



Quatuor des Timbres

For an ensemble of mixed timbres

*Version for soprano sax in Bb, bass trombone,
tuned percussion and violoncello*

Nigel Morgan

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About the piece

Quatuor des Timbres (A Quartet of Timbres) was written between 20 May and 17 June 2002. In this short period a number of major technical innovations developed which have laid the foundations for the series of orchestral music *Instrumentarium Novum* begun in 2003. The objective of *Quatuor des Timbres* was investigate different and formal ways an ensemble of instruments of differing timbre might interact with one another within particular musical situations.

The music looks backwards to devices from the Renaissance (vocal and instrumental setting of a Psalm text) and Baroque (chorales); performance instructions are kept to a minimum, and any that are present should be considered as a guide, no more.

The music looks forward in unique 'playful' open-form structures that develop from algorithmic computation modeling the activity and density of sound within an ensemble of instruments across time.

In the 2nd and 3rd movements two contemporary models are acknowledged: Milton Babbitt's graphic notation applied to the initial structuring of his early *Composition for Four Instruments*; Morton Feldman's score of *IXION* in which graphic structuring of activity is extended to include the density of sound attacks.

The quartet is devised to be played by an ensemble of diverse or mixed timbres. In this published version an ensemble of soprano sax in Bb, bass trombone, violoncello and tuned percussion is imagined. There exists a parallel version for flute, tenor saxophone in Bb, double bass and synthesiser realised for members of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. For professional ensembles the composer is willing to undertake re-orchestrations or provide the basic data files to enable performers to undertake orchestrations themselves. More than four instruments may be scored. A reference version is available to audition on the composer's website: www.nigel-morgan.co.uk

In the rehearsals for the initial performances of this work musicians from the BBCNOW, although at first reluctant to devise their own dynamic schemes, articulations and tempos, brought to the work a wealth of ideas and invention: the flautist adopted oriental inflections

(as well as using piccolo and alto flute), the sax player employed jazz timbres and ornaments, the bassist brought into play many rich timbral colours, and the keyboard player made extensive use of different voices, modulation and pitch bend. The music is published in a performance score with appropriate transpositions. A set of individual parts is also available.

Four Necessary Chorales

- each instrument leads a short chorale.

Giuco delle Coppe (The Game of Pairs)

- the title comes from the second movement of Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra. The music has been so structured (prior to the composition of pitches and rhythms) to allow only two instruments to play together at any one time.

Jeux Diurnes (Afternoon Games)

- this music focuses on unique tonalities derived from fractal data, the play of rhythm and elaborate counterpoint.

In Finem Psalmus David (To the end, a Psalm of David)

- this is a setting of Psalm 19 in the manner of a Renaissance composition where it was quite usual for a liturgical vocal setting to be played by or with an ensemble of instruments. A vocal version of this movement is available for four solo singers (SATB). It has already received performances in a variety of different vocal and instrumental combinations.

Performance Information

In the *Four Necessary Chorales* a marimba with an extension to low C is indicated. if this instrument is not available the player should follow the instructions to play an octave higher when necessary.

As with the change from marimba to vibraphone in the final movement, the trombonist might consider changing to tenor trombone for the fourth movement.

Performers are invited to experiment with placing whole phrases into different registers - an octave higher or lower than written.

Four Necessary Chorales

Chorale 1 ♩ = 40 *semplice*

Musical score for Chorale 1, featuring four staves: Soprano Sax in Bb, Bass Trombone, Marimba, and Cello. The score is in 3/8 time and consists of 8 measures. The Soprano Sax part is marked *solo*. The Marimba part is marked *octave higher ad lib.* and includes a small 'x' above the staff. The Cello part has a small 'x' above the staff. The score is divided into two systems of four measures each. The first system is in 3/8 time, and the second system is in 1/4 time.

Musical score for Chorale 1, featuring four staves: Soprano Sax, Bass Trombone, Marimba, and Cello. The score is in 1/4 time and consists of 6 measures. The Soprano Sax part is marked *Sop.Sax.* and includes a small '6' above the staff. The Bass Trombone part is marked *Bass Tbn.*. The Marimba part is marked *Mrmb.*. The Cello part is marked *Vc.*. The score is divided into two systems of three measures each. The first system is in 1/4 time, and the second system is in 1/4 time.

x see page ii for a note about range of the marimba.

Chorale 2

8

Sop.Sax.

Musical notation for Soprano Saxophone, measures 8-10. The staff is in treble clef. Measure 8 is in 5/2 time, measure 9 is in 1/4 time, and measure 10 is in 3/8 time. The melody consists of quarter notes in measure 8, followed by a half note in measure 9, and a quarter note in measure 10. A slur covers measures 8 and 9.

Bass Tbn.

Musical notation for Bass Trombone, measures 8-10. The staff is in bass clef. Measure 8 is in 5/2 time, measure 9 is in 1/4 time, and measure 10 is in 3/8 time. The notation includes a *solo* marking and a complex melodic line with many accidentals and slurs. A slur covers measures 8 and 9.

Mrb.

