

Full Score

L.A. DIERKER

FOREST FANTASY

FOUR BAGATELLES FOR WOODWIND QUARTET

NELSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

2023

ABOUT FOREST FANTASY

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(10:14 minutes)

This collection of four short works were composed as part of an ongoing collaboration with visual artist Frankie Brackley Tolman. Our shared life in the Monadnock Region of New Hampshire is our inspiration to create art meant to convey the beauty which surrounds us; she in her paintings and I through music and film.

Four of her paintings, and the natural world they referenced, were chosen to film and as a focus for music compositions: *Consolations Of The Forest (Solace)*, *Life Tree (Solitude)*, *Senescent Ferns (Staccatissimo)*, and *Autumn in the North (Sojourn)*.

The musical details for each of the bagatelles (e.g. time signature, articulation, notation, dynamics) were selected with the compositional focus on the paintings and the world they portray.

Solace is composed to convey the joy experienced when immersed in the foliage of the fall forest as it exuberantly, in the brilliance of color against the deep blue sky, affirms the blessings of life in all its fullness. The ABA form, expresses the journey from the forest into Frankie Brackley Tolman's painting, and then a return to the forest. (3:08')

Solitude speaks to approaching winter, when the forest reveals its solitary self, now barren before the onslaught of ice and snow. This poignancy is expressed by the oboe which plays a slow, expressive melody to begin and end the piece. As each instrument, alone, in "solitude", continues that simple theme- flute, clarinet, bassoon- the dynamic range is contained to a soft quiet range befitting the mood of contemplation and reflection; an awareness of the oncoming darkness of December. (2:37')

Staccatissimo creates a completely different mood with its unexpected tempo change, staccato articulations, abrupt alternation in direction of movement, wide dynamic range, and a tonality built on permutations of a chromatic tone row (12 tone serialism). This contrast reflects the abrupt change of season, winter to summer; solitary barren landscape to the lush green fullness of summer's forest floor. The playful interaction between the four wind instruments is paused at moments, so that other "voices" of summer-cricket, bees, birds-can be heard. (2:11')

Sojourn returns to the wind swept landscape of late autumn and with that return, the music again features a melodic line introduced by a solo oboe which continues throughout the bagatelle. As each instrument solos it carries the theme forward, and modulates from the initial key of C through F to end in Eb, the key initially established in *Solace*. Each solo journey (time signature 3/4) ends with all joining, in this "new" place (a sojourn) for a pause (time signature 4/4); a pause, to gather and shelter from the buffeting of the north wind. (2:14')

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SOLACE

L.A.Dierker

♩ = 90

Flute *mp* *p*

Oboe

Clarinet in B \flat *p* *mf*

Bassoon *mf*

6

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *p*

Bsn. *p*

12

Fl. *mf* *p*

Ob. *p*

Cl. *mf* *p*

Bsn. *mf* *p* *pp*