RYAN NOWLIN Song of Solace

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KOS Neil A. Kjos Music Company • San Diego, California

About the Composer



Ryan Nowlin (b. 1978), a native of Cleveland, Ohio, holds both his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Bowling Green State University (Ohio). He has taught for ten years at the beginning, middle school, high school, and college levels including wind ensemble, jazz ensemble, and marching band direction. Mr. Nowlin was an instructor of conducting and band scoring at BGSU and was recently recognized as one of the university's Accomplished Graduates.

Mr. Nowlin is an active composer and arranger, and has co-authored with noted author, composer, and educator Bruce Pearson the *Tradition of Excellence Comprehensive Band Method*, the textbook *Teaching Band with Excellence*, the *Excellence in Theory* music theory, history, ear training workbooks, *Excellence in Chamber Music*, and *Tradition of Excellence Concert Time*. In 2010, Mr. Nowlin joined "The President's Own" United States Marine Band as staff arranger before being appointed to his

^{Beautiful Things Photography} current position of Director in 2023. In this role, Mr. Nowlin regularly conducts the Marine Band and Marine Chamber Orchestra in the Washington D.C. area, at the White House, and across the United States.

Works presented by this publisher have been prepared by Ryan Nowlin in an unofficial capacity and neither "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, the U.S. Marine Corps nor any other component of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government have endorsed this material.

About the Composition

Song of Solace was commissioned by Jeff and Linda Andrews in loving memory of their son, Jordin.

A loving son, a life-long musician, and a deeply devoted Christian, Jordin Andrews left his imprint on every life he encountered.

Developing a passion for the arts at a young age, Jordin performed in nearly every ensemble available in northeastern Ohio. In addition to his many school ensembles at Jackson High School, he won positions with the Canton Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Akron Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, and the Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony—the ensemble with which he toured Europe as a soloist.

Upon graduating high school, it was no surprise that Jordin would seek to turn his passion for music into a career. It was during his second year of studies as a music performance major at The University of Akron that the tremors first appeared.

The diagnosis of a rare, vicious cancer and subsequent brain surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy did not deter Jordin from his musical pursuits. In the spring of 2021, he graduated from the University of Akron with his Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance.

It is only fitting that in the wake of Jordin's passing, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews looked to commission a piece of music that could serve as a "prayer for the living" in honor of their only child's memory.

Jeff and Linda Andrews, along with his former band directors Michele Monigold (Jackson High School) and Galen Karriker (The University of Akron), spent hours with me on a video call sharing the joy and the light that was Jordin. As a fellow northeastern Ohio horn player, (and Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony alumnus though over two decades apart) I connected deeply with their story, with their grief.

Jordin's parents were very open with me about the life and death of their son, disclosing many emotions and private family moments. They shared photos and videos of performances and events from throughout his childhood, impressions from his friends and mentors, and perhaps most powerfully, his recent experience at a Christian conference that ignited his relationship and devotion to God.

Coincidentally, the first time we spoke was the same day Jordin's mother, Linda took her first lesson on flute, a musical pursuit in the footsteps of Jordin. She played her first note and was understandably proud—it was an A. This is where the music begins; an A emerging from the empty sound-scape.

As I processed all of the emotion surrounding the request for this work, there were a few foundational elements that came to the fore. First, I wanted to write a song of comfort for Jeff and Linda. When Linda described her desire for a "flowy, pretty" piece, I aimed to compose a melody that would remain with each of them, even when no music was playing. The melody evolves from a repeating minor third—the first interval children learn to sing.

In addition to what I called "Jordin's song," I sought to incorporate the Trinity not only for Jordin's unwavering faithfulness and spiritual devotion, but for the trinity of their family of three. I knew that in addition to the solo flute (Linda's new musical venture), that solo trumpet (his father Jeff's instruments) would have a supportive role. The feature, however, would be the horn section playing with one unison voice from within the ensemble.

Finally, and significantly, Jordin's high school band director, Michele Monigold, shared with me his original compositions written in her music theory classes. After carefully perusing all of his music, I identified a short motive from a work for Woodwind Quintet that I would employ in this piece. This seven-note motive, which Jordin himself wrote for flute, is introduced by the solo flute and used to construct the first theme. This theme, discovered in duple meter, is finally stated in full by the horn section, this time in triple meter.

