

Matthew Whittall

Sketches before a storm

for flute and kantele

2006

Music Finland





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Composer's note

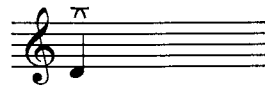
Sketches before a storm, for flute and kantele, is a product of my fascination over the last several years with various Japanese art forms, poetry and landscape painting especially. The style of fast-sketched inkbrush painting known as *sumi-e* is one I find particularly inspiring. I am constantly attracted by its spaciousness, the limited use of a few controlled gestures in a single color, usually black, to create a simple but sharply defined image; the alternation of emptiness and dense activity, light and shade and, above all, by the overwhelming feeling of balance in such scenes.

The piece is, as the title implies, a series of brief vignettes or panels, some linked, some standing slightly apart from the overall structure, that together create a larger landscape. The two instruments soliloquy and dialogue freely, using and re-using a minimal set of musical “brushstrokes” deployed in improvisational fashion throughout. The “storm” is an image only intimated by the unsettled, slightly volatile nature of the music, like waves of tension mounting before a rainstorm that never arrives (except perhaps for the first heavy drops). Although the influence of Japanese music may occasionally be heard, the relationship is more of a structural one, where small-scale materials are arranged into a form of greater complexity. I like to think the use of extended techniques – airy flute sounds, strings being scratched and buzzed together – parallels the technique in *sumi-e* of letting the paper show through the ink, thereby exposing the material upon which the scene is drawn, the canvas, in the case of music, being silence.

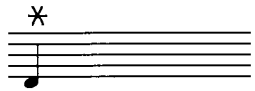
Sketches before a storm was commissioned by Tuuli Lukkarinen and Salla Ruuskanen with the generous assistance of the Kordelin Fund, and is dedicated to them.



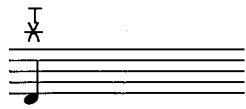
Explanation of extended flute techniques:



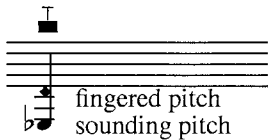
Diaphragmatic
air burst, with tongue
articulation



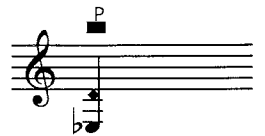
Diaphragmatic
air burst, without
tongue articulation



Diaphragmatic
air burst, without
tongue articulation,
ending with tongue stop

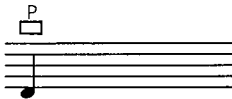


Tongue ram
fingered pitch
sounding pitch

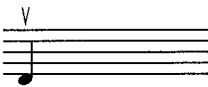


fingered pitch
sounding pitch

Pizzicato, moutpiece
completely covered



Pizzicato, normal
mouth position



Breath attack
(no articulation)



Air
tone

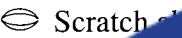


Air only,
no pitch

—————> Transition from one method of sound production to another

Upward or downward-pointing arrows attached to notes or accidentals indicate approximate interval of 1/8 to 1/6 higher or lower than standard tuning.
Non-standard flute fingerings are indicated above the note (ex. 12 4 / 3 B).
Underlined numbers for non-trilled fingerings (ex. 123 / 2) indicate partially covered finger holes.
Underlined numbers in trill fingerings indicated trilling fingers.
Non-standard trill execution is explained in the score as it happens.

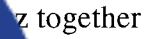
Explanation of extended kantele techniques:



