

*If Promises Were Packaged in Forget-Me-Not's* is a chamber piece that has been composed with a general structural outline in mind and yet developed based on a sequence of intuitive reactions. These reactions were stimulated by the atmosphere sought and the music written at that point. The course of which the form develops as a whole relates to the process of transformation to which reflects a theme of distance and suppressed memories. Specific elements I strove to augment within the piece included sensitivity and emptiness.

I wanted to explore an unconventional instrumental combination for this piece in order to achieve this character. An atypical grouping would also allow for exploring diverse timbral and instrumental effects. I intentionally chose these instruments for their natural and most celebrated features including colour and range, but also to expose the characteristics of their upper and lower ranges with each instrument making a different timbral contribution to the textures used within the piece. Specifically, there are moments in the piece where the pitches in the soprano saxophone and bass clarinet parts which cross each other's path

The main essence of the piece is a reflection on what is missing in the importance of life. As the piece was taking shape there was a dramatic influence being imposed which I used to my advantage, however; with an attempt to keep it controlled to a spiritual and emotional level, so as not to take over the direction intended for the work. The textures vary in order to shift the importance of the gesture or line from one sound to another while keeping the harp rather predominant throughout. This is meant to mirror the idea of forgetfulness, in which many aspects of life get flipped between foreground and background as they pertain to one's current situation. In sustained and almost unmoving moments there are internal fluctuations offered by a thin sound on the outer ranges of the bass clarinet and soprano saxophone. Whereas, the harp gradually deepens its colour from single notes through to thick and dense chord structures.

When beginning this piece I did not want to take a form used by many composers and try a work with it, I intended to write some of the music and let the structure develop from where the music would best lead. The music is what influences my decisions for what would come next. The initial written piece of material used in the piece currently begins in the harp part at measure 84. It was then processed and developed in manner that would tie the sections together and hold the interest of the listener. This material was directly manipulated into what became the introduction of the piece. The intent behind the first two minutes of the piece was for building an atmospheric quality that would suggest abstruse thought. The slow, steady increase of tension is brought about by maintaining a regular rhythmic pattern and adapting the harmonic colour.

The motifs, melodies and harmonies for this piece were developed with a strong focus on intervallic relation. The pitches were a prominent characteristic when composing this piece. Many times I would take isolated musical ideas from the initial motif to provide a new shape or coherent sequence of ideas. As a result, this piece demonstrates a continuous flow and unified expression relatively consistent through out. The harp holds the largest part in the score with accompaniment and soloist roles to be fulfilled. In preparation and during the development of this piece, I met with a harpist in order to understand the flexibilities and possibilities available to me and to be sure that the harp part was playable with especial focus on the pedalling directly associated with the tempi.

Rhythm was intended to take on an important role in the piece. There are moments where rhythmic grouping and ideas sound even and predictable and other moments that shake up what the mind expects, and alters one's perception of what is to come. This is meant to reflect upon the time-space concept in which society thinks in and what affects our memories and expectations. The regular recurrence of an accent is held underneath the deviations, fluctuations and instability of the tempi changes and rhythmic impulses. The 5:4 tuplets in the harp have a hypnotic quality which moves into steady semi-quavers into a steady crotchet

pattern. These passages are broken up by rests and other melodic gestures allowing for the listener to gain a new interest and associate with a new pattern while maintaining an almost mesmerising sensation.

This piece maintains a musical consistency through the patterns developed over its duration. The interaction of instruments creatively asserts the ambiance sought and is balanced to provide a provoking exchange of texture and colour. Written with a traditional element in compositional approach my goals were not to be innovative by means of method but to create a piece which rouses the internal dialogue of the listener.