

RWS CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

Grade: 3

Conductor Score: RWS-2585-01

Droid Funk

Dylan Fixmer

CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

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INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score.....	1
Violin 1.....	8
Violin 2.....	8
Viola.....	6
Cello.....	5
Double Bass.....	5
Drum Set.....	1

PROGRAM NOTE

Droid Funk was inspired by the whimsical and snarky robots from science fiction. The composer loved how these sentient beings trapped within metal housing transcended their existences as property and made meaning for themselves through relationships with others, including being (among many other things) sassy, dedicated, moral and proud. The juxtaposition between short angular dance rhythms and smooth flowing groove made the funk style a perfect medium for portraying droids in all their beautiful complexity. Giving space for the individual's voice to take the center stage during the solo section made it even more compelling. For these reasons, the composer celebrates these wonderful beings by writing a funky piece that get all up and grooving!

NOTES TO CONDUCTOR

The big hurdle is to get the students freed up from the terrifying process of soloing off the page. To help with this, I've written out solos for the students to play first (these don't need to be for only one part, the Violin 1 may want to play the Bass solo or vice versa). From there, the students can be encouraged to adopt different parts of these solos to their own improvising. It is important to give them the time and space to practice in class. Adopting a "chaos improv" time to provide the students with space to improvise all at the same time can take the spotlight off any one student. I encourage playing the chords underneath the chaos so students can tune in to the chordal motion of the section. After providing the practice time, offer solo time for students who want to improvise or play the written solos individually. The provided suggested solos are meant to help scaffold these types of pedagogical activities in the classroom.

The piece is meant to be in the style of 70's funk with a 21st-century aesthetic. The rhythms are very articulate and require lots of energy behind the bow. Staccatos must be very short, and tenutos must be as long as possible. Subdividing the beat is one of the most important things the students must feel for the piece to work. The piece is written in a D Dorian mode which functions on the two opposing motions of D Minor (tonic) and C Major (dominant). The solo section contains no C Major, but the use of G natural as a 7th of A Minor makes the Dorian motion stronger when the soloist employs it at the end of a phrase (i.e., to make the phrase longer, stay away from the G natural, to end the phrase use it).

The drum part of this piece gives it sparkle and energy. It is written for a grade 3 drum set player familiar with traditional jazz notation. Bringing in the drummer from the school's jazz band or a special guest from the community is a great way to create a special moment for the students.

I hope you and your students will enjoy this fun and groovy piece!

Please visit my composer page at rwsmusic.com to connect!



ABOUT THE COMPOSER



Described by Conductor Lowell Graham as "Just an incredible composer" and "a very sincere creative artist" by composer Chen Yi, Colorado based composer, musician and educator, Dylan Fixmer, is a genuine and passionate artist whose works reflect his diverse music career.

Classically trained at University of Colorado and Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Fixmer's music is inspired by the beauty of nature and the human spirit, and draws upon a multitude of musical styles and traditions from Western Art Music to Rock n' Roll, Jazz to Irish Trad, Electronic to Raga, and Bluegrass to Hip-hop.

Recent works include commissions and premiers from Ópera Guanajuato, the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra, the Front Range Chamber Players, the Crested Butte Music Festival, The Burroughs, Towards a Shining Light, Old Machines Duo, UCHHealth, the University of Texas – El Paso and the University of Northern Colorado Faculty Recital Series.

Fixmer is currently the Composer in Residence for the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra who premiered his Concerto for Violin: In Memory of Terri Sternberg with violinist Sarah Off, "which received a rapturous reception when it was performed" (The Times of London) on September 24, 2022.

As a multi-faceted and imaginative composer, Fixmer writes for multifarious contexts from orchestral and traditional solo and ensemble work, to theater, choir, film, and narrative including the soundtrack for the audio book "Adventures of a Mystic Warrior" by Robert Rocco D'Ordine, and author Craig Child's multi-media production "Dark Night".

Fixmer's Four Portraits for Strings was selected as Editor's Choice by J.W. Pepper in 2023 and his music has been featured internationally on Colorado Public Radio Denver and CPR Classical, Radio Classique – Paris, The Times of London, and Le Figaro.

An active and dynamic performing artist, Fixmer currently performs with his band "Traditionish", in addition to various solo and ensemble performances. He has appeared with artists from Glen Valez and Loire Cotler to Blackie O'Connell and Cyril Cyril O Donoghue to Gao Hong, and in performance venues from the Montrose Pavilion and Boettcher Hall to The IBar Ranch. He has recorded numerous albums including Embodying Rhythm Marimba Ensemble's "Music for Everyday Life", Traditionish "Traditionish".

As an educator, Fixmer is currently Adjunct Faculty of Music Composition at the University of Northern Colorado. He has served as Associate Instructor of Music and "First Voices" Choir Director at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and previously taught Music History at the Early College Academy in Greeley, K-8 general music, jazz band, and drama at Hotchkiss K-8 School, K-4 general music at Highland Elementary School, and as a faculty member at the Mt. Blanca Music Conservatory in Colorado.



DROID FUNK

9

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Drs.

f

mf

mp

mf

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Drs.

mf

f

mf

f

mp

mf

17

Score for measures 17-20, featuring Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs.

Measures 17-20 show a progression of dynamics: *mf* (measures 17-18), *mp* (measure 19), and *f* (measure 20). The strings (Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl.) play a rhythmic pattern, while the Double Bass (D.B.) and Drums (Drs.) provide a steady accompaniment.

