

SCORDABASSO

For double bass quartet
in III acts

David Miguel

Awarded with an honorable mention in the
2010 ISB/David Walter Composition Competition
(Chamber Division)

SCORDABASSO

For double bass quartet
in scordatura (full score)

David Miguel
Porto, June 2004

Estimated playing time: 10'30''

SCORDABASSO

Note from the author:

The idea of placing four Double Basses together using a *scordatura* as the one I chose, came from the need to create the appropriated sonority to a simultaneously dense and light harmony, which would not be reached with the standard orchestral tuning or the solo tuning. In this manner, the harmonic field opened a wide range of options that, among the timbre effects and different execution techniques, provide an identity to each Act although familiar with the other ones.

The language that I use intends to eliminate a common concept about this instrument, that is the feeling of a slow, obese and heavy sonority.

So, *Scordabasso, for Double Bass Quartet in III Acts*, aspires to demonstrate that the intensity, as well of the variety of atmospheres that this combination is able to provide to the listener, is much wider than one usually judges.

Porto, June 2004

Glossary

Tuning:

Double Bass 1:



Double Bass 2:



Double Bass 3:



Double Bass 4:



Notation:

- 1) The harmonics, whether natural or artificial, are written with the normal octave transposition, e. g., sounding an octave lower.
- 2) The notation of Double Bass 1 and 4 is written with the desired notes, not with the transposition of the notes to play on the strings with *scordatura*.
- 3) The execution of the harmonics is free, except when the string to be played is specified. When written as an artificial harmonic, it must be executed as so, even when possible as a natural harmonic. Example:

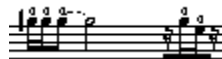


the A 4 as free execution.

- 4) Natural Harmonics – identified by a circle above the note or by a diamond. Diamonds are not used when the rhythmic values change. Examples:



- harmonic

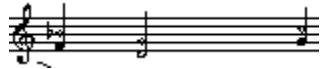


- harmonic



- harmonic (the same every 1/8 note)

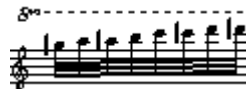
Artificial Harmonics – lower note, press; diamond, crop out the string. Example:



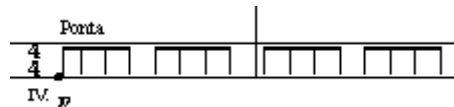
- 5) Artificial harmonic ascendant *Glissando*:



- will sound:



- 6) Percussive effect:



The headless notes indicate that the sound to perform must be uniform. The lines refer to the I (upper line) and IV (lower line) strings; it must be attacked as follows: place the instrument at an angle of 90° with your position, hold it with the left arm, and hit the string by the side, in such a way that it doesn't *buzz* against the wood. One should keep a constant and uniform pulse, except when the notation demands a different execution.

- 7) The accidentals apply to every note on the same line or space within the same measure.
- 8) The *glissandos* are notated with a straight line, with the word "*glis*", or with a wavy line connecting the notes.
- 9) Ascendant *arpeggio* from III to I string. All notes are harmonics:



Scordabasso - Act I

David Miguel

♩ = 96 *Tense*

Doublebass 1: 4/4, rests, then *ppp* with hairpins and notes starting at measure 5.

Doublebass 2: 4/4, rests.

Doublebass 3: 4/4, rests.

Doublebass 4: 4/4, *p* notes, *mp* notes, *s.t.* hairpin, *s.p.* hairpin.

Annotations: *Point*, *IV. p*, *mp*, *s.t.*, *s.p.*, *I. Point*

DB. 1: *mf* hairpin, *pp subito* notes, *s.p.* hairpin.

DB. 2: *pp* hairpin, *f* hairpin, *L.V.-----,* notes.

DB. 3: *pp* hairpin.

DB. 4: *mf* hairpin, *pp subito* notes, *s.p.* hairpin.

