

mackerel sky

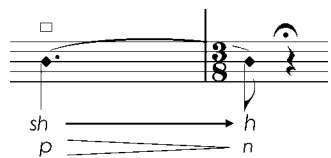
for saxophone quartet (2009)

james bunch

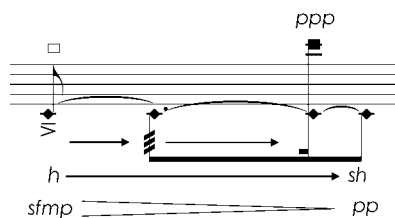
commissioned by the Hi-Def Saxophone Quartet

Noa Even, Soprano
Dave Tribley, Alto
Colin Wilson, Tenor
Phil Pierick, Baritone

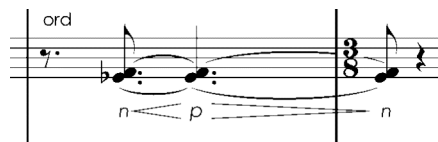
performance notes



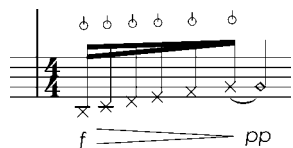
A square above a note (combined with a diamond-shaped note-head) signifies breath only, no pitch. Combinations of letters written below the staff (above dynamics) indicates the sibilants/aspirates that should be articulated into the mouthpiece. **h** is a neutral position (and is the default when there is no indication). Articulating an **s** into the mouthpiece causes a brighter sound and helps to clarify the relative fingered pitch. **sh** will create a darker color.



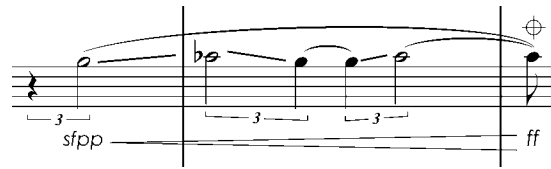
Square-shaped note-heads indicate teeth-on-reed technique. The pitch does not matter, but there are two levels of pitch indicated by the placement of the note on “e” or “c” above the staff. “E” represents a position with less reed in the mouth, which will result in a relatively higher-pitched sound. “C” represents a position with more reed in the mouth, which will result in a relatively lower-pitched sound. In either case, they are to be performed in such a way as to sound barely there – very very quiet – as gentle and small as possible.



Dyads/chords are multiphonics. All multiphonics are taken from Daniel Kientzy’ s *Les Sons Multiples Aux Saxophones*. Fingerings are included in the parts. Because there is some variation in the exact notes in each multiphonic (due to instrument/player factors) I have simplified the multiphonics to the nearest quarter-tone. If a multiphonic should prove impossible/unwieldy, the performer may substitute another with as close a harmonic similarity to the one that is notated.



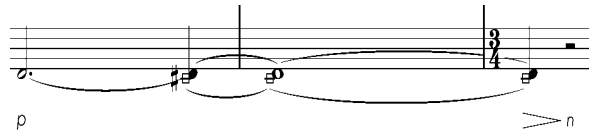
Notated rallentando (with non-pitched slap-tongues). The gradual rallentando should occur within the beat space in which it is notated.



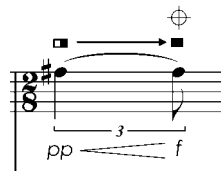
Lines between notes indicate gradual pitch-bends, which can be achieved through a combination of embouchure and the gradual depression/release of the keys.



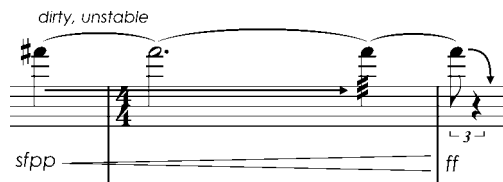
Sfmp is “sforzando – mezzo-piano.” Similarly, *Sfpp* means “sforzando – pianissimo,” and *Sfn* means “sforzando – niente,”



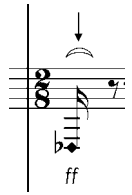
Clear, square-shaped note-heads indicate the player should sing that pitch into the instrument (the pitch can be derived from the regular note-head. If the voice range of the player necessitates, they may sing any note within an octave below the played pitch.



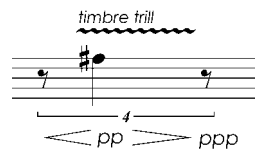
Half-filled square is a breathy, but pitched note (*sotto voce*). The black square (un-attached to a stem) is an ordinary/full tone. The target sign, indicates that the player should forcefully stop the tone with the tongue.



