Benjamin Williams

Jitters

for Orchestra

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Jitters

Full Transposed Score

Duration: ca. 11 minutes

Instrumentation

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B♭
2 Bassoons
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
3 Trombones
Tuba
Timpani
2 Percussion
Bells
Chimes
Suspended Cymbal
Crash Cymbals
Tam-tam
Snare Drum
Bass Drum
Strings

Composer's Note

The promise of technology was supposed to be 'less work', so much so that we would struggle to figure out what to do with all our free time. And yet the most common response I get (or give!) to the question "How have things been?" is "Busy." Wouldn't it be nice to slow down, be quiet and not get the *jitters* watching the world spin relentlessly on? That's what I thought I might do with this music: begin with a fury, take a few deep breaths and find a peaceful tune to ease my mind. It all sounded so simple, like the child-like game at the beginning of Pablo Neruda's poem *Keeping Quiet*: "Now we will count to twelve / and we will all keep still." But instead of stillness, the music kept roaring back to life, every time more intense.

But, *Jitters* also has another meaning: much of our technology relies on being able to reproduce sound and video in real time, without any lag or delay. But, if we try to do too much with our devices, slight irregularities (referred to as *jitters*) can cause the signal to get distorted or broken up. Audio stutters, videos buffer, sometimes the whole system crashes. One of the regular features of this music is two parts getting slightly off from each other, sometimes creating surprising beauty, other times an unwelcome blur. As motives and gestures return, they are not quite like they appeared at first. To me, this is not just a technological phenomenon, but a human one as well: do too much and your results will get mixed up, frustrated.

In the end, the music does slow down (although it seems to take a bit of force). But, it's not so much an ending as a moment to pause and think before everything in 'real time' starts back up again. Neruda's poem goes on: "If we were not so single-minded / about keeping our lives moving, / and for once could do nothing, / perhaps a huge silence / might interrupt this sadness / of never understanding ourselves... Now I'll count up to twelve / and you keep quiet and I will go."

Jitters was written for and premiered by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Crafton Beck.

Transposed Score

Jitters

(2015)

Benjamin Williams
(b. 1982)

Allegro con brio ♩ = 120

1 Flute 2

1 Oboe 2

1 Clarinet in B♭ 2

1 Bassoon 2

1 2 Horn in F 3 4

1 Trumpet in C 2 3

1 2 Trombone 3

Tuba

Timpani

1 Percussion 2

S.D.

Sus. Cym.

Tam-tam

Allegro con brio ♩ = 120

I Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Div.

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9

1
Fl.
2

1
Ob.
2

1
B♭ Cl.
2

1
Bsn.
2

a2

9

1
2
Hn.
3
4

a2

a2

1
C Tpt.
2
3

1
2
Tbn.
3

Tuba

9

Timp.

1
Perc.
2

9

I
Vln.
II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Div.

Div.

Div.

16

15

1 Fl. 2 — f — mf

1 Ob. 2 — f — pp

1 B♭ Cl. 2 — f — pp

1 Bsn. 2 — f — f

15

1 2 Hn. — mp

3 4 — mp

1 C Tpt. — f — mf

2 3 — f — mf

1 2 Tbn. — f — p

3 — f — p

Tuba — f — fp

15

Timp. — f

1 Perc. 2 — f — p — mp — f

16

Div.

I Vln. — f

Div.

II — f

Vla. — f

Vc. — f

D.B. — f

22

1 Fl. 2

1 Ob. 2

1 B♭ Cl. 2

1 Bsn. 2

solo

22

1 2 Hn. 3 4

1 C Tpt. 2 3

1 2 Tbn. 3

Tuba

22

Timp.

1 Perc. 2

22

I Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

26

30

1
Fl.
2

1
Ob.
2

1
B♭ Cl.
2

1
Bsn.
2

mp f

26

1
2
Hn.
3
4

1
C Tpt.
2
3

1
2
Tbn.
3

Tuba

mp f

26

Timp.

f p f

Bells

1
Perc.
2

(wood stick)

f

30

I
Vln.
II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

mf

f

32

1
Fl.
2

1
Ob.
2

1
B♭ Cl.
2

1
Bsn.
2

32

1
2
Hn.
3
4

1
C Tpt.
2
3

1
2
Tbn.
3

Tuba

32

Timp.

1
Perc.
2

(yarn mallets)

32

I
Vln.
II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

37

1 Fl.
2
1 Ob.
2
1 B♭ Cl.
2
1 Bsn.
2

mp mf f

37

1 2 Hn.
3 4

mp mf f

1 C Tpt.
2 3

f

1 2 Tbn.
3
Tuba

37

Timp.

S.D.

1 Perc.
2

p mf f

37

I Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

mp mf f pizz.

45

1 Fl. 2 — 1 Ob. 2 — 1 B♭ Cl. 2 — 1 Bsn. 2

45

1 2 Hn. — 3 4 — 1 C Tpt. — 2 3 — 1 2 Tbn. — 3 — Tuba

45

1 Perc. 2

45

I Vln. II — Vla. — Vc. — arco D.B.

Timp.

52 *rit.*

54 **Andante con moto** ♩ = 92

1 Fl. 2 — 1 Ob. 2 — 1 B♭ Cl. 2 — 1 Bsn. 2

mp

52

1 2 Hn. 3 4 — 1 C Tpt. 2 3 — 1 2 Tbn. 3 — Tuba

p

52

Timp. — 1 Perc. 2

54 **Andante con moto** ♩ = 92

52 *rit.*

I Vln. II — Vla. — Vc. — D.B.

p