

Sculling the Styx

for solo oboe

written for Rachel Van Amburgh

by

Georgi Dimitrov

Multiphonic legend:

- ▼ tip of reed
- ▼ just below heart
- ▼ at string

- strong lip pressure (biting)
- ◐ medium lip pressure
- weak lip pressure

- medium air pressure
- weak air pressure

Performance notes:

The pitch representations of the multiphonics are approximate. However, care must be given to achieve a sound as close to the approximations as possible, especially when the multiphonic is almost identical to a major (consonant) triad in a first, second, or third inversion.

Alternate fingerings (optional):

The image shows four musical staves, each with a treble clef and a note with a multiphonic symbol. Below each staff is a vertical stack of circles representing fingerings for the notes below the staff.

- Staff 1: Note with a flat (Bb) and a strong lip pressure symbol (solid black circle). Fingering: C (open), Ab (strong), B (medium), C (open).
- Staff 2: Note with a sharp (B) and a strong lip pressure symbol (solid black circle). Fingering: B (strong), C (open), D (open), E (open), F (open), G (open), A (open), B (strong).
- Staff 3: Note with a sharp (B) and a strong lip pressure symbol (solid black circle). Fingering: Eb (open), F (open), G (open), A (open), B (open), C (open), D (open), E (open), F (open), G (open), A (open), B (open).
- Staff 4: Note with a sharp (B) and a strong lip pressure symbol (solid black circle). Fingering: Eb (strong), F (open), G (open), A (open), B (open), C (open), D (open), E (open), F (open), G (open), A (open), B (open).

Title notes:

The river Styx was, in various tales and traditions of Greek mythology, at the border between Earth and the Underworld. According to some the river gave invulnerability: thus Achilles' strength and famous weakness – his mother dipped his whole body in the water but his feet (heels). According to others it was a pathway to the afterlife. Any passenger ferried needed a coin placed on his mouth – otherwise a final destination would never be reached and the dead would be stuck forever.

The first movement introduces a series of multiphonics that progress from the moribund to the chipper while creating a blossoming harmonic narrative. The second movement takes the aura, contours, and emotions of the first and elaborates on them through more conventional yet highly virtuosic oboe performance. A coda returning to the most prominent multiphonics validates the harmonic chronicle and unites the piece in a finale of a brief heavenly ascent.

Sculling the Styx

I

Pastoral, flowing, not slower than $\text{♩} = 58$

Georgi Dimitrov

Oboe

p *mp* *p*

multiphonic simile

6

slowing . . . In tempo

p *ff poss.* *p*

10

p - mp = mf = f

p *mp* *mf* *f* *ff poss.* *p* *ff poss.*

* Beating as slow as possible on the first quarter and as fast as possible on the second

Mirthful, becoming faster.

Much Faster, $\text{♩} = 120$
staccatissimo

14

mf *fff*

Subito tempo I, joyous, $\text{♩} = 58$

staccatissimo

slowing . . .

18

f *fff* *f* *ff* *pp*

2 In tempo

Anxious (same tempo)

22

27 *

* Beating as slow as possible on the first dotted eighth and as fast as possible on the second

31

slowing - - -

In tempo (♩ = 58), teasing

becoming faster. - - -

36

* It is okay to keep the reed placement constant and produce a multiphonic on this note

In tempo, ♩ = 58

slowing - - -

39

Mysterious and steady, even ♩ = 58

44

p
C
C

p
trill A^b
C

p
C

p
B^b
C

p
C
F
C

Cheeky (same tempo)

49

pp
E^b
B^b

*ff*_{poss.}

p
C

*ff*_{poss.}

53

*ff*_{poss.}

pp
E^b
B^b

*ff*_{poss.}

pp
E^b
B^b

*ff*_{poss.}

*ff*_{poss.}

II

Virtuosic, smooth, ♩ = 120

Georgi Dimitrov

Oboe

p possibile

(Absolutely no change of tempo, ♩ = ♩)

5

p possibile

10

p possibile

14

p possibile

17

p f

19

f quarter tone fingering simile

21

mf sub. f

25 *p possibile* \curvearrowright *f* *(f)*

29 *p possibile* *p*

slowing *Vulgar*, ♩ = 100

32 *f* *p possibile*

36 *p sub.*

40 *p* *p possibile* *f*

Tempo I, virtuosic ♩ = 120

43 *f* 5:6

46 *f*

50 *f* 5

53 5 5 6 7

78 strict pulse, no accents 7

slowing Pastoral, flowing, ♩ = 54

80

83

87

90

multiphonic simile

multiphonic simile

* teeth may be applied directly to the reed;
make tone deliberately shaky and unstable
and more so with each note

Suddenly Slower, slowing

♩ = 80

staccatissimo

94