

Amidst Asphodel Meadows

Jonathan Sokol

Performance Notes

Duration: 8 minutes

ST: Sul Tasto

MSP: Molto Sul Ponticello

Accidentals apply only to the notes in which they precede except for repeated notes.

It is assumed that all pizzicato markings are to be played *ord.* unless otherwise indicated.

x noteheads : scratch-bow.

^ noteheads : highest note possible. They are sometimes bracketed in parenthesis to suggest freeness; both duration and pitch are for the performer to decide.

Beams without noteheads, found in the presence of glissandi, serve as rhythmical landmarks and are written for the player's benefit.

The alteration between **n** and **o** (m. 41) signifies the exchange between normal and harmonic fingerings. The intent is not to have the figure played as fast as possible, but to create a noticeable difference between the two sonic qualities at an appropriate tempo.

Feathered beaming in mm. 41-42 indicates a gradual *accel.* and *rit.* over the span of two eighth beats.

Grace Notes that are found in empty measures or without adjacent measured notes are to be played as closely and quickly to the nearest beat as possible.

Program Note

Though they have since been spread worldwide, the Asphodelus plants are perennials native to central and southern Europe, especially along the Mediterranean Coast. The plant grows nearly 3 feet in height, and bears numerous long, radical leaves and white, terminal flowers.

Along with a handful of obsolete medicinal uses, Asphodelus plants were, in ancient times, regarded as the preferred food of the dead, and were planted in large part near the tombs of the deceased. Furthermore, an entire meadow of the plants is thought to have constituted the middle section of the Greek Tartarus, or Hell. Called the Asphodel Meadows, this area was reserved for the indifferent and ordinary souls of the dead, neither heroic nor treacherous, a sort of Purgatory.

The String Quartet, while not narrating an imagined experience amongst the Asphodel Meadows, yet elicits a sense of stillness, stagnancy, and even death. And among the stale atmosphere, ambiguous wisps and otherworldly effects, the beauty of the Asphodel flowers steals through the darkness with fluid, melodic lines ushered in by and concluding with gentle breezes and fading winds.

Amidst Asphodel Meadows

for String Quartet

Hollow and Lifeless ♩ = Slow; no greater than 60

Like subtle, dying winds

(3 + 2) short long (2" - 3") con sord. non-vib. MSP remove mute long (2" - 3")

Violin I

Violin II IV MSP non-harm. short long (2" - 3") long (2" - 3")

Viola III ST (trem.) MSP short long (2" - 3") MSP (highest note) long (2" - 3")

Violoncello short long (2" - 3") MSP long (2" - 3")

mf *pp* emotionless

6

pizz. *p* arco senza sord. MSP (trem.) *ppp* pizz. *slow arp.* *ppp*

Violin I

Violin II (trem.) ST → MSP *mf* *pp* *mf* MSP *ppp* *ppp* pizz. *slow arp.* *ppp*

Viola ST MSP ST MSP *mf* *ppp* *ppp* pizz. *slow arp.* *ppp*

Violoncello pizz. arco (trem.) ST *p* *ppp* *ppp* pizz. *slow arp.* *ppp*

14

(4 + 4 + 3) ♩ = ♩

ord. arco *pp* emotionless *pp* *f* *pp*

Violin I

Violin II ord. arco ST → MSP ST → MSP *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *f* pizz. non-arp. *ppp*

Viola ord. arco MSP → ST MSP → ST *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *f* pizz. non-arp. *ppp*

Violoncello ord. arco *pp* emotionless *pp* *pp* *f* pizz. non-arp. *ppp*

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

A

20

Musical score for measures 20-25. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is in 3/8 time and includes various dynamics such as *pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *fppp*, *p*, and *pp*. Performance instructions include *arco*, *MSP*, *ord.*, *non-vib.*, *ST*, *pizz.*, and *Imperceptible attack ord.*. There are also markings for *3* and *5* fingerings.

