

Brandon Johnson

Artistic

Sax Quartet

2022

Sample Score
Not Purchased

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Artistic Signature

Sample Score
Not Purchased

Alto Sax 1
Alto Sax 2
Tenor Sax
Bari. Sax

Sample Score
Not Purchased

Program Note

Adrift is a sax quartet with much variety. Sometimes it's smooth and slow; sometimes it's very rapid and energetic. It has slap tongue effects and growls along with funky and jazzy rhythms. First, Adrift starts off with a slow and somber mood. All saxes soon contribute to challenging rhythms and jazzy figures. A shocking growl takes the piece to a fast, intrepid ride. The character of all fast sections are adventurous and somewhat kooky.

After the first fast section, the piece takes on another slow section, this time with more notes. This section has more Jazz harmony and difficult rhythms. The low, minor, quarter note motif gives it a very smokey atmosphere. The piece drifts off to a slightly faster tempo but with a spy sounding melody. The next drift is a G Lydian section with yet a new melody and changing time signature. Because of the modal influence, the atmosphere is very bright here. This section is satisfyingly developed, then veers off with the encroaching material from the beginning. This works well because the G Lydian section is the same tempo as the beginning.

The piece drifts to an ending with 3 more sections : repeating the Bari Sax led 180 tempo, a fast return to the slow somber, then a fast 180 tempo ending. These last sections are not exact repeats, as some material is developed and some is outright changed. This piece approaches the end by bringing back some effects, the first Alto Sax leads the ensemble to a powerful punch of an ending with a fluid, soloistic figure.

Performance Note

Adrift is more of a cross through composed; however it can be divided into 8 sections :

1. Slow Intro : m. 1 - 9
2. Fast Intrepid : m. 10 - 47
3. Slow Quarter Note Motif : m. 48 - 74
4. Spy Theme : m. 75 - 102
5. G Lydian : m. 103 - 147
6. Intrepid 2 : m. 148 - 186
7. Fast Slow Section : m. 187 - 199
8. Fast Tag : m. 200 - 216 (End)

Slow Intro : m. 1 - 9

This piece has many tempo and feel changes. I'm stating the obvious here, but still want to clarify that it would be helpful for a performer (perhaps the first Alto) to lightly body pulse the tempo changes for increased communication (like conducting). This first section sets a somber mood yet, with a variety of rhythms. Some rhythms sound soloistic, such as the first alto at bars 6 - 7 but it's important that they are precise and in time. Let the growl at the end of the section be raunchy.

Performance Note 2

Fast Intrepid : m. 10 - 47

The Bari. Sax leads the fast tempo here. It's imperative that this section starts with poise and ease, especially with 16th note figures. The layering of the voices from the bottom makes it easy for each player to latch on and match precise articulations, especially staccatos. Make sure that all grace notes come in before the beat. All grace notes, key gliss., and other effects should be approached with finesse. While rehearsing 38 - 48, it may be helpful to isolate individual parts so each performer understands how their part fits. To be clear, this subsection is mainly comprised of hockets so this will be difficult to put together if each player is reacting to each other. This part will take many reps to get correctly and up to speed.

Slow Quarter Note Motif : m. 48 - 74

This highly syncopated section is slightly reminiscent to the Intro. Once again, the Bari Sax leads the development, this time with variations on shaped quarter note figures. If any syncopated figures with ornaments become problematic, I suggest doing some reps without them in order to get the underlying timing solid. Pay very close attention to the shaped quarter note figures that the whole ensemble plays, like bars 59 & 60. It will take maximum effort to get the effect of the fortepiano into the crescendo to forte all in one beat. Lean into and exaggerate the falls, growls, and scoops. These effects will give this section sufficient greasiness.

Spy Theme : m. 75 - 102

This bump in tempo adds to the drift. This section passes around a spy sounding theme, but what makes it very notable is the variety of texture and sense of groove. The groove (in the Bari Sax) should feel laid back and not too fast so that the other solos can fit in the pocket nicely.

