

Kaleidoscope by David Schumacher

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Bb Clarinet 1
Bb Clarinet 2
Bb Clarinet 3
Bb Bass Clarinet

Kaleidoscope was commissioned by Dan Arsenault for the Chalumeau Chamber Ensemble. Dan wanted improvisation in the piece and I decided to incorporate non-jazz improvisation in a way that would allow for a unique experience each time the piece is performed. Rather than devoting sections of the piece for improvised solos, I have weaved improvisation into the melodic fabric of the piece, challenging each player to move seamlessly between written and improvised material. The players are expected to spontaneously shape the melody of the piece according to their reaction to the accompanying material. Together these two elements are meant to evoke the structured, yet transitory images of a child's kaleidoscope, creating new textures and colors with every turn. As these textures intensify, the players are free to shape the melody as a soaring line floating above the texture, or to react more directly to the increasingly rhythmic fabric. The end result being a truly fresh and fluid work in each performance.

PLAYER NOTES: All crescendos/decrescendos are meant to be continuous and gradual, and should be carefully paced, leading into the next dynamic marking.

Each improvisation starts directly under a chord symbol. Players are given scales and slash marks to indicate the duration of each improvised section. With each new chord symbol the player must use the corresponding new scale (notated as note heads without stems). These scales should be strictly adhered to (octave does not matter). Notes that are tied over into improvised sections are to be used as the first note in a player's improvisation. They should be held LONGER than the rhythm indicated, acting to transition between written and improvised material. The exact length is up to the player and should reflect the tone of the piece in that moment.

Improvisers are free to float over the texture or react directly to the underlying fabric of the piece, however, each player should continue in the same vein as the previous soloist and/or the previous written material. This should be a spontaneous, continuously evolving story, and should NOT be treated as an opportunity to stand out in any way as a soloist. The piece has the potential to be unique upon each performance and that opportunity should be seized.

Many other works of various style, instrumentation, and level of difficulty are available from this composer. Commissions for new works, orders for existing works, and information about guest artist residencies should be directed to David Schumacher at stroderode@earthlink.net or 617-970-1177.

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