

Edgar Guzmán

After tomorrow

(2011)

amplified saxophone(s) and pre-recorded sounds

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to Ryan Muncy

PERFORMANCE NOTES

1) GENERAL NOTES

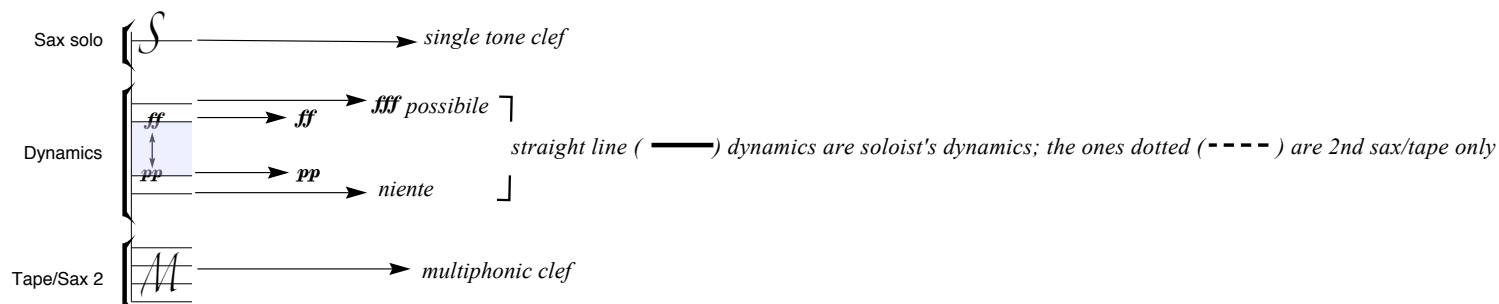
Saxophone(s) and tape

Both the soloist part of the piece as well as the ‘accompaniment’ part -which shall be either performed live by a **second saxophonist** or **previously recorded** by the soloist him/herself in a stereo file- can be performed using any member of the saxophone family (soprano, alto, tenor, etc.), and they can be combined in any way and/or switched at any moment of the piece that presents itself as suitable.

Cortazar’s text

Most of the Cortazar fragments used in the score suggest a more or less specific sound content while offering dynamic ideas of development; others are more emotionally charged descriptions of moments of intense creativity. In both cases, however, the purpose in using them is for the performer to ‘find himself’ in those fragments -as well as in all of Cortazar’s text.

2) CLEFS AND ‘ACCIDENTALS’




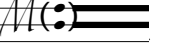
‘Accidentals’ are directly related to the immediately preceding or following multiphonic:

↑ = high(er) multiphonic pitched element (*mpe*), ↑ = middle high register *mpe*, ↓ = low(er) *mpe*, ↓ = middle low register *mpe*

3) SINGLE TONES AND MULTIPHONICS

The actual pitch of the single tones, when used, is dependent on the multiphonic from which they came from or the one they lead into; it'll be either an element of prolongation or anticipation of/to the full multiphonic's spectrum. Multiphonics are going to be selected by the performer(s) in accordance with their own multiphonic repertoire and the particular saxophone being used. Single tones are called for at certain moments of the piece through the use of the single tone clef, but they might also appear ‘naturally’ as part of multiphonic's proper in and out ‘fading’ period.

The four-line staff along with multiphonic clef are meant to represent the relative sense of frequency highness or lowness once they are ‘compounded’ in the multiphonic. From the bottom (low freq.) to the top line (high freq.) the spaces in between does differentiates the multiphonics in account of relative frequency too, but they also does it in account of ‘timbre’ qualities. Those multiphonics ‘notated’ on lines have a different ‘timbre’ quality than those written on spaces, in accounts of the relative amount of ‘battements’ they produce, the amount of ‘air noise’ that it contains, and the relative *dynamic range* that they are capable of. *Lined* multiphonics have a higher, very noticeable, amount of battements, contains a lesser amount of air noise in the compounded sound, and are capable of a wider range of dynamic play without ‘breaking’ the multiphonic.

