

# Sleepyhead

*for english horn and piano*

2011

Robbie McCarthy

# Sleepyhead

## *for english horn and piano*

In the winter of 2010, I spent several weeks traveling the United States. The three main movements of "Sleepyhead" were composed in the three places I traveled that holiday season: Los Angeles, New York, and Phoenix.

Visiting my family in Los Angeles for holiday break, I began banging out a few pop songs on a practice room piano while I was waiting for my brother to finish rehearsal. Driving to dinner together, we casually talked about instrumental music's influence on the indie-rock scene. More and more mainstream acts are featuring skillful instrumentalists to add a new layer of complexity to otherwise simple arrangements. I thought a lot about the music I listen to for fun, and wondered what place it would have in the concert hall. For the next few days, I planned out what would eventually become this piece:

*What would happen if the simplicity of popular music infiltrated the concert hall instead of the instrumentalists sneaking onto the main stage?*

Upon arriving in New York City, I immediately fell asleep on the couch of our hotel room. It was at this moment that my omnipresent brother quoted pop-musician Jason Mraz. "Wake up! How can you sleep at a time like this, unless the dreamer is the real you?!" (I notice that about myself. I sleep way too much. What was I doing snoring on a stinky fifty year-old pink couch when I could have been exploring the greatest city on the planet? I really did enjoy my dreams though. Maybe too much now that I look back on it.) The trip ended with the break-up show of "As Tall As Lions", one of my most recently discovered favorite bands. To date, that show was one of my favorite musical moments in my life. I bought their last album, and failed at first to notice the title of the last track: "Sleepyhead".

Back to school in Phoenix, Arizona, I started compiling the material I wrote during my travels. Distinct themes were nowhere to be found, but what I did have were tonal and harmonic moods of the places I went. I then turned to my favorite pop artists and tried to emulate the feel and lyric nature of their melodies. My explanation of the movements are as follows:

- I. Wake Up Everyone (Los Angeles, CA) - my ideal 'wake-up' soundtrack, bringing back the happy memories of my childhood home. Contains imitative elements of As Tall As Lions, The Fray, Freddy and Francine, and Snow Patrol.
- II. How Can You Sleep at a Time Like This? (New York, NY) - a jazz-influenced song inspired by how at-home I feel amongst the hustle-and-bustle in the Big Apple. Contains imitative elements of Alicia Keys, The Fray, Freddy and Francine, and Sufjan Stevens.
- III. Unless the Dreamer is the Real You (Phoenix, AZ) - the soundtrack to my dreams, a pseudo-impressionist canvas to paint a singer's lyrics, (or in this case the soloist's melody.) Contains imitative elements of Freddy and Francine, and John Coltrane.

During performance I prefer that the movement titles are read aloud by the soloist during the fermata rests (after the double-bar-lines) in the solo part. The pianist should feel free to pedal liberally throughout.

- Robbie McCarthy, 2/2011  
*revised for English Horn, 4/2011*

# Sleepyhead

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I. Wake Up, Everyone  
♩ = 132

English Horn

Piano

freely

*mp*

*ff*

9

E.H.

Piano

*mf*

17

E.H.

Piano

23

E.H.

Piano

29

E.H.

Piano

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2

35

E.H.

Piano

40

E.H.

Piano

46

E.H.

Piano

52

E.H.

Piano

58

E.H.

Piano

*mp*

*p*

*p*

*mf*

*rit.*

*f*

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64 *a tempo*

E.H.

Piano

*leg.*

71

E.H.

Piano

77 *rit.* *a tempo*

E.H.

Piano

*mf*

II. How Can You Sleep at a Time Like This?  
♩. = 56

83

E.H.

Piano

*p* *mp*

91

E.H.

Piano

Sleepyhead

4

97

E.H.

*mp*

Piano

102

E.H.

Piano

108

E.H.

Piano

114

E.H.

*f*

Piano

*f*

\*

120

E.H.

*f*

Piano

*f*

*And*

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125

E.H.

Piano

*mp*

130

E.H.

Piano

*p*

133

E.H.

Piano

*mf*

136

E.H.

Piano

*mf*

139

E.H.

Piano

*mp*

*mf*

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6

E.H. 143 *mp*

Piano 143

III. Unless the Dreamer is the Real You

♩ = 120

E.H. 147 *rit.*

Piano 147 *Real*

E.H. 152

Piano 152 *p* *Real*

E.H. 155

Piano 155 *Real*

E.H. 158 *mp*

Piano 158 *Real*



## Sleepyhead

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "The Rose Tree". The score is written for two parts: E.H. (likely a vocal or solo instrument) and Piano (accompanying instrument). The music is in the key of D major (indicated by two sharps) and features a complex, multi-measure rhythmic structure. The score is divided into six systems, each containing staves for E.H. and Piano. The E.H. part consists of a single melodic line with various note values and rests. The Piano part is more complex, featuring multiple staves with dense, rhythmic patterns, including many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano), and articulation marks like accents and slurs. The overall style is that of a classical or romantic-era musical score.

175

E.H.

Piano

*mp*

179

E.H.

Piano

*ff*

*ff*

183

E.H.

Piano

*ff*

187

E.H.

Piano

*ff*

192

E.H.

Piano

*mp*

*ff*