

Tom Armitage

Ajax Lattie

2021

For my beloved Andrew, my dearest Stoff & Ian, and my adored Sydney (RIP) & Sooty.

Ajax Lattie

by Tom Armitage

Duration: *c.* 1'

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes (one doubling Piccolo)

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in Bb

2 Bassoons

4 Horns

2 Trumpets in Bb

3 Trombones

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion I (Tubular Bells, Snare Drum)

Percussion II (Tam-Tam, Triangle)

Harp

Strings (10.8.6.5.3)

About the Piece

Ajax Lattie, which is Polari for a "nearby" or "adjacent home", seeks to capture the chaos and subsequent beauty of the queer person's struggle and search for "found-family". Although one minute is much too brief a time to create a narrative journey, considering the context and history of such a piece, I can only seek to highlight the chaos and intensity of the overall experience.

Essentially, it is through the trauma that we create the beauty of our found-family.

Ajax Lattie is, at least to my own hardened and (dare I say) tasteless ears, an expression of beauty. The open palette of tonal colours and dissonances, which may be striking or unnerving to traditional ears, is something I would admire if I came upon such expression in a human being. The journey for a queer person is rarely smooth, but the subsequent search for a place in this world is to create beauty from trauma. Existence from uncertainty. Home from rootlessness.

What others find beautiful, I rarely agree with. What others find camp or kitsch, I praise and idolise. I seek diversity and shamelessness in what I ultimately find to be beautiful. So, to that end, I present this wholly "beautiful" piece - *Ajax Lattie* - borne out of trauma, filled with flaws, void of thematic coherence, unsettled in its transitory passage, hardly even structured, but desperate to be loved by all. And to prove that, I have ended it with a major chord. Two, in fact! But at the same time. Because that is how much I want you to find this beautiful.

About the Composer

Tom Armitage (b. 1992) is a British composer and pianist from Hull, East Yorkshire. He gave his first piano recital aged eleven and conducted his first orchestral compositions at the age of thirteen. He studied piano and composition at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and the University of Malta.

An upcoming queer composer and performer, he explores themes of otherness, diversity, and absurdity in his music. He was a prize winner at the Icarus Composition Competition (2011), the 5th Edition of the International Composers Competition "Artistes en Herbe" Luxembourg (2020), and was shortlisted for awards in the annual Composer's Award held by the National Centre for Early Music in York (2008) and the Philip Bates Prize (2013).

His opera, *Isperanza*, was performed at Teatru Manoel in Valletta. This was followed by a second opera, *The Legend of the Blue Lady*. He performed his own piano concerto with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. Other ensembles and companies he has worked with include Hull Urban Opera, Orchestra of the Swan, the Schubert Ensemble, CHROMA, Decibel, the Ebor Singers, POW Ensemble (Netherlands) and Ise Boys & Girls Choir (Japan).

Other passions include Occitan history and culture. Occitan themes are a common feature in Tom's music. He has released a recording of his large-scale piano piece, *March 16th, 1244*, based on the brutal expulsion of Catharism from Occitania. As well as composing, Tom is mostly active as an opera répétiteur.

Ajax Lattie

Tom Armitage
June 2021

Chaotically (♩=70)

Flute I & II *div.* *ff* Flute II to picc.

Oboe I & II *div.* *ff*

Clarinet in B♭ I & II *div.* *ff*

Bassoon I & II *a2* *f < ff*

Horn in F I & II *div.* *f*

Horn in F III & IV *f div.* *f*

Trumpet in B♭ I & II *f* *f* *div.*

Trombone I, II & III *mp* *mf* *ff*

Tuba *f < ff*

Timpani (C, D, Ab) *f < ff* *f*

Tubular Bells *f* To S. D. Snare Drum *mf*

Tam-tam *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Harp

Chaotically (♩=70)

Violin I *div.* *f < ff* con sord.

Violin II *div.* *f < ff* con sord.

Viola *div.* *f < ff* con sord.

Violoncello *div.* *f < ff* tutti

Double Bass *div.* *f < ff* tutti

Intensely

(♩=40)

A

accel. 5

Fl. Flute I *pp*

Piccolo *pp* to flute

Ob.

Cl. *ppp* div. *ppp*

Bsn. *p* Solo. 3 4

Tba. *pp*

Timp.

S. D.

T.-t. To Tri. Triangle *p* 3

Hp. *ppp* *sim.* 3 3 3 5

Intensely **A** *ppp* senza vib. accel.

Vln. I *ppp* senza vib. div. (2,2) 3 3

Vln. II *ppp* senza vib. a2 3 3

Vla. *ppp* senza vib. div. (3,3) 3 3

Vc. *p* 3

Db. *ppp* *p* 3

In immense and agonising ecstasy (♩=90)

12

Fl. *div.* *f* *a2* *ff* *rit.*

Ob. *f* *ff*

Cl. *div.* *f* *ff*

Bsn. *div.* *f* *ff*

Hn. *a2* *div.* *f* *ff*

Hn. *a2* *div.* *f* *ff*

Tpt. *f* *ff*

Tbn. *f* *ff*

Tba. *f* *ff*

Timp. *tr.* *ff*

S. D. *p* *f*

Tri. *To T-t.* *Tam-tam* *sfz* *mf*

Hp. *ff*

In immense and agonising ecstasy (♩=90)

Vln. I *senza sord.* *con vib.* *div.* *f* *ff* *rit.*

Vln. II *senza sord.* *con vib.* *div.* *f* *ff*

Vla. *senza sord.* *con vib.* *div.* *f* *ff*

Vc. *solo.* *f* *ff*

Db. *f* *ff*