for Javier Perez-Garrido

Come Slowly, Eden

based on the poem by Emily Dickinson
for solo clarinet

Neal Endicott

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Program Notes

“Come Slowly, Eden” is a love themed poem by Emily Dickinson. The poem deals with the ways that desire and sexual pleasure can overwhelm the unprepared brain. I adapted the poem using the concept that I call crypto-serialism. I convert each letter of the poem to a letter between 0 and 11. I then use each of these numbers as a pitch class designation and then shape those notes into a coherent melody. In some pieces that I approach in this way I add extra pitches to enhance the melody. In this case, however, I chose to be very strict, which forced me to be very careful in how I shaped phrases.

Performance Notes

The music is laid out exactly as the poem is, in two four-line stanzas. The words of each line are positioned in front of the staff. Tempo and some stylistic concerns (those nor specified on the page) are completely at the discretion of the performer. The lines should run into each other as the lines of the poem do. Depending on the delivery, there may or may not be a slight pause between each line.

There are a few nonstandard elements in my notation. Stemless, diamond headed notes are indeterminate in both octave and duration: all they represent is pitch class.

The glissandi in the last line are to indicate free improvisation between the marked pitches. It is not necessary to limit oneself to the chromatic pitches between the two notes. The player should be concerned with remaining in a consistent style (this is not the moment for a jazz or Klezmer solo).

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Moderately Fast ♩ = 68 - 84
Follow the rhythm of the poem

Come slowly, Eden

Lips unused to thee

Bashful, sip thy jasmine

As the fainting bee,

Repeat ad lib and fade

Reaching late his flower,

Round her chamber hums

Counts his nectars -- Enters

2 - 3"

And is lost in balms.

wander between notes

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