

Dave Riedstra

Spalting

for contrabass solo

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duration: ca. 10 minutes

This score describes a very quiet solo contrabass performance for a small audience. Playing so quietly invites listeners to hear aspects of sound they might not usually hear: movements of the performer's hands on the strings, goings-on outside the venue, bodies of audience members (including their own) living. I hope that listening in such a way provides an opportunity for listeners to savour their relation to these less often heard sounds and the beings which cause them.

Performance directions

General

This work is written for contrabass in standard orchestral tuning (EADG) with a practice mute.

Bow using the wood of the bow throughout (*arco col legno sempre*). (Consider holding the bow underhand, gamba-style.) Mute all strings with all left hand fingers at the indicated double-stops. Play with light bow pressure so that the resulting sound is mostly noise with some semblance of the indicated pitches.

Dynamic

Perform the entire piece at a dynamic that requires listeners to exert some effort to hear. The sound of the performance should be quieter to a listener than the sound of their neighbour shuffling in their seat and comparable in dynamic to the sound of the room or to the listener's own breathing.

Staging

Stage the performance situation such that listeners are close to the performer and are as close to equidistant as possible. Position seating in a semicircle around the performer with as few rows as necessary to accommodate all listeners. Try to ensure that the dynamic is similar in each row.

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Ambling, ♩ = 72

sempre arco col legno e con sordino

The musical score is written for a single bass line in a low register. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked 'Ambling' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The performance instruction is 'sempre arco col legno e con sordino'. The score is divided into systems of five staves each, with measure numbers 6, 12, 17, 24, 30, 37, 43, 47, 51, and 57 indicated at the start of their respective systems. The time signature is highly variable, changing frequently throughout the piece. Dynamics include a piano (*pp*) marking at the beginning and several accents (>) placed over notes. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs.

63

68

senza dim.

74

79

84

87

senza cresc.

93

99

104

111

116

121

127

Musical staff 127: Bass clef, 3/8 time signature, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

134

Musical staff 134: Bass clef, 7/8 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

140

Musical staff 140: Bass clef, 5/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

145

Musical staff 145: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

152

Musical staff 152: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

Poco meno mosso

161

Musical staff 161: Bass clef, 6/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

170

Musical staff 170: Bass clef, 5/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

180

Musical staff 180: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.

186

Musical staff 186: Bass clef, 6/4 time signature, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes with various articulations like accents and slurs.