

# Signals From the Edge

*for*

*Orchestra*

John Newell

ABIERTO MUSIC



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This short one-movement work was composed for and is dedicated to the Passamaquoddy Bay Symphony Orchestra and its music director, Trond Saeverud. The piece is generally quiet and minimalist in terms of the musical materials.

The title came to me once I began listening to and working with the musical ideas that arose. What is a signal? A sign, a gesture, an indication, a hint, perhaps a warning sign. It is not a sentence, not a story, not an essay. And what is the reference to “the edge?” The edge of consciousness, of perception, of existence, of time, of the land, of the solar system?

Let’s just say that the initial repeated note idea is inspired by a fog horn that I have grown used to hearing over the past few years. I also have enjoyed following news of the New Horizons spacecraft, launched in 2006. It made its closest approach to Pluto in July, 2015 and continues to travel through the vast Kuiper Belt on its way, eventually, past the edge of our solar system.

## John Newell

Like many composers today John draws from a variety of musical traditions. Not belonging to any “school” of composition, his objective is to create works that reflect his personal sensibility, that are inspiring and rewarding for performers and listeners alike. John’s works have been noted for their originality, clarity, and expressive power. He is equally at home composing for orchestra, solo instruments, vocal ensembles and chamber groups.

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, John graduated from Duke University, having pursued studies in composition, piano and conducting. He earned his M.F.A from California Institute of the Arts, where his primary teacher was Mel Powell. John completed his formal training at SUNY Buffalo, working with Morton Feldman as recipient of the first Edgard Varèse Fellowship. Since earning his Ph.D. in 1979 he has pursued an independent creative path.

Organizations that have commissioned works include Eight Strings & a Whistle, Atlantic Sinfonietta and The Bowery Ensemble (New York), Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles), the Enid Symphony Orchestra (Oklahoma), as well as a number of amateur ensembles such as Passamaquoddy Bay Symphony Orchestra (Maine). His work has received support from the American Music Center, the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Meet the Composer. John's works are self-published through Abierto Music and he is a member of Broadcast Music Inc. More information is available at his web site: [johnnewellmusic.com](http://johnnewellmusic.com).

An accomplished pianist and conductor, he is experienced in collaborating with performers to create and present new works. John lives in Eastport, Maine, where he is music director at Christ Church and founding director of the choral ensemble *Quoddy Voices*.

Note: All instruments are notated at concert pitch; piccolo sounds 1 octave higher and contrabass sounds 1 octave lower.

To Trond Saeverud and the Passamaquoddy Bay Symphony Orchestra

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Sostenuto sempre ♩ = 52

The score is for a 7/4 time signature piece. The woodwind section includes Flute (1 and 2), Piccolo (2), Oboe (1 and 2), Clarinet in Bb (1 and 2), Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon (1 and 2). The brass section includes Horn in F (1-2 and 3-4) and Trumpet in Bb. The percussion section includes Timpani and Percussion (Triangle, Suspended Cymbal). The string section includes Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass. The score is marked 'Sostenuto sempre' with a tempo of ♩ = 52. The woodwinds and strings have specific dynamics: Clarinet in Bb 1 is *mp*, Bass Clarinet is *p*, and Violin 1 is *pp* with a 'sul D' instruction. The Flute and Piccolo parts end with a *p* dynamic. The rest of the score is mostly rests.

A

1 Fl. 1  
2 Fl. 2  
1 Ob. *p*  
2 Ob. 2  
1 B♭ Cl.  
2 B♭ Cl. 2  
B. Cl.  
1 Bsn. *mp*  
2 Bsn. 2

7  
1-2 Hn.  
3-4 Hn.  
Tpt. Mute *p*  
Timp.  
Perc. Triangle *p*

A

7  
Vln. I  
Vln. II Con sord. *pp*  
Vla. Con sord. *pp*  
Vc. *p*  
Cb. *p*

1 Fl. 1  
2 Fl. 2  
1 Ob. 1  
2 Ob. 2  
1 B♭ Cl. 1  
2 B♭ Cl. 2  
1 B. Cl.  
1 Bsn. 1  
2 Bsn. 2

15  
1-2 Hn. 1-2  
3-4 Hn. 3-4  
Tpt.  
Timp.  
Perc.

15  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Cb.

