

# Ben Morris

---

*Commissioned by the Playground Ensemble*

## Ghost Figures



for two violins, viola, violoncello,  
percussion, and piano

© May 2021

Ben Morris Music

[www.benmorrismusic.com](http://www.benmorrismusic.com)

[bmorriscomposer@gmail.com](mailto:bmorriscomposer@gmail.com)

(+1) 973-722-0460

# Ghost Figures

for two violins, viola, violoncello,  
percussion, and piano

**Total Duration:** ca. 8'35"

## Program Note

*Ghost Figures* is inspired by the Barrier-Canyon Style pictograph panel known as the "Great Gallery" located in Horseshoe Canyon in Utah's Canyonlands National Park. The panel features apparition-like anthropomorphs and zoomorphs interacting in enigmatic ways. The precise meaning of the panel remains unknown, as there is little evidence of its meaning aside from scant material dug up by archaeologists, who speculate that the pictographs were created between 1-1100 AD.

After a visit to the canyon in summer 2020, I was struck by the immediacy of these artworks; coupled with the haunting, remote atmosphere in the canyon and the shade of nearby cottonwood groves, the panel draws you into a distant foreign world. I also noticed that in the particular locations where rock art is located in the canyon, there is a distinct slap-back echo, suggesting that these rock art sites were also possibly the sites of musical performances. I capture something of that mystery performance in this work, evoking a distant meeting of people by the side of this intricately decorated rock face.

## Percussion Instruments

Vibraphone, bongos (2), congas (2), splash cymbal, temple blocks (5), sandpaper blocks, medium tom, floor tom, concert bass drum.

## Performance Notes

Unless otherwise noted, the ricochets should be dry and short. They do not need to last exactly the number of notes specified in the score, they can be ad lib as long as the bow or drum stick naturally ricochets. Percussionist may substitute lighter mallets or sticks as they see fit to produce the maximum ricochet effect.

commissioned by the Playground Ensemble

Transposed Score

# Ghost Figures

Veiled  $\text{♩} = 48$

for piano quintet and percussion

Ben Morris

The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features the following parts:

- Violin I:** Flaut. (flute), *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Violin II:** *p*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Viola:** Flaut. (flute), *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Violoncello:** Flaut. (flute), *ppp*, *senza vib.*, *port. port.*, *p*, *ppp*
- Vibraphone:** *ppp*, *sim.*
- Piano:** *ppp*

The second system (measures 5-8) features the following parts:

- Vln. I:** *p*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Vln. II:** *p*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Vla.:** *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*  $\langle p \rangle$  *ppp*
- Vc.:** *ppp*, *senza vib.*, *port. port.*, *p*, *ppp*
- Vib.:** *ppp*
- Pno.:** *ppp*

Tempo markings include *poco rit.* and *sim.* (sforzando). The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat sign.

Ghost Figures | Ben Morris

2

A ♩ = 72

Musical score for section A, measures 8-13. The score includes staves for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Vib., and Pno. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 72. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. parts feature a melodic line with a fermata over measures 9-10. The Vc. part has a similar melodic line. The Vib. part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Pno. part has a chordal accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *fp* (no cresc.), *fp sim.*, *fp*, and *mf*. The instruction "rebow as required" is written above the Vln. I, Vln. II, and Vla. staves. The Pno. part has a dynamic marking of *f*.



B ♩ = 80

Musical score for section B, measures 14-19. The score includes staves for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., Vib., and Pno. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 80. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The Vln. I part has a melodic line with a fermata over measures 15-16. The Vln. II part has a melodic line with a fermata over measures 15-16. The Vla. part has a melodic line with a fermata over measures 15-16. The Vc. part has a melodic line with a fermata over measures 15-16. The Vib. part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Pno. part has a chordal accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The instruction "poco accel." is written above the Vln. I staff. The Pno. part has a dynamic marking of *pp* and the instruction "8va" above the staff.