25

Score for measures 21-25, featuring Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs.

Measures 21-25 show a progression of dynamics: *mf* (measures 21-22), *mp* (measure 23), *f* (measures 24-25). The strings (Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl.) play a rhythmic pattern, while the Double Bass (D.B.) and Drums (Drs.) provide a steady accompaniment.

Score for measures 26-29. Instruments: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs.

Measure 26: Vln. 1 (*f*), Vln. 2 (*f*), Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs. (*mf*)

Measure 27: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs. (*f*)

Measure 28: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs. (*mf*)

Measure 29: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs. (*f*)

Score for measures 30-33. Instruments: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., Drs.

Measure 30: Vln. 1 (*sub. pp*), Vln. 2 (*sub. pp*), Vla. (*sub. pp*), Vcl. (*sub. pp*), D.B. (*sub. pp*), Drs. (*mf*)

Measure 31: Vln. 1 (*sub. pp*), Vln. 2 (*sub. pp*), Vla. (*sub. pp*), Vcl. (*sub. pp*), D.B. (*sub. pp*), Drs. (*sub. pp*)

Measure 32: Vln. 1 (*sub. pp*), Vln. 2 (*sub. pp*), Vla. (*sub. pp*), Vcl. (*sub. pp*), D.B. (*sub. pp*), Drs. (*sub. pp*)

Measure 33: Vln. 1 (*sub. pp*), Vln. 2 (*sub. pp*), Vla. (*sub. pp*), Vcl. (*sub. pp*), D.B. (*f*), Drs. (*f*)

37 *ad lib (open for solos)*

Score for measures 34-38. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs. The key signature is D minor (three flats). The tempo is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). The score includes a repeat sign at measure 37, indicating a solo section. The bass line (D.B.) features a prominent eighth-note pattern. The drums (Drs.) play a consistent eighth-note pattern.

Measures 34-38 are marked with *mf* and *f* dynamics. Measure 37 is marked with *mf* and *ad lib (open for solos)*. Measure 38 is marked with *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Score for measures 39-43. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs. The key signature is D minor (three flats). The tempo is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). The score includes a repeat sign at measure 42, indicating a solo section. The bass line (D.B.) features a prominent eighth-note pattern. The drums (Drs.) play a consistent eighth-note pattern.

Measures 39-43 are marked with *mf* and *f* dynamics. Measure 42 is marked with *mf* and *ad lib (open for solos)*. Measure 43 is marked with *mp* (mezzo-piano).

DROID FUNK

Solo continues
Backgrounds on cue

[illegible]

Vln. 1
 Vln. 2
 Vla.
 Vcl.
 D.B.
 Drs.

Dm F Am Dm *Repeat as needed*
 Dm F Am Dm
 pizz. F Am pizz. Dm
 Dm pizz. F Am pizz. Dm
 Dm F Am Dm
 49 50 51 52

53 *End solo*

Score for measures 53 to 57. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The score features a large red watermark reading "Preview Only" and "Legal Use Requires Purchase".

Measures 53-57 show a progression of dynamics: *f* (forte) in measures 53-54, *f* in measure 55, *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measures 56-57. The Vln. 1 and Vln. 2 parts have a *f* dynamic marking in measure 55. The Vla. and Vcl. parts have an *arco* marking in measure 55. The D.B. part has a *f* marking in measure 55. The Drs. part has a *f* marking in measure 55 and a *mf* marking in measure 57.

Score for measures 58 to 61. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The score features a large red watermark reading "Preview Only" and "Legal Use Requires Purchase".

Measures 58-61 show a progression of dynamics: *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 58, *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 59, *f* (forte) in measure 60, and *f* in measure 61. The Vln. 1 and Vln. 2 parts have a *f* dynamic marking in measure 60. The Vla. and Vcl. parts have a *f* marking in measure 60. The D.B. part has a *f* marking in measure 60. The Drs. part has a *f* marking in measure 60.

Score for measures 62-65, featuring Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs.

Measures 62-65 show a rhythmic pattern in the strings, with dynamics *mf* and *f* indicated. The strings play a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures featuring accents (^) and breath marks (V). The drums (Drs.) play a consistent pattern of eighth notes.

Score for measures 66-70, featuring Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., D.B., and Drs.

Measures 66-70 show a continuation of the rhythmic pattern. Measures 66-69 feature a *sub. p* (subito piano) dynamic, while measure 70 features a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic. The strings play a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures featuring accents (^) and breath marks (V). The drums (Drs.) play a consistent pattern of eighth notes.

Dorian Modes

Sheet music for Dorian Modes, featuring five staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., and D.B. The music is written in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The notes are: Vln. 1 (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5), Vln. 2 (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5), Vla. (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4), Vcl. (D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3), and D.B. (D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3).

37 Suggested Solos

Sheet music for Suggested Solos, featuring five staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vcl., and D.B. The music is written in 4/4 time and consists of six measures. The notes are: Vln. 1 (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5), Vln. 2 (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5), Vla. (D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4), Vcl. (D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3), and D.B. (D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3). The music is marked with a large red watermark: "Preview Only Requires Purchase".

45

Am Dm Dm F Am

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

43 44 45 46 47

Dm Dm F Am Dm

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

48 49 50 51 52