

Norbert Palej

**CONCERTO FOR TWO CLARINETS
AND ORCHESTRA
(2011)**

INSTRUMENTATION:

2 Flutes (2nd doubling on Piccolo)
2 Oboes
1 B-flat Clarinet
2 Bassoons

2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C

2 Timpani
1 Percussion player
(Claves, Whip, Maracas, Rain Stick, Suspended Cymbal, Pair of Cymbals,
Tam-tam, Chimes, Crotales, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Vibraphone)

2 Solo Clarinets in B-flat

Strings

DURATION:

18 min.

PROGRAM NOTE:

The concerto was commissioned by Polish-Canadian clarinet virtuoso Kornel Wolak. Though essentially conceived as an absolute, non-programmatic piece of music, it was indirectly inspired by several extramusical themes. One of them is a poem by the Polish poet K. K. Baczynski (1921-1944), entitled "The Disquietude of Everything," written in the midst of World War II, shortly before the young poet's tragic death in the Warsaw Uprising. Indeed, the opening section of the concerto – or the "First Theme," as one might call it – projects a sense of restlessness and agitation, even fear and panic. The other main inspiration came from Mr. Wolak, who has recently been researching the War of 1812, and telling me many stories from that turbulent time in (pre-) Canadian history. However, the concerto transcends all the foreboding war-associations by means of a contrasting "Second Theme," which is filled with tranquil nostalgia and lyricism. In the final episodes of the work, this second theme transforms into an expression of triumph, joy and ecstatic transfiguration.