

To Err

for Woodwind Quintet

Amy Nam
2025

Duration:

I. Striving	4:30
II. Reflecting	2:00
III. Reframing	2:30
IV. Embracing	3:50
Total:	12:20

Notes:

The horn part may be played by tenor saxophone.
A transposed part is provided.

Please inform me of all performances. Thank you!
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Program Notes:

Mistakes, it turns out, are curious things. After all, the laws of physics do not make mistakes. However, biological organisms, whose components appear to operate entirely in accordance with the laws of physics, somehow *do*. Despite striving to act in accordance with our intentions, we living creatures often accidentally do just the opposite. When I came across an article about mistake theory in biology, I was intrigued to find out that not only can an organism as complex as a frog miss "catching an insect with its tongue by a few millimetres," but even small bacteria "can be confused by plants mimicking signals used by the bacteria!"¹

I, frankly, hate my mistakes. How could I possibly see them as anything other than a frustrating limitation?

Upon reflection, it seems that, although frustrating, mistakes are intrinsically bound up with the miracle of being alive. You can only be said to fail at a goal if you possess the agency to form a goal. Although scientists and philosophers will continue to speculate about the nature and definition of mistakes, according to our current understanding, it looks like mistake-making is a behavior shared by all types of terrestrial life. And, to me, this intrinsic relationship between mistake-making and being alive gives me a reason to accept, and perhaps even be grateful for, my mistakes.

Mistakes are often top-of-mind for the conscientious young musicians at Lutheran Summer Music, and rightly so. Isn't a performance without mistakes "better" than one that is mistake-riddled? Ought we not, then, strive for perfection? ...But if so, what will happen when we inevitably fail to perform perfectly? Won't we be left feeling discouraged and disappointed in ourselves?

Lutheran Summer Music's musical and spiritual mentors offer an alternative framework for processing our struggle for perfection. LSM faculty member Dr. Cheryl Lemmons speaks about "making the practice room a safe space," and LSM chaplain Rev. Nathan Baker-Trinity builds on this idea, drawing an analogy between the safe space of the practice room and the safe space of faith wherein our striving to meet a "complicated covenant of conditions" is replaced by relational attitudes of "trust and persistence."²

Reconciling ourselves to our imperfection enables us to show compassion to ourselves—and others—when we each inevitably show ourselves to be human. In fact, our response to a mistake reveals more about our character than the mistake itself. As Alexander Pope famously wrote, "to Err is Human, to Forgive, Divine."

Over its four movements, *To Err: A Meditation on Imperfection* traces the emotional journey of coming to terms with our mistakes: striving for perfection, reflecting on shortcomings, reframing perspective, and, at last, embracing imperfection.

To Err was commissioned by the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival and is dedicated to the Movere Woodwind Faculty.

—Amy Nam (b. 1994)

¹David S. Oderberg, Jonathan Hill, Christopher Austin, Ingo Bojak, François Cinotti and Jonathan M. Gibbins. "Biological Mistakes: What They Are and What They Mean for the Experimental Biologist," *British Journal of the Philosophy of Science*, 77. <https://doi.org/10.1086/724444>.

²Baker-Trinity, Nathan. Sermon at Lutheran Summer Music, Valparaiso University, IN, July 24, 2022.

transposed score

To Err

A Meditation on Imperfection

Amy Nam

to the Lutheran Summer Music Movere Woodwind Faculty

I. Striving

yearning, intense (♩ = c. 76)

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in B♭

Horn in F

Bassoon

f

f

ff

f

f

A agitated, anxious (♩ = c. 152)