For the sake of variability and as a bit of a ‘research’ into different possible multiphonic qualities, sometimes the notation suggest the compounding of multiphonics with different timbral qualities: , or, in the case of two multiphonics with the same timbral quality, an expansion of the multiphonic spectrum of frequencies: 

4) IVES

A reference to Ives's song *The Cage* is made in Cortazar's text. That's not however Ives's musical source for the excerpt that is written in the score. The idea of literally basing the piece's structure on that of Cortazar's text was never part of the strategy when started working with it. Since it was never the purpose to make a literal ‘translation’ of the text –but to find in it, extract from it, some of the *pursuer's* creative energy, a desire for more than just the immediate pleasure-, there was no reason to use Ives's ‘leopard’ song, or to use Ives whatsoever.

Nevertheless, while making late musical and structural ‘tests’, a musical reference to Ives by means of an excerpt of *Adeste Fideles in an Organ Prelude*, seemed actually to work as a musical strategy, summing-up one of the main (and ‘original’) dialectical and aesthetic characteristic present throughout the piece: the pedal chord on the organ (transmuted into sax multiphonic(s)), as the genesis of the life that is ‘above’ it, no matter how different it becomes after being released developing life on its own (in this case, guided by Johnny/Cortazar's words), retaining nonetheless an intrinsic and stressful connection to its sound ‘origin’, sometimes even going back to it, fusing to its ‘harmonic’ and energetic source.

5) AMPLIFICATION

Soloist performer's full ‘sonic-aura’ must be amplified. Tone production, voice, mechanism, they must be amplified and have the signal equally sent to a minimum of two loudspeakers selected accordingly to the saxophone(s) chosen to perform. A different pair of loudspeakers should be used to diffuse either the pre-recorded tape or the performance of the second saxophonist (for whom only the tone production is required to be amplified), and they shall be located in the same spot than those used to spread the soloist's performance. If a different pair of loudspeakers is not available it's possible to use the available set to amplify both signals, equally distributed in the stereo set.

The critical part of the piece as far as amplification is concerned can be found at the end of the second page: “*all of a sudden he lets go with a blast, could of split the fuckin' celestial harmonies(...)*.” Whatever is performed, it shall be able to be ‘qualified’ as a ‘*chaotic and terrifying moment*’, and much of it is intended to be accomplished by means of amplification. If useful, try doing the soundcheck on this section first, accomodating the rest starting from there.

PROGRAM NOTES

In 1964, Julio Cortazar's *El perseguidor (The pursuer)* was published. Its story line describes a sequence of events surrounded by a series of physical and mental ‘crises’ in the life of saxophonist Johnny Carter, as seen and described by Bruno, the music critic, scholar and ‘friend’. From Bruno's ‘puritanical world’ point of view, Johnny's ‘anguished’ life descriptions seemed like a stereotyped personal analytical resource intended to ‘understand’ and connect, albeit aesthetically, with the life and work of an art ‘geniuses’. Nevertheless, Johnny's sole creative ‘energy’ escapes Bruno's own words, as well as it escapes Johnny himself, apparently ‘condemning’ him to a life of eternal *pursue*. Whatever performance is recorded, whatever sounds are ‘written’, they will always be a mockery of pursuer's desire, of everything he'd wanted to say while fighting up against that he is pursuing.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Edgar Guzmán (b. 1981, Mexico) is a freelance composer of acoustic and electronic music. His work has been performed at several new music festivals in Mexico, United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Austria, France, Poland and Germany. He has been recipient of several grants and distinctions such as the National Fund for the Culture and Arts' Young Creators Grant in 2006 and again in 2009, Artistic Projects Sponsorship Program granted by the Mexican Youth Institute in 2006, Queretaro State Institute of Culture and Arts' Young Creators Grant 2002 and 2004, Guanajuato State Institute of Culture and Arts' Young Composers Specialization Grant 2005, National System for Musical Promotion's Annual Commissioning Program 2003, and 31st International Competition of Electroacoustic Music and Sonic Art Bourges Residencè Award in 2004. His musical production is comprised of commissioned by and dedicatory pieces to a number of institutions, ensembles and performers such as the Ensemble de Música Contemporánea de la Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil de México, Camerata de las Américas, International Contemporary Ensemble, Wilfrido Terrazas, Alexander Bruck, Rebekah Heller, Kivie Canh-Lipman, Ryan Muncy and I-Chen Yeh among others.

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2011

Edgar Guzmán
1981

*"I don't buy your God...
There's no use getting past that door
if it's him on the other side opening it."*

Johnny Carter

