

Duration:		HOTE2:
I. Striving	4:30	The horn part may be played by tenor saxophone.
II. Reflecting	2:00	A transposed part is provided.
III. Reframing	2:30	
IV. Embracing	3:50	Please inform me of all performances. Thank you! amy.victoria.nam@gmail.com
Total:	12:20	www.amynam.com

#### **Program Notes:**

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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"!

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."

Reconciling ourselves to our imperfection enables us to show compassion to ourselves—and others—when we each invetiably 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)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>David 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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Baker-Trinity, Nathan. Sermon at Lutheran Summer Music, Valparaiso University, IN, July 24, 2022.

# To Err

#### A Meditation on Imperfection

Amy Nam

to the Lutheran Summer Music Movere Woodwind Faculty













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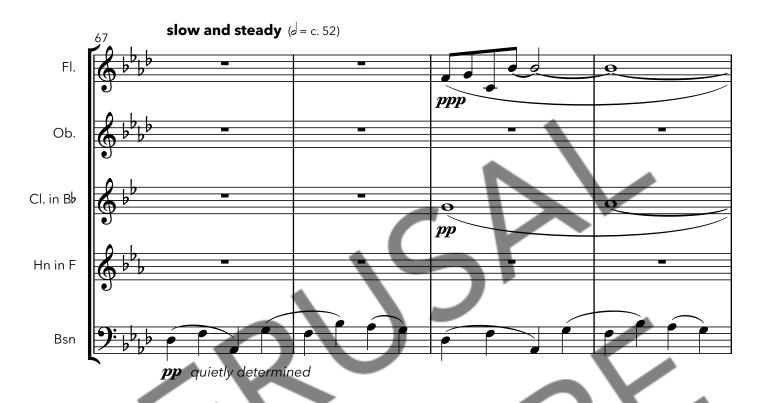




