

Owl Song

(for sinfonietta and voice)

2022

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Commissioned by Borealis Festival for Bit20 Ensemble

Owl Song instructions:

- Players have the option of using a stopwatch or may follow the conductor for cues.
- Timbral “trills”/ bisbigliandos: Shapes above notes indicate a 2nd, 3rd, and 4th timbre character on the same pitch achieved by an alternate fingering or mute (horns). When these shapes appear in later passages, use the same timbre character for that note.
- “1X”, “2X”, etc indicates the number of repeats after the measure has been played once. “∞X” means repeat until next downbeat or rehearsal mark is cued
- Rehearsal Mark I – 2-3 repeats depending on length of m.32
- The box around some measures for the Voice and Celesta indicate that those notes can occur in any time, with any repeats, at any pace. Completely independent.
- Noteheads with no stem can be played for any duration, at any speed.
- Arrow up noteheads are to be played as high-pitched as possible at the indicated dynamic. Arrow noteheads aiming down are as low as possible.
- “ALAP” means “as long as possible”, at least until the next cue.
- “((()))” indicates a pure, “sine tone”, non-vowel sound for the voice.

A 00:00 **B** 00:09 (repeat) 1X individually any speed **C** 00:30 approx $\text{♩} = 100$

grad. decresc. throughout 2X $\frac{8}{8}$ $\frac{11}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

Voice

(sfz) > mp-mf

Alto Flute

(sfz) > mf ∞X

Oboe

(sfz) > mf 3X

Clarinet in Bb

(sfz) > mf ∞X

Bassoon

(sfz) > mf 1X (just enough air but don't allow reed to vibrate) ord. mf f

Horn in F

open to thumb 1+3 3X (sfz) > mp-mf

Trumpet in Bb

(sfz) > mp-mf 2X

Trombone

(sfz) > mp-mf ∞X (growing buzz sound) mf f

Percussion

mf

Electronics

A drone

Harp

(bisb.) (sfz) > mf ∞X 8^{ve} mf

Celesta

$\frac{8}{8}$ mf 8^{ve} $\frac{11}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

Violin I

II III II III ∞X $\frac{8}{8}$ $\frac{11}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

(sfz) > mp

Violin II

III II III II ∞X (pz)

(sfz) > mp

Viola

I II I II ∞X mf f

(sfz) > mp

Violoncello

II I II I ∞X mf f

(sfz) > mp

Contrabass

I 8^{ve} II I II ∞X

(sfz) > mp 1 2 3 4 5 p mp

[illegible]

F
01:30

faster (and increase speed but quieter each repeat)

∞X

ululations (oboe cue) (blend) *mp* ((()))

Voce

A. Fl. (alto fl.) *mf* tilt white noise

Ob. squeal

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. air noise - open to all half valves (alt - half valves to open on odd repeats) *mf*

Tpt.

Tbn. 6:5 (split tone) *mf* 5:4 *mf*

Perc. scrape tile w/ rosined drumstick Floor tom center/rim alternate same stick *f* sim.

Elec.

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc.

Cb.

11 12 13 14 15

G
02:30

start ♩ = 50 accel to ♩ = 100
open mouth breathy "ha!" (a scream with no sound)

4X

slow (cue downbeat)

9
4

Score for various instruments and voice, including Voice, A. Fl., Ob., Cl., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Elec., Hp., Cel., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb.

Key performance instructions and dynamics include:

- Voice:** *mf* (open mouth breathy "ha!" (a scream with no sound))
- Hn.:** *mp* (sing while blow, slightly raise voice pitch)
- Perc.:** drinking glass on tile, superball on tom slow/ slowly depress
- Elec.:** *D*
- Hp.:** *mf*
- Cel.:** *mf*
- Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb.:** *mp*
- Vla.:** *pp*

Rehearsal marks 16, 17, and 18 are indicated at the bottom of the page.

H
03:00

$\text{♩} = 100$

9
4

5
4

flute cue

bend up

Score for various instruments and voice, measures 19-21.

Instruments listed on the left:

- Voice
- A. Fl.
- Ob.
- Cl.
- Bsn.
- Hn.
- Tpt.
- Tbn.
- Perc.
- Elec.
- Hp.
- Cel.
- Vln. I
- Vln. II
- Vla.
- Vc.
- Cb.

Measures 19, 20, and 21 are indicated at the bottom of the page.

19

20

21

5
4

I
4
4 03:15
♩ = 90

1X

J
4
4 03:30
faster

1-2X

Voice

A. Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Elec.

