



FLICKER

FOR OBOE AND  
STRING QUARTET

JAKE GUNNAR WALSH

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*Scored for:*

Oboe  
Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Violoncello

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

With “*Flicker*” I aim to capture the weak, unstable imagery and affect of a flame just before it’s extinction. The work opens with a tired, faded theme in the oboe over a relentlessly numb string accompaniment: the old flame is already nearly extinguished, and the dark funeral chorale is at the ready. Through a series of rising attempts at gaining strength, there is a brief resurgence of energy and light. The determined oboe inspires the strings to become more active and alive: a flicker of hope. The flame wills itself to become more alive, and it is temporarily successful, coals turn to embers, flickering sounds are emboldened, one flame multiplies, to two, three, and beyond. Soon, the fire is out of control, wild, strained, consuming. Yet, it is this final push of desperate energy that ultimately causes the flame to suffocate itself. The weak flame is responsible for its own downfall, and the piece ends a mere shadow of what it was when it began: slowly losing the energy and oxygen of life, until the flame chokes down it’s final, flickering breath.

*Duration: 10”*

# FLICKER

JAKE WALSH

Slowly, melancholy ♩ = 60

Musical score for the first section of "Flicker". The score is for five instruments: Oboe, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is "Slowly, melancholy" with a metronome marking of ♩ = 60. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Oboe part starts with a *semplce* marking and a *pp* dynamic. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) all start with a *sul ponticello* marking and a *ppp* dynamic. The string parts also include markings for *weak, frail* and *port.* dynamics. The score features several measures with triplets and a *rit.* marking at the end.

8 A tempo ♩ = ♩ (♩ = 120)

Musical score for the second section of "Flicker". The score is for five instruments: Oboe, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is "A tempo" with a metronome marking of ♩ = 120. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Oboe part starts with a *rit.* marking. The Violin I part starts with a *p* dynamic and a *delicatissimo* marking. The Violin II part starts with a *p* dynamic. The Viola part starts with a *p* dynamic. The Violoncello part starts with a *p* dynamic. The score features several measures with triplets and a *rit.* marking at the end.

### 12 Aching, slow ♩ = 60

*accel.* . . . . . **A little faster** . . . . . *rit.* . . . . . **A tempo ♩ = 60** . . . . . *rit.* . . . . . *w/ Vln. I*

Ob. *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *mf* 3 *mf* 3  
 Vln. I *pp* *mp* *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mp*  
*arco ord.*  
 Vln. II *pp* *mp* *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mp*  
*arco ord.*  
 Vla. *pp* *mp* *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mp*  
*arco ord.*  
 Vc. *pp* *mp* *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mp*

### 18 Spiraling, unraveling ♩ = 120

*accel.* . . . . . *rit.* . . . . . *disappear* . . . . . **Drowsy ♩ = 86**

Ob. *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *pp*  
 Vln. I *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *pp*  
*disappear*  
 Vln. II *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *pp*  
*disappear*  
 Vla. *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *pp*  
*disappear*  
 Vc. *pp* 3 *mf* 3 *pp*  
*disappear*

**26** Sensual, molto rubato ♩ = 100

accel. . . . . rit. . . . . **A tempo**

Ob.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.

**Twice as slow** ♩ = ♩  
rit. . . . .

**Dramatico**

Ob.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.

**34** Fragile ♩ = 60

**Molto rubato, espressivo**

*trill slower and slower* (no tr) *rit.* . . . . .

Ob. *pp* almost imperceptible *p*

Vln. I *pp* sul ponticello *p* *pp* *ord.* *n* *mp*

Vln. II *pp* sul ponticello *p* *pp* *p*

Vla. *pp* sul ponticello *p* *pp* *p*

Vc. quietly searing *p* *mp* *3* *rubato* *p*

**Drowsily, calm** ♩ = 48

**44** Freely ♩ = 56

*"shadow-like"* *Solo* *meandering*

Ob. *pp* *n* *Solo* *n* *mp* *meandering*

Vln. I *p* *pp* *sul pont.* *n*

Vln. II *pp* *sul pont.* *n*

Vla. *ord.* *p* *pp* *sul pont.*

Vc. *pp* *sul pont.*

Molto Rubato

49 With a lurch ♩ = 76

Musical score for measures 49-50. The score is for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 2/4 time and features a 'Molto Rubato' tempo. Measure 49 shows the Oboe playing a complex melodic line with slurs and fingering (5, 6, 3, 3) and dynamics *mp* and *p*. The Violin I and II parts are mostly silent. The Viola part has a note marked *n*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *n*. Measure 50 shows the Oboe playing a melodic line with dynamics *f* and *n*. The Violin I part has a note marked *mp*. The Violin II part has a note marked *mp* and *pizz.*. The Viola part has a note marked *f*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *mp*.

