

# **Ex umbra...**

**for clarinet in Bb**

**Cameron McArthur**  
2023

## **Composer's Note**

*'Ex umbra...'* is a piece about shadows, shifting perspectives, and things obscured from view. It was created as part of the 2023 Psappha *Composing For...* series. The piece is the first in a trio of related works: it precedes '*afterglow I*', for clarinet, cello, and piano, (premiered by *Terra Invisus* in spring 2023), as well as '*afterglow II*', for Pierrot ensemble and percussion. All of the works in this set relate to a common musical line, which influences almost every passage of music. Each of the works stand on their own – they follow their own path, which depends on particularities of shape, motion, and desires for musical momentum, but they all contain shadowy traces of a mutual core.

## Performance Notes

*Microtonal/Alternate fingerings* – Where fingerings are provided, microtonal discrepancies are encouraged. Notes marked with a star (\*) should be achieved using the fingering below:



*Overblown spectral sweep* – play an overblown multiphonic, and then ‘sweep’ up through the different partials.

(overblown spectral sweep)

27

*Rapid double trills* - start with the fundamental fingering (the first in each box) and then alternate the other two in each example in order to produce the four given pitches. Boxed notation indicates that these actions are to be repeated freely, at the performer’s discretion.

31



**Ex umbra...**  
for Dov Goldberg and Psappha

Transposing Score  
(Clarinet at reading pitch)

Cameron McArthur

**Open, but purposeful ( $\text{J}=c.60$ )**

Clarinet in B $\flat$

*pp play like a folk tune, as though from memory*

5

9

14

19 **A** **Fragile ( $\text{J}=52$ )**

22 **accel.**

25 **Skittish ( $\text{J}=68$ )**

(overblown spectral sweep)

27

The sheet music consists of six staves of musical notation for Clarinet in B-flat. Staff 1 (measures 1-4) starts with a dynamic of *pp* and a performance instruction "play like a folk tune, as though from memory". Staff 2 (measures 5-8) includes dynamics *mp*, *pp*, and *mf*. Staff 3 (measures 9-12) includes dynamics *pp*, *mf*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, and *> pp*. Staff 4 (measures 13-16) includes dynamics *f*, *pp*, *mp*, and *pp*. Staff 5 (measures 17-20) shows a transition with *pp*, *f*, *pp*, *f*, and *pp*. Staff 6 (measures 21-24) shows an acceleration with dynamics *pp*, *f*, *mp*, and *pp*. Staff 7 (measures 25-28) is labeled "Skittish" with dynamics *ff*, *6*, *5*, *3*, and *3*. Staff 8 (measures 29-32) shows a dynamic transition from *fp* to *ff*, then to *p*, *mf*, and finally *ppp*. Various articulations like slurs, grace notes, and triplets are indicated throughout the score.

\*N.B. starred notes use an alternate fingering - see performance notes

**B**

Duration of each boxed section is at the performer's discretion  
 Rest durations steadily decrease as dynamic swells increase:  
 Create a building sense of momentum towards section C

**Frozen time**

rapid double finger trills

31

c. 3"

*p*      *pp*

*p*      *mp*      *pp*

37

c. 2"

*mp*      *mf*      *p*

*mp*      *f*      *mp*

43

c. 2"

*mf*      *f*      *mf*

*mf*      *ff*      *mf*

*mf*      *ff*

51

*p*

*mf*      *p*

53

*flz.*

*fp*

*fp*

**C Frantic (♩=c.152)**

55 

**D** Fragile, fleeting ( $\text{J}=\text{c.68}$ )

74

*mf*      *pp*

76

*mf*      *pp*

78

*mf*      *p*

80

*pp*      *pp*      *mf*      *p*

\*allow resonance  
to decay

82

*mf*      *pp*      *mp*

84

*pp*

86

*mp*      *pp*

gradually increase air in sound  
norm.  $\xrightarrow{\hspace{1cm}}$  75% air  
25% pitch

88

*p*      *pp*      *ppp*

*dying away*