

## Silver-Backed Fox: Andrea Hobson



The Silver-backed fox, better known as the Cape Fox, is the only known fox species that exists in the Southern part of Africa. They can be found along the coast in the extended Cape region and are mostly nocturnal. With large ears and a petite pointed nose, they are quizzical creatures who use various forms of chirps, barks, whines and howls to communicate. They are also known for lifting their tails in excitement and prancing around the nests of potential prey. This fox is the inspiration behind the composition.

The introduction begins at dusk -the waking time of Africa's nocturnal creatures - with the muted flugelhorn suggesting that something is stirring. One can imagine the bright red and orange sun setting into a deep murky blue as the fox bounds out of her den with the main theme being played on the unmuted flugelhorn. The story develops as the fox begins to hunt in search of food. Using various rhythmical play between the piano and lilted rhythms, we follow the fox to her prey. Using the minor pentatonic scale an ominous mood is set with repetitive phrases from both the piano and flugelhorn. As she catches her prey, the tranquility that sets over the veld (an open, uncultivated grassland in southern Africa) becomes the calm B section of the piece and nature is once again calmly played with a muted flugelhorn and transparent, open chords in the piano. However, this doesn't last long. With her hunger satiated the main theme returns and moves into a playful C section to emanate the various chirps and the playful nature of the fox. The blues scale is used in this passage as African jazz has roots in the same Cape region where the fox is found. The piece modulates to a new key but sustains its general open feel reminiscent of the melodies from the region.

## In the Cold: Lucy Pankhurst



When Jen asked me to compose a piece for her, I knew I wanted to write something that showed off her beautiful sound as well as stunning control and technique on the flugelhorn horn. Beyond this, when I first began writing *In the Cold*, I didn't know exactly what I wanted the piece to become. This was actually quite unusual for me as a composer, as I tend to have a strong visual or narrative element in mind before I begin writing. However, with this piece, the

more I wrote, the more the piece revealed what it wanted to be to me, regardless of which way I tried to shape it! The result turned out to be an introspective reflection on a tumultuous, yet static time in my life.

Although the piece was never originally intended to reference the global Covid-19 pandemic, it was inevitably influenced by my emotions at this time. Composed in the winter of 2020/2021, at the start of the third UK lockdown, the feeling of isolation that paradoxically bound so many people together felt painfully strong. After months of watching the world suddenly frozen in time, we had tentatively started to try and gain a new grasp of 'normal' - a virtually impossible task, with everything still constantly changing and evolving unexpectedly around us.

Gazing through the window at the light drifts of snow we had during these few months, I found myself lost in my thoughts, mesmerised by the falling snow. I felt drawn to sparse, cold sounds as I wrote - retrospectively, I now see this as a subconscious attempt to try and capture a snapshot of these strong, conflicting emotions - trying to make sense of it all; Feeling safe in my own space, but also very far away and separate from so many loved ones; Thankful that family and friends were safe, but also grieving the loss of the freedom to be together. Battling through complex waves of anxiety, fear, frustration, anger, powerlessness (and subsequent guilt), right through to strange moments of quiet contentment or calm before the cycle began anew often felt very lonely, even though I knew very well that I was not - and am not - alone.

In trying to process these emotions and the experiences of the lockdowns and terrifying events of the previous year, this work emerged. An honest representation - a time capsule of that period for me, translated to music. Part of me feels that this is perhaps only the first chapter of a bigger piece and there is more to say...but not just yet.

The resulting image the music leaves for me is that of isolation. Isolation, but not desolation. There is still an underpinning of hope and light amidst the dust of falling snow and the cold underfoot. The sky is bright and clear behind the flurry of snowflakes. The scenery changes as the drift continues to fall, but the masked shapes beneath its blanket will become more familiar again as it thaws. All is not lost. There is a warm light in the distance which grows ever brighter with each step. For as isolated as you may feel, that light is still there - a constant reminder.

We may sometimes feel alone and out in the cold, but look for the lights to guide you home again.

## Elegy for Karyn: Dorothy Gates



Elegy for Karyn was written at the request of Jennifer Fox Oliverio. The piece itself was written in response to my sister's death in January 2021 during the pandemic. Karyn lived in England and so I was unable to attend the funeral. This means that a real sense of closure has been less than minimal - if it even exists at all. Elegy for Karyn is a musical commentary on the life of my sister and the memories we shared living in Northern

Ireland in the 1970's and '80's. The theme itself draws its inspiration from the letters in Karyn's name. The piece is quite haunting in many ways and has a distinct Irishness and quirkiness about it. It almost feels like a conversation – albeit a one sided conversation at times. Karyn was a fine cornet player in her youth, so it is fitting that the elegy is scored for the tender flugelhorn.

## The Dark Place: Jen Mitchell



The Dark Place was commissioned by Dr. Jennifer Fox Oliverio for a recording project of solo works for cornet/flugelhorn and piano. She specifically requested instrumentation of cornet and piano, but beyond that, I had free reign.

The Dark Place is a musical representation of depression. With moments of calm melancholy to moments of anguished misery, it explores our deepest, saddest emotions. If you listen carefully, you can hear short fragments of “Pure Imagination” by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley. There is always a moment of clarity in depression, however brief, however amusing, in its own demented way.

The Dark Place opens with dissonant clusters in the high and low extremes on the piano paired with a simple melody in the warm middle register of the cornet. As the piece evolves, the cornet and piano present fractured moments of both clarity and disorientation, often slightly unaligned. Each instrument responds to the other, if not quite the same way. The piece closes with a feeling that this ceaseless desolation will never end, just as one often feels while in the throes of depression.

## Song Without Words: Joel Collier



Song Without Words is a presentation of a simple original melody. The first full presentation is in the cornet, with simple accompaniment by the piano. The second presentation is more elaborate, with the cornet and the pianist trading the melodic and ornamental passages. The piece is sentimental, and certainly evocative of the emotions when reflecting on a long-past memory.

## Enigma: Kevin Day



The definition of Enigma is a person or thing that is mysterious, puzzling, or difficult to understand. With this work for cornet & flugelhorn with piano accompaniment, I wanted to portray the dichotomy of the frustrations that come with being misunderstood and the longing for wanting to be understood, something that I can relate to in my personal life experience. This dichotomy is illustrated with the varying choices of tonality, gestures, and the motive ideas throughout the composition. Eventually with the final coda of

the piece portraying this feeling of not caring whether they are understood or not, embracing the enigma that they are.