

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 $\text{J}=66$

Soprano Saxophone
Alto Saxophone
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone

2 3 4 5 6 7

pp f p mp $(\text{timbral}) \text{tr}$
 mp pp $ppp < mf$ mp
 $mf > n$ $ppp < f$ $ppp < mp$
 $f > n$ $mp > n$ mp

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

pp p mp n n pp mp pp fp
 pp $ppp < mf$ n p $> pp$ mp pp fp
 pp mp p mf pp mp pp fp
 pp $p > n$ mf $p > n$ $ppp < f$ $mp > pp$ fp

\diamond & + both indicate different varieties of slap-tongue.

+ indicates a more resonant, softer slap-tongue.

\diamond indicates a harsher, shorter slap-tongue.

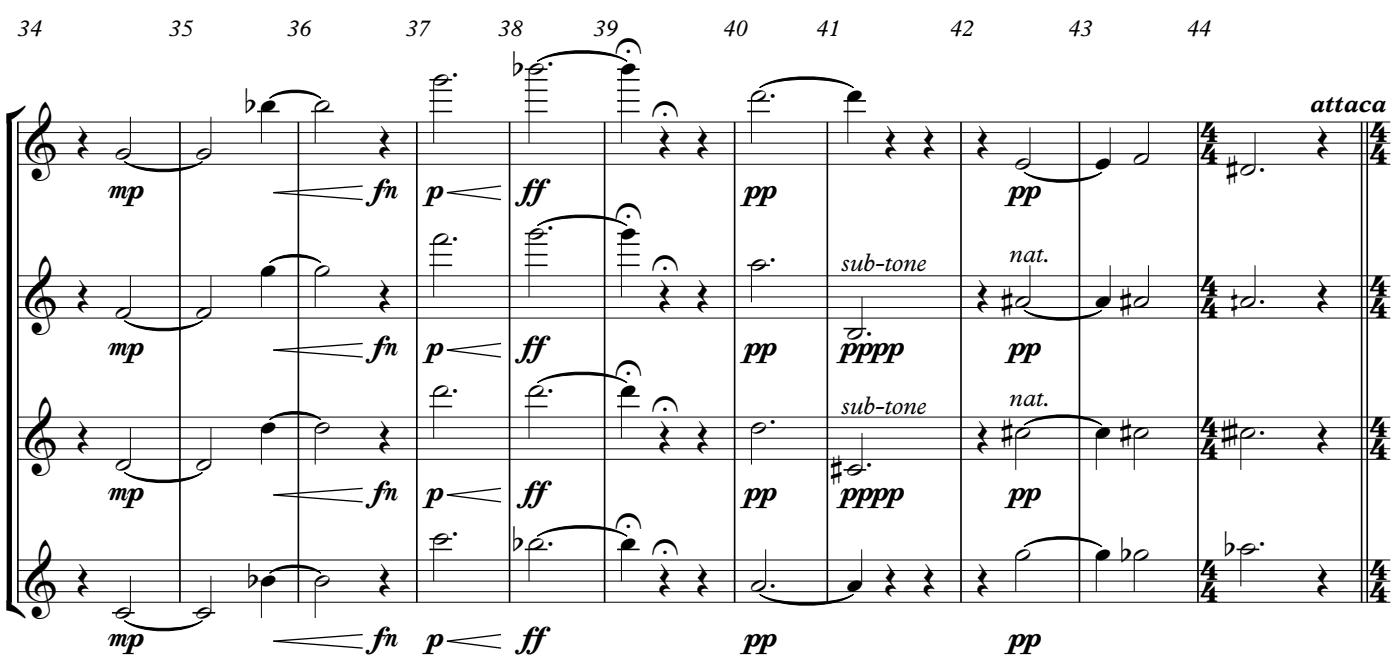
16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Sop. Sax. 

23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33

Sop. Sax. 

34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Sop. Sax. 

II. Paroxysm

Moderato con fuoco $\text{♩}=100$

45 46

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

ppp *mf*
f *f*
ppp *ppp*
ppp

47 48

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

p *f* *f*
f *fp*

49 50

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

f *f* *f*
pp *f* *f*
pp *f* *f*
f *fp* *f*

51 52 53

Sop. Sax. 

mp mf³ mp
mp mf³ mp
mp mf⁶ mp
mf⁵ mp>p< mp

54 55 56

Sop. Sax. 

p mf f³ fp
mf p f sfz
mf 3 3 3
growl f mp p
mf mp f mf

$\overline{\overline{3}}$ = $\overline{\overline{3}}$

57 Vivace $\text{♩}=150$ 58 59 60

Sop. Sax. 

f mp f mp
f mp f mp
f mp ff f mp
ff f ff

61

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

growl

f *mp*

f *p*

mp

fp *f p*

65

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

p

f p *ppp*

f

3

f

mf

mf

69

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

3

3 *3*

3

3

p

p

f

3

3

3

3

mp

f

mp

74 75 76 77

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

78 79 80 81

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

81 82 83

Sop. Sax.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.

