

Sarantine Polyphony

2010

For String Orchestra

Paul Frehner

Instrumentation and Performance Notes

String Orchestra: 5 4 3 3 1* minimum

*Note on the double bass part: There are a number of solo passages in which the bassist has to play extensively in the lowest register, from C-G. These passages contain frequent glissandi and other expressive techniques. Thus, it would be easiest to play the part on a bass tuned C-A-D-G at the nut or on a 5-string bass. If the part is played on a 4-string bass with a C extension operated by mechanical capos the bassist will have to work out a solution to these passages that approximates as much as possible what is indicated.

Accidentals function in the traditional manner. However, cautionary accidentals are frequently indicated.

Microtones in the score are indicated as follows:

♯ Quarter-tone sharp

Three quarter tones sharp

♭ Quarter-tone flat

Three quarter tones flat

↗ Slightly sharp: This indication is always placed on top of an accidental. If the arrow is applied to a note that is natural, sharp or flat play that note slightly sharper (by less than a ¼ tone). Likewise, if it is applied to a note that is already quarter-tone sharp or flat or three quarter tones sharp play that pitch slightly sharper still.

Duration: 17 minutes approximately

Contents

I.	The Zubir	1
II.	Shirin's Dance	32
III.	The Sleepless Ones	38

Program Note

Sarantine Polyphony draws its title from Canadian author Guy Gavriel Kay's historical fantasy series *The Sarantine Mosaic*. The action in Kay's *Sarantine* novels takes place in Sarantium, a fictional city and empire modeled after Byzantium in the time of Justinian, ca. 500-600 AD. In the novels Kay vividly paints a sophisticated society that is both rich in culture and customs and filled with political intrigues and sub plots. The dichotomy of theological beliefs is a central line of inquiry in the novels. Though Sarantium is by empirical decree a monotheistic society, pagan beliefs and the half-world are ever-present in the minds of its inhabitants. Specific characters and events from the novels were the inspiration for the three movements of this piece.

Movement I – *The Zubir*

The *Zubir* is the physical manifestation of the pagan bison god of the forests. Its presence is both terrible and awe-inspiring. Caius Crispin, the protagonist in the story, encounters the Zubir on the Day of the Dead when the god requires a human sacrifice. Crispin is forever changed by this encounter.

Movement II – *Shirin's Dance*

Shirin is the daughter of an alchemist and the most celebrated exotic dancer in the city of Sarantium.

Movement III – *The Sleepless Ones*

The Sleepless Ones are a holy order of clerics who keep prayerful vigil all night long while the god fights through the darkness of night to ensure the light of a new day. In this movement my intention is to create the impression of the clerics' chanting echoing in the vast space of their great basilica.

Sarantine Polyphony was commissioned by the McGill Chamber Orchestra in celebration of its 70th Anniversary Season. Financial support for this piece was graciously provided by the Canada Council for the Arts. Boris Brott conducted the McGill Chamber Orchestra in the premiere performance of this work on March 15, 2010, in Redpath Hall, Montreal.

Sarantine Polyphony

For String Orchestra

For Boris Brott and the McGill Chamber Orchestra

Paul Frehner, 2009

I. The Zubir

$\text{♩} = 72$ Haunting

Violin I div. *p*

Violin II-div. *ppp*

Viola 2-3 *ppp*

Cellos div. *pp < ffff* *ff* *pp < ffff* *ff*

Bass *pp < ffff* *ff* *pp < ffff* *ff*

Violin I div. *pppp* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral*

Violin II-div. *pppp* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral*

Vla. 1 *p* *Solo Like Chant, senza vib.*

Vla. 2-3 *pppp*

Vce. div. *pp* *arco (molto s.p.)* *fff* *ff* *pizz.*

Cb. *pp* *arco* *fff* *ff* *pizz.*

Muted (LH) a heavy thud, like a drum *pizz.*

5

9

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral
pppp

Vla. 1

mp 3 **pp** 3 **mp**

Vla. 2-3



13

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

mf 3 **mf** 3 5

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

pp arco (molto s.p.) **ffff** **ff** pizz. **pp** arco

pp arco **ffff** **ff** pizz. **pp** arco

Cb.

pp **ffff** **ff** pizz. **pp**

18

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

Cb.

