

SNAPDRAGON

flute, 2 oboes, 2 Bb clarinets, 2 F horns and 2 bassoons

Eleanor Hovda

commissioned by the Holland Festival
for the Nederlands Blazers Ensemble

PERFORMANCE NOTES

SNAPDRAGON is written for The Netherlands Wind Ensemble, and was completed on May 19, 1993. I use the title SNAPDRAGON because it refers to a game where raisins are snatched from burning flames. I wanted to work with extremes of energy (from relaxed to intense-but-inward to most extraverted, flung energy). I also wanted to work with the idea of excavating sounds from the bone and sinew of wind instruments: the expansions of single pitches, either fingered or otherwise altered, which can happen when extremes of breath control, additions of auxiliary keys and alternative fingerings are used. I imagine the energy of watching the flames and then swiftly snatching at the raisins. I imagine the energy of both participating in the game and watching the action.



GENERAL NOTES FOR PERFORMERS:

SNAPDRAGON should be played from full score, but since that is too awkward for page-turns, I am using, with each part, a reduction of the other parts, grouping oboes, clarinets horns and bassoons together. The conductor facilitates the flow of the piece, and shapes the larger energy shapes. This allows players to focus on the intricacies of timbral changes without worrying about ensemble and lengths of time. This piece can also be played without conductor, because parts are arranged so that there should be no awkward cuing places. The piece is performed "in the time it takes to do it". It is not metered; the timelength are determined by "breath" time. Each page indicates the approximate length of that page. The pages are not laid out visually in time; rather they are condensed, when possible, to minimize page turns. Allow sequences, entrances and exits to take the time they need.



notation enclosed in brackets with a line across the system refers to a set of repeating material to be continued until the line ends.

notation enclosed in parentheses refers to additional activity to be interspersed with the activity in braces. The parentheses occur as breaks in a line connecting braces, and is operative, *ad lib.*, until the end of the section.

FLUTES: It is important to use inhale () as well as exhale () melodically for energy flow.

(mo) - ordinary manner of tone production (modo ordinario) - produces pitch, no air; usually subtone/tonano

(1) - traverse air sound (EXHALE) - completely relaxed embouchure. Use diaphragm to articulate energy.

(2) - covered air sound (EXHALE) - mouth completely covers embouchure hole.

(3) - covered air sound (INHALE) - mouth completely covers embouchure hole.

(1)(2) & (3) are interchangeable in a long passage and should be used as needed.

- Subtone/tonano: covered tone, ppp. almost cover mouthpiece (lowers pitch by 1/2 step [approx.] this is OK!)

- Always articulate from the diaphragm - allow tongue and throat articulations to follow.

- a e o u (vowels) - Vowels and consonants are used melodically to color air sounds. Air sounds work best when the tongue is behind the teeth, the embouchure is very relaxed and the (tsch, th) (consonants) attack is from is from the diaphragm.

- use a variety of alternate fingerings whenever possible to color long passages microtonally and timbrally. Try harmonic fingerings, alteration by trill & auxiliary keys and use underblowing, overblowing and embouchure changes to adjust pitches. (+) means use of microtones.

- right hand trill keys (D, D#); left hand G# key and r.h. thumb key. These keys are used, *ad lib.* to color basic pitches. They may be combined, trilled, and used singly as appoggiaturas; this can increase the density of "air sounds" and will alter pitch. The point is to use them as "sound around the sound". It is not necessary to control exactly which pitches are produced.

OBOES:

This piece requires the oboe to use as many alternate fingerings and auxiliary/trill keys as possible to "expand" a single pitch. Find at least 3 alternate fingerings for as many of the notes as possible. These fingerings will alter the "basic" sound microtonally and/or timbrally. Arrange these fingerings in some order which can be repeated for held tones. Ways to find these fingerings include using trill keys, auxiliary keys (such as thumb keys) and harmonic fingerings.

Maintain as soft and sheer a sound as possible in *pp* sections. The intensity of the sound will be greater. Never use vibrato or bend pitch with the lips, in this piece. Experiment with the very unstable fingerings which allow for gradual entrances. It is very beautiful to hear the air sounds which precede the sounding of a note; entrances may take as much time as needed, and if the sound results in ghostly multiphonics, that is also

Use as many alternate fingerings as possible for any written pitch. These should create microtonal and timbral changes. There are three basic levels of change which can be made from any given "home pitch":

1. same pitch - timbre changes (arising from various ventings of octave and other keys).

examples:

- These changes may be made slowly or quickly;
- there may be circular repeating timbral patterns;
- there may be timbral trills;
- there may be quick "flicks" of auxiliary keys as grace notes/appoggiaturas with return to the basic fingering.