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

22
mp 23
24
25
26
27
28

K
03:45

2-3X

Score for a musical piece, featuring multiple staves and instruments. The score is divided into three measures, with measures 29, 30, and 31 indicated at the bottom.

Voices:

- Voice:** Features vocal lines with lyrics "uh" and "wuh". The melody includes a triplet of eighth notes and a five-measure phrase.

Woodwinds:

- A. Fl.** (Alto Flute): Rests throughout the measures.
- Ob.** (Oboe): Rests throughout the measures.
- Cl.** (Clarinet): Rests throughout the measures.
- Bsn.** (Bassoon): Features a five-measure phrase in measure 29 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 30.

Brass:

- Hn.** (Horn): Rests throughout the measures.
- Tpt.** (Trumpet): Features a single note in measure 29 and rests in measures 30 and 31.
- Tbn.** (Trombone): Features a single note in measure 29 and rests in measures 30 and 31.

Other Instruments:

- Perc.** (Percussion): Rests throughout the measures.
- Elec.** (Electric): Rests throughout the measures.
- Hp.** (Harp): Rests throughout the measures.
- Cel.** (Cello): Features a five-measure phrase in measure 29 and a five-measure phrase in measure 31.
- Vln. I** (Violin I): Rests throughout the measures.
- Vln. II** (Violin II): Rests throughout the measures.
- Vla.** (Viola): Rests throughout the measures.
- Vc.** (Violoncello): Rests throughout the measures.
- Cb.** (Contrabass): Rests throughout the measures.

Measure numbers 29, 30, and 31 are indicated at the bottom of the score.

8 8 L 04:30 ♩ = 90 11 8 9 9
 Voice
 A. Fl. ALAP
 Ob.
 Cl.
 Bsn. ALAP (just enough air but don't allow reed to vibrate) ord. flz (ord. dbl tng) air + flz (just enough air that the reed doesn't vib.)
 Hn.
 Tpt.
 Tbn. (growing buzz sound) mf
 Perc. Floor Tom mf
 Elec. [E] hold until m. 34
 Hp. mf
 Cel.
 Vln. I light bow pres. mf
 Vln. II light bow pres. (pz) mf f
 Vla. mf f
 Vc. mp
 Cb.

32 33 p mp 34 35 36

M

9

05:00

a tempo

∞ X

9

slow, arrhythmic, low

N

5

05:45

♩ = 50 slow

Voice

A. Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Elec.

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

9

mp

9

mp

5

4

37

(sfz) - mp 38

p 39

half-whistle

sim. violin

whistle same pitch, but slightly higher than flute

whistle same pitch

floor tom

floor tom

floor tom

ff

IV/III

pp

IV/III

pp

(pz)

40 41 42 43

O
06:45

free time Begin with medium-fast changes, become more sparse as you continue

∞X

Score for O, 06:45, free time. The score is for a large ensemble, including Voice, A. Fl., Ob., Cl., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Elec., Hp., Cel., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The tempo is free time, starting with medium-fast changes and becoming more sparse as the piece continues. The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Key markings and instructions:

- mf** (mezzo-forte) is marked for A. Fl., Ob., Cl., Bsn., and Tbn.
- mp-mf** (mezzo-piano to mezzo-forte) is marked for Hn., Tpt., and Tbn.
- mf** (mezzo-forte) is marked for Hp.
- f** (forte) is marked for Vln. I and Vln. II.
- mp** (mezzo-piano) is marked for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb.
- p** (piano) is marked for Vln. I and Vln. II.
- mf** (mezzo-forte) is marked for Vc. and Cb.

Other markings include "open to thumb 1+3" for Hn., "use harmon mute (optional)" for Tpt. and Tbn., and "(bisb.)" for Hp.

p ————— *mf* —————

P
08:05

5
4 = 80

4
4 "crunch" sound

inhaled glottal click

match piccolo

5
4

Score for various instruments and voice, measures 45 to 49.

Measures 45-46: 5/4 time signature. Instruments include Voice, A. Fl., Ob., Cl., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Elec., Hp., Cel., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. Key markings include *fl tng.*, *prep tom*, *shaker*, *floor tom with crumpled paper*, *inhaled glottal click*, *match piccolo*, *breath*, *spiccato/ricochet*, *sfz*, and *G*.

Measures 47-48: 4/4 time signature. Key markings include *3*, *6*, *5*, *mf*, *p*, *fast tight to slow wide vib*, *(ord.) fast tight to slow wide vib*, *gliss.*, *mf*, *mp*, and *8va*.

