

An Archive of the musical compositions by Herb Bielawa

Composition: **Double Think** – flute, clarinet, violin, cello, soprano, harpsichord

Date: 2009

Duration: 11:55

Recording by Sounds New – Deborah Schmidt, flute; Richard Mathias, clarinet; Brooke Aird, violin; Cathy Allen Aird, cello; Anna Carol Dudley, soprano; Miles Graber, harpsichord

Program Note:

*Double Think* was composed in 2009 for the Sounds New Ensemble specifically for their annual concert. Levity was my starting point and my favorite poet of humorous verse is Jeannie Pool, a Southern California poet/composer/female activist. I had already set eight of her *Rants*, the collection which also contains “Double Think.” This is a discourse probably between a man and a woman who bat back and forth what they suppose each is thinking about the other. As I worked on the piece it gradually took on the shape of a cantata in the Bach manner so I simply let it continue on that path with arias, recitatives and traditional cadences. Rather than trying to match the harmonic language of Bach, however, I naturally used my own.

Text:

***Double Think***

I think about that sometimes, he said. I think you think you are smarter than me, he said.

I said, why do you think that, I mean, I said, well, Why do you think that I think that? I mean, why do you think I think that I am smarter than you?

I don't know, but that's what I think; I think you think you are smarter than me.

Oh, yeah, well who are you, to say aloud what you think I might think, particularly if it is that you think I think I am smarter than you are? I mean really, that is something else. What makes you think that I think I am smarter than you are? The nerve of you to think that about what I might think! How in the hell do you think you think you know what I might think about which one of us is smarter than the other, and what does it matter to you what I think anyway?

Well, I do think about it sometimes. And I do think that you think you are smarter than I am and, well, I guess it bothers me; Yeah, that is what I think. You know, it does bother me that you would think that you are smarter than me. It really does bother me.

Well, I think it's you—it's you who thinks that I am smarter than you and that's why you think I think I'm smarter than you. Well, I don't think that at all—that's what you think so you think I must think that, too.  
I don't think so.

Well, it bothers me that you could think that I think that. Well, I mean, how can you think you might know what I might be thinking? What makes you think you are so smart that you could even guess what I might be thinking—that I might be thinking that I think I am smarter than you?

Well, now that you mention it, I do think that I might be smarter than you, I mean in this relationship, I think. But I also think that it shouldn't make any difference to you what I think about what you think, or even about what I think for that matter.

Well, I think we should change the subject. What do you think?

-Jeannie Pool