La Bicicletta

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La Bicicletta

For Symphony Orchestra

Jack Druffel
La Bicicletta
Duration: 9'40"

Instrumentation:
  2 Flutes
  2 Oboes
  2 Bb Clarinets
  2 Bassoons
  4 Horns in F
  2 Trumpets in C
  2 Trombones
  1 Bass Trombone
  1 Tuba

Percussion (3 Players):
  Bass Drum
  Glockenspiel
  Suspended Cymbal
  Marimba
  Nonpitched Metals
  Vibraphone
  Roto Toms

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass
Program Notes

*La Bicicletta* was written in the fall of 2018 and edited for the Illinois Wesleyan Symphony Orchestra in early 2019. It is a narrative about an accident the composer endured while in Milan, Italy. While cycling home, he was struck by a motorcycle and spent a night in an Italian hospital and was released the next day with minor injuries. The main idea of the piece is to reflect the mundane tasks of daily life, and this motif is presented in each of the four sections that make up *La Bicicletta*.

The first part of the piece reflects the day-to-day patterns of city and general existence that most of us go through reflected through the repeating ostinato and repetitions of the main theme. The second part begins with a quick rip from the bass trombone, signifying the initial collision of the motorcycle accompanied with a wall of sound from the whole orchestra which mimics the ensuing chaos that followed after the collision from the motorcyclist. The second section has the embedded rhythm of S.O.S in Morse code scattered throughout, initially being shouted several times at first from the first few cries of help from the composer. The section climaxes with a large cluster chord from the orchestra, followed by each instrument fading away until the lowest voice of the orchestra is left.

This transitions the piece into the third part, the hospital. In the hospital, he laid there in disbelief to what had just happened and was in deep shock. His thoughts raced and he was unable to comprehend what had just taken place. The main theme is quoted, varied, and passed around the orchestra while also undergoing subtle changes to reflect the composer's trauma. The main theme goes in-between consonance and dissonance in relation to the sustained harmonies by the string section and is never fully stated as it was in the beginning. After these several fragmentations of the melody, the third and fourth parts of the piece fade into one another as the composer is now able to leave the hospital after it was confirmed that no major injuries were sustained.

The fourth and final part begins with the original ostinato, only a little brighter. The main theme returns harmonized, while a new idea of triplets is introduced into the texture. The three against four patterns of the two figures, duple vs triple, combines both the old routine of life with a newfound sense of wonder and vigor; enjoyment of the expected and appreciation for all the things in life, both large and small.
The notes may be played in any order, and the rhythm and intensity of the section starts softly, and slowly builds in activity until m. 62.

*Each player will pick one of the notes at random.

They will tremolo on that particular note while bending the pitch at random speeds, and intervals.

*A group of notes is shown for each player.

***Each player will play a random rip up, or down. Starting pitch is also random.

The notes may be played in any order, and the rhythm and intensity of the section starts softly, and slowly builds in activity until m. 62.
A grouping of notes is shown for each woodwind player.
The notes may be played in any order and the rhythm and intensity of the section starts softly, and slowly crescendos until m. 92.