

## Free Climb

### Program Notes

When Director Samat first came to me with the idea of the Jazz Ensemble playing in concert with the Philharmonic, I first thought of the music of Chuck Mangione. I even went so far as to get in touch with Chuck's manager to inquire about the availability of some of his music. To my surprise, none of Chuck's arrangements are available to buy or rent as they are all owned by Sony. So, in the summer of 2020 I sat down to write and record Free Climb which is now one of the few compositions for jazz band and orchestra.

Free Climb is inspired by the fearless mountain climbers who, without any equipment, climb the face of Yosemite's El Capitan. Just thinking about it gives me the shivers.

Free Climb is what's called a modal piece and really does not have a key center. This doesn't mean that it's atonal or aleatoric; no, it's quite melodic. It just doesn't contain the standard cadences and resolutions found in most Western music, even jazz.

Free Climb makes good use of a musical device called the hemiola. Hemiola is any rhythm that combines 2 beats and 3 beats and I use many combinations throughout the piece.

I am very excited about this performance and I thank all the performers, staff and parents for their generous participation.

Eric Bolvin