

Fireflies

For Cygnet Band

Grade 2

Teaching Suggestions

The Cygnet Series is composed for first, second or third year band musicians. Schools that have beginning band every day can play the Series towards the end of the first year.

Each piece in the Series can be played by a large ensemble with full instrumentation or by a small ensemble with mixed instrumentation that may be missing entire sections. Four clarinet parts are included - two for those who can play across the break ("High Clarinet") and two for those who cannot. All student parts have cues. If your students have never seen them, you might point them out as both guides to help them come in at the right time and also to reinforce a weak or missing section of the band

Fireflies is designed to give young bands experience in the following Twentieth Century techniques: aleatoric improvisation (or "indeterminacy"), group improvisation, sections without meter or "free time," chords in fifths, and non-musical theater. These elements are easily introduced and performed by young ensembles because the sounds correspond to a visual image of fireflies or "lightning bugs" which flicker at random on summer nights in much of North America.

Conductor: Do not hand this composition to your ensemble to "read through." The following preparatory exercises, done over a three - five day span, will enable your students to better understand the music and the notations that may be unfamiliar.

Preparatory Exercise #1 - Random Notes

a. Play the Bb Concert Scale. b. "Now I would like you to choose any note from the Bb scale and play it softly and staccato." c. "Let's take 30 seconds. During that time, you may play any note from the Bb scale at any time. Please play each note softly and short." This will often be uncontrolled cacophony as the students try to play as many notes as possible. That is OK for now.

Preparatory Exercise #2 - Controlling Space

Exercise 1c can be ramified in many ways. "Let's take 30 seconds and play the beginning of a light rain. The drops are few and far between, very short and very light. You may still use any notes of the Bb scale you wish." The result is usually one where each musician tries to duplicate this light rain resulting in a texture that is too dense. The goal is to get the group as a whole to duplicate a light rain. Try rationing notes: "now during our 30 second light rain, each of you has only one light and short note to play sometime during the 30 seconds. You choose the note and you choose the time. Let's hear how that would sound." Experiment with different numbers and time spans. The students may have some suggestions for different random events they can "paint" with sounds.

Preparatory Exercise #3 - Flute Flutter Tongue

Repeat Exercise #2 but allow the flutes to try flutter tongue notes one to three seconds long on their note set. To flutter tongue, roll the tongue like when you say 'burrrrrr.' Now do this when you play the flute." Be aware that some cultures, most notably many Asian ones, are unable to roll their tongue.

Preparatory Exercise #4 - Random Notes in 4/4 Time

Split the band in two parts. Have the first part play the Bb concert scale, half notes, 4/4 time at mm. = 60. While they are doing that, have the other half play the short, random notes selected from the Bb scale. Experiment with different combinations. Notice how the high instruments can play random notes more often and have it sound "good" than the lower instruments.

More Suggestions In Back Of Score

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Conductor Score

Performance Time - 4:00 - 4:30

Fireflies

For Cygnet Band

Craig Thomas Naylor

Light, Delicate ♩ = ca. 60 - 72

Flute/Oboe $\frac{1}{2}$ (oboe = fl. 2) $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ p

High Clarinets $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ p

Bb Clarinets $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Alto Saxophone $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Tenor Sax/Bass Cl. $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Baritone Sax $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Trumpet $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

French Horn $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Trombone/Baritone $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Tuba $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Bells $\frac{4}{4}$

Rain Stick $\frac{4}{4}$

Sus. Cym. $\frac{4}{4}$

Fing. Cym. & Shaker $\frac{4}{4}$

Bass Dm. & Triangle $\frac{4}{4}$

Tip stick side to side
(maracas OK sub. - globes down, swirl in circle)

Sus. Cym. - med. yarn mallets

B. D. Roll - 2 beaters

mp

pp mp

pp mp

1 Approx. 10 Seconds **2** **Tempo 1**

5

Fls./Ob. 1/2 *pp* *Continue Note Set*

High Cls. 1/2 *pp* *Continue Note Set*

Bb Cls. 1/2 *pp* *Continue Note Set*

A. Sax. 1/2 *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly*

T. Sax/B. Cl. *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly*

Bari. Sax *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly*

Tpt. 1/2 *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly* (alto sax cues)

F. Hn. 1/2 *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly* (T. Sax & Bass. Clar cues)

Tbn./Bar. 1/2 *pp* *smoothly* *p* *smoothly*

Tuba

Bells

Rn. Stk. *pp* *let vibrate*

Sus. Cym.

F. Cym./Shkr *mp* *pp* *let vibrate*

B. D. & Tri.

Play in random order, very short with lots of space between notes

8

Fls./Ob. 1/2

High Cls. 1/2

Bb Cls. 1/2

A. Sax. 1/2

T. Sax/B. Cl.

Bari. Sax

Tpt. 1/2

F. Hn. 1/2

Tbn./Bar. 1/2

Tuba

Bells

Rn. Stk.
Sus. Cym.

F. Cym./Shkr
B. D. & Tri.

smoothly

p

45

Fls./Ob. 1/2

High Cls. 1/2

Bb Cls. 1/2

A. Sax. 1/2

T. Sax/B. Cl.

Bari. Sax

Tpt. 1/2

F. Hn. 1/2

Tbn./Bar. 1/2

Tuba

Bells

Rn. Stk.
Sus. Cym.

F. Cym./Shkr
B. D. & Tri.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a concert band, page 11, starting at measure 45. The score is arranged in a standard concert band layout. The woodwind section includes Flutes/Oboes (1/2), Clarinets in High and B-flat (1/2), Alto Saxophone (1/2), Tenor Saxophone/Bass Clarinet, and Baritone Saxophone. The brass section includes Trumpets (1/2), French Horns (1/2), Trombones/Baritone (1/2), and Tuba. Percussion includes Bells, Snare Drum/Suspended Cymbal, and Field Drum/Small Drum/Bass Drum/Triangles. The woodwinds and brasses play sustained notes with various articulations, while the percussion parts are mostly rests with occasional accents. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

