

O Dance! O Light! Onami! (2005/2007 Rev.)

This piece originated as a short melody for solo clarinet that I composed in one sitting. Five years later the melody resurfaced to become the spine of this piece. While playing it through on the piano, I would focus on the undulating, dancing overtones of the melodic segments. These textures created by the natural resonances of the overtone series were what I wanted to capture with a small chamber orchestra. Although it was not intended to be a concerto the clarinet is definitely the tour guide throughout the piece.

One of the issues I chose to tackle with this piece was that of distance. With the use of dynamics and certain textural elements, various depths can be explored. The piece was composed in three continuous sections that present the ensemble:

1. from afar
2. fleeting; scurrying
3. surrounding the listener

As the piece progresses from far to near, the harmony expands and thickens along with the texture.

The textures of this piece are my musical representation of the behavior of light. After reading about wave/particle duality, holographic universe theories, and subtle energetic healing methods I tried to create music that would reflect the quixotic characteristics of light (vibration). With this aesthetic, sustained sounds can become fragmented sparks just as quickly as the diffuse can become solidified. The title of the piece contains the Japanese word for “great waves”. I felt this embodied the spirit of this piece rather succinctly.

“**O Dance! O Light! Onami!**” is dedicated to the memory of my cousin, Judy Erlich.