



A Review of *Diversions*, a new album released by flutist and GPFS member Rose Bishop. Includes three works by Portland-based composer Lisa Neher! (2022, 49 minutes)

Reviewed by GPFS Member BJ Nicoletti

Rose Bishop *Diversions*



Music for solo piccolo, flute, alto flute,
bass flute & contrabass flute

Diversions, a new album released by flutist and GPFS member Rose Bishop features six unique, well performed, well recorded, and interesting pieces for piccolo, C-flute, alto, bass and contrabass, including three works by Portland-based composer Lisa Neher. Learn more at Rose's webpage for the album, including program notes by the composers (nice addition!): [Diversions](#).



Night Songs for Moths, for solo piccolo by Lisa Neher (7'33") – Commissioned by Rose, this composition calls the listener into stillness, reflection, and connection to the natural world around them. It creates an intimate aural and visual landscape. You will indeed hear the rise and set of the moon, fluttering moths, rippling water. The piece leaves a lot of room for resonant, yearning musical interpretation. This piece is for the early-advanced to advanced player. While technically accessible, it requires nuanced, colorful, mature piccolo playing – playing which Rose delivers. Piccolo players amongst us will enjoy this solo option. This piece is best programmed within the concert setting (not background music for gigs) and would be especially

effective in an outdoor setting. Available at: <https://www.lisanehermusic.com/night-song-for-moths.html>

Reach Out, for solo flute by Lisa Neher (3'54"). Crazy beautiful and beckoning opening expressions. Described by the composer as about yearning for connection in all forms - "Reach Out is about yearning for human connection. It is about the need to be heard, to be seen, to be touched, to be understood. Large ascending leaps in the melody represent that longing while expressive arpeggios up and down paint a picture of waves of emotion, surges of happiness, grief, anxiety, and relief. We need one another. Reach Out." (Lisa Neher) Rose's sound, musicality and colors are breathtaking, completely engaging. This piece is for the advanced-intermediate through advanced player because all three octaves of the flute are used, there are more complex rhythms and varied meters as well as some slightly more challenging technical passages. This is best programmed for a recital or other concert setting. It can serve as excellent challenge piece for more advanced middle and high school students both musically and technically. Available at: <https://www.lisanehermusic.com/reach-out.html>

Seal Mother, for alto flute by Lisa Neher – (6'53") This piece calls upon the performer to create sea sounds, whisps and long lines of yearning, keeling - "Seal Mother envisions a selkie in her seal form, swimming not too far offshore, watching her children from a distance. Lyrical melodic lines express her love and longing for her children, while undulating motives evoke currents of water and grief. The embellishments are inspired by Irish whistle ornamentation such as cuts and taps. The piece ends with a reinvention of the Scotts ballad The Great Selkie, a tragic folksong about a Selkie father and his son who are killed by humans while in seal form." (Lisa Neher) Rose delivers a nuanced alto flute performance and a sympathetic message. The piece is suitable to more advanced players because of the varied meters, musicality demands, modest technical runs, full use of all three octaves of the alto flute, and extended techniques of vocal sounds and pitch bending. This piece is best programmed within the concert setting (not background music for gigs) and would be especially effective in an outdoor setting. Learn more: <https://www.lisanehermusic.com/seal-mother.html>

(Continue on next page.)

Calls, for solo flute by Amber Beams – In three

movements: Morning Call for alto; Love Birds for C-flute, and Dusk for bass flute. (10'30") Rose creates a stunning range of “calling effects” that had me listening and imagining the visual landscape and feeling the moment at each turn – the call of the morning hours, the fun chatter of love birds, and the sweet rest and quiet of dusk. Each movement is suitable to the advanced-intermediate through advanced player. The composer uses some pitch bends and flutter tongue techniques. The first and third movements stay mostly within the first two octaves of the flute. The second movement makes more use of the third octave. This piece too is best programmed within the concert setting (not background music for gigs) and would be especially effective in an outdoor setting. Learn more: <https://beamsmusic.weebly.com/>



Imperial Topaz for contra-bass by Nicole

Chamberlain – (3'55") If I was pressed to choose one piece to listen to on this album, I simply couldn't do it. That said, this is a fascinating one because it is a substantive solo for a contra-bass. Invoking Imperial Topaz - “The color of the sun at sunset.” Nicole notes the piece “is intended to be performed on contrabass flute, but could easily be performed on any of the low flutes or even the C flute,” a fact which makes this engaging solo

accessible to more players. It employs some simple modern techniques such as key clicks/punches, vocal and wind sounds. There are slow parts with elongated low notes as well as technically faster spots. Learn more about flutist and composer Nicole here: <https://www.nikkinotes.com/index.html>. This definitely takes a bass flute player with substantial breath energy and “tongue stop”/lip articulation ability.

Diversions, for one flute, three flutes and orchestra by Linda Robbins Coleman – In three movements: L'avventura

for alto flute; Le Petite Rendevous for C-flute; and, LaFiesta for piccolo. Needless to explain, this is a vibrant and fun filled piece. Deserving of the album's namesake. (11'5"). The first movement with the alto is humorous and immediately translates as “movie-score like.” As the composer intended, I immediately started wondering about the movie and “what's up' with this alto flute character/scenario!?” Definitely for the more advanced player and not yet arranged for any other orchestration. There are no extended techniques or wildly inaccessible technical passages, just outright romping fun. The second movement with the C-



flute is charming and a little “old-timey stroll.” Keeps you smiling and bouncing. Very cheery. The third movement evokes a determined, interesting journey – a walk down a boardwalk by someone with a mission. A march feeling of elated excited to be moving along and getting closer to the destination. Person seems to get a little unusual, jocular swagger or tipsiness going in the middle then is back on some sort of determined path as it comes to a close. This one will evoke from the listener a smile and laughter. Jolly good journey. From the composer: “Diversions is not your normal flute concerto by any means. It is a lighthearted entertainment that explores the ranges, tonal flavors, and individual characters of three different flutes. While each movement can easily exist as a standalone piece, the three complement each other using stylistic and thematic traits, the interplay between the soloist and other instruments, and the overall mood. My love of classic movies provided inspiration, my travels and experiences with other cultures provided the settings, and my jazz, pop, and theatre background provided the stylistic and tonal palette.” (L.R. Coleman) Learn more: [Composer Webpage for Diversions](#).



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