

Drew Sperry

Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral

for Alto Saxophone, Violin, and Percussion

- Full Score -

Perusal Score

Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral

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Performing Forces

- Alto Saxophone
- Violin
- Percussion
 - Crotales
 - Vibraphone (resonators on)
 - Tam-tam

Composer's Note

This piece is a reflection on loneliness and how even if we have surrounded ourselves with people that bring positivity to our lives, there are still times when we feel excluded or wish that we had another person's physical presence with us. To explore this experience, I took the concept of an antiphon—a sacred musical genre that traditionally involves call and response between multiple performers—and thought about how in an open space such as a cathedral, performing an antiphon may be possible if we consider the echo of one's own voice to be a response.

Using this concept as inspiration, I visualized an image of someone entering an empty cathedral and singing a melody in a chant-style. As they sing, they hear their voice echo around the room and from this, they begin to imagine that they are performing with someone else—sometimes imitating each other and sometimes simply performing in harmony with one another. At the end of the piece, the “singer” again becomes aware of their surroundings and exits the space, leaving only the emptiness of the room behind.

Performance Notes

- Breath marks (') indicate a very brief pause in sound. Avoid letting these markings interrupt the notated rhythm and meter as much as possible.
- “col legno battuto” indicates to strike the string with the wood of the bow, producing a percussive effect. “col legno tratto” indicates to drag the wood of the bow across the string, producing a wispy timbre.
- Arrows (—————>) indicate that the performer should gradually change from one playing style to another.
- In passages with the marking “air”, perform with about 50% air to ensure that the notated pitches are still subtly audible.

Duration ca. 4.5 minutes

Perusal Score

for Alto Saxophone, Violin, and Percussion

Moderately, with spaciousness ♩ = 63

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Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral

9

A. Sax.

Vln.

Vib.

punta d'arco

ord.

mf

p

n

p

mf

Vib.

mf

f

mp

mf

p

15

A. Sax.

Vln.

Crot.

Vib.

poco rit.

p

n

p

(p)

19 **a tempo**

A. Sax.

Vln.

(ord.) → air

mf

p

p

f

p

spaciously

trailing off, like an echo

p

f

p

26

A. Sax. *spaciously ord.*
n *pp* *mf*

Vln. *mf* *p* *n*

Vib. *Vib.* *like an echo*
mf *p*

30

A. Sax. *p* *mf* *p* *f* *p sub.*

Vln. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *f* *p sub.*

Vib. *mf* *p* *f mp*

34

A. Sax. *mf* *p* *n*

Vln. *mf* *p* *f* *pp*
(ord.) → sul pont. punta d'arco

Crot. *Crot.* *mp* *Tam.* *pp* *mp* *pp*

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral'. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 26-30) features A. Sax., Vln., and Vib. The second system (measures 30-34) features A. Sax., Vln., and Vib. The third system (measures 34-38) features A. Sax., Vln., and Crot. The score includes various dynamics such as *n* (pianissimo), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *pp* (pianissimo). It also includes articulations like *spaciously ord.*, *like an echo*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *p sub.*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, *mp*, and *pp*. The score is written in 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures. A large watermark 'Perusal Score' is visible across the page.

Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral

38 *dryly*
A. Sax. *p* 3 *mf* *p*

Vln. *n* *ord.* *p warmly* 3 *mf*

Vib. *Vib.* *f* *p*

43
A. Sax. *p* 3

Vln. *p* *mf* 3 *p*

Vib. *(p)* *Crot.* *mf*

47 *warmly*
A. Sax. *f* *p* 3 *mf* *p*

Vln. *f* *mp* *mf*

Tam. *Tam.* *pp* *mf* *pp*

51

A. Sax. *mp* *n* *f* *p* *as an interjection*

Vln. *p* *f* *n* *mp*

Tam. *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *Vib.*

55

A. Sax. *f* *p* *ff* *n* *rit.*

Vln. *f* *3* *mp* *ff* *f* *mp* *exasperated*

Vib. *mf* *f* *ff*

59

A. Sax.

Vln. *p* *weakly*

Vib. *mp*

Antiphon for an Empty Cathedral

a tempo *with less urgency*

62

A. Sax. *mp* ³ *abruptly*

Vln. *f sub. senza espressione* *p*

Crot. *f*

Vib. *f*

65

A. Sax. *feebly* *(p)* *mf* *p*

Vln. *(p)* *mf* *p*

Tam. *scrape (triangle beater)* *mf* *(heavy yarn mallet)* *pp*

70

A. Sax. *f* *p* *mf* *p sub.* *n*

Vln. *col legno tratto* *ppp* *n*

Tam. *mp*

The musical score is written for five instruments: Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Violin (Vln.), Crotales (Crot.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Tambores (Tam.). The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number (62, 65, 70). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4 and then to 3/4. The A. Sax. part features melodic lines with various dynamics (mp, mf, p, f) and articulations (abruptly, feebly, air). The Vln. part provides harmonic support with sustained notes and dynamic markings (f, p, mf, ppp). The Crot. and Vib. parts play sustained chords. The Tam. part includes specific instructions for playing techniques like 'scrape (triangle beater)' and 'col legno tratto' (col legno tratto).