

ken davies

Twitter Rhapsody

for B \flat Clarinet and Fixed Audio



KD 208

kendav music
www.kendavies.net
U.S.A.

Program Notes:

My favorite twittering instrument, the clarinet, stars in this experimental stream of consciousness flow of thoughts related to clarinets, twittering, the color blue, birds, skies, clouds and rhapsodies incorporating a plethora of referenced musical and literary quotations and/or parodies. While we busy ourselves twittering on our Androids, computers and iPads, we might recall the painter of "The Twittering Machine," Paul Klee, who was bothered by science and technology concerning themselves with art. So this work was created using the technology of synths and samples, not the least of which were the variety of tweaked but standard text reading voices of the Macintosh computer which provided the varied literary narrations through this piece. Among the sounds of bluebirds and mourning doves, you'll hear musical quotes and/or parodies of Gershwin, Berlin, Debussy, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Charlie Parker, Vaughn Williams, and literary quotes and/or references to Maya Angelou, Judy Davies, Paul Dukas, Percy Shelley, Langston Hughes, Edgar Allen Poe, and St. Francis of Assisi. Of course, in these tributes, great care was taken with work-arounds to avoid potential copyright snags. We must not deliberately infringe on others' works, you know.

Notes to Performer

- For rehearsal convenience, timings are given in rectangular boxes at strategic locations throughout the piece.
- The clarinetist may wish to use a microphone to help blend the acoustic sound with the electronic background, though this is optional.
- For sound check purposes, be aware that the loudest part of the track is the "bass drum" beats beginning at measure 90 (at time 4:29).

Composer Bio

Wisconsin native Ken Davies holds an M.A. in trombone from Middle Tennessee State University at Murfreesboro and an M.M. in composition from the University of Colorado at Boulder where he was a Cecil Effinger Fellowship composition student. During the 1970s, he was trombonist with Gabriel's Brass, a 12-piece jazz-rock show band based in Orlando, Florida, often appearing at Walt Disney World. He has worked as a commercial arranger and session producer for nationally broadcast record and television projects. Since 2002, he has resided in south Mississippi where he teaches brass, and runs his publishing company, Kenvad Music (see at www.kendavies.net). His works include acoustic and electronic pieces that have been performed internationally at conferences and festivals by Society of Composers, Southeastern Composers League, Electronic Music Midwest, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers, International Trombone Festival, National Association of Composers USA, PARMA Music Festival, London New Wind Festival (UK), Sonic Coast (UK), and concerts. Honors include ASCAP awards, the Mississippi Performing Artist Fellowship in Composition for 2006-2007 and 2012-2013, grants from Mississippi Arts Commission and a listing on the Mississippi Artist Roster. His Three Pieces for bass trombone and piano won the 2009 Eastern Trombone Workshop National Composition Competition. He was the 2013 Mississippi Music Teachers' Association commissioned composer. He has collaborated with his poet wife Judy to create a CD of poetic soundscapes featuring narrated poetry and electronic soundscapes. Their studio cat, Darius Meow, supervise each piece of new music.

Twitter Rhapsody

Score is transposed

for clarinet in B \flat and fixed audio

Duration 8:06

KEN DAVIES

Davies *Utah Sunset*

Adagio ♩ = 60

Clarinet in B \flat

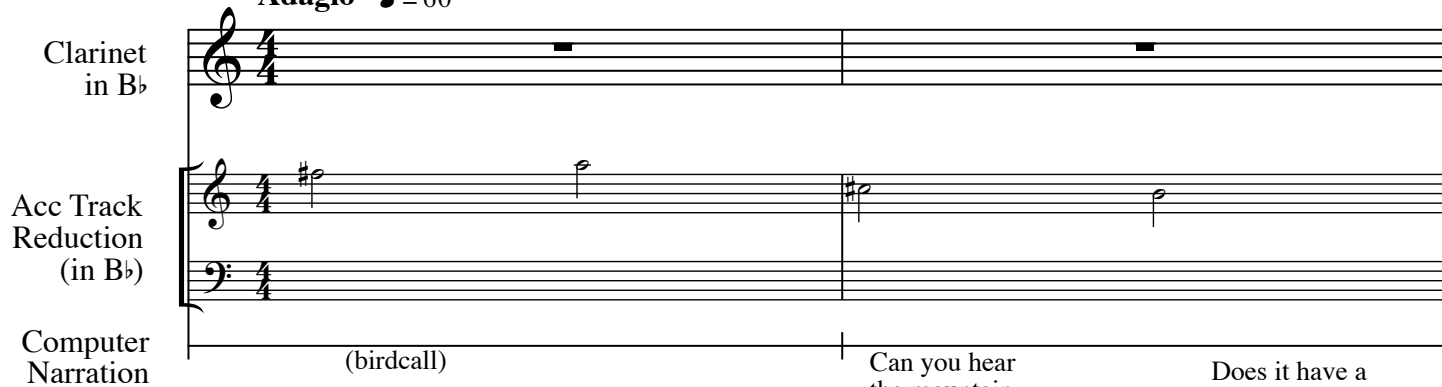
Acc Track Reduction (in B \flat)

Computer Narration

(birdcall)

Can you hear the mountain bluebird twittering?

