

# Malcolm Dedman

# Stillness

**for keyboard/piano, percussion and  
mixed ensemble (open score)**

**1997, rev 2008**

**Stillness** is a partially improvised piece and the players should follow the instructions on the following pages. The instrumentation is free, within the following guidelines:

*Keyboard/piano:* an electronic keyboard or electric piano is preferred, although it is possible to employ an acoustic piano. When using electronic keyboard/piano, use an FM EPiano or MIDI EPiano sound. This player leads the ensemble.

*Percussion:* Large suspended cymbal and windchimes (although the later can be simulated on an electronic keyboard).

*Voice 1:* This should be between 3 and 5 treble instruments, such as violin, viola, flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, etc.

*Voice 2:* 1 pitched 'bell-like' percussion instrument, e.g. glockenspiel, crotale, or suitable sound on an electronic keyboard.

*Voice 3:* 1 or 2 bass instruments, e.g. cello and double bass, bassoon and contrabassoon bass guitar (electric) or another electronic keyboard are all possibilities. If two instruments play this part, (enabling the octave doubling) they must be completely synchronised.

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Adagio, ♩ = 50 **A** ♩ = 60

Keyboard/Piano

*pp* *p*

Percussion

*pp* *p*

Large suspended cymbal

Follow keyboard/piano

Strike cymbal, or tremolo once only during each repetition, at any time between A and B. Explore different sounds each time.

**B** rit. *8va*

Kbd.

Repeat 4 to 6 times

*p* *dim.* *ppp*

Perc.

Give signal to ensemble when on last repeat.

*8va* *nat.* *ppp*

to Windchimes

(If Windchimes unavailable, use similar sound on keyboard or alternative percussion)

## Additional Notes

The keyboard player leads. The part consists of an introductory bar, a four bar repeating central section (letter A) and a final bar (letter B). As shown, the central section should be repeated between 4 and 6 times (i.e. the section is played a total of between 5 and 7 times).

The percussionist plays as written for the introductory and final bar, but improvises when and how to play in the four bar central section. The player is encouraged to explore different sounds, for example, by stroking the edge, use different sticks, tapping or stroking different parts of the surface, etc. Only one sound is allowed during each repetition.

While these parts are being played, the other voices improvise their parts, in accordance with the instructions on page 3.

Improvise around these notes

Voice 1

*p* to *mf*

**Voice 1:** consists of between 3 to 5 melodic instruments, as indicated on page 1. They play these four bars in time with the four bar repeating section from letter A. This part offers the most imagination for the players, as each should take the written passage and elaborate, using the pitches above the staff, to a greater or lesser degree. One version might be for each instrument to take in turns to play solo, alternatively, some more elaborate solos could be accompanied by simpler interpretations. Different octaves are permissible, as well as the use of silence, ornamentation and embellishments. Above all, do not all play at once all the time, listen to one another and keep the calm atmosphere, as suggested by the title.

Voice 2

*mf p* *p* *mf*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

**Voice 2:** The three 'bars' indicate choices to be played during the four bar repeating section (from letter A), as well as during the final bar (letter B). Starting from letter A, choose one of the three 'bars' at random and play once only at any time during the four bars. On each repetition, select another of the three 'bars' at random and play once only at a different time. Continue this random selection until the end of the piece (playing one random selection, once only, after letter B).

Voice 3

*mf* *pp*

**Voice 3:** During the central four bar repeating section (letter A), play the long held octave Es once only at any time during the four bars. Do the same for each repetition of this section, playing at a different place each time. Vary the dynamics subtly between *p* and *mf* making use of gradual *cres.* and *dim.* and vary the length of the held notes randomly. After letter B, play the last notes, once only, towards the end of the final bar.