

Russell Steinberg

Whack-A-Mole USA

Trio for Flute, Viola, and Double Bass



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op. 80

Trio for Flute, Viola,
and Double Bass

Duration: 6 minutes

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by Russell Steinberg
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Performance Notes

Whack-A-Mole USA is a sardonic response to Donald Trump's gaslighting to deny Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election. The piece opens with the flute riffing neurotically on the *Star Spangled Banner* and ultimately gets subsumed by the Russian National Anthem. However, both are fragmented and rhythmically altered to the point that it does not ever rise to full consciousness.

I was contemplating that tragic, almost Dadaist moment at the 2018 Trump-Putin press conference in Helsinki where Trump stood next to Russian President Vladimir Putin and proclaimed to the whole world that he trusted Mr. Putin's denial of Russian interference more than the conclusions of his own American intelligence agencies.

The surface of *Whack-A-Mole USA* is all neurosis! In the first section, labelled "Hack Attack," the flute keeps getting "whacked" by the viola and bass whenever it tries to establish motifs from the *Star Spangled Banner*. That flows into a second section, "Anxious scampering," where all three instruments chase each other to exhaustion. The third section, "Normalization," begins with the bass intoning motifs of the *State Anthem of the Russian Federation*, warping and bending the flute's *Star Spangled Banner* fragments. The viola joins the bass and the flute ultimately submits and joins the other two in the "Whack-A-Mole" motif.

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Whack-a-Mole USA

I. Hack Attack

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Allegro $\text{♩} = 120$

Flute: flz. ord.

Viola: pp f brutal!

Double Bass: pp f ff brutal!

5: timid more confident

10: pizz. rigid, robotic p graceful, gentle

mf pizz. rigid, robotic mf rigid, robotic

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2

13

p arco brutal!
ff f

arco brutal!

ff f

shril, paranoid

16

ff

19

mf f

mf f

21

24

calm

pizz.

espress.

pp

pp

pp

30

agitated

ff

Whack!

ff

Whack!

snap

ff

mp

4

35

v
5
f

arco
f

38

p
ff
ff

41

battle fanfare

flz.
mf < *f*

ff

pizz.

pizz.

p

<*mp*

pizz.

arco

45

p *mp* *p* *cresc.* *arco* *mp*

48

f *p* *ff* *arco*

f *p* *ff* *arco*

II. Anxious Scampering

51

pizz. *arco* *pizz.*

pizz. *arco* *pizz.* *p*

55

arco
f
arco
pizz.
p
p

59

mp
f
ff
arco
mp
arco
f
=f
mp
f

62

6
ff

65

pizz.

6

67

arco

69

arco

71

Musical score for strings. Measure 71: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 72: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 73: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns.

74

Musical score for strings. Measure 74: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 75: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 76: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. 'pizz.' markings are present in the middle and bass staves.

77

Musical score for strings. Measure 77: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 78: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Top staff: eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Middle staff: eighth-note chords. Bass staff: sixteenth-note patterns. 'arco' markings are present in the middle and bass staves.

80

pizz.

mp

pizz.

mp

84

f

arco

f

pizz.

86

p

pizz.

p

III. Normalization

89

insidious
arco

pp

f

94

f
arco

f

pp

5

99

pizz.

p

f

arco

f

mf

104

5 5 5

sf *mp* pizz.

sf *mp*

107

f

arco

f

pizz.

110

f

arco

f

pizz.

f

113

6

f

115

arco

pizz.

118

arco

120

tr~

123 (tr) ~~~~~ (b) o ~~~~~ p gradually submitting pizz.

(tr) ~~~~~ (f#) o ~~~~~

mf

p

127

arco

131 Adagio ♩=72

pp

tr

mp

pp

f

134

f

f

135

tr

5

mp

136

5

p 5 pp

138

Vivace $\text{♩}=144$

mf

pp

142

Adagio poco accel.

mp

Vivace ♩=144

145

f

flz.

p

p

Adagio ♩=72

148 ord.

pp

forced singing

mf

forced singing

f

pp

lontano

flz.

ord.

153

6

<*mf pp*<

mp

pp

158

poco accel.

pizz.
p

A tempo $\text{♩} = 120$

arco
mp
f
ff

arco

ff
tr#
pizz.

ff

Musical score page 18, featuring two staves of music.

Measure 167: The top staff begins with a dynamic of **(tr)**. The key signature changes from one sharp to two sharps. The bottom staff starts with a bass note followed by a series of eighth notes and sixteenth-note patterns.

Measure 168: The top staff begins with a dynamic of **tr**. The measure number **13** is centered above the staff. The bottom staff starts with a bass note followed by a series of eighth notes and sixteenth-note patterns. The instruction **arco** is written above the bass staff.