84 85 86 87 88

Sop. Sax. |

Alto Sax. |

Ten. Sax. |

Bari. Sax. |

mp

p

p

mf > *p*

89 90 91 92 93 94 95

Sop. Sax. |

Alto Sax. |

Ten. Sax. |

Bari. Sax. |

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

mp

mp

mp

96 97 98 99 100

Sop. Sax. |

Alto Sax. |

Ten. Sax. |

Bari. Sax. |

p

mf

fp

fp

fp

fp

mf

mf

mf

f

mf

p

mf

101 102 103 104

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

Alto Sax. *mf* *3* *3* *3* *p* *3* *3* *3* *f*

Ten. Sax. *p* *mp* *3* *mf* *<f>* *<f>*

Bari. Sax. *p* *mf* *3* *ffp*

105 106 107 108

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

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *sim.* *f* *3* *3* *3* *ff* *5* *fff*

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

109 110 111 112

Sop. Sax. *ff* *ff*

Alto Sax. *ff* *ff*

Ten. Sax. *ff* *ff*

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

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

113 114 115

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

*p*pp ————— *mp* ————— *pp* ————— *p*

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

p ————— *p* ————— *p* ————— *p* ————— *mf*

116 117 118 119

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

p ————— *mp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp*

flt. ————— *p* ————— *mp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp*

p ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *pp*

120 121 122

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

- ————— *mf* ————— *n* ————— *mp* ————— *f*

- ————— *mf* ————— *n* ————— *mf* ————— *n*

- ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* ————— *f*

n ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *mf* ————— *pp* ————— *pp* ————— *sfz* ————— *f*

C1
Bb
C
MP 12

123 *p*

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. *f p*

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax. *p*

124

125 *ppp*

126 *mp pp pp*

127 *p mp pp*

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *3*

Bari. Sax. *ppp*

rit.

128 *mp*

129

130 *pause*

pp f n f n f n

III. Chant

131 **Lento** $\text{♩} = 50$ 132

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *timbral tr~*

Bari. Sax.

133

134

pp

135

136

137

138

139

140

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *3 5*

Bari. Sax.

pp

141

142

143

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. *mp*

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

144

145

146

Sop. Sax. *p 3 5*

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax. *pp*

Bari. Sax.

ppp

147

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

MP 56 C1
Bb

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

p

mp 3 5

148

149

150

151 slower $\text{♩} = 40$

MP 130 Ta
Eb

pp

5

5

pp

5

pp

5

152

Sop. Sax.

p

MP 104 C5

rit.

153

Alto Sax.

p

MP 94 C \sharp

154

Ten. Sax.

p

MP 79 C \sharp , C3, C

155 a tempo $\text{♩} = 50$

Bari. Sax.

ppp 4:6 \downarrow 4:6 \downarrow

ppp 3 3 3

p

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.

167 168 169 170 *a bit quicker* $\text{♩} = 40$

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax. $4:6\downarrow$ $4:6\downarrow$ $4:6\downarrow$ $4:6\downarrow$

Ten. Sax. 3 3 3 3 3 3

Bari. Sax.

n ***ppp***

n ***ppp***

n ***ppp***

p *n* ***ppp***

171 172 173 174 175 176

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

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

Ten. Sax. ***p*** ***ppp*** ***p*** ***ppp*** ***p*** ***ppp***

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

C1 (or C2)
B♭
C
pause

gradually increase and then decrease trill speed over course of trill
MP 63
C4
C
MP 33
X
(C)

IV. Dance

Presto $\text{d}=190$

177 178 179 180 181 182

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

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

183 184 185 186 187 188

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

mf

189 190 191 192 193 194 195

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

ff *ff* *ff* *gliss.* *ff* *p* *p*

196 197 198 199 200 201

Sop. Sax.

p *ff* *mf* *ff*

202 203 204 205 206 207

Sop. Sax.

208 209 210 211 212 213

Sop. Sax.

pp *pp* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

214 215 216 217 218

Sop. Sax.

p *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

219 220 221 222 223 224

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

225 226 227 228

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

229 230 231 232

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

233 234 235 236

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

237 238 239

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

240 241 242 243

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

244 245 246 247 248

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

249 250 251 252 253

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

254 255 256 257 258

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

259 260 261 262 263

Sop. Sax. 

Alto Sax. 

Ten. Sax. 

Bari. Sax. 

