

Jon Bash

Oratorio

for Saxophone Quartet

commissioned by and written for the Equus Saxophone Quartet

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I. Meditation

II. Paroxysm

III. Chant

IV. Dance

In Spring 2014, Matt Birmingham of the Equus Sax Quartet approached me about writing a piece for the ensemble, and I jumped at the opportunity without hesitation. I sought to write something that would play to the players' specific strengths & abilities and of the unique timbral qualities & techniques of the saxophone. A special thanks is owed to Soren Hamm, Matt Birmingham, David Hoogkamer, and David Decker, who played through many drafts and helped me guide the direction of the piece.

An oratorio has historically been essentially a (usually) unstaged opera on a religious narrative. While this work certainly doesn't contain any vocalists or specific biblical story, with the music and the titles I hoped to evoke feelings of sacredness and spiritual contemplation that one might experience with a traditional oratorio. The first movement depicts the internal workings of the mind during meditation, especially that of an inexperienced meditator; resistant, distracted, and trying, but still working to come to terms with stillness and mindfulness. The second movement depicts a spastic outburst of the body and mind, as pent-up aggression and negativity boil over and explode outwards before finally dying down into the third movement, a series of solemn, inquisitive recitatives and chorales, perhaps sermons or eulogies. The final movement is a freeform folk dance, having come to terms with (or at least accepted the lack of an answer to) the questions posed by the previous movements. I heartily encourage any more or less specific or alternative imagery that your ears might impose while you listen.

Contact Jon Bash at jonbashmusic@gmail.com or www.jonbash.com

I. Meditation

Jon Bash

Largo tenuto ♩=66

Measures 1-7:

- Soprano Saxophone:** *pp* (quintuplet), *f*, *p*, *mp* (timbral trill)
- Alto Saxophone:** *mp*, *pp*, *ppp*, *<mf*, *mp*
- Tenor Saxophone:** *mf > n*, *ppp < f*, *ppp < mp*
- Baritone Saxophone:** *f > n*, *mp > n*, *mp*

Measures 8-15:

- Sop. Sax.:** *pp*, *p*, *mp*, *n*, *p*, *n*, *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, *fp*
- Alto Sax.:** *pp*, *ppp < mf*, *n*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, *fp*
- Ten. Sax.:** *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, *fp*
- Bari. Sax.:** *pp*, *p*, *n*, *mf*, *p*, *n*, *ppp < fmp*, *pp*, *fp*

♠ & + both indicate different varieties of slap-tongue.

+ indicates a more resonant, softer slap-tongue.

♠ indicates a harsher, shorter slap-tongue.

16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Sop. Sax. *ppp* *mf* *mp* *pp* *fpp* *f* *n* *pp* *mf* *mp* *p* *n*
(timbral) *tr*

Alto Sax. *pp* *mf* *pp* *fpp* *f* *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp*

Ten. Sax. *n* *pp* *fpp* *f* *p* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp* *mp*

Bari. Sax. *pp* *mp* *n* *mp* *pp* *fpp* *f* *p* *sfz* *n* *mf* *n* *pp* *n*

23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33

Sop. Sax. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *pp*

Alto Sax. *f subito* *p* *f* *p* *f subito* *pp*

Ten. Sax. *f subito* *p* *f* *p* *f subito* *pp*

Bari. Sax. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f subito* *pp*

34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Sop. Sax. *mp* *fn* *p* *ff* *pp* *pp* *attaca*

Alto Sax. *mp* *fn* *p* *ff* *pp* *pppp* *pp* *sub-tone* *nat.*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *fn* *p* *ff* *pp* *pppp* *pp* *sub-tone* *nat.*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *fn* *p* *ff* *pp* *pp*

II. Paroxysm

Moderato con fuoco ♩=100

45 46

Sop. Sax. *ppp* *mf*

Alto Sax. *f* 6 6 6 6

Ten. Sax. *ppp*

Bari. Sax. *ppp*

47 48

Sop. Sax. *f* 6 6 6 6

Alto Sax. 6 6 6 6

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f*

Bari. Sax. *fp*

49 50

Sop. Sax. 6 6 6 6 *f* 6

Alto Sax. *pp* *f* 5

Ten. Sax. 3 *pp* *f*

Bari. Sax. *f* *fp* 3 3 5

51 52 53

Sop. Sax. *p* *mp* *f*

Alto Sax. *mp* *mf* *mf* *f*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

54 55 56

Sop. Sax. *p* *mf* *f* *fp*

Alto Sax. *mf* *p* *f* *sfz* *p* *mf*

Ten. Sax. *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *mp* *f*

Bari. Sax. *mf* *mp* *f* *mp* *p* *mf*

growl

57 58 59 60

Vivace ♩=150

Sop. Sax. *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

Alto Sax. *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

Ten. Sax. *f* *mp* *ff* *f* *mp* *ff*

Bari. Sax. *ff*

61 62 63 64

Sop. Sax. *f* *mp*

Alto Sax. *f* *p*

Ten. Sax. *mp*

Bari. Sax. *growl* *fp* *f* *p*

65 66 67 68

Sop. Sax. *p* *f*

Alto Sax. *f* *p* *ppp* *f*

Ten. Sax. *p* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *f* *p* *ppp* *mf*

