

davon kam der Tod so bald
for flute, alto sax, and cello

Luke Dahn

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written for the collaborative effort entitled "The Cruci Project"
for the 2015 Day of Learning in Community at Northwestern College (Orange City, IA)
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Performers: Anna Bartlett (flute), Pam De Haan (sax), and Hannah McGarvey (cello)

Performance Notes:

Pitch bends: In the flute and alto parts, any time a horizontal line connects consecutive noteheads (always the interval of a descending minor 2nd), a pitch bend is called for. The pitch bend should lead as smoothly as possible into the second note. If such pitch bends cannot be achieved by either player, all such pitch bends should be eliminated. In any case, these phrases should be played in the manner of a sobbing sigh.

Fluttertonguing: In the flute and alto parts, all notes with tremolo hash marks should be performed using fluttertonguing if at all possible.

Quarter tones: Quarter tones are called for in the cello part. A backwards flat indicates a quarter-step lower. Thus, a backwards flat that accompanies a normal flat indicates that the note should be three-quarters flat.

Program Notes:

Davon kam der Tod so bald was written as part of a collaborate project that included an artist, several composers and several poets. Composers and poets were invited to compose short compositions and poems based on the same artwork – a set of three prints entitled "Cruci" by artist Eric Robinson. The three images are variations on the same print depicting Christ during the crucifixion. All compositions were written for the same instrumentation.

Davon kam der Tod so bald reflects more than a slight nod to J.S. Bach, the great master whose many musical portrayals of the suffering Christ are unmatched in their beauty, deep sincerity, and expressivity. The most obvious nod to the great composer is in the descending cello passacaglia line which directly references the Crucifixus movement of the great composer's *Mass in B minor*. It is as if Bach's meditation of Christ's torn body has been echoing through the generations, even until now. We, like Bach, continue to contemplate the terrifying beauty of the crucifixion. The title (English: *Therefore death came so quickly*) is the fifth line of the second verse of Martin Luther's hymn "Christ lag in Todesbanden," a verse which Bach set for soprano and alto duet (indirectly referenced here by the flute/sax duet here) in the third movement of his fourth cantata.

Duration: 2'45"

Davon kam der Tod so bald

("Therefore death came so quickly")

Luke Dahn
2015

Plodding; mournful ♩ = 48

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features a Flute part with rests, an Alto Saxophone part with a melodic line starting in measure 4 marked *p*, and a Cello part with a plodding accompaniment marked *pizz. sempre* and *p*, with a *poco a poco crescendo* instruction. The second system (measures 6-10) is marked with a box 'A' and includes dynamics *p*, *mp*, and *p*. It features a triplet in the Alto Saxophone part in measure 8. The third system (measures 11-15) is marked with a box 'B' and includes dynamics *mp* and *mf*. It also features a triplet in the Alto Saxophone part in measure 13. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), and Cello (Vc.).

C

15

Fl. *p* *mf* *mp*

A. Sx. *p* *mf* *mp*

Vc. 3

D

18

Fl. *f* *f* *poco f*

A. Sx. *f* *f* *poco f*

Vc. *ff*

20

Fl. *mf* *f* *ff* *flutert. (sim)*

A. Sx. *mf* *f* *ff* *flutert. (sim)*

Vc.

E

Musical score for measures 22-23. The score is for Flute (Fl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Fl.:** Measures 22-23. Starts with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *f* (measures 22-23), *fff* (measure 23).
- A. Sx.:** Measures 22-23. Starts with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *f* (measures 22-23), *fff* (measure 23).
- Vc.:** Measures 22-23. Simple eighth-note accompaniment.

F

Musical score for measures 24-27. The score is for Flute (Fl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Fl.:** Measure 24: triplet of eighth notes. Measure 25: rest. Measure 26: rest. Measure 27: *as an echo*, *p*.
- A. Sx.:** Measure 24: triplet of eighth notes. Measure 25: rest. Measure 26: *as a wailing gesture*, *mp*. Measure 27: *p*.
- Vc.:** Measure 24: triplet of eighth notes. Measure 25: *sub.*, *p*. Measure 26: *fff*. Measure 27: *fff*.

Musical score for measures 28-31. The score is for Flute (Fl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Fl.:** Measure 28: *p*. Measure 29: *ppp*. Measure 30: *ppp*. Measure 31: *ppp*.
- A. Sx.:** Measure 28: *ppp*. Measure 29: *ppp*. Measure 30: *ppp*. Measure 31: *ppp*.
- Vc.:** Measure 28: *pp*. Measure 29: *ppp*. Measure 30: *ppp*. Measure 31: *ppp*.