

Petr Bakla

MAJOR SECONDS
night walking for double bass

(2008) (dur. 8'30")

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

The piece is notated on two staves. The upper staff indicates actions of the right hand, which plays *sempre arco*. The lower staff indicates actions of the left hand, which mainly produces pizzicati (see below).

“**NORMAL**” indicates standard way of playing, i.e. the left hand stopping, the right hand bowing. The “normal” sections are notated on the lower staff, the upper staff just indicating with broken line which string is being bowed. Please, **NO VIBRATO!**

Bow the A string as indicated. Diamond notes bearing X on their stems indicate "harmonic-like stopping", i.e. the string is not "fully" stopped (while maybe pressed upon considerably more firmly than with harmonics; to prevent possible natural harmonics from sounding, place three or four fingers on the string). As a result, the indicated pitches are heard, but somewhat blurry, noisy. However, avoid scraping sounds, please! In this example, each note is followed immediately by a left-hand pizz on open A (see below), produced by the action of the stopping finger(s) being removed from the string. The string is bowed throughout.

+ stands for left-hand pizzicato (in this example sul A). Play the left-hand pizzicati *tenuto*, producing quasi-legato melodic line; however, the imminent "portamento" due to position changes with every new pitch should be avoided or reduced to possible minimum.

The same string on which left-hand pizzicati are produced, is often also bowed simultaneously (typically *p*, poco pont. / sul pont.). In those cases, a feeling of continuous, quasi-legato melodic line consisting of left-hand pizzicati (dominant) mixed with bowed notes (somewhat in the background) should be produced. In order to avoid portamento, certain compensation in bowing will be necessary at the moment of changing position, i.e. before every new pitch there will probably have to be a slight, discreet caesura in bowing, which must not, however, undermine the desired quasi-legato feeling. For producing left-hand pizzicati on simultaneously bowed strings (especially on A), a slight accent with the bow at the moment of pizz action may help. These accents should not be made obvious, just give the pizz more intensity. Exception: see last four notes of the example (also p. 2) – in such cases the bow accents will be made explicit (circa as loud as the pizz). On the other hand, no such additional accentuation should be employed with left-hand pizzicati on open strings.

2 indicates 2nd finger, **4** indicates that the 4th finger will be used for playing the left-hand pizz (the note is obviously stopped by first finger or the thumb). In higher registers where stopping with the thumb is expected, letters **C** and **F** are used in analogy, meaning "close" and "far" (i.e. the pizz will take place either close to the stopping thumb or rather far from it, respectively). The purpose of this differentiation is the following: when playing close to the stopping finger, the pizz will take a coloring somewhat different from that of a pizz played farther from the stopping finger (in lower positions, typically a hint of a semi-tone or a whole-tone acciaccatura, respectively, takes place.) The two kinds of pizzicati should not be very different what regards intensity. The suggested use of different fingers / pizz positions is optional; it doesn't have to be observed at all, or it can be observed in some sections only.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON DYNAMICS: Basically only two dynamic indications have been employed for the left-hand pizzicati: "**mf**" for the pizzicati played on a stopped string (bowed at the same time or not), "**p**" for the pizzicati on open strings (always bowed simultaneously). These dynamic markings in inverted commas express the perceived intensity of sound produced, while the intensity of physical action will probably have to be considerably strong or rather strong, respectively. What regards dynamics of the right hand, the suggested **p** (or **pp**) appearing typically in connection with left-hand pizzicati has to be sensitively adjusted according to the actual musical and acoustical situation. The desired effect is that of having a kind of steady "background" for melodic lines of left-hand pizzicati, a background which will always be less prominent than the pizzicati, but not too soft in fact – in result, always something around *mf* versus *p* relation (exception: *Ritmico*, p. 2, see footnote).

Clasp the string firmly between thumb and index, producing indicated pitch (rough, but still not scraping sound). At release, somewhat pull the string and let it slap against the fingerboard, producing a kind of Bartók-pizz (*poco f*). The string is being bowed throughout.

Left-hand pizz on open string (always bowed simultaneously).

Left-hand pizz on open string produced right at the octave point. Being the string bowed sul pont. (or poco pont.), the result of the pizz at the octave point is that the fundamental will clearly appear for a moment.

TEMPO PRIMO

J ≈ 56 MM

ORD. POCO PONT. QVASI BATTUTO ma p, poco pont. NORMAL BOW ORD.

R.H. (A) "NORMAL" p dist. (A) "NORMAL"

L.H. z.v. F F C C F F (WITH RIGHT HAND AD LIB.) p mf p mf sub. pp mf

* DAMPEN THE STRING (RIGHT HAND) AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE

POCO PONT. ORD. POCO PONT. QVASI BATT. "NORMAL" ALWAYS LET SOUND

R.H. (E) "NORMAL" (A) p dist. (E) "NORMAL" (arco) ORD. sul D

L.H. p sempre F "mf" pp sul A

pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp < ff > pp

REPEAT 5x "NORMAL"

(THE D STRING SOUNDS OVER)

R.H. POCO PONT. p dist. l.v. G+ ORD. mf > mf > mf (5")

L.H. F "mf"

21/2/2008