69 70 71 72 73

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *f* *mp*

Bari. Sax. *f* *mp*

74 75 76 77

Sop. Sax. *f* *fp*

Alto Sax. *f* *fp*

Ten. Sax. *fp* *mp* *fp*

Bari. Sax. *fp* *mp* *fp*

78 79 80

Sop. Sax. *f*

Alto Sax. *f*

Ten. Sax. *fp* *fp* *f*

Bari. Sax. *fp* *fp* *f*

81 82 83

Sop. Sax. *ff* *pp* *fp* *mp*

Alto Sax. *ff* *pp* *f* *mp*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *pp* *mp*

Bari. Sax. *ff* *pp* *f*

84 85 86 87 88

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *p*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *mf*³ *p*

89 90 91 92 93 94 95

Sop. Sax. *pp* *mp*

Alto Sax. *pp* *mp*

Ten. Sax. *pp*

Bari. Sax. *pp*³

96 97 98 99 100

Sop. Sax. *p* *mf* *fp* *mf* *fp* *fp* *mf*

Alto Sax. *p* *mf* *fp* *mf* *p*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *f* *mf* *p* *mf*

101 102 103 104

Sop. Sax. *ffp* *ffp* *f* *ffp*

Alto Sax. *mf* *mf* *p* *f*

Ten. Sax. *p* *mp* *mf* *<f>* *<f>*

Bari. Sax. *p* *mf* *ffp*

105 106 107 108

Sop. Sax. *ffp* *ffp* *ffp* *fff*

Alto Sax. *fff*

Ten. Sax. *sim.* *f* *ff* *fff*

Bari. Sax. *ffp* *ffp* *ff* *fff*

109 110 111 112

Sop. Sax. *pp*

Alto Sax. *pp*

Ten. Sax. *pp*

Bari. Sax. *ppp*

$\text{♪} = \text{♪}$
 $\text{♪} = 100$

113 114 115

Sop. Sax. *ppp* *mp* *pp*

Alto Sax. 3 3 3 3 3 *pp*³ 3 *pp*³ *p*

Ten. Sax. *p* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *p* 6 6 *p*³ *mf*

116 117 118 119

Sop. Sax. *p* *mp*

Alto Sax. *pp*

Ten. Sax. *ft.* *p* 3 *mp* *pp*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *pp*

120 121 122

Sop. Sax. *mf* *n* *mp* *f*

Alto Sax. *mf* *n* *mf* *n*

Ten. Sax. *n* *pp* 6 6 *mf* *p* 3 *mf* *mp* *f*

Bari. Sax. *p* 6 *f* *ft.* *pp* *mf* *pp* *sfz* *f*

C1
Bb
C
MP 12

123 124 125 126

Sop. Sax. *trv*

Alto Sax. *f p* *ppp* *mp*

Ten. Sax. *f p* *pp*

Bari. Sax. *p* *ppp* *mp*

127 128 129 130 *rit.* *pause*

Sop. Sax. *p mp pp mp* *pp f n*

Alto Sax. *p mp pp mp* *pp f n*

Ten. Sax. *3* *3* *f n*

Bari. Sax. *ppp mp pp f n*

III. Chant

131 **Lento** ♩=50 132 133 134 135

Sop. Sax. *pp*

Alto Sax. *timbral tr*

Ten. Sax. *ppp* < *pp* > *ppp* < *p* > 3 3 3 3

Bari. Sax.

136 137 138 139 140

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. *p* 3 3 3

Ten. Sax. 3 5

Bari. Sax. *pp*

141 142 143

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. *mp* 3 5

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

144 145 146

Sop. Sax. *p* 3 5 3 3 3

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *pp*

Bari. Sax. *ppp*

147 148 149 150 151 **slower** ♩=40

Sop. Sax. *pp*

Alto Sax. **MP 56** C1 Bb *pp*

Ten. Sax. *p* *pp*

Bari. Sax. *mp*³ *5* *n* *pp*

MP 130 Ta Eb

152 153 154 155 **a tempo** ♩=50

Sop. Sax. *p* *mp* *p* *ppp*

Alto Sax. **MP 104** C5 *p* **MP 94** C# *mp* **MP 79** C# C3 C *p* *ppp* 4:6 4:6

