

Our Solitude



by Ben Hylton

for concert band

 HYLTON MUSIC DESIGN

Program Notes

Our Solitude was originally composed as part of the Hylton Music Design Virtual Consortium in 2020 as a flexible/adaptable work for concert band and was fully orchestrated for concert band in 2023.

This piece explores the profound and often haunting emotions of loneliness that have reverberated through our collective consciousness during the unprecedented times of the global pandemic. The composition delves into the isolating experiences faced by individuals as they grapple with the challenges of social distancing, lockdowns, and the overwhelming uncertainty that has permeated our lives.

We weren't exactly alone - technology kept us connected virtually through social media, games, and video conferences; yet, the long-term lack of physical connection to one-another had a true and lasting effect on our daily lives. We visited friends and family through windows and doorways, touching hands and embracing on opposite sides of the glass; hearing their voices but never feeling their physical presence.

The piece opens delicately and introspectively, capturing the initial sense of solitude that many felt. The sparse textures and isolated musical gestures reflect the stark emptiness of a world suddenly devoid of the familiar warmth of human connection. As the composition unfolds, the music evolves, mirroring the ebb and flow of emotions experienced on this lonely journey.

Our Solitude employs a palette of evocative harmonies, subtle dissonances, and poignant melodies to convey the complexity of the emotional landscape. Moments of tension and release mirror the oscillation between hope and despair, while expressive solo passages serve as poignant reflections of individual struggles against the vast silence.

As the composition draws to a close, "Solitude Echoes" offers a glimpse of resolution and acceptance; reflecting the resilience of the human spirit, acknowledging that even in the face of profound loneliness, there exists the potential for personal growth, self-discovery, and the possibility of finding solace within oneself.

Our Solitude is a musical exploration of the myriad emotions experienced during the pandemic, a reflection on the shared human experience of isolation, and a testament to the strength and endurance of the human spirit in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Performance Notes

In general, this work was created with minimal technical demands on the individual players so that ensembles can focus more on expressive music making - quality of sound, dynamic contrast, direction of line, etc. Work to create contrast of dynamics, not only moment to moment but also across big phrases, matching the color of the composer's orchestration. Use this piece to experiment with your students on tone color "how rich can you make your tone here?" - "how bleak can we make this phrase sound?"

Perfect for smaller ensembles, *Our Solitude* is orchestrated for a reduced number of parts and utilizes doubling of parts, cues, and redundancies that will make your small ensemble sound full.

Harmonically, there are many suspensions left unresolved - not only the normal 4-3 but also 7's, 9's, etc. Work to bring out these moments and let them sit, steadily moving without resolution into the silence or next phrase. Winds should enter silence at note releases with a delicate taper, letting the 'resonance' of the sound ring calmly through the hall. Tempo markings are just suggestions but do try to keep them relative for the correct feeling of forward motion on certain phrases that move ahead.

The opening introductory phrase (top-13) should sound introspective and somewhat distant, with a calm flowing feel. Keep a steady tempo so that the winds can solidify entrances. Arrival points, such as mm. 15, mm. 36, and mm. 55 should not feel harsh or accented, keep a round, buoyant tone quality. MM. 19-28 should sound like a small ensemble, feel free to have 1 player on a part - same thing mm. 38-44.

- Mallet parts are crucial and should be covered throughout the work.
- Piano mostly doubles mallet percussion and is optional.
- The Tuba part contains some passages with parenthesis for optional 8va.
- mm. 19-28 trumpets and euphonium have WW cues.

Above all, Make Music!

The Composer



Ben Hylton is an active composer, music educator, and clinician who creates music for all types of ensembles, and commercial music groups, as well as designs competitive shows for the pageantry arts. His works have been performed around the world including the Midwest Clinic, the Jazz Education Network Conference and his shows have been successful at the local, regional, and national level.

Ben's grasp of various musical genres enable him to create new music in a vast array of styles and his experience teaching music at every level (Kindergarten-University) guides the pedagogy and student appeal within his compositions and arrangements.

Ben received a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from East Carolina University, a Master's Degree in Trumpet Performance from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and he completed additional graduate studies in Jazz at Florida State University.

Please send recordings, programs, letters, questions, etc. We would love to hear from you!

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Instrumentation

Flute
Oboe (opt. Flute 2)
Bassoon
Bb Clarinet 1 & 2
Bb Bass Clarinet

Eb Alto Saxophone 1 & 2
Bb Tenor Saxophone
Eb Baritone Saxophone

Bb Trumpets 1 & 2
Horn in F

Trombone 1 & 2
Euphonium B.C./T.C.
Tuba

Timpani
Percussion 1: Glockenspiel
Percussion 2: Vibraphone
Percussion 3: Marimba
Percussion 4: Snare/Triangle
Percussion 5: Bass Drum/Mark Tree
Percussion 6: Suspended Cymbal, Ride Cymbal

Piano (Optional)

Winds Reduction

Duration: 3:55

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Our Solitude

Ben Hylton (ASCAP)

Calm (♩ = 72) 5

Flute *div.* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *Tutti* *mp* *mf*

Oboe *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bassoon *mp* *mf*

B♭ Clarinet 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

B♭ Clarinet 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bass Clarinet in B♭

Alto Sax. 1 + 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Tenor Sax. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *mf*

Calm (♩ = 72) 5

B♭ Trumpet 1 *mp* *mf*

B♭ Trumpet 2

F Horn *mp* *mf*

Trombone 1 + 2 *a2.* *mp* *mf*

Euphonium B.C. *mp* *mf*

Tuba

Timpani (Opt.) tuning: Ab, Bb, Eb, F

Calm (♩ = 72) 5

Percussion 1 (Glockenspiel) *mp*

Percussion 2 (Vibraphone) *mf*

Percussion 3 (Marimba) *mf* r l r l r l r l r l r l r l etc.

