

About *Alas, but notwithstanding*

Alan B. Stout (1932–2018) was an extraordinary human and the teacher of many (including myself). Possessing an unusually playful sense of verbal humor, he once remarked that his favorite word was “notwithstanding”. Like his favorite word, the form of this piece results from combining and reordering eight smaller musical “words” to create longer continuities and new meanings. The complex sounds in the saxophone quartet all share a simple harmonic idea: each sound or harmony must contain microtonal variants of the initials, A and S (the pitches A and Eb-flat).