



# ***Ascending Form***

*(after the sculpture by Barbara Hepworth)*

*For tenor saxophone in Bb*

*Poem by Margaret Morgan*

*Music by Nigel Morgan*

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## **About the music**

This composition forms part of the series of *Music for Sculptures* commissioned by Yorkshire Sculpture Park for the Barbara Hepworth Centenary Exhibition in 2003. *Music for Sculptures* consists of 4 pieces by Hepworth that have musical titles or preoccupations. Many of these pieces were influenced not just by the sculptor's lifelong love of music but by her friendship with the composer Priaux Rainier.

*Ascending Form* is a two part work in which the music ascends . . . and descends. The descent might have something of the ecstasy of proud free flight. This composition has similarities to the composer's series *Rising, Falling*. . . for solo strings. Both pieces are based on material from Nicholas Slonimsky's *Thesaurus of Scales and Music Patterns*, a collection of over a thousand patterns that have become the staple practice routines of jazz musicians since John Coltrane learnt them all in the 1940s.

The first performance of the work was given by John Cooper of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in front of Hepworth's sculpture. His studio recording, available as a download on the composer's website, makes use of a sustained tritone drone which can be prerecorded or played live on any suitable sustaining instruments.

More information on Music for Sculptures can be found at <http://www.nigel-morgan.co.uk>

### **Ascending Form**

'Gloria' is an angel paeon.  
To hear it cup your ears  
and strain up and up.

A form built on a spring  
turned in on itself and taut  
as beginning bracken.

Between bent metal fences  
lie clefts of privacy ancient  
as green oak bark.

A shape of inner moment;  
a bronze, containing wimple  
that frames no face.

A fish poised, petrified  
at the apex of a leap, a stone  
dream of the fall.

Gloria! Gloria in excelsis!  
In ecstasy two stretched arms  
have drawn into their haven

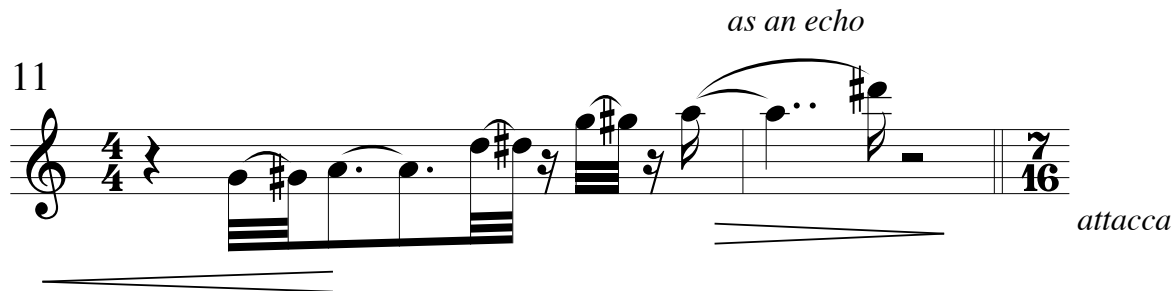
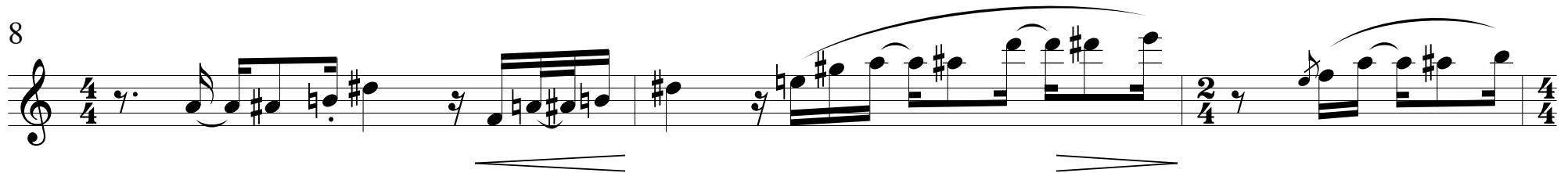
a needy treasure and an aperture  
to open onto heaven  
and the strains of angels

and with a slew and a spin  
it will launch itself, an augur  
testing eternity's geology.

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# Ascending Form

*Rhapsodic* ♩ = 72



13 *Dance-like* ♩ = 110

(begin gently)

18 *subito*

22

28 *vibr.*

33 *vibr.*

38 *vibr.* *vibr.* *echo*

45  $\text{♩} = 64$

50

56 *gradually more emphasis*

61 *poco rit.* *vibr.*

*With energy* ♩ = 96

65

7  
16

69

Example 69 is a single-staff musical piece in treble clef, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

74 *allargando*

The musical score for measures 74-79 is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 3/8 to 2/8 and back to 3/8. The music features a melodic line with various ornaments and a bass line with sustained notes. A fermata is placed over the final measure (79).

*allargando*

81 *a tempo*

5/16 7/16 2/4 3/8 5/8

*a tempo*

86 *molto allargando*

The musical score for measures 86-91 is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo marking *molto allargando* is written above the staff. The score includes various time signatures: 5/8, 3/4, and 2/4. The notation features complex rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *f* (forte). The measures are numbered 86 through 91.

*molto allargando*

91 *a tempo piu meno* *poco a poco dim.*

95 *lontano*

*For John*

*pp*

Optional drone.

For recording and broadcast performances the use of a drone, either synthesised or pre-recorded, has proved highly effective.