

wastelands

for tenor saxophone, percussion, piano/keyboard,
electronics and optional lights

José del Avellanal Carreño

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"He fumbled his canteen off his shoulder with his claw hand and shook it. The canteen was nearly empty. Didn't matter. He would drink every single drop and lay up here until the sun went down, and then he would walk down the highway and into Cibola, fabled City, Seven-in-One. Tonight he would drink from ever-springing fountains faced in gold. But not until the killer sun went down. God was the greatest firebug of them all. A long time ago a boy named Donald Merwin Elbert had burned up old lady Semple's pension check. That same boy had torched the Methodist Church in Powtanville, and if there had been anything left of Donald Merwin Elbert in this shell, it had surely been cremated with the oiltanks in Gary, Indiana. Over nine dozen of them, and they had gone up like a walloping string of firecrackers. Just in time for the Fourth of July, too. Nice. And in the wake of that conflagration, only the Trashcan Man had been left, his left arm a cracked and boiling stew, a fire inside his body that was never going to go out ... at least not until his body was so much blackened charcoal.

And tonight he would drink the water of Cibola, yes, and it would taste like wine."

Stephen King, *The Stand* (1990)

Instrumentation

Tenor saxophone

Percussion

- Large tom-tom
- Spring coil (medium size)
- Spring drum
- Hi-hat 1 (china + regular cymbal)
- Hi-hat 2 (2 small-sized cymbals)
- Kalimba (ideally loosely tuned around the E-flat minor scale)
- MIDI pad (with 8 pads)

Piano & MIDI keyboard (4 octaves)

Technical information

The performance of the work requires of the following additional items:

- 2 MIDI pedals (for saxophonist and pianist, connected through the MIDI pad and MIDI keyboard respectively)
- 1 contact microphone
- 2 microphones with input into interface (saxophone and kalimba)
- Additional microphones for amplification
- Sound interface
- Mixer
- Stereo speakers
- 4 LED lights with RGBW DMX controls (suggested model Gear4Music Sol-Party-12S or similar)
- Light interface
- Laptop (running Ableton Live, Max and QLab)

The detailed technical information of the piece and its specificities can be found in the technical rider of the work, provided by the composer.

Performance notes

Saxophone

The multiphonics used in the work were explored together with the saxophonist Miguel Fernández and, for the most part, have been notated as they appear in M. Weiss and G. Netti's *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing* (2010, Bärenreiter). The choice of notation does not intend for the exact playing of the depicted pitches, but rather aims to showcase to the player the spectrum and quality of the multiphonic to be produced.

"choked" sound: this term is used to depict a performance approach consistent of a very tight embouchure and no tongue articulation, used for the most part (unless specifically indicated) with harmonic fingerings. The result of this are very resistant and unstable pitches, with a 'choked' and strenuous quality. Due to the instability of this technique, whenever it is required in the work the choice of fingering is left open to the performer.

"pop" sound: this term asks for a playing style reminiscent of pop music solos, with a direct and bright, piercing sound.

Saxophone (cont.)

↓ : blow air through the instrument

↑ : inhale through the instrument

↓ (together with the indication "trigger"): slap with the right hand one of the large valves close to the bell of the instrument. This sound is to be picked up by a contact microphone placed in that area, which will be used as a trigger for the electronics (see technical rider).

Percussion

Legend:

Mallets/Beaters: **F** - finger / **H** - hand / **M** - metal beater / **SB** - mini superball / **SM** - 'soft mallet' / **D** - drumstick

In case the mallet is not indicated, this is due to it not being relevant for the sound of the instrument (e.g. MIDI pad) or to indicate the continuous use of the previously used mallet.

The spring coil and spring drum should be hanging from a percussion stand. When no specific indications (e.g. 'hit body') are provided, the spring drum is to be hit freely by the percussionist.