The musical score for measures 18-21 is arranged in a system with six staves. The top two staves are for Violin I and Violin II, both in treble clef. The next two staves are for Viola 1 and Viola 2-3, both in bass clef. The fifth and sixth staves are for the Voice and Cello, both in bass clef. The score includes various dynamic markings: *f* (forte) for the strings, *pp* (pianissimo) for the Viola 2-3 part, and *ffff* (fortississimo) for the Voice and Cello parts. There are also *ff* (fortissimo) markings for the Voice and Cello. The score features several triplets (marked with a '3' and a bracket) and a quintuplet (marked with a '5' and a bracket) in the Viola 1 part. The Voice and Cello parts include *pizz.* (pizzicato) markings. The strings have hairpins indicating crescendos and decrescendos. The measure numbers 18, 19, 20, and 21 are indicated at the top of the staves.

(All 1st violins)
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.

22

Vln. I-1
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5

pppp
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.

Vln. II-div.

mf *pppp*
mf *pppp*

Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3

marcato
f 9 9 9 3 3 3
mf *pppp*

Vce. div.

ord. arco *mf* *pppp* pizz. *ff*
arco *mf* *pppp*

Cb.

ff

31

Vln. I-1
p *fff* *p*

Vln. I-2
p *fff* *p*

Vln. I-3
p *fff* *p*

Vln. I-4
p *fff* *p*

Vln. I-5
p *fff* *p*

Vln. II-div.
p *fff* *p*

Vln. II-div.
p *fff* *p*

Vla. 1
p

Vla. 2
p *fff* *p*

Vla. 3
p *fff* *p*

Vce. div.
p *fff* *p*

Vce. div.
p *fff* *p*

Cb.
p

35

Vln. I *div.*
f *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II *div.*
f *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 1 Solo
mf *undulating s.p. ord.*

Vla. 2 *pp* *ff* *mp*
undulating s.p.

Vla. 3 *pp* *ff* *mp*
undulating s.p.

Vce. 1 *ppp* *f* *pp* *undulating s.p. ff*

Vce. 2 *ppp* *f* *pp* *undulating s.p. ff*

Vce. 3 *ppp* *f* *pp*

Cb. *pizz.*
ff

40

Vla. 1

Vla. 2 *s.p. ord.*
f mp mf p mp pp p ppp

Vla. 3 *ord. s.p. ord.*
f mp mf p mp pp p ppp

Vce. 1 *ord. s.p. ord.*
mp f mp mf p mp pp

Vce. 2 *ord. s.p. ord.*
mp f mp mf p mp pp

Vce. 3

43

Vln. I div.

pp *otherworldly*

Vln. II-div.

pppp *otherworldly* *echo*

Vla. 1

pp *f*

Vla. 2

fff *pp* *f*

Vla. 3

fff *pp* *mf*

Vce. 1

fp *fff* *pp* *mf*

Vce. 2

fp *fff* *pp* *mp*

Vce. 3

fp *fff* *pp* *mp*

Cb.

f *pizz.* *arco*

47

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

52

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

56

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

pp

pp

molto s.p.

ppp

fff

fff

fff

fp

fff

fff

fp

fff

fff

f

ff

ff

p

p

p

wide amplitude fluctuation
(rapidly move between *pp-ff*)

Wide, pitch fluctuation
shuddering vib.

Solo arco

62

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Cb.

mp

f

p

Solo

ff

Solo

65

Vln. I div.

Vla. 1

Vce. div.

Cb.

ppp

ppp

mp

echo

pp

s.p.

pp

ff

s.p.

pp

ff

s.p.

ord.

3

Solo

mp

f

69

Vln. I div.

Vln. II

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

Cb.

73

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Cb.

79

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Cb.

