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Title

Smells Like Green

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Smells Like Green

for soprano saxophone and electronics

Michael Flynn

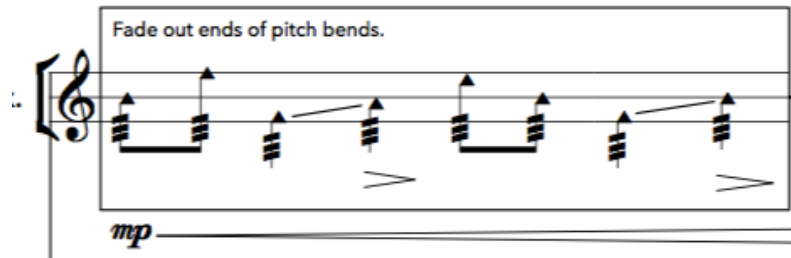
Duration: 8:15

Program Note

Smells Like Green is something of a musical love letter to summer nights in the American Midwest. I grew up in northern Illinois, in a house next to a small pond. At night during the summer, I would sleep with my window open, listening to the sounds of all the animals who lived in the pond: frogs and crickets and the like. The opening section of the piece features sounds in both the saxophone and the electronics that evoke that kind of dreamy, nostalgic summer-night atmosphere. These sounds recur throughout the piece. The next two sections—and the overall arc of the work—are based on the potential effects of global warming on midwestern summers. If climate change continues unabated, then the weather in much of the midwest will become increasingly rainy in the early summer, followed by yearly drought in the late summer months. The second, more rhythmically and harmonically active section, portrays a growing rainstorm. The third and final section features echoes of the earlier musical material, presented in a sparse, distant manner, evoking the desolation of drought. The work is less a direct political statement than a musical portrayal of love for something very simple: a childhood memory that is in danger of being lost forever.

Performance Notes

Teeth on Reed



Three line staff gives a rough indication of register. Top line indicates highest sound possible, bottom line indicates lowest sound possible. Registral indications within boxes are not absolute. Rather, they are intended to give a general sense of gestural contour.

Slap Tongue



Smells Like Green

Relaxed, Going With the Flow

Michael Flynn

0:00 ----- 0:30

Soprano Saxophone

Teeth on reed with flutter tongue. Emulate a frog. Sounds start short in duration sparsely spaced, and constrained in register.

Reduce space between sounds. Widen register. React to increasing activity in the frogs in the electronics.

Repetitious gestures. Create a lazy dialogue with the frogs in the electronics.

pp ----- *mp*

Electronic Cues

0:00

1 2

Frogs, sparsely...

0:30 ----- 0:45 ----- 0:50

Sop. Sax.

Add pitch bends to the ends of gestures. Short bends at first, with clipped releases.

Gradually elongate pitch bends, soften releases.

Unpitched air sound

mp

Wind fades in. More frogs...

0:45 Rustling leaves...

3

Elec.

0:50 ----- 1:10 ----- 1:12

Sop. Sax.

Fade out ends of pitch bends.

Gradually elongate ends of gestures.

Unpitched air sound

mp < *mf* > *mp*

Increasing frog activity...

0:50

4

1:10 Wind in the leaves...

5

Elec.

2

1:12 ----- 1:35

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Elongated ends of gestures alternate between flz. and ord.

Phrases become gentler, fading out over time as electronic frogs become a saturated texture.

Elec. 1:12 Wind becomes sustained note.
Frogs become saturated texture...

6

1:35 ----- 1:45

Sop. Sax. 16

Unpitched air sound

flz.

Unpitched ord. → half-pitch

p < *mp* > *p* *mp* < *mf* > *pp* *p*

Elec. 1:35 Wind note starts to split into harmony...

7

8

1:45 ----- 2:10

Sop. Sax. 21

Vary amount of pitch (air to half-pitch) in swells. Swells gradually shorten in duration and increase in dynamic. Start with mostly first pitch, add the next two over time until all three are used equally.

pp ----- *p*

Elec. Harmony builds...

2:10 ----- 2:35

Sop. Sax. 29

Lightly tongue attacks.

half-pitch

Gradually add pitch

fully-pitched

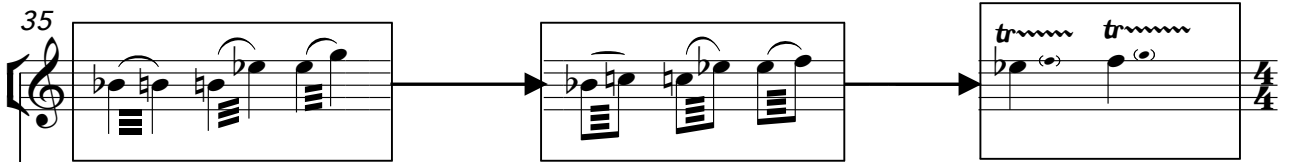
p ----- *mp* ----- *mf*

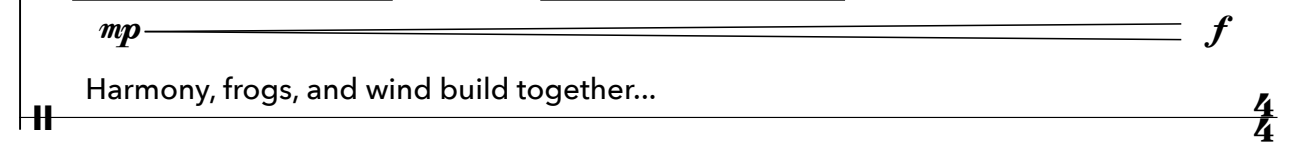
Elec. Harmony builds...

