

# ***AZIM***

**for string quartet, piano, percussion, horn  
and trombone. c 14m**

for Ilan Volkov's Tectonics Festival, Tel Aviv, October 2014.

completed at Cagliari, August 2014

---

---

**Program note** : The name *Azim* comes from the Greek *azymos* meaning *unleavened*. Unleavened bread is made when a settled people remembers its nomadic past. The prophets favoured the nomadic way, and prophetic law concerns what time gives, rather than the division and ownership of space that leads finally to the nation state. I, for one, want something else: I want the genius of Jewishness to flow through the world in nomadic and prophetic form, and I deeply resent the forcing of the Jewish mind into a bitter and provincial struggle to steal the neighbour's field. The laws of my composition are set to work in musical time and musical space in ways that often refer to these thoughts, without, of course, literally representing them. In the end music uses thought how it must, but I can only make music - or composed music at least - through thought and its feeling. *Azim* dedicates itself to all those who share its sense.

---

**Score** is written with Horn as sounds, not as transposed for horn in F.

At bar 95, meter changes from crotchet time in (mostly) 4/4 to quaver time in 4/8 .

**Pianist will need:**

a pair of **brushes** as used by percussionists, see bars 12, 15, 20, 78, 86, 87,

a plastic credit **card**, see bars 45, 54, 73, 135,

a plastic **box** as for zip, CD or cassette etc. see bars 116, 214 seq

a '**steel**' as used for steel guitar, c 7cm. (can be glass or dense plastic)  
distance markings, such as at bar 22, refer to distance between end of steel closest to bridge and bridge: steel is generally held at right angles to direction of strings.  
see bars 10, 22, 199 seq.

a **mallet**, for striking the frame. see bars 195, 197.

watch out for octava bassa signs!

Will need to position to see conductor when playing inside piano and when playing keyboard.

**Percussionist will need :**

Gong with plenty of high frequencies: stick dragged from centre to edge vertically. (bar 1)

Deep gong with large beater. (bar 6)  
Small hanging sheet (aluminium) play with metal serrated edge. (bars 15, 78, 87)  
Small snare drum for crisp roll. with drum-sticks. Lots of snare rattle and not much drum sound. (br 34)  
Large cymbal for roll with beaters (br 37 and 194)  
Hi-hat cymbals (br 42 seq. )  
Drum rubbed w fingernail (br 45 seq)  
Large gong with beater (91)  
Largish drum with brushes, circular motion. (92)  
Big cymbal with beaters (104)  
Zizz cymbal with beaters. (112)  
Large tam-tam with beaters. (122)  
cymbal played on dome with stick (138)  
small drum with brushes rapid oscillation (163, 182)  
Bells/chains hanging against metal sheet (low B resonance zone if poss.) : irregular rattling (168, 187)  
Smallish gong, pitch resonance circa A above mid C (175)  
A largish drum, perhaps a timp, with skin tension controlled by pedal, on which an inverted cymbal is placed. (214 seq)

The percussion part is mainly continuous textures rather than punctuative events. So it has not been necessary to allocate to each instrument a specific place on the percussion staff.

**Trombonist** will need harmon mute.

Some glissandi are written with an arrow leading to a free-floating accidental . In this case, a free-floating quarter flat sign means that the note is gradually taken down a quarter tone, irrespective of whether it is sharp, flat or natural in the first place.

In section 6, the trombone repeatedly plays a similar or identical pattern of rhythm and pitch change, differently transposed in the different iterations.

Rhythm: over the first 6 quavers, the notes get progressively further behind the beat until the sixth quaver which is one quarter of a quaver late. Over the next six quavers, they catch up. The following groups of 5 and the last 4 quavers are notated in the usual way.

Pitch: from the first to the ninth quaver, the trombone gradually raises the pitch, playing each note an eighth of one tone higher than the previous note. From the sixteenth to the twenty first note, a similar change of pitch occurs, only this time the steps are of one fifth of one tone.

From bar 135, the same patterns occur but slowed down and echoed by the cello (pitch and rhythm) and violin (rhythm only). This time the rhythm is fully notated, but the instruction for pitch change is retained.

**Horn** part is written as sounds in Score and for Horn in F in Part.

In the part, horn sounds a fifth lower regardless of clef. 'Alternating fingers' is to produce a timbral trill on one pitch. I have used the expression 'cuivré sound' leaving it up to the player how to achieve it at a given pitch and dynamic.

Some glissandi are written with an arrow leading to a free-floating accidental . In this case, a free-floating quarter flat sign means that the note is gradually taken down a quarter tone, irrespective of whether it is sharp, flat or natural in the first place.

In section 6, rhythmic notation for the horn part is as follows: grace notes (with stems down) are to be played as

if tied to the note that they follow and separated from the note they precede. The leading note is played as the first note of a triplet, the grace note as the second note, with the third part of the triplet silent. The whole triplet has a duration given by the duration of the leading note. This avoids notating groups of 15, 21 and so on, in favour of notating groups of 5, 7 etc.

Even where the following pitch is the same as the grace note, the grace note is played as attached to the preceding pitch and not to the following pitch, from which it is separated by an audible gap.

## **Strings**

In prolonged tremolos, the tremolo indication is given only at each new pitch. I use *tremolo* to mean fast bowing on one note, as opposed to fingered tremolo, tremolo across strings, or trill.

*Glissando continuo* means that a series of glissandi flow into one another without there being a stable note at any point. On the other hand, notes may pass from being stable to sliding, and vice versa: this should be clear in the notation.