

Commissioned by the Tasmania Symphony Orchestra

The Saqqara Bird

For Symphony Orchestra

2016

The premiere performance was given by the TSO, conducted by Marko Letonja on Friday 5th August 2016 as part of the TSO's Australian Music Program.

Duration: 8 minutes

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Instrumentation:

2 Flute (Pic.)

Oboe

Cor Anglais

2 Bb Clarinet (dbl. Bb Bass Clarinet)

Bassoon

Bassoon (dbl. Contrabassoon)

4 F Horns

2 C Trumpets

2 Trombones

Tuba

Timpani

1 Percussion*

Strings (minimum 8.6.5.4.3)

Percussion

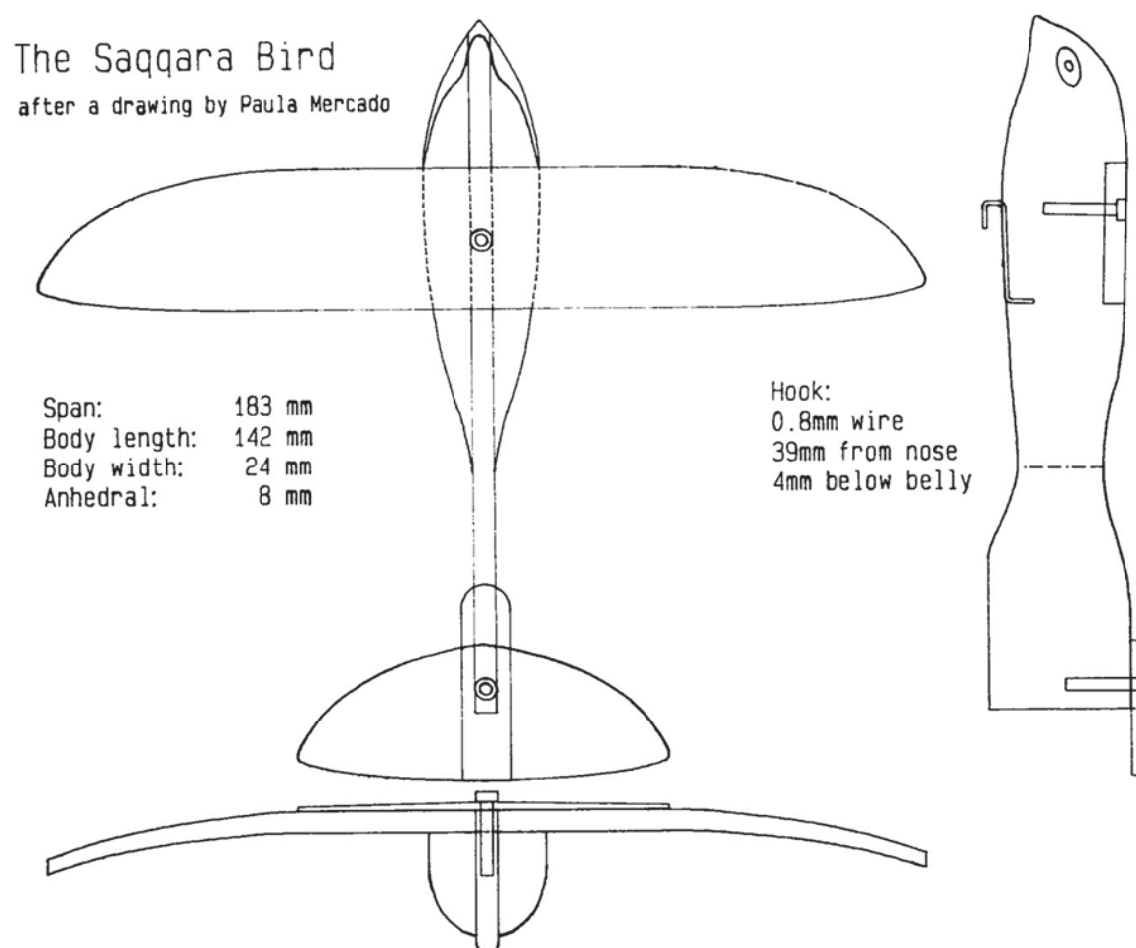
Vibraphone, Bass Drum, Glockenspiel, Tambourine, Large Suspended Cymbal, Medium Suspended Sizzle Cymbal, Triangle, Tam-tam, Low tom-tom Drum.

