

Suncatcher

for soprano saxophone/glockenspiel performer, fixed media, and lighting

Brandon Shen (2026)

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Duration

I. 4' 18"

II. 5' 22"

Full Duration 9' 33"

Lighting Setup (optional)

Suncatcher Window Film

The performer and film should be positioned such that both natural sunlight and the rainbow effect (pictured below) project onto the performer.

Hanging Suncatchers

Hanging suncatcher fixtures should be positioned that their diffraction effects are as clear as possible while covering as much of the room as possible.

Two Tube Lights

A tube light should be positioned on each side of the performer.

Sourcing

The materials provided below are not mandatory. Substitutions are appropriate.

Suncatcher materials:

rainbowsymphony.com

rainbowspaces.com

Tube Lights

bhphotovideo.com/c/product/1736677-REG/nanlite_pt30c_pavotube_ii_30c_4.html



Suncatcher Window Film



Hanging Suncatchers

Electronics Setup

The fixed media should be played in any stereo setup positioned on each side of the performer. The performer and fixed media should be balanced so that the performer is nearly overwhelmed by the density of the electronics at measure 133. For the sake of clarity, the electronics part shown in the score have been heavily condensed into important cues.

A TouchDesigner patch must be utilized to ensure that the electronics and can lights are synchronized. The performer only must trigger the start of the piece from start to finish. The patch can be found at drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-H7eaM4ov_FLsqR_PPy8Dg6ADqWVM3EV?usp=sharing

If not performing with the can lights, the fixed media may be played with any convenient method.

Performance Notes

I. utilizes durational notation where events must be played according to a timecode. As such, a time-keeping device is required for the performer to observe.

In II., the performer is asked to play glockenspiel in the right hand and soprano sax in the left hand simultaneously. The written glockenspiel pitches are encouraged, however any white-key note on the glockenspiel may be played as long as it fits the contour of the written phrase. During this passage, any one-handed fingering of D5 (middle D on sax) regardless of intonation may be used.

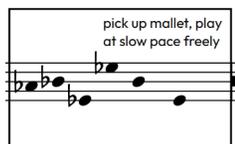
In II., beginning at measure 155, all duple-triple/triple-duple meter changes are $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$. or $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$, which differs from the rest of the piece.

At measure 162, the performer is asked to sing or whistle while playing glockenspiel. The exact intonation of the singing/whistling is not important; these slight imperfections are intended to display playfulness, charm, and innocence.

For clarity's sake, the electronics part in the score is a reduction, only containing important cues.



all glockenspiel glissandi are white note glissandi



ensure that picking up and putting down the mallet is not particularly frantic, uncomfortable, or distracting

Program Note

I was thinking about how a sunbeam diffracts into a rainbow of colors and the simple joy of watching light shine and dance.

Suncatcher is written for (and is sort of a portrait of) my friend Quinlan Collins.

For more music, please visit brandonshencomposer.com.

Suncatcher

for Quinlan Collins

Brandon Shen

I.

2 3 4 5 6 B

0:05

0:11

0:17

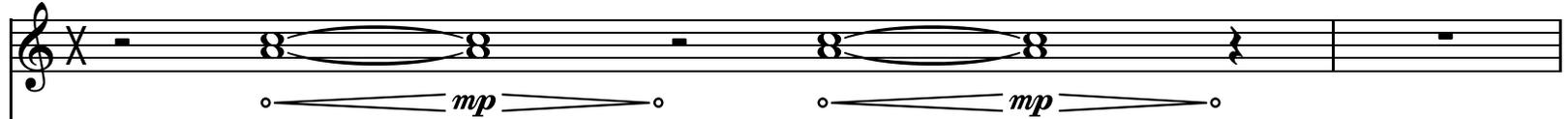
0:22

0:27

0:33

step away from the stage,
let fixed media play

Soprano Saxophone



Musical notation for Soprano Saxophone. The staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains two measures of music, each featuring a half note with a fermata. The notes are G4 and Bb4. Below the staff, there are two dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano) with a hairpin indicating a crescendo and decrescendo over each note.