Annotations: *Point, with the hairs **, *s.p.*, *quasi sul tasto*, *pp subito*, *f*, *L.V.-----,*, *pp*, *Point, with the hairs **, *s.p.*

* The string should be attacked with the point, where the hairs overlap the wood.

DB. 1

13

Point

DB. 2

ffpp

L.V.

ff *pp* *p*

Glissando

(I)

DB. 3

mp *pp* *mf* *al niente* *mf*

Point

DB. 4

ffpp

21

DB. 1

f *mf*

DB. 2

f *mf*

DB. 3

f *mf*

DB. 4

f *mf*

* first crop out the string(s) and then, gradually, press them on the same position

A

29

DB. 1 *f* *ffp* *mf*

DB. 2 *p* *mf* *ffp* *p*

DB. 3 *p* *mf* *ffp* *p*

DB. 4 *fff* *f* *ffp* *mf*

pizz. *L.V.*

B

37

DB. 1 *p* *f* *p* *sf*

DB. 2 *p* *f* *p* *sf*

DB. 3 *p* *f* *p* *Arco* ******

DB. 4 *p* *f* *p* *sf*

* Standard position

** Percute the string the same way
DB. 4 did from bar 1 to 28

Scordabasso - Act I

DB. 1 *p* *sim.*

DB. 2 *mp*

DB. 3 *p*

DB. 4 *p*

DB. 1 *p*

DB. 2 *mp*

DB. 3

DB. 4 *p*

50

DB. 1 *p* *mf*

DB. 2 *mf*

DB. 3 *mf*

DB. 4 *mf*

55

C

DB. 1 *mf*

DB. 2 *mf* *f* *mf*

DB. 3 *mf*

DB. 4 *pp* *p* *pp*

59

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

ff

mf

D

63

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

f

p

f

p

f

p

f

p

70

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

f *p* *pp*

Molto Ligero sim.

pizz.

Arco (ord)
Molto Ligero sim.

E

77

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

I

II

I

IV

* Gradually rotate the instrument until E,
keeping a regular pulse and sound

F

DB. 1 ⁸⁴

DB. 2

DB. 3 II III

DB. 4 III IV

mf

mf

mf

mf

DB. 1 ⁹¹

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

Scordabasso - Act I

G

96

DB. 1 *ff*

DB. 2 *ff*

DB. 3 *ff*

DB. 4 *ff*

sim.

V

99

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

L.V.

*

* Strong hit with the hand on the back of the instrument.
Keep the strings vibrating for some seconds

Scordabasso - Act II

♩ = 100 *Fluent*

Doublebass 1

Doublebass 2

Doublebass 3

Doublebass 4

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

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

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

22

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

mf *f* *mf*

p *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

pont. *ord.* *pont.* *ord.* *pont.*

ff *mp* *mf*

H

30 *col legno batuto*

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

al niente *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp*

al niente *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp*

al niente *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp*

al niente *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp* *Arco* *mp*

34

DB. 1 *simile, crescendo poco a poco*

DB. 2 *p f p f p f p*

DB. 3 *p f p f p f p*

DB. 4

38

DB. 1 *f*

DB. 2 *f p*

DB. 3 *f p*

DB. 4

I *batuto, com as cerdas*
Ponta

DB. 1 *mf*

DB. 2 *ff* *pont.* *pp*

DB. 3 *ff* *pont.* *pp*

DB. 4 *mf* *des.** *asc.* *des.* *asc.* *des.* *asc.*

Arco sempre tremolo *f* *ord. sempre tremolo* *L.V. - - -*

DB. 1 *ff* *sf* (long)

DB. 2 *ff* *sf* (long)

DB. 3 *ff* *sf* (long)

DB. 4 *ff* *sf* (long)

L.V. - - - - -

* Artificial harmonic glissando
 between the given notes, towards the specified direction:
 ascending: asc.
 descending: des.
 The Bowing must respect the written rhythm