264

Sop. Sax.

265

266

267

268

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

mf

mf

mf

mp

mf

269 270 271 272 273

Sop. Sax.

Alto Sax.

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

274 275 276 277

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

278 279 280 281 282

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

283 284 285 286 287 288

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

289 290 291 292 293

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

Detailed description: This block contains six staves of musical notation for four saxophone parts: Soprano (Sop.), Alto, Tenor (Ten.), and Bass (Bari.). The staves are arranged vertically. Measure numbers 274 through 293 are indicated above each group of staves. Measure 274 starts with Sop. Sax. in 2/4 time. Measures 275-277 show Ten. Sax. playing eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*. Measures 278-282 feature rhythmic patterns with dynamics *fff*, *mf*, and *mf*. Measures 283-288 show complex sixteenth-note patterns with dynamics ranging from *ff* to *p*. Measures 289-293 show eighth-note patterns in various time signatures (3/4, 6/8, 7/8, 4/4, 5/8).

294 295 296 297 298 299 22
 Sop. Sax. |
 Alto Sax.
 Ten. Sax.
 Bari. Sax.

300 301 302 303 304
 Sop. Sax. |
 Alto Sax.
 Ten. Sax.
 Bari. Sax.

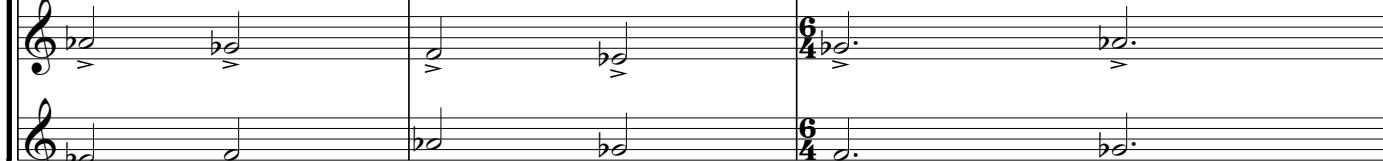
305 306 307
 Sop. Sax. |
 Alto Sax.
 Ten. Sax.
 Bari. Sax.

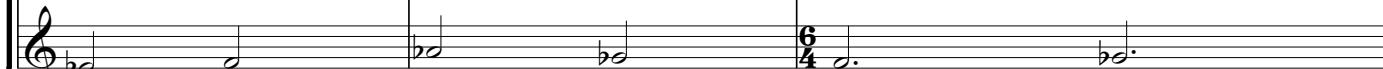
308 309 310 311
 Sop. Sax. |
 Alto Sax.
 Ten. Sax.
 Bari. Sax.

312 313 314

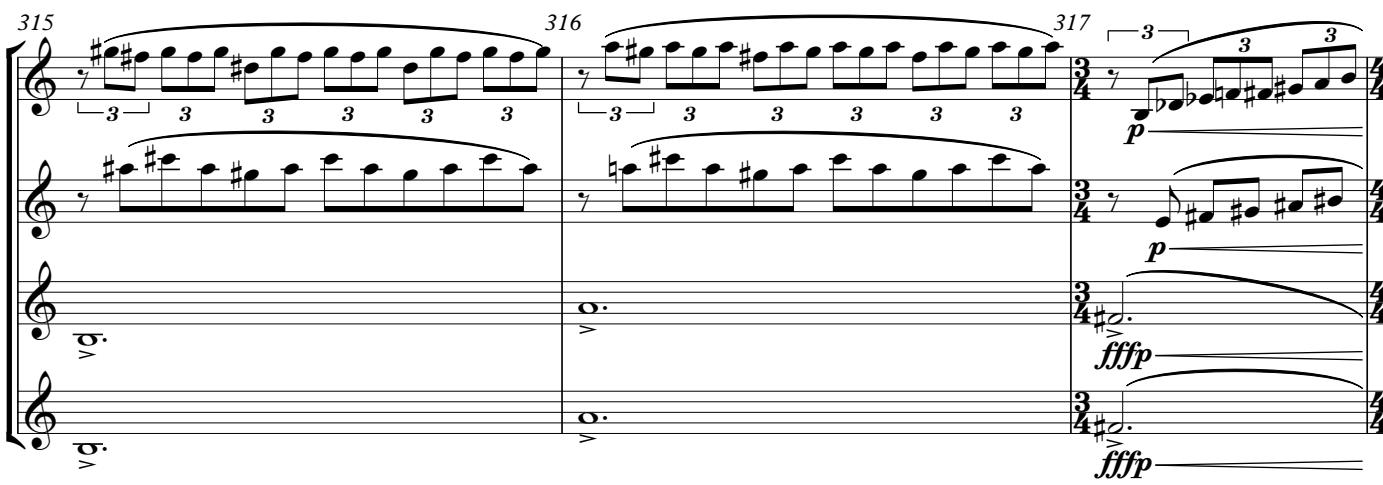
Sop. Sax. 