51 Subito faster, ♩ = 90

Musical score for measures 51-54. The score is for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 2/4 time and features a 'Subito faster' tempo. Measure 51 shows the Oboe playing a complex melodic line with slurs and fingering (3, 6) and dynamics *mf* and *fp*. The Violin I part has a note marked *f* and *mf*. The Violin II part has a note marked *f*. The Viola part has a note marked *mf*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *mf*. Measure 52 shows the Oboe playing a complex melodic line with slurs and fingering (5, 7) and dynamics *mf*. The Violin I part has a note marked *mf*. The Violin II part has a note marked *mf*. The Viola part has a note marked *mf*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *mf*. Measure 53 shows the Oboe playing a complex melodic line with slurs and fingering (6, 6) and dynamics *mf*. The Violin I part has a note marked *mf*. The Violin II part has a note marked *mf*. The Viola part has a note marked *mf*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *mf*. Measure 54 shows the Oboe playing a complex melodic line with slurs and fingering (5, 7) and dynamics *mf*. The Violin I part has a note marked *mf*. The Violin II part has a note marked *mf*. The Viola part has a note marked *mf*. The Violoncello part has a note marked *mf*.

Anxiously ♩ = 104

Musical score for measures 57-60. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 104. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The instruments are Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Oboe part features a melodic line with slurs and dynamic markings. The strings provide a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and dynamic markings. The dynamic marking *fp* (fortissimo piano) is used throughout the section.

57 With a flash of burning energy ♩ = 120

Musical score for measures 61-64. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 120. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The instruments are Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Oboe part features a melodic line with slurs and dynamic markings. The strings provide a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and dynamic markings. The dynamic markings include *f*, *ff*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The Viola part includes the instruction "like crackling flames" under the *mf* dynamic. The Violoncello part includes the instruction "sul C" (sul C-clef) for the first two measures.



63 With quiet intensity, murmuring ♩ = 120

Musical score for measures 63-65. The score includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Ob.:** Starts with *p*. At measure 64, dynamics change to *mf*. A *raucous* marking is above the staff. A sixteenth-note triplet is marked with a '6'.
- Vln. I:** Starts with *p*. At measure 64, dynamics change to *fp*. At measure 65, dynamics change to *f*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3'.
- Vln. II:** Starts with *p*. At measure 64, dynamics change to *fp*. At measure 65, dynamics change to *f*.
- Vla.:** Starts with *p*. At measure 64, dynamics change to *f*. A *swell* marking is below the staff.
- Vc.:** Starts with *p*. At measure 64, dynamics change to *fp*. At measure 65, dynamics change to *f* and then *mf*.

Musical score for measures 66-68. The score includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Ob.:** Starts with *mp*. At measure 68, dynamics change to *f*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3'.
- Vln. I:** Starts with *mp*. At measure 68, dynamics change to *fp*.
- Vln. II:** Starts with *mp*. At measure 68, dynamics change to *fp*.
- Vla.:** Starts with *p*. At measure 68, dynamics change to *f*. A *swell* marking is below the staff.
- Vc.:** Starts with *mp*. At measure 68, dynamics change to *fp*.

Ob. *sf sf sf sf sf* *mf*

Vln. I *sf f sf sf sf sf* *aggressive* *f*

Vln. II *sf f sf sf sf sf* *f aggressive* *sf sf*

Vla. *sf sf sf sf sf* *f aggressive* *sf sf*

Vc. *senza sord.* *sf f aggressive sf sf sf sf* *sf*

76 *like glowing embers* *sim.*

Ob. *ff ff fp mf mp p*

Vln. I *ff* *mp*

Vln. II *ff* *pizz. angular* *mf mp*

Vla. *ff* *pizz. angular* *mf mp*

Vc. *ff mp mp*

Ob. *f* *p*

Vln. I *f* *mp*

Vln. II *sfz* *arco* *mf* *fp* *mp* *pizz.*

Vla. *sfz* *arco* *mf* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mp* *pizz.*

Vc. *f* *mp*

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The Oboe staff has a melodic line with two five-measure rests. The Violin I staff has a melodic line with a five-measure rest. The Violin II and Viola staves have similar melodic lines with dynamic markings *sfz*, *arco*, *mf*, *fp*, and *mp*. The Viola staff also includes *pizz.* markings. The Violoncello staff has a bass line with a five-measure rest and a triplet of eighth notes.