Programme Notes

There's something undeniably intriguing about events that happened, discoveries that were made, and literature that was written at the turn of the 20th century. Until recently I have been absorbed mostly by just the literature.

In 1898 an expedition took place in Saqqara, Egypt, during which a curious and confounding artefact was discovered. The object I am referring to is a bird-shaped relic made of sycamore wood. Due to a lack of period documentation, the function of the Saqqara Bird is completely unknown. Some hypothesize it is a ceremonial object, while others radically envision it is evidence that the Egyptians were dabbling in the principles of aviation. It has also been posited as a weather vane, an elite child's toy, some sort of boomerang, and as a featured carving on the masthead of a sacred boat.

This orchestral work places the Saqqara Bird at the intersection of all these theories, in an imagined tapestry of the mechanical, the living, and the ancient becoming new again. By focusing on the 'engineered' side of this wooden carving as inspiration, I was able to invest a great deal more rhythmic and harmonic stability than usual into my music. A wonderful side effect of circling around a clearly defined beat is that varied repetition gives way more easily to new, yet familiar, melodic ideas. So, while this piece is a more lyrical and thematically organized work which relies on motivic transformation to propel forward, it still aims to capture something imaginative and fictional in its Pinocchio-like metamorphosis.



The Saqqara Bird

for Symphony Orchestra

Light & Mechanical

Melody Eötvös (2016)

♩ = 132

The score is written for a full symphony orchestra. The woodwind section includes Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, and a second Bassoon. The brass section includes F Horn (1, 3 and 2, 4), C Trumpet (1, 2), Trombone (1, 2), and Tuba. The percussion section includes Timpani and Percussion. The string section includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 132 beats per minute. The key signature is C major. The Piccolo part begins with a melodic line marked *p*. The Violin I part begins with a melodic line marked *p*, followed by a section marked *8va* and *divisi*, and then *tutti*. The Violin II part begins with a melodic line marked *p*, followed by a section marked *8va* and *p*.

6

Picc. *mf* *mp* *f*

Fl. *mp* *f* *mp* *f*

Vln. I *divisi* *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *p* *mf*

10

Picc. *f* *p* *f*

Fl. *f* *f*

C. A. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Cl. *f* *p* *mp* *f* *mp*

B. Cl. *mp* *f* *mp*

Bsn. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Bsn. *f* *p*

Timp. *p*

Perc. *mf* *mf* *mp*

Vibraphone *medium yarn mallets*

Bass Drum *with hand*

Vln. I *tutti* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *p* *f* *mf* *p* *p*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vc. *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Cb. *pizz* *f*

A

D

32

Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

C. A.

Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Bsn.

1, 3
Hn.

2, 4

C Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

Tba.

Timp.

Perc.

Large Sus. Cymbal

to Glock.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

mp

f

p

mf

mp

f

pp

mf

ppp

mf

arco

mp

f

sub p

arco

mp

f

sub p

arco

f

arco

ppp

f

8va

div.

37

Picc. *f* *p*

Fl. *p* *f* *mp*

Ob. *pp* *f*

C. A. *f*

Cl. *p* *f* *p*

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Bsn.

1, 3
Hn.

2, 4

C Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

Tba.

Timp.

Perc. Glockenspiel with metal mallets *mp*

Vln. I *tutti* *div.*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

Vc. *mf* *ppp* *arco* *ppp*

Cb.

G ♩ = 72

59

Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

C. A.

Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Bsn.

1, 3
Hn.

2, 4

C Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

Tba.

Timp.

Bass Drum *with hand*
pp

Perc.
Tambourine (*suspended or on table close by, with hand or stick*)
pp

G ♩ = 72
solo
f

3

3

3

3

3

Vln. I
non div. sul pont.
pp
gliss.

Vln. II
div.
p

Vla.
p

Vc.
pizz
pp

Cb.
pizz
pp

62

poco accel.

