CHALLENGES OF TECHNIQUE AND INTERPRETATION: A PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SELECTED WORKS BY KEVIN BOBO

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ABSTRACT

Kevin Bobo is an American percussionist and composer whose compositions for marimba consistently expand the technical and musical potential of the instrument. Performance of Bobo’s marimba works requires the performer to utilize specific performance techniques that are departures from standard practices. This study looks in-depth at technical and interpretive challenges present within three works for marimba by Bobo, and provides the performer with detailed explanations and exercises to assist with the performance of the included works. The Odyssey, According to Penelope, and Three Etudes are works for solo marimba, while Prayer for the Broken is a duet for two marimbas. Each work is distinctive in its harmonic makeup, melodic motifs, and rhythmic patterns. Additionally, each piece explores distinct technical challenges, all of which showcase the breadth of Bobo’s compositional style, justifying their inclusion in this study. Through this study, the author aims to provide percussionists with a greater understanding of his music, thus demystifying it and encouraging increased performance of Bobo’s works.