JIM, JIMI, AND JAMES

BY

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P.Q. Phan, Chairman of the Research Committee & Director of Document

Claude Baker

Don Freund
Jim, Jimi, and James
For chamber orchestra

Gabriel Lubell
Performance Notes

Oboe and Bassoon

In m. 48ff, both players should alternate between the multiphonics indicated below according to the notated rhythms. Either can be used as the initial multiphonic. Oboe and bassoon fingerings and notation, as suggested below, are derived from Nora Post’s Multiphonics for the Oboe (Journal of the International Double Reed Society, Number 10, 1982) and Bruno Bartolozzi’s New Sounds for Woodwinds (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), respectively. In the event that these particular multiphonics prove to be problematic, alternatives are acceptable; the sonic effect is more important than the specific pitches or fingerings.

Oboe

Bassoon

Bass clarinet

Overblown multiphonics at the twelfth, as employed in m. 48ff, are executed by fingering the lower note and adjusting the embouchure such that the upper note, simultaneously with the lower, begins to sound clearly. If isolating that particular partial proves problematic, alternatives are acceptable.

Drum set

This work requires a minimum setup including bass drum, snare drum, floor tom, high and low toms, high hat, crash, and ride cymbals. The specific sizes and types of drums and cymbals are left to the discretion of the performer; it is certainly reasonable to use any combination of cymbal types the performer thinks will best serve the score. Improvisation is encouraged during the indicated portions of the piece. Slight embellishments in other parts of the score are also welcome. Whenever a staccato marking is attached to a cymbal note, this indicates that the sound should be quickly choked. All other cymbal attacks should be left to vibrate. The part has been notated according to the following system:

Hi-hat Bass drum Snare Snare Hitom Low tom Floor tom Ride Ride Hi-hat Hi-hat Crash

(bell) (open) (closed)

Electric bass

The bass writing in this work is intended as a sort of homage to James Jamerson, who is most associated with a ‘62 Fender Precision bass. He used flatwound strings, a foam mute placed near the bridge, and is said to have played exclusively with his pointer finger. For a full account of his life and works, see Standing in the Shadows of Motown by Dr. Licks (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Publishing Corp., 1989). That said, the performer is free to use the instrument, amplifier, and playing techniques of their choice. It is recommended that a volume pedal be employed so dynamic contours and contrasts can be precisely controlled. During the indicated passages, improvisation is encouraged. Embellishments in other parts of the score (especially after m. 159) are also welcome.

Piano

A small upright piano is preferred, though any acoustic instrument, no matter how fancy (or not), is acceptable. Ideally, the sound will be as different from a grand piano as possible. If a true una corda effect is not available on the instrument, the nearest equivalent (e.g., a soft pedal) is acceptable. For the sake of balance and color, the lid should be removed.

Strings

To help unify the sound of the ensemble, it is suggested that the strings be lightly amplified. This is not intended as a volume-boosting technique. Rather, the idea is to add a tinge of electronic sound to the section so as to better integrate the sound of the electric bass with that of the rest of the group. To this end, a bright treble-heavy mix through a single speaker would be ideal. It is important that speaker be placed in the center of the group so as not to disturb the stereo image of the full ensemble.
For a relatively brief period of human history, three musicians cohabited the planet and generated sounds so powerful that we still don’t fully understand where they came from or how they worked. These musicians were named Jim, Jimi, and James and each had their own unique way of making their music. Jim, at his core, was a poet. His words, and the songs based on them, were often dark and bore a marked strangeness that mystically revealed fundamental truths about humanity. When he sang, people became transfixed and transformed as they passed through the Doors of Perception. They still do. Jimi had a similar effect on people, but his sounds were different. With his guitar, he performed feats of magic. Noises became music and music opened spaces previously unimagined. His message was one of peace and harmony in all senses of both words. The powers of Jim and Jimi made them both very famous – they brought their music all over the world and were recognized everywhere. The same could not quite be said of James, however. Even today, only a small number of people know this was the name behind the sound, but the sound is known by many. With his bass, James showed the world that a little bit of funk could go a very long way. When you play it just right, not only does the bass simultaneously reveal and challenge the order in what goes on above, but also makes the music’s message infinitely clearer. He performed such miracles on hundreds of songs, all from a basement in Detroit. These songs were then put on records, the records were sold all over the world, and they were played all over the airwaves while hardly a single one bore his name.

As the world entered the 1970s, what the people had known of Jim, Jimi, and James began to change. Jim and Jimi died just as they were beginning to understand their full power. And though James pressed on a bit longer, the company that supported him left for Los Angeles and he was only rarely heard on records thereafter. Tragic though this may be, time has proven that the art produced by these three is lasting and vital. Their records are still sold all over the world, and they were played all over the airwaves while hardly a single one bore his name.

When these realizations hit me, helped by an uncanny appellative consistency, I decided to acknowledge them by directly engaging with the lessons taught by Jim, Jimi, and James. Rather than draw explicitly from their work, I studied their individual approaches to the craft and worked on ways in which I could integrate their ideas with my own. This forced me to think about every aspect of musical language (harmony, melody, counterpoint, form, timbre, space, etc.) from a fundamental perspective and this composition represents the initial fruits of that study.