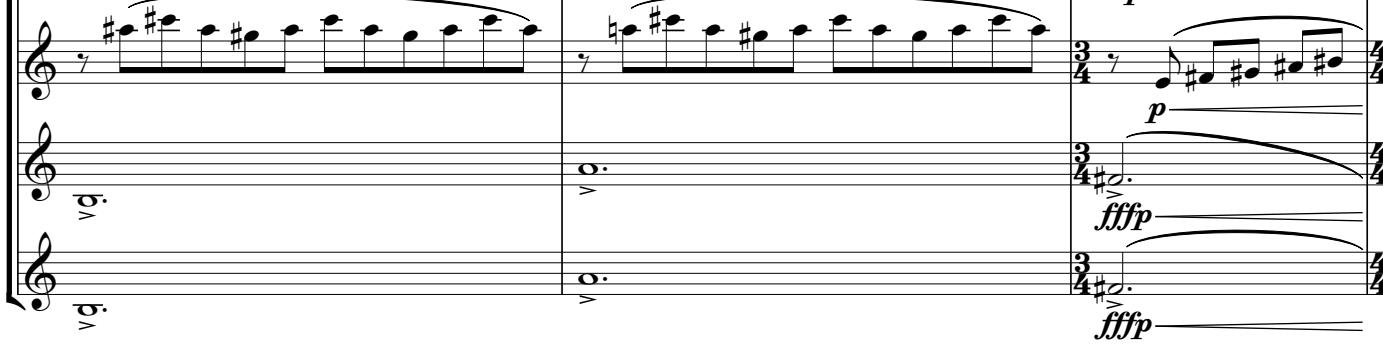
Alto Sax. 

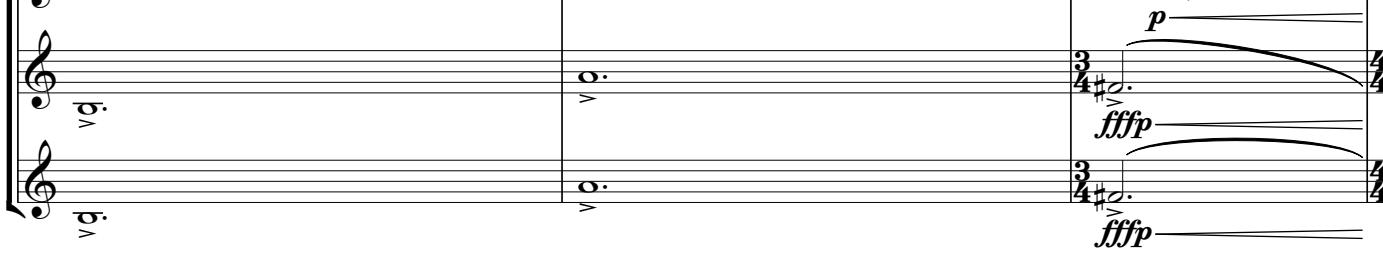
Ten. Sax. 

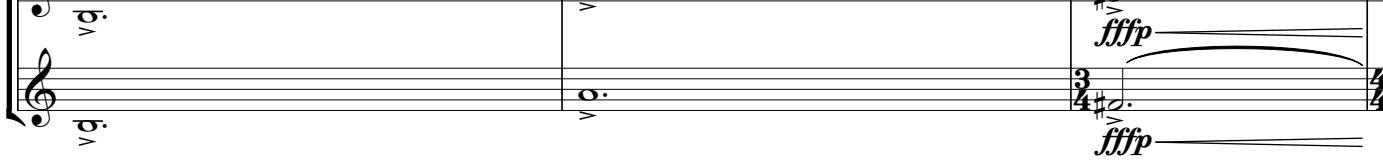
Bari. Sax. 

315 316 317

Sop. Sax. 

Alto Sax. 

Ten. Sax. 

Bari. Sax. 

318 319 320

Sop. Sax. 

Alto Sax. 

Ten. Sax. 

Bari. Sax. 

321 322

Sop. Sax. 

Alto Sax. 

Ten. Sax. 

Bari. Sax. 

323 324 325 326 327 328 329

Sop. Sax. 

Alto Sax. 

Ten. Sax. 

Bari. Sax. 

24

330 331 332 333 334 335

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

336 337 338 339 340 341

Largo $\text{♩} = 66$

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.

a tempo $\text{♩} = 190$

342 343 344 345 346 347 348

Sop. Sax. Alto Sax. Ten. Sax. Bari. Sax.