

Composer's Note

Terra Obscura: Concerto for Saxophone (2014) was first premiered on the 6th September, 2014 by the Sydney Conservatorium Modern Music Ensemble with Beaugeais as soloist, at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. *Terra Obscura* was composed for the Conservatorium Centenary Commissioning Project, as part of the prize for winning the 2010 ISCM-IAMIC Young Composer Award.

In the lead up to the Conservatorium's 2015 Centenary celebration, this saxophone concerto is inspired by the excavation and rebuilding of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, which was completed in 2001. The collection of artefacts and the variety of textural stone features discovered during the excavation process is represented by textural manipulation and obscured pitch elements. The unconventional position of the players enhances the sense of mystery and intrigue in the first movement. The saxophonist first appears from an upper balcony and the other members of the orchestra are heard softly in the distance, and are completely out of sight. The players begin to emerge from all corners of the hall, and with the soloist gradually walk through the audience, making their way to their place on stage.

The aim of *Terra Obscura* is to present avant-garde playing techniques, not only in a modernistic style, but also in an atmospheric, expressive, lyrical manner, which is uncommon in contemporary saxophone repertoire. This is clearly heard in the second movement with the alto saxophone's soft, pure, vibrato and multiphonic harmonic effects. To imitate the continuous, sustained chords of the vibraphone, the saxophonist circular breathes to avoid taking a 'normal' breath and breaking the sound.

In the third movement, the saxophonist mimics a percussion instrument by playing fast slap-tongue effects on the alto saxophone - a soft drum-like sound created by the tongue suction on the reed. The gradual rebuilding of the Sydney Conservatorium is depicted by the buildup of players improvising over the main motivic material (which is based on a pitch set), creating a textural sound mass. In my music I use improvisation as a way of sharing the 'composer-creator' role with the players.

The final movement opens with a brass fanfare in a joyous & celebratory style. A fast, energetic, rhythmic feel is soon established with the soloist playing virtuosic, rippling, semiquaver passages on soprano saxophone. The saxophonist ends the work with loud, high-pitched trill glissando pitch-bend effects alongside the ensemble's complex, interlocking, pulsating rhythms and glissando rip effects, to create a unifying and commemorative climactic finish.

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Terra Obscura

Saxophone Concerto

For solo saxophone & chamber orchestra

Katia Beugeais

In a bold & triumphant style ♩=132

Flute 1 / Piccolo

Flute 2

Oboe

Clarinet in B \flat

Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

Horn in F

Trumpet in C

Trombone

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Percussion 1
Bass Drum
 From the conductor's position, the Bass Drum is on the left-hand side of the stage, opposite the timpani.
Timpani
 From the conductor's position, the Timpani is on the right-hand side of the stage, opposite the Bass Drum.

Percussion 2

Solo B \flat Soprano Sax / E \flat Alto Sax

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

A In a free & improvisatory style

Senza misura c. ♩=104

Duration of rests indicated is only a guide. Saxophonist leads - percussionists follow tempo rubato indicated by the saxophonist.

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bass Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

mp l.v.

p *f*

Bass Drum

f *mf*

f *mp*

1 2 3 4

Timbral, gestural effect with sax more important than rhythmic precision.

A In a free & improvisatory style

Senza misura c. ♩=104

Duration of rests indicated is only a guide. Saxophonist leads - percussionists follow tempo rubato indicated by the saxophonist.

(Position: in audience - From the conductor's position, right-hand side of the hall, on an upper level if possible, directly opposite the trumpeter)

Soprano Sax

Solo Sop sax

f *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *mf* *p* *f*

Begin to play once the Tam-tam's volume has significantly dropped.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

II

In a serene & atmospheric manner
Tempo *Liberamente* c. $\text{♩} = 44-48$

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bass Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Solo E♭ Alto Sax

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Vibraphone with Bow

Brass wind chimes

p *l.v.* *mp*

pp molto espress. *mp* *p*

1 2 3 4 5 6



D Senza misura

Gliss. effects and chimes begin fast then gradually become more spacious and slow.

Play together

c.20"

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bass Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Repeat pitches in random order.
Begin rapidly like church bells, gradually become more spacious.

Brass wind chimes
Falling motion similar to string gliss. effects.

mf

mp

pp
l.v.

D Senza misura

Gliss. effects and chimes begin fast then gradually become more spacious and slow.

Play together

c.20"

Solo Alto sax

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Sul pont.
(highest harmonic possible)
gl.
(Bird-like)

Repeat gliss. harmonic effects rapidly then gradually become spacious.
ad lib. different harmonic pitches

In time with other players
Very slow *Gliss.*
gl.

mf

mp

pp

III

In a rhythmic & playful style c. ♩=116

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bass Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Vibes
(hard rubber mallets)
Play random notes unless specified
- rhythm is important

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

In a rhythmic & playful style c. ♩=116

Solo Alto sax

(Alto Sax)

(Slap-tongue)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

1 2 3

B In a fast & improvisatory style
Senza misura c. ♩=138

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bass Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
B. Tbn.
Tuba
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Solo Alto sax
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

Temple bl. & Tom-toms
Create a "catch me if you can" effect with the other player. To avoid a gap between each player, dove-tail entries - phrases overlap at beginning & end of phrases.

f (Player freely improvises over instrumentation, rhythms, dynamics & phrase lengths indicated)

mf *f* *mf*

In a fast & improvisatory style
Senza misura c. ♩=138
Create a "catch me if you can" effect with the other player. To avoid a gap between each player, dove-tail entries - phrases overlap at beginning & end of phrases.

B
f *mf* *f*
(Player freely improvises over instrumentation, rhythms, dynamics & phrase lengths indicated)

IV

In a joyous & celebratory style
Alla misura c. ♩=126-132

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bass Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. Senza sord. *f*

C Tpt. Senza sord. *f*

Tbn. Senza sord. *f*

B. Tbn. Senza sord. *f*

Tuba *f*

Perc. 1 *f*
Crash cymb. *f*
L.v.

Perc. 2 *f*
Bass dr.

Solo Sop sax (Soprano Sax)
(Sax notation is now shown in concert pitch)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

1 2 3 4 5



F In a jubilant & euphoric manner ♩=138

Piccolo

Fl. 1 *ff*

Fl. 2 *ff*

Ob. *ff*

B♭ Cl. *ff*

Bass Cl. *ff*

Bsn. *ff*

Hn. *ff*

C Tpt. *ff*

Tbn. *ff*

B. Tbn. *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Perc. 1 *ff*

Perc. 2 *ff*

F In a jubilant & euphoric manner ♩=138

Solo Sop sax *ff*

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

D.B. *ff*

G With even more elation
Presto possible ♩=144

The image displays a musical score for an orchestra and a solo saxophone, covering measures 161 to 164. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Presto possible' with a metronome marking of ♩=144. The score is divided into two systems, each beginning with a section header: **G** With even more elation, Presto possible ♩=144. The instruments included are Flute 1 and 2, Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Percussion 1 and 2, Solo Saxophone, Violin I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The score contains various musical notations such as triplets, dynamics (mf, f, cresc.), articulation (accents), and performance instructions like 'Sus. Cym. with soft mallets' and 'bend gliss'. A large green watermark 'Sample Score Only' is overlaid diagonally across the page.