↓ ↑ : close and open (respectively) hi-hat with foot

① : indication of specific pad to be hit

↓ (small notehead): superball scrape

↓ : rimshot

Piano

The top 4 notes of the piano (A7-C8) should be muted with Blu Tack or similar.

↓ : scrape string with nail while pressing with thumb in a random harmonic, to be performed on notes with double strings

"finger superball": always performed on lowest note of the piano, pince string with left hand and scrape it with the nail of the thumb and the flesh of the index finger of the right hand, creating a screamly harmonic resonance.

↓ : scrape multiple strings simultaneously with nails, without pressing harmonics

↓ (independent of clef!): hit frame inside the piano with knuckles

↓ (independent of clef!): slam piano lid open

↓ : strum a cluster of low strings with finger

↓ : stomp on left pedal heavily, creating a resonance in the piano when the sustain pedal is held. In case this approach does not provide a noticeable result, a potential alternative could be stepping on the pedal quietly and releasing it violently. Unless deemed necessary by the player, the pedal is not to be held and may be released immediately after the action.

↓ : hold pedal down until next indicated

↓ : stomp heavily on sustain pedal, causing a faint resonance

↓ : press MIDI pedal (electronics, see technical rider)

Written for Ex-Sentia Ensemble in 2023, with generous support from the Fondation Nicati-de Luze and guidance from the PRISM team at the Royal Northern College of Music

Duration: c. 15'

For Miguel, Santi and Jacob

Transposed Score

wastelands

José del Avellanal Carreño

Tenor Saxophone

♩ = 60 (full tube closed, no vents)
air

pppp *mf* *ppp* *pppp*

Percussion

♩ = 60

0: turn lights on

L1 (light cue 1)
1: activate input from saxophone into patch

Piano/Keyboard

sustain on!



Ten. Sax.

7

mf *ppp* *pppp* *mf* *f* *ppp* *pppp* *mf*

scrape
M

scrape skin
F

Perc.

f *f*

hit frame inside the piano (w. knuckles)

[Piano RH]

[Piano LH]

f

Red →

12

Ten. Sax. *f* *ppp* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *ppp* *mf*

Perc. scrape M *f* scrape M *f* F *mp* *f*

Pno./K. scrape low string (w. nail) *f* L2 2: water sounds become independent from saxophone input 'finger superball' 8vb *f* stomp left pedal



17

Ten. Sax. *pp* *p* *ppp* *f* *p* *mp* *pp* *mf* poss., keep dyad

Perc. M *mp* SB *f* F *mf* F *p* *f*

Pno./K. hit low strings (w. palm) *p* 8vb *p* 'finger superball' 8vb *mp* scrape low string (w. nail) *f*

22

Ten. Sax. *f* *pp* *p* *f* *pp* *let split!*

Perc. *f* *sf* *f* *mp*

Pno./K. *sf* *mf* *f*

scrape M SB scrape spring M H F

slam piano lid *f* *15^{ma}*

(w. palm) *mp* *mf*

8^{vb} *mp* *f* *mp*

(8) *f* *mf* *mp*

3: water sounds get distorted

1/2

25

Ten. Sax. *f* *ppp* *mp* *pp* *sfp* *pp* *sf*

Perc. *f* *f* *f* *mf* *f*

Pno./K. *f* *pp* *f* *mp* *sonore*

hit side (both cymbals) M F M bell D SB

[Keyboard] *f*

[Piano RH] *f* *15^{ma}*

[Piano LH] *pp* *f* *mp*

cluster (keys) *f* *mp*

8^{vb} *f* *mp*

(8) *f* *mp* *sonore*

28

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f* *sf* *pp*

Perc. ricochet SB side D SM SM *mp* *sf* *mf* *p* *sonore*

Pho./K. *f* *f* *p*
scrape low string (w. nail) hit strings (w. palm)
mp *mp* *p*
8^{vb}