Electronics



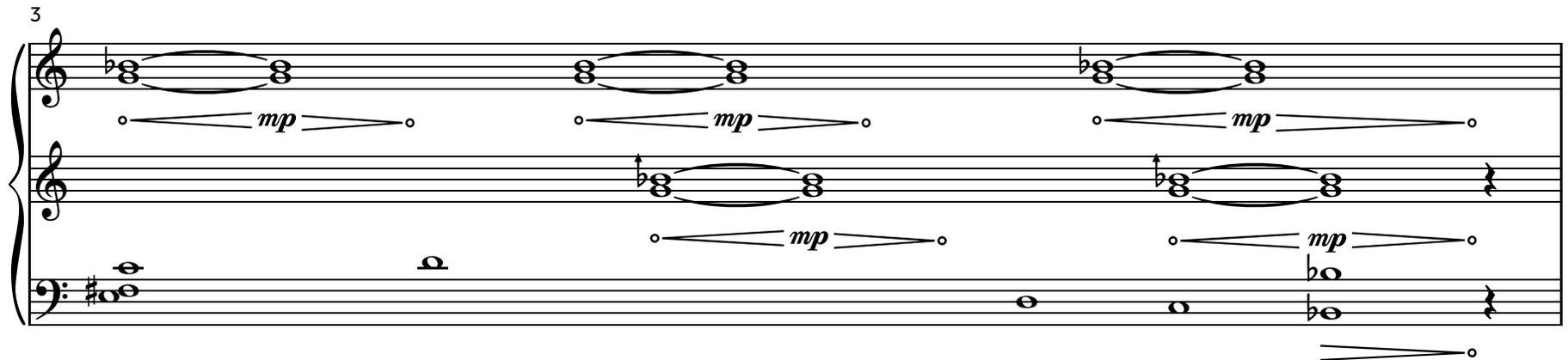
Musical notation for Electronics. The staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains two measures of music, each featuring a half note with a fermata. The notes are G4 and Bb4. Below the staff, there are two dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano) with a hairpin indicating a crescendo and decrescendo over each note. At the end of the piece, there is a wavy line representing geiger noise and a final dynamic marking.

0:00

activate patch

geiger noise

Elec.



Musical notation for Electronics (Elec.). The staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains two measures of music, each featuring a half note with a fermata. The notes are G4 and Bb4. Below the staff, there are two dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano) with a hairpin indicating a crescendo and decrescendo over each note. At the end of the piece, there is a wavy line representing geiger noise and a final dynamic marking.

4 2:02 2:12 2:24 2:30 2:41 2:51 2:55

S. Sax.

Elec.

3:00

sweep up in multiphonic partials and add vibrato ad lib
tremolo with D using first finger
agitate timbre, tremolo, and vibrato more as note as held

5

S. Sax.

Elec.

3:45

1 2 3 4 6 C B♭

[5]

4:04

4:09

S. Sax.

Elec.

kick + cymbal + crotales

The image shows a musical score for two parts: S. Sax. and Elec. The S. Sax. part is written on a single staff with a treble clef. A box at the top left contains the sequence '1 2 3 4 6 C B♭'. Below this, a measure is marked with a time signature of 3:45. The notes in this measure are G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. A bracket labeled '[5]' spans these notes. A thick black bar with an arrow at its end covers the staff from 4:04 to 4:09. A fermata is placed over the final note at 4:09. The Elec. part consists of two staves, treble and bass clefs. A section labeled 'kick + cymbal + crotales' is marked with a wavy line and a downward-pointing arrow. A thick black bar with an arrow at its end covers both staves from 4:04 to 4:09. A fermata is placed over the final notes on both staves at 4:09.

II.

4:17
♩ = 60

4:24

in time ♩ = 120

4:33
beep

Soprano Saxophone

Glockenspiel

Electronics

7 **A**

S. Sax. *mp*

Gl. *p*

Elec.

pitches approximate, follow general contour

11

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

15 **B**

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

Musical score for measures 15-18. The S. Sax. part (top staff) features eighth notes with accents and triplets. The Gl. part (middle staff) features eighth notes with accents and triplets, and slurs. The Elec. part (bottom staves) features sustained chords in both staves.