Rather early in the process, I observed that the single most important unifying musical element between our three musician-heroes is the blues. All were masters of the form, again with each taking a completely unique perspective, and while I can make no such claim about myself, I let the rhetoric of the blues inform much of the work’s content. This can perhaps be most succinctly demonstrated in the piece’s harmony, all of which is based on a single chord: a dominant seventh with added sharp ninth. Not coincidentally, it is sometimes referred to as the Hendrix chord.

Beyond this, many aspects of the work interact with the specific traits of Jim, Jimi, and James. Some sections are based on the repetitive structures of rock and roll, but the large-scale form is based very loosely on Aldous Huxley’s early poem Scenes of the Mind. Huxley was a major influence on Morrison and the poem quite perfectly (and coincidentally) encapsulates my thoughts on the subject(s) at hand. Its proto-psychedelic vision of “panic revelers,” “crystal silence,” and awakening of “colour in what was dead,” provided the conduit through which I could translate my ideas – abstract and concrete; musical, graphical, and verbal – into the present score. Psychedelia is, of course, also strongly associated with Hendrix, who notably exploited the technology of stereo recording towards remarkable ends. At the time, this was revelatory: stereo wasn’t new, but its serious application in rock music was almost unique to Jimi. Having inherited this love of mutable musical space myself, I decided to have the instruments arranged on stage so as to produce a specific stereo image. Even if the full effects aren’t audible without listening to this work through headphones, the broader notion of variable musical worlds still exists – the piece moves through several different sonic landscapes, each of which may convey a different imaginary scene. Finally, the work’s most overt references are to Jamerson, through the inclusion of a prominent part for electric bass. As is true of so many Motown hits, the bass line serves as the basis and driving force behind the work’s last large section – a sort of variation set that echoes the vast sonic edifices erected by Jim, Jimi, and James. But, as these three humans knew, all music must eventually come to a close, as does this little piece, unwinding exactly as it began, having occupied a relatively brief period of human history.
This work was conceived with a stereophonic image in mind. Throughout the score are effects that depend on a specific distribution of the instruments, from left to right and front to back, across the stage. The ensemble is thus divided into several groups: strings are front-center, rhythm instruments are back-center, brass instruments are divided into hard left (trumpet & trombone) and hard right (horn & tuba), while the winds are divided into middle-left (oboe, alto sax., and bass clarinet) and middle-right (flute, clarinet, and bassoon) groups. This division is reflected in the ordering of parts in the score, with instruments of each spatial group being placed together. Each group should be fairly separate from the others to maximize the effect, though instrumentalists within groups should sit close to one another. This holds especially true for the strings and rhythm sections: instrumentalists should position themselves such that they form a compact sonic unit. The full width and depth of the stage should be utilized to maximize the breadth of the stereo field. The diagram below summarizes the suggested layout. Slight adjustments should be made to suit the performance space and ensure that all instrumentalists can clearly see the conductor. This may include adjusting the angle of the piano or flipping its position with that of the electric bass. For the sake of balance, it is important to experiment with the angles of the brass instruments. Better results may be attained if the players direct their sound more towards the audience than the center of the stage.
Jim, Jimi, and James

Allegro ma non troppo (♩ = c. 88)

Oboe
Alto Sax.
Bass Clarinet
Trumpet in C
Trombone
Flute
Clarinet in B
Bassoon
Horn in F
Tuba
Piano
Electric Bass
Drum Set
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello

NB: All staccato eighth and sixteenth notes should be equally very short regardless of indicated duration.

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Jim, Jimi, and James
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*Alternate between harmonics. Fingering suggestions in preface.
Jim, Jimi, and James

Ob.
A. Sx.
B. Cl.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Fl.
B-Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tuba

Pno.

arbitrary palm clusters; follow contour

repeat with variations ad lib.

D. S.

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
Cb.

49

50
Jim, Jimi, and James

Ob.
A. Sx.
B. Cl.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Fl.
Bb Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tuba
Pno.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
Cb.

sing lower note while playing

†sempre

54 55 56
Jim, Jimi, and James
Jim, Jimi, and James
Jim, Jimi, and James

Tranquillo (\( \dot{\ \} = c. 60 \))

- Ob.
- A. Sax.
- B. Cl.
- C. Tpt.
- Tbn.
- Fl.
- B. Cl.
- Bsn.
- Hn.
- Tuba
- Pno.
- E. Bass

- D. S.
- Vln. 1
- Vln. 2
- Vla.
- Vlc.
- Cb.

\( \text{rit.} \)
Jim, Jimi, and James

Ob

A. Sx

B. Cl

C Tpt

c to piccolo

Tbn

Fl

B. Cl

Bsn

Hn

Tuba

Pho

una corda through m. 131

E. Bass

D. S.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla

Vlc

Cb

94 95 96 97 98

poco cresc., sempre; as if emerging from the sound of the double bass
Jim, Jimi, and James
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NB: precise metric alignment of the short figures that occur between measures 126 and 134 is not a strict necessity. Though each should be played as written, the figures need not begin at exactly the indicated subdivision of the measure.
Jim, Jimi, and James
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