

***The Short Fear (2020)***

for actor and bass clarinet

Jamie Elless (b. 1998)

## *The Short Fear (2020)*

for actor and bass clarinet

My awkward grossness grows: I go down, through

I maintain my self in the conviction  
that I may have as much to say as others  
and more apposite ways of saying it

Certainly I feel it has all been said

The short fear is that even saying it  
in my own way is equally worthless

*The Short Fear*, B. S. Johnson (1933-1973)

### *Notes for performance*

The actor is encouraged to add their own dramatic expression and flair to their performance. Small directions - “**matter of fact**,” “**loud and aggressive**,” “**short and sharp**” - are given within their part, but the actor may interpret and extend these however they choose.

The actor is also encouraged to experiment with vastly different styles of address to see which most suits their own voice and expression. Examples may include: sitting behind a desk as a newsreader; performing with exaggerated and dynamic actions as a thespian; sitting or standing amongst the audience, engaging with individual members directly; or standing completely still on stage with as little expression as possible.

Although the clarinetist may visibly cue the actor and lead the musical direction of the performance, especially if the actor is not musically trained, the actor must ultimately take charge of and control the performance space.

The clarinettist may perform on stage with the actor, or may go elsewhere in the space, as long as they are static throughout. The actor is free to move around as they wish.

Amplification for both performers may be used if needed, although this is not preferred if they are performing amongst the audience.

*Duration: c. 5 minutes.*

*Transposing score.*

# The Short Fear

for actor and bass clarinet

B. S. Johnson (1933-1973)

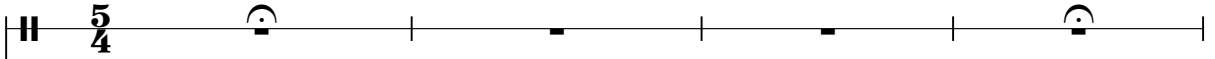
Jamie Elles (b. 1998)

♩ = 140

(Matter of fact)  
My awkward grossness grows:

I go down, through

Actor



Clarinetist may visibly cue actor if needed.

