

DAVID BIEDENBENDER

KAIROS

for reed quintet

BENT SPACE MUSIC

Commissioned by the Maryland Chamber Winds, Tyler Austin, Artistic Director.

Performance materials available from Bent Space Music (Publisher):
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INSTRUMENTATION

Oboe
B^b Clarinet
E^b Alto Saxophone
Bassoon
B^b Bass Clarinet

Total duration: *ca.* 4:45

Score in C

PROGRAM NOTE

2020 has been a strange and difficult year. The loneliness of time in quarantine is unlike anything I have experienced. Time seems to travel differently, perhaps more slowly at times and at other times more quickly—its arrow seems jagged, bent, and off course. *Kairos* is an Ancient Greek word meaning the right, critical, or opportune moment. It is a different kind of time than *Chronos*, which is our more conscious and common understanding of time, measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, and so forth. In the Eastern Orthodox Divine Liturgy *Kairos* describes the intersection of the Liturgy with the Infinite—with God. An integral aesthetic principle of cathedrals is an attempt to sonically connect with something massive, something larger than ourselves—the Infinite. Bissera Pentcheva, an art historian at Stanford University, writing about the Hagia Sophia (built in 537 as the largest Christian Church in the Byzantine Empire), translates a 6th-century description of the building by Paul the Silentiary in this way: “human action...brings into presence the divine reaction, the divine voice...in a sense that is the reverberation of the space: After the human voice stops singing, the building continues.”¹

Many concert halls share a similar sonic aesthetic principle. I miss these spaces. I miss the resonance of concert halls and churches. I miss the energy and excitement when people gather together and can not only hear but also feel the air molecules moving around them, and they can see how and why and by whom these sounds are made. I miss the way in which these spaces activate sound waves, sending them bouncing frenetically from wall to wall, arch to edge, and then gently dissolve—each molecule hitting another, each collision becoming slightly less energized than the last until only a shadow of the sound remains. Then, even the shadow disappears, and profound silence inevitably crawls out of the cracks and crevices of these cavernous spaces and becomes a fast and fizzy flood, a cool, fresh bedsheet of air molecules draped over us. We feel the heaviness of sound in its sudden absence. Its weight in the silence. And then we remember the silence *before* sound. It was a different silence. It *felt* different. Or maybe we felt different?

I miss simply sharing these spaces—these experiences—with other people. With friends. With family. With acquaintances. With strangers. There is something very special about sharing sound in a particular time and place. This piece is my humble attempt to weave the threads of these ideas and of our disconnected realities into a single strand—a shared moment—and to sing a space—*our* time and space—into resonance.

¹ New York Times, August 6, 2020, “How a Historian Stuffed Hagia Sophia’s Sound Into a Studio”

Kairos

for reed quintet

David Biedenbender

Ecstatic, freely ♩ = 56

Musical score for the first system of 'Kairos'. The score is for a reed quintet and consists of five staves: Oboe, B♭ Clarinet, E♭ Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, and B♭ Bass Clarinet. The time signature is 4/4. The tempo is 'Ecstatic, freely' with a quarter note equal to 56 beats per minute. The Oboe and B♭ Bass Clarinet parts are mostly rests. The B♭ Clarinet part has a melodic line starting in the second measure with a *ppp* dynamic, moving to *pp* in the third measure. The E♭ Alto Saxophone part has a 'solo' marking above it. The Bassoon part has a melodic line starting in the first measure with a *mp* dynamic and the instruction 'dark, rich, reedy'. The B♭ Bass Clarinet part has rests.

7 Spacious ♩ = 60

Musical score for the second system of 'Kairos'. The score is for a reed quintet and consists of five staves: Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The time signature is 6/4. The tempo is 'Spacious' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The Oboe part has rests. The Clarinet part has a melodic line starting in the first measure with a *pp* dynamic. The Alto Saxophone part has rests. The Bassoon part has a melodic line starting in the first measure with a *pp* dynamic. The Bass Clarinet part has a melodic line starting in the first measure with a *pp* dynamic. The system ends with a double bar line and a 6/4 time signature.

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8

Ob.

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn

B. Cl.

mf

11

Ob.

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn

B. Cl.

mp singing, playful

mf

pp

no vib.

pp

mf

p

14 16

Ob. *f* *mf radiant*

Cl. *f* *mp*

A. Sax. *p* *f*

Bsn *f* *mp*

B. Cl. *f* *mp*

17

Ob. *f* *mf*

Cl. *mf*

A. Sax. *mf*

Bsn *p* *f > mp* *p*

B. Cl. *p* *f > mp* *p*

20

Ob. *f*

Cl. *mf*

A. Sax. *mf*

Bsn *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

6

3

21

Ob. *f*

Cl. *f > mp*

A. Sax. *mf radiant*

Bsn *f sim.* *p* *mf*

B. Cl. *f sim.* *p*

23

Ob. *f*

Cl. *mf* *p* *b₂*

A. Sax. *f*

Bsn *f sim.* *p* *mf*

B. Cl. *f sim.* *p*

25

Ob. *p.*

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn *f* *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

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28

Ob. *ff-mp* *ff*

Cl. *ff-mp* *ff*

A. Sax. *ff-mp* *ff*

Bsn *ff-mp* *ff*

B. Cl. *ff-mp* *ff*

29 Rapturous

Ob. *ff*

Cl. *ff > mp* *ff* *mp* *ff*

A. Sax. *f*

Bsn *ff*

B. Cl. *ff*

Musical score for the piece "Kairos", measures 31-33. The score is arranged for five woodwind instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.).

Measure 31: The Oboe part begins with a melodic line, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The Clarinet part features a triplet of eighth notes. The Alto Saxophone part starts with a *ff* dynamic marking and a triplet of eighth notes. The Bassoon part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Bass Clarinet part also features a triplet of eighth notes.

Measure 32: The Oboe part continues with a melodic line. The Clarinet part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Alto Saxophone part continues with a melodic line. The Bassoon part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Bass Clarinet part has a triplet of eighth notes.

Measure 33: The Oboe part continues with a melodic line. The Clarinet part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Alto Saxophone part continues with a melodic line. The Bassoon part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Bass Clarinet part has a triplet of eighth notes.

35

Ob. *ff*

Cl. 3

A. Sax.

Bsn *f*

B. Cl. *f*

36

Ob.

Cl. *f* 6

A. Sax. *f* 6

Bsn *f*

B. Cl. 3

37

Ob.

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn

B. Cl.

38

Ob.

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn

B. Cl.

ff

ff-mp < *fff* > *mp*

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49 **rit.**.....

Ob.

Cl.

A. Sax.

Bsn

B. Cl.

pp *p* *pp* *pp*