

Julian Wagstaff

A Persistent Illusion

for clarinet, cello and piano

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Score
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This work was commissioned by the Royal Society of Chemistry (Edinburgh and SE Scotland local section) in 2011, and received its first performance at a concert given by Hebrides Ensemble to mark International Year of Chemistry in Edinburgh's Canongate Kirk on 12 December 2011. The players were Jean Johnson (clarinet), Will Conway (cello) and Scott Mitchell (piano).

My brief in writing this piece was that it should celebrate the past, present and future of chemistry in Edinburgh and southeast Scotland. The title refers to Einstein's observation that the distinction between the past, present and future is merely a "stubbornly persistent illusion".

The work is in three movements, none of which have titles. The first is an imagined three-way dialogue between Alexander Crum Brown (1838-1922), a professor of chemistry at Edinburgh University and a pioneer in the diagrammatic representation of compounds, the Russian composer/chemist Alexander Borodin (1833-1887) and the chemist Joseph Black (1728-1799), who discovered carbon dioxide a century earlier. The motif recalls the opening movement of the Borodin cello sonata.

The second movement (of which the first section is essentially twelve-tone while the latter section essentially tonal) represents the process of chemical crystallisation, with the piano crystallising chords from the notes carried by the other two instruments.

The third movement derives from my workshops with school pupils and teachers in Edinburgh schools. Participants were asked to produce note patterns on manuscript paper inspired by their knowledge of chemical structures and formulae, and everything in this movement is derived from these ideas (including the "twelve-part" section at the end of the movement). I have tried to capture something of the exuberance and fun that I encountered in the classroom, as well as deeper considerations regarding the nature of our world.

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A Persistent Illusion

Movement #1

Julian Wagstaff

N.B Clarinet notated in C in the score!

Somewhat ponderous (♩=70) **A** **Andante Moderato** (♩=80)

Clarinet in B♭

Violoncello

Piano

Pno.

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Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

C A lighter mood, jaunty (ma l'istesso tempo)

15

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

18

Cl. *f*

Vc. *f* *mp*

Pno. *f*

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D

21

Cl. *p*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

25

Cl. *mp*

Vc. *f* *mp*

Pno. *f* *mp*

30

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

E

36

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

8va

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42

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

(8)

47

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

F (♩=80)

51

Cl. *p*

Vc. *mute on*

Pno. *p* *sim.*

54

Cl. *pp*

Vc. *con sord.* *p* *pp*

Pno. *pp*

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58

Cl. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *mp* *gliss.*

65

H

Cl.

Vc. *p* *pp*

Pno. *p* *pp*

72 **I**

Cl. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

Pno.

79 **J** Poco più vivo

Cl. *p*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

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85 **K** poco rall. . . . poco accel. . . . Molto rit.

Cl. *ppp* *pp* *p* *mf*

Vc. *ppp* *pp* *p*

Pno. *ppp* poco a poco cresc.

mute off! senza sord.

91 Slower (♩=50) Poco a poco accel. -----

Cl. 

Vc. 
mf

Pno. 
mf

93 ----- al

Cl. 

Vc. 

Pno. 

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96 ♩=80

Cl. 
f

Vc. 
f

Pno. 
f

99

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

L

102

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

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104

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

107

Cl. *ff* *sub. mf*

Vc. *ff* *sub. mf*

Pno. *ff* *sub. mf*

109

Cl. *ff* *fff*

Vc. *ff* *fff*

Pno. *ff* *fff*

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A Persistent Illusion

Movement #2

N.B. Clarinet notated in C in the score!

Julian Wagstaff

Slow (♩=60) **A**

Clarinet

Violoncello

Piano

9 **B**

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

18 **C**

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Sample only
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D

Cl. *mf* *f* *ff*

Vc. *mf* *f* *ff*

Pno. *f* *ff*

Ped. Ped.

E

Cl. *mf* *p* *pp*

Vc. *mf* *p* *pp*

Pno. *mf* *pp*

Ped. Ped.

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F

Cl. *ppp* *pp dolce*

Vc. *ppp*

Pno. *ppp*

Ped.

53 **G**

Cl. *p*

Vc. *p dolce*

Pno. *p dolce*

Ped.

60 **H**

Cl. *mp* *p*

Vc. *mp* *p*

Pno. *mp* *p* *mp*

Ped.

8vb

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67 **I**

Cl. *f* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *f* *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mf* *f* *mf* *(mf)*

Ped.

75

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

f

f

f

mf

p

rall.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

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Movement #3

Julian Wagstaff

N.B. Clarinet notated in C in the score

Leisurely (♩=90) (♩+♩)

Clarinet in B♭

Violoncello

Piano

p *p* *p*

Ped. Ped.

5

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

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p *mp* *mp*

Ped.

8

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

A

A

mp *mf* *mf*

Ped.

10

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

p

p

Ped.

12

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

pp

pp

Ped.

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14

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

B

16

Cl. *ff* 5 5 5 5 3

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *ff*

Ped.

B

18

Cl. *poco rall.* **C** Slower (♩=75) (♩+♩+♩+♩) *pp*

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *poco rall.* **C** Slower (♩=75) (♩+♩+♩+♩)

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21

Cl.

Vc. *p*

Pno.