MICHAEL MARKOWSKI

UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY

FOR SOLO CLARINET & WIND ENSEMBLE
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**INSTRUMENTATION FOR SOLO CLARINET & WIND ENSEMBLE**

## WINDS
- Piccolo
- Flute 1 & 2
- Oboe
- Bassoon
- B♭ Clarinet 1 - 3
- B♭ Bass Clarinet
- B♭ Contra Bass Clarinet
- Eb Alto Saxophone 1 & 2
- B♭ Tenor Saxophone
- Eb Baritone Saxophone

## BRASS
- B♭ Trumpet 1 - 3
- F Horn 1 - 4
- Trombone 1 - 3
- Euphonium
- Tuba

## PIANO (movement 2 only)

## STRINGS
- String Bass

## KEYBOARDS
- Piano

## PERCUSSION
1. Timpani, Low Tom Drum, Wood Block, Djembe
2. Crotales, Snare Drum, Guiro (metal, preferred)
3. Marimba, Shaker (double shakers)
4. Vibraphone, Xylophone
5. Crash Cymbal, Sus. Cymb., Bell Tree, Finger Cymbals, Claves (two metal pipes), Triangle

Duration: ca. 9:00

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For more information, please visit http://www.michaelmarkowski.com
PROGRAM NOTE

Unfamiliar Territory is a bit of a film-noir spin on George Gershwin’s An American in Paris; that is, the piece is “programmatic” in that it attempts to tell a short story about an American tourist in another country. For this foreigner, however, the adventures take place not in the bustling city streets of Paris, but somewhere south of the border, somewhere where the local language is beautiful yet alienating, and the landscape is alluring yet disorienting.

The United States-Mexico border is only a dusty four-hour drive from Phoenix, and for some reason it took me 24 years to cross it. People often escape the Arizona heat and head south to their condos in the intimate resort town of Puerto Peñasco—or as Americans better know it: Rocky Point. The beaches are gorgeous and the tides recede hundreds of feet every night, as if by magic, revealing the ocean’s hidden treasures. The weather is perfectly mild—never too hot, never too cold—and refreshing, tropical-themed drinks are always nearby.

On the other side of the tall resort walls is a different side of Mexico. Many of the roads are unpaved and some of the locals’ homes have roofs made from corrugated tin. On the corner is the neighborhood restaurant, a local favorite, with meals served up by a pleasant woman named Rosie. I order the pancakes, and although delicious, they have a surprising carne asada flavor as almost everything here is cooked on the same little grill.

As night falls, the local spirits emerge and the town comes alive. The moon hangs low, peeking out around buildings, always just out of sight, as if to keep an eye on us without our knowing it. Taxi drivers take wild shortcuts through dark side streets, narrowly avoiding packs of stray dogs on these roads “less traveled,” if we may actually call them “roads.” Our ears have been badly beaten by someone named Mr. Saxobeat, courtesy of our driver, who just wants us to have a good time. Somehow, we are still able to make out the low meditative hum of neon lights, buzzing quietly like mosquitoes. It doesn’t take long to fall under the city’s spell.

The ghosts of this unfamiliar territory swirl all around us, dazing our senses, growing more and more vocal as we enter somewhere we perhaps weren’t invited to. Outside, our taxi driver waits for us, watching us. This is either super creepy or maybe he has been appointed our guardian angel for the night—this is still unclear. But we continue on into the night, if for no other reason than because we have no idea where we are or how to get back home.
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