

On the Summit

Elena Specht

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Duration: 7 minutes

horn choir (octet)

On the Summit draws on my experience playing in horn choir as an undergraduate. As a part of the curriculum in horn studio, my teacher, Leslie Norton, required us to regularly listen to both the solo horn repertoire and major orchestral works that feature the horn. It was through this assignment that I fell in love with the music and horn parts of Richard Strauss, who had a masterful control over the orchestra and a thorough understanding of how to make the horn sound great. *On the Summit* celebrates the horn's many sides: triumphant, bold, and powerful, as well as rich, lyrical, and lush. It also incorporates quotes from two of my favorite works of Strauss, *An Alpine Symphony* and *Horn Concerto No. 2*. The title itself is drawn from a middle section of *An Alpine Symphony*. "On the Summit" is most appropriate for this piece, written for the horn studio at the University of Colorado Boulder, as it not only ties in the influence of Strauss but also the very present Rocky Mountains just west of campus.

On the Summit was premiered on October 22, 2017.