

Aulos & Lyre

Showboat Piece for Saxophone and Piano

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By Kyle Rieger

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Program Notes

The most famous musician in Greek mythology is unarguably Orpheus, who journeyed to the underworld with lyre in hand as he sought to bring back his beloved Euridice. So many composers have used the epic tale as the inspiration for their works over the centuries (Monteverdi, Offenbach, Gluck, Haydn, Stravinski, etc) that one might begin to think that it is the only music-inspired story from Greco-Roman legend. However, a whole ensemble could be made from the characters said to possess musical talent in ancient Greece, with singers and instrumentalists in abundance. This composition draws from the myth of Marsyas and Apollo, a satyr and a god, who competed in what would have been considered the earliest music competition in history.

Marsyas was skilled in playing the aulos, a kind of reed instrument that had two shafts. This means that, because an aulos player would control two pipes at once, they could harmonize with themselves or play drones underneath more active passages. Apollo was one of the first lyre players recorded in Greek mythology, and being a member of the Pantheon, was near-perfect in much of what he did, yet was still fallible. Marsyas challenged Apollo to a musical duel on the condition that the winner could “do what they wanted” with/to the loser. Given what is known about satyrs in other stories from Greek mythology, this prize would likely be more than coquettish in nature if Marsyas was the victor. Apollo agreed to the contest, and the Muses were assembled as a panel of judges.

The competition began with the aulos being played in a way that whipped everybody into a frenzy, causing the Muses to dance wildly and with abandon. Apollo, in turn, played his lyre so sweetly and so beautifully that everybody was hushed, and many listeners began to well up with tears. The contest resulted in a draw, and both performers became flashier in their performance in the final round to insure their victory. Ultimately, Apollo was declared the winner, and skinned Marsyas alive for his hubris.

In *Aulos & Lyre*, the saxophonist and the pianist are representative of Marsyas and Apollo, respectively (spare the skinning). The story lends itself incredibly well to ABA form, with the final A section being a kind of “sudden-death” between the wild and lyrical themes presented prior. While the saxophone is a much different instrument than the aulos, the saxophonist does what they can to replicate the aulos’ most distinctive feature in the dramatic finale of this composition.

Aulos & Lyre was commissioned by Jichen Zhang, a talented saxophonist with technical facility that I believe to be nearly unmatched. I was encouraged to explore the most extreme fringes of the instrument’s capabilities, taking advantage of Zhang’s extensive altissimo range, his mastery of glissandi, and his openness to explore extended techniques that I was unable to find in any other pieces for saxophone. While *Aulos & Lyre* might only be performed by the most skilled players, I hope it serves as a fun and rewarding mountain to climb.

Performance Notes

It is critical that the saxophonist master playing both the soprano and alto saxophones simultaneously. The soprano is to be played with the left hand, with G through palm-key E \flat being accessible, in addition to the octave key. The alto is to be played with the right hand, with G through D \flat being accessible (with the exception of A \flat), in addition to the octave key. The altering of posture may be necessary to insure that both instruments are angled in a way that renders them playable. For added effect, the saxophonist may choose to hide the soprano until it is needed.

Equipment:

Alto Saxophone

Soprano Saxophone

Neckstraps (2)

Saxophone Stand (optional)

Aulos & Lyre

Showboat Piece for Saxophone and Piano

Commissioned by and Dedicated to Jichen Zhang

By Kyle Rieger

As Wildly and Aggressively as Possible (♩=152 or more)

Alto Saxophone

f *ff*

Piano

ff

ASax

mp

Pno

mp

ASax

ff *mp*

Pno

ff *mp*

7

ASax

Pno

ff

Growl

9

ASax

Pno

p

f

p

sub. ff

f

A

A

13

ASax

Pno

15

ASax

Pno

ff

ff

ASax 17 *Growl* *gliss.*

Pno

ASax 19 *mp*

Pno *mp*

ASax 22 *ff*

Pno *ff*

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ASax

Pno

24

26

29

sub. p

sub. p

mf

p

sfz

sfz

sfz

mf

p

B

B

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33 rit. **A Tempo**

ASax *f* *ff* *n* *f* *ff*

Pno *f* *ff* *ff*

38

ASax

Pno

41

ASax *ff*

Pno *ff*

43 *stiss.*

ASax *mp* *f*

Pno *mp* *f*

45
ASax *ff* *fff*

Pno *ff* *fff*

47
ASax *molto rit.*

Pno *molto rit.*
f *mp* *p*

51
ASax *(≈68)* *molto rit.*

Pno *(≈68)* *molto rit.* *pp*

C

53 Lingeringly; Incredibly Freely (♩≈132) rit.

ASax

C

Lingeringly; Incredibly Freely (♩≈132) rit.

