

Elegy

*for Chris Hughes and the Mahidol Wind Symphony
to Martha Araiza Ogburn, with limitless gratitude*

James J. Ogburn

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I wrote *Elegy* after the loss of my mother. In processing my grief I have spent a lot of time thinking about the complex person she was. Astoundingly generous, she dedicated her life to helping other people (she was a social worker for almost 40 years) but she could also be very frustrating to those who loved her most. This piece serves as a tribute to that complex and wonderful person. In the work, large sections are defined by quartal harmony, with the melodic interval pairing 4+5, while other passages consist of polyphony containing interval pairing 1+3 in the vertical and horizontal domains. The result is starkly contrasting character between discreet episodes: quasi-octatonic passages juxtaposed against ethereal, almost blissful consonances. In some places, I pushed quartal harmony to its limit by building stacked fourths until a (nearly) complete chromatic chord sounds. Confounding these structures are the freely composed, soloistic passages, most notably the oboe solo in the center of the work (set against a fixed, unfolding quartal sonority). Chris Hughes commissioned *Elegy*, for the Mahidol Wind Symphony. I am honored to have worked with such a fine musician, colleague, and friend on this project and enthusiastically praise the talented young musicians of his ensemble.

Duration: ca. 10 min.

Instrumentation

Piccolo

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

E♭ Clarinet

3 B♭ Clarinets

2 Bassoons

Contrabassoon

Saxophone Quartet (soprano, alto, tenor, baritone)

Trumpet in C

2 Trumpets in B♭

4 Horns in F

2 Tenor Trombones

Bass Trombone

Euphonium

Bass Tuba

Timpani

4 Percussion (1: Chimes, Wood Blocks; 2: Glockenspiel, Large Tam-Tam; 3: Vibraphone, Large Bass Drum; 4: Xylophone, Tom-toms, suspended cymbal)

Double Bass