Musical notation for Mallets, measures 8-10. The staff is in treble clef. Measure 8 is in 5/2 time, measure 9 is in 1/4 time, and measure 10 is in 3/8 time. The notation shows chords and rests.

Vc.

Musical notation for Violoncello, measures 8-10. The staff is in bass clef. Measure 8 is in 5/2 time, measure 9 is in 1/4 time, and measure 10 is in 3/8 time. The notation shows a simple melodic line.

11

Sop.Sax.

Musical notation for Soprano Saxophone, measures 11-13. The staff is in treble clef. Measure 11 is in 3/8 time, measure 12 is in 1/4 time, and measure 13 is in 7/4 time. The notation shows a quarter note in measure 11, a whole note in measure 12, and a whole note in measure 13.

Bass Tbn.

Musical notation for Bass Trombone, measures 11-13. The staff is in bass clef. Measure 11 is in 3/8 time, measure 12 is in 1/4 time, and measure 13 is in 7/4 time. The notation shows a quarter note in measure 11, a half note in measure 12, and a whole note in measure 13.

Mrb.

Musical notation for Mallets, measures 11-13. The staff is in treble clef. Measure 11 is in 3/8 time, measure 12 is in 1/4 time, and measure 13 is in 7/4 time. The notation shows chords and rests.

Vc.

Musical notation for Violoncello, measures 11-13. The staff is in bass clef. Measure 11 is in 3/8 time, measure 12 is in 1/4 time, and measure 13 is in 7/4 time. The notation shows a quarter note in measure 11, a whole note in measure 12, and a whole note in measure 13.

13 Chorale 3

Musical score for measures 13-14. The score is for four instruments: Sop. Sax., Bass Tbn., Mrmb., and Vc. The time signature is 7/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The Soprano Saxophone and Bass Trombone parts consist of single notes with stems. The Mrmb. part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes, marked with *solo* and *sim.* The Violoncello part consists of single notes with stems. The measure numbers 11 and 8 are indicated at the end of each staff.

Musical score for measures 14-15. The score is for four instruments: Sop. Sax., Bass Tbn., Mrmb., and Vc. The time signature is 11/8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The Soprano Saxophone and Bass Trombone parts consist of single notes with stems, with a slur over the first two notes of measure 14. The Mrmb. part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes, marked with *sim.* The Violoncello part consists of single notes with stems. The measure numbers 14 and 15 are indicated at the end of each staff.

17 **Chorale 4**

Sop.Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

octave higher ad lib.

Vc.

solo

11/8

18

Sop.Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

Guico Delle Coppe

20 *♩ = 50 con brio*

Soprano Sax in Bb

Bass Trombone

Marimba

Cello

24

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco.*

30 A

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

36 *eco*

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

pizz.

42

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *(pizz.)* *arco*

47

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

B

52

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

pizz.

57

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

as an echo

63 C

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn. (ossia 8ve)

Mrb.

Vc.

69

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb. *as an echo* *a very distant pre-echo*

Vc. *more distant*

75 *en dehors*

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

80 *as a pre-echo*

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

87

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

92

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrb.

Vc.

Jeux Diurnes

♩ = 70 *con anima*

95

Soprano Sax in Bb

Bass Trombone

Marimba

Cello

pizz. *arco* *pizz.*

101

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

arco *pizz.*

107

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

113

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

119

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

124

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

D

x

x - as though a bar of $\frac{2}{4}$

128

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

132

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

pizz. *arco*

136

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

139

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

143

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

146

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

pizz.

149

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *arco*

152

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.* *arco*

E

157

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.*

161

Sop. Sax. *very light - behind marimba*

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *arco*

166

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

170

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

light - behind sax

174

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

179

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

185 **F**

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *pizz.*

190

Sop. Sax.

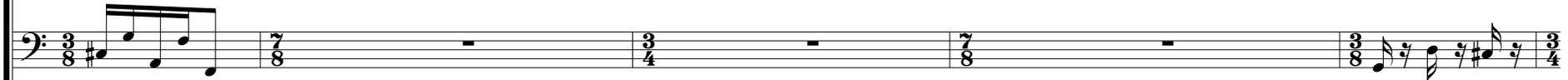
Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc. *arco*

195

Sop. Sax. 

Bass Tbn. 

Mrmb. 

Vc. 

200

Sop. Sax. 

Bass Tbn. 

Mrmb. 

Vc. 

204

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

pizz.

210

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Mrmb.

Vc.

arco

In Finem Psalmus David

215 ♩ = 100 *spirituoso*

Soprano Sax in Bb

Bass Trombone

Vibraphone

Cello

f

f

f

f

Cae - li glo - ri - - am De - i et o - pe - ra

220 *poco rall.* **G** ♩ = 90 *meno mosso*

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Vibr.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mf

ma - nu - um e - jus a - nun - ti - at fir - ma - men - tum Di - es di - e - i eruc - tat ver - bum

225

Sop. Sax. *mp* *p* *mp*

Bass Tbn. *mp*

Vibr. *mp* *mp*

Vc. *mp*

et nox noc - ti sci - en - ti - am Non sunt loq - ue - lae ne - que ser - mo - nes quo - rum non au - di -

