

Piece of Mind

for
Bb clarinet, F horn, viola, & cello

Ryan Suleiman
(2021)

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ca. 7'

Commissioned by American Wild Ensemble, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Landscape Music, and Michigan Technological University Department of Visual and Performing Arts to Commemorate the 2022 Bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted.

Program Note

Frederick Law Olmsted is considered the “father of landscape architecture” in the United States. Though not exactly a household name, his impact on his country was profound and his aesthetic was visionary in the nineteenth century, designing the first urban parks, including Central Park, Emerald Necklace, Stanford University’s campus, and many more. Contrary to the European aesthetic, Olmsted was keen on “listening” to nature. Though a park is by definition human-made, his designs focused on local landscapes and allowed them to be themselves. In crowded, noisy, stressful city-environments, he believed we all deserved a place to stop and take in nature.

Olmsted’s home and office, Fairsted (Brookline, MA), is where his firm operated, and this location – a park and creative studio – provides the inspiration for *Piece of Mind*, which was commissioned by Landscape Music. The piece is about stillness, contemplation, the creative process, and above all, letting sounds and silences simply be themselves.

- Ryan Suleiman

Performance Notes

As you can see from the program note, stillness and mindfulness are critical elements of the music, and therefore, critical in performance. Though I know it may sometimes feel awkward or uncomfortable to hold long notes without dynamic embellishment or silences that seem “too long,” I ask you to lean into the feeling, because it is critical to the interpretation. The goal is a kind of joyful austerity. To that end, I ask for minimal use of vibrato throughout.

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Piece of Mind

Very slow, spacious - do not rush the held notes!

♩ = c. 48

Ryan Suleiman

hold all long notes mindfully for their full value - allow them to simply "be" without rushing. not tense or overly expressive.

clarinet in Bb

horn in F

viola

cello

mp

hold all long notes mindfully for their full value - allow them to simply "be" without rushing. not tense or overly expressive.

breath sounds - little to no pitch

pp *p* *ppp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

6

cl.

hn.

vla.

vc.

hold for the full value

G.P.

hold for the full value

G.P.

hold for the full value

G.P.

hold for the full value

G.P.

gently; hold all long notes mindfully for their full value - allow them to simply "be" without rushing. not tense or overly expressive.

gently; hold all long notes mindfully for their full value - allow them to simply "be" without rushing. not tense or overly expressive.

mf *p* *pp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

pp *mp* *mf* *mp*

sempre meno vib.

sempre meno vib.

Suleiman: Piece of Mind

2

9

cl. *mf* *p*

hn. *pp* *p* *mp*

vla. *mp*

vc.

hold for the full value, shape minimally

14 (play over the cello)

breath sounds - little to no pitch

cl. *mp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

hn. (simile) *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

vla. *p* *mp* *p*

vc. *p* *p* *mp*

poco sul tasto (play underneath the clarinet)

18

cl. *mp* *p* *mf*

hn. *p* *mp* *p* *mf*

vla. *p* *mp* *p* *mf*

vc. *p* *norm.* *mp* *p* *mf*

overpressure - poco, gently

overpressure - poco, gently

p *mp* *p* *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 18 through 22. The clarinet (cl.) part starts with a half rest in measure 18, then plays a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The horn (hn.) part has a half rest in measure 18, then a triplet of eighth notes in 4/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The viola (vla.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The violin (vc.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. Dynamics range from *mp* to *mf*. Performance instructions include 'overpressure - poco, gently' for the horn and viola parts.

23

cl. *mp* (no cresc.) *mf* *p* *p*

hn. *pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *p*

vla. *pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *p*

vc. *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

tr

Detailed description: This system contains measures 23 through 27. The clarinet (cl.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The horn (hn.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The viola (vla.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. The violin (vc.) part has a half note in 3/4 time, followed by a half note in 4/4 time, a half note in 4/4 time, and a half note in 4/4 time. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mf*. A trill (tr) is indicated above the clarinet part in measure 23.