

Sakari Dixon Vanderveer

*Obsidian, rippled in
moonlight, gleams*

for piano quintet

When I begin to write a piece, I usually refrain from attaching a specific title or image to it until much of the work is complete and there is an image or scene that comes to me freely but won't disappear. While writing the initial sketches of *Obsidian, rippled in moonlight, gleams*, I originally thought of moonlight being reflected on a body of water.

As I continued writing, the image of obsidian soon became a metaphor for the water. I eventually began to cling to that visual as the overarching theme. In spite of its darkness and opacity, obsidian is a stone that readily reflects light. Though it is a byproduct of a volcanic eruption -- a devastating and catastrophic event -- this stone represents the beauty that can be found even in the most trying of times.

This piece was premiered by the Salastina Music Society in Pasadena, CA on April 6, 2019.

—Sakari Dixon Vanderveer

Instrumentation:

2 Violins
Viola
Violoncello
Piano

Duration: 9 minutes, 40 seconds

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Performance Notes:

Accidentals

As is customary, all accidentals are valid for the full duration of the measure in which they are provided.

Harmonics

Diamond noteheads represent where fingers are placed. Standard noteheads with a circle above them represent the desired pitch.

At letter “G,” Violin II and Viola perform trills from either a stopped note or an open string to either a natural or an artificial harmonic. These trills begin on the principal note. A cue note in parenthesis is used to specify the harmonic to be used for the trilling note.

Glissandi

All glissandi begin immediately on the note preceding the glissandi marking. Whenever a pitch is to be sustained before a glissando begins, a tie is used to clarify this as shown in the example below from Violin I, measure 3:



Between rehearsal letters “B” and “C”, Violins I and II are asked to perform harmonic glissandi. In measure 47, notes without noteheads are shown to give an approximate starting rhythm for this technique as shown below. However, it is not necessary for Violins I and II to line up. A high “B” is shown merely as the suggested upper limit of the pitches to be heard.



In measures 76 and 77, Violin I, Violin II, and Viola are given the instruction “stagger gliss.” Here, performers are discouraged from the temptation to match their pitch with one another until their glissandi arrive in unison at the last beat of measure 81. Cue notes are given in parenthesis to help performers pace the

glissandi so that they avoid matching pitch with one another. However, these pitches are approximate and are only meant to serve as a guide.

Trills

All trills begin on the principal note. Accidentals are used in trill markings to specify the trilling note.

If a cue note in parenthesis follows the principal note, that note will specify the trilling note instead of an accidental. (See the section under “Harmonics” above.)

Obsidian, rippled in moonlight, gleams

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Slow ♩ = 50
non vib., with mute

Violin I *pp* *mp* *p*

Violin II *pp* *mp* *p*

Viola *pp* *mp* *p*

Violoncello *p*

Slow ♩ = 50

Piano

Use sustain pedal generously, *ad lib.*, throughout the entire piece.

11

vib. ord. *mp* *pp* *p*

vib. ord. *mp* *pp* *p*

vib. ord. *mp* *pp* *p*

vib. ord. *mp* *pp* *p*

A non vib. *p*

A non vib. *p*

A non vib. *p*

A non vib. *p*

A *p* 3

22

poco vib. non vib. vib. ord.

p sub. *mf*

poco vib. non vib. vib. ord.

p sub. *mf*

poco vib. non vib. vib. ord.

p sub. *mf*

poco vib. non vib. vib. ord.

p sub. *mf*

(Perform grace notes as quickly as possible.) *mp*

29

(8)

B

44 trem., molto sul pont. *p* mute off

harm. gliss., sul G (e)

continue gliss., varying speed and relative pitch ad lib.

trem., molto sul pont. *p* mute off

harm. gliss., sul G (e)

continue gliss., varying speed and relative pitch ad lib.

trem., molto sul pont. *p*

trem., molto sul pont. *p*

mp *p*

mp *p*

B

mf

3

76 Stagger gliss.

cresc. poco a poco

Stagger gliss.

cresc. poco a poco

Stagger gliss., trem, sul pont.

p cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

E

82 ord.

f aggressively

ord.

f aggressively

(sul pont.)

ff aggressively

(ord.)

ff aggressively

sim.

sim.

ff aggressively

E

ff aggressively

86

ord.

fff

ord.

fff

ord.

fff

f

fff

91

trem.

trem.

sim.

sim.

94

ord.
mf sub.

99

F

(mp)
f *mf* sub.
ord.
mf

p *sim.*

p *sim.*

p *sim.*

(mp) *mf*

F

mf

105

Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello/Double Bass, Piano

110

G sul pont. 3 sim. 3 3 3 3

mp *mf* *f*

tr *tr* *tr*

mf *f*

G

Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello/Double Bass, Piano

119

3 3 3 3 3 3

(tr) tr

tr (s)

3 3 3 3 3 3

3 3 3 3 3 3

122

3 3 3 3 3 3

(tr) tr

tr (s)

3 3 3 3 3 3

3 3 3 3 3 3

125

3 3 3 3 3 3

(tr) tr

3 3 3 3 3 3

128

3 3 3 3 3 3

tr

pizz.

f

mf

3 3 3 3 3 3

Slowly arpeggiate chords with top note landing on the beat.

131

3 3 3 3

tr

mf

mp

3

133

3 3 3 trem.

(tr)

mp

p

(Remain still as piano repeats this ad lib.)

(Remain still as piano repeats this ad lib.)

(Remain still as piano repeats this ad lib.)

(Remain still as piano repeats this ad lib.)

Repeat ad lib. and decrescendo until only key clicks are heard. (Keep pedal on). Remain still for a moment of silence.

3 3 3 3