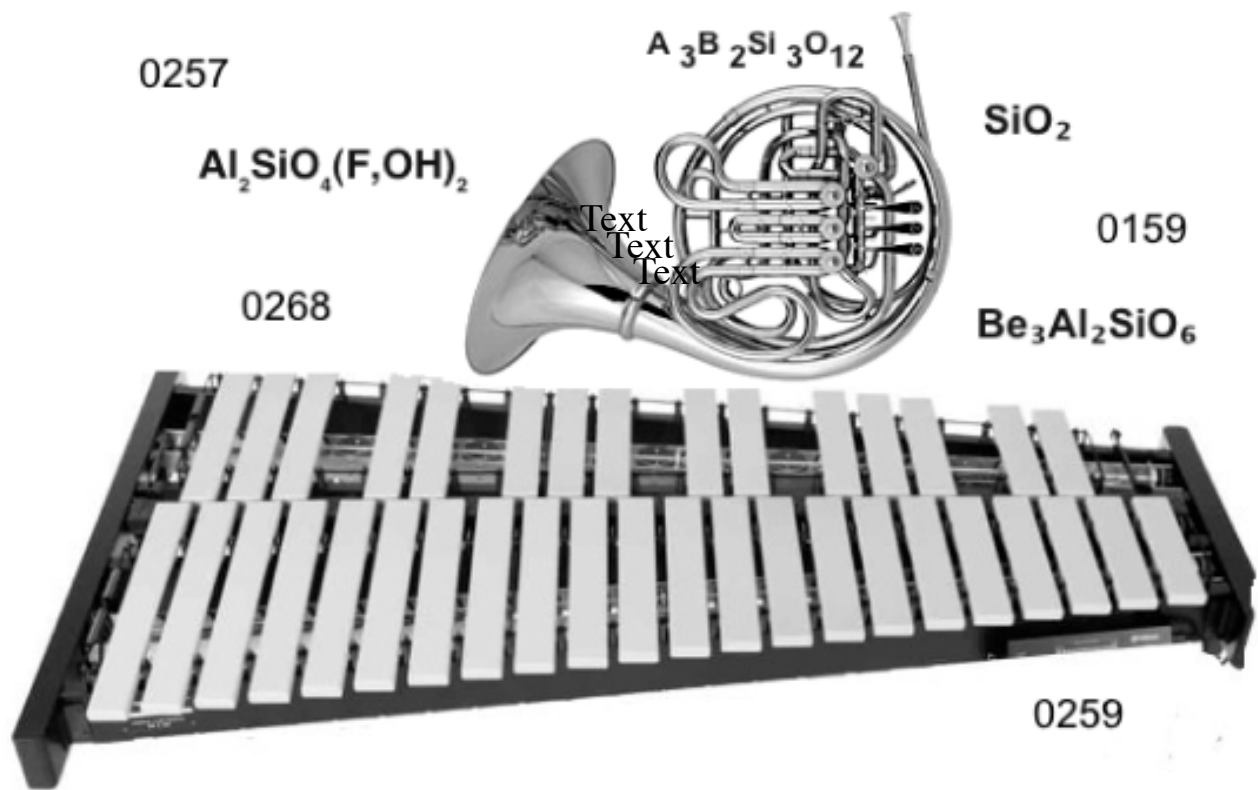


ken davies

Crystal Kaleidoscope

for horn and vibraphone

This commission was funded in part by the Meir Rimon
Commissioning Assistance Program of the International Horn Society



KD 512

kenvad music
www.kendavies.net

Ken Davies

Crystal Kaleidoscope

for horn and vibraphone

Program Note

Look into the kaleidoscope. See the variously shaped colored crystals, their reflections producing continuous changing patterns. Each crystal has a unique structure, shape, and color—its own symmetrical, ordered, three-dimensional aggregation of atoms or molecules.

As the title suggests, this work is based on "crystals." Though the sectional sub-titles may be whimsically named for gemstones, the musical crystals are pitch sets which consist of a few notes which are spun out into transformed patterns of melodic and harmonic variety. While the theorist/musicologist may want to delve into set analysis, I hope that others may simply enjoy the aural ride along the surface, letting the notes, chords, and timbres provide a worthy repeatable listening experience.

The work composed for James Boldin (horn) and Mel Mobley (vibraphone) and was funded in part by the Meir Rimon Commissioning Assistance Program of the International Horn Society.

Preview

About the Composer

Ken Davies' (www.kendavies.net) acoustic and electronic works have appeared at numerous new music festivals such as the Society of Composers, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Southeastern Composers League (he is a past president), New Music on the Bayou, ClarinetFest, and London New Wind Festival (UK). Since 2002, he resides in coastal south Mississippi. Awards include the Mississippi Arts Commission's Performing Arts Fellowship for Composition (three times) and the Mississippi Music Teachers' Association's Commissioned Composer Of The Year. His music studies were at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Yale, MTSU at Murfreesboro (MA trombone), and the University of Colorado at Boulder (MM composition).

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Crystal Kaleidoscope

Score is transposed

Performance time c. 8:00

for horn and vibraphone

① Garnet

Andante ♩ = 76

KEN DAVIES

Horn in F

Vibraphone

f motor off
crisp attacks (hard mallets)

f

Ad.

4

7

PREVIEW

10

13

f

16

PREVIEW

19

21

Ped.

24

Ped.

