



Howard J. Buss

Lakeland FL

Vibrant Horizons

It is clear Howard Buss knows his way around a flute. One of the more difficult things for a composer to do is to create a well-balanced work with a solo instrument and the power of a Wind Band. Complicate that hurdle with an instrument that has difficulties projecting above powerful ensembles and this becomes quite a challenge. This challenge was met and conquered. While this is a medium advanced work, the solo is not ridiculously hard and you made it sound beautiful! I applaud you for keeping the flute in a flattering range throughout the work. Not once did I wince, thinking "a lesser soloist could never make that work". There are many neat and inventive musical ideas woven through the work. Right from the start, I was captivated by the clever development and interplay with the solo clarinet, oboe, bass clarinet leading us into letter A. I especially appreciate your scoring. It's never too thick. Part of composing a fabulous work is to have it sound good with the dynamic markings on the page. You did a marvelous job of allowing the flute to resonate above the ensemble without littering the score with pianississimo markings. You also create a high-quality sounding "ensemble" with your superb scoring. No instruments are forced to play at an unflattering dynamic. Too many times performers must play at dynamics that are too soft, allowing tone quality to suffer. Again, good job of addressing this in your scoring! In addition, I always felt the accompaniment was an excellent companion with the solo. Never disjointed or out-of-place. This should be a popular piece! Also, KUDOS to the flute soloist!

—Mark Morette