31

Ten. Sax. *ff* *f* *3* *trigger*

Perc. SB D (alternative) SB SM D 5 *f* *mp* *f*

Pho./K. *f* *pp* *mp* *p* *f*
15^{ma} 7 5

(Red.) 1/2

34

Ten. Sax. *sf* *mp < sf* *f* *poco* *ff* *let break!*

Perc. *sf* *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *sf* *p*

Pno./K. *ff* cluster (keys) *f* *sf* *pp*

8^{vb} *ff*

4: increasingly glitchy water sounds

15^{ma}

5

36

Ten. Sax. *ff* *f'* *p* *molto*

Perc. *ff* *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *pp* *sf* *mp* *ff*

Pno./K. [Piano RH] *ff* *f* *f* cluster (keys)

[Piano LH] cluster (keys) scrape strings (w. nails) strum strings (w. finger) *f* *ff*

8^{vb} *ff* *f'* 8^{vb} *ff*

choke! "choked"

bell

15^{ma}

cluster (keys)

39

Ten. Sax. *ff*

Perc. *f* *sf* *f'* *mp* *sf* *f*

[Keyboard] *p* *f*

Pno./K. [Piano RH] *ff* *f* *ff* *p*

[Piano LH] cluster (keys) *ff* cluster (keys) hit low strings (w. palm) (*ff*)

SM rimshot D SB SM

3 3 3 6

8vb

42

Ten. Sax. *f'*

Perc. *f* *p* *ff*

Pno./K. *f* *mp* *ff*

black key cluster *p* *mf*

choke! "choked"

D SB D SM D SM D SM

3 3 3

5: glitchy water sounds fade

8vb

(Red) 1/2

45

Ten. Sax. *meno f* *mf* *ppp delicate* *p*

non-harm. fingering

Perc. *pp* *f* ① *f* ②

side D SM side D SM D

Pno./K. *sf* *p* *f*

7 *8^{vb}*

15^{ma}



49

Ten. Sax. *mp* *f* *ppp* *mf* *f* *pp* *f*

non-harm. harm. hold fingering! break dyad! break dyad!

Perc. ③ *f* ①

SM

Pno./K. *mf* *p* *f*

hit low strings (w. palm) *8^{vb}* *7* *8^{vb}*

(Red) $\frac{1}{2}$

52

Ten. Sax. *without tongue* *until out of breath* (☹)

Perc. *f* ④ ② ③ ①

Phno./K. *f heavy* *ff*

mp *p calmo* *pppp poss.*



56

Ten. Sax.

Perc. SB *f* ④ ② ⑥ ① ⑤ *f*

Phno./K. *sf* *cluster (keys)* *ff* *f* *ff* *p* 7 *8vb*

61

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

SM

7

8

1

2

L6

6: change perc. samples

3

f

ff

8vb

ff

8vb



65

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

SM

2

6

f

7

5

1

8

L7

trigger

Red

7: change keyboard sound

8: kill samples

f

3

f

p

ff

3

7

f

8vb

8vb

(Red)

69 c. 30" (electronics, noisy water) L8 air sudden exhalation in an unfocused way, loosening the embouchure

Ten. Sax.

Perc. c. 30" f' mp f' SB SB

Pno./K. c. 30" sustain off! stomp left pedal ff



74 L9 trigger c. 4" (electronics, noisy water) L10

Ten. Sax. pppp

Perc. scrape F f' f' f' 3 mp pp ricochet 3 SB c. 4"

Pno./K. c. 4" f'

79

Ten. Sax. *mp* > *p* *pppp* *pp* *poco*

Perc. *mp* *f'* *mp* > *f* *f'* *p*
3 *3* *3* *3*
 ricochet scrape F SB SB

Pno./K. *p* *pp* *p* *sonore*
 strum strings (w. finger) *8vb*



83

Ten. Sax. *ppp* *p* *pp* *break dyad!*

Perc. *mp* *f'* *pp* *p* *pp* *f'*
3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*
 SB SB ricochet

