

# CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

BY

ELMA MILLER

# CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

Commissioned by the Saskatoon Symphony Society for the Prairie Arts Ensemble with the assistance of a grant from the Canada Council in 1983

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The movements are inspired by murder mysteries. The musical connection will present itself upon hearing the work; I deliberately chose evocative titles that allow for the imagination to roam freely in the mind of the listener. Whether the thoughts are cliché or not is not relevant, for the interplay of the emotions and the intellect will produce yet other dimensions of complexity during the progress of the piece.

*An Ill Wind* is typical when a sort of premonition is felt that a murder (or foul deed) is about to be committed. In a mystery story, there comes a point at which nothing is certain; in fact this is the only thing of which we can be certain. Rumours abound; red herrings appear everywhere and seemingly everyone is under suspicion - all equally guilty .... before proven innocent (with a handy alibi or lack of motive). Then again the case can become quite a *First Conundrum* if all concerned have a plethora of motives for the death.

During the unravelling of the plot, one must pass through *Murky Waters*. Information privy to a select few often adds an interesting twist to the complications just when one is ready to point the finger at the real suspect. This is where *Another Conundrum* provides a moment of lucidity and some chaos. Is it absolutely true? Can it be proven? The musicians can have a lot of fun in the *Another Conundrum*.

Some mystery writers point to natural justice, where in the end a calamity finishes off the guilty party in an unfortunate accident which spares everyone else the grief of a long and drawn out court battle for a weak conviction, based mainly on circumstantial evidence.

The last movement *And Then There Were None* is the politically correct title of an Agatha Christie mystery from a black face comedy and nursery rhyme, sanitized for the American edition.

After its first performance in 1983, subsequent performances were held throughout the Prairies. In 1993, this composition was entirely re-engraved and edited into a computer using the software Score.

Symphony by the Bay (previously Symphony Hamilton) commissioned a mystery story to be added in-between the movements to be either read by the composer or a suitable actor. This scenario is attached as an option at the end of the score.

E. Miller  
Burlington, Ontario  
2004, rev. 2012

## Instrumentation:

Flute  
Oboe  
B flat Clarinet  
Bassoon  
French Horn  
Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Cello  
Contrabass

Score in C

Dur.: ca. 18 min.

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## 1. An Ill Wind Blows

Elma Miller

$\text{♩} = 63$

FLUTE

OBOE

CLARINET

BASSOON

HORN

VIOLIN I

VIOLIN II

VIOLA

CELLO

CB.

*sf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

SCORE IN C

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Four systems of empty musical staves, each consisting of a treble and bass clef staff. The first system has a brace on the left side. The second system has a brace on the left side. The third system has a brace on the left side. The fourth system has a brace on the left side.

Musical notation for measures 12-15. The first system (measures 12-13) features a treble clef staff with a melodic line of eighth notes and a bass clef staff with a bass line of eighth notes. The second system (measures 14-15) features a treble clef staff with a melodic line of eighth notes and a bass clef staff with a bass line of eighth notes. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

pizz.  
mp