SACRED BEAST

by

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Abstract

Sacred Beast is a set of three character pieces for wind ensemble. I wanted to capture a wide range of emotions with this work; most specifically, those of excitement, mystery, fury, and mourning. The end result is a raucous balance of deference and violence. I made a conscious effort to develop ideas which suit the wind ensemble’s vast timbral capabilities as well as fill the large spaces in which it would be performed.

Movement I: Vulture. This is the longest movement of the piece and broadly consists of two core ideas. The first is a texture of overlapping ostinati and melodic fragments presented by the low brass. Flutes and marimba flutter above, imitating flight, while the clustering harmonic structures wax and wane in imitation of a synthesizer pad using a delay pedal. The second section is largely aleatoric, constructed of tinkering sounds and wind, with a mournful baritone saxophone melody atop.

Movement II: Prophetess. This movement is by far the most reverent of the set, and also the most melodically-driven. A swirling, disorienting opening overwhelms the senses before gradually giving way to delicate clarity. Scenes melt into each other before the long introduction finally finishes and the primary material can enter. Devoted lyricism is periodically interrupted by meditative sections of pulsating clusters.

Movement III: Chimera. The finale is furious, energized, and upsetting. Ideas rapidly mutate until they find a shape stable enough to stick around. True to its name, the chimera combines elements of the previous two movements, although they are generally distorted beyond easy recognition. Some bits pop in briefly while others are thoroughly transformed into foundational elements.
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Sacred Beast
for Wind Ensemble
Bryan Pallotta
Movements
I. Vulture
II. Prophetess
III. Chimera

Ensemble
Piccolo
Flute 1, 2
Oboe 1, 2
English Horn in F
Bassoon 1, 2
Contrabassoon
Clarinet in E♭
Clarinet 1 in B♭ (div.)
Clarinet 2, 3 in B♭
Bass Clarinet in B♭
Contrabass Clarinet in B♭
Soprano Saxophone in B♭
Alto Saxophone 1, 2 in E♭
Tenor Saxophone in B♭
Baritone Saxophone in E♭
Trumpet 1, 2 in B♭
Trumpet 3, 4 in B♭
Horn 1, 2 in F
Horn 3, 4 in F
Tenor Trombone 1, 2
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba
Double Bass
Timpani
Five timpani, two drinking glasses of different sizes

Percussion 1
Marimba, Xylophone, Tam-tam, Hi-hat, Tambourine, Crash Cymbals

Percussion 2
Medium Egg Shaker, Medium Suspended Cymbal, Suspended Chinese Cymbal, Brake Drum, Tam-tam, Glockenspiel,
Wind Chimes, Tubular Bells, Claves, Tom-toms, Vibraphone

Percussion 3
Ratchet, Vibraphone, Snare Drum, Tom-toms, Triangle, Brake Drum

Percussion 4
Bass Drum, Crotales, Claves, Hi-hat, Tam-tam

Performance Notes
Duration: approximately 16 minutes.

This is a Transposing Score.

Standard octave displacements are in effect for all applicable instruments.

Accidentals apply only through the end of the measure, and in the octave and part/player of appearance. Courtesy
naturals will be given occasionally.

Meter changes retain the same sixteenth-note value by default, and generally include tempo equations as a reminder.
If this is not the case, a tempo change will be given.

All trills are to the next-highest natural pitch.

Dynamic curves with an "o" at their closed end either crescendo from or decrescendo to niente.

Drum rods are sticks typically used with rock drum sets. They are bundles of smaller drum sticks bound together and
are primarily used to reduce volume. They are used in this piece almost exclusively to color the timbre of rim clicks
across various drums. It should give them a lighter, more woody/slappy sound than regular concert drum sticks
would. If unavailable, substitute with the lightest drum sticks on hand.
Performance notes (cont.)

X noteheads on drums indicate rim clicks, striking the rim of the drum rather than the head.

Rim shots on the snare drum are notated with a diagonal slash through solid noteheads. The player should wedge the butt of the stick against the drum head against the rim and strike the rim hard on the opposite side with the rest of the stick.

