

Lucy McKnight

**plunge**

for two violas, cello, and two basses

2018

## **Program Notes:**

This piece explores the feelings and imagery of my experiences in sauna and ice plunging culture in Finland. The first section, Sauna, is meant to convey slow warm breaths, gradually becoming more difficult or painful as the heat becomes overwhelming.

Escaping the heat, the sauna bather jumps into a hole carved into the ice-covered bay. The Ice Plunge section's overlapping shifting subdivisions are meant to convey the delightful yet frantic sensation of the freezing water surrounding the human. The interruptions of low "melting" moments are a sort of panicked attempt to calm down and combat the overwhelming iciness. As the ice water takes over the "melting" moments, it conquers the human and she gives in, climbing out onto land again.

From intense heat to intense cold, the human body, once out of water, achieves a strange feeling of equilibrium, a feeling of power against the cold air, a peaceful compromise of temperatures. In the Equilibrium section, the violas bring back the sauna material and the basses are a calmer continuation of the ice water. The cello is the human, in the midst of those two feelings and temperatures, combining low notes and harmonics and eventually finding peace.

## Performance Notes:

### General:


ST = sul tasto


SP = sul ponticello

-----> = gradually change from one technique to the next


### Sauna:

The first two notes of this section should arrive together, the remaining should be determined by each player's individual slow bow length, and should not necessarily land together.



 = soft scratch tone created by moving bow vertically up or down fingerboard while still moving slightly horizontally to maintain bow direction

 SP = hold last note on sul pont until everyone has arrived, then cue the next entrance



### ST to SP

 = quick vertical scratch, either from bow position ST to SP or SP to ST, on muted strings


### Ice Plunge:

slow  = approximately 

medium  = approximately 

fast  = approximately 

Playing within and between these approximate tremolos/subdivisions should be very free.

 = initial pitch should be exact, but the headless notes after should be careless and out of tune, slightly pitch bending to move from one indeterminate pitch to the next

# plunge

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**Sauna** ca. 8" each note, the length of one slow bow in your own time

Viola 1  
*sempre p*

Viola 2  
*sempre p*

Violoncello  
*sempre p*

Contrabass  
*sempre p*

Contrabass 2  
*sempre p*

6  $\text{♩} = 120$

Vla.1  
*sub.f*  
ST to SP

Vla.2  
*sub.f*  
SP to ST

Vc.  
*sub.f*


Cb.  
*sub.f*


Cb.2  
*sub.f*

**Ice Plunge**

♩ = 120 exhilarating, tingly

11


fast (approx. )

Vla. 1 *sempre f* med. (approx. ) med.

Vla. 2 *sempre f* fast

Vc. *sempre f* II slow

Cb. med. II

Cb. 2 slow (approx. ) *sempre f* III med. II



14

Vla. 1 fast

Vla. 2 med. fast

Vc. fast slow

Cb. slow med.

Cb. 2 fast slow

I I II I

18

Vla.1 med. fast

Vla. 2 slow

Vc. med. fast slow

Cb. fast med. slow

Cb. 2 fast

II I I II

Detailed description: This system contains measures 18 through 21. It features five staves: Vla.1 (Violin I), Vla. 2 (Violin II), Vc. (Violoncello), Cb. (Contrabass), and Cb. 2 (Second Contrabass). The key signature has one sharp (F#). Vla.1 starts with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by a half note on A4, and a quarter note on B4. Vla. 2 starts with a dotted quarter note on G3, followed by a half note on A3, and a quarter note on B3. Vc. starts with a dotted quarter note on G2, followed by a half note on A2, and a quarter note on B2. Cb. starts with a dotted quarter note on G1, followed by a half note on A1, and a quarter note on B1. Cb. 2 starts with a dotted quarter note on G1, followed by a half note on A1, and a quarter note on B1. Dynamics and articulation include 'med.', 'fast', and 'slow' markings with arrows indicating the tempo changes. Fingering numbers I and II are shown below the notes in the Vc. and Cb. parts.



