

East to West - Production Notes **by Gary Rhodes**

East to West is a worship musical in the truest sense of the Word. It's a testimony of the redemptive power of God in all of our lives; it's a time of reflection on the cross and meaningful scriptures, a celebration of the resurrection and a proclamation - looking forward to the 2nd coming of Christ! He's coming back!

With that in mind, there are many ways to present this musical; I will present one way here which is how it was presented at our church. There is no special set needed although we did use media as is available with the musical and lighting as is suggested here. There are times for a testimony (or more than one) and for ministry. If you are presenting this to the community at large as a tool for evangelism, there is a place for an invitation; if it is for your church family (ie... on a Sunday morning service), there is a place for communion.

Worship Leader(s): You may choose one worship leader (W.L.) or several. Whichever you choose it is important that they have a countenance that communicates the song they are leading and all lines, lyrics are memorized without hesitation. By the way – as you know – the countenance of your choir is half of their ministry ☺ Any song lead-ins need to feel like they are being spoken from the person's heart and not read.

Orchestra: The orchestra should be prepared to segue from one song to the next immediately with little or no pause to keep a flow to the service. If they should miss an intro, make sure and communicate where the vocals begin. They should each have a stand light.

Congregational Singing: You may choose to have the congregation sing on all of the songs except for “East to West” and “By His Wounds” or you may choose to have them sing on only certain songs. If you have them sing on all but two (as we did at our church) you will want to introduce most of them before the Sunday of this presentation so that they can enter in with all their hearts. The available accompaniment DVD provides lyrics for congregational participation.

OPENING: This can be done well with track or with orchestra. The orchestra arrangements are especially geared to work well with church orchestra and have already been refined in the church (NOTE: Additional “contemporary brass” charts are available for free to those who have ordered the orchestration by contacting Gary Rhodes: garrhodes@aol.com). As people enter the sanctuary, lights are mid, project “East to West” logo on the screens or on the back wall; a CD (or organ or solo instrument with accompaniment) should be playing of some of your favorite Easter songs - i.e. “In Christ Alone”, “How Beautiful”, “Lamb of God”, “Jesus Paid it All”, “At the Cross”, “Easter Song”, “How Deep the Father's Love”, “When I Survey” and others. As the time for the service comes, spot the Pastor (or Worship Leader) as he brings a welcome to all those who have gathered. Let the people greet one another.

1. **ALL BECAUSE OF JESUS:** At the close of the welcome, lights come down in the sanctuary with a spot on the soloist as the orchestra begins the intro which is a vamp while the worship leader exhorts the people to remain standing and to sing with the choir and praise team. As the intro builds, bring lights to full on the choir and orchestra. The choir leads out in claps on 2 & 4 around measure 109 through to the end – then lead out in a clap offering to the Lord as the last note is held. Lights remain full and spot the worship leader at the end of the song as he leads into next song. During the last few measures of this piece project the text of **2 Corinthians 5:21** (included on the accompaniment DVD).
2. **JESUS MESSIAH:** As applause to the Lord begins to fade, intro to this song should begin. Lights stay full throughout this song. Again – at the end of this song – your choir should feel free to lead out in expressing their worship to the Lord through their countenance, praying, openly lifting a hand to the Lord and even joining the congregation in applauding the Lord (which is what happened just from the energy in the sanctuary focused on the Lord at our church). In addition to lyrics on the screen, we projected Names of the Lord (Messiah, Blessed Redeemer, Emmanuel etc...) on our back wall.
3. **GREAT IS YOUR GLORY:** The intro to this song should begin ASAP after the cutoff to the previous song. Lights come down to mid on choir and orchestra with a spot on the W.L. You may choose to have a girl soloist on verse one (and she could be the W.L. throughout the song) or women in unison. Whichever you choose, the conductor should direct the whole choir and congregation to join in singing “amen” each time on the verse. Congregation (if joining in singing on the 1st three songs should remain standing). As the song builds into the bridge – lights should gradually come up full on choir and orchestra. I want to encourage you to do this song with your congregation – it has been one of our church family’s favorites! Lights begin to come down during the outro to this song. Note that the last note ends on an F chord. The next song begins in F minor – so there is just a breath between the two songs. (cut off / and / start) Congregation is seated at the end of this song.
4. **EAST TO WEST:** Lights should gradually go to dark during this intro and spot the soloist (then duet). Lights come up dim on choir around measure 29 – build during the bridge and up to mid by measure 61. On ms 76 – again lights gradually go dark with a spot on the duet. During the last few measures of this song project the scripture text of **Psalms 103:11-12** on the screen (included on the accompaniment DVD).