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B♭

Hn in F

Bsn

pp

pp

pp

pp

p

11

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

pp

mp

PERUSAL SCORE

14

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

PERUSAL SCORE

17

Fl. *mf* *mp*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F +

Bsn

20

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F o

Bsn

23 **B**

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f*

Cl. in Bb *mf*

Hn in F *mf*

Bsn *mf*

f

26

Fl. *fp*

Ob. *f*

Cl. in Bb *fp*

Hn in F *f*

Bsn *fp*

29 C

Fl. *pp* *p*

Ob. *p* *pp* *mp*

Cl. in B♭ *pp* *p*

Hn in F *p* sub. *pp* *p*

Bsn

32

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf* *ff*

Cl. in B♭ *mp* *mf*

Hn in F *mf* *ff*

Bsn *mf* *ff*

35

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

D

mf \leftarrow *ff*

mf \leftarrow *ff*

mf

mf

38

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

ff

mf

ff

mf

41

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

44

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

ff

p

E exhausted, slightly lagging ($\text{♩} = \text{c. } 66$)

47

Fl. *pp*

Ob. *pp*

Cl. in B \flat *p*

Hn in F *pp*

Bsn *pp*

53

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

58 F

Fl. *ppp*

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat *ppp*

Hn in F *pp*

Bsn

rall.

63

Fl. *p* freely, reflectively

Ob. *pp* freely, reflectively

Cl. in B \flat *ppp*

Hn in F

Bsn *p* freely, reflectively

67 **slow and steady** ($\text{♩} = \text{c. } 52$)

Fl. *ppp*

Ob.

Cl. in B♭ *pp*

Hn in F

Bsn *pp* quietly determined

71 **accel.**.....

Fl. *pp*

Ob. *pp*

Cl. in B♭

Hn in F

Bsn

G

75

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

p

p

p

p

p

yearning (♩ = c. 76)

79

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

mp

mp

mp

mp

colla parte

83

Fl.

colla parte

Ob.

colla parte

Cl. in B \flat

freely

Hn in F

colla parte

Bsn

mf

mf

f

mf

rit.

86

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

Detailed description: This is a page from a full score, page 14, marked 'H'. It contains measures 83 through 86. The instrumentation includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in B \flat), Horn in F (Hn in F), and Bassoon (Bsn). Measures 83-85 are marked with 'colla parte' for the Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet, indicating they play the same part as the strings. The Horns play a triplet melody marked 'freely'. Dynamics are marked as *mf* for the woodwinds and *f* for the Horns. Measure 86 begins with a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking. The woodwinds have more active parts, including grace notes and slurs, while the Horns continue with a triplet. The Bassoon part is mostly sustained notes.

90 **accel.**

Fl. *pp*

Ob.

Cl. in Bb *pp*

Hn in F *pp*

Bsn

94 **agitated, anxious** (♩ = c. 152)

Fl. *f*

Ob. *pp* *f*

Cl. in Bb *f* *p*

Hn in F *f*

Bsn *f*

97

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

mf

f

fp

mf

100

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

mp

fp

f

f

The image displays a musical score for measures 97 through 100. The score is written for five instruments: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Horn in F (Hn in F), and Bassoon (Bsn). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 4/4 based on the notation. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 97-99, and the second system covers measures 100-102. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *fp* (fortissimo). The Flute part has a melodic line with accents and slurs. The Oboe part has a melodic line with accents and slurs. The Clarinet in Bb part has a rhythmic line with slurs. The Horn in F part has a melodic line with slurs. The Bassoon part has a melodic line with slurs. A large diagonal watermark reading 'PERUSAI SCORE' is overlaid on the score.

103

J

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mf *f* *mf*

pp

f

pp

mp

106

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

mp

p

mf

pp

mf

mf

109

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

pp

mf

f

mf

f

112

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mf

f

f

K

115

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

mf

mf

mf

118

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

f

f

f

f

ff

131

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

longingly, rubato (♩ = c. 132)

M

136

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mf

pp

p

pp

141 **molto rall.**

Fl. *ppp*

Ob.

