

Music Too Brief, for Allan  
by Jon Forshee

There are many things I would like to share about Allan – about his kindness, about his integrity, and about his commitment to Art. I would like to write about his devotion not only to Music, but to musicians, and particularly about the time and energy he spent working with younger composers (like myself). And I would like to share what a master composer Allan's music reveals him to be, and I would share that his influence on my own music is lasting and indelible.

But right now, I would like to share a little context for a regret that informed my piece, "Music Too Brief, for Allan". The first piece for live performer and computer I ever heard, as a High School student, was Allan's "Eternal Winter", for trombone and computer-generated sounds. It was too sophisticated for my ears at that age, but I returned to the work many times. As I came to know Allan as his TA at the Eastman Computer Music Center, my admiration for his music and for his imagination grew with each new work, whether the (at that time) newly composed Akhmatova Songs, or his earlier works with video. And as a computer music composer, I can only marvel at the tactile, instrumental qualities I hear in his computer works. Only a book-length text could adequately start to address the many dimensions, aesthetic and technological, alive in Allan's music.

I am also a tuba player, and after becoming familiar with "Eternal Winter", and other works for performer with computer, I resolved to one day get some of my colleagues in the International Euphonium & Tuba Association together, and form a consortium to commission Allan for a work for tuba and computer-generated sounds. I knew then, as I believe now, that such a work from Allan Schindler would be an important, even seminal, contribution to the literature. Important, because everyone would want to play it, and Allan's miraculous computer tracks would come alive in tuba practice rooms all over the country and beyond. But, though Allan and I were in touch as recently as 2016, I never mentioned it to him. I suppose I always wanted more "in place" before bringing up the subject with him. I wish I had worked with Allan on a piece like this.

This was on my mind when the chance to submit a 1-2 minute work for Allan's memorial concert came up, and so my offering tonight, "Music Too Brief, for Allan", is a kind of incomplete, micro version of a work for tuba and computer-generated sounds. Some of the filtering would not be to Allan's liking, and I am certain he would send me back to clean up a few of the tuba samples, played by me. But this work is for him, and is dedicated to him, and is filled by the feelings of admiration and gratitude I have for him.

--Jon Forshee, November 2018