G Lydian : m. 103 - 147

Not all of the 4/4 to 8th note based timing signature changes are equal. For further clarification, I will briefly list and explain all changes here :

m. 104 (4/4) into 105 (6/8) : 8th notes are the same speed.

m. 107 into 108 : same as above

m. 110 (4/4) into 111 (6/8) : The 16th note speed in 4/4 will be equal to the 6/8 8th note speed. (same as 16ths at 113 as well)

m.123 (2/4) into 124 (6/8 [most tricky]) : Think of the dotted 8th of bar 123 as the setup for the 6/8. Trust that speed. Think of two 8th notes in 6/8 fitting inside of the dotted 8th space.

m. 125 into 126 : This is a tempo increase. That previous quarter note space (at 125) is now the new dotted quarter.

m. 131 into 132 : Written as 16th equals 8th but is the same idea as dotted 8th equals dotted quarter.

m. 133 into 134 : Remember to keep the a streamline duration between 8ths in 8/8 to the growled and scooped 16ths in the Tenor.

Performance Note 3

As you can see, this section has a lot of tenuto markings. Furthermore, some phrases have mixed articulations such as the phrase at bar 119. This mixture is on purpose to make foreground and background more interesting. The Bari. Sax incorporates tenutos and slurs, while the others have staccatos. Another phrase with mixed articulations is bar 115, the tenor sax has tenutos while the altos don't. This is a phrase that has less to do with foreground and more about texture mix for variety.

Intrepid 2 : m. 148 - 186

If you are looking to one player for the tempo here (or have a conductor) make sure it's clear and consistent because it's extremely hard to get the correct tempo change with just whole notes, until the Bari. Sax's quarter notes. When the Bari sax takes the audible lead, it's imperative that the tempo doesn't waver particularly when the triplets get introduced at 156 and 157 (The tendency will probably be to rush the part).

Last Slow Section : m. 187 - 199

This section is developed material from the intro. mixed with the quarter note section 3. Since there is mixed material here, it's important to make sure all phrase transitions are as smooth as possible.

Fast Tag : m. 200 - 216 (End)

The 180 tempo has yet another tempo, led by the Bari. Sax. The heavy hocket idea is brought back and developed, so precision and independence is key. It's important to exaggerate the effects linked in with the dynamics (growls, trills, and slurs). This will take you to a most satisfying ending of a very involved sax quartet.

Brandon Johnson

Sample Score
Not Purchased

Transposed Score

Adrift

Duration : ca. 8' 56"

For Sax Quartet

Brandon Johnson (ASCAP)

Somber $\text{♩} = 60$

2 3 4 5

E♭ Alto Sax. 1 *p mp fp mf*

E♭ Alto Sax. 2 *p mp fp mf*

B♭ Tenor Sax. *p mp fp mf*

E♭ Bari. Sax. *p mp f*

6 7 8 9 10 Intrepid $\text{♩} = 60$

Alto 1 *p f p f sf p f*

Alto 2 *mf p f sf p f*

Tenor *mf p f sf p f*

Bari. *mf mp p f p*

12 13 14 15 16 17

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari. *normal p*

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

f p

mf

normal mf

sfp

mf

p

mf

25

26

27

28

29

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

mf

p

mf

p

mf

30

31

32

33

34

35

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

normal f

mf

f

sfp

f

p

f

f

mp

f

f

3

3

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

36

37

39

fp

mf

mf

f

p

mp

f

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

40

41

42

43

44

mp

p *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

p *mp*

p *mp*

p *mp*

mf

48 ♩ = 60

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

46

47

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

Adrift For Saxes

4 49 50 51 52

Alto 1 *mp p* *pp*

Alto 2 *mp p* *pp*

Tenor *mp p* *pp* *mp* 3

Bari. *mp p* *pp* *mp*

Sample Score

53 54 56

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor *pp*

Bari. scoop 3 key gliss.

Sample Score

57 58

Alto 1 *mf* 3 6 3

Alto 2 *mf* 3 3 6 3

Tenor *mf* 3 3 6 3

Bari. *mf* growl ----- (normal) slap + +

Sample Score

59 60 fall

Alto 1 *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *p* *f*

Alto 2 *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *p* *f*

Tenor *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *p* *f*

Bari. *f* *fp* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* 3

61

Alto 1 3 3 3 *sfz* growl -----

Alto 2 3 *sfz* growl -----

Tenor growl (no l) *p* *f* 3 *sfz* growl -----

Bari. *sfz* growl -----

64 65

Alto 1 3 *mp* *f* *mp*

Alto 2 *mp* *f* *mp*

Tenor *mp* *f* *mp*

Bari. *mp* *f* 3

67

Alto 1

66

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

67

68

1

1

 $\mathcal{I}$

4

man

69

70

L

 m

1

1

1

[illegible]

