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Impromptus

for flute, soprano saxophone, and piano

Sean Clarke

This work was written for Sarah Gieck (flute), Holly DeCaigny (soprano saxophone) and Lana Henchell (piano), for the 2015 NASA Regional Saxophone Conference in Calgary AB, and was later revised and expanded.

Program Notes

These short pieces are meant to depict condensed, vivid emotional scenes, as if from an invisible film. By turns passionate, militaristic, yearning and seething, they should be played with only a short pause between movements.

Each player should think of herself as an actor playing a multi-faceted dramatic role, one whose different dimensions are revealed only as the work progresses.

The three characters interact with each other in vastly different ways from movement to movement, disclosing new, unexpected aspects of their personalities.

These impromptus are character studies of three instrumental personas that reveal different sides of themselves as they interact with each other in dramatic, unanticipated ways.

Instrumentation

Flute
Soprano saxophone
Piano

Duration

Impromptu I: ca. 2'45"
Impromptu II: ca. 45"
Impromptu III: ca. 1'45"
Impromptu IV: ca. 1'00"
Impromptu V: ca. 3'30"

Total: ca. 10'

The soprano saxophone part is notated in B-flat.

Piano tremolo

Tremolo should be played very quickly and with great energy at loud dynamics. All the notes in one hand should be played as a block chord, followed by a similar chord in the other hand so that the result is rapidly alternating chords.

At lower dynamics tremolo should be played slower and in an improvisatory and mellifluous manner. The notes in each hand should be played one or two at a time and in different orders, not as single block chords. The desired result is of ever-changing, expressive, liquid figuration.

As a passage gets louder, the performer should gradually change from the quiet-tremolo technique to the loud-tremolo technique.

Impromptu I

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Largo

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 42$

Flute

Soprano Sax
Notated in Bb

Piano

f < *ff*

tr

f *ff*

f *ff*

sfz *f*

5

Fl

Sax

Pn

espressivo

pp

ff *sfz* *f* *fff* *ff* < *fff* *ff* *fff*

5

3

Red. *Red. *Red.

Impromptu II

FURIOSO – Severe and
militaristic.

Sean Clarke

♩ = c. 96 - 104

Fl
Sopr. Sax
Notated in Bb
Pn

ff *f* *ff* *f*

ff *f* *ff* *f*

ff *f* *ff* *f*

Red. * Red. *

3 3 5

This system contains the first four measures of the piece. It features three staves: Flute I (Fl), Soprano Saxophone (Sopr. Sax, Notated in Bb), and Piano (Pn). The Flute I part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, *ff*, and *f*. The Soprano Saxophone part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, *ff*, and *f*. The Piano part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, *ff*, and *f*. There are markings for *Red.* and *** in the piano part. The system includes triplets and a quintuplet.

Fl
Sax
Pn

ff *f* *ff* *f* < *ff*

ff *f* *ff*

ff *f* *ff*

Red. * Red. * Red. *

5 3 5 3 6

This system contains measures 4 through 7. It features three staves: Flute I (Fl), Saxophone (Sax), and Piano (Pn). The Flute I part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, *ff*, and *f* < *ff*. The Saxophone part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, and *ff*. The Piano part has dynamics of *ff*, *f*, and *ff*. There are markings for *Red.* and *** in the piano part. The system includes quintuplets and triplets.

Impromptu III

Largo

♩ = c. 42

*Breathe expressively
(not hurried) when needed.*

Fl

Sopr. Sax
Notated in Bb

Pn

pp *p* *mp* *mf* *p*

freely - quasi recit.

sost. ped. (hold until end of mvt.)

ped. * *ped.* * *ped.* *

Detailed description: This system contains the first three staves of the score. The Flute staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by a half note G4 with a fermata, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The Soprano Saxophone staff has a quarter rest, followed by a half note G4 with a fermata, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The Piano staff features a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a half note G4 with a fermata, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The score includes dynamic markings (pp, p, mp, mf, p), articulation (accents), and performance instructions like 'freely - quasi recit.' and 'sost. ped. (hold until end of mvt.)'. Pedal markings are present at the bottom of the piano staff.

Fl

Sax

Pn

pp *p* *mp* *mf*

freely - quasi recit.

ped. * *ped.* *

Detailed description: This system contains the fourth and fifth staves of the score. The Flute staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The Saxophone staff has a quarter rest, followed by a half note G4 with a fermata, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The Piano staff features a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a half note G4 with a fermata, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The score includes dynamic markings (pp, p, mp, mf), articulation (accents), and performance instructions like 'freely - quasi recit.'. Pedal markings are present at the bottom of the piano staff.

Impromptu IV

Agitato - Savagely

$\text{♩} = c. 72$

Flute

Musical notation for the Flute part, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The piece is marked 'Agitato - Savagely' with a tempo of approximately 72 beats per minute. The notation includes a series of sixteenth-note runs with slurs and accents. Dynamics range from *ff* to *ff*. Performance instructions include 'fluttertongue' and '3' (triplets). The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Sopr. Sax
Notated in Bb

Musical notation for the Soprano Saxophone part, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes slurs and accents over sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*. Performance instructions include 'fluttertongue (Ossia: semi-tone trills)' and '3' (triplets).

Piano

Musical notation for the Piano part, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes slurs and accents over sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *ff* to *ff*. Performance instructions include '5' (quintuplets).

Fl

Musical notation for the Flute II part, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes slurs and accents over sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *ff* to *f*. Performance instructions include '3' (triplets).

Sax

Musical notation for the Saxophone part, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes slurs and accents over sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ff*. Performance instructions include '3' (triplets).

Pn

Musical notation for the Piano part, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes slurs and accents over sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *ff* to *ff*. Performance instructions include '5' (quintuplets), '7' (septuplets), and '3' (triplets).

Impromptu V

Adagio

♩ = c. 44

Flute

Sopr. Sax
Notated in Bb

Piano

dolce
pp < *p* > *pp*

dolce
p > *pp*

f ————— *fff*

Sub
ff ————— *mp*

dolce
p > *pp*

6 Sost. Ped.

Fl

Sax

Pn

pp < *p*

pp < *mp* > *p* ————— *ppp* ————— *mf*

p > *pp* ————— *pp* < *p* > *pp* ————— *ppp* ————— *mf*

tr ~

p > *pp* ————— *pp* *p* > *pp* ————— *ppp* ————— *mf* <

(Sost. Ped.).....