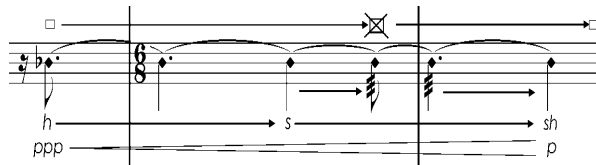
The curved arrow symbol indicates a “spill” – a rapid downward glissando that is as seamless as possible (pitch-bent as much as possible).



The crescent-shaped symbol with the arrow indicates that the player should hold the mouthpiece away from the mouth and send a violent jet of air into it, but without creating a pitched sound.



The timbre trill changes only the color but not the pitch (more than a quarter-tone).



The square shape with the lines-through it indicates **no** breath sent directly into the mouthpiece. Typically used in combination with fluttertongue, it is intended to indicate that the sound of the fluttertongue should predominate with as little breath noise as possible.

MULTIPHONICS BY INSTRUMENT WITH SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES

found in the book *Les Sons Multiples aux Saxophones* by Daniel Kientzy, with the exception of one soprano multi (labeled below) which can be found in the book *Hello Mr Sax!* by Jean-Marie Londeix.

Multiphonics are listed in order of appearance in the score.

Fingerings are found in the parts, but are not indicated in the score. The suggested alternative fingerings will alter the pitch content and timbre of the notated multiphonics. This was anticipated and figured into the structural language of the work.

If none of the alternatives are possible, the player may elect to perform the soft dyad multiphonics as a pitch bend from the top to the bottom note, or to trill them quietly with as little pad noise as possible. If a three-note multi (or larger) does not work (and none of the alternatives), players may treat them as rolled chords sustaining only the top note. The preference is (of course) what is written.

soprano

prefered

63
16
52
75
28
27
Londeix – p33, 3rd multiphonic, second system
39
73
1
46
5

suggested alternatives

18, 88
13, 17
44, 74, 88
13, 17, 38, 40
38, 70
5
Kientzy: 11, 12, 31
11, 32, 33

21, 34
33
31

alto

prefered

16
65

20
103
46
50
14
130
43
18
1
67

suggested alternatives

17, 65, 79
17, 19

103, 104, 121, 131
79, 90, 131
48-51, 102, 139
13, 19, 60, 63
6, 26, 28
27, 86, 96, 118
27, 31, 42, 56
44, 51

58

MULTIPHONICS (CONT.)

tenor

preferred

117
128
70
24
9
4
56
138
64
39
12

suggested alternatives

14, 43, 87
117, 137, 134, 145
20, 87
22, 89, 105–108
73, 78, 84, 98, 109, 118, 146
23, 28, 39, 41, 42, 47, 51, 96, 100, 101
29, 40, 72, 140
4, 39, 55, 96, 103, 113, 120, 141
63, 71
51, 55, 82, 85, 96
83, 95

baritone

preferred

33
25
89
26
67
20
46

suggested alternatives

11, 15, 74, 77
31
99
28, 31, 38
47–51

Further questions may be directed to the composer:

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Urbana, IL 61801

jbunch2@illinois.edu

Mackerel sky, mackerel sky. Never long wet and never long dry.

anonymous

For the pattern is new in every moment
And every moment is a new and shocking
valuation of all we have been. We are only undeceived
of that which, deceiving, could no longer harm.

T.S. Eliot, "East Coker," *Four Quartets*

mackerel sky

♩ = 42 - 60 translucent, gentle, earnest, focused, as one for the Hi-Def Saxophone Quartet

Soprano Sax. *ff* *ord* *n* *p* *n* *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *s* *h* *n* *pp* *n*

Alto Sax. *ppp* *pp* *n* *ord* *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *ord* *n* *p* *n*

Tenor Sax. *ff* *s* *h* *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *ord* *h* *pp* *s* *n*

Baritone Sax. *ff* *h* *s* *h* *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *pp* *pp*

3 *ord* *A* *3* *ord* *ord* *ord*

10 S. Sax. *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *p* *(h)* *n* *ff* *ff* *h* *s* *sh* *p* *pp* *pp* *pp*

A. Sax. *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *s* *sh* *s* *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *ord* *n* *p* *n*