Piano (Opt.) *mp*

Percussion (snare/triangle) *mp*

Percussion (BD/mark tree) *mp* *mf* mark tree

Percussion 6 (sus cym/mde cym) *mp* *mf* sus cym

1 2 3 4 *mp*< 5 6 *mp*< 7 8 *mp*< 9 10 *mp*< 11 12

Our Solitude - Full Score (11x17)

13 19

Fl. *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Ob. *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *mp* *f* *mf* *p*

Cl. 1 *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Cl. 2 *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

B. Cl. *mf* *f* *mf* *p*

Alto Sax. 1 + 2 *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *f* *mf* *p*

13 19

Tpt. 1 *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Tpt. 2 *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *f*

F. Hn. *mp* *f* *mf* *p*

Tbn. 1 + 2 *mp* *f* *mf* *p*

Euph. BC *mp* *f* *mf* *f*

Tba. *mf* *f* *mf* *p*

Timp. *f*

13 19

Perc 1 (glock) *mp* *f* *mf* *f*

Perc 2 (Vib) *mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

Perc 3 (Mar) *mp* *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

Pno. (Opt.) *mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

Perc. 4 (SD/tri) *mp* *f* *mp* *mf*

Perc. 5 (BD) *mp* *f* *mp* *mf*

Perc. 6 (Cym) *mp* *f*

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

mp *f* *mp* *mf*

triangle
mark tree

28 33

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

B. Cl.

Alto Sax. 1 + 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

28 33

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

F Hn.

Tbn. 1 + 2

Euph. BC

Tba.

Timp.

28 33

Perc 1 (glock)

Perc 2 (Vib)

Perc 3 (Mar)

Pno. (Opt.)

Perc. 4 (SD/tri)

Perc. 5 (BD/m. tom)

Perc. 6 (Cym)

26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

mp *mf* *f* *al.* *a2.* *div.* *p* *ride* *sus cym*

Our Solitude - Full Score (11x17)

38 44 rall. 48 a tempo (♩ = 72)

Fl. *mp* < *mf* > *mp* *mf* *f*

Ob. *mp* < *mf* > *mp* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

Cl. 1 *mp* < *mf* > *mp* *mf* *f*

Cl. 2 *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

B. Cl. *p* *mf* *f*

Alto Sax. 1 + 2 *p* *mp* *f*

Ten. Sax. *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

Bari. Sax. *mf* < *f* > *f*

38 44 rall. 48 a tempo (♩ = 72)

Tpt. 1 *mp* *f*

Tpt. 2 *mp* *f*

F. Hn. *mp* *mf* *f*

Tbn. 1 + 2 *p* *mf* *f*

Euph. BC *mp* *mf* *f*

Tba. *p* *mf* < *f* > *f*

Timp. *mf* < *f* > *mf* < *f* >

38 44 rall. 48 a tempo (♩ = 72)

Perc. 1 (glock) *mf* *f*

Perc. 2 (Vib) *mp* *f*

Perc. 3 (Mar) *p* *mp* *f*

Pno. (Opt.) *mp* *f*

Perc. 4 (SD/tri) *mp* *f* *mf* *f*

Perc. 5 (BD) *p* < *mp* > *mp* *f* *mf* *f*

Perc. 6 (Cym) *mf* *f*

37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

mf < *f* > *mf* < *f* >

The image displays a page from a full orchestral score for the piece "Our Solitude". The score is arranged in a standard format with multiple staves for each instrument family. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The page is marked with a rehearsal cue "52" at the beginning of the section. A "rit." (ritardando) marking is present above the staff for Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone 1 & 2, Tenor Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone. A tempo marking of "♩ = 65" is also indicated. The score includes dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). The percussion section includes Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Maracas, Snare Drum/Triple Drum, and Bass Drum. A Piano (Pno. Opt.) part is also present. The page number "52" is printed in a box above the first measure of the section. A large, diagonal watermark reading "Hylton Music Design Sample Score" is overlaid across the entire page.

Our Solitude - Full Score (11x17)

60 **rall.** ♩ = 60

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

B. Cl.

Alto Sax. 1 + 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

60 **rall.** ♩ = 60

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

F. Hn.

Tbn. 1 + 2

Euph. BC

Tba.

Timp.

60 **rall.** ♩ = 60

Perc. 1 (glock)

Perc. 2 (Vib)

Perc. 3 (Mar)

Pno. (Opt.)

Perc. 4 (SD/tri)

Rack B

Perc. 5 (Cym)

58 *p* 59 *mf* 60 *p* 61 *mf* 62 *p* 63 *mf* 64 *p* 65 *mf* 66 *p*