

concert music

By the Lonely  
Traveller's Call  
for Solo Tuba

peter gilbert

## By the Lonely Traveller's Call

for Solo Tuba

This work was written for the virtuosic musicianship of Richard White. I thank him for his bold thinking and his dedication to this piece. The poetry (in italics) is excerpted from "The Listeners" by Walter De la Mare. 1873–1956 from the book of the same title (1912).

### **Program Note:**

*...And he smote upon the door again a second time;  
'Is there anybody there?' he said.  
But no one descended to the Traveller;*

**Audible behind the tuba's tempestuous unleashings in this piece is a still, mysterious presence that found a kind of kinship in Walter de la Mare's famous poem, "The Listeners."**

*...Only a host of phantom listeners  
That dwelt in the lone house then  
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight  
To that voice from the world of men:  
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,  
That goes down to the empty hall,  
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken  
By the lonely Traveller's call.  
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,  
Their stillness answering his cry,*

**As the wailings give way to tone, remnants of an ancient narrative emerges.**

*'Tell them I came, and no one answered,  
That I kept my word,' he said.  
Never the least stir made the listeners,  
Though every word he spake  
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house  
From the one man left awake:  
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,  
And the sound of iron on stone,  
And how the silence surged softly backward,  
When the plunging hoofs were gone.*

## Notes to the Performer:

### STAGING & ELECTRONICS

- This piece does not require but benefits from dramatic staging and the addition of electronics. This can be configured creatively by the performer to taste and need.

Some possibilities for electronics:

- Amplify with microphone or via practice mute with pick-up microphone
- Add mild distortion
- Add long reverberation

Some possibilities for staging:

- Play in a dark hall lit only by a stand light
- Play from a location that feels far from the audience (if amplified)

### NOTATION

- Waved connecting lines indicate a fast and blurry motion between the written pitch, the half-step above and the half-step below (a kind of "noodling" gesture) including microtonal pitches within that range. They function like a tie and accidentals continue as long as the waved line keeps on in a flat line. If the waved line stops, the noodling gesture ceases and the note is simply sustained.
- When the waved line moves through different pitches, like a glissando, the blurry trill noodling continues and the effect is not smooth as in a normal gliss. Straight-line glissandi are smooth (more traditional) glisses which can be a combination of lip-bending, half-valving, and so on.
- Forward-pointing arrows indicate that the fingering speed of the waved-line gestures gets somewhat faster. The speed of the gesture gets somewhat slower on backward-pointing arrows.
- "x" noteheads indicate an airy tone or a disappearing tone, as at the end of a decrescendo.

### BREATHING

- In measure 72 there is a short section of breathing air through the horn which facilitates emptying out condensation. This may be repeated as necessary to accomplish this task. But it must be done as a musical part of the piece with sensitivity to the dramatic timing of the moment.

# Solo Tuba

Peter Gilbert

(2011)

**With frightening tenacity (♩ = 60)**

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

*sfz* *fffz* *mp* *fz* *fffz* *mp* *p* *mf* *n*

*sfz* *fffz* *mf* *pp* *sffz* *fffz* *mp* *fz*

*p* *ffz* *ffz* (sempre *fff*) *sffz* *p* *fffz* *p* *sffz* (sempre *fff*) *sp*

*sffz* *mp* *f* *p* *ffz* *pp* *sffz* *mf* *ff*

*pp* *sffz* *pp* *sffz* *fffz* *mf* *p*

*sfz* *pp* *sfz* *pp* *sfz* *fffz* *pp* *fz* *pp* *mp*

*fff* *pp* *mf* *sffz* *p* *n*

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35

*sfz > fffz > pp > n* *sfz > fffz > p* *ppp* *p*

40

(gliss.)

*mf >* *f < mp > n* *f* *fffz* *sfz > p*

\* optional cut to m59

49

*sfz > p* *sfz > pp* *mp < fffz > mf > p* *p < mf > < f > p <*

50

*< ff < sfz > p < f > n* *mp < f > p < ff > p < fffz > n* *mp < f > < fffz > < fffz >*

57

*> mp >* *sfz > mf < fffz > pp* *sfz > f < fff > mf > pp*

59

*sfz > p < fffz* *sfz > mp < fffz* *sfz > mf < f >*

66

*mp* *ff* *p*

68

*pp* *pp*

Blowing air

[Use this moment to empty condensation. Repeat as necessary.]  
No page turn in performance

# 73 Penetrating steadiness

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82 *mf* < *ff* > *p* *f* > *p* *f* < *ff* > *p*

91

92 *p* *ff* < *p* *f* < *ff* >

104

102 *ff* < *fff* > *p* *fff* < *p*

111 *fff* < *p* < *fff* *fffz* < *p* *p*

117

119 *p* *p*

127

126 *ff* *fffz* < *p* *p* *p* < *mf* > *p* *ff* *fff* *p*

132 *fff* *fffz* *p* < *mf* > *ff* *fff* > *mp*

137

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138 *f* *ff* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz*

143

143 *ff* *fffz* *ff* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz* *fffz*

Sung:

150

149 *f* *p* *mf* *p*

Pesante

157

156 *mf* *fffz* *poco sfz* *poco sfz*

(poco a poco)

[fully sustained, even while getting softer]

Sung:

163 *mf* *p*

gradually relaxing

169

169 *fffz* *p* *sfz* *pp* *(pp)* *(pp possible)* *pp* (low D)

[Slow lib-bend down, like a wide vibrato towards C#]

176 *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* (pedal B)