1

 m

growl_____

72

73

4



1

[illegible]

75

♩ = 90

76

77

7

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

p

mf

Slap

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

p

mf

f

mp

f

fp

mf

f

p

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

f

mp

f

p

mf

mp

f

p

mf

f

mp

f

p

mf

Slap

Slap

Adrift For Saxes

8

85 86 87

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

88 89 90

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

93 94

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

96

95 97 98 ^{8va}-----9

Alto 1 *p*

Alto 2 *p*

Tenor *p*

Bari. *f*

99 (8)-----1 100 101 rit. -----

Alto 1 *mf* *f* 3 *f* 3

Alto 2 *mf* *f* 3 *fp* *f* 3 3 3

Tenor *f* 3 *fp* *f* 3 3

Bari. *f* 3 *fp* *f* 3 3

103

Bright In Color ♩ = 60

102 104 105 106 (♩ = ♩)

Alto 1 *mp* *p* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Alto 2 *p* *p* *mf* *p*

Tenor *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Bari. *mp* *p*

107 108 109

Alto 1 *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Alto 2 *mf* *p*

Tenor *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Bari. *mf* *p*

110 112 113 114

Alto 1 *f* *f* *f* *p*

Alto 2 *p* *f*

Tenor *p* *f*

Bari. *p* *f* *mf* *p*

115 116 117 118

Alto 1 *mf* *p < f*

Alto 2 *mf* *p < f*

Tenor *mf* *p < f*

Bari. *p < f*

119

Alto 1 *pp* 120 *mf* *pp*

Alto 2 *pp* *mf* *pp*

Tenor *pp* *pp*

Bari. *f* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*

Alto 1 122 *p* *mf* *p* *f* *mf* *p*

Alto 2 *p* *mf* *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p*

Tenor *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *p*

Bari. *p* *mf* *p* *f* *p*

Alto 1 126 *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Alto 2 *mf* *mf*

Tenor *mf* *p* *mf*

Bari. *mf* *p* *mf*

129 130

134

Alto 1 *mp* *mf* *p*

Alto 2 *p*

Tenor *p*

Bari.

131 132 133

owl

Alto 1 *< f* *p* *f*

Alto 2 *< f* *p* *f*

Tenor *f* *> p* *pp* *f* *p* *f*

Bari. *> p* *f* *pp* *tr* *p* *f*

135 136 137 138

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

139 140 141

Adrift For Saxes

142 143 144 13

Alto 1 *fp* < *f* *tr*

Alto 2 *fp* < *f* *tr*

Tenor *f* *fp* < *f* *tr*

Bari. *fp* < *f* *tr*

145 146 147 148 149

Alto 1 *p* *f* *mp*

Alto 2 *p* *f* *mp*

Tenor *p* *f* *mp*

Bari. *p* *f*

149 150 151 152 153 154 155

Alto 1 *sfp* *mf* growl

Alto 2 *sfp* *mf* growl

Tenor *sfp* *mf* growl

Bari.

Adrift For Saxes

14

156 157 158 159 160 161

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

162 163 164 166 167

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

169 170 171 172 173

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

174

quick fall

176

177

178

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

f

mf *mf*

f

sf *f*

p

f

mp

f

179

180

182

183

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

f

f *p*

fp *f*

f

p

f

f

f *p*

f

f

p

f

187

rit. *♩* = 90

186

188

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bari.

ff 3

ff 3

ff 3

ff 3

mp

p

197 198 199 200 201

mp *p* *p* *mp* < *mf* *p* < *mp* *mf*

mp *p* *p* *mf*

202 203 204 205 206

Alto 1 *mf*

Alto 2

Tenor *mf*

Bari.

207 208 209 210 211

Alto 1 *sfz* *f* *tr*

Alto 2 *sfp* *sfz* *f*

Tenor *sfp* *sf* *f*

Bari. *sfz* *f* *tr*

Growls -----|

212 213 214 215 216

Alto 1 *mf* *ff* *8va*

Alto 2 *fp* *ff*

Tenor *fp* *ff*

Bari. *fp* *ff*

8'54.2"

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