

Prologue for an Evening

for Trombone Choir or Trombone Quartet

by

Houston Dunleavy

The logo consists of the letters 'H' and 'D' in a large, serif font. The 'H' and 'D' are connected at the top by two vertical lines that extend upwards from the top of the page.

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Prologue for an Evening – for Trombone Choir or Trombone Quartet*

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About the Music

It's been a number of years since the last time I heard this work performed and sitting down to type notes for it, but it is still a piece whose conception, purpose and form is still very easy to call to mind.

Prologue for an Evening was conceived as an opening work for a concert in Cleveland, Ohio which was to be my Masters recital. There were four great young trombone players available and so, during my Christmas break in 1988, which was spent in Northern Ireland, I wrote the original version of this work for trombone quartet.

The odd, almost eerie duality of Northern Ireland's political and cultural landscape in the late 1980's which had led to so much bloodshed in the previous 20 years, seeped its way into this four-minute piece. It finds its representation here in the contrast, dare I say even juxtaposition, between the punchy, homorhythmic sections and the aleatoric, quasi-improvised sections. Only in the lyrical, polyphonic section is there any attempt at resolution of these two characteristics. It fails to really make any impact on the piece, and the juxtaposed material returns, almost as if the middle section had not even happened.

After the premier of the work, and a second performance in Michigan at the National Music Camp, I thought that a second version for large trombone choir could be crafted with minimal tinkering. This proved to be the case, with some extra directions for soloists to perform and some extra cueing in the parts being all that was required. This version was premiered in Buffalo, NY, USA in 1992.

The only symbol explanation needed is that the downward-pointing arrows signify one of two things. Those with "filled-in" heads are right hand "down-beat" cues from the conductor. The ones with an empty triangular head are left hand cues for individual players (these are all noted in the parts).

Enjoy!

Houston Dunleavy
Thirroul, NSW, May 2004

Duration: c.4'0

Prologue for an Evening

Score

for Trombone Choir or Trombone Quartet

by Houston Dunleavy

Senza Misura ∞

1

Alto/tenor trombone

1st Tenor Trombone

2nd Tenor Trombone

Bass Trombone

f *solo** *sfzp*

f *solo** *sfzp*

f *solo** *sfzp*

f *solo** *sfzp*

With vigour $\text{♩} = 116$

tutti*

S.M. ∞

3

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

ff *tutti** *f* *solo** *sfzp*

ff *tutti** *f* *solo** *sfzp*

ff *tutti** *f* *solo** *sfzp*

ff *tutti** *f* *solo** *sfzp*

S.M. ∞

* These directions, of course, are only for when there are multiple players on each part.

$\text{♩} = 116$
6 *tutti**

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

S.M.

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

$\text{♩} = 116$
12 *tutti**

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

3

A little slower

$\text{♩} = 96$

\longrightarrow *accel*

$\text{♩} = 116$

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

Musical score for measures 14-16. The score is for Alto, 1st Tenor, 2nd Tenor, and Bass. The tempo is marked 'A little slower' with a quarter note equal to 96. An 'accel' marking is shown with an arrow pointing to the right. The dynamics are marked *p* and *cresc e accel*. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 between measures 15 and 16.

S.M.

17

*solo**

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

Musical score for measures 17-18. The score is for Alto, 1st Tenor, 2nd Tenor, and Bass. The tempo is marked 'S.M.' (Sostenuto). The dynamics are marked *f*, *sffp*, and *solo**. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 between measures 17 and 18.

$\text{♩} = 116$

19

*tutti**

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

Musical score for measures 19-21. The score is for Alto, 1st Tenor, 2nd Tenor, and Bass. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 116$. The dynamics are marked *ff*, *tutti**, *p*, and *fp*. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 between measures 19 and 20.

Relaxed, almost dreamily

21 *molto rall*

$\text{♩} = 58$

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

S.M.

