GREGORY ROWLAND EVANS

Adumbration

for string quartet

2020

SCORE

FOREWORD

The word *Adumbration* may be taken to have several meanings. First, a directed shadowing, intentional or otherwise: the shadow which precedes an obect in motion while backlit. It could mean a metaphorical projection of foreshadowing: presage. Also a sketch, an outline, a finished (or unfinished, temporary) text or artwork. Summarily: a skeleton or a premonition outwardly cast.   (G.R.E.)

What happens in the shadow, in the grey regions, also interests us – all that is elusive and fugitive, all that can be said in those beautiful half tones, or in whispers, in deep shade.
(The Brothers Quay)

What deity in the realms of dementia, what rabid god decocted out of the smoking lobes of hydrophobia could have devised a keeping place for souls so poor as is this flesh. This mawky worm-bent tabernacle.   (Cormac McCarthy, *Suttree*)

In the temples of Japan, [...] in the palaces of the nobility and the houses of the common people, what first strikes the eye is the massive roof of tile or thatch and the heavy darkness that hangs beneath the eaves. Even at midday cavernous darkness spreads over all beneath the roof's edge, making entryway, doors, walls, and pillars all but invisible.
(Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*)

Sat alone. He, in absentia, to receive those loops: braided shadows of unheard prayers. The clock does not tell her. Thread, she speaks. In knots.   (G.R.E.)

In the square there is the wall where the old men sit and watch the young go by; he is seated in a row with them. Desires are already memories.   (Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*)

I thought: "You reach a moment in life when, among the people you have known, the dead outnumber the living. And the mind refuses to accept more faces, more expressions: on every new face you encounter, it prints the old forms, for each one it finds the most suitable mask."   (Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*)

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Pitch : At times throughout the score, justly tuned intervals are indicated by the use of Helmholtz-Ellis notation combined with cent deviations from equal temperament for use with an electronic tuner. When no example pitch is given with the cent deviation, the mark is a deviation of the nearest "standard" accidental. If the performers wish to interpret the score without cent-tuning, the approximation of pitches to the nearest semi-tone is acceptable. When Helmholtz-Ellis notation is not given, the pitches are to be played as usual.

Bow Rotation Indications : ① *ordinario* (abbreviated as *ord.*) and ② *col legno tratto* (abbreviated as *clt.*). When these abbreviations are not present, the performer should default to *ordinario* bowing techniques. ③ In measure 236, the second violin is given the direction to place the bow on the two lowest strings and to twist the bow in a clockwise motion, first pointing the tip of the bow toward the shoulder then toward the scroll, to create a crackling sound. This is written in degrees of a circle, where the length of the bow is the radius, with an arrowed arc pointing in which direction the bow should be twisted.

String Contact Points : The indications of string contact positions such as *sul tasto* (abbreviated as *st.*), *sul ponticello* (abbreviated as *sp.*) etc. should be considered as points along the continuum of the length string. When preceded by an *m* the marks should be *molto sul ponticello* and *molto sul tasto*. The performer should make an effort to smoothly transition from one position to the next when abbreviations are connected by an arrow. When this arrow is not present, the performer should change position *subito*.

Dynamic Indications : Dynamics marks should be considered "effort dynamics." As such, *forte* represents a heavy bow pressure rather than a "loud" resultant sound. Likewise, *piano* represents a light bow pressure as opposed to a "quiet" resultant sound. These indications will often result in unusual bowing timbres when combined with the String Contact Points, and finger pressure alterations. These are the desired effects. The indication "noise" is used to indicate a slightly over-pressured bowing at a normal or fast bow speed resulting in complex, upper harmonic noise. This should rarely affect the sounding dynamic.

Miscellaneous : ① Tremoli should be performed as fast as possible and not as a measured subdivision of the duration to which they are attached, with XFB representing an *extremely flautando bow*. When the *noise* indication is combined with tremolo, the motion should be extremely tight. XFB tremoli should be slightly irregular, comprised of almost full bow strokes. ② XSB stands for *extremely slow bow* which refers to a bow speed so slow that intermittent clicks occur. In parenthesis, an approximate number of clicks per second is given. Clicks should be somewhat irregular and should not be syncronous between players. ③ Diamond note heads represent a left hand finger pressure of a natural harmonic. Harmonic finger pressure is sometimes required on non-natural harmonic nodes, which often results in a multiphonic. ④ Accidentals apply only to the pitch which they immediately precede, but persist through ties.

c. 14'

A d u m b r a t i o n

from the museums of sleep

for string quartet

Gregory Rowland Evans (*1995)

Adumbration -2- GR Evans

Adumbration -6- GR Evans

Adumbration -14- GR Evans

Adumbration -15- GR Evans

Iowa City, Ia.
September - November 2020

AFTERWORD

To become imperceptible oneself, to have dismantled love in order to become capable of loving. To have dismantled one's self in order finally to be alone and meet the true double at the other end of the line [...] but this, precisely, is a becoming only for one who knows how to be nobody, to no longer be anybody. To paint oneself gray on gray.

(Gilles Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*)

The shadow escapes from the body like an animal we had been sheltering.

(Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*)

For what is this shadow of the going in which we come, this shadow of the coming in which we go, this shadow of the coming and the going in which we wait, if not the shadow of purpose, of the purpose that budding withers, that withering buds, whose blooming is a budding withering.

(Samuel Beckett, *Watt*)

[...] Cut my shadow from me.
Free me from the torment
of seeing myself without fruit.
[...] The day walks in circles around me,
and the night copies me
in all its stars. [...]

(Federico García Lorca, *Song of the Barren Orange Tree*)

[...] so I love you because I know no other way
than this: where I does not exist, nor you,
so close that your hand on my chest is my hand,
so close that your eyes close as I fall asleep

(Pablo Neruda, *Between the Shadow and the Soul*)

In the resonance we hear the poem, in the reverberations we speak it, it is our own.

(Bachelard Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*)

When the iron shadows hunker down, you unload the little boat of your sorrow and we climb aboard.   (Andrew Grace, *Sancta*)

It is highly unlikely that we, who can know, determine, and define the natural essences of all things surrounding us, which we are not, should ever be able to do the same for ourselves – this would be like jumping over our own shadows.   (Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*)

Other scores from Gregory Rowland Evans include:

UNACCOMPANIED

Onkos (contrabass alone) 2019

Simbelmynë (piano alone) 2019-20

Chalk Line (solo flute) 2020

Frost on Magnolia Petals (saxophone) 2020

redbud blossom, blueberry bee (cello) 2020

CHAMBER

Hamonshū (string quartet) 2018-20

Adumbration (string quartet) 2020

LARGE ENSEMBLE

Metamorphoses (orchestra) 2018

GUERRERO (21 saxophones) 2018

Presage (string ensemble) 2019-20