

Helge Skjeveland
“Cool Willie”
for strings & percussion

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Performance instructions

This piece is intended to sound just as well with a small ensemble as a large one. The opening string-bass line presents the twelve-tone row on which the piece is based in straight-forward form, then in retrograde inversion, the last note of the first being the first of the last exposition (hence eleven notes).

String bass dips below E, and so, if the instruments do not have the extension, they should re-tune the E string down to D (the lowest note used). The *pizzicato* should always be ringing and strong, never dull.

The 11/8 meter is subdivided 2+2+2+2+3 in the first half of the piece, and then transmuted to 3+3+3+2 for the second half. Although the melodic structure is derived from the twelve-tone row, the harmonic structure vacillates, leading to the surprising $b\flat$ minor cadence at the end.

Do not tune the timpani with the pedals until the *ostinato* starts descending in the second half, and then, do so innocuously by tuning the drum that is not being played, so there's no *glissando* heard.

Use as large a bass drum as possible, and produce a powerful *THUD!* with plenty of after-resonance, when it is struck.

The sometimes exceedingly difficult rhythmic subdivisions are approximations to real performance, but should be aimed at as goals. The *senza misura* sections that have thin beaming should be played freely with the suggested contour, striving to keep synchronous with the other parts.

Some of the string parts are acrobatically disjunct. This is from octave shifting of the row, and the players should endeavor to avoid crossing over strings while playing, using the adjacent string for the note. Unless specifically asked for, open strings should not be used because of their stronger timbre and tendency to ring. This is, of course, unavoidable with the lowest string, and the player should take care to damp it with the fingertip (except the string bass, which should always have strong resonance), unless otherwise specified.

Helge Skjeveland, Orem UT Sep. 21, 2004

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♩ = 162, jazzy, misterioso

Susp. Cym.
Snare Dr.
Timp./
Gr. Cassa

8va

pizzicato misterioso, con risonanza

mf

mf

sf, pesante

9:3

5:2

3:4

mf

mp

sfz, pesante

sf

mf

mp

mp

5:2

3:4

9:3

5:2

5:4

poco a poco accel., senza misura - - tempo giusto

mf

p

tempo giusto

mp

mf

mf

mp

mf

7:5

3:8

♩=214, threateningly

Sus. Cym. *wooden drumsticks*

Sn. Dr. *mp* *mf*

Tmp. *two drums, no pedal* *mf*

Vn II *molto espressivo* *mf*

CB *pizzicato* *mf*

SC

SD

Tmp.

Vn I

Vn II *sfz* *mp* *molto espressivo* *mf* *mf* *4:5*

Vla *mf* *mp*

VC

CB *mf*

SC

SD

Tmp.

Vn I *mp*

Vn II *molto espressivo* *sfz* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vla *molto espressivo* *sfz* *mp*

CB *mf*

SC

SD

Tmp

Vn I

Vn II

Vla

VC

CB

mf

f

mf

f

f

mf

sempre pizzicato

SC

SD

Tmp

Vn I

Vn II

Vla

VC

CB

p

p

p

tutti:

sfz

mp

sfz

mp

sfz

mp

p

p

SC

SD

Tmp

Vn II

Vla

VC

CB

mf

mf

mf

sf, pesante

sf, pesante

solo, molto esp.

mf

mf

f

tutti molto allargando: ffz

SC

SD

TMP

Vn I

Vn II

Vla

VC

VCi

CB

laissez vib.

laissez vib.

laissez vib.

mf

Helge Skjeveland
20 Sep. 2004