32

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

10" →

35

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

gliss (as rapidly as possible)

ff *p* *ff*

gliss (as rapidly as possible)

ff *p* *ff*

gliss (as rapidly as possible)

ff *p* *ff*

gliss (as rapidly as possible)

ff *p* *ff*

gliss

ff *p* *ff*

S.M.

gradually increase tempo of glissando

37

$\text{♩} = 116$

Alto

1st Ten

2nd Ten

Bass

ff *f* *ff* *mf*

ff *f* *ff* *mf*

ff *f* *ff* *mf*

ff *f* *ff* *mf*

The Composer

Houston Dunleavy was born in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, in 1962. He is Senior Lecturer in Composition at The University of Wollongong. Since 1985, he has pursued a national and international career as a composer and conductor. Leading American contemporary-music authorities have referred to him as "...one of the best of a distinguished group of young composers to emerge recently", "...one of the leading interpreters of 20th-century music in his generation" and one even commented that "...he will one day, no doubt be a composer of national, maybe even international reputation". His teachers have included Peter Tahourdin, Barry Conyngham, Donald Erb, David Felder and Charles Wuorinen.

He was instructor of music theory and composition at the National Music Camp, Interlochen, Michigan, USA in 1989-90 and, after completing his Ph.D. at Buffalo, NY in 1994, was Guest Artist at The American University in Washington D.C., and Visiting Composer at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA. He conducted the Niagara County (New York) all-county choir in 1994 and has conducted and had performances of his music, at the June in Buffalo and North American New Music Festivals and The National Music Camp, USA. He made his European debut as both a composer and conductor in Scotland in 1995, with further performances of his works in France and Scotland over the following years. In 1995 he also took up his current post at the University of Wollongong. In 2000 he was appointed Musical Director of the Illawarra Choral Society.

As a singer, he has been a tenor soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, the Paul Hill Chorale, the Washington Singers, First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, NY, The Church of the Covenant, Cleveland, OH and Hamburg Church of Christ, Hamburg, NY. He has been cast in principal opera roles by and worked as a soloist with such luminaries as Andrew Foldi, Paul Hill, Lukas Foss, Michael Stern and Gilbert Brooks

His compositional interests include music for orchestra, the theatre (including dance), the voice and the church, the combination of electro-acoustic and acoustic resources (especially in real time), the exploration of virtuosity and indigenous Australian music. Dunleavy's commissions have come from The Geelong Youth Orchestra, The Strnad (sic) Fellowship, The Church of the Covenant, The University of Wollongong Singers, The State University of New York at Buffalo Choir, The Scottish Chamber Orchestra String Quartet, The University Circle Wind Ensemble, The Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony and many others. His awards have included the Florence Bradford Scholarship at The University of Melbourne, the Beryl Rubenstein Scholarship at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Strnad (sic) Fellowship, induction into the *Pi Kappa Lambda* international music honours society, and the Presidential Fellowship at the State University of New York at Buffalo (three times).

In 2001, he was granted Permanent Residence in Australia. Late that year his solo flute work *Icarus* was selected as a set work for the semi-final round of the Australian Solo Flute competition. He was offered Full Representation status at the Australian Music Centre in early 2002 and his solo piano piece *Meditation on Satie* has recently been recorded on the CD *Anthem* by Aaron Macmillian. After its release in September 2002, the CD was deposited in the new Library of Alexandria in Egypt as part of the Australian cultural collection. Along with other works on the CD, *Meditation on Satie* will be performed in Australia and in Egypt. 2002 and 2003 saw performances of his works in Melbourne, Wollongong and Sydney, Australia, Buffalo, NY and Boston, MA in the USA and broadcasts of the ABC's "New Music Australia".

In 2003, he was Visiting Composer at both The University of Florida at Gainesville and James Madison University in Virginia, USA and completed works for a number of professional ensembles.

Dunleavy is married to American writer, editor and self-defence expert, Laura Goodin. They have one daughter, Margaret, and no spare time.

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