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Title

Staircase Wit

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Full Score
(transposed)

Lise Morrison

Staircase Wit

(2018/2019)

for bass flute, bass clarinet, tuba, contrabass, harp, vibraphone, and cimbalom

*- for the Lucerne Festival Academy Alumni Ensemble
for performance at Lucerne Festival 2018 -*

Performance notes

Winds - Singing and playing:

Bass flute, (along with the bass clarinet and tuba) are required to sing in unison or at the octave (showed with a diamond notehead) with the played note. The pitch classes indicated can be both played and sung in the register of the player's choice - favouring a fitting dynamic and good balance.

(Players are welcome to let the instrument sound first in order to hear the pitch before singing, as long as the voice entries are nearly imperceptible.)

Singing and playing are both at a soft dynamic and should be balanced in the ensemble.

"Precise" sung pitches are not necessary - slight deviation with the voice from the written pitch is welcome.

In section E, deviation from the unison/octave is required to create some sense of "beating" between the voice and played note.

Double Bass:

The bass bowing is mainly "stuttered" (as quietly as possible). Move the bow very slowly, with sufficient pressure. It is not necessary for separate impulses from the arm. The stutters should not be in a constant tempo. (The vertical spaces between the lines do not represent any specific rhythm, only the effect of irregularity.)

Bows can be changed freely.

Winds+double bass:

The winds and double bass quartet enter one after the other after the cue for each gesture. The speed of the staggering can vary from one event to the other, but overall get shorter as the piece unfolds.

Harp+cimbalom+vibraphone: The harp, guitar and vibraphone trio give play the "trigger" of each event, as indicated by the conductor leader of the ensemble.

Staircase wit is what one would call the predicament of thinking of a reply too late. This piece was commissioned by Cody Takács from the Hague-based Hodiernal Quartet and subsequently re-orchestrated for the Lucerne Festival Alumni Ensemble for the 2018 Lucerne Festival.

I was interested in a micro-counterpoint between the voices while playing a “stuttered” or distorted chorale. Soft, vulnerable voices within these gestures are meant to be completely independent but, when one zooms out of it, still hear a chorus of weaves with each other.

Staircase Wit

for ensemble mise-en

Lise Morrison

A

c.18" c.4" c.18" c.4" simile

with voice: *pp* (or any comfortable octave)

Bass Flute

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

with voice *pp* (or any comfortable octave)

Bass Clarinet in Bb

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

with voice: *ppp* (or any comfortable octave)

Tuba

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

"bow stutters" *pp*

Contrabass

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

p

Harp

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

p

l.v. sempre

Cimbalom

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

p *l.v. sempre*

c.18" c.4" c.18" c.4" simile

Vibraphone

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

pp motor on (slow) pedal lifted mid-silence (up to the player) *pp* simile

E \flat F \sharp A \flat
B \flat G \sharp C \sharp

Full Score (transposed)

9

B. Fl. \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

B. Cl. \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

Tba. \flat_2 \sharp_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

Db. \flat_2 \sharp_2 \sharp_2 \sharp_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

Hp. \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

Cimb. \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

Vib. \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2 \flat_2

G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Eb G\# Ab
 C\#

Full Score (transposed)

17

B. Fl. G.P. G.P. G.P.

B. Cl. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Tba. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Db. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Hp. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Cimb. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Vib. G.P. G.P. G.P.

grace note on the beat

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a full orchestra, transposed. It contains seven staves, each for a different instrument. The staves are: B. Fl. (Bass Flute), B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet), Tba. (Tuba), Db. (Double Bass), Hp. (Harp), Cimb. (Cymbal), and Vib. (Vibraphone). Each staff has a treble or bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The score is divided into four measures by vertical dashed lines. In each measure, there is a 'G.P.' (Grand Pause) marking. The B. Fl. staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, with a '17' above the first measure. The B. Cl. staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Tba. staff starts with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The Db. staff starts with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The Hp. staff has two staves, one with a treble clef and one with a bass clef, both with a key signature of one flat. The Cimb. staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Vib. staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. There are various musical notations, including notes, rests, and grace notes, throughout the score. A 'grace note on the beat' is indicated in the Hp. staff. There are also some colorful markings (vertical bars) in the Db. staff.

Full Score (transposed)

23

B e. 3" e. 5" e. 3" **C** 12 - 15" 3 - 4" simile

B. Fl. *p* *G.P.* *p* *G.P.* *G.P.*

B. Cl. *p* *G.P.* *p* *G.P.* *G.P.*

Tba. *p* *G.P.* *G.P.* *G.P.*

Db. *molto flautando*
molto sul tasto *G.P.* *mp* *G.P.* *G.P.*

Hp. *p* *mp* *mp* *G.P.* *G.P.* *G.P.*

Cimb. *p* *mp* *mp* *G.P.* *G.P.* *G.P.*

Vib. *pitch bend* *mp* *G.P.* *G.P.* *G.P.*

slow pedal slide:
G#- G#
C#- C#
G#- G#
C#- C#

E# F# G# A#
B# C#

Eb F# G#
Bb C#

E# G# A#
C# D#

Full Score (transposed)

30

B. Fl. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

B. Cl. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Tba. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Db. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Hp. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Cimb. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

Vib. G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P.

A#-A# C#-C# G#-G# C#-C# A#-A# C#-C#

C# A# C# B#

#5

Full Score (transposed)

46 *simile*

B. Fl. *simile* \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.**

B. Cl. **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.**

Tba. **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.**

Db. **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.** **G.P.**

Hp. \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.**

Cimb. \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.**

Vib. *simile* **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.** \flat_2 **G.P.**

Chord Boxes:
B \flat C \sharp
E \flat A \flat G \sharp
E \flat A \flat B \flat C \sharp

Full Score (transposed)

F Very slow

54 6" 9" simile

B. Fl. *ppp*

B. Cl. *ppp*

Tba. *ppp*

Db. *molto flautando*
molto sul tasto *col legno tratto*
sul tasto *p* *mp* *pp*

Hp. *mp*
quicker pedal slife than before

Cimb.

F Very slow 6" simile

Vib.

The score is for a full orchestral ensemble, transposed. It begins at measure 54. The top staff is for B. Fl., followed by B. Cl., Tba., Db., Hp., Cimb., and Vib. at the bottom. The tempo is marked 'Very slow' with a fermata 'F' above it. The key signature has one flat (F major or D minor). The score is divided into sections by vertical dashed lines. Above the first section, a bracket spans 6 measures. Above the second section, a bracket spans 9 measures. The word 'simile' is placed above the third section. Dynamics include *ppp* (pianississimo) for B. Fl., B. Cl., and Tba.; *p* (piano) for Db.; *mp* (mezzo-piano) for Hp.; and *pp* (pianissimo) for Db. Performance instructions include 'molto flautando molto sul tasto' for Db., 'col legno tratto sul tasto' for Db., and 'quicker pedal slife than before' for Hp. The Vib. part at the bottom has a 6-measure bracket and 'simile' marking.