

Ajax is all about attack 2

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Performance notes

Commissioned and premiered by the Arête Duo (Doug O'Connor and Jacob Harpster),
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General

Rhythms should be flexible and free throughout. The slow general tempo can shift *ad libitum*, with non-metric extensions indicated through short, medium, and long fermatas. The emphasis should be on melodic shaping (saxophone) and richness of instrumental timbre/resonance (percussion), rather than metronomic precision. Continuity and smoothness are essential, particularly in the percussion. At all times, both players should aim for a close balance between the instruments, seeking a fusion between the timbres of metallic percussion and the saxophone.

Percussion

The compact percussion set up consists of vibraphone (motor off), with three metal resonating instruments arranged behind the vibraphone in left-to-right order:

1. suspended cymbal (low) or tam-tam
2. suspended cymbal (medium)
3. suspended cymbal (high)

Instruments should be chosen for long resonance and richness of tone colour. Use of softer mallets is recommended to favour sustained rolls and highly controlled crescendo/decrescendo rather than sharp attacks. Always allow the sound to die away naturally (*laisser vibrer*). Though tremolos are marked throughout the score, the speed of the tremolo is flexible and the resonance of the instruments can be used instead of rearticulation to create the desired effect: a continuous, virtually unbroken sounds with a blend of timbres between vibraphone and cymbals/tam-tam.

Saxophone

Multiphonic fingerings are based on Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti's *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing* (Bärenreiter, 2010). For reference, the fingerings and resulting pitches below include tunings (measured in semitones, C = 0.00) from test recordings by O'Connor and Weiss.

(2) A / B♭ + E♭

A musical staff with fingerings for a multiphonic technique. The staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. Fingerings shown are: A (left hand 1st finger, right hand 1st finger), B♭ (left hand 1st finger, right hand 2nd finger), and E♭ (left hand 1st finger, right hand 3rd finger). Below the staff, the notes are labeled: C♭, C♯, D/B. Dynamics are indicated as pp, pp, mp < ff >. The staff ends with a fermata.

2c, 116"

E6 = 3.95 / inaudible

C#+6 = 1.42 / inaudible

A#5 = 10.05 / inaudible

F#5 = 6.16 / 6.05

C#+5 = 1.42 / 1.30

G4 = 6.82 / inaudible

F+3 = 5.49 / 5.33

(8) A / 8 E + B_b

Musical notation for measure 8. The staff shows a note A (solid dot), an eighth note E (open circle), and a note B_b (solid dot). The bass staff shows a note B_b (solid dot). The key signature is one sharp. The time signature is 8. The dynamic is p.

8, 506"

D+5 = 2.54 / 2.46

G4 = 7.06 / 7.00

G#+3 = 8.42 / inaudible

(16) A/C-4

Musical notation for measure 16. The staff shows a note C (solid dot), an eighth note CE (open circle), and a note D/B (solid dot). The bass staff shows a note B (solid dot). The key signature is one sharp. The time signature is 8. The dynamics are mf, pp, mp, and ff.

16c, 200"

Bb5 = 9.98 / 9.73

E+5 = 4.50 / 4.36

Bb4 = 9.96 / 9.73

G#+3 = 8.51 / 8.55

(17) A/C#-4

Musical notation for measure 17. The staff shows an eighth note Ce (open circle), a note D/B (solid dot), and a note C (solid dot). The bass staff shows a note B (solid dot). The key signature is one sharp. The time signature is 8. The dynamics are pp, p, and ff.

17b, 250"

A+5 = 9.37 / 9.40

E+5 = 4.54 / 4.59

A#4 = 9.73 / 9.85

A3 = 8.94 / 8.95

(25) A/Bb-37

Musical notation for measure 25. The staff shows a note Bb (solid dot) followed by two eighth notes Cb (open circle) and Eb (solid dot). The bass staff shows a note Bb (solid dot). The key signature is one sharp. The time signature is 8. The dynamics are pp and mp.

25b, 585"

C#+5 = 1.42 / 1.40

B+4 = 11.52 / 11.43

(27) A / E_b + B_b - 3

B_b
E_b
Cb 8
pp <p> mp <ff>
Da

27c, 700"

F6 = 5.12 / 5.05

C+6 = 0.68 / 0.63

A+5 = 9.28 / inaudible

G#5 = 8.04 / 7.96

C#+5 = 1.65 / 1.57

B+4 = 11.67 / inaudible

D#+4 = 3.41 / inaudible

B+3 = 11.69 / 11.60

(49) A / D - 1

C
<mp>

49, 1845"

E5 = 4.02 / 4.04

D+5 = 2.41 / 2.32

F+4 = 5.50 / 5.62

D+4 = 2.41 / 2.31

(58) A / C - 14

C
<p> <ff> <ff>

58, 2085"

E+6 = 4.49

B5 = 11.00 / 10.83

E+5 = 4.49 / 4.26

F#4 = 5.95 / 5.66

D#4 = 2.94 / 2.85

[#70 is a possible substitute for #58]

(70) A/B-5+c₁

c₁
B
C
<p>

70, 2485"

E+5 = 4.56 / 4.38

F#4 = 5.98 / 5.76

D#4 = 3.02 / 2.88

[#70 is a possible substitute for #58]

(72) A/Bb-4+c₁

c₁
Bb
C
<mp> <ff>
D

72a, 2565"

F+5 = 5.54 / 5.51

G4 = 6.99 / inaudible

E4 = 4.00 / 3.76

72b, 2580

C6 = 0.11 / 0.03

F+5 = 5.54 / 5.47

G4 = 6.99 / 6.76

E4 = 4.00 / 4.05

(102) A/8c+c₃

8
o
c₃
o
o
o
Ce
<pp>s

102, 3241"

F#5 5.98 / 6.10

G+4 7.39 / 7.03

$\text{♩} = 30 - 36$, flexible

(A)

sempre l.v.

ppp pp mp

pp mp senza dim.

3 p mp mp mf

3 p mp

3 mp

mp l.v.

(B)

pp p p mf

mf mp

sfp mp sfp mp

accel...

much faster

5

p *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

l.v.

6

a tempo

7

(C) #17

p *mp* *mf* *o* *mf* *o* *p* *mp* *o*

8

pp pp p mp pp p mp pp

(C) #17

lunga

mf *p* *mp* *pp* *mp* *o* *mp* *o*

pp mp pp mp pp

D
 9

 10

E
 11

 12

 #17

 #49

E
 13

 14

 #49

E
 15

 16

 sub.

 pp

14

15

#49

mf

p

mf pp

F

16

p

ossia fill on cymbals: keep chord as continuous as possible

sim.

p

17

#49

pp

mf

mp

sfp

sfpp

18

#25 #49 #25

p *mp* *mp* *mp* *sfp*

mp *mp* *mp* *mp*

p *mp* *sfp*

G

19

G

20

mp *mp* *mp* *mf*

mf *mf* *mf* *sfp*

mp

H

21

#27 #25 H

mf *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* *mp*

3 *3* *3* *p* *mf* *mf*

mf *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mf* *sfp*

p *mf* *sfp* *mf* *mf* *sfp*

tr.

① #58
 23 #58

#58
 24 #58

#58 #16
 25 #16

26

 27

 ossia fill on cymbals
 (keep chord sounding)

28

 29

 ossia fill on cymbals

30

 31

 add G and B gradually

32

#72 #8

33

O

mf *mp*

mp *mf*

p *mf*

sfp *mp*

34

#72 #8

p *mp*

p *pp* *mp*

35

#72 #8

p

pp

ppp *p*

Montreal, 31 May 2019