20 **C** senza vib, flaut.

Vln. I *p* senza vib, flaut. *mf* *p* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vln. II *port.* *port.*

Vla. senza vib, flaut. *mf* *p* *sim.*

Vc. *pizz.* *arco* *port.* *port.* senza vib. *mf* *p*

Vib. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Pno. *loco*

**||** poco accel. *sim.* **D** ♩ = 168

26

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *mf* *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

Vib. *pp*

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Pno.

*mf* (just melody)

*pp*



*molto rit.*

**E** Tense ♩ = 60  
 rebow as required, senza vib.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Pno.

*ppp* rebow as required, senza vib.

*ppp* rebow as required, senza vib.

*ppp* rebow as required, senza vib.

*ppp* rebow as required, senza vib.

*ppp* to bongos

*mf*

mute w/ finger, like a slap bass

*mp*

40

Vln. I *gliss.* *mp* *ppp*

Vln. II *gliss.* *mp* *ppp*

Vla. *gliss.* *mp* *ppp*

Vc. *gliss.* *mp*

Vib. Bongos (with rutes) *ric., very close to edge like an echo* *f* *p* *close to edge sim.* *f* *p*

Pno. *3* *3* *3* *3*



45

Vln. I *quasi col legno ric.* *f* *p* *sim.* *f* *p*

Vln. II *quasi col legno ric.* *f* *p* *arco, ord.* *ppp* *mf* *gliss.* *ppp* *sim.* *f* *p* *quasi col legno ric.* *f* *p*

Vla. *gliss.* *mf* *ppp* *f* *p*

Vc. *ppp ric.* *mf* *ppp* *gliss.* *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Bongos *f* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *ric.* *pp* *ric.*

Pno. *3* *3* *3* *8vb*

**F** Più mosso ♩ = 68

50

Vln. I con vib. *p* *port. port.* *gliss.* *port. port.*

Vln. II senza vib. *p* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vla. *ppp* *gliss.*

Vc. *gliss.* *gliss.*

Perc. Splash cymbal (swipe with triangle beater) *p* ric. (with triangle beater) *pp*<sup>3</sup> ric. <sup>3</sup>

Pno. (8) —————

54

Vln. I *gliss.* *gliss.* overpressure //'

Vln. II *gliss.* *ff* overpressure //

Vla. *ff* overpressure //

Vc. *ff* overpressure //

Perc. ric. <sup>3</sup> To Vib. Vibraphone arco *mf* ord. //'

Pno. (8) ————— *ff*



59 **G** Bone dry echos through the canyon

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Congas (with rutes)  
ric.  
*ff*  $\rightarrow$  *p*      *ff*  $\rightarrow$  *p*      *mf*      *ff*  $\rightarrow$  *p*

Pno.  
(l.v)      wait for natural decay

64 quasi col legno ric.

Vln. I  
*f*  $\rightarrow$  *p*

Vln. II  
quasi col legno ric.  
*f*  $\rightarrow$  *p*

Vla.  
quasi col legno ric.  
*p*  $\rightarrow$  *ppp*

Vc.  
quasi col legno ric.  
*mp*  $\rightarrow$  *pp*

Congas  
ric. *pp*      close to edge *sim.* *f*  $\rightarrow$  *p*

Pno.  
(8)

flaut. *pp*      *p*

flaut. *pp*      *p*

flaut. *pp*      *p*

flaut. *p*

rit. . . . . molto vib.

69

quasi col legno ric. *mf* *p* *p* *ghostly, theremin-like* *molto vib.*

quasi col legno ric. *mf* *p* *p* *ghostly, theremin-like*

quasi col legno ric. *mf* *p* flaut. flaut.

quasi col legno ric. *mf* *p* flaut.

Congas *f* *p* *pp* to brushes swish in circles with brush

Pno.