2. microtonal pitch changes, up or down, which also usually produce timbral changes as well. (+) = microtonal variation

examples:

- These changes may be made slowly or quickly;
- there may be circular repeating timbral patterns;
- there may be timbral trills;
- there may be quick "flicks" of auxiliary keys as grace notes/appoggiaturas with return to the basic fingering.

3. movement of a 1/2 step or larger (up and/or down) combined with timbral changes. These changes are usually "flicks" which serve to make the basic pitch "glint". They are rather like grace notes or appoggiaturas, returning to the basic pitch quickly.



indicates that the basic pitch is to be "expanded" or "whirled" from its source. This is a "crack the whip" kind of energy.

1. finger basic pitch - always keep that basic fingering and expand around it
2. start by altering fingerings for that pitch (and microtones around it)
3. add auxiliary keys as trills and flicks
4. begin to overblow harmonics, while increasing the density of (2) and (3)
5. take overblowing to highest possible harmonic, adding double trills and fluttertonguing, to the end of the breath

Use DOUBLE TRILLS and FLUTTER TONGUE *ad lib* in evolving sonic textures

Bb CLARINETS

This piece requires the clarinet to use as many alternate fingerings and auxiliary/trill keys as possible to "expand" a single pitch. Each player should find a set of fingerings which work well. Please experiment with some of the very unstable fingerings which allow for gradual entrances. It is very beautiful to hear the air sounds which precede the sounding of the note; entrances may take as much time as needed, and if the sound results in multiphonics, that is also beautiful. The goal is to allow the sound to continually evolve throughout a single breath. When indicated, allow high harmonics to speak, and then "color" them with auxiliary/trill keys. The idea is to excavate the sound-worlds which can evolve from a basic "note area"/fingering.

Find 3 - 5 alternate fingerings for the pitches indicated in the score. These fingerings should alter the "basic" sound microtonally and/or timbrally. Arrange these fingerings in some order which can be repeated. Ways to find these fingerings include using trill keys, auxiliary keys (such as thumb keys) and harmonic fingerings, and neighboring tones with flatted/sharped alternate fingerings (ex: sharped-B & flat-C" fingerings for written B). The notation (\pm) means that pitch may be altered up and down microtonally. The rhythmic notation given in the score for alternate fingering changes is only approximate, to indicate asymmetry. In long passages of alternate fingerings, the goal is to savor the changes, which should happen more or less asymmetrically (unless noted otherwise).

Never use vibrato in this piece, or bend tones with the lip. The actual fingering changes and pressure/placement on the reed will create the changes in sound.

Always maintain as soft and sheer a sound as possible in *pp* sections and allow the air sounds. The intensity of the playing will be greater. Niente means to literally come out of nowhere, with no discernable attack - exaggerate this quality.

Use as many alternate fingerings as possible for any written pitch. These should create microtonal and timbral changes. There are three basic levels of change which can be made from any given "home pitch":

1. same pitch - timbre changes (arising from various ventings of octave and other keys).
examples:
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2. microtonal pitch changes, up or down, which also usually produce timbral changes as well.
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5. take overblowing to highest possible harmonic, adding double trills and fluttertonguing, to the end of the breath

Use DOUBLE TRILLS and FLUTTER TONGUE *ad lib* in evolving sonic textures

HORNS:

This piece requires the horn to use as many alternate fingerings as possible to "expand" a single pitch. Each player should find a set of fingerings which work well. Please experiment with some of the very unstable fingerings which allow for gradual entrances. It is very beautiful to hear the air sounds which precede the sounding of the note; entrances may take as much time as needed. The goal is to allow the sound to continually evolve throughout a single breath. The idea is to excavate the sound-worlds which can evolve from a basic "note area"/fingering.

Always maintain as soft and sheer a sound as possible in *pp* sections and allow the air sounds. The intensity of the playing will be greater. Niente means to literally come out of nowhere, with no discernable attack - exaggerate this quality.

Muting: use a practice mute or try half-muting with the hand. The choice will depend upon ensemble balance and resultant tone quality. This piece uses muting throughout. It may be possible and interesting to alternate muting methods. The goal is to achieve a distant, echoing sound.

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 - These changes may be made slowly or quickly;
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3. movement of a 1/2 step or larger (up and/or down) combined with timbral changes. These changes are usually "flicks" which serve to make the basic pitch "glint". They are rather like grace notes or appoggiaturas, returning to the basic pitch quickly.