Does it have a twitter account?



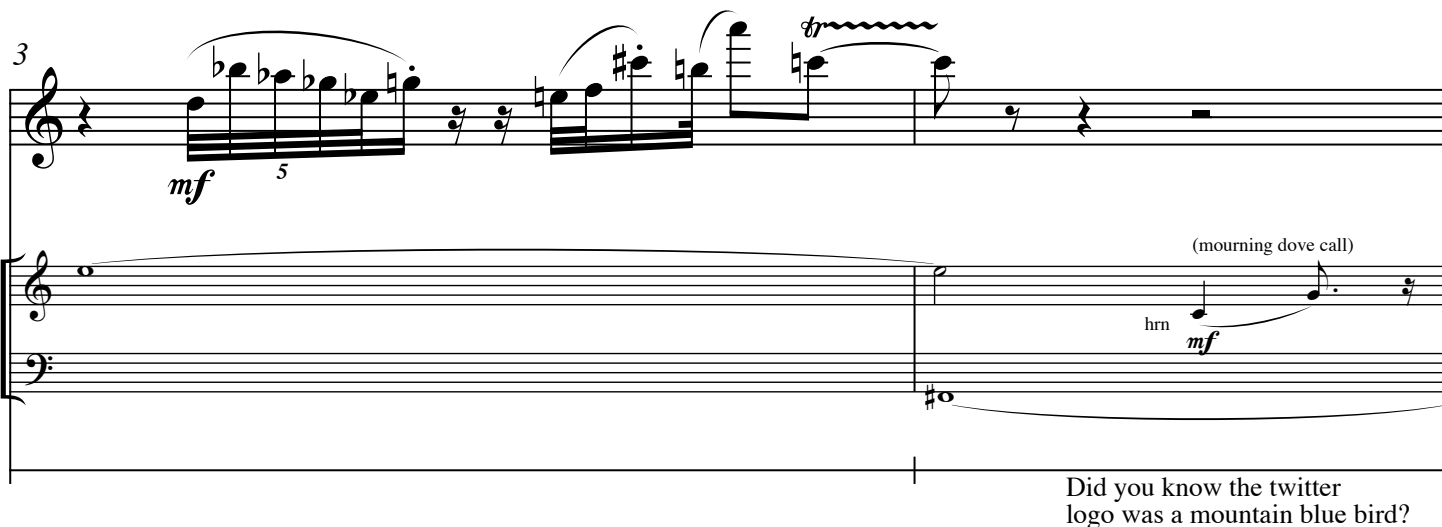
3

mf 5

(mourning dove call)

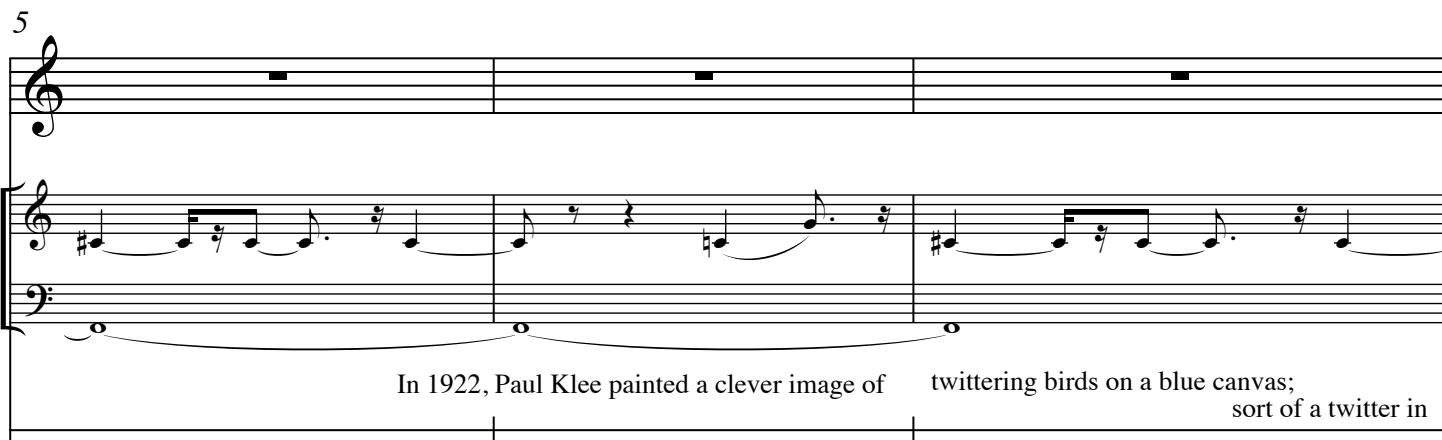
hm *mf*

Did you know the twitter logo was a mountain blue bird?



