

# **The Same Wind**

for baritone, six instruments, and electronics

Alex Stephenson

2018

First performance: Jonathan Nussman, Wilfrido Terrazas, Alexandria Smith, Christopher Clarino, Dimitris Paganos Koukakis, Shaoai Ashley Zhang, and Matthew Kline, Steven Schick conducting, Conrad Prebys Concert Hall, UC San Diego, La Jolla, California, 1 November 2018

Duration: approximately 10 minutes

To contact the composer: <http://alexstephenson.com/site/contact>

## Instrumentation

Flute (doubling Piccolo) \*

Trumpet in C \*

Percussion (1 player) \*

Crotales

Marimba

Guiro

Vibraphone

3 Wood Blocks (very high, high, medium)

Bass Drum

Temple Block (low)

Glockenspiel

MIDI Keyboard (with sustain pedal) \*

Piano \*

Baritone soloist

Contrabass \*

Electronics (see below)

\* N.B. all players are also asked to use their voices (please see below).

## Stage Configuration

LS 1\*

LS 2\*

Pf./LS 3\*

Perc.

Cb.

Fl.

Tpt.

Bar.

Key./LS 4\*

Conductor

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Audience

\* Loudspeakers 1 and 2 behind the ensemble on tall stands at far left and right, respectively. Loudspeaker 3 on a very short stand or on the floor under the piano. Loudspeaker 4 next to the keyboard player; consider resting the speaker on the floor and orienting away from the audience to engage room reflections. N.B. during spoken passages, the baritone soloist may need to be discreetly amplified through a fifth loudspeaker placed next to him and oriented in an analogous manner to loudspeaker 4.

## Performance Notes

### General

- ♭ 1/4 tone flat
- ↓ 1/8 tone flat
- ↑ 1/8 tone sharp
- ♯ 1/4 tone sharp
- ∅ Niente

At certain moments in the piece, the instrumentalists are asked to **use their voices, completely separately from their instruments**. Two distinct modes of ensemble vocalization appear in the piece:

1. Producing specific phonemes in notated rhythm, always unvoiced (with the breath only). The following phonemes, which are notated with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), are used by ensemble members in this context:

a, as in father

u, as in put

ə, as in ago

i, as in me

s, as in see

o, as in gros (French)

N.B. audio examples of these phonemes may be found online (e.g., [www.ipachart.com](http://www.ipachart.com))



2. Whispering. Performers should *continuously* whisper the words provided in the box below the staff, always very quickly and nervously, uncoordinated with other players and throughout the entire written duration. Words should be repeated as necessary and their order may be freely varied.

Additionally, all performers (both the baritone soloist and the instrumentalists) are occasionally asked to execute **hand gestures**, which interact with their vocalizations and which are notated above the vocal staff:

- + Cup hand over mouth
- o Mouth unobstructed (i.e., cancels the above instruction)

**N.B. phonemes and hand gesture instructions remain in effect until cancelled by another instruction.**

#### Flute/Piccolo

- Air sound
- Normal sound (i.e., cancels the above instruction)
-  Tongue pizzicato
-  Tongue ram (sounding pitch)

#### MIDI Keyboard/Electronics

The electronics are triggered by a dedicated performer operating a MIDI keyboard with sustain pedal, which is connected to a computer running a Max/MSP patch created by the composer. The computer should be running Max 7 and a licensed version of Pianoteq 5 Standard ([www.pianoteq.com](http://www.pianoteq.com)). Four channels of sound are sent from the computer to four loudspeakers, which should be positioned onstage as described above. The resulting electroacoustic sounds are notated at the bottom of each system of the score (note that many microtonal tunings in the live ensemble are cued in the electronics).

#### Piano

All strings over the following range (inclusive) should be partially muted with substances such as rubber, felt, and/or sticky tack. The aim is to create a palpably modified, wooden timbre while still allowing considerable resonance when the affected notes are held under the sustaining pedal. Please aim for a consistent timbre across all muted strings.



- + Mute with finger

#### Baritone

The text is derived from Wallace Stevens' poem "The Snow Man" (printed below).