A + over a hi-hat strike means to play it closed. A ° means to play it open.

Most percussion parts have stick/mallet types specified. If not, players are free to choose whatever sounds most appropriate. Generally, medium sticks/mallets/beaters will work just fine.

In all drum parts, cross noteheads denote rim clicks. The snare drum also uses rim shots, notated with filled noteheads with one diagonal slash through them.

Dynamics given in quotation marks (i.e. "ff") are given relative to the dynamic capacity of the technique currently in use, rather than relative to the instrument's standard range or the ensemble's total volume.

For most wind sounds, players should use whatever fingering results in the loudest wind sound. Some segments ask for the sound to be colored with a specific pitch; in these instances, fingering charts are given.

Movement-specific notes

I. Vulture

m. 38: Players should rapidly click random keys/valves on their instruments, as loudly as possible. No specific rhythm is given, although in later appearances of this gesture, players are given various approximate tempi to think of. The end effect should be a static, rain, white-noise clicking gesture.

m. 50: This measure begins an extended aleatoric section. Percussionists should take their given notes/rhythms as starting points and iterate as their parts progress. The conductor is welcome to fine-tune entrances, exits, and dynamic swells to better shape the sound.

Beginning on page 10, arrows with empty heads indicate large cues for the entire ensemble while filled-in arrows indicate smaller cues for certain players. Each large cue should be approximately 10 seconds apart, but their pacing will be partly determined by the bari sax player. Players are given tempo markings (usually ∞ = 108) where appropriate.

m. 51, 137, 141-142: These measures aren't metered, and instead should last approximately the durations in seconds listed above them.

II. Prophetess

m. 60: Double bass plays a harmonic tremolo; the diamond notehead indicates the node to lightly touch. It is unlikely to produce a discernible pitch; the trill is a timbral effect.

III. Chimera

m. 45-63: Snare drum in percussion 3 uses two noteheads to indicate that the player should use both sticks for each rim click.
II. Prophetess
Sacred Beast
II. Prophetess

Pic.
Fl. 1, 2
Cl. 1, 2
Eng. Hn.
Bsn. 1, 2

Cl. 2 in E
Cl. 1 in B
Cl. 3 in B

Bsn. Cl. in B
Ch. Cl. in B

Sep. Sas.
A. Sas. 1, 2
Ten. Sas.
Bar. Sas.

Tpt. 1, 2
Tpt. 3

Hn. 1, 2
Hn. 3

Tbn. 1, 2
B. Tbn.

Euph.

Db.

Tim.

Man.

W. Chimes
Vib.
B. D.
III. Chimera
Sax. 1, 2
in E

Sop. Sax.

Eng. Hn.

Ten. 1, 1
Choo.

Cl. in B

Cl. 1
in B

Cl. 2, 3
in B

Ba. Cl.
in B

Ch. Cl.
in B

Sep. Sax.
in B

A. Sax. 1, 2
in B

Ten. Sax.
in B

Bar. Sax.
in B

Tpt. 1, 2
in B

Tpt. 3, 4

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Fhr. 1, 2

B. Fhr.

Euph.

Tbn. 1, 2

Db.

Timp.

Mar.

Sus. Cym.

S. D.

Cl.

Sacred Beast
III. Chimera

In T. Bells

to Hi-hat
Sacred Beast
III. Chimera
Sacred Beast
III. Chimera

Picc.
Fl. 1, 2
Ob. 1, 2
Eng. Hn.
Bsn. 1, 2
Cbsn.
Cl. in E
Cl. 1
Cl. 2, 3
Bs. Cl.
Cl. in B
Cb. Cl.
Sop. Sax.
A. Sax. 1, 2
Ten. Sax.
Bar. Sax.
Tpt. 1, 2
Tpt. 3, 4
Hn. 1, 2
Hn. 3, 4
Tbn. 1, 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Db.
Timp.
Mar.
T. Bells
S. D.
Hi-hat
Sacred Beast
III. Chimera