Bass Clarinet  
in B $\flat$

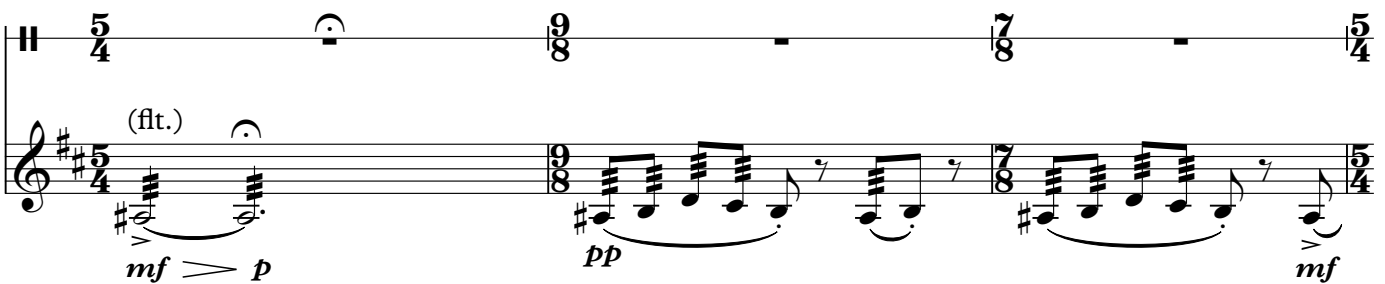


Transposing score

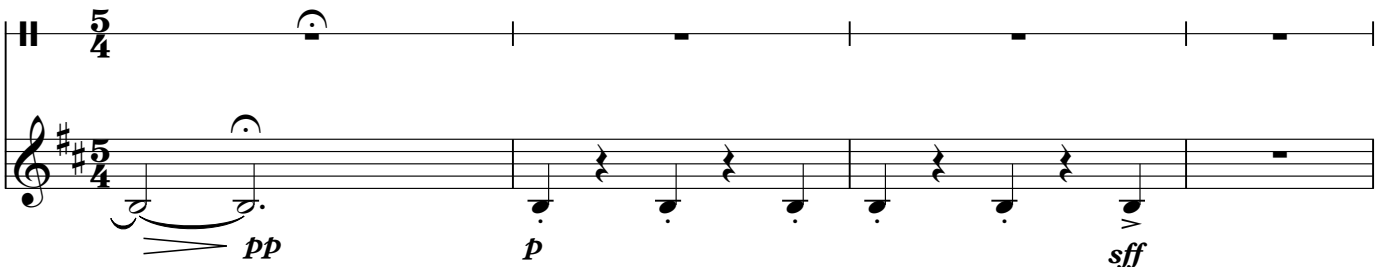
5 I maintain myself in the conviction



8 that I may have as much to say as others



11 and more apposite ways of saying it.



15

Musical notation for measures 15-18. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation features a series of eighth notes with dynamic markings: *p* < *f* > *p* *mf p* *sff*. This pattern repeats three times across the four measures.

19 My awkward grossness

awkward grossness grows:

Musical notation for measures 19-24. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes dynamic markings: *p* < *f* > *p* *sff mf* *p* < *f* > *p*. There are also fermatas over the first and last notes of the first and fourth measures.

25 My awkward grossness grows:

Musical notation for measures 25-34. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes dynamic markings: *p* *sff mf* *f* *sf*. There are fermatas over the first and last notes of the first and second measures.

35

Musical notation for measures 35-43. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes dynamic markings: *p* *sf*. The piece concludes with a 4/4 time signature.

44

Musical notation for measures 44-47. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation features a series of eighth notes with dynamic markings: *f* *p f* *p*. There are slurs over the first two and last two measures.

48

(Loud and aggressive)  
gr(rr)...

Repeat for as long as actor is growling.

*pp* *f* *mp*

53

gr(rr)...

gr(rr)oss(ss)...

*pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

59

(Start loud, get quieter with each repeat until almost whispering)  
oss, oss, oss, oss, oss, oss, oss, oss, oss...

gr(rr)oss(ss)...

(Short and sharp)  
My

awk

ward

*mp* *p dry* *sim.*

68

gross

ness

grows(ss...):

(Keep "ss" going for as long as possible, until almost running out of breath totally)

Repeat for as long as speaker is hissing.

*pp very smooth*

76

*f* *pp* *mp* *pp*

81

*f* *pp* *mp* *pp* *pppp*

88

(Matter of fact)  
Certainly I feel that all has been said

*fpp* *mf* *p*

93

all has been said      all has      been said

*mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

99

The short fear is      that even saying it in my own way      is equally worthless.

*mf* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *mp* *pp*

105

worthless      awkward      gross      worthless

*pp* *p*

113

saying it in my own way

Musical notation for measures 113-120. The piece starts in 7/8 time, then changes to 2/4. The melody features a series of chords in the first measure, followed by a melodic line with dynamics *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*.

121 is equally worthless.

awkward... gross... worthless(ss...)

(Keep "ss" going for as before)

Musical notation for measures 121-125. The piece is in 5/4 time. It includes dynamic markings *sff*, *pp*, *mp*, and *ppp*. A note in measure 125 has a long horizontal line above it with the instruction "Repeat for as long as speaker is hissing."

126

Musical notation for measures 126-131. The piece is in 4/8 time. The melody is a continuous line of chords with dynamics *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *pp*, and *mp*.

132

Musical notation for measures 132-138. The piece is in 4/8 time. The melody is a continuous line of chords with dynamics *pp*, *f*, and *mp*.

139

Musical notation for measures 139-142. The piece is in 4/8 time. The melody is a continuous line of chords with dynamics *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *p*.

143

(Hiss like before. Start off loud, then get gradually quieter before trailing off...)

Musical notation for measures 143-146. The piece is in 5/4 time, then changes to 1/4. It includes dynamic markings *pppp* and *sff*.