BASSOONS:

This piece requires the Bassoon to use as many alternate fingerings and auxiliary/trill keys as possible to "expand" a single pitch. Each player should find a set of fingerings which work well. Please experiment with some of the very unstable fingerings which allow for gradual entrances. It is very beautiful to hear the air sounds which precede the sounding of a note; entrances may take as much time as needed. The goal is to allow the sound to continually evolve throughout a single breath. When indicated, allow high harmonics to speak, and then "color" them with auxiliary/trill keys. The idea is to excavate the sound-worlds which can evolve from a basic "note area" when all available auxiliary fingerings and ventings are used.

Use as many alternate fingerings as possible for any written pitch. These should create microtonal and timbral changes. There are three basic levels of change which can be made from any given "home pitch":

1. same pitch - timbre changes (arising from various ventings of octave and other keys).
examples:
 - These changes may be made slowly or quickly;
 - there may be circular repeating timbral patterns;
 - there may be timbral trills;
 - there may be quick "flicks" of auxiliary keys as grace notes/appoggiaturas with return to the basic fingering.
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3. movement of a 1/2 step or larger (up and/or down) combined with timbral changes. These changes are usually "flicks" which serve to make the basic pitch "glint". They are rather like grace notes or appoggiaturas, returning to the basic pitch quickly.

With a basic pitch as anchor, "out of tuneness" is desirable! Avoid vibrato, and take a long time to make entrances, allowing air sounds. Play as softly as possible unless indicated otherwise. "Color" any basic fingerings with trills and appoggiaturas using available auxiliary and neighboring keys.

Use DOUBLE TRILLS and FLUTTER TONGUE *ad lib* in evolving sonic textures

flute

double trills (use the $F^{\#}$ key and the screw above it)
(as long as possible with one breath)

oboe

ff

oboe

ff

Bb clar

Bb clar

Horns

half mute/hand or practice mute
non vib in this piece
use a full breath to determine
time length of phrase

lontano sempre - use alternate fingerings to produce microtonal (\pm)
and timbral changes. Flick upper & lower neighbor tones as grace notes

(\pm) 2 4 6 7 (\pm) 3 5 7

F horn

alternate fingerings (notated rhythms are examples)

niente < ppp possible > N

F horn

niente < ppp possible > N

bssn

bssns 1+2

non vib
ad lib - (notated rhythms are examples)
and/or auxiliary keys

use alternate fingerings to get microtone + timbre changes
use trill keys and auxiliary keys to color texture ad lib

niente < ppp possible > N

bssn

niente < ppp possible > N

- exhales { (mo) - modo ordinario
 (1) - traverse Air (pitched air)
 (2) - pure air - play into mouthpiece (covered)
 inhale { (3) - pure air - inhale into mouthpiece

make all accents from diaphragm

use r.h. trill keys ad lib To color texture

(mo)
 "dove sounds"
 subtone/lontano
 covered tone - Almost cover mouth-piece
 (use 3 As needed)

flute

oboe

oboe

B^b clar.
1+2

use alternate fingerings
 to get timbral/microtonal
 changes. Get 4 or 5 +
 make a circular repeating
 pattern. (use bc + B alt. fings.)
 #A

Subtone - "whisper tone" (much Air)
 non vib
 As fleet as possible, keeping tempo even

Bb clar

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

bssn

bssn

(use alternate fingerings + auxiliary keys for color & motion)

(+) 3 6 k 3
 PPP > N

3 k 6 k 5 (+) k 5 3 k 6 k 5
 > N PPP > N

Handwritten musical score for a percussion ensemble, featuring staves for Flute, Oboe, Bb Clarinet, F Horn, and Bsn. The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings (ppp, ff). Key annotations include:

- Flute:** "tr flutter ad lib", "click Ad lib", "diaphragm accents", "Hö ē", "3", "1", "3", "Hö ē".
- Oboe:** "oboes 1/2", "Industrials in Air", "Double Tongue as fast as possible", "fingers move randomly", "breath support: just between pitch & Air", "ff".
- Bb Clarinet:** "lontano - barely audible subtone / 'whisper tone'", "ppp possible", "lontano - subtone", "ppp possible".
- F Horn:** "hand 1/2 mute or practice mute use alternate fingerings (at least 3)", "niente < ppp possible", "d(±)", "Snapdragon".
- Bsn:** "ppp possible".