Jordin's minor motive spins through different key centers until the horns lead the heart-heavy theme to a surprising major cadence. This sets the musical landscape for "Jordin's song." Stated in full by the horn section, the flute and trumpet learn the song and begin to sing it for themselves. As they sing, the horn section provides a soothing countermelody, like a balm, offering the other performers, and perhaps the audience, a sound of solace.

At the piece's joyful climax, while the woodwinds are dancing and the horn section performs the melody for the third and final time, the chimes and remaining brass outline the Ave Maria set by Charles Gounod to J. S. Bach's Prelude No. I - as if it was always there. The climax submits to a majestic return of Jordin's own motive, shouted by the horns and leading to an unresolved, suspended chord.

As the piece dissolves, the flute is heard, Linda accompanied by Jeff, playing her A and the beginnings of Jordin's song. While the notes are literally the same as the opening of the work, they have now found their place in comfort and peace.

Song of Solace was premiered on December 2, 2023 in a joint performance by the Akron Wind Symphony and the Jackson High School Symphonic Band, Galen Karriker and Michele Monigold, directors.

This piece is dedicated to Jeff and Linda; Peace be with you,

-Ryan Nowlin

Instrumentation List

- 4 Ist Flute
- 4 2nd Flute
- I Ist Oboe
- I 2nd Oboe
- 3 Ist B♭ Clarinet
- 3 2nd B^b Clarinet
- 3 3rd B^b Clarinet
- 2 B^b Bass Clarinet
- $I E \triangleright$ Contra-alto Clarinet
- I Ist Bassoon
- I 2nd Bassoon
- 2 1st E^b Alto Saxophone
- 2 2nd E^b Alto Saxophone
- 2 B^b Tenor Saxophone

2 - E♭ Baritone Saxophone
3 - Ist B♭ Trumpet
3 - 2nd B♭ Trumpet
3 - 3rd B♭ Trumpet
4 - Ist F Horn
4 - 2nd F Horn
3 - Ist Trombone
3 - 2nd Trombone
3 - 3rd Trombone
2 - Euphonium
2 - Baritone TC
4 - Tuba
2 - String Bass
1 - Timpani

- 2 Percussion I: Chimes, Suspended Cymbal
- 2 Percussion II: Vibraphone, Suspended Cymbal
- 2 Percussion III: Tam-tam, Suspended Cymbal, Marimba
- 2 Percussion IV: Bass Drum
- I Full Conductor Score

