

Where Words End....., Randall Standridge. FJH Music Publications.

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This is another piece in my opinion that should be played by every ensemble regardless of age. Randall Standridge gives the following insight on this piece: "Sometimes, music is not about anything. It exists solely for its beautiful sounds and the emotions derived from the aesthetic experience of listening to it. *Where Words End....* falls firmly into this category of music. The title comes from the famous quote (attributed varyingly to Goethe and Heine): *Where words end, music begins*. Music can express emotions, ideas, pictures, and states of grace that no words or pictures could ever hope to capture; this is what makes music special."

Dynamic shaping is crucial to the complete realization of this piece. Careful attention to the tempos that are indicated but there are lots of places where you will want to exercise rubato. This piece is a good place to teach about harmonic suspensions and resolutions. Be sure to find these and the instruments that are responsible for the tension and release that makes this piece so wonderful.

In the beginning follow the dynamic contour that is indicated. I add a breath mark for everyone on beat four of meas. 2, with a slight *rallentando*.

Horn entrance in meas. 4 needs to sit on top of the texture.

Flute ascending line in meas. 5 is balance point. I ask them not to breath before the A flat on beat four. I add a breath mark after beat one of meas. 8. The phrase feels complete and they will need the breath to complete the F on the fermata.

Complete release in meas. 10 after fermata. Meas. 10 is a D flat 9 chord. The E flat is in trpt 2 and cl 1. Balance this chord carefully.

Trumpet and oboe echo the fl,cl,as,ts, horn line. This brief fugue is helps to build the tension into meas. 16. Meas. 16 has a 9-8 suspension.

Meas. 18-19 is a 4-3 suspension. Horn, Alto, cl 1 have moving notes.

I give the release after the fermata in meas. 19 a little time to resonate.

Melody at meas. 24 is in low brass and low reeds. Great opportunity to work melodic shape with instruments that do not often have the melodic line. A dark resonant tone color is wonderful here.

Observe the *rallentando* on beats 3 & 4 in meas. 31.

The time presses forward in meas. 32, MM=92.

Meas. 35 *rallentando* on beat 3&4.

I start the ritard on beat one of meas. 38 and pull back on beats 3 & 4 of 39 even a little more.

Another ritard in meas. 43, *atempo* in meas. 44 and *molto ritard* in meas. 45. Meas. 45 harmonically is a B flat over a A flat pedal. Lean into this dissonance, crescendo to release on beat 4. Forte entrance on an A flat (tonic) chord in meas. 46.

Meas. 46, the percussion, bass drum, sus cymbal and timp roles add a great deal to the passion of this section.

Meas. 50, *molto ritard*! I give beats 3 & 4. I push through measures 51,52, to another *molto ritard* on a D flat 9 chord with crescendo to release on beat one in meas. 54. This is so wonderful! There is great percussion writing throughout this piece but the bell and chimes in meas. 51-53 add another layer of excitement and harmonic energy.

Take your time in meas. 54. Let that D flat 9 chord resonate.

Clarinets restate the D flat 9 in meas. 55.

A flat tonic is in solo flute in meas. 57,

In meas. 58 we have a mediant harmonic relationship, B+6 – D flat, meas. 60, G flat -e flat minor. The crescendo is important to the A flat resolution in meas. 62!

Meas. 63 – 64 the horn has a 4-5 resolution. Careful balance so this is heard! If needed have the alto double the horn cues. This is a great ending!

I hope you enjoy this piece as much as I do. It is important to find and play these pieces so our students associate with and appreciate the beauty that only music can express.