

Circle Dance

For String Quartet

Asta Rossi

About the Work

The piece takes its inspiration from a summer wedding celebration where party-goers come and go from a circle dance, learning the steps and discovering their own movements along the way. Each string part plays a distinct character, oscillating between coming together and dispersing from other dancers at various moments in the piece. Additional percussive elements support the rhythm of the movements and contribute to the sound of the dance.

Performance Notes

The first section (mm. 1–15) concerns the coming together of the dancers. The majority of the piece (mm. 16–119) depicts the dance itself. In the end (mm. 120–135), the dancers slow down and begin to separate, speaking to each other as they walk away.

A Note on Some Notation

Knocking sounds: lightly knock with fists on the top, front side of the instrument. Indicated by a percussive note on an A along with a written note.

Finger tapping sounds: use the fingertips to tap along the front side of the instrument. Indicated by a percussive note on an F along with a written note.

Foot tapping sounds: tap the ground with either the heel or toe of the foot. Indicated by a percussive note on a D along with a written note.

Dashed arrow: indicates a gradual transition from one sound to another. For instance, mm. 8–9 shows an increase in the extremity of the vibrato.

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$\text{♩} = 80, \text{scattered}$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

pp

knocking

mp

gliss.

non vibrato -----> molto vibrato

5

mp

circular bowing

p

col legno battuto

mf

f

mf

11

f

f

mf

mp

col legno battuto

mf

14 A the start of the dance (♩ = ♪)

p

finger tapping

mf

finger tapping

mf

19

ord.

pp

p

3

3

23

mf

p

3

27

arco

p tentative

sim.

31

gliss.

mp confidently

mp

(ord.)

mp confidently wrong

foot tapping

35

p hesitantly

39

mf sweeping

mf

mp with greater security

gliss.

43

f

f

f (ord.)

f boldly, with swagger

fp

B

foot tapping

47

f

foot tapping

52

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello/Double Bass

finger tapping

55

C

finger tapping

mp

increase bow pressure

(ord.)

p shy, building confidence ord.

60

pizz. arco

p

pizz. arco

p

mp jauntily

p

64

col legno battuto

p

(ord.)

mf

68

ord.

mf

gliss.

mf

72

pizz.

f

pizz.

f

f

subito *p*

p

f

76

D

f

f

f

f

mf light-footed

mp *p*

81

foot tapping

arco

f

pp wistfully

mp wistfully

86

rit.

a tempo

E

gliss.

f assertive

f

90

6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8

mp *pizz.* *mp* *p*

94

6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8

pizz. *arco* *f* *arco* *f*

98

6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8

accel. *foot tapping* *nimble* *nimble* *nimble* *nimble* *f*

(accel.)

102

103

104

105

F ♩. = 98, *spinning, a blur*

106

107

108

109

110

111

rit. - - -

115

(rit.) - - - tempo primo

117

120

6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4

ppp

125

(ord.) -----> side of bow

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

(ord.) -----> side of bow

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

(ord.) -----> side of bow

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

(ord.) -----> side of bow

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4 6/8 4/4

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

ppp mp distant, receding chatter

130

Musical score for measures 130-133. The score is written for four staves. The first staff is in treble clef, the second in treble clef, the third in alto clef, and the fourth in bass clef. The time signature changes from 6/8 to 4/4 in measure 131, then back to 6/8 in measure 132, and finally to 4/4 in measure 133. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some measures containing rests. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

133

Musical score for measures 133-136. The score is written for four staves. The first staff is in treble clef, the second in treble clef, the third in alto clef, and the fourth in bass clef. The time signature is 4/4. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some measures containing rests. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes performance instructions: "col legno trattato" (measures 133, 134, 135), "battuto" (measure 134), "col legno battuto" (measure 135), and "trattato" (measure 136). A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" in measure 133.