**B**

22

1 Fl. *f*

2 Fl. *f*

1 Ob. *f*

2 Ob. *f*

1 B $\flat$  Cl. *f*

2 B $\flat$  Cl. *f*

1 B. Cl.

1 Bsn.

2 Bsn.

22

1-2 Hn. *f* *Brassy* *sfzp* *simile*

3-4 Tpt. *f* *Brassy* *sfzp* *simile*

Timp.

Perc. Sus. Cymbal (with snare drum stick) *ff*

**B**

22

Vln. I *ff* *simile*

Vln. II *ff* *simile*

Vla. *ff* *simile*

Vc. *sfz*

Cb.



25

1 Fl. 1

2 Fl. 2

1 Ob. 1

2 Ob. 2

1 B♭ Cl. 1

2 B♭ Cl. 2

1 B. Cl.

1 Bsn. 1

2 Bsn. 2

25

1-2 Hn.

3-4 Hn.

Tpt.

Timp.

Perc.

25

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

C

28

1 Fl. 1

2 Fl. 2

1 Ob. 1

2 Ob. 2

1 B♭ Cl. 1

2 B♭ Cl. 2

B. Cl.

1 Bsn. 1

2 Bsn. 2

28

1-2 Hn.

3-4 Hn.

Tpt.

Timp.

Perc.

L.V. simile

p (1 octave lower if available)

C

28

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Con sord. Div. pp

Con sord. Div. pp

Con sord. Div. pp

p

**D**

34

1 Fl. 2 Fl. 1 Ob. 2 Ob. 1 B♭ Cl. 2 B. Cl. 1 Bsn. 2

34

1-2 Hn. 3-4 Tpt. Timp. Perc.

**D**

34

Vln. I Vln. II Vla. Vc. Cb.

**40**

1  
Fl.

2

1  
Ob.

2

1  
B $\flat$  Cl. *pp*

2

B. Cl.

1  
Bsn. *pp*

2

**40**

1-2  
Hn.

3-4

Tpt.

Timp.

Perc.

**40**

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *pp*

Cb. *pp*

**E**

**46**

1 Fl. 2 Fl.

1 Ob. 2 Ob.

1 B $\flat$  Cl. 2 B $\flat$  Cl.

B. Cl.

1 Bsn. 2 Bsn.

**46**

1-2 Hn. 3-4 Hn.

Tpt.

Timp.

Perc. Sus. Cymbal (with soft mallets) *pp sempre*

**E**

**46**

Vln. I Senza sord. pizz. *p*

Vln. II Senza sord. pizz. *p*

Vla.

Vc. *p*

Cb.

F

52

1 Fl. 1

2 Fl. 2

1 Ob. 1

2 Ob. 2

1 B $\flat$  Cl. 1

2 B $\flat$  Cl. 2

1 B. Cl.

1 Bsn. 1

2 Bsn. 2

52

1-2 Hn.

3-4 Hn.

Tpt.

Timp.

Perc.

F

52

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*ritard.*

1 Fl. 2 Fl. 1 Ob. 2 Ob. 1 B♭ Cl. 2 B♭ Cl. 1 Bsn. 2 Bsn.

**58**

1-2 Hn. 3-4 Hn. Tpt. Timp. Perc.

*ritard.*

**58**

Vln. I Vln. II Vla. Vc. Cb.











# John Newell

## *Selected Instrumental Works*

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**Fantasy** viola, 'cello, piano

**Signals From the Edge** orchestra

**The Story Told** timpani, chimes, harp, strings

**In Autumn** violin, piano

**Reflections** String orchestra

**...and nothing remains the same.** flute, viola, 'cello

**Three Preludes** flute

**Samsara Breakdown** Orchestra

**A Day's Journey** string quartet

**Concerto** Piano and orchestra

**Variations on Amazing Grace** piano

**Sequoia Quintet** flute/piccolo, clarinet, oboe, horn, bassoon

**Sky Music** flute, clarinet, harp

**Companions II** piano

**Song of Compassion** 2 violas, keyboard, percussion

**Rhapsody** horn, piano

**Lavender Axes** flute/picc, clarinet, oboe/eh, bassoon, percussion, piano

**Rondos** Eb clarinet, trumpet, trombone, tuba, percussion

**Knossos** piano

**Heterophony** alto voices, violin, viola, english horn

**Text** soprano, violin, flute, clarinet, guitar, percussion

**Image, Song, Vision** flute, clarinet, violin, 'cello

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