

Rand Steiger

Tropes
(2018)

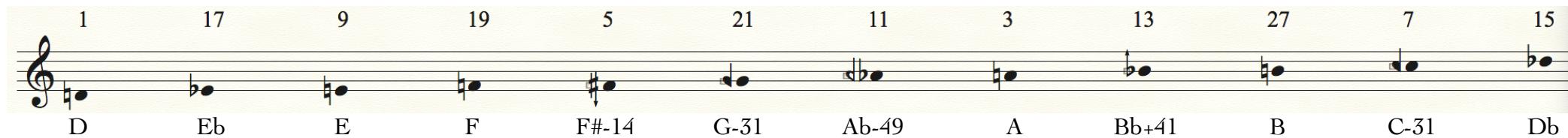
for spatial string quartet

Commissioned by the Muzik 3 Foundation
for the Flux Quartet

Commission: Muzik 3 Foundation for the Flux Quartet

Premiere: August 9, 2018; Flux Quartet, La Jolla Music Society SummerFest, Conrad Prebys Concert Hall, UC San Diego

Accidentals: accidentals carry through the measure, but only in the octave in which they are indicated. The following scale is used in much of the piece, based on just intonation with a fundamental of D. In the chart below, the numbers above the notes indicate the partial the tuning is based on, and the number below the notes indicates the deviation (in cents) from the nearest tempered pitch. Please take note of the special accidentals deployed: backwards flat = -49 cents, black backwards flat = -31 cents, sharp with arrow down = sharp -14 cents (86 cents sharp), and flat with arrow up = flat +41 cents (59 cents flat). All other notes are rounded off to tempered tuning. A reference recording of this scale is available upon request.



Dynamics: The dynamic marking *n* is frequently used to indicate notes that begin imperceptibly and gradually fade in over the length of the indicated crescendo. Similarly, decrescendos that end at a rest without a dynamic marking indicate a complete diminuendo to silence. Please note the starting and ending points of these transitions precisely.



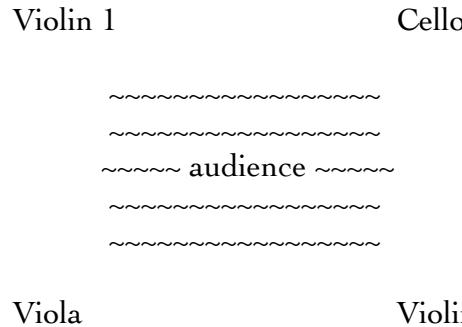
Thrown bow: Jeté, or "thrown bow" technique is used often throughout the piece. This is indicated by a slur following the note with a series of dots underneath it:



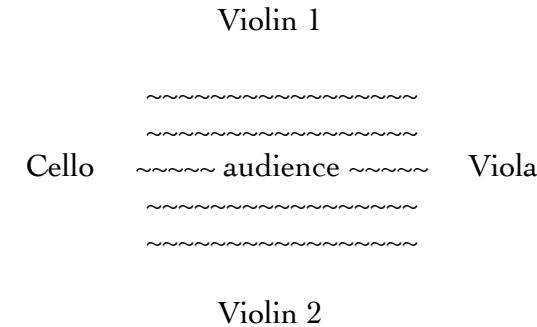
The motion begins at the indicated note, and the bow is then allowed to freely bounce as long as possible until preparing the next note.

Physical arrangement: This piece was conceived for a quartet spatially located around the audience. Depending on the performance space, one of these two arrangements should be deployed:

Square:



Diamond:



Program Note:

For centuries, Jewish congregations throughout the world have read the text of the Hebrew Bible aloud in synagogue with a kind of ritual chanting referred to as cantillation. A set of small symbols, or tropes, that appear above and below the text provide guidance for the structure and melismatic patterns of this chanting. Yet within different communities, the tropes have been interpreted in a wide variety of ways that reflect the assimilation of local musical practices. While the text and tropes look exactly the same, the resulting sound is quite different in each community, thereby giving voice to the Jewish diaspora.

Drawing on the text of the first four sentences of *B'reisheet*, the opening section of *Genesis*, I have created my own interpretation of the tropes using a single pitch with rhythmic and timbral variations, which appears after a brief introduction. As it is repeated, it is complemented by transcriptions of traditional cantillation patterns, including Sephardic (Syrian and Moroccan) and Ashkenazic (Hungarian and British) versions. By gradually combining these versions and presenting them simultaneously, while positioning the members of the quartet around the audience, I hope to give voice to this remarkable phenomenon – to the way in which the tropes and text have historically traveled with Jewish communities throughout the world, both connecting them and also marking their differences of place through sound.

