

Wayne Siegel

Millennium Café

Concerto for Trumpet and Ensemble (17')

1999

Millennium Café was commissioned by the Danish Chamber Players with financial support from the Danish Arts Foundation. When I was asked to compose a work for the Danish Chamber Players I first considered the unusual instrumentation of the ensemble: flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, harp, piano, violin, viola and cello. My first thought was that the trumpet, being the only brass instrument, is somewhat out of place, making the ensemble a bit inhomogeneous. Rather than work around this and try to hide the trumpet amongst the other players, I decided to bring the trumpet to the forefront and compose a concerto for trumpet and ensemble. The concerto is performed without a conductor. In some sections the soloist acts as a kind of "band leader" to keep the ensemble together, in other sections the musicians follow one another.

The title, Millennium Café, does not refer to a particular place, though I don't doubt that such a place might exist. It strikes me that the celebration of the new millennium is in fact a celebration of the Roman Calendar and the base-10 counting system. Had we adopted the Judaic calendar, we would have to wait another 240 years, since the current year is 5760. And had we adopted a binary system, we might celebrate a similar change of digits every 8 years. And somehow I think that round numbers are overrated. Personally, I prefer odd and prime numbers. The time signatures in Millennium Café alternate chiefly between meters of 5, 7, 11, 13 and 17, bringing us back to the trumpet concerto that I was supposed to be writing about. Anyway, I hope you enjoy the piece, have a merry century and a happy new-millennium.