

Mallet Portfolio 1

Small Ensembles - Peter Saleh (2005)

These pieces were conceived and written as a response to the relative scarcity of simpler, 'readable' chamber music for younger players. For those looking for the experience of just putting music on the stand and reading it through with the ensemble, an experience that many other instrumentalists get to enjoy at a generally much earlier stage, one would have to either do some considerable searching, or adapt and transcribe music from other sources. This music seeks to fill that void with the thought that good music doesn't have to be hard music.

The three pieces in this collection were composed separately and may be performed in any combination and order. A suggested order is printed below as each piece ends in what could be perceived as the dominant of the next.

For Juliana: A quartet chorale for two marimbas (one Low E), where the soprano and tenor parts share one instrument and the alto and bass share the other. Its 30 measures of music were written for Juliana Choi's 30th birthday.

Passacaglia for Morris: Traditional four part harmony set to a melody found in the Goldenberg "Modern School" text. This piece also requires two marimbas with the same part distribution as For Juliana, but features a bass part with optional pitches that could either require the low E or the more common low A..

Theme and Variations: Based on a brief polyphonic baroque piano etude whose title has been lost to the composer, this piece requires more nimble players than the two preceding chorales. The music takes a journey from home key to relative major, parallel major, dominant minor, and finally a trip back though the original 6/8 material in a melodic argument between the original and parallel keys.