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Woodwind Trio (for Solo Woodblock Player)

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Tyler Katz

Woodwind Trio

(for solo woodblock player)

Duration: 7:30

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This humorously-titled piece came about from a brief stint of writers' block. During my first semester of graduate school at the University of Iowa, I had planned on writing a woodwind trio. I had a good opening statement for the piece, but I was having problems writing anything past that statement. My composition professor gave me a brief exercise: write a page of straight eighth notes, on one pitch, for a woodblock, and make small alterations, so I could see how small variations could make a piece interesting. I did, making alterations through intuition, and I found that this short one-page exercise sounded interesting, and decided that it was good enough to turn into a full-length piece.

After a lesson of analyzing what I did, my professor and I found some numerical patterns. After counting the number of eighth notes between alterations, certain number combinations and patterns appeared often, especially the number 3. I used these number patterns as a basis for almost entire piece, with occasional intuitive processes as well. I based the formal structure from a different number pattern I found incorporating the number 11, and I created a "theme and variations"-like formal structure, where each new variation became progressively less predictable. Thus, the beginning of the piece is simple, with eighth notes using only two pitches (one pitch in the first measure), but at the end, the piece finishes with changing meter and unpredictable rhythms in a fast frenzy, leaving the listener on edge.

Performer note: When J = 84.3, the individual eighth notes in the 11-tuplet before (when J = 92) equals the new regular eighth notes. In other words: J = J

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187 grace note measures are senza misura, and the grace notes should be played as fast as possible

