Pno./K. *p* *f'*
 hit strings with fingertips "finger superball" *8vb*

86

Ten. Sax. *mf* *pp* *pp* *mp*

Perc. SB *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *f*

Pno./K. *pp* *f* 15^{ma}

9: new perc. samples



89

Ten. Sax. *pp* *pp* *poco* *ppp*

Perc. scrape *f* SB *p* *pp* *poco* *pp*

Pno./K. *p* *f* *ppp* *poss.*

hit strings with fingertips

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

♩ = 90

L11

10: kill samples

c. 7" (wait for resonance to almost die)

f punchy!

pp ————— *f*

7

8th strictly no pedal unless indicated!



[Keyboard (RH)]

[Piano (LH)]

Pno./K.

L12

11: change tuning

12: change tuning



L13 trigger

L14

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

f

D

Pno./K.

13: change tuning

cluster (keys)

8th

107

Ten. Sax. *without tongue*
fp

Perc. *f* *mp*

Pno./K.

L15
14: change tuning

110

Ten. Sax. *choke!* *half-choked* *choked*
mp *f* *f*

Perc. *f* *pp* *f* *f*

Pno./K. *cluster (keys)* *8vb*

L16
15: change tuning

L17
16: change tuning

114

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f* "choked" *f'*

Perc. *p* *f* *mf* *sf*

Pho./K. *sf* *f* *sf*

17: change tuning 18: change tuning 19: change tuning

bell edge side

8vb Red



117

Ten. Sax. *pp* *sf* *p* *sf* non-harm. fingering

Perc. *mp* *f* *sf* *f* *pp* 1 stick rimshot

Pho./K. *mp* *f* *sf* *f* *pp*

20: change tuning 21: change tuning 22: change tuning 23: change tuning 24: change tuning 25: change tuning L18

120

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f* *ff* *bell*

Perc. *f* *più f* *f* *p* *ff* *6*

Pno./K. *f* *sf* *15^{ma}* *8^{vb}* *p*

♩ = 60

123

Ten. Sax. *f* *più f* *sf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

Perc. *rimshot* *sf* *ff* *p* *sf* *f* *D SM* *D SM* *D SM* *D SM* *D*

Pno./K. *f* *sf* *8^{vb}* *mf* *15^{ma}* *(Red)*

125 $\text{♩} = 90$

Ten. Sax. $\text{♩} = 60$

Perc.

Pno./K.

trigger

sf mp sf

D f p f SM D_5 SM D

L19

26: kill electronics

L20

27: change tuning, new perc. samples

$\text{♩} = 60$

28: change tuning

128

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

f sf sf mp sf mp ff

D f SM p f p

29: change keyboard sound

15^{ma}

cluster (keys)

pp

8^{vb}

131

Ten. Sax. *ff* *p* *ff* *poss.* *f* *rough* *poco* *ff*

Perc. *f* *f* *p < mf* *f*

Pno./K. *ff* *black key cluster* *scrape strings (w. nails)*



134

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f* *pp*

Perc. *f* *f* *f* *mp*

Pno./K. *ff* *f* *p* *f* *15ma*

136

Ten. Sax. *fp* < *f* *f* *poco* *ff* *p*

Perc. *f* SM 3 3 SM

Phno./K. hit low strings (w. palm) *p* *ff* *mp* 7 3 8vb

L21 30: change perc. samples

L22 31: change perc. samples

140 until out of breath (☹)

Ten. Sax. *ff* rough, let break

Perc. ① ④ ① ② ① ⑥ ① ② ② ③ ① ⑧ ① ⑤ ⑦

Phno./K. *ff* cluster (keys) *ff* 8vb

146

Ten. Sax. *sf* *poco* *ff* *mf* *molto, very messy* *sf*

Perc. *f* *f*

Pno./K. [Keyboard] *sf* *mf*
[Piano] *f* *mf* *ff* *mp*

without tongue

32: change keyboard sound and perc. samples

8vb

149

Ten. Sax. *p* *ff* *mp* *ff* *screamy*

Perc. *mp* *f* *ff*

Pno./K. *f* *ff*

rimshot

SM

cluster (keys)

33: change keyboard sound and perc. samples

15ma

8vb

154

Ten. Sax. *pp* *f* *ff* *fp* hold fingering!

