

Composing for Strings Workshop
Turning Point Ensemble/Vancouver Pro Musica
Owen Underhill, composer mentor
Mary Sokol Brown, Domagoj Ivanovic, Roxi Dykstra, Peggy Lee, David Brown
Nov. 6, 2022

I - Writing for String Quintet in Large Ensemble

- Orchestration Transparency and Weighting, difference between individual strings and string sections, opportunities for different combinations and mixing with winds, percussion, piano etc., conceptual approaches,

II - Excerpts of String Section writing from works written for Turning Point Ensemble

- Minx (2010) - Rudolf Komorous
- Bee Studies - And the Dance Most of All (2019) - Owen Underhill
- A Curious Passerby at Fu's Funeral (2015) - Alexina Louie

III - General Areas to mention

Words of advice to Composers for writing for Strings

- Mary, Domagoj, Roxi, Peggy, David

Bowing

- Upbow, Downbow, notation
- Proximity to bridge - sul pont., sul tasto, on bridge, behind bridge
- Jeté, col legno battuto
- Bridge Clef

Double/Triple/Quadruple stops

- Use of open strings, reasonable intervals on various string instruments

Glissandi

- Rhythmic notation, speed, which string

Vibrato

- Senza vib., norm vib., molto vib.,

Harmonics (Artificial and Natural)

- Overtone series

Special Techniques

- Scordatura, noise (extreme pressure etc.), muffled sound, different uses of the bow

Fragments

- Hope Salmonson

Questions

Further questions following the workshop may be sent to Owen Underhill at underhil@sfu.ca