2 Topaz

Andante ♩ = 76

26

mf

mf Ped.

30

mf Ped.

mf Ped.

mf Ped.

35

mp

mp

mp

mp

PREVIEW

40

mf

mf

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

43

mp

mp

mf

as fast as possible - - - -

5

5

Ped.

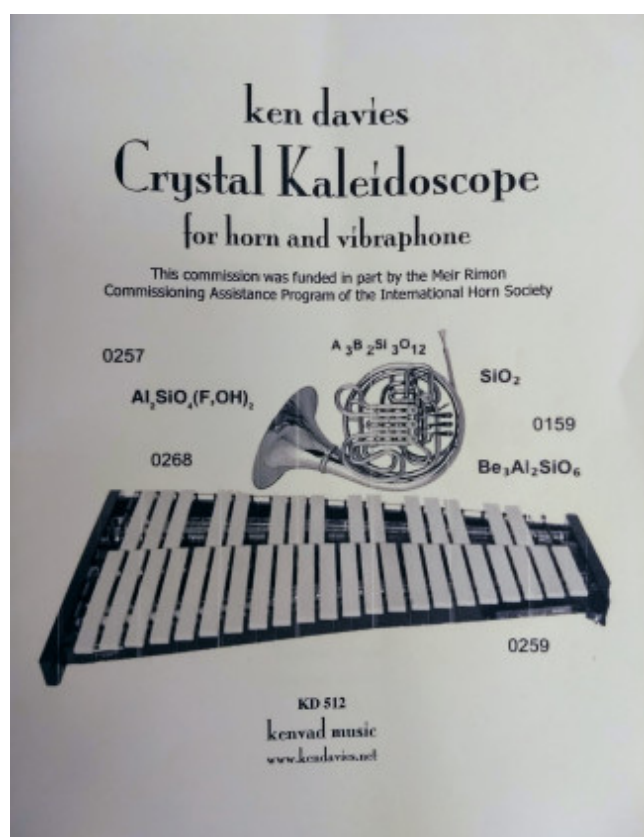
Ped.

James Boldin's Horn World

Thoughts on Teaching and Playing the Horn

Upcoming Performance: Crystal Kaleidoscope for Horn and Vibraphone by Ken Davies

MARCH 20, 2019 • AREA HORN NEWS, CHAMBER MUSIC, REPERTOIRE, UNCATEGORIZED



In addition to the Dana Wilson song cycle performance mentioned in my earlier post, I'll be performing another brand new work in April at the Society of Composers, Inc. Region VI Conference at Texas A&M University—Commerce. The composition is by Ken Davies, and is entitled *Crystal Kaleidoscope* for horn and vibraphone. My colleague Mel Mobley and I commissioned it with assistance from the International Horn Society's Meir Rimon Commissioning Assistance Fund. This is a fantastic initiative by the IHS, and well worth applying for and supporting! As of this writing, the fund is on hiatus from January 2019 through December 2019. Be on the lookout, however, for future funding opportunities.

Getting back to *Crystal Kaleidoscope*, Ken Davies is a very fine composer, and the works I've performed by him have been interesting and rewarding to play. The horn and vibraphone combination is pretty unique, and there are only a handful of other works in the repertoire for horn and mallet percussion, let alone

this specific instrumentation. The first one that comes to mind is *HornVibes: Three Duos for Horn and Vibraphone*, by Verne Reynolds. For more information on this and other works for horn and mallet percussion, refer to Dr. Casey N. Maltese's *A Performance Guide of Selected Works for Horn and Mallet Percussion*, D.M.A dissertation, the University of Miami, 2011. In my estimation, *Crystal Kaleidoscope* holds up very well when compared to the Reynolds, though it is quite different. Here is the composer's note:

Look into the kaleidoscope. See the variously shaped colored crystals, their reflections producing continuous changing patterns. Each crystal has a unique structure, shape, and color—its own symmetrical, ordered, three-dimensional aggregation of atoms or molecules.

As the title suggests, this work is based on “crystals.” Though the sectional sub-titles may be whimsically named for gemstones, the musical crystals are pitch sets consisting of a few notes which are spun out into transformed patterns of melodic and harmonic variety. While the theorist/musicologist may want to delve into set analysis, I hope that others may simply enjoy the aural ride along the surface, letting the notes, chords, and timbres provide a worthy repeatable listening experience.

The writing is fun and challenging, but not unreasonably so, with lots of rhythmic and melodic interplay between horn and vibraphone. As the composer implies in his preface, there are some complex compositional operations at work, but the melodies and timbres are interesting enough in and of themselves without deep analysis. As I’ve found in other works by him, Ken likes to throw in periodic references to other styles such as funk and jazz. For instance, this short line for the horn in the final movement, “Crystal Collage,” has a pretty fun groove to it. Tempo is quarter note=92-104 or faster.



If this post has piqued your interest in the music of Ken Davies, take a look at his website for a complete list of his many works. Here is a short list of works with horn, taken from his website.

- *Brain Fantasies* for horn and two-channel audio
- *Sensuous Images* for horn and pre-recorded soundscape
- *Waterscape* for horn and digital media
- *Loose Connections* – horn alone
- *Three Roads Diverged* – brass trio – tpt, hrn, tbn
- *Concert Piece* for Brass Quintet and Organ
- *Bayou Sketches* – soprano, French horn, piano
- *Veiled Places* for Woodwind Quintet