2:35


3:10 3

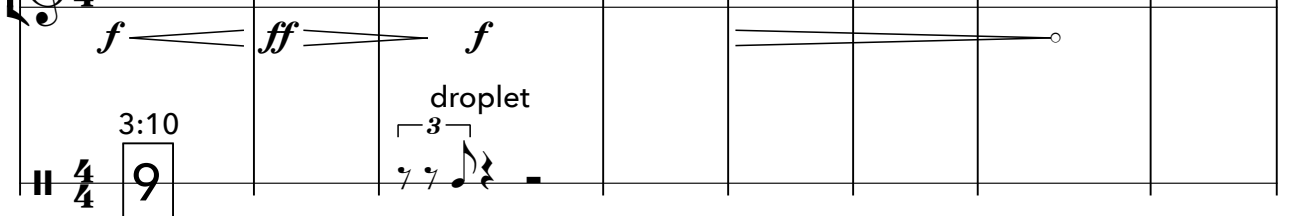
Regularly tongued attacks. Begin tremolo figures slowly, gradually increasing rate over time.

Sop. Sax. 


Elec. 

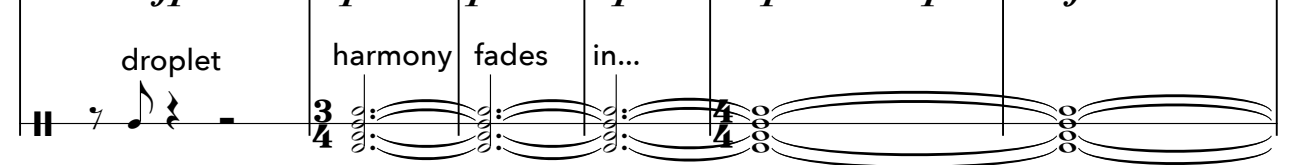
More Urgent, You Are the Flow ♩ = 130


Sop. Sax. 


Elec. 

(3:24)

Sop. Sax. 

Elec. 

Sop. Sax. 

Elec. 

(3:48)

Sop. Sax. 

Elec. 

64

Sop. Sax. *mp*

Elec. chord builds...

70

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Elec. droplets

harmony swells

76

Sop. Sax. *fp* *mf*

Elec. droplets rising bubbly chaos

79

Sop. Sax. no vib. *f*

Elec. droplets bubble away... rain... 4:32 10

85 no vib. fast vib. (4:45)

Sop. Sax. *mp* *pp*

Elec. frog texture returns... (4:45) 11 droplet

92

Sop. Sax. *mf* *pp*

Elec. droplet

98 (5:08)

Sop. Sax. *mp* *p* *mf* *pp*

Elec. 5:08 (attacks on beat 1) 12

104 3x

Sop. Sax. *fp* *mf*

Elec. droplets (starts second repetition)

109 4x

Sop. Sax. *mf*

Elec. 6

112

Sop. Sax. *fp* *mf* 3x lip up (5:38) lip up 3x

Elec. rising rain... droplets

117

Sop. Sax. 2x 2x

Elec. 6 6 6

120

Sop. Sax. *f* chords

Elec. 6 6 6

123 (5:59)

Sop. Sax. *mf* 3 3 3

Elec. 5:59 13 (attacks on beat 1)

128

Sop. Sax. *f* 3 3 5

Elec.

Sop. Sax. *ff*

Elec.

High whistling...

Forlorn, Dried Up

6:24 ----- 6:39 ----- 6:54

Sop. Sax. 136

15s of rest.

Lots of space. Delicate, fragile. React to frog sounds in electronics.

Gradually elongate pitch bends.

mf ----- *p*

6:24 (one second apart)

Elec. 14 15 16

Frogs, wind, dry sand...

6:54 ----- 7:14

Sop. Sax. 141

fully-pitched ----- half-pitch ----- fully-pitched

mf ----- *p* ----- *mf = mp*

6:54 (one second apart)

Elec. 17 18 19

7:14 ----- 7:33

147

Sop. Sax. *mp* *pp*

Very, very sparse.

Vary lengths of notes.
Gradually increase space between notes.

Elec. *pp*

Frogs, wind, dry sand. Very distant...

7:33 ----- 8:04

149

Sop. Sax. *p* *mp* *mf* *p*

fully-pitched

half-pitch

Elec. 8:00 20

8:04 ----- 8:14

155

Sop. Sax. *mp*

Elec.

Wind and sand...