19

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

Musical score for measures 19-22. The S. Sax. part (top staff) features eighth notes with accents and triplets, and a triplet of eighth notes. The Gl. part (middle staff) features eighth notes with accents and triplets, and slurs. The Elec. part (bottom staves) features sustained chords in both staves.

25 D

S. Sax. *mf*

Gl. *mp*

Elec.

29

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

33

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 33 to 36. The S. Sax. part begins with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) and continues with eighth-note patterns, including another triplet (B4, A4, G4) and a final triplet (G4, A4, B4) with an accent. The Gl. part starts with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) and includes a glissando effect on a note in measure 35. The Elec. part features sustained chords in the right hand across all four measures, while the left hand has whole rests.

37

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 37 to 40. The S. Sax. part continues with eighth-note patterns, featuring a triplet (G4, A4, B4) and a final triplet (G4, A4, B4) with an accent. The Gl. part includes a glissando effect on a note in measure 38. The Elec. part features sustained chords in the right hand across all four measures, while the left hand has whole rests.

41

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

41

42

43

44

45

46

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

46

47

48

49

50

65 **F** ♩ = 132

S. Sax.

Elec.

15^{ma}

gliss.

gliss.

elec. keyboard

69

S. Sax.

Elec.

(15)

81

S. Sax.

Elec.

sfz

86

S. Sax.

mf

p

mf

Elec.

bass

90

S. Sax.

mf

p

mf

pp

hushed

Elec.

glock

15^{ma}

Detailed description: This system covers measures 90 to 94. The S. Sax. part begins with a triplet of eighth notes (mf) in 4/4 time, followed by another triplet. A dynamic shift to p occurs at measure 92, then back to mf, and finally pp in measure 94. The phrasing is described as 'hushed'. The Elec. part has a glockenspiel line starting in measure 94, marked 'glock' and '15^{ma}'. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line with triplets and a bass line with sustained chords.

95

S. Sax.

Elec.

(15)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 95 to 99. The S. Sax. part continues with triplet patterns. The Elec. part features a piano accompaniment with dense chords and triplets in the bass line. A melodic line with triplets is present in the treble clef. A measure rest of 15 measures is indicated at the start of the system.

99

S. Sax.

Elec.

(15)

103

S. Sax.

mf *sfz* *p* *mf* *sfz* *p* *mf*

Elec.

107

S. Sax.

mf

Elec.

111

S. Sax.

f

Elec.

115

S. Sax.

Elec.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 115, 116, and 117. The S. Sax. part is in 4/4 time and features a melodic line with eighth-note triplets and accents. The Elec. part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a bass line and chords, including a triplet in the treble staff.

118

S. Sax.

bright synth

Elec.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 118, 119, 120, 121, and 122. The S. Sax. part is in 5/8 time and features a melodic line with eighth-note triplets and accents. The Elec. part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a bass line and chords, including a triplet in the treble staff. The time signature changes from 5/8 to 16/16, then to 2/4, and finally to 4/4.

124

S. Sax.

I

f < *sfz*

sfz

sfz

sfz

Elec.

glockenspiel

e. keyboard

129

S. Sax.

< *sfz*

sfz

sfz

sfz

Elec.

133

S. Sax.

f 3 3 3 3 *sfz*

Elec.

137

S. Sax.

f 3 3 3 3 *sfz*

Elec.

J suddenly slower, gradually accel ♩ = 96

141

Elec.

K *a tempo* ♩=132

S. Sax. 150 *f*

Elec.

S. Sax. 154 *fp* *f*

Elec.



1 2 3 4 6 C Bb

159

S. Sax.

ff

f

Elec.

164

S. Sax.

(concert pitch)
hum and whistle
at slow pace freely

15

Gl.

pick up mallet, play
at slow pace freely

Elec.

170

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

Musical score for measures 170-175. The S. Sax and Gl. parts are solid black bars. The Elec. part features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and slurs. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 and back to 4/4.

(concert pitch) hum or whistle

176

S. Sax.

Gl.

Elec.

play exactly

Musical score for measures 176-181. The S. Sax part includes a "(concert pitch) hum or whistle" instruction. The Gl. and Elec. parts have triplets and slurs. A "play exactly" instruction is present. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 and back to 4/4. A tempo marking "♩ = ♩" is shown.