T. Sax. *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *ord* *n* *p* *n* *h* *ppp* *s* *sh* *p*

B. Sax. *n* *pp* *n* *ff* *h* *sh* *ppp* *ff* *sh* *h* *p* *n*

B *C*

31

S. Sx. *f* *ppp* *ord* *p* *n* *ppp* *pp* *f* *mp*

A. Sx. *ord* *n* *p* *n* *ppp* *f* *sfpp* *p* *(h)* *s*

T. Sx. *pp* *p* *n* *pp* *p* *f* *h* *pp*

B. Sx. *f* *pp* *p* *ppp* *h* *sh* *f* *pp* *sfn*

H

36

S. Sx. *n* *mp* *3* *n* *pp* *mp* *n* *mp* *f* *pp* *p* *ppp* *ppp*

A. Sx. *sh* *h* *3* *s* *pp* *p* *n* *ord* *n* *mp* *n* *p* *n* *p* *mp* *n* *(cue pulse from Bari.)*

T. Sx. *(h)* *3* *3* *s* *p* *n* *pp* *p* *sfn* *mp* *pp* *f*

B. Sx. *s* *p* *sfpp* *mf* *p* *4* *f*

I

with a supple and flexible pulse

53 M

S. Sx. *p* *f* *h* *s* *mf* *(h)* *n* *pp* *n*

A. Sx. *f* *h* *sh* *mf* *pp* *n* *pp* *n*

T. Sx. *mp* *pp* *mf* *ppp* *rude, artless* *ff* *n* *pp* *n*

B. Sx. *f* *sfpp* *mf* *mp* *sfpp* *f* *n* *pp* *n*

58 N

S. Sx. *sfpp* *mf* *p* *sfpp* *mp* *mp* *pp* *f* *mp* *sfmp* *n*

A. Sx. *h* *ppp* *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p*

T. Sx. *sfpp* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *sfmp* *mf* *p* *p* *f* *pp* *mf*

B. Sx. *ff* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf* *pp* *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *s* *s*

65

S. Sx. *ppp* *f* *p* *mp* *pp* *mf* *sfpp* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *Q*

A. Sx. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *f* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

T. Sx. *mf* *pp* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *f* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *sfpp* *mf* *p*

B. Sx. *sfmf* *pp* *f* *p* *f* *pp* *sfpp* *mp* *f* *p*

P

71

S. Sx. *mp* *pp* *sfpp* *f* *f* *p* *f*

A. Sx. *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp* *f* *f* *p* *f*

T. Sx. *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *ppp* *f* *mf* *f*

B. Sx. *f* *sfpp* *s* *mp* *pp* *sfmf* *pp* *p* *f* *p*

R

76

S. Sax. *mp* *f* *mp* *mp* *f* *f*

A. Sax. *f* *mp* *f* *p* *f*

T. Sax. *f* *p* *sfpp* *f*

B. Sax. *mp* *f* *p* *f*

S

82

S. Sax. *f*

A. Sax. *p* *f*

T. Sax. *p* *f*

B. Sax. *mf* *ff* *f*

T

87

S. Sax. *ff*

A. Sax. *mf* *ff*

T. Sax. *mf* *ff*

B. Sax. *ff* *f* *ff*

92

S. Sax. *fff* *sfpp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *mf* *ff* *pp*

A. Sax. *fff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *sfpp* *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp*

T. Sax. *fff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *f* *ff*

B. Sax. *fff* *sfpp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *pp*

U

V

101

S. Sx. *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ord* *3*

A. Sx. *sfpp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *3*

T. Sx. *ff* *sfpp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *3*

B. Sx. *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp* *f* *sfpp* *ff* *pp*

W

108

S. Sx. *pp* *ff* *pp* *tempo libre* *p* *ppp* *tempo esatto* *pp*

A. Sx. *ff* *pp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

T. Sx. *pp* *f* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp*

B. Sx. *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp* *tempo libre* *pp* *ppp*

X

115

Y

S. Sx. *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff*

A. Sx. *pp* *ff* *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp*

T. Sx. *tempo libre* *tempo esatto* *pp* *ff* *pp*

B. Sx. *tempo esatto* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ppp*

122

Z *tender, absolutely calm*

S. Sx. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *n* *p*

A. Sx. *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *n*

T. Sx. *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *n*

B. Sx. *pp* *ppp* *p* *n* *ppp*

N.B. The specific attack/release points of the sung notes is flexible and can be adjusted so that the performers achieve a sonic arch exposing as little of their voice sound as possible. To that effect, the exact pitch is flexible as well so long as a complex sound results (though quietly) - the player should try to keep the range of their voice to within an octave of the played note.

130

AA

BB

S. Sx. *n* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *n* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

A. Sx. *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *p* *n* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

T. Sx. *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *n* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

B. Sx. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pp* *n* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

hold as long as possible

138

CC

S. Sx. *pp* *mp* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

A. Sx. *pp* *mp* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

T. Sx. *pp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

B. Sx. *pp* *mp* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

hold as long as possible

N.B. Last chord: each player will hold until they run out of breath. The release of the dyads will occur gradually and individually. No attempt should be made to release together. The chord should last longer than the one in measure 140.

ppp