**H** Ghosts floating through the canyon ♩ = 56

75

quasi col legno ric. *p* *ppp* *mf*

quasi col legno ric. *p* *ppp* *sim.*

ric. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

mute w/ finger *mf* *pp* *sub. mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

*8vb*

79

Vln. I *gliss. gliss.*

Vln. II *gliss.*

Vla. *sim.* *p* *ppp* *pizz.*  $\phi$  5 *mp*

Vc. *sim.* *mf* *mp* *pizz.*  $\phi$

Congas *Bongos ric.* *mf* *p* *p* 6

Pno. *(8)*

**I** *poco più mosso* ♩ = 60

83

Vln. I

Vln. II *arco* *3* *gliss.*

Vla. *pizz.*  $\phi$  5 *mf* *mp* *mp* *mp*  $\phi$  3 3

Vc. *p* *mp* *mp* 3 3 *mp* 5

Bongos *Congas (with rutes. close to edge)* *p* 7 6 5 *p* 6 *p* 5 *p*

Pno. *(8)* *loco* 3

10

87 rebow as required

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

Vln. I

Vln. II

rebow as required

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

Vla.

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

Vc.

5

5 5

5 5

3 3

3 3

3 3

3 3

Congas

Bongos (with rutes)

p 3 ppp

Pno.

+

+

8va

3

sub. più mosso ♩ = 64

highest possible harmonic

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

gliss. gliss.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

arco

gliss. gliss.

arco

gliss. gliss.

Vc.

arco

gliss. gliss.

sim.

sim.

sim.

sim.

sim.

sim.

sim.

sim.

f noisy

highest possible harmonic

f noisy

highest possible harmonic

f noisy

highest possible harmonic

f noisy

highest possible harmonic

f noisy

highest possible harmonic

p

p

p

p

p

p

p

p

p

To T. Bl.

Temple Blocks (5)

sandpaper blocks

mf

imitating bongo ricochet

sim.

f

pp

f

pp

3 6 3 3 3

mf

3 3 3

mf

quasi col legno ric.

ric., sim.

mf p

quasi col legno ric.

mf p

quasi col legno ric.

mf p

quasi col legno ric.

mf p

Temple Blocks

sandpaper blocks

f p

f pp

f pp



**K** sub. più mosso ♩ = 68

mf f

mf f

mf f

mf f

ric., on wooden rim (with drumstick)

medium tom ric. on edge of skin middle damp w/ hand ric., on wooden rim

mp mf f mp

secco, violent

fff pp

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Tom-t.

Pno.

ric. on edge of skin damp w/ hand

wooden rim floor tom on edge of skin middle damp w/ hand

*mf* *sim.* *mp* *mf* *f* *ffpp*

To B. D. damp w/ hand

*ffpp* flaut.

*ffpp* flaut.

*ffpp* flaut.

*fff* *pp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

B. D.

Pno.

ric., on wooden rim (with drumstick)

ric. on edge of skin middle damp w/ hand

ric., on wooden rim (with drumstick)

ric. on edge of skin

*pp* *pppp* *p* *ppp*

*pp* *pp* *ppp* *fff* *pp*

*mp* *mf* *f* *f* *fff* *pp*

*sim.* *sim.*

flaut.

flaut.

flaut.

*ppp* *fff*

103

Vln. I *ppp* *p* *ppp* *ffp*

Vln. II *p* *ppp* *ffp*

Vla. *p* *ppp* *ffp*

Vc. *sub. p* *ppp* *port. port.* *ffp*

Tom-t. *ppp* *p* *ppp* *p* *f*

Pno. *ff*

medium tom rim shot - press stick against head and move tip toward center of drum for pitch shift floor tom (sim.)

senza vib.

Bass Drum ric., middle

**||**

106 *accel.* *molto vib.* **L** Ecstatic ♩ = 76

Vln. I *ff molto espress.* *molto vib.*

Vln. II *ff molto espress.* *molto vib.*

Vla. *ff molto espress.*

Vc. *ff molto espress.*

B. D. *sempre secco* *ff*

Pno. *sim.* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp*

Ghost Figures | Ben Morris

14

109

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Tom-t.