Perc. ④ ⑤ ① ⑦ ② ⑥ ⑦ ③ ④ ② ⑤ ① ⑧ ⑦ ④ ⑥

Pno./K. 34: change perc. samples 35: change perc. samples *ff* (sempre!) cluster (keys) 8^{vb}



158

Ten. Sax. circular breathe *ff* *mp* *f* *mp* *ff*

Perc. ① ② *ff* ① ② ④ ⑥ *f* D

Pno./K. use both hands when needed *with sustained maximum intensity!* *sim.* 3

8^{vb}

163

Ten. Sax. *pp* *ff*

Perc. *p* *f* SM D

Pno./K. 36: change keyboard sound



166

Ten. Sax. *pp* *ff* *p* (ord.)

Perc. *f* SM SM SM

Pno./K. *ff* 8vb

hold fingering!

Ten. Sax. *f* *ff* *ff* *pop* sound

Perc. *p* *f* SM D ⑤

Pno./K. L25 37: change tuning



Ten. Sax. *f* *p* *pop*

Perc. *ff* D ① ② ⑥ ⑧

Pno./K. 38: change tuning 39: change perc. samples 40: change tuning random chords between C4 and F5

ff 8^{vb}

177

Ten. Sax. *p* *f* *sf* *ff* *f* "pop"

Perc. *pp* *ff* *ff*

Pno./K. 41: change tuning 42: change tuning 43: change tuning and perc. samples

L26

ff *8vb*



181

Ten. Sax. *ff* *mp* *pp* ord.

Perc. 5 6 1 2 3 4

Pno./K. L27 44: kill samples 45: activate input from saxophone into patch

slam lid *sf* stomp left pedal

(Red.)

186

Ten. Sax. *pppp* *p* *pppp* *pppp*

Perc. *pp* *p* *p delicate* *p*

Piano/K. *pp* *f'* *mp*

hit strings with fingertips

hit frame inside the piano (w. knuckles)

scrape low string (w. nail) *3*

scrape M

F

SB

8^{vb}

190

Ten. Sax. *p poco* *pppp* *p* *pppp*

Perc. *p* *p* *pp* *mp*

Piano/K. *f'* *p* *mp*

hit strings with fingertips

scrape M

F

SB

bell M

8^{vb}

194

Ten. Sax. *ppp* *p* *ppp*

Perc. SB F M scrape *p* *p*

46: cut input from saxophone into patch, kill electronics

[Piano RH] *f* 15^{ma} slam lid *f*

[Piano LH] hit low strings (w. palm) *f* hit low strings (w. palm)

p 8^{vb} *f* 8^{vb}



198

Ten. Sax. c. 45"

Perc. ricochet SB *ppp* *p* c. 45" (sustain texture, peaceful and dreamy, let irregularities and slight differences emerge organically)

47: activate live electronics on kalimba

[Piano] c. 45"

200

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

L29
48: fade live electronics on kalimba

'finger superball'

8vb

ppp *p* *pp* *poco* *ppp* *poco*

pp *poco* *ppp*

3



205

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

ppp *poss.* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

3 3 3 3

208

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

3 *ppp* *poco* 3 *ppp* *poco*



211

Ten. Sax.

Perc.

Pno./K.

full tube closed, no vents

until out of breath (☹)

c. 1'

pppp *pp* *pppp*

c. 1' (sample fades into louder and louder water sounds, sudden fade to silence)

L30 49: enable final perc. sample

L31 50: end, lights off