

AKASHA

for string quartet

(2015)

TREVOR BAČA

Akasha is a music of invisibility, electricity and the open expanse of the sky. The title is the Sanskrit word for the æther, a concept once understood as an unseen force present in all things in motion in the world.

Scordatura. The violins are tuned as usual. String IV of the viola is tuned down a minor third to A \flat 2; string IV of the cello is tuned down a minor third to A \flat 1.

Accidentals. Accidentals govern only one note. **Because of this no natural signs appear in the score:** G \sharp 4 G4 should be played G \sharp 4 G \flat 4. This is especially important in the densely chromatic sections that appear throughout the score.

String contact points. Five string contact points appear in the score:

XT	as close to the fingers as possible (without touching the fingers)
tasto	very noticeably <i>tasto</i> in color
pos. ord.	ordinary playing position
pont.	very noticeably <i>ponticello</i> in color
XP	as close to the bridge as possible (without touching the bridge)

Bridge contact points. The indication **OB** stands for “directly on the bridge” and means that the bow should be run diagonally on the bridge to produce white noise with no pitch at all. Fractional bridge contact points also appear. These are played with the bow extremely high on the string such that the hair of the bow runs against both the wrapping of the string and the wood of the bridge at the same time. Taken as a series these bridge contact points do three things: they reduce the fundamental of the string’s fingered pitch; they increase the spectral content of the upper partials; and they replace the overall sensation of pitch with noise. Some examples:

XP	as close to the bridge as possible (without touching the bridge)
$\frac{1}{4}$ OB	one quarter of the hair on bridge (and three quarters of the hair on string)
$\frac{1}{2}$ OB	one half of the hair on bridge (and one half of the hair on string)
$\frac{3}{4}$ OB	three quarters of the hair on bridge (and one quarter of the hair on string)
OB	bow directly on bridge with a diagonal bow (to produce white noise only)

Bow speed colors. The score contrasts widely different speeds of the bow:

XFB	extremely fast bow (extreme <i>flautando</i> with the bow only very lightly skimming the string)
FB	fast bow (very pronounced <i>flautando</i> just slightly less than above)
NBS	normal bow speed (neither <i>flautando</i> nor <i>scratch</i>)
$\frac{1}{4}$ scratch	timbre with one quarter part <i>scratch</i> (and three quarter parts pitch)
$\frac{1}{2}$ scratch	timbre with one half part <i>scratch</i> (and one half part pitch)
$\frac{3}{4}$ scratch	timbre with three quarter parts <i>scratch</i> (and one quarter part pitch)
scratch moltiss.	timbre with as much <i>scratch</i> (and as little pitch) as possible (though without encouraging subtones)

Do not substitute *tasto* for the FB and XFB degrees of bow speed *flautando* requested in the score: bow speeds combine freely with the string and bridge contact points given above. Indications for individuated clicks of the bow also appear; these result from almost impossibly slow motions of the bow against the string.

All passages marked “leggierissimo” should be played off string. The effect is to be an incredibly fast, and nimble, flurry of notes. (All such passages carry a quiet dynamic and are marked with *staccati*.)

Glissandi. Do not rearticulate note-heads in the middle of glissandi.

Akasha was written for the JACK Quartet who gave the world premiere the piece on February 6th 2016 in Paine Hall on the campus of Harvard University.

A K A S H A

आकाश

for the JACK Quartet

Trevor Bača (*1975)

♩ = 44

3/8 6/8

♩ = 44 ♩ = 55

3/4

(“Violin I” Violin I Vn. I)

Violin I

(“Violin II” Violin II Vn. II)

Violin II

(“Viola” Viola Va.)

Viola

OB + terminate abruptly

“mf”

(“Cello” Cello Vc.)