Ob. *mp* *mf*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *sfz* *arco* *mf* *fp* *f*

Vla. *sfz* *arco* *mf* *fp* *f*

Vc. *mf*

Detailed description: This system continues the musical material. The Oboe staff has a melodic line with dynamic markings *mp* and *mf*. The Violin I staff has a melodic line with *mf*. The Violin II and Viola staves have melodic lines with dynamic markings *sfz*, *arco*, *mf*, *fp*, and *f*. The Violoncello staff has a bass line with *mf*.

Ob. *mf* *f* *mf sub.* *f* *brilliante* *explode!*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *brilliante* *explode!*

Vln. II *mf spiccato* *f* *mf* *f* *explode!*

Vla. *mf spiccato* *f* *mf* *f* *brilliante* *explode!*  
*sul C*

Vc. *mf* *f brillante* *sfp* *explode!*

**90 Violently Radiant**

*stagger breathing*

Ob. *ff brutal* *mp*

Vln. I *sul G* *ff* *mp*

Vln. II *ff spiccato* *p*

Vla. *ff spiccato* *mp*

Vc. *ff* *p*

96 Aggressively, gaining momentum

Musical score for measures 96-100. The score is for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 4/4 time and features a dynamic range from *p* to *sf*. The Oboe and Violin I parts have melodic lines with slurs and accents. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score includes performance instructions such as *growl-like* and *pizz.* (pizzicato).

Musical score for measures 101-105. The score continues for the same five instruments. The dynamics increase significantly, with *f* and *sf* markings. The Oboe and Violin I parts feature more complex melodic patterns with slurs and accents. The Viola and Violoncello parts continue their rhythmic accompaniment. Performance instructions include *gliss.* (glissando) and *arco* (arco). The overall mood is aggressive and gaining momentum.

**Molto Allargando**

Ob. *f sf sf ff*

Vln. I *f sf sf ff*

Vln. II *f sf sf ff*

Vla. *f sf sf ff*

Vc. *f sf sf ff*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The tempo is marked 'Molto Allargando'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 10. The second system contains measures 11 through 14. Dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *ff* (fortissimo). The Oboe part features a melodic line with accents and a trill in measure 11. The Violin parts play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Viola part has a trill in measure 11. The Violoncello part has a trill in measure 11. The score ends with a fermata over the final notes in measure 14.

**104 Expansive, Passionately** ♩ = 56

Ob. *ff appassionato*

Vln. I *ff appassionato*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

*8va*

*sul G*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The tempo is marked 'Expansive, Passionately' with a quarter note equal to 56 (♩ = 56). The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 4. The second system contains measures 5 through 8. Dynamics are consistently *ff* (fortissimo). The Oboe and Violin I parts play a melodic line with accents and a trill in measure 8. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Viola part has a trill in measure 8. The Violoncello part has a trill in measure 8. The score ends with a fermata over the final notes in measure 8.

*accel.* ..... *rall.*

Ob. *ff* 5 3 3

Vln. I *gliss.* *ff* 3 5 5 6 6

Vln. II *gliss.* *ff* 3 3 7

Vla. *gliss.* *ff* 3 3 5 7

Vc. *gliss.* *ff* 3 5

**110** Uncontrollably raw ♩ = 68

*accel.* ..... **Faster, reckless** ♩ = 116

Ob. *fff* ruthless 3 5 3 5 3 3 *sempre forza* guttural 3 3 6

Vln. I *fff* ruthless 3 guttural 3

Vln. II *fff* ruthless 3 guttural 3

Vla. *fff* ruthless 3 guttural 3 3 3

Vc. *fff* ruthless 3 guttural 3 3 3

Excruciating

Allargando . . . . .

The musical score is arranged in five staves, each with a different instrument:

- Ob. (Oboe):** Features a melodic line with a trill (tr) and a sixteenth-note run. Dynamics include *sfz* and *fff*.
- Vln. I (Violin I):** Features a triplet of eighth notes followed by a sixteenth-note run. Dynamics include *sfp*, *ff*, *ugly*, and *sfz*. The final section has a seven-note chord with *fff* dynamics.
- Vln. II (Violin II):** Features a triplet of eighth notes followed by a sixteenth-note run. Dynamics include *sfp*, *ff*, *ugly*, and *sfz*. The final section has a seven-note chord with *fff* dynamics.
- Vla. (Viola):** Features a sixteenth-note run. Dynamics include *sfp*, *ff*, *ugly*, and *fff*. The final section has a six-note chord with *fff* dynamics.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features a five-note chord. Dynamics include *sfp*, *ff*, *ugly*, and *fff*. The final section has a six-note chord with *fff* dynamics.

