

Ornaments

on Samai Ta'er, Duet for Two Tars

N. P. Stottlemyer

NPS 003 - \$15.00

Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Ornaments on Samai Ta'er is first in a series of duets written for frame drums. It is based on the Turkish waltz rhythm of Samai Ta'er and uses an abundance of extended techniques for the *tar*. This composition is written for two tars, preferably tuned a perfect 4th apart with medium tension to enhance harmonics. If possible, only tunable tars with synthetic heads should be used to guarantee consistent and lasting tuning.

The tar is a frame drum originating from Nubia (modern-day Upper Egypt and Sudan). Similar frame drums are found over much of the Near/Middle East and may be known also as *duff*, *mazhar*, or *daff*. The tar and its cousins are made with either a cut-out or thumb hole to facilitate holding the instrument with an Oriental grip. For this piece, each tar must have a thumb hole to execute visual effects.

Performers of this composition should be familiar with the traditional techniques for the tar. In addition to traditional techniques, extended techniques enhancing the fundamental tone and harmonics of the drum are used. The instrument produces a variety of tones which are all used throughout the performance of the piece. There are three basic tones of the tar: dum, tek, and the muted stroke. Dum is played with the 4th finger on the skin between the center and the edge of the drum. Tek is played with the 4th finger on the edge of the skin where it meets the bearing edge. The muted stroke (often called "pa" or "sak") is played with the tips of the fingers in the center of the skin. Extended techniques are used to "ornament" the piece. The fundamental is played by knocking the backside of the shell with heel of the hand. Harmonics are achieved by placing a single finger on the skin while playing the fundamental or tek. The drum spin is a visual effect achieved by "tossing" the drum inward and allowing it to spin around the thumb supporting the instrument with the thumb-hole. The spin is concluded by catching the drum with the dominant hand after a single revolution. The brush stroke is achieved by brushing the skin with the fingertips or fingernails. The shell knock is done by "knocking" on the shell with the first knuckle of the dominant hand's third finger. The outward snap is executed by closing the dominant hand, followed by snapping or "flicking" each finger outward beginning with the 2nd finger on the rim of the drum.

Key:

Dum Fundamental Fundamental (Harmonic) Drum Spin Muted Stroke (Pa or Sak) Brush Stroke Tek Tek (Harmonic) Shell Knock Outward Snap (on rim)

For a recording of this piece and a video lesson demonstrating extended techniques, visit www.NPStottlemyer.net. Any questions regarding the performance of this piece can be directed to:

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