

Night Scenes, a multi-movement composition for solo piano, was composed for pianist Stanley Yerlow. Stanley and I have been friends since the eighth grade in Atlanta Georgia, and have shared musical ideas, experiences and philosophies since that time.

My mother was a wonderful pianist and my strongest musical memories of childhood was hearing the choir sing in the synagogue and hearing my mother play the piano at home.

She didn't teach me to play, so I am not a pianist, today. But she was a composer and listening to her play her music shaped some of my very first ideas of composing music. These are all reasons why writing for the piano is a very special experience for me, now.

Night Scenes is the last installment in along collection of individual musical compositions dealing with death. Each work begins with the word "night", representing death. In this case it was my inability to understand the death of my own father; my powerlessness to reconcile those feelings that only a mature child can muster. I was a young nineteen when he died and immediately had to face the still and cold body in the coffin, the whispering landscape of his hilly grave site, and the chilling song of insects at the sight. Night Scenes is about that moment of reality when one walks to the coffin and undeniably see the cold body. It is like that awful moment when the young deer looks up and sees the hunter's gun aimed at it. It starts to leap way without success and the sound of the gun breaks the silence. This is that awful moment of truth when we can no longer deny the inevitable.

The composition is divided into small, programmatic scenarios, each constructed around personal and specific tone colors that draw an appropriate musical character. Trying together these desperate musical pictures are two ritual-like interludes, providing "solemn walking music" to propel us to the end of the composition.