

Drew Sperry

An Air of Stillness

for Solo Piano

(2026)

Perusal Score

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Written in collaboration with Esther Lee

Program Note

This piece is inspired by the natural phenomenon of snowflake sublimation—the seemingly instant vanishing of snowflakes before they even get the chance to touch the ground. While we can't actually see this happening with the naked eye, when observed under microscopes, scientists have found this disappearance of snowflakes to be a process where snowflakes gradually lose their shapes and details until all that remains is water vapor suspended in the air. The goal of writing this piece was to musically depict this process by gradually deconstructing a musical idea until it's no longer recognizable when compared to what it started as. To do this, the main musical gesture of the piece, a quick septuplet, is rhythmically distorted through augmentation and the pitches of each figure gradually stray from the original idea that we heard at the start. What we're left with are musical ideas suspended in time that are related to the original septuplet figure but have gradually morphed into something different.

Performance Notes

- Pedal markings indicate how and when the sustain and sostenuto pedals must be used. The sostenuto pedal should only be used when indicated in the score, but otherwise, the performer is free to use the sustain pedal as they please.
- Breath marks (') indicate very short pauses. While still making a clear break in the music, take as little time as possible.
- When transitioning between meters with different denominators (4/4 and 6/8 or 4/4 and 3/2, for example), the smallest common denominator will always remain consistent.
 - ♪=♪ when transitioning between meters such as 4/4 and 6/8.
 - ♪=♪ when transitioning between meters such as 4/4 and 3/2.

Duration: ca. 3 minutes

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Moderately, with spaciousness ♩ = 80

p *mf* *f* *p*

mf *p* *mf* *p*

mp *p* *f* *mp*

pp *mf* *p* *mf* *p sub.* *mf* *p*

Sost. Ped. 1/2 Ped. Ped. Ped. Sost. Ped. Ped.

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20 *8va* *loco*

mf *pp*

Ped. _____

Ped. _____

25 *8va* *loco*

mf *p* *mf* *p*

suddenly more animated

(Ped.) _____

Ped. _____

28 *f* *p* *molto rit.*

3 *6*

Ped. _____

31 *f* *p* *rit.*

♩ = 40

8ba

silently depress

Sost. _____

Tempo I (♩ = 80)

33 *sub. f* *(ord.)* *(f)* *(ord.)*

(loco) *(loco)*

8ba

silently depress

Sost. _____

37

mp warmly

mf *p*

1/2 Ped. Ped.

42

mf *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Ped.

48

p *pp* *mf* *p* *loco*

Ped. Ped.

52

mp *pp*

(Ped.) 1/2 Ped.