

Matthew Tíramaní



CIRCLESONGS

on Joseph Hardy Neesíma

for Alto Saxophone and Fixed Audio

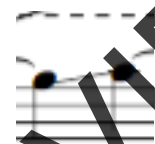
PREVIEW

Joseph Hardy Neesima, born Niijima Jō, grew up in a samurai family. He wanted to pursue an education in America, but travel outside of Japan was illegal at the time. He convinced a American ship captain to hide him on a ship on his way back to America, for if he was caught traveling outside of the country, he would be executed. He made it to America and began living with the Hardy family, changing his name to reflect this. Neesima became a minister during this time, and became an assistant and translator to the Iwakura Mission, an initiative by the Meiji government to conduct diplomacy and learn from Western territories. Neesima eventually returned to Japan and founded Doshisho University. He died in 1890, after uttering his last words, "Peace, joy, heaven."

Notation Guide



Bend freely, up and down, within the intervals of a quarter step and a whole step.
Feel free to implement this type of bend on long notes throughout the seven movements, even when it is not notated.



Perform normal portamento.



Bend to an indeterminate pitch.



Bend starting at the note with the notehead, bending for the duration of the tied notes. In this example, the performer should bend until reaching the dotted eighth rest.



Grace notes always come before the beat.



This notehead indicates a tongue ram.



Implement a growling effect.



Hold pitch for 5 seconds.



Large lines like these indicate that what is notated before the lines begin will resume as long as the lines last.



Notes with smaller noteheads in the sax line are cues in the audio that will help with keeping up with the audio part. Longer strings of these notes are surrounded by parenthesis to prevent confusion about what is a cue and what is to be played by the saxophonist. These cues are in written pitch so the saxophonist can play them to hear what they sound like without listening to the audio part.

About the Cadenzas

Performers may choose to create their own cadenzas. They may also modify the written ones if they desire, or if they need to compensate for certain notes that may be out of range of their saxophone model. Whatever the case may be, please keep in mind the style of the music and the dramatic implications these choices may have on the story, as well as the logistics of timing with the audio. Also, if one chooses to use the written cadenzas, they should be confident in the altissimo range and with overtones. Performers should attempt to make high notes as solid as possible.

Movement 1:
Neesima, Son of a Samurai

Alto Sax

Samurai fighting, followed by grainy pitched percussion

Grainy percussion becomes rhythmic, airy synth enters

Disciplined ♩ = 88

1:41

A higher airy synth leads you in

mf p mf p mf

8

mf

legato

f

11

Distant, shifting congas come in

mf p sim.

20

Congas shift and invite you to a call-and-response game

mf

sim.

8va

legato

26

8va

f

as before

mf p mf p

34

mf

f

legato

mf p

39

sim.

sim.

8va

mf

Final, echoing samurai yell

Movement 2:
Dreams of America

Serene ♩=67
a pure yet airy sounds sets the tempo

a distant, swirling sound and a manufactured voice

Alto Sax

0:36

fade out after you hear the airy sound come in

Like a good dream ♩=63

1:46

Audio

wait for voice

Improvise using the specified notes, switching octaves freely; each time the voice chords add a note, add the next note to your improvisation

waver between pp and ff throughout section

3:09

"Ob - serve good faith and jus - tice toward all na - tions cul - ti - vate PEACE and har - mo - ny with all."

Movement 3:
The Escape to America

*Sustained, blocky percussion
and warped strings play...*
♩ = 72, but not strictly

*...until the blocks descend
and you hear a low "poof"*

Blocks lead you in

0:25

mp

Be here b/w 0:45-0:48
Hold until 2 seconds
after low "poof" |

Blocks

0:39

improvise rhythms, play pitches in order

waver between mp and f throughout section

Be here b/w 1:03-1:06
Begin bend when low,
swashy sound starts to bend

Frantic = 130

an ostinato begins

slowly

*Ostinato continues,
with another voice entering*

even more voices enter

1:34

play

$$mf$$
8^{va} $(8^{va}$ g

no growl

 gr gr

Movement 4:
Land of the Free

With some push-and-pull ♩ = 130

*a glassy sound plays freely;
wait for the soundscape chord*

(no need to be strictly lined up with audio,
can be a little behind or a little ahead)

Alto Sax

Audio

*glassy sound re-enters;
again, wait for chord*

*glassy sound re-enters;
again, wait for chord*

*glassy sound re-enters;
again, wait for chord*

(slowly fade out)

(slowly fade out)

(slowly fade out)

PREVIEW

Movement 5:
Negotiating Peace

Alto Sax

Moderately (♩ = 80)

while sustaining, you hear two sets of thin sounds bending down on each side of your hearing

thumps

mp

mf

f

mf

freely, like a cadenza, but no longer than 23 seconds

:17

start after hearing this note

an upward metallic gliss leads into a familiar section

Tempered (♩ = 156)

:31

mf

improvise pitches based on this grouping (a note and then 2 minor seconds down, pitches given are just an example) like a bumble bee

:53

stop holding F# once you hear the echoing bass enter (the next entry of the audio after the bells)

end improvisation and move to F# when you hear the audio bells chime this

p

1:02

mf

grace notes sound before the beat

1:22

mf

f

f

f

f

f

Fast but relaxed (♩ = 220)

1:48

mp

mp

Movement 6:
Peace Across Two Lands
(IWAKURA)

Alto Sax

Audio

grainy percussion from movement one begins

Wavering (around ♩=90)

does not need to line up with audio, which is also not metronomic

pp

mf

a bright, sparkling sound

niente

differing grace note values are just estimates and not exact values

:19

:41

grainy percussion

Wavering even more now

mp

niente

a warm, reverberating sound

the bright sound again, not metronomic at all

the voice from before glisses again, this time very slowly, while everything else fades out

niente

9

9

15

15

X

X

X

X

Movement 7:
Peace, Joy, Heaven

Bliss (♩ = 60)
echoing

Audio

Peace, Joy, Hea - ven,

same order of words throughout piece

sounds from the past begin to join the voice...

7

:38

...and even more...

:56

Alto Sax

slowly

go to next measure after hearing the first "thud"

stop holding when you hear the second thud

1:12

ppp

mf

purring, accompanied by low, breathy organ from movement 2

18

mf

the shimmering stars enter

mp

f

24

mf

the blocky bells enter

p

f

the swirling sound enters

24

1:52

a bit distorted