93

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

99

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

105

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

112 *marcato*

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

125

Vln. I-1
ppp
mp

Vln. I-2
ppp
mp

Vln. I-3
f
p *mp*

Vln. I-4
f
p *mp*

Vln. I-5
f
p *mp*

Vln. II-1
f
p *mp*

Vln. II-2
f
p *mp*

Vln. II-3
f
p *mp*

Vln. II-4
f
p *mp*

Vla. 1
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp*

Vla. 2
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pppp*

Vla. 3
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp*

Vce. 1
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pppp*

Vce. 2
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pppp*

Vce. 3
ff *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pppp*

Cb.
solo pizz.
ff

Fluid Movement

129

Vln. I-1 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. I-2 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. I-3 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. I-4 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. I-5 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-1 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-2 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-3 *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-4 *pp*

Vla. 1 Solo Like Chant, senza vib. *mp* *pp*

Vla. 2 *mp* *pppp* *pp*

Vla. 3 *mp* *pppp* *pp*

Vce. div. *mp* *pppp*

Cb. *p* *arco*

133

Vln. II 1-2 *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-3 *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II-4 *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 1 *pppp* *pp* *pppp* *echo* *p*

Vla. 2 *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 3 *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vce. div. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Cb. *pppp*

138

Vln. I-1 *ppp* *mp* Solo

Vln. II 1-2 *mp* *pppp*

Vln. II-3 *mp* *pppp*

Vln. II-4 *mp* *pppp*

Vla. 1 *mp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 2 *p* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 3 *p* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Vce. div. *p* *pppp* *pp*

Cb. *pp* *mp* Solo

157

Vln. I-1 *mf*

Vla. 1

Vla. 2 *pppp*

Vla. 3 *pppp*

Vce. div. *pp* *pppp*

Cb. *pp* *mp*

arco

160

Vln. I-1

Vln. II 1-2 *pppp* *mp* *pppp*

Vln. II-3 *pppp* *mp*

Vln. II-4 *pppp* *mp*

Vla. 1 *f*

Vla. 2 *pppp* *pp*

Vla. 3 *pppp* *pp*

Vce. div. *pp* *pppp*

Cb. *3*

169

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. I 2-3 *ppp*

Vln. I-4 *mp* *ppp*

Vln. I-5 *mp* *ppp*

Vla. 1 *pppp* *pp* *pppp* *mf*

Vla. 2 *pppp* *pp* *pppp* *mf*

Vla. 3 *pppp* *pp* *pppp* *mf*

Vce. div. *mp* *pppp* *pp* *p*

Cb. *p*

175

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f* *div.*

Vce. div. *f* *p* *f*

Cb. *f* *pizz.*

178

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce. div.

Cb.

Div. à 3

p *ff*

181

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla.

Cellos

Cb.

185

This musical score page contains five systems of staves. The first system includes five Violin I staves (Vln. I-1 to Vln. I-5), four Violin II staves (Vln. II-1 to Vln. II-4), and a Viola staff (Vla.). The second system includes a Cello staff (Cellos) and a Contrabass staff (Cb.). The Violin I and II staves feature melodic lines with various note values and slurs. The Viola staff plays a sustained harmonic accompaniment. The Cello and Contrabass staves provide a rhythmic and harmonic foundation with dense chordal textures and moving lines.

189

This musical score page, numbered 189, features a full orchestral arrangement. The top section consists of five staves for Violins I (Vln. I-1 to I-5) and four staves for Violins II (Vln. II-1 to II-4). The Violin I parts play a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The Violin II parts play a similar melodic line, also marked *p*. Below the violins are three staves for Violas (Vla. 1, 2, 3), which play a sustained harmonic accompaniment. The bottom section includes two staves for Cellos (Cellos) and one for Contrabass (Cb.). The Cello part features a rhythmic, textured accompaniment with many accents, while the Contrabass part provides a steady, rhythmic foundation. The score is written in a single system with a common time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

193

Solo

Vln. I-1 *p* *mf*

Vln. I-2 *ppp*

Vln. I-3 *ppp*

Vln. I-4 *ppp*

Vln. I-5 *ppp*

Vln. II-1 *ppp*

Vln. II-2 *ppp*

Vln. II-3 *ppp*

Vln. II-4 *ppp*

Vla. *f* Solo 3

Vla. 2 *ppp*

Vla. 3 *ppp*

Cellos

Cb. *mp*

II. Shirin's Dance

$\text{♩} = 82$ **Mysterioso**

Vln. I *ppp* \langle *ff* \rangle *ppp* \langle *f* \rangle *ppp* \langle *ff* \rangle