Cello

“mf”

“Cello” Cello Vc.)

tasto + 1/2 scratch

mp

7

4/4

♩ = 44

5/4 4/4

♩ = 44

leggerissimo: off-string bowing on staccati

9:8 9:8

p

tasto + 1/2 scratch

mp

leggerissimo: off-string bowing on staccati

9:8

p

tasto + 1/2 scratch

mp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

12

6/4

♩ = 55

6/4

leggerissimo: off-string bowing on staccati

9:8 9:8

p

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

15

4/4 6/4

tasto + XFB

pp

tasto + XFB

pp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

20

5/4 3/4 9/8

B ♩ = 55

A

“ViolinI” Violin I Vn. I)

pp

“ViolinII” Violin II Vn. II)

tasto + 1/2 scratch

mp

“Viola” Viola Va.)

mp

“Cello” Cello Vc.)

p

leggerissimo: off-string bowing on staccati

p 9:8

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

25

4/8

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

9:8 5:4

27

8 3/8

A

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

9:8 9:8 5:4 9:8 5:4

31

4

7

C ♩ = 55
6
4

Λ

Score for measures 31-35. Instruments: Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., Vc. (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello). Time signatures: 4/8, 7/8, 6/4. Dynamics: *pp*, *mp*. Performance markings: "tasto + XFB", "tasto".

36

4

6

6

Score for measures 36-39. Instruments: Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., Vc. Time signatures: 4/4, 6/4, 6/4. Performance markings: "9:8", "3:2".

43

6

4

3

4

5

Score for measures 43-47. Instruments: Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., Vc. (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello). Time signatures: 6/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4. Dynamics: *mf*, *mp*, *pp*. Performance markings: "OB", "mf".

48

3/4 4/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

leggeriss. 9:8 9:8

p

tasto + scratch moltiss. *ff*

55

5/4 4/4 6/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

tasto + 1/2 scratch *mp*

tasto + 1/2 scratch

tasto *mp*

tasto *pp*

3:2

61

D = 126

3/8 4/8 3/8 8/8 7/8 4/8

(“ViolinI” Violin I 5°/A4(II) + vib. mod. *mp*)

8va

(“ViolinII” Violin II Vn. II) *pp*

(“Viola” Viola Va.) *mp*

7°/A2(IV) + vib. mod.

(“Cello” Cello Vc.) *mp*

11°/A1(IV) + vib. mod.

69

8va₇

8va

XP + full bow strokes

ppp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

76

8va

XP + senza vib. + full bow strokes

ppp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

82

4

3

9

4

8

XP + senza vib. + full bow strokes

ppp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

89

3

4

8

7

3

6

4

$\text{♩} = 55$

tasto + senza vib.