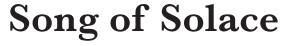
Approximate performance time—6:15

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Full Conductor Score

Commissioned by Jeff and Linda Andrews in loving memory or their son, Jordin

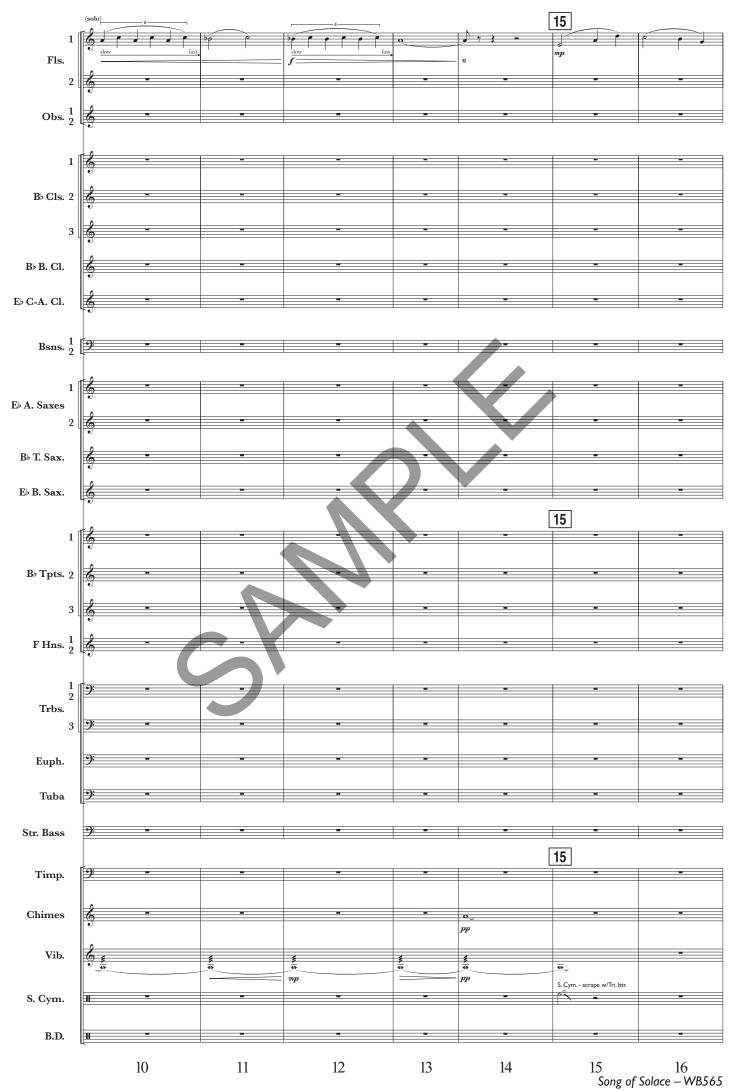


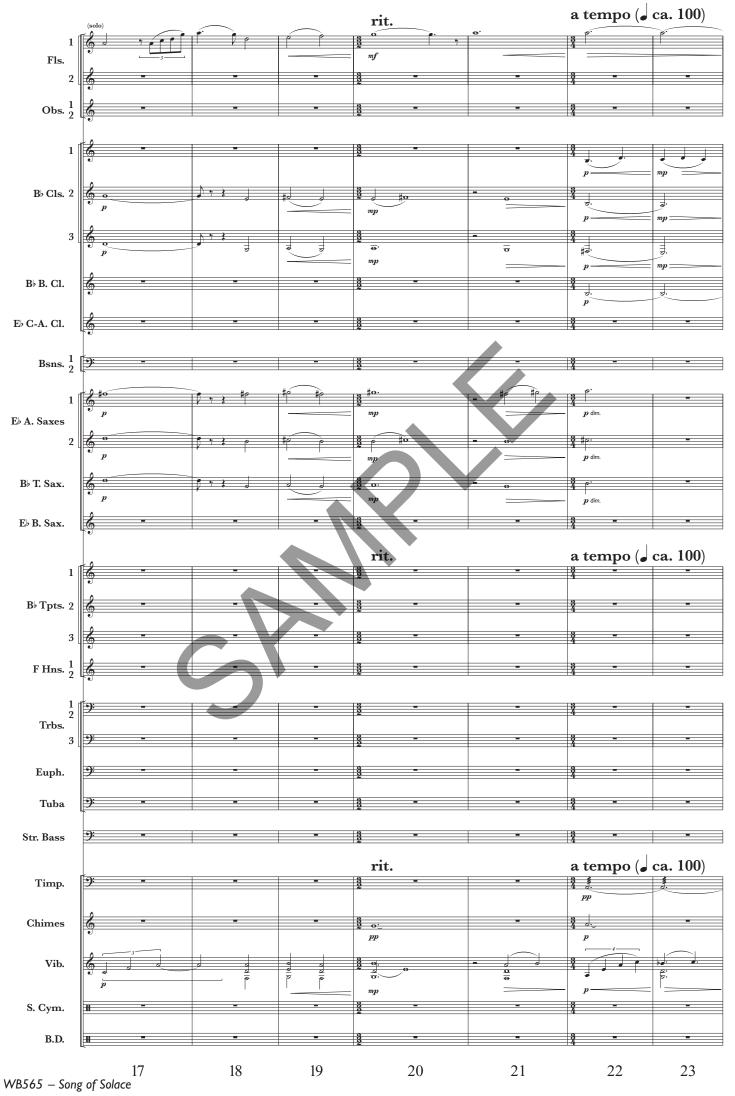
Ryan Nowlin (ASCAP)



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Approx. performance time-3:30









WB565 – Song of Solace

























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