to prevent the destruction of their world by a parasitic monster called Lavos. Lavos emerges in 1999 AD to devastate the planet, and from there, humanity and the planet begin to die a slow, agonizing death. Starting in 1000 AD, our main character Crono travels through time and space and meets and recruits a tomboy princess, a

brilliant inventor, a robot from the ruined future, a polymorphed frog knight, and a prehistoric tribal chieftain to join together to prevent the devastation of Lavos and change a future that resists being changed.

This game and soundtrack have played a very important role in my life. This performance is the culmination of 30 years of playing the game, studying the music, transcribing the music, and finally having the confidence to arrange the music. This arrangement is deeply personal for me, and I hope I'm able to share with you all some of my love and admiration for this very excellent soundtrack.

While the game contains many, many great musical themes from which several symphonic suites of at least this length could be arranged, I have chosen to focus on the characters. Our first two movements introduce us to the characters, the third describes the climactic battle for the fate of the world, and the fourth is the bittersweet farewell at the end of the adventure, while looking forward to something new.

Mvmt. 1: Prelude and Main Theme

Chrono Trigger's title screen is iconic, all the more so for its musical accompaniment. Though composed only of an introduction (a clock ticking) followed by three chords, Mitsuda uses this germ of musical material liberally throughout the soundtrack. The first chord strikes, then we step up to the second chord, before jumping down to the third. In this arrangement, we get a brief glimpse of the various people who will take up our cause throughout the game through short excerpts of their character themes. We'll learn more about them in the second movement!

The main theme (Often called "Crono's Theme") is an exemplar of the form. Bombastic, heroic, and exciting, the syncopated melodies and accompaniment constantly push the tune forward. The harmony throughout blends functional, expected chords with unexpected sonorities that in the hands of a less talented composer might sound out of place. One such sonority is the "suspended" voicing Mitsuda uses throughout the soundtrack, first heard in our three-chord motif in the title screen. This arrangement adheres fairly closely to the original form, with one brief dalliance to serve as a rest or palate-cleanser before barrelling head-first into the conclusion.

*New friends, new goals,
New adventure through time
New friends and a new goals
A brand new adventure
This will be our time now
This will be our work now
We will open new paths to times far away*

*Oh, dare to dream, with dreams we gain
The power to reshape our fate
Go on, look up, go on, to open a new path!*

*We will choose to try defying fate
Hand in hand we fight!
And when our time ends
Whether now we will part
Or meet again or will not,
Our fate is ours to create
We travel on ahead
To the future that we will make!*

Mvmt. 2: Sound Test at the End of Time

In *Chrono Trigger*, the “End of Time” area serves as a hub where characters not currently in your party hang out until you call on them. When you do, their associated theme plays. As a kid, I used to hang around here and walk from person to person just to hear their themes: a kind of “Sound Test” (for anyone old enough to remember those). The structure of this movement consists of a “promenade” theme (the theme for End of Time) that serves as the intro, outro, and transition between the character themes. This structure draws direct inspiration from Mussorgsky’s “Pictures at an Exhibition” as well as a medley WMGSO has performed, “Town Pictures at an Exhibition,” arranged by our former member Tyler Zimmerman.

With one exception, the character themes are played in the order in which you can recruit the characters. Keen listeners or fans of the game may notice other related themes and ideas popping up during the performance!

*For my past regrets
I know what to do
Learn, make, help my friends
And build the future with you*

*I'm not the One
I lack the Badge
I lack the Sword
I'm not the One
They brought the Badge
They brought the Sword
Now I must choose
Be the hero to enact my will!*

*Our world needs me and my strength
My Sword in hand I now reclaim my name!*

*My name is Glenn,
My sword will break mountains!
I am the One*

Was not my call
To take part in battle
Nor to protect or defend
She fixed me up
And gave me the choice
To stand with those I call friends

If I help fight, take arms
I may not have a place
In the future we make
I am a part of all living things
With the forest I will help grow

Fight for my friends, for my people
For the planet, it's the right thing to do
Fight the monster, stop it sucking
Up the planet like a soup
Fight the monster, punch the darkness
In the face to have some fun and do right too!