22

Vla.1 med.

Vla. 2 fast

Vc. med. fast

Cb. fast

Cb. 2 slow

II

Detailed description: This system contains measures 22 through 25. It features the same five staves as the previous system. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Vla.1 starts with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by a half note on A4, and a quarter note on B4. Vla. 2 starts with a dotted quarter note on G3, followed by a half note on A3, and a quarter note on B3. Vc. starts with a dotted quarter note on G2, followed by a half note on A2, and a quarter note on B2. Cb. starts with a dotted quarter note on G1, followed by a half note on A1, and a quarter note on B1. Cb. 2 starts with a dotted quarter note on G1, followed by a half note on A1, and a quarter note on B1. Dynamics and articulation include 'med.', 'fast', and 'slow' markings with arrows indicating the tempo changes. Fingering number II is shown below the notes in the Cb. 2 part.

25

Vla. 1  
melting *ff* *sempre f* *slow* *med.* *fast*

Vla. 2  
melting *ff* *sempre f* *med.* *fast*

Vc.  
melting *ff* *sempre f* *fast* I

Cb.  
melting *ff* *sempre f* *fast* I (touch 2)

Cb. 2  
melting *ff* *sempre f* *med.* *slow* I



29

Vla. 1 *fast* *med.* *fast*

Vla. 2 *med.* *slow* *med.*

Vc. *med.* *fast* *slow* *fast*  
III I II

Cb. *slow* *med.*  
II

Cb. 2 *fast (touch 2)* *slow*  
II I

35

Vla.1

Vla. 2

Vc.

Cb.

Cb. 2

melting *ff*

fast *sempre f*

med. *sempre f*

slow

fast

med. *sempre f*

38

Vla.1

Vla. 2

Vc.

Cb.

Cb. 2

slow

fast

slow

med.

med.

fast



42

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc.

Cb.

Cb. 2

*melting ff*

*pp*

*med.*

*slow*

*fast*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*pp*

*med.*

*fast*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

47

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc.

Cb.

Cb. 2

*ff*

*f*

*med.*

*slow*

*fast*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

# Equilibrium

♩ = 60

in your own time, gradually move between sul tasto and sul pont. bow freely and slowly

fastest! multo SP

fastest! multo SP

fastest! multo SP

fastest! multo SP

fastest! multo SP

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*ff* *sub. pp*

*ff* *sub. pp*

*con sord.*

*sempre pp*

*con sord.*

*sempre pp*

solo

*expressivo*

*mp*

III II I (II) III



Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc.

Cb.

Cb.

*mf*

*sempre pp*

*sempre pp*

Faster  
(♩ = ca. 80)  
accel.

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-8. The score includes parts for Violin 1 (Vla. 1), Violin 2 (Vla. 2), Violoncello (Vc.), and two parts of the Contrabass (Cb.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 5/4 to 3/4 and then to 7/8. The Vc. part features triplets and is marked with 'unrelenting' and 'f'. The Cb. parts play sustained notes with some chromatic movement.



Musical score for the second system, measures 9-16. The score includes parts for Violin 1 (Vla. 1), Violin 2 (Vla. 2), Violoncello (Vc.), and two parts of the Contrabass (Cb.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 7/8 to 4/4. The Vc. part features triplets and is marked with 'rit.' and 'allow harmonics to be quite unreliable and nasty'. The Cb. parts play sustained notes with some chromatic movement.

Slow  
(♩=60)

arrive ST

Vla.1

Vla.2

Vc. *gently*  
*mp* 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Cb.

Cb.



Vla.1

Vla.2

Vc. *flickering*

Cb.

Cb.

Lightly tap harmonic fingering while maintaining sustained bow (should sound mostly like the harmonics but with slight disturbances)  
Begin tapping quickly then gradually slow pulse

Continue tapping after your bow has run out.  
Slow to nothing.