

1995

Spiritual Excursion

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Spiritual Excursion
for viola, vibraphone and timpani

by

Alan Schmitz

1990
rev. 1995

Spiritual Excursion
for Viola, Vibraphone and Timpani
(notes by Alan Schmitz)

SPIRITUAL EXCURSION was written in 1990 and revised in 1995 and is dedicated to conductor/violist/composer Russell Guyver, who premiered the work in Alaska. The melodic aspects of the viola part are built around the well known Bahama Spiritual "All My Trials," made famous in the 1960s by folk singers like Joan Baez and in a moving choral arrangement by Norman Luboff. Fragments of the spiritual melody appear a number of times in the viola part and should be fairly easy to hear by those familiar with its opening few bars and refrain. The percussion instruments supply harmonic support but do not have any recognizable relationship with the melody of the spiritual. All three instruments do have, however, special features in that each has its own characteristic set of motives and each has a cadenza or solo passage, thus giving everyone an opportunity to "shine" for a moment.

Formally, the piece consists of a calm section, used at the opening and elsewhere, that includes the "All My Trials" theme. This is followed by a section that is a bit more energetic and the thematic material is developed in the viola part. All three instruments perform in these sections. The other sections consist of short cadenzas: first by the vibraphone, then the timpani, and finally, the viola. These cadenzas are separated by brief interludes derived from the material used in the opening. Following the viola solo, the piece ends calmly, just as it began.

Spiritual Excursion

for Viola, Vibraphone and Timpani
to Russell Guyver

Alan Schmitz
1990
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♩. = 52 - 63

1 *with expression*

Viola *f* *p* *mf*

Vibr.

Timp. *p*

5 *f* *motor on slow soft mallets* *p* *pp*

9 *(with expression)* *mf*

duration: 7 1/2 minutes

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13

System 13: Treble, Piano, and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and accidentals. Piano staff has chords and a dynamic marking *f*. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs.

17

System 17: Treble, Piano, and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and a dynamic marking *p*. Piano staff has chords and a dynamic marking *mf*. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and a dynamic marking *mp*.

21

System 21: Treble, Piano, and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and a dynamic marking *mf*. Piano staff has chords and a dynamic marking *p*. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and a dynamic marking *pp*.

25

Measures 25-28 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Middle, and Bass. The time signature is 3/8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked as *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the Treble staff and *p* (piano) for the Middle and Bass staves. The Treble staff features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The Middle staff provides harmonic support with chords and sustained notes. The Bass staff has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

29

Measures 29-32 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Middle, and Bass. The time signature is 3/8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked as *pp* (pianissimo) for the Treble staff, *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Middle staff, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the Bass staff. The Treble staff continues with a melodic line, showing a crescendo leading into measure 30. The Middle staff features more complex chordal textures. The Bass staff maintains its eighth-note accompaniment.

33

Measures 33-36 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Middle, and Bass. The time signature is 3/8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked as *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Treble staff, *p* (piano) for the Middle staff, and *pp* (pianissimo) for the Bass staff. The Treble staff features a melodic line with a crescendo leading into measure 34. The Middle staff provides harmonic support with chords and sustained notes. The Bass staff has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The score concludes with a final measure (36) marked with a double bar line and a *(pp)* dynamic.

37 $\text{♩} = 78-94$
with energy

pp *mf* *p* *mp* *mf*

motor off med. hard mallets

1. v.

pp *p*

40

p *mp* *p* *p* *pp*

43

mf *p* *mp* *mf*

mp *p* *pp* *p*

46

ff *mp* *mp*

ff *dim.* *p*

f *p* *p*

49

pp

p *p* *p* *p*

pp *p* *p* *p*

ossia

53

mp *mf* *mp* *ff*

mp *mf* *mp* *ff*

56

mf *mf* *p* *p*

mf *mf* *p* *p*

$\text{♩} = 52 - 63$

59

p

p

mp

64

Timp.

p

cresc. -----

67

Timp.

(cresc.) -----

70

Timp.

f

ff

ff \rightrightarrows *mp* \leftrightsquigarrow *f*

p

cresc. -----

75

Timp.

(cresc.) -----

ff

80

Timp.

dim. -----

84

p

motor on slow
soft mallets

p

pp

mp

88

Viola

78-94

Viola 92

f *mp*

Viola 96

f *p*

Viola 100

f *p* *f* *ff p subito*

Viola 104

mp

Viola 108

ff *ff* *mf*

$\text{♩} = 52 - 63$

111

p

p

115

with expression

(motor on slow)
(soft mallets)

mf

p

pp

119

123

$\bullet = 78-94$ with energy

motor off
medium hard mallets

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

mf *p* *mf* *p*

mp *pp* *p*

127

< > *p* *mf*

p *mf*

mp *p*

130

p *mp* *mf* *ff* *dim.*

pp *p* *f*

133

$\bullet = 52 - 63$
with expression

mp *p* *mf*

(dim. -----)

p *p*

136

motor on slow
soft mallets

mp *mf* *f*

pp

140

mp (*mp*)

144

mf

mf

pp

pp

148

mf

pp

Rit. — — — — —

152

mp

mf

p

mf

mp

p

Red