Performance instructions include *Allargando* at the top, *tr* (trill) above the Oboe staff, and *fff* (fortissimo) markings throughout. The word *ugly* is written below the strings, and *sfp* (sforzando piano) is used for accents.



*scream!* *rubato*

Ob. *7* *10* *12* *7*

\* repeat ad lib.

Vln. I *7* *fff*

Vln. II *7* *fff*

Vla. *6* *fff*

Vc. *6* *fff*

\*out of sync with one another

**122** Immediately relaxing ♩ = 116 **126** Tired and slow, defeated ♩ = 60

Slower, suspended ♩ = 60

*rit.* *no trill* *no trem.* *mp* *n* *gradually move to sul ponticello* *pp* *like a faded memory* *3* *3* *5* *3* *rubato*

Ob. *fff* *mp* *pp*

Vln. I *fff* *mp* *pp sul. pont.* *unstable, wavering*

Vln. II *fff* *mp* *pp sul. pont.* *unstable, wavering*

Vla. *fff* *mp* *pp sul. pont.* *unstable, wavering* *"flicker"*

Vc. *fff* *mp* *pp sul. pont.* *unstable, wavering* *"flicker"(norm.)*

*fff* *mp* *pp sul. pont. unstable, wavering*

**134** A tempo ♩ = 60

rit. . . . .

Ob. *pp* *mp*

Vln. I "flicker" *pp* *mp* static *p* *mp*  
randomly "flicker" out of sync with other players

Vln. II "flicker" *pp* *mp* static *p* *mp*  
randomly "flicker" out of sync with other players

Vla. *pp* *mp* static *p* *mp*  
randomly "flicker" out of sync with other players

Vc. *pp* *mp* static *p* *mp*  
randomly "flicker" out of sync with other players

**139** Slower, gently ♩ = 60

accel. . . . . rit. . . . .

Ob. *p rubato* *n*

Vln. I *con sordino* *mp ord. (non sul pont.)* "evaporate" *p* *pp echo*

Vln. II *con sordino* *mp ord. (non sul pont.)* "evaporate" *p* *pp echo*

Vla. *con sordino* *mp ord. (non sul pont.)* "evaporate" *p* *pp echo*

Vc. *con sordino* *mp ord. (non sul pont.)* "evaporate" *n*

**141** A tempo, sensual and serene ♩ = 60

**146** Suddenly faster ♩ = 88

Ob. *mp* *semplice* 3 *rubato* *mp* *rit.* *mp*

Vln. I *p non vib.* *sim.* *mp*

Vln. II *p non vib.* *sim.* *mp*

Vla. *p non vib.* *sim.* *pp* *sim.* *mp*

Vc. *non vib.* *pp* *mp*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 141 through 146. It features five staves: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is divided into two sections. The first section, starting at measure 141, is marked 'A tempo, sensual and serene' with a tempo of ♩ = 60. It includes dynamics like *mp* and *p*, and performance instructions such as *semplice*, *rubato*, and *non vib.*. The second section, starting at measure 146, is marked 'Suddenly faster' with a tempo of ♩ = 88. It features a double bar line and includes dynamics like *mp* and *pp*, along with *rit.* and *sim.* markings. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

**147** Already slower, dying ♩ = 72

**151** Numb, fading and dying ♩ = 52

Ob. *3* *rubato* *pp* *PPP*

Vln. I *Solo* *rubato* *pp* *PPP* *sul pont.*

Vln. II *Solo* *3* *pp* *PPP* *sul pont.*

Vla. *rubato* *Solo* *pp* *PPP* *sul pont.*

Vc. *rubato* *pp non vib.* *sul pont.* *PPP*

*rall.*

*gradually move to sul ponticello*

*gradually move towards sul ponticello*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 147 through 151. It features five staves: Oboe (Ob.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is marked 'Already slower, dying' (♩ = 72) and 'Numb, fading and dying' (♩ = 52). It includes dynamics like *pp*, *PPP*, and *pp non vib.*, along with performance instructions such as *rubato*, *Solo*, *sul pont.*, and *sul ponticello*. A *rall.* marking is present at the top. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.