TESTIMONY / MINISTRY: As last note is held, spot fades on soloist and a spot is on the testimony (there may be more than one); the keyboard (synth with Rhodes patch, of course ☺ - or piano) begins the underscore. The underscore has been written so that it can go on for a while if needed (feel free to add other material in Ab if needed). A time of ministry may follow the testimonies in which prayer teams are available and you may extend this time by adding songs

or hymns. We sang “Still” and “Come to Jesus” with just piano accompaniment so that nothing competes with the prayer that is going on. Our prayer time was based on God’s love and redemptive power no matter what the circumstances are. We had people come forward to receive prayer and also to pray for other family members and friends. We also had people praying in groups at their seats; others joined the choir singing over the auditorium.

- 5. AT THE CROSS:** Lights are still dark as this intro begins, spot on soloist/ W.L. Lights up dim on choir at ms. 11 to join on the repeat. If you are doing this live – you might consider having the orchestra vamp instrumentally from ms. 52-53; on the eve of teaching this song at Hillsong Church, one of their key youth leaders had passed away suddenly and tragically. The last verse was written in his honor. Encourage the band and orchestra to emulate the recording – in that there are places where this song goes from soft to huge in a very short amount of time. Lights should build and come down with the volume of the music on this (i.e. - come up for ms. 35, down for ms. 50, up for ms. 66, gradually down to dim at ms. 76 to the end). During the last few measures (ms. 78) project the scripture text of **Romans 8:38-39** (included on the accompaniment DVD). This song ends in the same key as the next song; the cut-off for this piece should be the downbeat of the next.

- 6. JESUCRISTO:** This is a powerful song of worship with the congregation; it will be easy for them to catch on. Lights are dim the first chorus, mid the second and full at the modulation. Then at ms. 82 – gradually bring back down to mid then dim again. At ms. 92 **Isaiah 53:4-6** is projected on the screen (again included on the accompaniment DVD) as the orchestra plays softly. There is just a breath between the cut-off of this song and the next. (same keys again ☺)

COMMUNION: If you are including communion – this is a good place to have it. We added songs like “In Christ Alone”, “How Deep the Father’s Love” and “When I Survey” specifically for this time. All were congregational. We then very naturally led into the next song of the musical.

- 7. BY HIS WOUNDS:** It would be great if one of your guitar players had a mandolin for this song – it adds a lot of color. This is done with mixed trio and choir. Dark on choir with spot on solos/trio until ms. 30. Congregation joins in on “Nothing But the Blood”. This is in the key of G, the following song begins in G minor and is set up for a segue – maybe 2-3 seconds in between.

INVITATION: If giving an invitation, this would be a good time to do it, however, if doing both Communion and Invitation, combine that to be in the same portion of the service.

- 8. HE IS LORD:** This is a song I heard at a worship conference at the Cove (Billy Graham Training Center) led by Darlene Zschech. As she described it, I could sense how powerful it would be in a worship setting. It begins with a solo (W.L.) with women— so dim on the choir with a spot on the soloist as it begins. Build to mid at ms. 30. At the second chorus (ms. 31) have the congregation stand if they are singing with you and begin a banner processional – we used a single banner with “He Is Lord” on one side beginning with that facing the congregation. Then as the music gets big at ms. 48 into the huge instrumental section (big brass, big bass drum, timpani etc…) – the banner is turned around with “HE’S COMING BACK” on the flip side. The banner carrier thrusts the banner into the air and the choir leads in a clap offering to the Lord. As the music comes down, lights gradually to mid, banner is lowered but stays in place (he may want to show the “He Is Lord” portion again); then as music builds, build the lights. Again at ms. 73, the banner with “HE’S COMING BACK” is thrust into the air through to the last note. We again joined the congregation in applauding the Lord at this point.
- 9. HAPPY DAY:** As applause is fading on previous song, the W.L. (or one of your PASTORS) comes and leads out exhorting the congregation as they lead into “Happy Day”. This is a huge moment and the person doing this should be someone who can really communicate the excitement of Jesus’ resurrection and 2nd coming as something to celebrate. Right from the beginning of this song lights bump to full and bright with spot on W.L. You’re going to want to applaud the Lord and the end of this song ☺
- 10. HALLELUJAH WE WILL SING:** The same person who led the charge on the last song should lead the proclamation of scripture to begin this one. The choir should join in boldly. Drum corps and pipe(s) be ready to move into place at ms. 99. Lights stay full throughout this song. As we build into the bridge at ms. 105-106, if you have drum corps/pipes on stage keep lights full and spot them if appropriate, if out in the sanctuary, bring the house lights up. They should really “bring it” at ms. 107 to the end. Also consider adding organ from ms. 137 (sneaking in) to the end. NOTE: As some Highland pipes have a tuning problem, work on this with them in advance; in some cases you may be better off going with an uilleann pipe (having them play in the top octave and mic it), but in other cases the moment is so big if you are anywhere close to the same tuning universe it is worth it ☺). As this song concludes – the congregation probably will applaud – again – it would be great for the choir and orchestra to join in directing the applause to the Lord. – If after that, you as the conductor want to recognize the choir – their hard work, and the orchestra – having them stand – that is fine too.