

TWITTER ETUDES No. 2

for

Solo Oboe

by

John Burge

About the composition...

Twitter Etudes No. 2, for solo oboe, was commissioned in 2016 by Charles (Chip) Hamann, Principal Oboe of the National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa, Ontario) as well as being an accomplished chamber musician and teacher. In the summer of that year Chip had been recording John Burge's *Sonata Breve No. 4*, for oboe and piano, and in passing John had mentioned that he had just finished composing *Twitter Etudes No. 1*, for solo violin. This violin work was composed as the test piece for the First Bader-Overton Violin Competition taking place in 2017. When John spoke of the fun working within the constraints of creating a challenging etude with just 140 distinctive attacks, Chip immediately expressed interest in having a set for the oboe. Having long been an admirer of Chip's facility and musicianship, this commission opportunity was immediately inspiring and the score was delivered shortly thereafter.

Each of the six short etudes in this set is given a title that in some cases reflects the technical skill demanded of the performer including: "Repeated Notes", "Stationary Control" and "Disjunct Motion". Other individual titles such as, "Double Reed Blues" and "A Flourish" are more descriptive in the way they reflect the desired character or effect. The most distinctive etude and the composer's personal favourite is "Why I Love the Oboe". Many composers have repeatedly given their most beautiful romantic melodies to this instrument and this etude leans heavily on the oboe's lyrical side in presenting a short, four-phrase melody followed by two more florid variations. The entire set takes approximately five minutes to play and although the composer has given numbers to each etude, performers are encouraged to play them in any order or to even perform just a few at a time.

About the composer...

Canadian composer John Burge (b. 1961) has been a professor of Composition and Theory at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario since 1987. In recognition of his work as a composer, he received one of the University's 2013 Awards for Excellence in Research and in 2014 he was inducted as a Fellow in the Royal Society of Canada's Humanities and Arts Division for both his work as a composer and his leadership in the arts in Canada. John Burge has written a large body of vocal, chamber, and orchestral compositions and a chamber opera entitled, *The Auction*. He has always been drawn to writing for string instruments and his string orchestra work, *Flanders Fields Reflections*, as recorded by Sinfonia Toronto, won the 2009 Juno for Best Recording of a Canadian Classical Composition. A passionate advocate of Canadian music, he was a member of the executive council of the Canadian League of Composers for fourteen years, holding the position of President from 1998-2006. He has been serving on the Board of Directors for the SOCAN Foundation since 2009.

TWITTER ETUDES No. 2

For Solo Oboe By

John Burge

- 1. Repeated Notes**
- 2. Stationary Control**
- 3. Double Reed Blues**
- 4. A Flourish**
- 5. Why I Love the Oboe**
- 6. Disjunct Motion**

**Performers are encouraged to play these etudes in any order
or even just a few at a time.**

for Charles Hamann

Twitter Etudes No. 2

for Solo Oboe

1. Repeated Notes

John Burge

Allegro ♩ = 132

Musical score for '1. Repeated Notes' in 4/4 time, featuring repeated notes and triplets. The score is marked with dynamics *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *cresc.*. It includes measures 1 through 16, with a 35-second performance time indicated at the end.

2. Stationary Control

Vivace ♩ = 80

Musical score for '2. Stationary Control' in 2/4 time, featuring stationary control exercises. The score is marked with dynamics *p* and *p (sempre)*. It includes measures 1 through 4.

7 *p* (sempre) *cresc. poco a poco*

11 *f* *p* [15"]

Detailed description: This section consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 7-10) features a continuous eighth-note pattern in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked *p* (sempre) and *cresc. poco a poco*. The second staff (measures 11-15) continues the pattern, ending with a triplet of eighth notes and a fermata. The dynamics are marked *f* and *p*. A bracket under the final measure indicates a duration of [15"].

3. Double Reed Blues

Swing ♩ = ♩³ = 92

4 *f* *p*

7 *p* *f*

10 *p* *p* ³ *cresc.*

14 *f* ³

17 *p* ³ *cresc.* ³

20 *f* *rit.* *ff* *port.* [1'10"]

Detailed description: This section is titled '3. Double Reed Blues' and is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It consists of eight staves of music. The tempo is marked 'Swing' with a metronome setting of ♩ = ♩³ = 92. The first staff (measures 4-7) starts with a dynamic of *f* and ends with *p*. The second staff (measures 8-10) has dynamics *p* and *f*. The third staff (measures 11-13) has dynamics *p*, *p*, and *cresc.*. The fourth staff (measures 14-16) has a dynamic of *f*. The fifth staff (measures 17-19) has dynamics *p*, *cresc.*, and *f*. The sixth staff (measures 20-23) starts with *f*, includes a *rit.* marking, and ends with *ff* and *port.*. A bracket under the final measure indicates a duration of [1'10"].

4. A Flourish

Fast but flexibly smooth ♩ = 84

Musical score for '4. A Flourish' in 4/4 time, tempo 84. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a 7-measure phrase. The second staff begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes a 6-measure phrase. The third staff returns to piano (*p*) and features a 5-measure phrase. The fourth staff starts with mezzo-forte (*mf*) and includes a 6-measure phrase. The fifth staff begins with piano (*p*) and features a 7-measure phrase, ending with a *poco rit.* marking and a fermata over a 20-measure rest.

5. Why I Love the Oboe

With a slow lilt ♩ = 42

Musical score for '5. Why I Love the Oboe' in 6/8 time, tempo 42. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and is marked *espr.* The second staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third staff starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking.

15 *p* *mp* *p*

18 *mf* *p* *mp* *rit.*

21 *mf* *p* *mp* *Meno mosso* *opt. 8^{va}* [1' 20"]

6. Disjunct Motion

Allegro ♩ = 132

f

5 *p (sub)* *f* *p (sub)* (*p*) (*no cresc.*)

9 *f* *p (no cresc.)* *f (no dim.) rit.*

13 *p* *f a tempo*

19 *p* *mf* *p (sub)*

24 *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* (*f*) *sfp* [55"]