The Struggle is Real for large ensemble

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for large ensemble

Graduate Thesis
M.M. Composition 2015
First performed March 27, 2015, Hockett Family Recital Hall
Conductor: Paul Grobey

Instrumentation

1 Flute
1 Oboe
1 Clarinet in Bb
1 Bassoon
1 Trumpet in C
1 Trombone

Timpani

Violins I
Violins II
Violas
Cellos
Basses

Score in C.

Duration: 9 minutes

Program Note

The art of composition is frequently difficult and discouraging. It is a struggle to create something new and true, even with the awareness of all the music that has come before and that is currently being created. The layered voices of self-criticism and doubt can be overwhelming. In some of my most frustrated moments, I started thinking about how many of the great masterpieces of classical music are about struggle: a struggle toward resolution, peace or revelation. In many of these pieces, the conflict is represented through dense counterpoint and fugal procedures, and I decided to appropriate some of the same methods. The resulting piece, while in some ways traditional and Romantic, feels like a fitting tribute to my own struggles and conflicts. The title is a phrase that has come into use recently to refer ironically to petty problems, but here I mean it in absolute sincerity. The struggle is real.

This piece serves as the graduate thesis project as part of the requirements for the Master of Music in Composition at Ithaca College.