26

Musical score for measures 26-29. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is in 4/8 time and includes various dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *f*, *fpp*, *ff*, and *p sub.*. Performance instructions include *arco*, *MSP*, *ord.*, *non-vib.*, *f espr.*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *ff*. There are also markings for *5:3*, *6*, and *3* fingerings.

30

Musical score for measures 30-33. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is in 4/8 time and includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *sub.*, *p*, *mp*, *pp sub.*, *n*, *mp*, *p*, *ppp*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, and *mf*. Performance instructions include *ord.*, *distant, ST*, *II*, *III*, *ST*, *MSP*, *arco*, *MSP*, *ST*, and *MSP*. There are also markings for *3* and *5* fingerings.

*m. 26: clarity between octaves is not desired

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

34

p *p* *p* *ff* *mp* (echo, a faint remembrance)
mf *pp poco rubato* *mp* *pp sub.* *fpp* *mf* *pp*
pp *mf* *ff* *ppp*
pp *f* *ppp*

38

mf *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *mf* *p* *f* *ppp* *mf* *mf*
pp *f* *ff* *ppp* *n*
pp *f* *ff* *ppp*
p *f*

42

(4 + 4 + 3)

p sub. *mf* *p* *f* *pp* *f*
mf *mf* *ff* *pp* *p* *n*
mf *pp* *ff* *pp* *n*
mf *pp* *ff* *pp* *n*
f *pp* *f* *pp* *n*

*m. 39: these grace notes on the beat.

**m. 41: this figure is not intended to be played so quickly that the effect is audible.

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

B Somewhat Blooming ♩ = 72; (at 60) ← ♩ = ♩ →

45

50

55

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

60 In tempo ♩ = 72 (2 + 3) (3 + 2) poco rit. Slightly Slower ♩ = 60

arco non-vib. pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp mp pp mp pp

arco non-vib. pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp pp mp pp mp pp

p p mf pp short non-vib. ord. 3 mp

arco non-vib. pp mp pp short pizz. mp pp

65 In Tempo ♩ = 72 ♩ = ♩ sempre (3 + 2 + 2)

mf f mp f p sub. mf ppp f

mf f mp f mf f

pp fppp mf pp mf pp mf

arco MSP (2 + 2 + 3) ST MSP ST

70 (3 + 2)

f p sub. mp pp non-arp. 5 p

f p sub. mp pp non-arp. 5 p

sul pont. III. pp mp sub. mf pp mf pp

MSP ST

*mm. 66: these glissandi to [microtonal] pitches are not meant to be precise, so long as a difference is audible.

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

C A Stirring of Life $\text{♩} = 58 \leftarrow \text{♩} = 58$

73

73

short

f

arco MSP

fpp

fpp

fpp

short

pizz. wildly

ff

arco MSP

fpp

fpp

fpp

short

mf

f

solo pleading

molto vib.

pp

mf

5

sul pont.

short

ppp

f

f

f

fpp

fpp

fpp

77

77

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

3

3

p

f

p

mf

f

3

3

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

81

81

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

3

3

ffpp

f

MSP

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

fpp

Amidst Asphodel Meadows - Score

85

IV **like unlabeled, free winds* ord. I non-vib.

fpp *f* *pp* *p* *mf* *pp*

fpp *f* *pp* *p* *mf*

MSP *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

IV *grind into string* ord. LH +

fpp *fpp* *mf* *ff* *p*

89

II MSP I

f *p* *mf* *pp* *mf* *ff* *p* *ff*

I ord. II MSP I

pp *f* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *ff* *mf*

fpp *fpp* *fpp* *fpp* *ff* *pp*

ord. → MSP

f *pp*

93

II ord. ord. non-vib.

ff *pp* *mf* *pp* *ff* *pp*

ff *mf* *sf* *pp* *ff* *pp*

ff *p* *ff* *p* *pp* *ffpp*

p *ff* *p* *ff* *p sub.* *ff* *mf*

*m. 87: pitches and durations are subjective;
use a light touch and, above all, play (and bow) freely.

