

Morning at the window

for ensemble

Sam Yulsman

2019

Instrumentation

Clarinet in Bb

Piano

Violin

Violoncello

Score is transposed

This work was composed for CULTIVATE 2019, Copland House's emerging composers' institute, and was premiered by the Music from Copland House ensemble at the Merestead estate in Mount Kisco, NY on June 9, 2019.

Performance Notes

Clarinet in Bb

Multiphonics

One multiphonic is used in this piece (sounding pitches are transposed):



Dotted slurs indicate that a multiphonic (or single note) should not be played with enough air speed to fully speak, and should hover on the threshold at which the pitches in question begin to emerge. Mostly air sound, these moments can be thought of as the ghost of the multiphonic - glimmering or hinting at the pitches but always obscuring them.

Solid slurs show full articulation of the multiphonic at the indicated dynamic; changes between dotted and solid lines show transformations in the ratio of air to pitch.

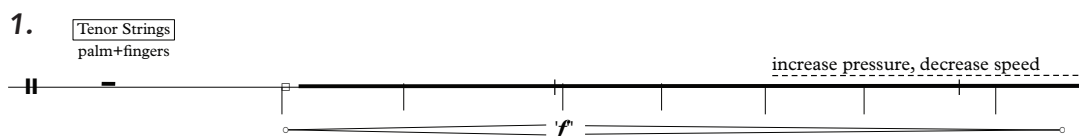
Breath sounds

For passages that call for breath sounds, very subtly narrow your throat/mouth as if you were about to make a plosive "k" sound (i.e. "car", "can") but stopped about a third of the way into the necessary mouth motion. The resulting sound should be hollow and distant - like wind moving through a canyon or between tall buildings. Exhale into the mouth piece with as little air escaping outside of the clarinet as possible, and using the fingering indicated with a diamond notehead

Piano

Tenor string gestures

Two different gestures/actions are performed directly on the tenor strings of the piano:



Drag the palm of your hand along the middle section of the tenor strings between the hammers and bridge, allowing the fingers to loosely drag along the way. A bright, breath-like white noise should be produced; it's very important that the pitches of the strings themselves are not directly activated. Dynamics can be controlled by varying the ratio of pressure and speed.

In some cases, heavy pressure and/or slow movements of the hand are used in combination with relatively short, durations. In these cases, a dull, choked, pitch-less noise should result, as the hand lethargically slips across the strings. In mm. 10 - 15, and mm. 34 - 38, keep the hand on the strings during rests if possible/comfortable in order to keep the strings muted.

2.

Piano

brush back and forth with thumb and thumbnail

Tenor Strings between tuning pins and felt

gradually depress sustain pedal

The three line staff for the left hand shows a small range of motion traversed by the thumb as it brushes a set of tenor strings between the tuning pins and felt. An evocative metallic, tinkling sound should result - the portion of strings struck by the hammers should not be activated.

The range of the bottom LH staff should cover approximately 4 or 5 strings, and can be chosen by the performer. Resting the left hand arm on the tuning pins, the palm of the hand can rest on the desired portion of strings, allowing the thumb to move upwards and downwards in a relaxed, tiny pendulum of motion.

The curve of the line shows the speed of this action. Dynamics indicate shifts in the thumb's pressure against the strings; accents show clear articulations of a single string.

"Multiphonic" trills

In mm. 17 and 58-59, mute the strings of the RH three note trill between the hammers and tuning pins using your finger pads. A multiphonic sound rich in upper-overtone content should be produced. In both passages, gradually move the LH muting fingers along the string starting at the back of the hammers and moving towards the tuning pins. At the same time, slightly reduce your finger pressure, allowing the lower overtones of the strings to slightly emerge. Keep the strings muted for the entire gesture; there should be only a glimmer/hint of these lower pitches - the string should never be allowed to fully speak.

Violin and Violoncello

Dynamics and Slow bowing

Traditional dynamic markings are used interchangeably with numbers which show precise bow speeds that range from slow to extremely slow; dotted lines show gradual transitions between speeds.

0> = not moving

1> = 80-90 seconds/one full bow stroke: extremely slow, barely moving.

2> = 25 sec/one full bow stroke: medium slow

Bow contact points/techniques

crine normal bowing - all the bow hairs touching the string

crine edge turn the bow at an angle so only the outer-most atoms of bow hair are touching the string. Approach the actual "edge" of the bow hair as needing to be found again in every passing moment - the bow may come off of the string or touch the string too forceful during your exploration of this bow hair-string threshold of contact. Making corrections in these moments to try to get back to the edge is part of the sound and expressive quality of the technique.

