

Swell Lines

for string orchestra

by Jon Magnussen (2015)

Program Note

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Swell Lines for string orchestra was written for Jonas Carlson and the Punahou Symphony in celebration of Punahou School's 175th anniversary. The work is derived from the third movement of *deep sea, distant sky* (String Quartet No. 1), which was composed for Chamber Music Hawaii's Galliard String Quartet with support from the Honolulu Mayor's Office on Culture and the Arts and premiered in April 2015. The idea for the work comes from my fascination with music's ability to be perceived as a tangible, physical form – a mountain, a river, a winding road – and its camera-like capacity to capture the feeling or essence of a place. As a child, I loved to watch the ocean birds from high atop Kaua'i's Kīlauea Point, and *Swell Lines* is essentially a portrait of that place and time, with marching ocean swells, shifting currents, and sea birds soaring high above.

About Jon Magnussen

Jon Magnussen's music for the concert hall, drama, dance and film has been called "*hauntingly beautiful*" (Salt Lake Tribune), "*beautifully textured*" (NY Times), and "*thoughtful... deeply imaginative*" (L.A. Times). His music has been commissioned and performed nationally and internationally by organizations including American Ballet Theatre, Chamber Music Hawai'i, Ebb and Flow Arts, ETHEL (string quartet), Hawai'i Youth Opera Chorus, Hawaii Youth Symphony, The Juilliard School, Limón Dance Company (NYC), Lula Washington Dance Theatre, New York New Music Ensemble, New Juilliard Ensemble, New York Percussion Quartet, New York Virtuoso Singers, The Shakespeare Theatre (D.C.), and St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble; published by Oxford University Press; released on the Albany label; and funded by organizations including the Argosy Foundation, Honolulu Mayor's Office on Culture and the Arts, Kosasa Foundation, Library of Congress, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation. Recent collaborative projects include *Pāka'a Lanakila!* for the Spring Wind Quintet and narrator in English and Hawaiian-language versions, commissioned by Chamber Music Hawai'i and recently released on CD and iTunes; and an arrangement of HRM Lili'uokalani's *The Queen's Jubilee* for the 2015 E Hīmeni Kākou collegiate choral festival, for 6-part *a capella* chorus and *oli*. He is currently working on a commission from Chamber Music America to compose a new song cycle entitled "Twinge" for the Texas-based Haven Trio, based on the stories of six people who survived the 2004 Indonesian tsunami. Magnussen holds doctoral and masters degrees from The Juilliard School where he studied composition with Robert Beaser. He also holds degrees from *Conservatoire Nationale Supérieure de Musique de Paris* where he studied with Jean-Paul Holstein and Michel Merlet; and Cornell University, where he studied with Steven Stucky and Karel Husa. He was Artist-in-Residence at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton from 2000 to 2007 where he led a new music series ("Recent Pasts 20/21") and presented talks, associated with the series, on new music. As a Punahou student, Magnussen played in the violin section of the Punahou Symphony under the direction of Edward Springer (1984-86). He currently resides on the Hawaiian island of O'ahu where he is Assistant Professor of Music at University of Hawai'i West O'ahu.

Swell Lines

Rigorous ♩ = 120

for Jonas Carlson and the Punahou Symphony
in celebration of Punahou School's 175th anniversary

Jon Magnussen

Solo

Violin I

pizz.
f secco
pizz.

arco
feroce
sfz
arco
feroce
sfz

Solo

Violin II

pizz.
f secco
pizz.

arco
feroce
sfz

Solo

Viola

pizz.
f secco
pizz.

arco
feroce
sfz

Solo

Violoncello

pizz.
f secco
pizz.

Contrabass

pizz.
f secco
pizz.

Violin I (Vln. I) and Violin II (Vln. II) parts are in treble clef. Viola (Vla.) is in alto clef. Violoncello (Vcl.) and Contrabass (Cb.) are in bass clef. The score is in 2/4 time. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Violin I and II parts feature a melodic line with many slurs and accents. The Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass parts provide a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns.

Dynamic markings include *sim.* (simile), *più sfz* (più sforzando), and *feroce* (ferocious).

12

Vln. I

sim.

(bowing sim.)

sfz

(bowing sim.)

Vln. II

sim.

(bowing sim.)

sfz

arco

(bowing sim.)

arco

Vla.

sim.

pizz.

pizz.

Vcl.

Cb.