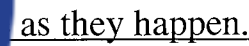
Scratch



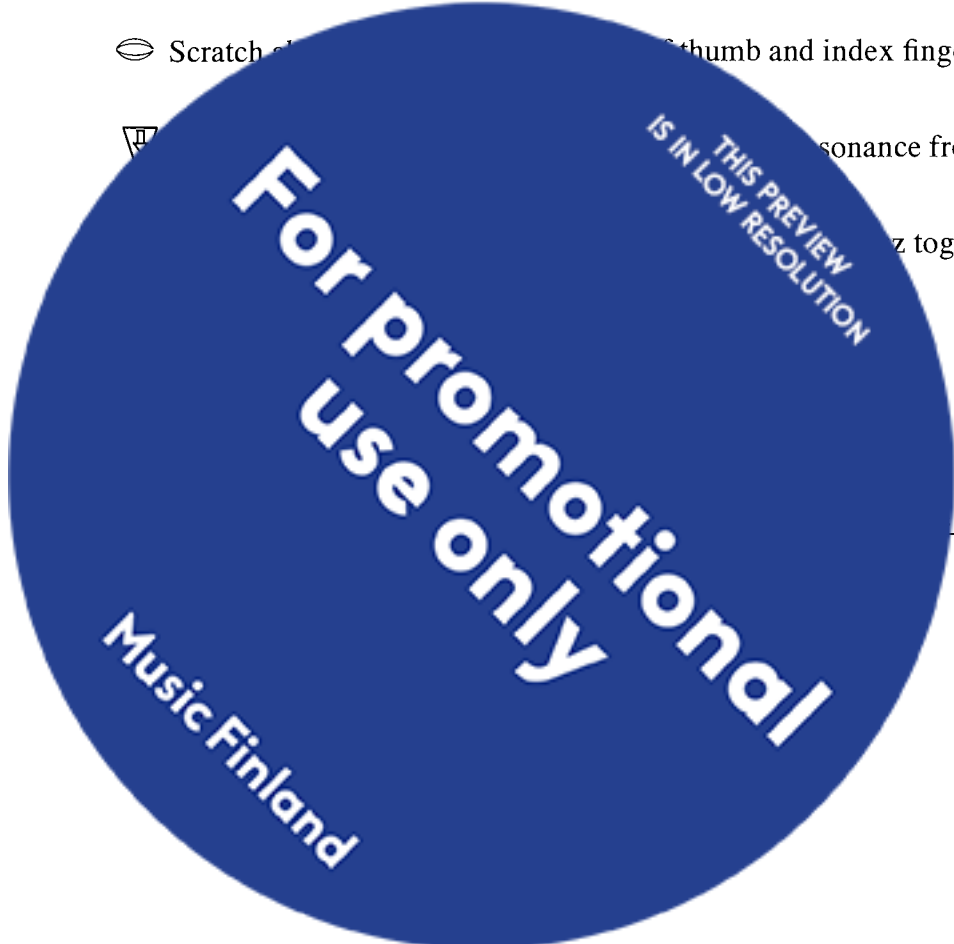
Resonance from strings



Buzz together



as they happen.



dedicated to Salla Ruuskanen and Tuuli Lukkarinen

Sketches before a storm

Matthew Whittall
(2006)

I- Freely, flexible ♩=80-88

Flute

mp *pppp* *molto* *f* *fpp* *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *no vib.* *whistle tone* *retain F fingering* *123/2*

mp *vib.* *retain Db fingering* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *12345/3* *1234/24*

mf *p* *mf* *f* *p* *f* *molto* *no vib.* *attacca II*

II- F

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mf *mfpp* *mf* *vib.*

fp *f* *p* *p* *p*

mp *f* *f* *f* *f* *mp* *f*

the seem continuous. However, if technical considerations require
the as there is no perception of gaps in the tremolo texture.

7 *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *poco vib.* *mp* *mf*

7 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *mp*

12 *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *mp*

12 *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *f* *mp* *f*

13/2 5 *f* *vib.* *no vib.* *mp* *p* *ff*

mf *f* *mp* *f* *ff* *poss.*

attacca III
(no break whatsoever!)

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III- Declamatory ♩=76-80

tr ^{4/} p < mf > pp

tr ^{4/} tr ¹²³ r.h. shake

Slowing A tempo Slowing

no vib.

ffz l.v. ffz A# mp l.v.

