James Williamson

Lone Yellow
for Bb Bass Clarinet and Piano

(2017)
Programme Note

*Lone Yellow* is a direct response to the kinetic sculptures of artist Alexander Calder. The ever changing, slow moving parts to each sculpture has facinated me for a while. I've always wanted to somehow capture the sense of these ever changing parts in my music, and particularly respond to self-similarity, perspective and a change of movement.

The piece is for B♭ bass clarinet and piano and although playing simultaneously they are equally independent, yet interdependent, as with the moving parts of the Calder mobiles. I have approached this by having a movement-per-page for each player (acting as an individual component of the sculptures), which can be interchanged with each other, thus creating a quasi composition kit for the performers and also offering many combinations of outcome within the same piece. Fragments of each part can be singled out and stand alone, they can sometimes merge and become a single sonority.

The title of the work is taken directly from the title of Alexander Calder’s work *Lone Yellow* [1961].

- James Williamson

*Lone Yellow* was written for Scaw Duo (Sarah Watts and Anthony Clare) in 2017, as part of a University of York student project.
Performance Notes

Each performer has five pages of music, marked I-V. The piece essentially works as a composition kit, for example, pages I-V for both bass clarinet and piano are interchangeable:

**Bass clarinet**  **Piano**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page I</th>
<th>Page V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page II</td>
<td>Page IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page III</td>
<td>Page II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The order of the pages can be predetermined prior to performance; however leaving this to the moment of performance could be more exciting!

The piano part acts as a 'vamp'; therefore the pianist is to repeat until the bass clarinettist indicates to stop i.e. once all music has been played on the particular bass clarinet page.

The performers are to start playing at the same time, indicated by either performer.

There is to be a short silence once each movement has been performed, but remaining to keep the energy. The performers must turn the pages at the same time.

Pages can be played more than once and in as many combinations as desired, depending on programme flexibility. All pages must be performed before the piece ends.

**Clarinet Performance Instructions**

Timbral trill fingering alternatives are up to the performer – if no alternative possible, use a wide vibrato or shaking.

S.T. = slap tongue.

All grace notes on the beat.

**Piano Performance Instructions**

Lowest pitch A (A₀) to be prepared with an eraser to create a 'gong' effect (symbolised with an 'x' notehead). NB The 'gong' effect is to be played only once, at the performers discretion, to avoid over-use. A movement can pass without the 'gong' being played.

Movement III requires a soft percussion mallet to strike the approximate strings inside the piano, as indicated in the score.

Movement V requires a soft plastic plectrum to strum the approximate strings inside the piano, as indicated in the score. The indicated pitch is an approximate reference as to where a chromatic cluster of strings should be strummed [no more than a major 3rd either side of the indicated pitch area]. The direction of the strumming motion is indicated by an up or down arrow above the 'cluster' notehead. See next page:

continued...
Piano Performance Instructions continued

Upward

Downward

Tempo is indicated by 'slow', 'medium' and 'fast' above the stave. The tempos are to be decided by the performer, as long as they are somewhat proportionate to each other. Tempo changes are gradual (i.e. a slow tempo gradually increasing to a medium tempo etc.) unless otherwise indicated by the word '[suddenly]'.

Transposed Score

Duration ca. 7 minutes (minimum)
Lone Yellow

Bb Bass Clarinet

\( \text{ppp} \) sempre

\( \text{S.T.} \)

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Lone Yellow

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-\( \text{Lyrical, a little slower} \quad \text{A Tempo} \)

-\( \text{gradually getting slower, grinding to a halt...} \quad \text{A Tempo FF} \)

-\( \text{pp dolce} \quad \text{poco} \quad \text{ppp} \quad \text{ff} \quad \text{p} \)

\( J = 84 \)
Lone Yellow

\( \text{Bb Bass Clarinet} \)

\( \text{James Williamson} \)

\( \text{ppp subtone} \quad \text{molto} \quad \text{ppp subito} \quad \text{molto} \quad \text{ppp subito} \)

\( \text{molto} \quad \text{ppp subito} \quad \text{molto} \quad \text{ppp subito} \)

\( \text{ppp subito} \quad \text{ppp subito} \quad \text{ppp subito} \)

\( \text{breath} \)
NB barlines are for co-ordination only and have no function as metric accentuation i.e. all articulations are equal to one another.

Play repeat 3 times, following metronome mark accordingly:

1. \( \cdot = 112 \)  2. \( \cdot = 88 \)  3. \( \cdot = 144 \)

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Lone Yellow

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Tempo: slow medium slow fast

ppp sempre

Red.

slow medium fast medium [short]

bring out ppp sempre ['gong', only once]

keep pedal down

ff
Lone Yellow

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Tempo: slow ── fast ── medium ── fast

ppp sempre

slow (suddenly) ── medium ── (short)

bring out

pp (‘gong’, only once) ppp sempre

keep pedal down

ff
Lone Yellow

James Williamson

Piano

Strike approximate pitch area with medium-soft percussion mallets.

Tempo: slow  medium  fast  medium

Bring out. Play normally. Strike with mallets.

Keep pedal down
Lone Yellow

James Williamson

Tempo: fast (suddenly)  slow  fast

Bring out.  Bring out.  (suddenly)

medium  slow  [short]

keep pedal down ---->
Lone Yellow

Strum clustered pitch area inside the piano with a soft plastic plectrum; no more than a major 3rd either side of the approximate pitch area. The direction of the strumming motion is indicated by an up or down arrow above the cluster notehead.

Tempo: slow medium fast medium

ppp sempre

Bring out. Play normally. Strum with plectrum

keep pedal down