

Partita

for tenor saxophone

Thomas J. Dempster (BMI)

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Partita

for tenor saxophone

Thomas J. Dempster

Hot Springs, AR

October-November 2024

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Partita (2024) – Duration: ca. 10:00

I. Impreza-Mazurka	(1'55")
II. Song	(1'30")
III. Scherzo-Tanz	(1'30")
IV. Poem	(2'30")
V. Toccata	(2'15")

Program Notes

Partita for tenor saxophone is a hybrid outgrowth of both teaching a lot of intermediate saxophonists and some various meandering improvisations on the instrument. The five movements in this work, variably etude-like yet still compelling and challenging for developing and developed players alike, are taken from improvisations I recorded in October 2024 (with another thirty minutes or so of material that went to the cutting-room floor, awaiting use in other pieces). After twenty years of teaching, I've not yet found The Holy Grail for the tenor saxophone specifically, particularly as it comes to unaccompanied works. It's not easy finding works purposefully written for unaccompanied tenor that are not otherwise adaptations or simply just the same pieces for alto or soprano (key centers, timbre, and response be damned!). The tenor is quirky; it is moody; it can be a little threatening and a little fuzzy or deceptively slow. It's a brown bear. It's not a quirky black bear or a dangerous and fearsome grizzly – it's somewhere in the middle. And I mean to exploit that as much as I can. Not to say that this is a Holy Grail, of course. But it is *a* grail.

For the *Partita*, every movement is inspired by some sort of dance or dance rhythm, usually more ancient than not – as is customary in a lot of my music. The movements should be played in the above order, though what connects them all are passing motivic and key-relation glances: there is a subdued unity in the motivic/harmonic world throughout, and some of the quirks – articulations, steering away from the altissimo too much, laying low from the unpredictability of some multiphonics – are outgrowths of both my playing ability as well as trying to thread the needle between the demands and skill levels of an adventurous intermediate player and well-oiled-machine of a veteran player (the anodyne, polar worlds that exist in the UIL list, for instance – we go from deliriously difficult to not difficult enough with not much in between), The piece begs for lots of tongue-in-cheek humor and I have no problem with many of the movements, the more technical ones, being taken ten to twenty clicks faster than marked, just to keep things interesting for the pros.

Composed in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in October and November of 2024

Partita

for solo tenor saxophone

Thomas J. Dempster

2024

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I: Impreza-Mazurka

Pompous ♩ = c. 84-92

Musical score for Impreza-Mazurka, measures 1-13. The piece is in 3/4 time and features a variety of dynamics and articulations. Measure 1 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 2-5 include accents and slurs. Measure 6 begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 10 is marked mezzo-piano (*mp*) and 'elegantly'. Measure 13 includes a 'poco rit.' marking and a dynamic range from mezzo-piano (*mp*) to piano (*p*).

Clumsily Maestoso

♩ = c. 70-74

Musical score for Clumsily Maestoso, measures 19-23. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a variety of dynamics and articulations. Measure 19 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 21 includes a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a crescendo leading to forte (*f*). Measure 23 includes a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic, a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, a forte (*f*) dynamic, a piano (*p*) dynamic, and a 'cresc. molto' marking leading to forte (*f*).

Partita

27 *mf* *poco* *morendo* *p* *pp* *poco meno mosso possible*

30 *mp* *agitato* **Doppio Movimento** ♩ = c. 140+ *f* *insistent, puckish*

33 *sub. pp* *ff*

37 *sub. pp* *ff*

41

45 *mp* *f* *mf*

50 *mp* *mf* *ff*

54 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

II: Song

Partita

Poco Rubato $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 66-70$

57 *p* *mp* *p* *mf*

61 *mf* *p* *mp*

64 *mf* *mp*

69 *p* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

73 *cresc.* *mf* *f* *cresc.*

77 *subito p* *ff*

81 *f* *p dim.*

85 *dim.* *pp* *mf*

90 *f* *dim. molto* *p dim.* *mf dim.*

93 *p* *pp* *mp*

III: Scherzo-Tanz

Vivace - Aggressive $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 148\text{-}152+$

95 *f* *mf*

103 *f* *sfz* *sfz* *mp* *f* *sfz*

111 *cresc.* *sfz* *mf*

118 *p* *f* *sfz* *p*

126 *sfz* *mp* *p* *f* *mp* *mf*

135 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *sfz* *pp* *mp* like an early '70s BBC sitcom *mf*

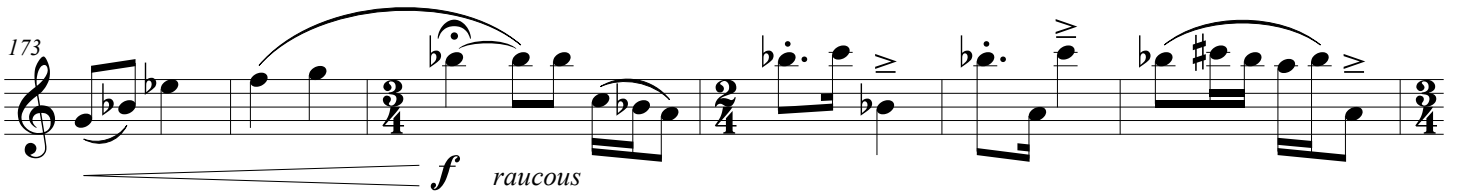
142 *p* *pp* *ff* *p* *mf* with hiccupping bravura *sfz*