19

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

25

Solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

solo

A

arco

sfz *passionato*

arco

mf

arco

mf

mf

mf

31

Solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

solo

sfz

più sfz

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Swell Lines – Magnussen'. It features six staves: Solo, Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vcl., and Cb. The Solo part begins with a 31-measure rest, followed by a melodic line with a forte (sfz) dynamic. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, also marked sfz. The Vla. part plays a melodic line in a lower register. The Vcl. and Cb. parts provide a harmonic foundation with a similar rhythmic pattern. The Solo part concludes with a 'più sfz' instruction. A large watermark 'Score' is visible across the page.

36

Solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

arco

mf

sfz

41

Solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

Con sord.

mf dolce

ppp

pp

subito ppp

Con sord.

arco

45

Solo

Vln. I

poco

p

sim.

poco

Vln. II

sim.

Vla.

p

Vcl.

p

48

Solo

Vln. I

ppp

Vln. II

ppp

ppp

Vla.

Vcl.

51

Solo

Vln. I

pp *p* *sim.*

solo

Vln. II

p dolce *p* *sim.*

Vla.

Vcl.

54

Vln. I

Solo

Vln. II

p

Solo

Vla.

Senza sord. *solo* *mf dolce*

Vcl.

57

Vln. I Senza sord. *ppp*

Vln. II Senza sord. *ppp* *pp*

Solo Vln. Senza sord. *ppp*

Solo Vcl. Senza sord. *ppp*

Vcl. Senza sord. *ppp*

60

Solo

Vln. I

p dancing...

mf

solo

pp

Solo

Vln. II

mp *p* *sim.* *pp*

mp *p* solo *sim.* *pp*

Solo

Vla.

mf *p* dancing... *pp*

Solo

Vcl.

mf *ppp*

63

Solo

Vln. I

poco a poco cresc.

Solo

Vln. II

Vla.

poco a poco cresc.

66

Solo

Vln. I

poco a poco cresc.

Vln. II

poco a poco cresc.

Vla.

poco a poco cresc.

8^{va}

4⁴:3⁴

69 (8va)

Solo

Vln. I

f

mf

mf

Solo

Vln. II

sfz

passionato

mf

mf

Solo

Vla.

sfz

passionato

mf

mf

pizz.

mf

Vcl.

mf

pizz.

mf

pizz.

mf

Cb.

mf

pizz.

mf

73

Vln. I

Solo

Vln. II

Solo

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

The musical score is for a string ensemble and includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into measures, with a large 'f' (forte) dynamic marking in the first measure of the Violin I and Violin II parts. The Violin I and Violin II parts are marked 'Solo'. The Viola part is marked 'Solo'. The Violoncello and Double Bass parts are marked 'Solo'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

78

Vln. I

Solo

Vln. II

Solo

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

mf

sfz *passionato*

mf

mf

sfz *passionato*

83

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

Con sord.

ppp

ppp

arco

subito p Con sord.

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D

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Solo

Vcl.

Con sord.

ppp

p

sim.

solo Senza sord.

mf dolce

arco

90

93

Vln. I

ppp *pp* *p* *sim.*

Vln. II

ppp *ppp* *p* *sim.*

Vla.

p

Solo

Vcl.

sim.

96

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

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105

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

f

f

108

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

Score

Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso. The score is in 3/4 time and features a dynamic shift from *mf* to *subito p*, with a "dancing..." instruction. The Viola part includes a 4:3 ratio marking. The Contrabasso part includes an "arco" marking and a *mp* dynamic marking.

114

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

117

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

The musical score is written for five string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or E-flat minor). The time signature is 4/4. The score begins with a large number '117' above the first measure. The Violin I and II parts feature rapid sixteenth-note runs, often with accents. The Viola part plays a more melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts provide a harmonic foundation with eighth and sixteenth notes, often using a 'pedal point' technique. The score is marked with a large diagonal watermark 'Score'.

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123

F

Vln. I

Vln. II

Solo

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

mf

pp

f

pizz.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a string ensemble. It consists of six staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Solo Violin (Solo), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The music is written in treble clef for Violin I and II, and bass clef for the other parts. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 in the second measure of each part. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *pp* (pianissimo), and *f* (forte). Performance instructions include *pizz.* (pizzicato). A rehearsal mark 'F' is at the top. A large watermark 'Core' is visible across the page.

128

Vln. I

mf *>sim.* *poco a poco diminuendo* *mf*

Vln. II

pp *mf* *mp* *poco a poco diminuendo* *mf*

Vla.

mf *mp* *poco a poco diminuendo* *mf*

Vcl.

poco a poco diminuendo *poco a poco diminuendo*

Cb.

poco a poco diminuendo *poco a poco diminuendo*

134

Vln. I

sim.

pp

Vln. II

pp

arco

Vla.

mp

arco

pp

Vcl.

mp

arco

pp

Cb.

mp

ppp

Perusal Score