The score is for a 4/4 time signature and includes the following parts:

- Picc.**: Piccolo, mostly silent.
- Fl.**: Flute, mostly silent.
- Ob.**: Oboe, playing a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure.
- C. A.**: Clarinet in A, mostly silent.
- Cl.**: Clarinet in C, mostly silent.
- B. Cl.**: Bass Clarinet, mostly silent.
- Bsn.**: Bassoon, playing a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *f*.
- Hn.**: Horns (1, 3 and 2, 4), playing a melodic line with dynamics *pp* and *mp*.
- C Tpt. 1, 2**: Trumpets in C, playing a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *mp* and *p*.
- Tbn. 1, 2**: Trombones, playing a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *p* and *mp*.
- Tba.**: Tuba, playing a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *mp*.
- Timp.**: Timpani, mostly silent.
- B. D.**: Bass Drum, playing a rhythmic pattern with dynamics *p* and *mp*.
- Solo Vln.**: Solo Violin, playing a melodic line with triplets and dynamics *pp*.
- Vln. I**: Violin I, playing a sustained chord with dynamics *pp*.
- Vln. II**: Violin II, playing a sustained chord with dynamics *pp*.
- Vla.**: Viola, playing a sustained chord with dynamics *pp*.
- Vc.**: Violoncello, playing a rhythmic pattern.
- Cb.**: Contrabass, playing a rhythmic pattern.

104

Picc. *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Fl. *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Ob. *mp* *pp*

C. A. *pp*

Cl. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

B. Cl. -

Bsn. *mp* *pp*

Bsn. -

1, 3 Hn. *p* *pp*

2, 4 -

C Tpt. 1, 2 -

Tbn. 1, 2 -

Tba. -

Timp. *pp*

Perc. (Vibes.) *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. I *p* *pp* *con sord. arco* *p*

Vln. II *p* *pp* *p*

Vla. *mp* *pp* *p*

Vc. *p* *pp* *p*

Cb. *p* *pp* *p*

♩ = ♩ (♩ = 88)

109

Picc. *mf pp mf pp mf pp*

Fl. *mf p mf p mf p mf p*

Ob. *mf 5 p*

C. A. *mf 5 p*

Cl. *mf 5 p*

C Tpt. 1, 2 *mp 5 pp mp 5 pp mp 5*

Timp.

Perc. (Vibes.) *mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

♩ = ♩ (♩ = 88)



M Piccolo solo - play with some freedom (cadenza-like)

112

Picc. *mf*

C Tpt. 1, 2 *pp*

Perc. *l.v.*

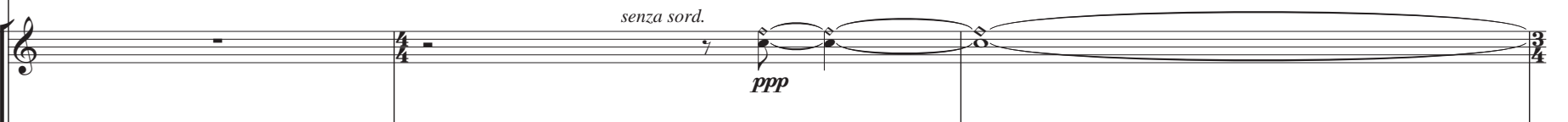
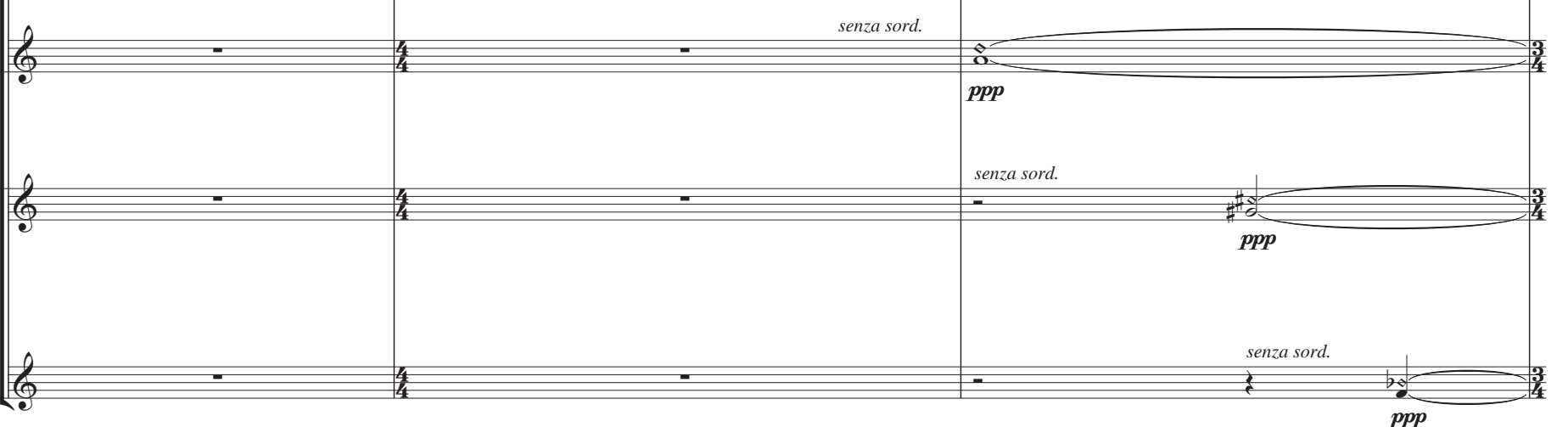
115 Picc. 



