

Michael Broder

(b. 1988)

Stairwell Music

for solo Saxophone

in a highly reverberant space

(or with electronic reverb)

Performance Notes

Stairwell Music is intended to be performed in a highly reverberant space—such as a stairwell or parking garage—or with a microphone and an electronic reverb effect of fixed parameters. The use of reverberation—whether ambient or simulated—in the piece’s performance should not be overlooked, as the various musical components that comprise the piece were conceived with such an acoustic environment in mind, and neglecting it would compromise their intended effects.

It may be performed on soprano, alto, tenor, or baritone saxophone.

Approximate duration is 4 minutes.



Accidentals affect only the notes they immediately precede, plus any immediate repetitions within the measure. Accidentals are not transferable to other registers. Courtesy naturals are used extensively to avoid confusion.

Crescendi and diminuendi without target dynamics indicate small changes of less than one dynamic level.

Sforzandi indicate additional weight on the attack of a note similar to accents, but without the separation that accents usually entail. Sforzandi occur at a variety of dynamic levels. When a sforzando coincides with a change in dynamic level or the restatement of a dynamic after a measure or more of rest, the symbols are shown close to each other (such as *fsfz*, *mpsfz*, etc.) The marking *sfz* by itself is to be played within the current dynamic level (i.e., the most recently indicated dynamic marking).

Program Note

Stairwell Music is a brief meditation on the majesty of a space and the transformative power that an environment can have on those who enter it, however quotidian it may be. It is intended to be performed in a highly reverberant space as a private deliberation, or, if played in the concert hall, with a microphone and an electronic reverb effect of fixed parameters. As is stated in the piece's notes to the performer, the reverberation called for in performance is not intended as a superfluous effect, but as an essential component of the music and one on which the proper realization of the composition depends.

to my wife, Morgan
Stairwell Music

Michael Broder
 (2014)

Rubato espressivo ♩ = 48-60
lunga

Saxophone

p < *mp* > *p* *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*

6 *light, agile*

mf *sfz* *mp* *sfz* *sub. p* > *pp*

11 Non rubato ♩ = 48 (♩ = 96)

p *mp* > *p* *sfz*

16 *poco rall.* Rubato espressivo ♩ = 48-60

mf *sfz* *più f* *mp* *mf*

20 *agitato* (♩ = 144)

f *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

23 ♩ = 54 (bend***) (like a shadow)

sfz sub. mp *mf* > *pp*

29 (with "snap")

mp *mf* *sfz* *p*

*Horizontal arrows above the staff indicate expressive accelerandi (→) or ritardandi (←).
 **All grace notes in the piece should be played as fast and as evenly as possible, so that the individual notes blur together.
 ***For all pitch bends in the piece (mm. 24-25 and 38-42), the performer may crescendo or diminuendo as needed to facilitate the technique.
 ****Grace notes marked with a vertical arrow should be played on the beat.

34 *agitato* *molto accel.* Non rubato ♩ = 96

mf *f*

37 *ff* *f*

42 (wide vibrato*) ♩ = 54 (♩ = 108) (with "snap") *ff*

45 *lunga* *dolce* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

51 *mf*

56 Con moto ♩ = 60 *f*

61 *sfz*

64 *sfz* *sfz*

*The pitch bends in m. 42 should transition seamlessly into m. 43 and accelerate throughout the (four-beat) figure, essentially becoming wide, accelerating vibrato. The precise number of undulations in m. 43 is unspecified.

♩ = 96
con forza
 66 *ff*

agitato
 69 *sfz*

poco a poco accel. (to m. 80)
 74 *sfz*

poco a poco rall. (to m. 84)
 79 *fff* (*f poss.*)

Very deliberate ♩ = 120
con tutta forza

poco rall.
 84 *fff* (*f poss.*) *lunga** *p*

Gentle, not much rubato ♩ = 54

91 *mp* *mf*

96 *mp*

Con moto ♩ = 66
 103 *mf sfz* *p* *mp* *p* *pp*

Hesitant, quasi tempo ad lib.
 ♩ = 48-56

108 *ppp* *p poss.*

*Wait until most of the "crunch" from the low B \flat has subsided and the low B \flat is heard as the most prominent pitch in the reverberation.