

In Their Shadows (Composition Notes)

In Their Shadows is a single movement piece of approximately 15 minutes in length. Although a single movement, it is composed in three sections, the second of which begins at measure 90 and the third of which begins at measure 156. It is in the basic form of Slow–Fast–Slow, and can be thought of as a kind of arching form. It is scored for pairs of flutes (first flute doubles on piccolo), Bb clarinets (second clarinet doubles on Bb bass clarinet), horns, and violins, plus piano, two percussionists, and electric bass.

The title *In Their Shadows* has several significant meanings. The first relates to the idea that the use of pairs of instruments allows the composer to shadow musical lines in duo writing.

The second meaning of the title is one related to the piece's approach to musical quotation. The piece grapples with the experience of attempting to compose new music in a time when we always seem to be in the shadows of our predecessors. It is a sort of fantasia-like experience in which one suddenly finds, in listening to the piece, the root of a certain convention that one has picked up, directly present in a major work of a great composer or musician of the past such as Ives, Messiaen, Coltrane, or Stravinsky. As one comes away from this, all one can do is attempt to find one's own language, while not rejecting the past but rather accepting it into one's context.

The third meaning of the title is in reference to the ideas of Carl Jung, specifically his concept of the archetypal Shadow within each human being—the repository of all that is denied or repressed within the self. One may attempt to ignore it, or to deny it further, but such attempts are futile. In the end, one must come face to face with one's own darkest tendencies, to find wholeness and live in balance. The piece is, like life, a process of working through this establishment of balance and of accepting one's internal opposite, the denied shadow, and its inherent value. The end goal (and final outcome) of this process is a sort of "unity" or "wholeness." While tensions persist, they hopefully succeed in adorning the achieved whole with greater beauty.

The percussion used by each percussionist includes:

Percussion I:

Suspended cymbals (2)
Riveted suspended cymbal (1)
Chimes
Glockenspiel
Triangle & beater
Marimba
Wind chimes
Wooden drumsticks
Soft mallets

Percussion II:

Snare drum
Woodblock
Tam-Tam
Vibraphone
Bass drum
Triangle beater
Soft mallets
Wooden drumsticks
Brushes