Ten. Sax. *p* *mp* *p* *ppp*³ 3 3

Bari. Sax. *p* *mp* *p* *p*

rit. C2 C3 **MP 128** C#

156 157 158 159

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

160 161 162 163

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

164 165 166

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

a bit quicker ♩ = 40

167 168 169 170

Sop. Sax. *n ppp*

Alto Sax. *n ppp*

Ten. Sax. *n ppp*

Bari. Sax. *p n ppp*

171 172 173 174 175 176

Sop. Sax. *p ppp p*

Alto Sax. *p ppp p*

Ten. Sax. *p ppp p*

Bari. Sax. *p ppp p*

● C1 (or C2)
● Bb

pause

MP 63 ● C4

MP 33 ●●●●

gradually increase and then decrease trill speed over course of trill

IV. Dance

Presto ♩=190

177 178 179 180 181 182

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Alto Sax. *p* *mf*

Ten. Sax. *ppp* *mp*

Bari. Sax. *pp* *mf*

183 184 185 186 187 188

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *mf*

Bari. Sax.

189 190 191 192 193 194 195

Sop. Sax. *ff* *gliss.* *gliss.* *p*

Alto Sax. *ff* *p*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *p*

Bari. Sax. *ff*

196 197 198 199 200 201

Sop. Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff*

Alto Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff*

Bari. Sax. *ff* *mf* *ff*

p *ff* *mf* *ff*

202 203 204 205 206 207

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

208 209 210 211 212 213

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. *pp*

Ten. Sax. *pp*

Bari. Sax. *pp* *mf*

pp *mf*

214 215 216 217 218

Sop. Sax. *p* *mf*

Alto Sax. *p* *mf*

Ten. Sax. *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mf*

219 220 221 222 223 224

Sop. Sax. *p* *ppp*<

Alto Sax. *p* *ppp*<

Ten. Sax. *mf* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mf* *mf*

225 226 227 228

Sop. Sax. *ff* *f* *f* *f*

Alto Sax. *ff* *f*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *growl* *growl*

Bari. Sax. *ff* *growl*

229 230 231 232

Sop. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f*

Alto Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f*

Ten. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f*

Bari. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f*

233 234 235 236

Sop. Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f* *p*

Alto Sax. *f* *f* *f* *f* *p*

Ten. Sax. *ffp*

Bari. Sax. *ffp*

237 238 239

Sop. Sax. *fff*

Alto Sax. *fff*

Ten. Sax. *fff*

Bari. Sax. *fff*

240 241 242 243

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *mf* *mp* *p* *p*

Ten. Sax. *mf* *mp* *p*

Bari. Sax. *p*

244 245 246 247 248

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *p*

Bari. Sax. *p*

249 250 251 252 253

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *p* *mp*

Bari. Sax.

254 255 256 257 258

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *p*

Bari. Sax.

259 260 261 262 263

Sop. Sax. *mp* *mp* 3

Alto Sax. *mp*

Ten. Sax. *mp*

Bari. Sax. *mp*

264 265 266 267 268

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Alto Sax. *mf*

Ten. Sax. *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *mf*

269 270 271 272 273

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Alto Sax. *mf*

Ten. Sax. *mf*

Bari. Sax. *mf*

274 275 276 277

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *p*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *p*

278 279 280 281 282

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Alto Sax. *fff* *mf*

Ten. Sax. *fff* *mf*

Bari. Sax. *fff* *mf*

283 284 285 286 287 288

Sop. Sax. *ff* *f < fff*

Alto Sax. *ff* *mf < fff*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *mp < fff*

Bari. Sax. *ff* *p < fff*

289 290 291 292 293

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Sop. Sax. *mp subito*

Alto Sax. *mp*

Ten. Sax. *mp*

Bari. Sax. *mp*

Sop. Sax. *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *p*

Bari. Sax. *p*

Sop. Sax. *fff*

Alto Sax. *fff*

Ten. Sax. *fff subito*

Bari. Sax. *fff subito*

Sop. Sax. *fff*

Alto Sax. *fff*

Ten. Sax. *fff*

Bari. Sax. *fff*

312 313 314

Sop. Sax. *3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3*

Alto Sax. *6/4 #*

Ten. Sax. *6/4 b*

Bari. Sax. *6/4 b*

315 316 317

Sop. Sax. *3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3* *p*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Sax. *3/4 4/4 fff*

Bari. Sax. *3/4 4/4 fff*

318 319 320 321 322

Sop. Sax. *3 3 3 3 3 3* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *fff*

Alto Sax. *fff*

Ten. Sax. *fff*

Bari. Sax. *fff*

323 324 325 326 327 328 329

Sop. Sax. *323 (b)*

Alto Sax. *324 325 326 327 328 329*

Ten. Sax. *324 325 326 327 328 329*

Bari. Sax. *324 325 326 327 328 329*

330 331 332 333 334 335

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

336 337 338 339 340 341

Largo ♩=66

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

a tempo ♩=190

342 343 344 345 346 347 348

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.