Tropes was commissioned by the Muzik 3 Foundation for the Flux Quartet. It is dedicated to my grandfather, Samuel Steiger, who emigrated in the late nineteenth century and worked tirelessly in the 1930s and 40s to help family members escape Europe and begin new lives here in the United States.

Contact:

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Additional information may be found on the following website:
<http://rand.info>

Score

for the Flux Quartet

Tropes

Rand Steiger

$\text{♩} = 60$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ff pp ff

ff pp ff

ff pp ff

ff pp ff

sul pont.

Vln. I

(ord.)

Vln. II

pizz. esp.

Vla.

pizz. II arco

Vc.

ff mf

ff f < ff

ff f < ff

ff f < ff

ff n f

ff n f

ff n f

ff n mf

(sul pont.)

(esp.)

pizz. arco

f(pos.) ff pp mf

J = 100

20 Vln. I *ord.* *pizz.* 5 *arco* *(ord.)*

Vln. II *pizz.* *arco* *n* — *f* *n* — *f*

Vla. *sul pont.* *ord.* *pizz.* *arco* *arco sul tasto*

Vc. *f* *f* — *(n)* *mf* — *p* *pizz.* *mf*

27 Vln. I 5 *pizz.* 3 *arco non vib.* *pizz.* 3 *arco sul pont.*

Vln. II *mf* *pizz.* 5 *arco sul pont.* *(sul pont.)* *ord.* *pizz.* *arco*

Vla. *p* *half col legno* III II *pizz.* *arco* II

Vc. *arco* *half col legno* *pizz.* *arco sul pont.* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco esp.* *pizz.*

35

Vln. I *half col legno* *pizz.* *arco*
mf < *f*

Vln. II *sul pont.* *pizz.* *arco*
mf *f* + *pp* < *f*

Vla. *pizz.* *arco sul pont.*
pp < *f*

Vc. *arco* *pizz.* *arco*
n < *p* *f* *pp* < *f*

ord.

n < *mf*

43

Vln. I *n* < *mf* *ff* *sul pont.* *ord.*
mf

Vln. II *ff* *(ord.)* *mf*

Vla. *ff* *pizz.* *arco sul pont.* *n* < *mf*
mf

Vc. *f(pos.)* *ff* *pizz.* *arco* *mf*

50

Vln. I *pizz.* *arco* *n* *mf* *f* *mf* *n* *f* *sul pont.* *ord.* *f* *n* *mf*

Vln. II *arco* *mf* *pizz.* *arco* *n* *mf* *f* *mp*

Vla. *f* *p* *f* *n* *mf* *f* *p* *n* *f* *f* *p*

Vc. *pizz.* *f* *n* *mf* *f* *n* *mf*

This section consists of four staves. Vln. I starts with pizzicato (3), then switches to arco. Vln. II starts with arco. Vla. and Vc. play eighth-note patterns. Measures 51-52 show various dynamics like mf, f, and mp. Measures 53-54 show more eighth-note patterns. Measures 55-56 show sustained notes and eighth-note patterns.

57

Vln. I *pizz.* *arco* *3* *pizz.* *3* *arco sul pont.* *f* *p* *f*

Vln. II *arco* *3* *pizz.* *3* *arco* *3* *pizz.* *5* *pizz.* *3* *arco sul pont.* *f*

Vla. *p* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *mf* *pizz.* *mf* *3 arco*

Vc. *ord.* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *mf* *pizz.* *mf* *arco*

This section consists of four staves. Vln. I starts with pizzicato, then arco (3). Vln. II starts with arco (3). Vla. and Vc. play eighth-note patterns. Measures 58-59 show sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. Measures 60-61 show sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. Measures 62-63 show sustained notes and eighth-note patterns.