In cases where the rhythmic placement of phonemes is important, the text is notated using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Phoneme changes should be exaggerated in these instances. Audio examples of the phonemes used may be found online (e.g., [www.ipachart.com](http://www.ipachart.com)).

When multiple phonemes are written under a single note, articulate the first phoneme(s) with the duration of a grace note and sustain the final phoneme for the remaining duration of the written note.

In cases where the rhythmic placement of phonemes is not important, the text is notated in standard English. Words are enclosed in square brackets to prevent confusion with IPA symbols.

In cases of tied notes with no textual information beneath them, continue sustaining the last notated piece of textual information.

#### Contrabass

A low C extension is assumed.

- s.p. Sul ponticello
- m.s.p. Molto sul ponticello

## Program Note

*The Same Wind* is a setting of and reflection upon Wallace Stevens' poem "The Snow Man," which has haunted me for several years. Taking inspiration from Stevens' portrayal of his character – who is on the cusp of drifting away from traditionally understood human consciousness and who, I imagine, might be starting to lose the ability to speak – I aimed to create vocal writing that approaches lyricism while also being highly fragmentary. In the first half of the piece, there is a stark alternation between music that sets Stevens' text and music that does not; in the second half, the boundaries between these musics become blurred, just as Stevens' character gradually blends into the vast, wintry landscape in which she or he is situated.

## Text

One must have a mind of winter  
To regard the frost and the boughs  
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time  
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,  
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think  
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,  
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land  
Full of the same wind  
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,  
And, nothing himself, beholds  
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

– Wallace Stevens, "The Snow Man" (1921)

Fl. *p* *f*

Tpt. *poco sf*

Perc.

Key.

Pno.

Bar. *pp* *fp*  
ko u l d ə [long] tai m

Cb.

Elec. "real" piano *f*

Fl. *f* *ff*

Tpt.

Perc. Marimba *f* Wood Blocks *f* Bass Drum *f non troppo*

Key.

Pno. *f* *ff*

Bar.

Cb. pizz. arco jété

Elec. *f*

74

pochiss. rit. a tempo

poco più rit.

Fl. *p* *ff* *p* *ff* harmon mute (stem removed) (non smorz.) *ff*

Tpt. *ff* Guiro (high) (low)

Perc. *ff* *ff*

Key.

Pno. *ff*

pochiss. rit. a tempo

poco più rit.

Bar. *ff* s au s au *ff* s au

Voice *ff* s ord.

Cb. (ord.) s.p. ord.

Elec. *f*

78

a tempo (non smorz.)

ancora poco più rit.

a tempo (non smorz.)

Fl. *ff* *ff* *ff*

Tpt.

Voice (medium-low) s s

Perc. *ff* s

Voice s s

Key.

Voice s s

Pno.

a tempo

ancora poco più rit.

a tempo

Bar. *ff* s au s

Voice *ff* s s

Cb. s.p. ord. s.p. s

Elec. *f* *f*

H

81

rit.

♩=c.72

♩=46

Fl. *p* *f* *f* *p*

Tpt.

Voice *ff* *p*  
a u

Perc. *mf*  
Vibraphone motor off arco

Voice *ff* *p*  
a u

Key. *p*

Voice *ff* *p*  
a u

Pno. *mf*

H

rit.

♩=c.72

♩=46

Bar. *p* *f* *p*  
s.v. (sempre) vib.  
[the] dʒu ni pə r z

Voice *ff* *p*  
a u

Cb. *p*  
ord.

Elec. "distant" piano *p*



85

I

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 of the January sun distant s

Fl.: Piccolo (instrument down) *ff*

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 of the distant glitter sun s

Tpt.: senza sord. (instrument down) *poco sf*

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 glitter of the distant sun s

Perc.: Crotales Bass Drum *ff* *p*

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 distant the glitter s

Key.: toggle patch settings (no sound)

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 distant of the January sun s

Pno.: *ff ppp*

I

Bar.: *p* *pp* *p* *f*  
 [æ g d [with] ar (t)s  
 speak as before  
 in the distant glitter of the January sun

Voice: whisper as before *ff*  
 of distant glitter the sun January s

Cb.: (bow down) pizz. *ff*

Elec.