D#

*Fingernail snap at base of string

Slower ♩=60

8

mp f mp

A tempo Slowing

mf C#F#A#B# f mp

G#A# mf p (echo)

Bb

Slower ♩=60

3

p mp mf

poco ten. then accel.

fast p mf

C#D#E#G#A#

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5-6" (breathe as needed) 7-9"

20 *mf* *ff* *mp* *p* *ppp*

sub. p *accel.* *r.h. slowing* $\text{♩} = 56-60$

5-6"

p *L* *R*

Slow sweep across strings with flesh of hands. Leave no resonance.

IV- Slow, free

mp *sim.* *ord.* *p*

mf *C*

$\otimes$ $\otimes$

$A\sharp B\flat$ $G\sharp A\flat$



$\text{♩} = 76-80$

Slower

mp no vib. *p* *f* very fast, frantic

Slowing

mp *ff* *f* *mf* *mp* l.v.

C#F# C#F#

$\text{♩} = 76-80$ Trill with underlined fingers. When trilling with multiple fingers, they should move independently, not as a unit.

sfzp < *ff*

whistle tone

Slow, as in the beginning

p *p* l.v. *mp* B#



V- Very fast; Skittering ♩= 138-152

(air tone throughout)

tktktktktk... *ff* *ppp* tktktktktk... *ff* *ppp* *f* *f* *sim.*

C♯ D♯ E♭ F♯ G♯ A♭ B♭

f *f* *f*

Strike lowest strings with fingers

8 *ff* "jet whistle" effect

8 *f* slap side of kantele take plastic card, zip across wound strings

3 *sim.* *molto* *sim.* put down card

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A tempo I

Poco a poco accel.

35

tktktktktk...

ff *ppp*

ff *ppp* *mp* (pitches approx.)

take tuning key

Poco a poco accel.

Accel. poss.

43

Accel. poss.

Accel. sub.

Accel. sub.

pp

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VI ♩ = 60

sfzp no vib. *ff* *mf* *fltr.* 234 / 5 3

freely *mp* *l.v.* *f*

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

The musical score for VI consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and features a series of notes with various dynamics and articulations. The lower staff is in bass clef and features a series of notes with various dynamics and articulations. The score includes a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 60. The notation includes slurs, ties, and dynamic markings such as *sfzp*, *no vib.*, *ff*, *mf*, *fltr.*, *freely*, *mp*, *l.v.*, and *f*. The score also includes a sequence of notes: C D $\flat$ E $\sharp$ F $\sharp$ G $\sharp$ A $\flat$ B $\flat$.

VII- Volatile ♪= 56-60

Agitated; Moving forward

Calming

musical score for "The Sound of Silence" by Simon and Garfunkel. The score is in 5/4 time and features a piano introduction with a complex, chromatic melody. The melody is written in treble and bass staves, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked "moderato". The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like "mp" (mezzo-piano) and "pp" (pianissimo). The piece concludes with a final chord marked with a circled X.

As in the beginning

The musical score for "The Wind" by Maurice Strakosky is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-8) is in 7/8 time and features a piano introduction with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano part includes dynamics such as *f*, *mf*, and *pp*, and articulations like "Forward" and "Calming". The voice part enters in measure 7 with a melody in 7/8 time. The second system (measures 9-16) is in 3/4 time and continues the piano and voice parts. The piano part includes dynamics such as *f*, *mp*, and *pp*, and articulations like "bisbigliando". The voice part continues with a melody in 3/4 time. The score is written for piano and voice, with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature of 7/8 and 3/4.

[illegible]

22

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

B $\flat$ G $\sharp$ B $\sharp$

⊗ (bottom staff only)

29

ff *l.v.* "Freeman gliss." (very long) *l.v.* *let fade* *p* *l.v.* *strike with rubber mallet*

G.P.

♩ = 72-76 (sounding pitches)

C $\sharp$ D $\sharp$ G $\sharp$ A $\sharp$ B $\sharp$ A $\flat$ B $\sharp$

take rubber mallet

attacca VIII, no break



VIII- Graceful, like a ceremonial dance ♩ = 72-76

Ab: 12345/ 2

p warm vib.

p

p

(sounding pitches)

mp

sim.

