



# HVAL

for solo bass

by  
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Hval is in two sections, both of which juxtapose open strings and stopped tones with natural harmonics. Please strive to find a sound and feel which mediates between them, so that the contrasting timbres always feel organic. Similarly, while the two sections of the piece are very different in character, please strive to project a connection between them, two aspects of a single personality.

In **section one** (mm. 1-130) natural harmonics are indicated by diamond noteheads on the touched node. The first appearance of each new harmonic also includes an ossia stave with the resultant pitch. (Where the resultant is the same as the node, no ossia is necessary.)

The ‘nodal glissandi’ at mm. 85, 98 and 99 are gestural: if you don’t quite get the notated highest pitch (i.e., the G# in m. 85, and the D# in mm. 98 and 99), don’t worry too much about it.

Mm. 89-97 and mm. 113-116 ask that you gradually ‘add’ ponticello. By this I mean to gradually moving the bow toward the bridge, bringing out extra, more unpredictable harmonics on top of the notated material. In mm. 90 and 92 the bracketed notes above the open Ds are guideposts, similar to the nodal harmonics discussed above. In general, go with what you get.

Mm. 117-128 are also gestural, at least in regards to the exact harmonics. Please try to retain the contours, rhythms, speed, and non-harmonic tones.

As the tempo marking indicates, this section should flow in an almost *moto perpetuo* way, without too much fluctuation in speed. In general, please regard slurs as suggestions.

**Section two** (m. 131-176), consisting almost entirely of doublestops, is written on two staves. The top stave is all harmonics, but here the fundamental open string is always indicated along with the fingered node and bracketed resultant pitch. (Where these are the same, of course, only the node is indicated.) Where helpful (because of excessive ledger lines), the name of the resultant pitch is indicated. The bottom stave has no harmonics, just stopped notes and open strings, with the single exception of m. 161, where both staves indicate harmonics. There are also two stopped notes that may be out of range for some players, at mm. 141 and 151. In these cases you can substitute a pitch an octave lower.

Needless to say, most of the natural harmonics will not be in tune with the tempered pitches indicated (i.e., the D-string’s F#, or the A-string’s C#). Further, several identically notated resultant pitches will in fact vary from one another microtonally (for example, the A-string’s E vs. the E-string’s E; or the G-string’s B vs. the E-string’s B). This raises the issue of intonation, how to tune the doublestops. Since the harmonics are fixed and inflexible, please tune the stopped note to the harmonic, rather than to the tempered pitch. By ‘tune to’ I mean: make intervals that sound good to your ear, that do not seem any more dissonant than necessary.

This section should feel measured and declaratory, like medieval music from another planet. The tempo does not have to be strictly metronomic – you can shape the phrases as you see fit, provided they can be heard as phrases. Please find a style of articulation that allows the notes to resonate while still retaining their connection to the notes which precede and follow them. The arpeggio at m. 175 is similar to those found in the first section of the piece.

Hval was written for the 2007 International Society of Bassists (ISB) Soloists Competition, Oklahoma City. “Hval” is Icelandic for ‘whale.’

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EVAN ZIPORYN

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1 ♩ = 88-100 RESONANT, WITH AN INEXORABLE FLOW

1 *p* *IV* *III* 3 3 3 3

7 *mp*

10 *mp*

13

16 *mp*

19 *mp*

22 *mp*

25

28 *mp*

31 *mp*