tasto

ppp

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

97 $\text{♩} = 126$

3 8 7 3 8

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

3:2

ppp

pp

XP + full bow strokes

XP + full bow strokes

tasto

sf

105 $\text{♩} = 44$

3 4 3 6 7

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

111 **E** $\text{♩} = 44$

4 4 6 4 6 4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

9:8

ppp

p

ppp

mf

ppp

ff

scratch moltiss. terminate each note abruptly

4:6

5:6

scratch moltiss. terminate each note abruptly

5:6

scratch moltiss. terminate each note abruptly

5:6

118

♩ = 55

5/4 3/4 4/4

Vn. I 3:5 4:3 4:3 9:8 9:8

Vn. II 6:5 po' meno scratch 7:8 7:8

Va. 4:5 po' meno scratch 5:3 5:3 10:8 10:8

Vc. 4:5 po' meno scratch 5:3 5:3 10:8 10:8

f

125

accel. ----- ♩ = 89

5/4 3/4 6/4 4/4

Vn. I 11:10 7:6 7:6 po' meno scratch 13:12

Vn. II 9:10 5:6 5:6 11:12 9:8 7:8

Va. 12:10 8:6 8:6 senza scratch

Vc. 12:10 8:6 8:6 14:12 10:8

mf

130

accel. -----

6/4

Vn. I 13:12 13:12 13:12

Vn. II 11:12 senza scratch 11:12 11:12

Va. 11:12 11:12 11:12

Vc. 14:12 leggieriss. 7:6

133

4/4 3/4

9:8 7:6

leggeriss.
5:4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

7:4 5:4 7:4

135

4/4 5/4

leggeriss.
senza scratch

mf

mf

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

5:4 7:4 6:4 5:4 7:4 5:4

6:4 5:4 6:4 5:4

7:4 5:4

137

3/4

♩ = 126

5:4 7:4 5:4 7:4

6:4 5:4 7:4 6:4 5:4 6:4

9:8

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

7:4 6:4 5:4 7:4

140

 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$

Vn. I $\frac{6:4}{5:4} \frac{7:4}{6:4} \frac{5:4}{7:4} \frac{6:4}{5:4}$
 Vn. II $\frac{5:4}{7:4} \frac{6:4}{5:4} \frac{7:4}{6:4} \frac{5:4}{7:4}$
 Va. $\frac{7:4}{10:8} \frac{12:8}{5:4} \frac{11:8}{6:4}$
 Vc. $\frac{7:4}{10:8} \frac{12:8}{5:4} \frac{11:8}{6:4}$

142

 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$

Vn. I $\frac{5:4}{7:4} \frac{6:4}{7:6} \frac{9:6}{8:6}$
 Vn. II $\frac{7:4}{6:4} \frac{5:4}{9:6} \frac{8:6}{7:6}$
 Va. $\frac{12:8}{9:8} \frac{9:6}{14:12} \frac{10:6}{7:6}$
 Vc. $\frac{12:8}{9:8} \frac{9:6}{14:12} \frac{10:6}{7:6}$

144

Vn. I $\frac{7:6}{9:6} \frac{8:6}{7:6} \text{pp}$
 Vn. II $\frac{9:6}{8:6} \frac{7:6}{7:6} \text{pp}$
 Va. $\frac{13:12}{15:12} \text{pp}$
 Vc. $\frac{13:12}{15:12} \text{pp}$

145

4/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

7:6 9:6 8:6 5:4 7:4 6:4

15:12 11:6 12:8 14:8

18:12 9:6 15:10 12:8 6:4

147

6/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

7:6 9:6 8:6

9:6 17:12 10:6

15:12 11:6 14:10

148

5/4 3/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

5:4 7:4 6:4

14:8 11:8

14:10 14:8 7:4

F

152

♩ = 44 ♩ = 126

3/4 4/4 5/4

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

mp

mp

mp

leggeriss.

14:8 7:4 13:8

155

[illegible]

161

164

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written for four instruments: Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Cello (Vc.). The time signature is 4/4, indicated by a blue "4/4" at the top center. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score is divided into three measures. The first measure features a long, sustained note in the Violin I part, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Violin II part has a series of eighth notes, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Viola and Cello parts have a single eighth note, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second measure features a series of eighth notes in the Violin I part, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Violin II part has a series of eighth notes, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Viola and Cello parts have a single eighth note, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third measure features a series of eighth notes in the Violin I part, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Violin II part has a series of eighth notes, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Viola and Cello parts have a single eighth note, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, and crescendo/decrescendo hairpins. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with a green staff and a blue key signature.

167

6
4

Vn. I

 Vn. II

 Va.

 Vc.

169

5
4**3**
4**4**
4

Vn. I

 Vn. II

 Va.

 Vc.

173

5
4**3**
4**6**
4

Vn. I

 Vn. II

 Va.

 Vc.

178

4
4**6**
4

Vn. I

 Vn. II

 Va.

 Vc.

182

accel.

♩ = 126

 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$

musical score for measures 182-186, featuring Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., and Vc. staves. The score includes dynamic markings (*f*) and articulation (*scratch moltiss.*). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4, then back to 4/4, and finally to 5/4.

187

 $\frac{3}{4}$

musical score for measures 187-190, featuring Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., and Vc. staves. The score includes dynamic markings (*ff*) and articulation (*pos. ord.*). The time signature is 3/4. Measure durations are indicated below the staves.

190

 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$

musical score for measures 190-194, featuring Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., and Vc. staves. The score includes dynamic markings (*ff*) and articulation (*pos. ord.*). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4. Measure durations are indicated below the staves.

192

$\text{♩} = 55$

$\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

11:8 6:4 *fff*

6:4 12:8 6:4 *fff*

6:4 11:8 6:4 *fff*

12:8 6:4 11:8 *fff*

OB + terminate abruptly

"mf"

196

$\text{♩} = 55$

$\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$

x6 6

leggeriss.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

18:12 16:12

16:12 9:6

15:12 10:6

15:12

pp

OB + terminate abruptly

"mf"

199

$\text{♩} = 126$

$\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$

("Violin I" Violin I Vn. I)

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

14:8 10:6 6:4 11:8 10:6

pp

ff

ff

ff

203

203

♩ = 44

6/8

8/8

4/8

8/8

Vn. I

18:12

f

mf

mf

Vn. II

- 1/4 scratch

f

trans.

mf

mf

Va.