63

Vln. I *3 (ord.)* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *half col legno* *pizz.* *3* *arco*
mf *III* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *n* *mf*

Vln. II *5* *5* *5* *(sul pont.)* *pizz.* *arco (ord.)*
mp *f* *mf* *mf* *n* *mf*

Vla. *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *sul pont.* *ord.*
mf *3* *3* *3* *mf* *f* *5* *n* *mf*

Vc. *esp.* *sul pont.* *ord.*
mf *n* *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *n* *mf*

69

Vln. I *n* *mf* *sul pont.* *n* *f*

Vln. II *n* *mf*

Vla. *ord.* *n* *mf*

Vc. *n* *mf*

77

Vln. I *ord.*

Vln. II *pizz.* *arco*

Vla. *sul pont.*

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

83

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *sul tasto* *ord.*

88

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Measure 88: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 89: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 90: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 91: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 92: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 93: Vln. I (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (arco) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$.

94

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Measure 94: Vln. I (ord.) $f \overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $\overbrace{\text{p}}^3 \overbrace{\text{f}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 95: Vln. I (ord.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 96: Vln. I (ord.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 97: Vln. I (ord.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 98: Vln. I (ord.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$. Measure 99: Vln. I (ord.) $\overbrace{\text{pp}}^3 \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vln. II (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vla. (pizz.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$; Vc. (ord.) $n \overbrace{\text{mf}}^3$.

half col legno

+ pizz.

arco

ord.

101

Vln. I

sul pont.

ord.

Vln. II

sul pont.

ord.

Vla.

Vc.

100

Vln. I

pp

mf

mf

f

p

mf

Vln. II

pp

mf

mf

n

mf

p

f

Vla.

f

mf

f

p

f

f

mf

p

Vc.

mf

f

p

mf

p

f

115

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

121

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vln. I

127

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vln. I

134

$\text{♩} = 48$

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

143

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

151

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

$\text{♩} = 90$

sul pont.

161

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

168

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

175

Vln. I *arco* *sul pont.* *ord.*

Vln. II *pizz.* *arco*

Vla. *ord.*

Vc. *mf*

182 $\text{♩} = 100$

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *sul pont.* *mf*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *mf*

ord.

sul pont.

ord.

sul pont.

ord.

mf

189

Vln. I

Musical score for measures 189-194. The score includes four staves: Vln. I (G clef), Vln. II (F clef), Vla. (C clef), and Vc. (Bass clef). Measure 189 starts with *mf*, followed by dynamic markings *f*, *p*, *mf*, *n*, and *mf*. Measures 190-194 show various dynamics including *n*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, and *mf*. The Vla. staff has a *sul pont.* instruction. Measure 194 ends with *ord.*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

sul pont.

ord.

195

Vln. I

Musical score for measures 195-196. The score includes four staves: Vln. I (G clef), Vln. II (F clef), Vla. (C clef), and Vc. (Bass clef). Both staves play eighth-note patterns consisting of groups of five notes. Measure 196 continues the eighth-note pattern.

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vln. I

p

Vln. II

p

Vla.

p

Vc.

mf

p

-5-

Vln. I

f

mf

Vln. II

f

Vla.

f

Vc.

f

212

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp ————— mf

pp ————— mf

pp ————— mf

p ————— f ————— p mf p ————— mf

pp ————— mf

p ————— f ————— p mf p ————— mf

217

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p ————— ff p ————— mf

p ————— f mf p ————— ff p ————— mf

p ————— ff p ————— mf

222

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p ————— f mf p ————— f ————— p ————— f mf p ————— f mf ————— p ————— f

p ————— mf p ————— f mf p ————— mf p ————— f ————— p mf p ————— mf p ————— f

p ————— f mf ————— p ————— f p ————— f p ————— f p ————— f

p ————— mf p ————— f ————— p mf ————— p f

227

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

————— p ————— f p ————— f mf p ————— mf ————— p ————— mf p ————— f

p ————— f ————— p ————— f mf ————— p ————— mf p ————— mf

————— p ————— mf p ————— mf p ————— mf p ————— mf

mf p ————— ff ————— p mf ————— p ————— mf

232

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

237

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

242

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

247

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

252

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp

pp *pp* *ff*

pp *f*

pp *f* *mf*

257

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ff *pp* *ff*

ff *pp* *ff*

mf *pp* *ff*

ff *pp*

263

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

esp.

pp ————— f
pp ————— f
pp ————— f
pp ————— f

esp.
p ————— ff
pp ————— ff
pp ————— ff

271

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

esp.
pp ————— ff
pp ————— ff

(gradually decrease vibrato, then transition to harmonic)
non vib.

f (pos.)

mf

FINE