Measure 49: 5/4 time signature. Key markings include *fast tight to slow wide vib*, *gliss.*, *mf*, and *8va*.

13

closed mouth
reverse scream ∞X
closed mouth screams

S
11:00

44

♩ = 90 then gradually slower until T

Voice *f* loud whisper
 A. Fl. piccolo (slippery half-holes $\text{♩} \frac{1}{2}$)
 Ob.
 Cl.
 Bsn.
 Hn.
 Tpt.
 Tbn.
 Perc.
 Elec.
 Hp.
 Cel.
 Vln. I
 Vln. II
 Vla.
 Vc.
 Cb.

reverse scream ∞X
 closed mouth screams
 but slower and quieter
 4

(sfz)mf
 (start slow - grad accel.)
 mp-mf
 (start fast - grad decel.)
 (sfz)mp-mf
 (start slow - grad accel.)
 mp-mf
 (start fast - grad decel.)
 (sfz)mp
 (start fast - grad decel.)
 (sfz)mp
 drinking glass on tile
 sine
 grad. increase pres.
 (start slow - grad accel.)
 II III II III
 p
 (start fast - grad decel.)
 III II III II
 p
 (start slow - grad accel.)
 I II I II
 p
 (start fast - grad decel.)
 II I II I
 p
 (start slow - grad accel.)
 I 8^{va} II I II
 4

54 55 56 57 58

sim. melody / solo
as m. 44

2X 2X 2X 2X 2X ∞X

54

Voice

A. Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Elec.

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

grad. gliss 15va
(breaths and readjustments)

III (open) / IV

III (open) / IV

I (open) / II

III (open) / IV

I (open) / II

gliss.

gliss.

gliss.

gliss.

gliss.

59 60 61 62 63 64

Score for measures 65-67, featuring a 5/4 time signature.

Measures 65-67:

- Voice:** Melodic line with a wavy line at the end of measure 67.
- A. Fl.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *piccolo* and *Es*.
- Ob.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *mp-mf*.
- Cl.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Bsn.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Hn.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Tpt.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Tbn.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Perc.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *blanket* and *shaker / floor tom*.
- Elec.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Hp.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Cel.** Melodic line starting in measure 65.
- Vln. I** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *III / IV (open)*.
- Vln. II** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *III / IV (open)*.
- Vla.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *III / IV (open)*.
- Vc.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *III / IV (open)*.
- Cb.** Melodic line starting in measure 65, marked *III / IV (open)*.

Measure 66:

- Vln. I** Melodic line, marked *scrape / heavy pres.*
- Vln. II** Melodic line, marked *scrape / heavy pres.*
- Vla.** Melodic line, marked *scrape / heavy pres.*
- Vc.** Melodic line, marked *scrape / heavy pres.*
- Cb.** Melodic line, marked *scrape / heavy pres.*

Measure 67:

- Vln. I** Melodic line, marked *f* (l) glide fingernail against string - grad to molto sul pont.
- Vln. II** Melodic line, marked *f* (l) glide fingernail against string - grad to molto sul pont.
- Vla.** Melodic line, marked *f* (l) glide fingernail against string - grad to molto sul pont.
- Vc.** Melodic line, marked *f* (l) glide fingernail against string - grad to molto sul pont.
- Cb.** Melodic line, marked *f* (l) glide fingernail against string - grad to molto sul pont.

U
14:45

buzz/hiss (sssss) cued from flute
(with tone)

V
15:00

slow, at own pace ((()))

5X

high-pitched reverse kiss
w/ teeth (violin for next pitch)

3
4

Score for measures 68, 69, and 70. The score includes staves for Voice, A. Fl., Ob., Cl., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Elec., Hp., Cel., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb.

Measure 68: Voice (U 14:45) buzz/hiss (sssss) cued from flute (with tone). A. Fl. [alto fl.] hiss (sssss). Perc. slow sandpaper cont' until m. 69. Elec. [J] hiss (sssss). Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb. (all staves show a whole note rest).

Measure 69: Voice (V 15:00) slow, at own pace ((())) b₂. A. Fl. b₂. Tpt. (sing 4th above [concert Eb]). Elec. [K]. Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb. (all staves show a whole note rest).

Measure 70: Voice 5X high-pitched reverse kiss w/ teeth (violin for next pitch). Vln. I mp. Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Cb. (all staves show a whole note rest).

68

69

70

18