Cl. in Bb *pp*

Hn in F

Bsn

145

Fl. *pp* *f* *pp*

Ob. *f* *pp*

Cl. in Bb *f* *n*

Hn in F *pp* *f* *pp*

Bsn *pp* *f* *pp*

Full score

2. Reflecting

gentle, introspective (♩ = c. 72)

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in B♭

Horn in F

Bassoon

6

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B♭

Hn in F

Bsn

A

This musical score is for measures 11 through 16 of the 'The Swan' movement from the Suite for Piano and Orchestra by Camille Saint-Saëns. The score is written for a woodwind and brass section, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in Bb), Horn in F (Hn in F), and Bassoon (Bsn). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 6/4. The score is marked with various dynamics: *pp* (pianissimo), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *ppp* (pianississimo). A large, diagonal watermark reading 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid on the page. A box labeled 'B' is placed above the Flute staff at measure 15. The score is divided into two systems: measures 11-15 in the first system and measures 16-20 in the second system. The measures are numbered 11, 16, and 20 at the beginning of their respective staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, beams, and dynamic markings.

21

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

freely

p

3

mp

pp

p

25

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

p

p

pp

p

p

p

Full score

3. Reframing

resolute (♩ = c. 76)

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in B♭

Horn in F

Bassoon

p *mp* *p* *mp* *mp* *mf*

5

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B♭

Hn in F

Bsn

p *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *p*

10 **forward looking, with movement** (♩ = c. 80)

Fl. *p* *mp*

Ob. *p*

Cl. in B♭ *p*

Hn in F

Bsn *p*

14 **A**

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B♭ *mp* 3

Hn in F *p*

Bsn

24

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

p

PERUSCORE

28

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

f

mf

f

PERUSCORE

32 **Tempo I**

Fl. *ff* *mp*

Ob. *ff* *mp*

Cl. in B \flat *ff* *mp*

Hn in F *ff* *mf*

Bsn *ff*

36 **D**

Fl. *pp* *ppp*

Ob. *pp* *ppp*

Cl. in B \flat *pp* *ppp*

Hn in F *p* *pp*

Bsn

40

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

mp

p

p

p

p

Full score

4. Embracing

weightless, quietly joyous (♩ = c. 58)

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in B♭

Horn in F

Bassoon

pp

pp

pp

pp

p

4

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B♭

Hn in F

Bsn

interrupting, intrusive

f

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

f

pp

Ob.

Cl. Bb

Fl.

Bsn.

f

pp

f

pp

f

pp

f

pp

p

p

12

Fl.

Ob.

interrupting, intrusive

12

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

interrupting, intrusive

f

pp

pp

pp

16

B

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

f *pp*

f *pp*

f *pp*

f *mp* *pp*

f *pp*

20

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in B \flat

Hn in F

Bsn

p *mp*

mp

p

p

Detailed description: This is a page from a musical score, page 34, titled 'Full score'. It contains two systems of music, measures 16-19 and 20-23. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in B \flat), Horn in F (Hn in F), and Bassoon (Bsn). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 4/4. Dynamics include fortissimo (f), pianissimo (pp), mezzo-piano (mp), and piano (p). A rehearsal mark 'B' is located above measure 17. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'PRELIMINARY SCORE' is overlaid on the page.

24

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mf

p

pp

mp

pp

pp

C

28

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. in Bb

Hn in F

Bsn

mf

f

mf

f

mf

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

mp

32

Fl. *p*

Ob. *mp*

Cl. in Bb *p*

Hn in F *pp*

Bsn *pp*

36

Fl. *pp*

Ob. *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Cl. in Bb *ppp*

Hn in F *ppp*

Bsn

interrupting, intrusive

40 D

Fl. *p* *f*

Ob. *f*

Cl. in Bb *pp* *f*

Hn in F *p* *f*

Bsn *pp* *f*

45 E

Fl. *p* *f*

Ob. *f* *p* *f*

Cl. in Bb *p* *f*

Hn in F *p* *f*

Bsn *p* *f*

51

Fl. *ff* *f* warmly, compassionately *ff*

Ob. *ff* *f* warmly, compassionately *ff*

Cl. in Bb *ff* *f* warmly, compassionately *ff*

Hn in F *ff* *f* warmly, compassionately *ff*

Bsn *ff* *f* warmly, compassionately *ff*