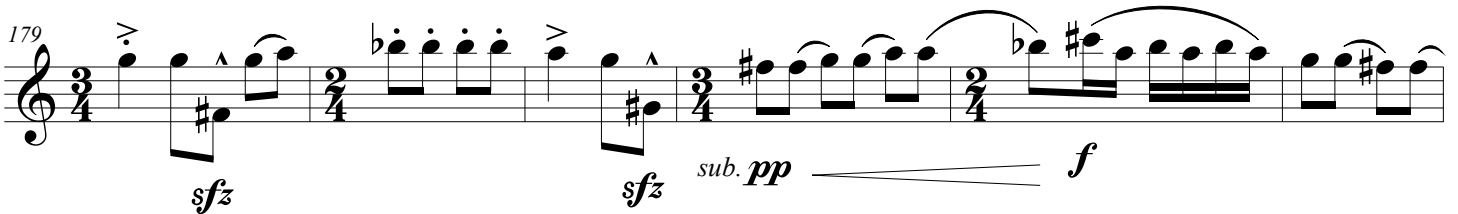
149 *mf* *sfz* *mf* *cresc.* *f* *dim.* *sfz*

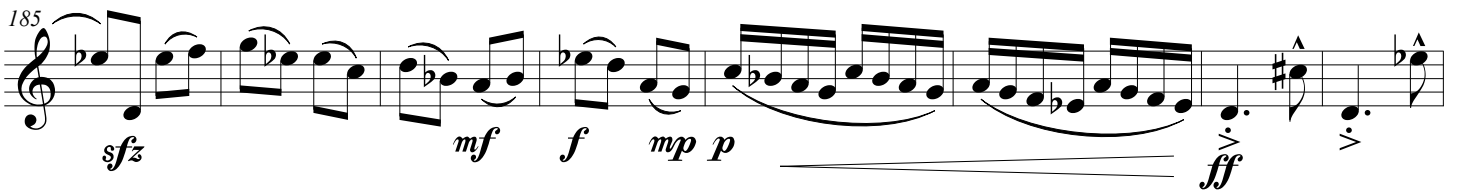
155 *mp* poco legato *sfz* *mp* *f*

162  *f₊*

167  *pp* *p*

173  *f* raucous

179  *sfz* *sfz* *sub. pp* *f*

185  *sfz* *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *ff*

193  *sffz* *sffz*

IV: Poem

Partita

Flessibile ♩ = c. 69-74

201

mp espressivo

206

mp *mf*

212

p *pp* *mp esp.*

216

p *mp* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

220

mf *f* *mp* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

223

mp

226

poco f *mf*

230

pp *mf* *f+* *mp* *poco legato* *morendo* *dim.*

234

mp esp. *poco f*

238

f *mp* *poco rubato* *poco*

V: Toccata

Partita

242 Intensely $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 124-132$

mf poco staccato *f*

mf

p *mf* *f*

sim.

mp misterioso *poco staccato - non troppo*

f *mf* *f*

mp *mf* *pp* *ff*

p *mf* *p cresc.* *mf dim.* *accel.* *rit.*

ppp *a tempo* *mf* *p lirico*

297 *mf espressivo* *p dolore*

Musical staff 297-304: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

305 *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f*

Musical staff 305-310: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

311 *pp* *f* *ff* *f* *cresc.*

Musical staff 311-317: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

318 *ff* *pp* *p* *poco rit.* *dim.*

Musical staff 318-325: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

326 G.P. *a tempo* *mp* *f*

Musical staff 326-332: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

333 *ff feroce* *p* *ff dim.*

Musical staff 333-339: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

340 *mp* *p* *pp* *p sotto voce* *mf* *f* *sfz*

Musical staff 340-345: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

346 *dim.* *p dim.* *pp cresc. poco a poco*

Musical staff 346-352: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

353

Musical staff 353-357: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

358 *f* *f+*

Musical staff 358-364: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next four measures, which contain a series of eighth notes: C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7. The piece ends with a quarter note G5.

364

cresc. *ff* *mf sub.*

Musical staff 364-368: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains six measures of music. Measures 364-366 feature eighth-note patterns with slurs and accents. Measure 367 has a dynamic marking of *ff*. Measure 368 has a dynamic marking of *mf sub.* and includes accents and a breath mark (>).

369

f *cresc. ed accel. al fine*

Musical staff 369-373: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains five measures of music. Measures 369-371 feature eighth-note patterns with slurs and accents. Measure 372 has a dynamic marking of *f*. Measure 373 has a dynamic marking of *cresc. ed accel. al fine* and includes accents and a breath mark (>).

374

fff

Musical staff 374-378: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains five measures of music. Measures 374-376 feature eighth-note patterns with slurs and accents. Measure 377 has a dynamic marking of *fff*. Measure 378 has a dynamic marking of *fff* and includes accents and a breath mark (>).

ca. 2'30"

October/November 2024
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