

Program Note

NEW TIME for clarinet, violin and piano Robert Greenberg

Prelude
Part One
Part Two
Part Three
Postlude

NEW TIME was composed in 1986 in conjunction with choreographer Victoria Morgan for the Dancer's Stage Ballet Company of San Francisco. The choreography, for three mixed pairs of dancers, describes aspects of the changing relationships between men and women in our contemporary urban world.

NEW TIME is in five parts. The Prelude introduces the three couples and the music that represents them and their relationships. Part One, a duet for clarinet and piano, describes a dependent, almost abusive relationship. The clarinet, fearful and tentative, attempts to escape the smothering, almost violent embrace of the piano. Part Two, a duet for violin and piano, describes a narcissistic couple so preoccupied with their own movements they never have the opportunity to dance with each other. They finish their frenzied dance too exhausted to interact with one another. Part Three, for all three instruments, is a love song, in which the third couple attempts to capture and attain for themselves the spirit of romance and intimacy that can be so difficult to preserve in a world characterized by change. Couples one and two have witnessed this "love" dance from the sides of the stage. The Postlude revisits the three couples. The narcissistic dancers, in reaction to the love duet, notice each other for the first time, and touch hands tentatively as they exit. The fearful woman of Part One (represented as before by the clarinet) is finally possessed of enough courage to break free of her abusive partner. He is left alone on stage, shocked and dismayed, as the ballet ends.