J *Very Subtle*

52 (Arco)

DB. 1 *pp* *simile, crescendo poco a poco*

DB. 2 *pp* *simile, crescendo poco a poco*

DB. 3 *pp* *simile, crescendo poco a poco*

DB. 4 (Arco) *pp* *simile, crescendo poco a poco*

K

60 *un poco espressivo*

DB. 1 *mf*

DB. 2 *mf*

DB. 3 *mf*

DB. 4 *mf*

75 *senza vibrato* *vibrare, un poco*

DB. 1 *p*

DB. 2 *senza vibrato* *vibrare, un poco* *p*

DB. 3 *senza vibrato* *vibrare, un poco* *p*

DB. 4 *senza vibrato* *vibrare, un poco* *p*

85 *senza vibrato*

DB. 1 *senza vibrato*

DB. 2 *senza vibrato*

DB. 3 *senza vibrato*

DB. 4 *senza vibrato*

96

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

al niente

al niente

al niente

al niente

Scordabasso - Act III

♩ = 60 *Precise*

Doublebass 1

Doublebass 2

Doublebass 3

Doublebass 4

senza vibrato
mp

senza vibrato
mp

senza vibrato
mp

sempre staccato
L.V. each note

sempre staccato
L.V. each note

mp

mp

8 **L**

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

senza vibrato
mp

mp

pizz.
Arco (ord.)

sempre staccato
L.V. each note

pizz.

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

M Scordabasso - Act III

12

DB. 1 *senza vibrato*

DB. 2 *mp*

DB. 3 *Arco (ord.)* *f* *mp* *pizz.*

DB. 4 *pizz.* *f* *mp* *gliss*

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

N

sempre staccato
L.V. each note

15

DB. 1

DB. 2 *pizz.* *Arco (ord.)* III

DB. 3 *gliss* *gliss* 6 6 6 6

DB. 4 *Arco, sempre tremolo (rapid)* 3 3 3 3 3 3 *Quasi s.p.*

18 **O**

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

mf

f

22 **P**

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

mf

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

mf 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 3 3 3

sem tremolo

Arco (ord.), over the bridge

col legno *

f

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

col legno *

* Oscilate between s.t. and s.p

32*

DB. 1
DB. 2
DB. 3
DB. 4

ff

35

DB. 1
DB. 2
DB. 3
DB. 4

pp *mf*

* Percute the specified area with the bow.

One must use the central part of the bow to hit the strings,
and the first half to hit the tailpiece and the bridge.

** DB. 2, 3, 4:

- 1 - Tailpiece
- 2 - Strings, behind the bridge
- 3 - Bridge

*** DB. 1:

- 1 - Tailpiece
- 2 - Strings, behind the bridge
- 3 - Bridge, underneath the strings

Pizz Bartok - I string

S

6 strings, col legno *

DB. 1
38
5 6 6 6
f 6 6
f 7 7 7

DB. 2
6 7 7 *f* 7 7
f 6 6

DB. 3
5 5 5 5
f 5 5
f 5 6 6

DB. 4
6 6 6
f 6 6 6
f 5 5 5 5

strings, col legno *

T

DB. 1
41
7 7 7 7
2/4
4/4 6 6 6 6

DB. 2
6 6 6 6
2/4 6 6
4/4 6 6 6 6

DB. 3
6 6 6 6
2/4 6 6
4/4 6 6 6 6

DB. 4
5 5 5 5
2/4 5 5
4/4 6 6 6 6

* Gradually oscillate between *s.p.* and *s.t.*, and between the four strings.

Scordabasso - Act III

44

DB. 1

DB. 2

DB. 3

DB. 4

pizz., behind the bridge
L.V. -----,
fff

*pizz., over the neck **
mp
*pizz., over the neck **
mp

pizz., behind the bridge
L.V. -----,
fff

* Attack the string in such a way that it does not vibrate against the wood.