1/2 CLT "1/2" col legno tratto: bow with a combination of bow hair and wood. The amount of bow hair touching the string should be slightly greater than during crine edge bowing, but only by a few individual strands of bow hair.

CLT col legno tratto: bow with the wood of the bow.

CLT-----1/2 CLT Transitions between these contact points are shown using dotted lines. Dotted lines don't always correspond directly to smooth transformations/transitions between sounds however: they show the duration/speed of the physical action necessary to move between contact techniques; the sounding results can be approached as secondary and indeterminate (within a very small range of possible outcomes). These actions center on very small, often slow motion twisting of the bow between the wood and hair.

Bow pressure

Bow pressure is always light during passages where bow speed is indicated using numbers instead of traditional dynamic markings. In mm. 49-51 heavy bow pressure is used, and should produce a harsh, metallic timbre. The following symbols are used in this passage:

- overpressure
- return to normal bowing pressure

Bowing location

Abbreviations are used to indicate different bowing locations:

- m.s.p = molto sul ponticello
- s.p. = sul ponticello
- s.t. = sul tasto
- m.s.t. = molto sul tasto

Changes in bow direction

During passages where changes in bow speed are indicated, the bow should change direction as little as possible, allowing as long a length of as possible to come into contact with the string on each bow stroke.


Slurs show exact bowings. If glissandi appear between two pitches that are not slurred, the starting and ending pitches should be bowed and clearly articulated.

Tremolos

Tremolos are always as fast as possible.

In mm. 3-6 and tremolos appear in combination with bow speed indications instead of traditional dynamic markings. In these passages tremolos should be approached as ornaments, or disturbances to the otherwise slow, lethargic movements of the bow; they should be played as quietly and as fast as possible, utilizing only a few inches of the length of the bow. The resulting sound should be a dry, rustling, brushing sound with very muted pitch content.

Vibrati and other LH techniques

 vibrati -- the width and speed of various vibrati are shown graphically. **They should always be very wide, fast and explosive, ranging from a quarter-tone to a minor sixth in either direction of the starting pitch.**

Slow bowing is often used to obscure these intense motions of the left hand. In these cases, the LH movements across the string may disturb the bow, producing unexpected "accidental" sounds - these are welcome, but no attempt should be made to force them to emerge; the focus should be on carrying out the actions themselves. Usually, very little if any sound will be produced, producing a visual tension between the intensity of the actions and the subdued resulting sound.

♯ strong jeonseong -- rapidly bend the indicated pitch down at least a minor third before rapidly returning to the starting pitch.

♭ weak jeonseong -- rapidly bend the indicated pitch down about a semi-tone before rapidly returning to the starting pitch.



clear diamond noteheads indicate harmonic finger pressure should be used. Boxed numbers indicate the partial number of the sounding pitch. Almost always the touch point and sounding pitch are the same.

Morning at the window

♩ = 60

Clarinet in B \flat

Violin

Violoncello

Piano

IV [until m. 52]

III [6]
IV [8]

1/2 CLT
m.s.t.

1 > ----- 2 > 3

III [until m. 11]
♯

1/2 CLT
m.s.t.

f > 3 < f >

3 1 >

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

4

6

7

3

3

1 >

2 >

3

1 >

3

2 >

s.p.

3

mp

crine ord.

♯

3

f

Tenor Strings
palm+fingers

increase pressure, decrease speed

f

keep depressed until m. 20

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

7

ppp

bisb.

crine ord.

poco a poco reduce the width of the vibrato while maintaining the fastest speed possible

1 >

♯

3

ppp

2 10

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

0>

crine edge

IV

9

0>

To bass strings - multiphonic trill

13

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

A

1/2 CLT
m.s.t.

ppp

[crine edge]

III 6

IV 8

poco a poco to crine

ppp

"multiphonic trill"
as fast as possible

[l.v.]

Bass strings between hammers and tuning pins

mute indicated pitches with fingers 2, 3 and 4; this should produce a "multiphonic" sound rich in overtone content

finger placement:

near the hammers

near the tuning pins

decrease finger pressure

barely touching strings

16

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

ppp

[d]

crine

barely speaking

13^{ma}

ppppp

ppppp

ppppp

Tenor Strings between tuning pins and felt

brush back and forth with thumb and thumbnail

ppppp

ppppp

mp

ppppp

28

Cl. *tr* *bisb.* **C** *bisb.*

Vln. *1/2 CLT* *CLT* *crine flautando* *p*

Vc. *5* *1/2 CLT* *CLT* *crine ord.* **I** **[11]** **[1>]**

Pno. *PPPPP* *PPP* *PPPPP* *PPP* *PPPPP*

31

Cl.

Vln.

Vc. *8va*

Pno.