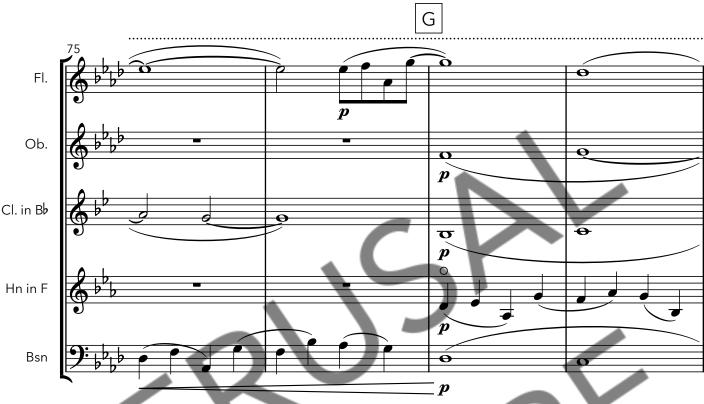


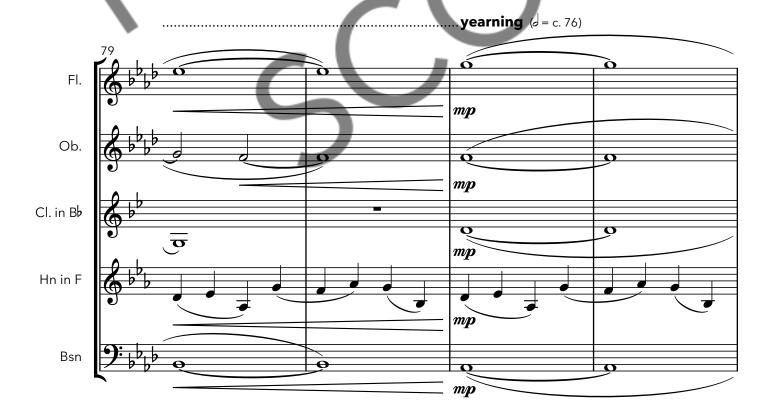














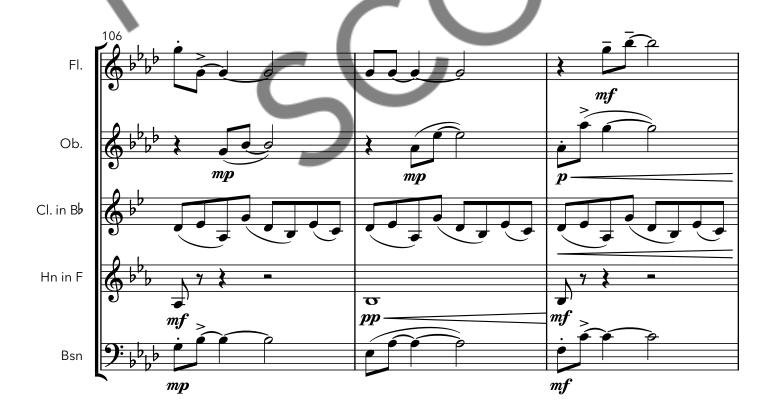














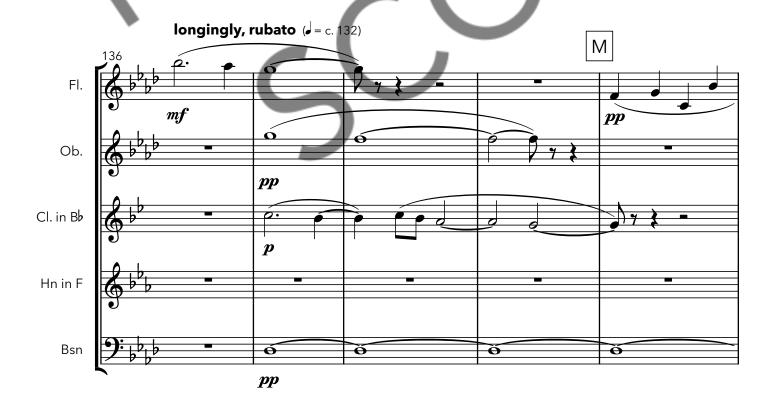














# 2. Reflecting

### gentle, introspective (J = c.72)







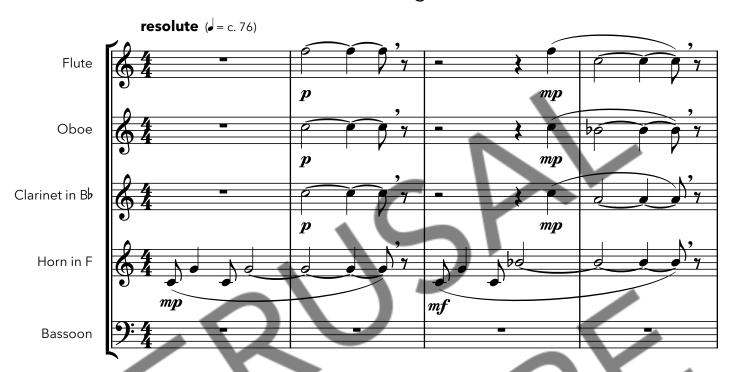
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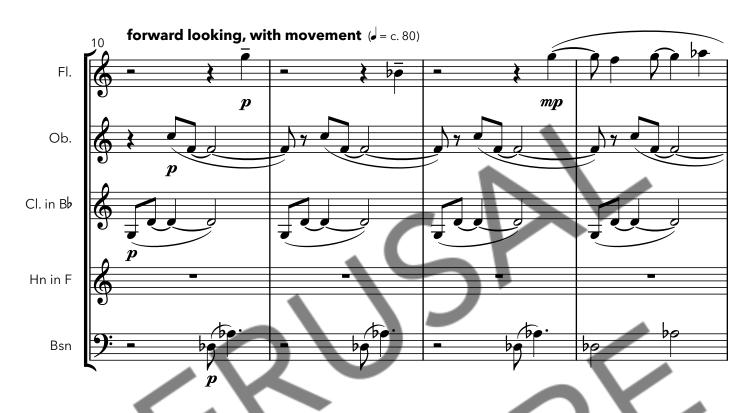




# 3. Reframing







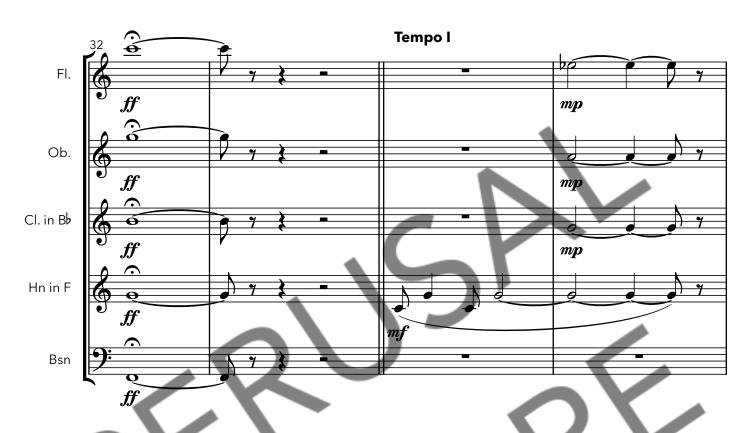
















## 4. Embracing

### weightless, quietly joyous ( = c. 58)