Pno.

floor tom ric. med. tom ric. floor tom

*fff* *pp*



112

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Tom-t.

Pno.

Bass Drum

*fff* *pp*



rit. . . . .

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

B. D.

Pno.

*fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp*

*ffp* *ffp* *ffp* *ffp*

119 → overpressure

**M** An echo back in time ♩ = *sub.* 60

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

B. D.

Pno.

*fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp*

*ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp*

*ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp*

*ff* *ppp* *ff* *ppp*

use both hands to produce long ricochet

To Bongos

*p* twinkly, emerging from bass drum. freely stretching time

*8va* *loco*

Ghost Figures | Ben Morris

16

122

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

B. D.

Pno.

pizz. 3

*mf*

pizz. 7

*mf*

pizz. 5

*mf*

pizz.

Bongos (swish with brush)

*mf*

*p*

(swish)

*pp*

*8va*

*loco*

*8va*

*loco*



126

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Bongos

Pno.

pizz. 3

*mp*

*ppp*

pizz. 7

*mp*

*ppp*

pizz. 5

*mp*

*ppp*

pizz.

*mp*

*ppp*

(swish)

*ppp*

*p*

*ppp*

*8va*

*loco*

*8va*

*loco*

130 **N**

Vln. I pizz. 3 arco free harmonic slide 17  
*p* *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

Vln. II pizz. 7 arco free harmonic slide  
*p* *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

Vla. pizz. 5 arco free harmonic slide  
*p* *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

Vc. pizz. arco free harmonic slide  
*p* *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

Bongos *sim.* To Vib.  
*p*

Pno.

133

Vln. I pizz. 3 arco  
*pp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Vln. II pizz. 7 arco, senza vib.  
*pp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Vla. pizz. 5 arco, senza vib. gliss.  
*pp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Vc. pizz. arco, senza vib. gliss.  
*pp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

Bongos freely flux  
Vibraphone  
*p*

Pno.

18

137

poco rit. . . . .

**O** ♩ = 54

Vln. I *mf* *p* *mf* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vln. II *mf* *p* *mf* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vc. *mf* *p* *mf* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vib. *mp* freely fluxing, slower pace

Pno. *mp* freely fluxing, slower pace

==

141

accel. . . . .

**P** ♩ = 72

Vln. I *gliss.* *fp*

Vln. II *gliss.* *fp*

Vla. *gliss.* *fp*

Vc. *gliss.* *fp*

Vib. *f*

Pno. *f* freely place in bar

145

Vln. I *ff espress.*

Vln. II *ff espress.*

Vla. *ff espress.* *ffp* *gliss.* *ffp*

Vc. *ffp* *gliss.* *gliss.* *ffp*

Vib.

Pno. *ff espress.*

149

Vln. I *gliss.* *pp* *ppp*

Vln. II *gliss.* *pp* *ppp*

Vla. *ffp (no cresc.)* *ppp*

Vc. *ffp (no cresc.)* *ppp*

Vib. *ff*

Pno. (retake pedal but let bass notes sustain)

*poco accel.*

**R** ♩ = 160

*molto vib.*

155

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Pno.

*pp*

*p*

160

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vib.

Pno.

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

164 **molto rit.** S ♩ = 88

Vln. I *dramatic smear* *gliss.* *gliss.* **f**

Vln. II *molto vib.* *dramatic smear* *gliss.* **p** **f**

Vla. **pp** **mf**

Vc. *senza vib. dramatic smear* *gliss.* *gliss.* **pp** **mf**

Vib.

Pno.

168 **rit.**

Vln. I **ppp**

Vln. II **ppp**

Vla. **ppp**

Vc. **ppp**

Vib.

Pno.