

Commissioned by Left Coast Chamber Ensemble with support from the San Francisco Arts Cultural Equity Grants Program

Up Close and from a Distance

after El Anatsui's *Hovor II*

for flute (doubling on alto & piccolo), Bb clarinet,
violin, viola, & cello

Ryan Suleiman

2014

Up Close and from a Distance (2014)

after El Anatsui's *Hovor II*

approx. 6'30

Program Notes

This piece takes its inspiration from the Ghanaian-born, Nigerian-based artist El Anatsui's installation, *Hovor II* (2004). The work is an enormous glistening wall-sized tapestry created by stringing together old liquor tops. As I sat in the de Young Museum admiring it, I noticed that others (as did I) would come close to examine the incredible detail, and then back away to look at it from afar. Hence the title – in my response to the work, I have tried to capture my own viewing experience. Up close, I am engrossed in the numerous liquor tops strewn together by twisted wire, some gnarled and bent, some golden, some striped. Though I admire the details, I think the piece is most powerful from afar, where its sheer scale and presence is truly felt, and I am mesmerized by its brilliant glow.

Up Close and from a Distance was commissioned by Left Coast Chamber Ensemble in collaboration with the de Young Museum with support from the San Francisco Arts Cultural Equity Grants Program. It has been a joy and a privilege working with the musicians of the ensemble.

Instrumentation

flute (doubling alto & picc.)

Bb clarinet

violin

viola

cello

Contact for Ryan Suleiman

1.916.284.2237

ryan.suleiman@gmail.com


www.ryansuleiman.com


Performance Notes

String Techniques

sul pont. Unless the indication "(bridge)" is given, sul ponticello should be played rich in overtones, but the fundamental pitch should be predominantly heard.


gliss. vs. port. In the score, glissandi are distinguished from portamenti in that the former is a *continuous* sliding of the pitch for the full rhythmic duration of a note, while the latter is more of a gliding shift played at the last moment, more in a Romantic style.


pizz. trills  During m.19-22, violin and cello are asked to perform pizzicato trills - the notes should be trilled with the left hand for as long as the pitch can be sustained.

overpressure  This symbol is used to indicate overpressure with the bow, where the thickness indicates amount/intensity of pressure. At the thickest point, little or no pitch is heard, but mostly "noise". At other points, some pitch should be heard if possible.


col legno In the final bar, the viola and cello are asked to play col legno battuto - the bow is to be dropped freely and bounce onto the strings, as shown by the accelerando sixteenth notes.

Flute Techniques

slap-tongue  This is indicated with an x notehead and the abbreviation *s.t.* A percussive puff of air is blown, and combined with a key-click where the possible.

harmonics  In m. 31-42, fingerings for harmonics are left at the performer's discretion, but a soft pale sound is desired that can achieve the softest dynamic possible in the high register.

Clarinet Techniques

slap-tongue  Indicated with an x notehead and the abbreviation *s.t.* for a percussive popping sound.

(transposed score)

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Slowly emerging, sensuous ♩ = c. 48

Flute (alto flute)
Bb Clarinet
Violin

Flute dynamics: *p* > *p* > *simile* > *mf* > *mp* > *mp* > *simile* > *p* > *mp*

Bb Clarinet dynamics: *p* > *p* > *simile* > *mf* > *mp* > *mp* > *simile* > *p* > *mp*

Violin dynamics: *mp* > *mp* > *simile* > *p* > *mp*

Violin marking: *flautando*

Moving but not hurried, still sensuous ♩ = c. 60

A. Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.

A. Fl. dynamics: *p* > *mf* > *n*

Cl. dynamics: *p*

Vln. dynamics: *n*, *mf*, *p*

Vla. dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *p*, *n*

Vc. dynamics: *mf*

Violin marking: *flz.*, *b₂.*

Violin marking: *sul pont.*

Viola marking: *pizz.*, *arco*

Up Close and From a Distance

Jagged ♩ = c. 90

16 *slap-tongue*

A. Fl. *mp* *mf* *mf* *simile*

Cl. *mp* *f*

Vln. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vla. *arco lyrical mp* *n* *mf* *mf* *simile*

Vc. *flautando pp* *f* *mf* *pizz.* *tr*

sul pont. *pizz.*

A tempo, again sensuous ♩ = c. 120 / ♩ = c. 60

22 *tr* *mf* *(no dim.)* *p* *tr* *to fl.*

A. Fl. *mf* *(no dim.)* *p* *tr* *to fl.*

Cl. *p* *tr* *p*

Vln. *tr* *arco (ord.) p*

Vla. *arco pp* *gliss.* *gliss.* *n*

Vc. *3* *arco (ord.) mp*

Up Close and From a Distance

3

30

flute

A. Fl.

Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

p as soft as possible

tr

n

pp

p

p

34

Fl.

Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

mp

p

pp

p

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a woodwind and string ensemble. It is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 30-33) features a flute with a melodic line, a clarinet with a rhythmic accompaniment, and strings. The flute part includes a trill and a note marked 'n'. The clarinet part has a sixteenth-note pattern. The violin and viola parts play sixteenth-note figures, while the cello part has a similar rhythmic pattern. The second system (measures 34-37) continues the woodwind and string parts. The flute has a melodic line with a trill. The clarinet and violin parts continue their rhythmic patterns. The viola and cello parts have sustained notes and some rhythmic movement. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mp*.