Vln. II *ppp* \langle *ff* \rangle *ppp* \langle *f* \rangle *ppp* \langle *ff* \rangle

Solo Vce. *f* \langle *pp* \rangle

Vce. *mp* \langle *ppp* \rangle

Cb. *ppp*

Danza, ritmico e preciso
With Panache

Vln. I *ppp* *ff*

Vln. II *ppp* *ff* *unis pizz.*

Vla. *ff* *Vigorous* *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle

Solo Vce. *f* *pizz.* *sffz* *f*

Vce. *sffz* *sffz* *f*

Cb. *sffz* *f*

13

Vln. I *pp* \langle *p* \rangle

Vln. II *f* *f*

Vla. *f* \langle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle

Vce. *f* \langle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle

Cb. *f* \langle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle *f* \rangle

Solo

div.

div.

Random harmonics along III - always rapidly swirling
all players independent
molto S.P.

57

Solo Vln. I

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

solo

f

5

3

3

non div.

p < f

p < f

p < f

p < f

div.

f

arco

pizz.

63

Solo Vln. I

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

5

3

3

f

f

f

f

arco

pizz.

68

Solo Vln. I

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

6

3

3

6

6

6

6

6

6

6

6

3

3

div.

div.

non div.

f

f

f

f

arco

pizz.

86

Vln. I *p < f* *p < f* *p < f* *p < f* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < fff* *p < fff* *p < ffff*

Vln. II *p < f* *p < f* *p < f* *p < f* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < ff* *p < fff* *p < fff* *p < ffff*

Vla. *f* *f* *f* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

Vce. *f* *f* *f* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

Cb. *f* *f* *f* *f* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

97

Vln. I *ffz* *pizz.*

Vln. II *ffz* *pizz.*

Vla. *f* *non div.*

Cellos *fff* *pizz.*

Vce. *ffz*

Cb. *ff* *p* *ppp*

101

Vln. I *arco* *pp* *f* *ppp*

Vln. II-div. *arco* *pp* *f* *ppp*

Solo Vce. *p*

Vce. *ppp*

Cb. *ppp*

molto S.P.
Random harmonics along III - always rapidly swirling
all players independent

III. The Sleepless Ones

♩ = 60 Expansive

Solo Vln. 1

gli altri

Vln. II solo

gli altri

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Cb.

Solo

p

ppp

Solo

p

ppp

Solo

p

ppp

ppp

Solo 'Sung,' like Eastern chant

ppp

mp

ppp

6

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

echo cello I

pp

gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral

pp

gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral

pp

gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral

12

19

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.



23

Solo Vln. 1

gli altri

Vln. II solo

gli altri

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

40

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

46

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

52

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

mp *f* *mf* *mp* *ppp*

mf *ppp*

mf *ppp*

mf *ppp*

mp *mf* *ppp*

mf *ppp*

mf *ppp*

56

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

Cb.

f *ff*

f *ff*

f *ff*

f *ff*

f *ff*

60

Vln. I div. *unis*

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

Cb.

pp *f* *pp* *ppp*

pp *f* *pp*

pp *f* *pp*

pp

pp

65

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

pp

molto s.p.
Slowly and randomly move between the highest possible partials on the C string.

p

mp

p

p

p

p

echo cello I

echo cello I

echo cello I

69

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

solo molto vib. senza vib.

mp *mf* *pp*

(Slowly and randomly move between the highest possible partials on the C string.)

(solo)

f solo molto vib. senza vib.

mp *mf* *pp*

mp *mf* *pp*



75

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

molto vib. senza vib.

mp *pp*

(solo)

pp *mp*

mp *pp*

79

Vln. I *ppp* *div.*

Vln. II *ppp*

Vla. *pp* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral*

Vce. 1 *mf* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral* *p* (solo)

Vce. 2 *pp* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral*

Vce. 3 *ppp* *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral*

Cb. *pp*

84

Solo Vln. I *p*

gli altri *pp* *unis*

Vln. II solo *p*

gli altri *pp*

Vla. 1 *p*

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.