5

In 1922, Paul Klee painted a clever image of twittering birds on a blue canvas; sort of a twitter in



George Gershwin *Rhapsody In Blue*
Play ala beginning glissando

8 *tr* 0:32 17

mf *gliss* *cresc.* *f*

blue? He called the painting the twittering machine.

11

f (birds screeching)

(fluttering wings - birds take flight)

12 *tr* *f* *mf* *tr* *tr*

tr *f* *mf* *tr* *tr*

stgs *mba* *mf* *hrn* mourning dove - Irving Berlin "Blue Skies"

Unlike the time period of this present musical work, Klee was an artist, concerned with line and color,

15 1:02

Smiling At Me"

3 mba

Blue skies, birds, and clouds.

smiling at me like mourning doves The birds of Alfred Hitchcock

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of a musical score. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The time signature is 3/4. A box above the staff indicates a duration of 1:02. The piece is titled "Smiling At Me" and includes performance markings such as a triplet of eighth notes and a sixteenth-note triplet. The lyrics are: "Blue skies, birds, and clouds. smiling at me like mourning doves The birds of Alfred Hitchcock".

18

Debussy *Nuages*
Modéré ♩ = 86

p mp mf

Color is the place where our brain and the universe meet. He would probably not be sitting at a computer —twittering,

It's great to have a talking computer, isn't it? You don't need live narrators.

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the musical score. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff. The time signature is 3/4. The piece is titled "Debussy Nuages" with a tempo marking of "Modéré" and a metronome marking of "♩ = 86". Performance markings include piano (*p*), mezzo-piano (*mp*), and mezzo-forte (*mf*). The lyrics are: "Color is the place where our brain and the universe meet. He would probably not be sitting at a computer —twittering, It's great to have a talking computer, isn't it? You don't need live narrators.".

21

6 3

hrn

tweeting short messages. Klee's era was one of science and industry with thoughts

Detailed description: This block contains the third system of the musical score. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff. The time signature is 3/4. Performance markings include a trill (*tr*) and a half note (*hrn*). The lyrics are: "tweeting short messages. Klee's era was one of science and industry with thoughts".

Excerpt incomplete
24 page score

International Clarinet Association

A Review by Jessica Harrie - August 2016

The clarinetist certainly has a wealth of repertoire at their fingertips when programming a recital. The versatility of the instrument lends itself to various styles and genres and many great composers have showered the it with repertoire. A budding genre for the instrument is clarinet and fixed audio. Recent works including *alt.music.ballistix* by Nikola Resanovic, have explored the potential of this genre. Ken Davies' new work, *Twitter Rhapsody*, will certainly prove to be a gem in the genre.

Premiered in February 2016 at Society of Composers concert at Friends University, Wichita, Kansas by Dr. Sarunas Jankauskas, *Twitter Rhapsody* is inspired by the social media network Twitter, but it's inspiration is deeper than the title suggests. A broader theme is drawn from the inclusion of technology into the realm of the arts. According to the composer, "while we busy ourselves twittering on our Androids, computers and iPads, we might recall the painter of "The Twittering Machine," Paul Klee, who was bothered by science and technology concerning themselves with art." The work incorporates synths and samples, including the recognizable narrating voice of the the text reading software from Macintosh computers.

Through the myriad of musical nods to composers like Gershwin, Berlin, Debussy, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Charlie Parker, and Vaughn Williams as well as the references to literary masters Maya Angelou, Judy Davies, Paul Dukas, Percy Shelley, Langston Hughes, Edgar Allen Poe, and St. Francis of Assisi, Davies is able to paint a portrait of a world in which the twittering birds of Paul Klee and the tweets of social media work together as a single art form.

Technically the work is challenging, but familiar. There are passages from *Firebird*, *Rhapsody in Blue*, and Debussy's *Première Rhapsodie*. The cues are clearly outlined by the composer in the score, which is a relief for those who have performed with fixed recording in the past. *Twitter Rhapsody* is an introspective work that will be fun for audience and performer alike.