N In Time ♩ = 88

118 Picc. 
Fl. 
Ob. 
C. A. 
Cl. 
Perc. 

N In Time ♩ = 88

Vln. I 
Vln. II 

153

Fl. *mf* 3

Ob. *mf* 3

C. A. *mf* 3

Cl. *mf* 3

Cl. *mf* 3

Bsn. *f* *p* *mf*

Cbsn. *f* *p* *mf*

1. 3 *mp* *pp*

Hn. *pp*

2. 4 *pp*

C Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2 *f* *p* *p*

Tba. *mp* *pp*

Timp. *p*

Perc. (Vibes)

Vln. I *tutti* *p* *pp*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f* 3 *gliss.* *sul pont.* *pp* *ord.* *p* 3

Cb. *p*

R

157

Fl. *f* *pp*

Fl. *pp*

Ob. *mf*

C. A. *mf*

Cl. *f* *pp*

Cl. *pp*

Bsn. *f* *pp*

Bsn. *f* *pp*

1, 3 Hn. *p* *mf* *p*

2, 4 *con sord.* *mp* *pp*

C Tpt. 1, 2 *pp* *f* *p*

Tbn. 1, 2 *mf* *pp*

Tba. *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

Timp. *ppp*

Perc. (Vibes) *mf* *Ped.*

R

Vln. I *ppp* *p*

Vln. II *f* *ppp* *gliss.* *mp*

Vla. *f* *pp* *mp*

Vc. *ff* *p*

Cb. *pp*

186

Picc. *mf* *ff*

Fl. *mf* *ff*

Ob. *fp* *ff*

C. A. *mf* *ff*

Cl. *fp* *ff*

B. Cl. *p* *ff*

Bsn. *p* *ff*

Cbsn. *f*

1, 3 *mf* *p* *p* *ff*

Hn. 1. & 3.

2, 4 *p* *f* *pp* *p* *ff*

2. & 4.

C Tpt. 1, 2 *ff*

Tbn. 1, 2 *fp* *f* *p* *ff*

Tba. *f* *p* *ff*

Timp. *f*

Perc. (T.-t.) *f*

♩ = 132 *div.*

Vln. I *p* *ff*

Vln. II *p* *ff*

Vla. *fp* *ff*

Vc. *p* *ff*

Cb. *ff*

T ♩ = 110

191

Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

C. A.

Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

Cbsn.

1, 3 Hn.

2, 4

C Tpt. 1, 2

Tbn. 1, 2

Tba.

Timp.

Perc.

T ♩ = 110

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

tutti

tr

non div.

ppp

f

ppp

f ppp

196

U

Picc. *p* *f* *p* *mf*

Vln. I *ppp*

Vln. II *ppp*

Vla. *ppp* *ppp*

Vc. *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

Cb. *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp*



201

Picc. *mp* *f* *p* *mf* *pp*

Fl. *mf* *p* *f* *pp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f*

Vc. *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

Cb. *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp*