



# BRUEGEL SKETCHES

a set of six miniatures for bass clarinet and accordion

Paul David Thomas

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

Composed in collaboration with Rachel Yoder

Each miniature is inspired by a different painting by the Flemish Renaissance painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The score varies between traditional notation and graphic score depending on the desired effect of each miniature. Improvisation plays an important role in miniatures 2, 4, 5 and requires the performers to listen and interact with each other in a variety of ways. The performance duration of the entire set is approximately nine minutes.

Premiered April 24, 2014 at Dallas Baptist University by bass clarinetist Rachel Yoder and the composer on accordion

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



1. TOWER OF BABEL



4. WINTER LANDSCAPE WITH SKATERS AND BIRD TRAP



2. THE BEEKEEPERS AND THE BIRDNESTER



5. BIG FISH EAT LITTLE FISH



3. THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND



6. THE WEDDING DANCE

# BRUEGEL SKETCHES

## 1. TOWER OF BABEL

Paul David Thomas

with rubato

Bass Clarinet in B $\flat$

mf

p

Accord.

sustain drone throughout

p

mf

mp

B. Cl.

mf

mp

mf

Accord.

p

mf

Ⓐ

B. Cl.

f

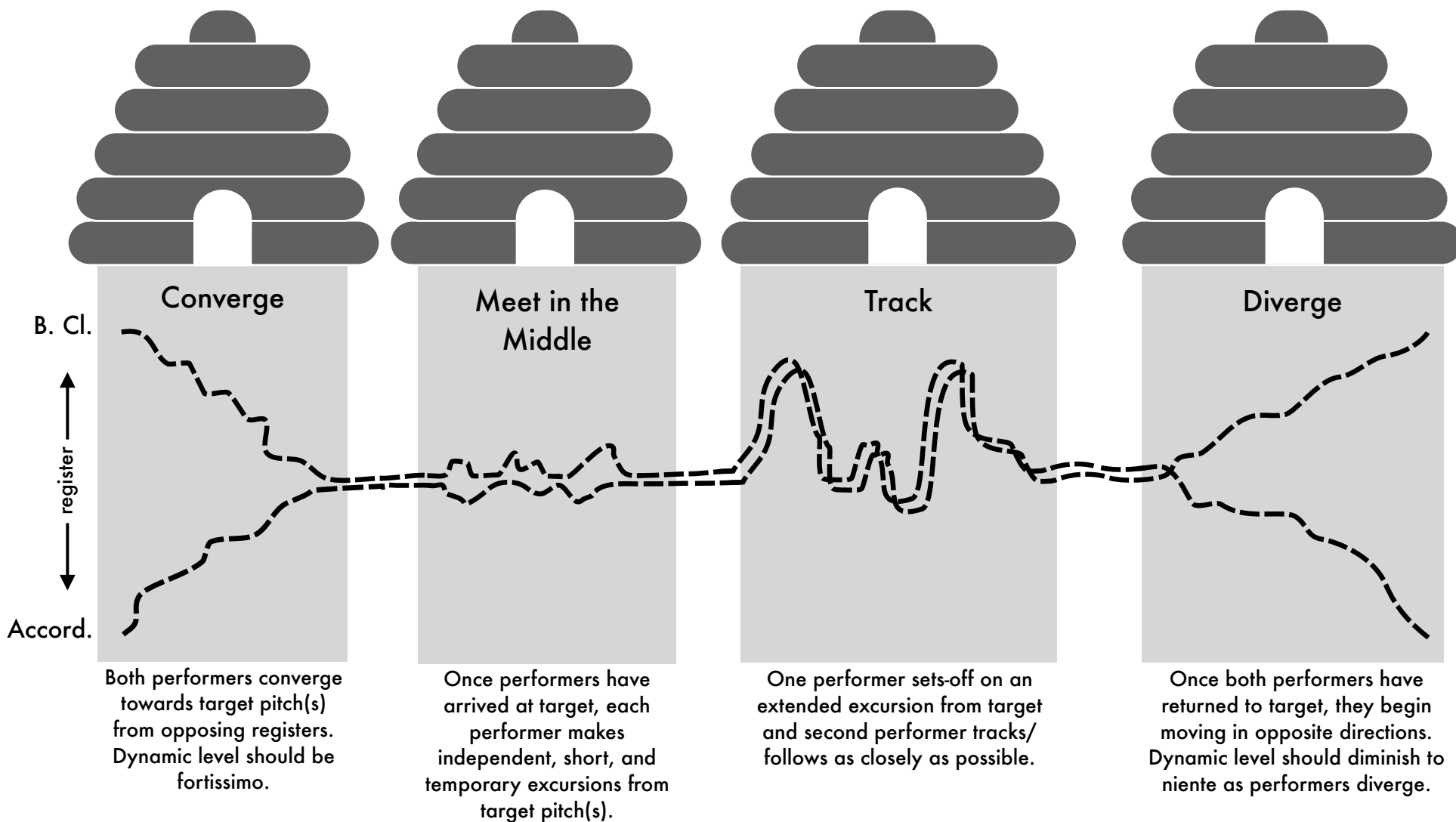
Accord.

f

BRUEGEL SKETCHES | 1. TOWER OF BABEL

The musical score is divided into three systems, each featuring a B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet) part and an Accord. (Accordions) part. The first system shows the initial melodic line for the B. Cl. and harmonic accompaniment for the Accord. The second system includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, and *mf*, along with a circled letter 'B' above the B. Cl. staff. The third system concludes with a double bar line and a final *ff* dynamic marking. The Accord. part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with various chordal textures and dynamics.

## 2. THE BEEKEEPERS AND THE BIRDNESTER



Performers are to trill (half-step and/or whole-step) for entire duration of the miniature. Dashed line conveys general direction of gestures and is not intended to be followed precisely. This miniature should last less than one minute.

# 3. THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

$\text{♩} = 70$

Bass Clarinet in B $\flat$

$\text{♩} = 70$

Accordion

5

B. Cl.

Accord.

9

B. Cl.

Accord.

13

B. Cl.

Accord.

# 4. WINTER LANDSCAPE WITH SKATERS AND BIRD TRAP



**1**  
**WIND**  
 Air Sounds  
 (b. cl. and accord.)

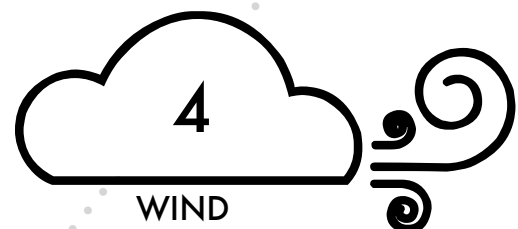
Overall texture should remain sparse and evocative of a cold, wintery day. Piece moves numerically from #1 to #5. This miniature should last approximately 2'.