The score is divided into two measures by a vertical dashed line. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings, along with handwritten notes and diagrams illustrating specific techniques and effects.

t u e e e

move between ∞

① traverse Air +

(mo) covered tone (pitch will get $\frac{1}{2}$ step flat)

(use ③)

when needed)

flute

(breath when needed) use alternate fingerings

not so loud but lots of energy

oboe

use alt. fing.

oboe

use alt. fing.

Bb clar

use alt. fing.

Bb clar

use alt. fing.

F horn

F horn

bssn

bssn

C+B

C+B

all use pulse of state
independent metric groups

(play G to get) $\text{F}^\#$ lOnTano - "covered tone"

[illegible]Snapdragon

(B) $\begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \end{array} (G^\#)$
 $(D^\#) \bullet - (\bullet)$
 $(D^\#) \bullet - (\bullet)$

() = keys to use for trills
or flicks
Subtone - Almost cover m.p.
double trills, flatter tongue
overblow harmonics

Snapdragon

covered tone $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{long tone} \\ \text{subtone - almost cover mouthpiece} \end{array} \right.$

B: $G\sharp \rightarrow tr G\sharp$ overblow harm ad lib using trill

tr. $\begin{array}{c} B \\ D\sharp \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \circ \\ \circ \end{array}$ (mo) 1 3 (mo) 2 3

flute

oboe

oboe

allow more + more harmonics, shape them with auxiliary keys, slowly - not frantically

Bb clar

* see notes p. 7

(take breaths when needed)

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

use mute alternate fingerings auxiliary "flicks"

niente < ppp

bssn

bssn

Snapdragon

"Nohkan" sound
full of Air, overtones

flute

oboe

oboe

Bb clar

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

bssn

bssn

use alternate fingerings
+ Auxiliary keys ad lib

use alternate fingerings
+ Auxiliary keys ad lib

mute

niente \leftarrow ppp

niente \leftarrow ppp possible

use alternate fingerings +
Auxiliary keys ad lib

niente \leftarrow ppp possible

ppp poss

ppp poss

flute

ooboe

ooboe

Bb clar

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

± B♭C

± B♭C

bsn

bsn

10

traverse air ① - use diaphragm energy
as fleet + light as possible

① ————— (use ② + ③ as needed)

flute

double trills (use F# key + the screw above it)

pp

oboe

ff

oboe

ff

subTone

Bb clar

ff

subTone

pp

ppp

(breathe when needed)

Bb clar

6

(breathe when needed)

F horn

mute (+)

niente < ppp

F horn

bssn

bssn

use diaphragm accents

(Nohkan) — (Air swoops)

② — ③ — ④ — ⑤ — ⑥ — ⑦

flute

(use ② + ③ As needed)

ppp

alternate fingerings

ff

oboe

niente — ppp possible

alternate fingerings

oboe

Alternate fingerings

niente — ppp possible

Bb clar

ppp

niente — ppp possible

alternate fingerings

Bb clar

ppp

niente — ppp possible

F horn

use alternate fingerings

F horn

Alternate fingerings if possible

bssn

ppp possible

use Alternate fingerings

bssn

use Alternate fingerings + auxiliary keys to flick sound Adlib

ppp possible

ppp

ppp possible

traverse air ①
diaphragm accents

① ② ③ ① ② ③ ① ② ③ ① ② ③ ①

(flick ad lib) (flick, ad lib)

flute

mp

oboe

oboe

Subtone - barely Audible
use Auxiliary keys ad lib to flick sound

Bb clar

ppp possible

Subtone - barely Audible - use Auxiliary keys, ad lib to flick sound

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

NB: stagger breathing. If it would help, have bssn 2 start later than bssn 1

15va

bssn

(always breathe when needed)

bssn

(always breathe when needed)

mp

f

flute

oboe

oboe

Bb clar

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

bssn

bssn

double trills
(as long as possible on one breath)

ff

double trills

ff

non vib

niente

pp

ff

non vib

niente

pp

ff

non vib

niente

pp

ff

14

from diaphragm

① ② ③ ①

flute

B expansion: finger B, start slowly adding alternate fingerings and auxiliary keys; then overblow & get higher & higher harmonics until the high is reached

add double trills

mf

ff

ooboe

ooboe

**B expansion: "crack-the-whip" spiral effect finger B, then use alternate fingerings & aux keys ad lib, then overblow into harmonics, shaping them with aux. keys*

add double tonguing

ff

ff

Bb clar

see above *

Bb clar

F horn

F horn

bssn

bssn

Elanora Gordon, NYC & Princeton, 5/21/93