

# **TWO FORMS OF INSOMNIA**

for solo soprano saxophone (2011)

Alan Theisen

*Two Forms of Insomnia* (2011) for solo soprano saxophone

Alan Theisen  
(b. 1981)

- I. Meditazione
- II. Danza grottesca

Program Notes

*Two Forms of Insomnia* was commissioned by and dedicated to my good friend Michael Hernandez. Hernandez is a member of the fantastic Mana Saxophone Quartet and has been a supporter of my music over the years.

Since adolescence, I have periodically experienced insomnia. At a certain time of night, usually midnight, my brain enters a mode of hyperactivity and refuses to shut down no matter how tired I might be. Therefore, this composition provided a channel through which I could explore what I believe are two slightly different versions of insomnia.

The first is meditative, obsessive – when a single idea, memory, or fear enters my mind and begins churning ceaselessly. This is a more "passive" type of insomnia and exists in that mysterious (and sometimes delightful) region that is neither sleep nor full consciousness. The second is a manic episode – a flood of concepts and images parades across my eyelids and I want to run around my house tending to them all. I am completely awake and convinced there is simply too much to be done in life to ever, ever sleep again. This might be termed "active" insomnia.

The contrasting movements in the piece, "Meditazione" and "Danza grottesca," reflect the two very different forms I have just described.

My piece *Two Forms of Insomnia* has nothing to do with the poem of the same name by the great Jorge Luis Borges. Then again, I admire Borges and recently read his works at night...

- Alan Theisen  
Weaverville, North Carolina

For Michael Hernandez

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## I. Meditazione

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Molto lento e meditativo. Con dolore.  
Come improvvisando. ♩ = 52-48

*p*

5 *misterioso*

10 *rit.* *poco piu mosso, molto espressivo*

14 *freely, not hurried, quasi-cadenza*

17 *lamentoso* *avanti*

*mf* *f* ma sempre dolce

21 *decresc. molto* *mp*