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Commissioned by William McGlaughlin
Premiere Performance
1979 by William McGlaughlin, trombone

COMPOSER'S NOTES

Bronze Veils is inspired by a series of paintings by the American painter Morris Louis. The paintings were created by layering soft tints on canvas so that the effect was that of gazing through, or not gazing through, several veils of color. That visual effect inspires the combination of instruments in my work. The layering of long decays from metallic percussion in combination with trombone should allow the listener to audibly penetrate several 'veils' of sound. *Bronze Veils* was composed for William McGlaughlin in 1979.

In 1977 I discovered the paintings of Morris Louis at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, through an exhibit dedicated to his work. I was fascinated by his painting technique, a process in which he poured his paint, diluted with thinners, onto a large canvas, and then tipped the canvas, guiding the paint along. When the paint dried, it created a thin veil of color on the canvas. He then repeated the process layering another color over the preceding one. The results of the process create the effect of several veils of color through which the viewer peers.

I thought it would be an interesting composing challenge to see if I could create a similar effect, but with thin veils of instrumental color. So, I chose trombone, metalophones, and a few membranophones as the instrumentation for *Bronze Veils*. The title for the piece is taken from a Louis painting of the same title.

When I composed the work in 1979, I envisioned a time when it would be not only be easy to project images during the performance, but also quiet (as slide projectors were at the time were very noisy) and able to flow musically with the music of the piece.

Sarna bells, which are part of the Percussion I battery, are small bronze bells that are pitched. You find them in bunches, usually tied to a cotton or silk cord and are most often found in shops which also sell India print clothes, etc. If you cannot locate Sarna bells, orchestra bells will work, but it would be best to experiment with various mallets which can produce a smaller sound when rolled on the bell. Plastic mallets might work as well.

—Libby Larsen

Duration: 12 minutes

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

For biographical information visit:
www.libbylarsen.com

Bronze Veils

for Trombone and Percussion (2 players)

Libby Larsen (ASCAP)

Slowly, langourously ♩ = 50

Harmon mute

Trombone

Vibraphone
3 mallets
motor on slow

Percussion I

Suspended Cymbal
felt mallet

Tamtam

Percussion II

Triangle

5
Perc. I

Sus. Cym.

Tam.

Perc. II

9
Tbn.

quite legato, singing, slight vibrato

increase vibrato

mp *poco crescendo*

p

Perc. I

Perc. II

Wind
Chimes

ppp

p

25 *l.v.*-----
Perc. I *mp* *mf* *mf* *pp* Sus. Cym. felt mallets
Perc. II *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* W. Ch. Bell Tree brass mallet W. Ch. Bell Tr. brass mallet

A (♩ = ♩) *accelerando* ♩ = 104
30 *f* *senza sord.* *secco* *mf* *< f*
Tbn. *mf* *f* *mf* *f* Tom-toms tenor drum mallet
Perc. I *mf* *f* *mf* Vib.
Perc. II *f* *f* *mp* Wood Block

(♩ = ♩)
33 *mf* *> mp* *mp* *gl.* *gl.*
Tbn. *mp* *p*
Perc. I *mp* *p*

Vib.
3 hard rubber mallets
motor on fast

52

Perc. I *mp*

Bell Tr.
brass mallet

*play random pitches
but maintain given rhythms*

Perc. II *mp*

54

(ra-hoo) *rip* *ff*

mf

(ra-hoo) *rip* *ff*

Perc. I *ff* *mf*

Perc. II *f* *f*

56

lightly, dance-like *mf*

legato

Tbn.

Perc. I *legato*

58

Tbn. *mp*

Perc. I *mp* *mf*

Perc. II *p* *mp* *mf*

72

Tbn. *p*

Perc. I *mf* Vib. 3 *p* *mf* *tr*

Perc. II

75

Tbn. *mf* *rubato, singing* 3

Perc. I 3 *p* *mf* *rubato* 3

Perc. II

78

Tbn. *gl.* *a tempo* *fltg. gently* *p* *f* 6 6

Perc. I 3 *p* *tr*

Perc. II

105 plunger mute* *any speed*

Tbn. *f vary dynamics* *fff* *f sim.* *fff* *sim.*

Perc. I Sus. Cym. felt mallets *p* *f* *f*

Perc. II Water Gong *gl.* *f* W. Ch. *f* Water Gong *gl.* *f* W. Ch. *f*

109 *singing* *mp* *fff* *Meno mosso* ♩ = 50 *via sord.*

Tbn. *mp* *fff*

Perc. I Vib. motor on slow *mp*

Perc. II Water Gong *gl.* *mp*

112 *senza sord. as lyrically as possible* *mf*

Tbn. *mf*

Perc. I Sus. Cym. *mf* (Sus. Cym.) 3 felt mallets *mp*

Perc. II Trg. *mp* W. Ch. *p* Tam. *mp*

* Take as much time as needed to place mute.