Pno

ppp

55

A Tempo rit.

A Tempo

rit.

A Tempo

ASax

A Tempo rit.

A Tempo

rit.

A Tempo

Pno

pp

59

rit. A Tempo

molto rit. A Tempo

ASax

sim.

rit.

A Tempo

molto rit.

A Tempo

Pno

p

62 rit. A Tempo molto rit.

ASax

rit. A Tempo molto rit.

Pno

mp

65 **D** Even Slower ($\text{♩} \approx 84$) Subtone Opt. 8va

ASax

pp

D Even Slower ($\text{♩} \approx 84$)

Pno

pp

sim.

68 With More Motion ($\text{♩} \approx 104$) rit.

ASax

With More Motion ($\text{♩} \approx 104$) rit.

Pno

sim.

70 A Tempo accel.

ASax

A Tempo accel.

Pno

p *mp*

E Song Like (♩=132)

73 *molto rit.* *mf* *rit.*

ASax

Pno

E Song Like (♩=132) *rit.*

77 **A Tempo** *f* **A Tempo** *f*

ASax

Pno

molto rit.

80 *molto rit.*

ASax

Pno

83 **F** A Tempo *ff*

85 *ff*

87 *molto rit.*

88 *molto rit.*

The musical score consists of three systems, each with an ASax staff and a Pno staff. The ASax staff uses a treble clef and a key signature of three flats. The Pno staff uses a grand staff with treble and bass clefs and the same key signature. The first system (measures 83-84) features a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a tempo marking of 'A Tempo'. The second system (measures 85-86) continues the piece with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The third system (measures 87-90) includes a 'molto rit.' (molto ritardando) marking, indicating a significant slowing down of the music. The ASax part features long, sweeping melodic lines with some chromaticism, while the Pno part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and some melodic fragments. A large watermark 'For Personal Use Only www.riegermusic.com' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

89 *molto accel.* *fff* *p* *Subtone* **G** *rit.*

Pno *let ring* **G** *rit.* *pp*

91 *rit.* *rit.* *Slowly introduce growl* *Wild* (♩=152) *n* *mp* *mf*

Pno *rit.* *rit.* *ppp* *Wild* (♩=152)

95 **H** *Normale* *f*

Pno **H** *f*

98

ASax

Pno

ff

ff

101

ASax

Pno

103

ASax

Pno

f

105

ASax

Pno

gliss.

107

ASax

Pno

Opt. ad lib

ff

gliss.

gliss.

ff

gliss.

gliss.

109

ASax

Pno

gliss.

fff

sub. p

gliss.

fff

sub. p

To Soprano Saxophone
Position to where RH plays
Alto and LH plays Soprano
simultaneously

111

ASax

I

Pno

mf

115

ASax

rit. G.P.

Pno

p *f* *ff*

3 3

121

SSax

J Slowly and Completely Without Pulse A Tempo

mp *f* *mp* *mf*

ASax

mp *f* *mp* *mf*

J Slowly and Completely Without Pulse A Tempo

Pno

*Pivot to/from
bis key

124

SSax *f*

ASax *f*

Pno

127

SSax *ff*

ASax *ff*

Pno

130

SSax *fp* — *f*

ASax *fp* — *f*

Pno *mp* < *f*

133

SSax

ASax

Pno

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136

SSax

ASax

Pno

ff

ff

ff

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138

SSax

ASax

Pno

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140

SSax

ASax

Pno

141

SSax

ASax

Pno

K Set Soprano aside
or tuck under arm

K

mp

144

ASax

Pno

sim.

mf

f

147

ASax

Pno

150

ASax

Pno

ff

152

ASax

Pno

154

ASax

Pno

156

ASax

Pno

157

ASax

Pno

molto rit. *Pick up Soprano* *Slow Greatly*

molto rit. *Slow Greatly*

fff

158

SSax

ASax

Pno

A Tempo (♩=152)

fff

fff

A Tempo (♩=152)

161

SSax

ASax

Pno

ff

ff

ff

20

163

SSax

ASax

Pno

accel.

165

SSax

ASax

Pno

167

SSax

ASax

Pno

Blistering

ffff