232

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Bass Tbn. *mf*

Vibr. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

- an - tur vo - ces e - o - rum. In om - nem te - rram e - xi - vit so - nus e - o - rum

en dehors *tremolo ad lib.*

239 H ♩ = 95 *meno mosso*

Sop. Sax. *f* *f p*

Bass Tbn. *f* *f p* *mf*

Vibr. *f* *f p* *mf*

Vc. *f* *f p*

et in fi - nes or - bis te - rrae vo - ces e - o - rum. In so - le po - su - it

245

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Bass Tbn. *mf*

Vibr. *f*

Vc. *mf* *f*

ta - ber - na - cu - lum su - um et ip - se tam - quam spon - sus pro - ce - dens de tha - la - mo su - o ex - sul - ul -

252

Sop. Sax. *f*

Bass Tbn. *f*

Vibr. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

- ta - vit ut gi-gans ad cu - rren - dan vi - am su - am a su - mmo cae - lo e - gre - ssi - o

257

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Vibr.

Vc.

e - jus et o - ccur - sus e - jus u - sque ad su - mmum e - jus nec est qui se ab - scon - dat

264 *poco rall.* $\text{♩} = 85$ *meno mosso*

Sop. Sax. *poco rall.* *mp* *3*

Bass Tbn. *poco rall.* *mp* *3*

Vibr. *poco rall.* *mp* *3*

Vc. *poco rall.* *mp* *3*

a ca - lor - e e - jus. Lex Do - mi - ni i - mma - cu - la - ta con - ver - tens a - ni - mas

270

Sop. Sax. *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bass Tbn. *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vibr. *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

te - sti - mo - ni - um Do - mi - ni fi - de - le sa - pi - - en - ti - am prae - stans par - vu - lis. Ju - sti - ti - ae Do - mi - ni

276

Sop. Sax. *mp* *mf*

Bass Tbn. *p* *mf*

Vibr. *p*

Vc. *p* *mf*

rec - tae lae - ti - fi - can - tes cor - da prae - cep - tum Do - mi - ni lu - ci - dum

280

Sop. Sax. *cresc.* *f*

Bass Tbn. *cresc.* *f*

Vibr. *cresc.* *f*

Vc. *cresc.* *f*

3 *3* *3*

i - llu - mi - nans o - cu - los. Ti - mor Do - mi - ni sanc - tus per - ma - nens in sae - cu - lum sae - cu - li

285 J ♩ = 80 *intimo*

Sop. Sax. *mp*

Bass Tbn. *mp*

Vibr. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

ju - di - ci - a Do-mi-ni ve - ra ju - sti - fi - ca - ta in se - met ip - sa. De - lic - ta

290

Sop. Sax.

Bass Tbn.

Vibr.

Vc.

qu - is in - te - lli - get? ab o - cul - tis me - is mun - da me et ab a - li - e - nis par - ce ser - vo tu - o

295 $\text{♩} = 85$ *improvisatore*

Sop. Sax. $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

Bass Tbn. $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

Vibr. $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

Vc. $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

pizz.

mf

mf

mf

si me-i non fu-e-rint do-mi-na-ti, tunc i-mma-cu-la-tus e-ro et e-mun-da-bor a de-lic-to ma-xi-mo.

300 **K**

Sop. Sax. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

Bass Tbn. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

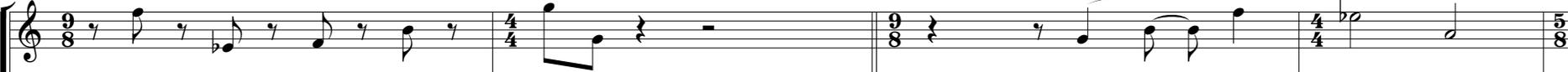
Vibr. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

Vc. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$

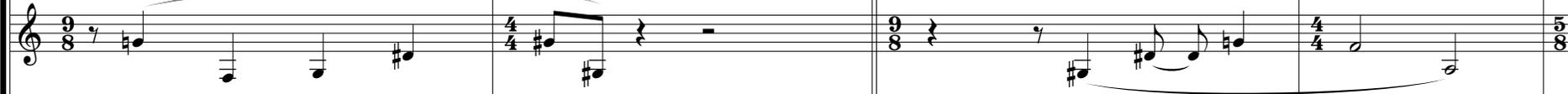
arco

Et e-runt ut com-pla-ce-ant e-lo-qui-a or-is me-i et me-di-ta-ti-o cor-dis me-i

306 L ♩ = 80 *meno mosso*

Sop. Sax. 

Bass Tbn. 

Vibr. 

Vc. 

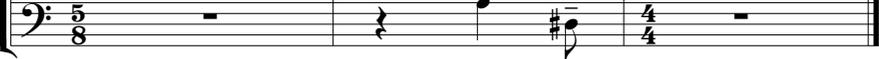
in con - spec - tu tu - o sem - per Do - mi - ne ad - ju - tor me - - us,

310

Sop. Sax. 

Bass Tbn. 

Vibr. 

Vc. 

et re - demp - tor me - us.

for Asbjørn Abelseth and John Lien who made *Schizophonia* possible.