34

Cl. *tr*

Vln. *PPPPP* *1/2 CLT ord.* *ppp*

Vc. *8va* **[poco a poco accelerare]**

Pno.

37

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

ppppp
1/2 CLT
ord.

ppp

2>

40

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

43

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

46

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

[poco a poco decelerate]

[poco a poco to 1/2 CLT]

49

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

crine flautando

1/2 CLT

CLT

1 >

Tenor Strings

palm+fingers

52

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

ppp

ord.

ff

f < ff

m.s.t.

f ff

crine ord. III

s.p.

ord.

mf

f

pp

f

f

15ma

mp

f

55

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

mp

m.s.t.

ord.

p

mp

mp

pppp

mf

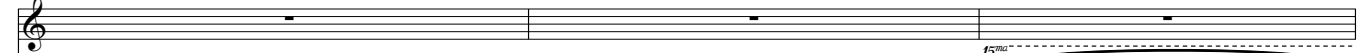
Tenor Strings

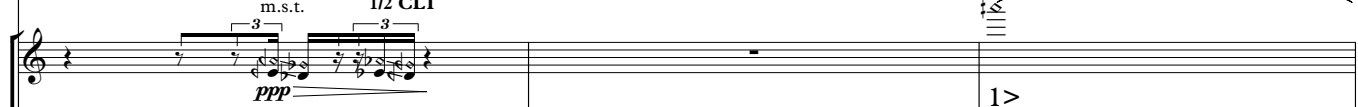
between tuning pins and felt

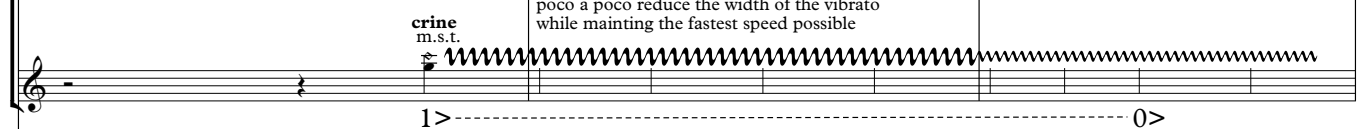
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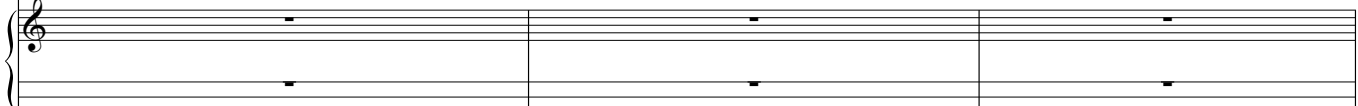
58

7

Cl. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

Pno. 

ppp

m.s.t. 1/2 CLT

crine m.s.t.


poco a poco reduce the width of the vibrato while maintaining the fastest speed possible

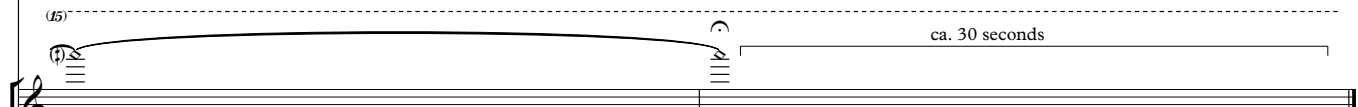
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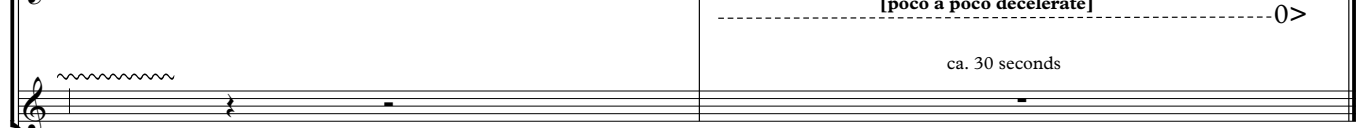


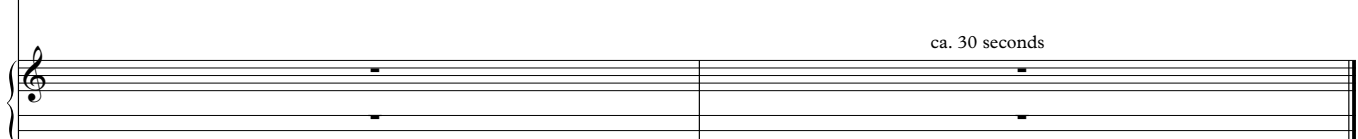
ca. 30 seconds

61

Cl. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

Pno. 

ca. 30 seconds

ca. 30 seconds

[poco a poco decelerate]

ca. 30 seconds

ca. 30 seconds