1990

Canyon Light

Michael Mauldin

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CANYON LIGHT: FOUR SCENES
for woodwind quintet
Commissioned by the New Mexico Woodwind Quintet

I. Morning Prayers
II. River Music
III. Shimmering Heat
IV. Sunset
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“Canyon Light: Four Scenes for Woodwind Quintet” was commissioned by the New Mexico Woodwind Quintet, which premiered it in 1990. I’m grateful for the group’s many fine performances of it since. One of those was included on the CD, “Earth Spirit: Chamber Music by Michael Mauldin.” Here is what I wrote for the CD jacket notes:

The piece was inspired by a river-rafting trip I took with my sons at Moab, Utah. It was August, after our family vacation. My wife couldn’t go, so I took the boys, who must have thought their father insane for taking them to the canyon lands that time of year. But the magic of the cooling white-water, the colors of the canyons, and child’s play on sandy beaches made it a treasured experience for all of us.

In the first movement, “Morning Prayers,” the flute and clarinet chase each other like cliff-swallows, echoing their calls off the cathedral-like canyon walls, as I make peace with the Colorado River. The second movement, “River Music,” is full of white-water thrills and wonderful, quiet moments when the river is deep and calm, as we float beside the raft. “Shimmering Heat” recalls the surreal light effects from rising heat. In “Sunset,” there’s a sense of urgency to take in as much as possible of the beauty of the rich light on the landscape before night falls. The energy we get from experiencing that kind of beauty is real. Not just a fleeting mood, it sustains mind, body and spirit.

Michael Mauldin
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Duration: 12:27
Published by
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Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112
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I. Morning Prayers

Michael Mauldin
1989

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II. River Music

Con moto $j = 144$

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Hn. (F)
Bssn.
III. Shimmering Heat
IV. Sunset
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Hn. (F)
Bsn.
II. River Music

Con moto $\frac{3}{4}$

2nd time $\Theta$ to CODA

poco a poco dim. ———— $p$  $pp$
Flute - 3
Canyon Light: Four Scenes

D.S. al CODA

III. Shimmering Heat
IV. Sunset
Oboe - 3
Canyon Light: Four Scenes

III. Shimmering Heat

IV. Sunset
Oboe - 4
Canyon Light: Four Scenes
B♭ Clarinet - 2
Canyon Light: Four Scenes

II. River Music

Con moto \( \frac{1}{3} = 144 \)

\[ \text{poco a poco dim.} \]

2nd time \( \Theta \) to CODA
III. Shimmering Heat

IV. Sunset
Horn in F

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I. Morning Prayers

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III. Shimmering Heat

IV. Sunset
Bassoon - 3
Canyon Light: Four Scenes

III. Shimmering Heat

\[ j = 108 \]

\( p \) (sempre)