

Niki Zohdi

Illuminans Obscurum

2024-25

for solo soprano sax

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*for
solo soprano sax*

Duration: c. 10'

Illuminans Obscurum (tr. 'illuminating the dark') explores momentary cracks of illumination within a background of obscurity. I am fascinated with how the different dimensions of composition can be used to create fluctuating senses of obscurity, especially where pre-existent materials are used. In this piece, all of the pitch and rhythmic material is based, in one way or another, to Pérotin's *Beata Viscera* - a piece which is all about mystery. To heighten this idea of mystery, each section in *Illuminans Obscurum* takes Pérotin's material and obscures it in different ways: through texture, through pitch/rhythm alterations and through timbre as well as combinations of these parameters. There are very, very short moments in each section where Pérotin's material is quoted in its original form, but these moments are sporadic and may not always be obvious.

Performance notes

◀ - 1/2 breath tone; 1/2 normal tone

◊ - full breath tone

♩ - slap tongue

Multiphonics are all numbered after Daniel Kientzy, *Les sons multiples aux saxophones* (Paris: Editions Salabert, 2003)

T - teeth notes

~ - random pitch contours



- shout into instrument (with no pitch) to create a 'growl' sound

Score is **TRANSPOSED**

Accidentals only apply to the note they are next to unless that note is immediately repeated

All other directions are noted on the score

To Rob Burton

Illuminans Obscurum

Niki Zohdi

♩ = 68 *fragile; unstable*

Soprano Saxophone

The musical score for Soprano Saxophone consists of 12 measures, each with a unique time signature and complex rhythmic patterns. The notation includes various accidentals, slurs, and dynamic markings.

- Measure 1:** Time signature 9/8. Rhythmic markings: 5:3, 7:6, 5:4, 7:9. Dynamic: *ppp*.
- Measure 3:** Time signature 7/8. Rhythmic markings: 3:2, 5:4, 9:8. Dynamic: *p*, *ppp*. Includes a fingering chart: 1, 2, 3 (B), 4, 7, Ta.
- Measure 6:** Time signature 9/8. Rhythmic markings: 7:5, 5:4, 11:8. Includes a trill marking (*tr*).
- Measure 8:** Time signature 9/8. Rhythmic markings: 6:9, 5:8, 5:3. Dynamic: *p*.
- Measure 10:** Time signature 4/8. Rhythmic markings: 7:4, 10:9. Dynamic: *p*.
- Measure 12:** Time signature 6/8. Rhythmic markings: 9:5, 8:11. Dynamic: *ppp*, *p*.

14 5

15 ♩ = 86

17

ppp *p*

19

ppp

20

p *mf* *ppp*

transition seamlessly between tone quality

22

ppp *mf* *ppp*

27

f *p* *mp* *ppp*

6

30 *mf* *ppp* *f*

36 *ppp* *mp* *f* *ppp* *mp*

40 *f*

♩ = 105
transition seamlessly between
tone quality; lots of key click noises
flz. →

42 *p*

45 *ppp*

47 *mp* *p* bisb.

50 non-flz. flz. non-flz.

54 *flz.* →

ppp *mp* *ppp* *mp*

57

ppp *mp*

60 *non-flz.* →

mp

62 *(ord.)* → *♩ = 75 less fragile; stringent* *overblow, with unstable overtones*

f *ppp* *ff* *ff*

65 *9:7* *11:7*

mp < f *mp < f* *mp* *f* *mp* *sf* *p* *f* *p*

69 *11:9*

ff *(ff)* *p* *ff*

73 *5:3* *3* *3* *5:3* *3*

sf *ff* *ff* *p*

♩ = 60 **aggressive; relentless**

shout/growl

78

ff *p* *ff*

7:5

85

p *ff* *p* *ff*

7:5 6:5 5:3

92

p *ff* *p* *ff* *ff* *p* *ff* *ff*

10:7 8:5 5:4

97

ff *mf* *ff* *p* *ff*

3 7:5

overblow,
with unstable overtones

102

f *ppp*

5:4 5:4 5:3

104

f *ppp*

7:6

107

f *ppp*

9:8

109

f *ppp*

111

f 5:3 *ppp* 9:8

113

ppp 5:4 5:4 *ppp* *fff* 5:3 5:3

fragile; unstable

116

4'' 10'' 8'' 4'' 4''

ord. flz ord. flz ord.

ppp *p* *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *mp*

gliss. *gliss.*

120

4'' 12'' 16'' 16''

ord. flz ord. flz ord. flz ord.

ppp *p* *mp* *p* *ppp*

gliss.

123

2'' 4'' 10'' 8''

ord. flz ord. flz ord.

f *ppp* *mp* *p*

gliss. *gliss.*

10 4" 4" 12"

127 flz. → ord. → flz. → ord. → flz. , ord.

mf *p* *mp* *ppp* *p*

16" 4" 6"

130 growl ord. → flz. → ord.

sub. ff *sub. ppp* *gliss.* *sf* *p* *p* *p*

8" 6" 6"

133 , $\frac{1}{2} \text{ Bb}$ $\frac{3}{5} \text{ C5}$ $\frac{7}{6} \text{ C6}$, tr. sub tone tr. sub tone ,

ppp *p* *ppp* *p* *p* *p*

8" 6"

136 gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss.

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *p*

♩ = 52

138

voice

ppp *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

142

5:4 7:4 5:4

145

if possible, always less than 50% pitch

ppppp

pitches & vocalisations as feint as possible

ppppp

6:4

151