- 1/4 scratch

f

trans.

mf

mf

Vc.

- 1/4 scratch

f

trans.

mf

mf

tasto + 1/4 scratch

tasto

tasto

trans.

trans.

trans.

trans.

208

216

216

♩ = 89

H ♩ = 89

3/8

4/4

5/4

3/4

♩ = 44

3/4

♩ = 55

Vn. I

("ViolinI" XFB Violin I Vn. I)

p

Vn. II

("ViolinII" XFB Violin II Vn. II)

p

Va.

("Viola" Viola Va.)

mf

Vc.

("Cello" XFB Cello Vc.)

p

ppp

ppp

mp

mp

tasto 9:8

tasto 9:8

222

I $\text{♩} = 89$

4/4 **6/4** **4/4** **6/4**

(“Violini” Violin I Vn. I)

Vn. I -pos. ord. + senza vib - - - - - vib. moltiss. - - - - - senza vib.

Vn. II pos. ord. + senza vib II - - - - - Vn. II - - - - - vib. moltiss. - - - - - senza vib.

Va. 9:8 pos. ord. + senza vib - - - - - Va. - - - - - vib. moltiss. - - - - - OB

Vc. 9:8 pos. ord. + senza vib - - - - - Vc. - - - - - vib. moltiss. - - - - - senza vib.

pp *sfp* *f* *sfp*

228

$\text{♩} = 89$

4/4 **5/4** **3/4**

Vn. I -vib. moltiss. *f* *ppp* OB

Vn. II -vib. moltiss. *f* senza vib.

Va. trans. *f* *ppp* *3/4*OB

Vc. -vib. moltiss. *f* *sfp* senza vib.

233

$\text{♩} = 55$

4/4 **5/4** **3/4**

Vn. I trans. *f* *ppp* OB

Vn. II -vib. moltiss. *f* *ppp* senza vib.

Va. trans. *f* *ppp* *1/2*OB

Vc. -vib. moltiss. *f* *sfp* senza vib. vib. moltiss.

239

♩ = 89

4/4

6/4

Vn. I $\frac{1}{2}$ OB trans. V
 Vn. II $\frac{3}{4}$ OB trans. V
 Va. $\frac{1}{4}$ OB trans. V
 Vc. OB

ppp

243

♩ = 55

4/4

6/4

3/4

♩ = 126

4/4 leggieriss.
pos. ord.

Vn. I XP XP + FB
 Vn. II XP XP + FB
 Va. XP XP + FB
 Vc. XP XP + FB

ppp *mp*

14:8 12:8

247

♩ = 55

5/4

3/4

♩ = 89

3/4

Vn. I XP + FB tasto + FB
 Vn. II XP + FB tasto + FB
 Va. XP + FB tasto + FB
 Vc. XP + FB tasto + FB

ppp *mp*

6:4 11:8 6:4

p

252

252

4/4

5/4

6/4

rit.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

trans.

ppp

mp

tasto + 1/2 scratch

257

257

$\text{♩} = 44$

$\frac{4}{4}$

$\frac{6}{4}$

$\frac{4}{4}$

J $\text{♩} = 44$

Vn. I

scratch moltiss.

mf

Vn. II

scratch moltiss.

mf

Va.

scratch moltiss.

mf

Vc.

scratch moltiss.

mf

(“Violin I” Violin I Vn. I)

mf

scratch moltiss.
terminate each note abruptly

(“Violin II” Violin II Vn. II)

mf

ff

(“Viola” Viola Va.)

mf

(“Cello” Cello Vc.)

scratch moltiss.
terminate each note abruptly

3:4

mf ff

262

262

6 scratch moltiss.
terminate each note abruptly

4:6 4:6

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

5:6 7:6 5:6

4 ("ViolinI"
tasto + 1 click/3-4 sec.