This is my regret
Hid from my own strength
Sister lost in time
Could not save her
Now my sole goal is to find her

Find her
Must find her
Or avenge her
I'll burn all there is

If history is to change let it change
If the world should be destroyed, so be it
Oh, if history is to change let it change
If I am to die, I must simply laugh

We have gathered at the end of time
Our haven

Look ahead

Mvmt. 3: The Future Refused to Change

“The Future Refused to Change” is one of the most iconic sentences from *Chrono Trigger*. Seen if your party attempts to fight the final boss and fails, there is a weight and gravity to these words that hit me like a truck when I was younger. Depicting the final confrontation of the game, this movement takes cues from the original soundtrack by interweaving motifs from the main theme into the fight. “World Revolution,” the first tune we hear, is a pulse-pounding action tune featuring brass, synth, and found percussion. Quotes from the main theme, interrupted each time by material from “World Revolution,” show that the heroes have hope: a real struggle is occurring, and our heroes stand a chance. It will be a close call, though, as the monster responds with its own theme, intent on dragging the future to its original gruesome conclusion.

“Last Battle” abandons more traditional instruments to double down on synthesizers and twinkling bell-like sounds. Perhaps this is reaching, but I have always imagined these bell-like sounds as suggesting outer space, indicating that your conflict has cosmic implications. After all, failure here will allow Lavos to send its spawn throughout the cosmos. Mitsuda ends each loop with mighty reprisals of the initial *Chrono Trigger* motif from the title screen. As the beast crashes wildly through time in its final moments, we may be tentatively optimistic: for the first time since our discovery of the planets’ dire fate, the future is uncertain.

*Lavos burns all
Takes all uses
Lavos eats all
Brooks no truces*

*We saw, we knew the whole world
burns if we don’t stop it
What then, if we fail to stop it?*

*The future burns lest we prevail
We must prevail
The world burns if we fail
We must not fail*

*All our history and art, all we have worked for
Human progress and the passions of the heart
Every plant and every animal shall not feed the beast*

*We won’t have it!
We must fight it!*

*The future may refuse to change
We'll make the world change!*

Dies irae!

Day of wrath

*Sixty-five million years ago
We witnessed the red star fall from heaven*

*We will not give in nor break
The future we will make*

Look ahead

*Though the future may be unknown,
There's a chance to make a brighter tomorrow
We can change tomorrow*

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Mvmt. 4: To Good Friends, and the Future We Make Together

As with many great adventures, once the threat to the world is ended, it is time to go home. While the “canon” ending of *Chrono Trigger* is unambiguously positive, there is nonetheless a bittersweet element as everyone returns to their time period of origin, unlikely to meet again. “To Good Friends,” also known as “Faraway Promise,” is the version of Marle’s theme that plays as the party says their farewells. Orchestral accompaniment reinforces the music box theme in the original to drive home that the adventure really has concluded. While it might be bittersweet in the moment, not all partings are permanent—and even if they are, we are improved for having made such wonderful friends.

“To Far Away Times” is the ending credits music and is my personal favorite “end credits” tune ever composed. The primary melody shares aspects of both Marle’s theme as well as the main theme, which makes it sound familiar while still being novel. All throughout the game, Mitsuda has used this three-chord motif; striking the chord, rising one step, then falling back down. Only here, when the main melody of the song comes in (played by piccolo following a piano solo), does Mitsuda resolve this motif to an unambiguous, major chord sonority. During a 30th anniversary livestream, Mitsuda remarked that the title screen chords resolve in a way to imply time moving backwards (with the bassline resolving to a “wrong” note), while here, the resolution of these three chords, with a proper bassline, represents time moving forwards, towards what is next.

This movement features Isabella Umberger as the vocal soloist and Sara Coleman, Hayley Bell, Kyle G. Jamolin, and Michael Ohr as the vocal quartet.

Look ahead

*We meet perhaps by chance
New friends we find for the journey
Now there’s so much to be done,
So much we can learn from one another
Come together to build
The future we wish to see*

*The road winds ever on
And we have burdens to carry
But I’ll carry yours; you’ll hold mine
Together we hope, we know,
We find, we learn, the future is
What we will make it to be*

*It can be so strange to come to the end
Of the road to find that we cannot know
What will now become of what we have built together
Will it stand or melt like the snow?*

*So we look and we wait, and we hope,
For we know that it was not done alone*

*It's time to say farewell
We knew it would come one day
Yet I swear though we must now part
I'll treasure the times we had,
The joy, the pain and in the end
I hold hope that we'll meet again*

*I place my hopes in the future we made
And in the end
I hold hope that we'll meet again*

Look ahead

*Feel no regret as we part ways
The bonds we forged
The time we shared with us stays
We grow, we change, and we adapt
We find what's next ahead on the way*

*Look ahead
Say farewell
No regrets
Now look ahead*

*Don't fear good bye
I bear you with me
Here's to you, my dear friends
And to a future we make*

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