

SILVER LINING

For Solo Flute and Chamber Ensemble

Frank Ticheli

Duration c. 22 minutes

INSTRUMENTATION

Solo Flute

Bb Clarinet

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Piano

Percussion/Drum Set (one player)

Triangle (*med.*)

3 Wood Blocks (*picc., med., lg.*)

Vibraphone (*motor off*)

Drum Set

Kick Drum, Floor Tom

Small & medium Tom

Snare Drum, Cowbell

Hi-hat, Ride Cymbal, Splash Cymbal

Duration: c. 22 minutes

- i. **Game**
- ii. **To the Girl with the Flaxen Hair**
- iii. **Silver Lining**

SILVER LINING was originally composed for solo flute and wind ensemble in 2018 on a commission by Peter Warshaw and a consortium of 25 flutists, conductors, and friends under the auspices of Worldwide Concurrent Premieres and Commissioning Fund, Inc., in memory of Peter Warshaw's wife, Lara Barnett. The current version, scored for solo flute and chamber ensemble, was created in 2026 for *Thornton Edge*, the contemporary music ensemble of the University of Southern California, and premiered by that ensemble on March 4, 2026, Donald Crockett, conductor, Antonia Styczen-Leszczynska, soloist.

Silver Lining is cast in three movements. The first movement, *Game*, was inspired partly by my (then) teenage son's love of video games. He acquainted me with lots of standard video game terms and characters, such as Side Quest (a deviation from the main game), Final Boss (the main antagonist, usually appearing at or near the end of the game), and Mini-Boss (a middle level boss, not as powerful as the Final Boss). The use of these references helped me to create an overall structure for the movement, beginning with a "Tutorial" in which the basic rhythmic motives are introduced as air or air-like sounds only. The movement progresses through various levels of play. In Level 1, adds pitch to the main motives; in Level 2 adds chords, and in Level 3, sound clusters. Along the way I insert transitional episodes (Side Quests) and more competitive episodes (Mini-Boss and Final Boss sections). The rapid interaction between the soloist and ensemble suggests a competition, a fun game, with no clear winner in the end.

The second movement, *To the Girl with the Flaxen Hair*, is a personal tribute to the memory of Lara Barnett, the late wife of the main commissioner of the concerto, and someone I also knew personally. (Lara was a student in one of my classes back in the 1980s). The movement is partly inspired by American poet, Sara Teasdale's "A Little While," a poem that addresses the topic of death with a gentle, accepting tone, ultimately finding peace and serenity in its final lines. As the melody unfolds, the ensemble recalls the main motive from Debussy's *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*—the dedicatee's favorite piece—floating it and blurring it like a passing dream.

The final movement, *Silver Lining*, is bright and joyous, moving alternately between ebullient dancelike energy and carefree lyricism. A sense of optimism is ever-present as the soloist and ensemble take turns sharing the spotlight.

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