8 Violin I Vn. I)

8 ("ViolinII"
tasto + 1 click/3-4 sec.

Violin II Vn. II)

8 ("Viola"
tasto + 1 click/3-4 sec.

Viola Va.)

8 ("Cello"
tasto + 1 click/3-4 sec.

Cello Vc.)

8

275

4/8 3/8 7/8 3/8 6/8 7/8 8/8

Vn. I -- 1-2 clicks/sec. trans. scrach moltiss. trans.

Vn. II -- 1-2 clicks/sec. trans. scrach moltiss. trans.

Va. -- 1-2 clicks/sec. trans. scrach moltiss. trans.

Vc. -- 1-2 clicks/sec. trans. scrach moltiss. trans.

ff

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289

289

3/8 4/8 8/8 3/8 4/8 8/8

x6

Δ

Vn. I trans. - vib. moltiss. pos. ord. + senza vib - XP

Vn. II trans. - vib. moltiss. pos. ord. + senza vib - XP

Va. trans. - vib. moltiss. pos. ord. + senza vib - XP

Vc. trans. - vib. moltiss. pos. ord. + senza vib - XP

ff *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

297

297

3/8 4/8 3/8 8/8 7/8

Δ

Vn. I pos. ord. pos. ord. pos. ord. pos. ord.

Vn. II XP pos. ord. pos. ord. XP pos. ord.

Va. XP pos. ord. pos. ord. XP pos. ord.

Vc. XP pos. ord. pos. ord. XP pos. ord.

fff *p* *fff* *fff* *fff* *p*

305

305

7/8 3/8 4/8 3/8 6/8 7/8 4/8

Vn. I pos. ord. XT

Vn. II pos. ord. XT

Va. pos. ord. XT

Vc. pos. ord. XT

pos. ord. + 7° / A2(IV)

pos. ord. + 11° / A1(IV)

fff *pp* *fff* *fff* *fff* *f*

322

7/8 8/8 4/8 8/8 9/8 4/8

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

fff f fff fff f fff fff

XP pos. ord. XP pos. ord. XP pos. ord. XP pos. ord. XP pos. ord. XP pos. ord.

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Vc.

54

\bar{p}

34

De
f

44

352

6
4**3**
4**4**
4**5**
4

trans. - pos. ord. + XFB trans. - pont. + XFB trans. -

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

vib. poco.

Vc.

pp

357

3
4**4**
4**5**
4**6**
4

rit.

XP + XFB trans. - XP trans. -

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

pp

363

4
4**6**
4

♩ = 44

1/3OB trans. - 2/3OB trans. -

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

367

4/4 **3/8** **4/8** **7/8** **3/8** **6/8**

N $\text{♩} = 89$

(“Violin I” Violin I
full bow strokes
terminate each note abruptly

Vn. I **“mf”**

(“Violin II” Violin II Vn. II)

Vn. II **pp**

(“Viola” Viola Va.)
full bow strokes
terminate each note abruptly

Va. **“mf”**

(“Cello” Cello Vc.)
full bow strokes
terminate each note abruptly

Vc. **“mf”**

375

9/8 **4/8** **8/8**

Vn. I

Vn. II **leggeriss.**
9:8
pp

Va.

Vc.

379

6/8 **7/8** **3/8** **8/8** **3/8**

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

386

$\frac{4}{8}$

$\frac{3}{8}$

$\frac{4}{8}$

$\frac{8}{8}$

$\frac{9}{8}$

Score for measures 386-391. The score is written for four staves: Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., and Vc. The time signatures are $\frac{4}{8}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{4}{8}$, $\frac{8}{8}$, and $\frac{9}{8}$. The Vn. II staff contains a complex melodic line with a 9:8 ratio indicated between measures 387 and 388, and another 9:8 ratio indicated between measures 388 and 389. The Vn. I, Va., and Vc. staves contain rests.

392



Score for measures 392-393. The score is written for four staves: Vn. I, Vn. II, Va., and Vc. The time signature is $\frac{4}{8}$. The Vn. I staff contains a rest. The Vn. II staff contains a melodic line with a 9:8 ratio indicated between measures 392 and 393. The Va. and Vc. staves contain rests.

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