**5**  
**FLAPPING WINGS**  
 Key Clicks (b. cl.)  
 Bellow Flaps (accord.)



**2**  
**FLAPPING WINGS**  
 Key Clicks (b. cl.)  
 Bellow Flaps (accord.)



**4**  
**WIND**  
 Air Sounds  
 (b. cl. and accord.)

**3**

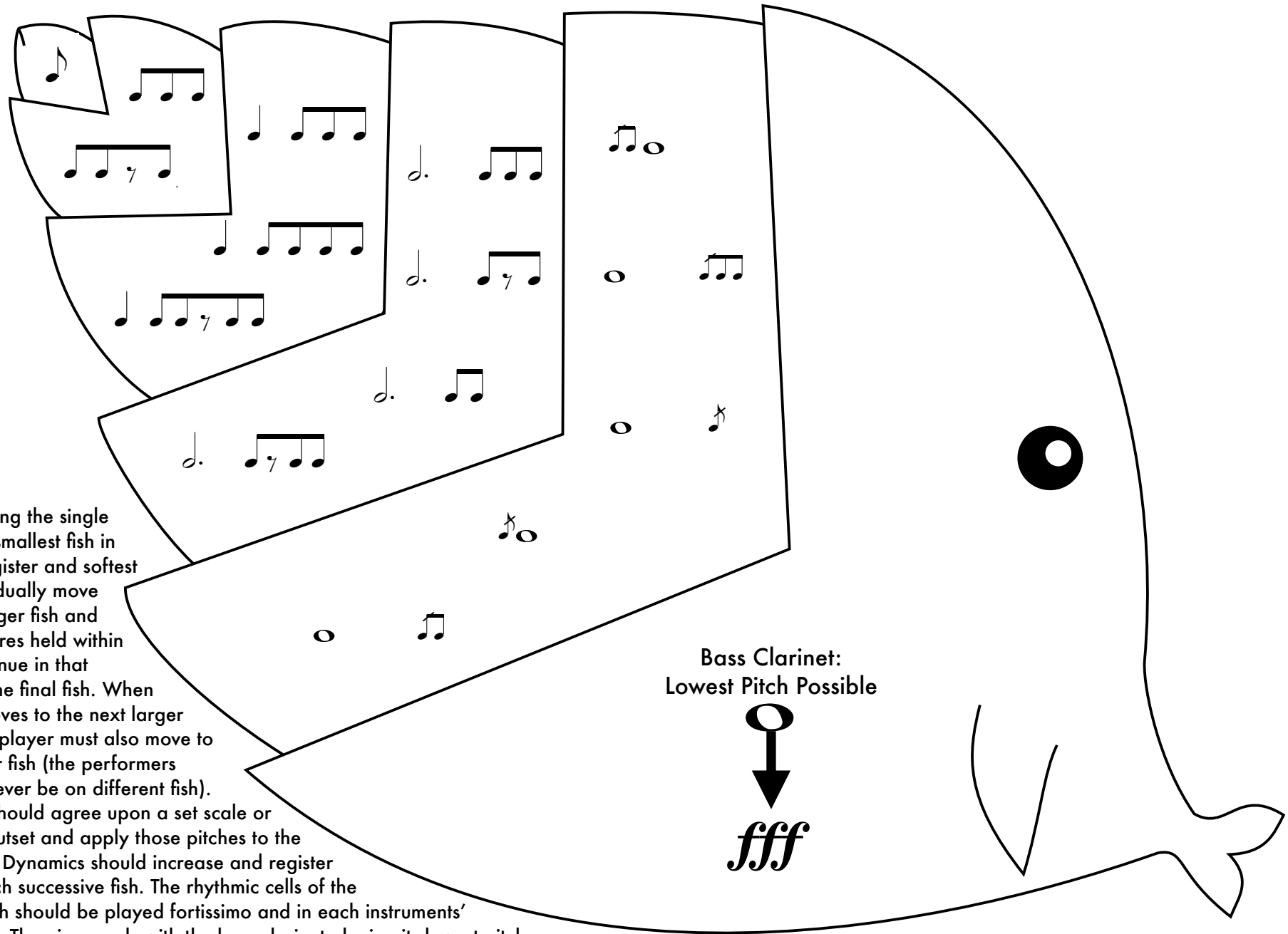
**BIRDSONGS**

One performer plays birdsong cells (in any order, octave, or clef) while other performer makes air sounds. Reverse roles after first performer plays 4-6 cells (second performer plays cells while first performer makes air sounds).

The musical notation for birdsongs consists of several lines of music on a grand staff. It includes various rhythmic patterns, such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and includes triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes). The notation is arranged in a triangular shape, corresponding to the '3 BIRDSONGS' section.



## 5. BIG FISH EAT LITTLE FISH



Begin by playing the single rhythm in the smallest fish in the highest register and softest dynamic. Gradually move to the next larger fish and rhythmic gestures held within said fish; continue in that manner until the final fish. When one player moves to the next larger fish, the other player must also move to the next larger fish (the performers should rarely ever be on different fish). Both players should agree upon a set scale or mode at the outset and apply those pitches to the rhythmic cells. Dynamics should increase and register lower with each successive fish. The rhythmic cells of the penultimate fish should be played fortissimo and in each instruments' lowest register. The piece ends with the bass clarinet playing its lowest pitch (eating all other fish). This miniature should last approximately 1'25".

Bass Clarinet:  
Lowest Pitch Possible



# 6. WEDDING DANCE

♩ = 130

Bass Clarinet in B $\flat$

mf

♩ = 130

Accordion (l.h. only)

mf

4

B. Cl.

♩ = 130

mf

♩ = 130

Accordion.

7

B. Cl.

♩ = 130

f

♩ = 130

Accordion.

f

10

B. Cl.

♩ = 130

♩ = 130

Accordion.

BRUEGEL SKETCHES | 6. WEDDING DANCE

(A)

13  
B. Cl. *mf*  
Accord. *mf*

16  
B. Cl. *mp*  
Accord. *mp* D+G

19  
B. Cl. *f*  
Accord. *mf* D+G

22  
B. Cl. *f*  
Accord. *f* D+G D+C

8

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piece titled '6. WEDDING DANCE' from 'BRUEGEL SKETCHES'. It features two staves: B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet) and Accord. (Accordion). The score is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number (13, 16, 19, 22). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 5/4. The first system (measures 13-15) includes a circled 'A' above the B. Cl. staff. The second system (measures 16-18) has a 'D+G' chord marking above the Accord. staff. The third system (measures 19-21) has a 'D+G' chord marking above the Accord. staff. The fourth system (measures 22-24) has 'D+G' and 'D+C' chord markings above the Accord. staff. Dynamics include *mf*, *mp*, and *f*. The score ends with a double bar line and a page number '8' at the bottom center.

BRUEGEL SKETCHES | 6. WEDDING DANCE

25

B. Cl.

Accord.

28

B. Cl.

Accord.

**B**

*mf*

*mp*

32

B. Cl.

Accord.

*rit.*

35

B. Cl.

Accord.

*p*