13

mp

no vib.

12345/ 23B

13

very long, slow bend

(•)

sounding harmonic

ten. ad lib.

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35

35

p

sempre p

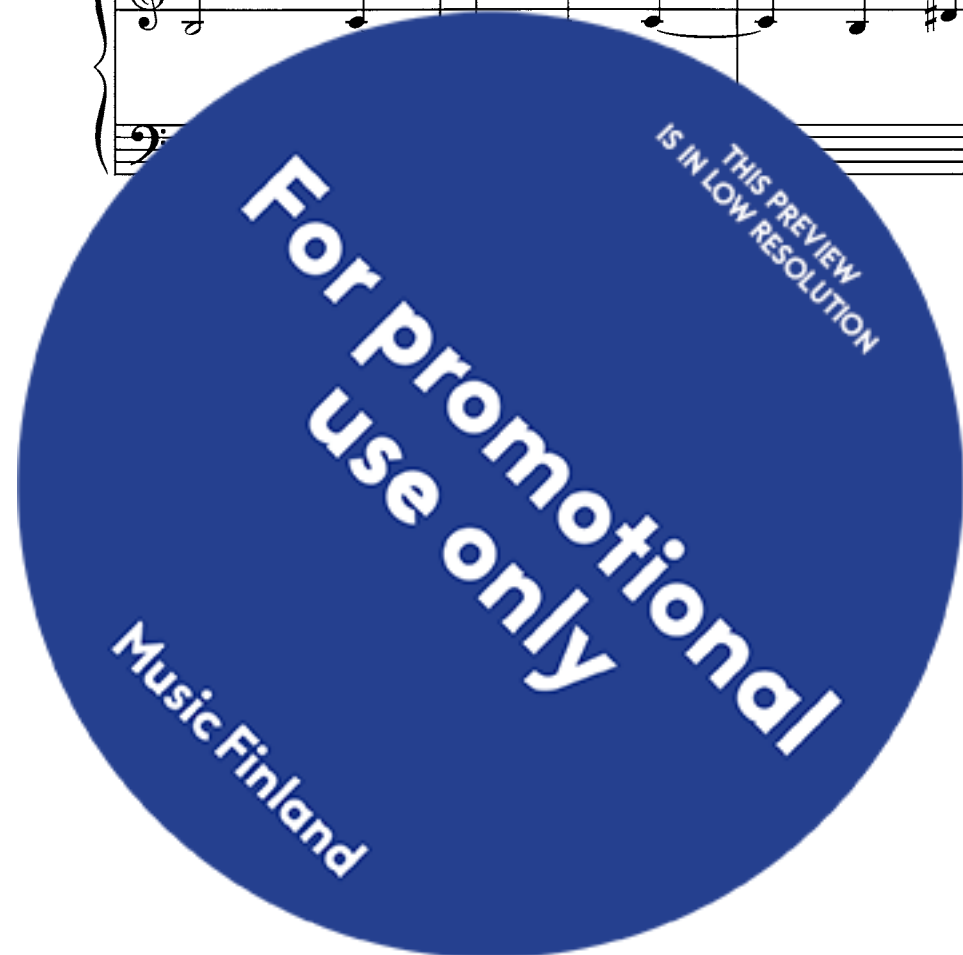
poco a poco dim.

45

45

Slowing slightly

pp



IX- Expectant; Serenely tragic ♩=56-60

mf mp mf ppp

f mf

l.v.

Flute

mp

ord.

poco

Quasi in tempo, but still free

ord.

/ A3B

5 ♩ : 2 ♩

half-tone ————— whistle tone

tr / A

1234 / 234

vowels: p mf o i o i o

p f

take tuning key

Hand-over-hand glissandi with flesh of hands across the wound strings, producing a high-pitched, wind-like sound.

A tempo

1234 / B 4

1234 / 12

3

p f mp mf mp

5

Pluck damping board spring, like a gong.

open damping board slowly

mf l.v.

like heavy raindrops

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