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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Context and Application – Perceiving Musical Stimuli and Developing an Identity

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree Master of Arts

in

Music

by

Edward Hamel

Committee in charge:

Professor Lei Liang, Chair
Professor Eun-Young Jung
Professor Chinary Ung

2014

The Thesis of Edward Hamel is approved and it is acceptable in
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Context and Application – Perceiving Musical Stimuli and Developing an Identity

by

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Master of Arts in Music

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This collection deals with two issues: the manner in which a listener perceives musical stimuli; and the sociological and environmental interactions which define one's identity. As music unfolds over a duration of time, listeners are in a state of constant inspection and perceptual organization. Relationships between musical dimensions are established based upon the manner in which listeners group stimuli. Awareness of these organizational tools allows a listener to attain a more engaging interaction with a musical

discourse. In regards to our identities, we do not define ourselves but rather are defined by the environment in which we are exposed. In a sense, our identities are a composite of influence. Such influence can shape who we are as artists, as is shown in the relation between visual artists and my own music of the last 4 years, or confines us to certain categorical labels, such as our ethnicities.

Dimensional Expansion of Recursive Material – Perceiving the First 90 Measures of
Triadic Memories

When perceiving a musical discourse, a listener is meticulously scanning, segregating and organizing temporal stimuli. The formulating process occurs in real-time and retrospectively through modulations of duration. In an instant, a listener receives a multitude of musical dimensions such as pitch, duration, texture, articulation, etc. These musical messages¹ taken from presently active repertoire pass through temporal channels and are assembled into unified structures (Moles 1966, 9). The resulting structures are quite complex, consisting of an abundance of messages. Adaptation to the environment consists precisely in being able to select from these complex and redundant messages to provide constant control over the external world (Moles 1966, 60). The perception of a musical discourse and in fact reality itself would be disorderly and chaotic without our means of cognitive organization. “Order is a consequence of organization, and organization the result of natural forces (Koffka 1935, 175).”

These cognitive organizational tools also assist in perceiving permutations of musical dimensions. Once a listener perceives a dimensional layer, such as a rhythmic figure, the listener is further able to distinguish between repetition and alterations of such figure. In regards to symmetrical repetition, “There is a connection between the intelligibility of perceived forms and their degree of symmetry (Moles 1966, 154).” However, it is possible to impress on the mind the possibility of repetition while in actuality minute alterations are being executed. Subtle dimensional variations upon a recursive musical gesture diverge from exact repetition testing a listener’s expectations

¹ A message is a finite, ordered set of elements of perception.

and foreseeability. Perceived repetition begins to diminish as the originality added by variation compensates for the redundancy caused by repetition (Moles 1966, 155).

In the opening of *Triadic Memories* for solo piano, Morton Feldman uses a 6 note musical gesture for the first 90 measures of the work. While the pitch material remains the same throughout, Feldman uses nuance rhythmic alteration in each restatement of the gesture. The subtle structural variation of rhythmic cells redefines each gesture deviating from exact repetition. Simultaneously, Feldman also employs gradual shifts in register to recontextualize the 6 note gesture. The transformation of register alters the intervallic and harmonic relationships between each pitch and creates a sense of temporal acceleration based upon a pattern of timbral change. From these dimensional expansions, Feldman deviates from exact, symmetrically repetitive patterns while remaining within a recursive and economical 6 note sonic texture.

Feldman's 6 note gesture contains the pitches G, G#, D, Bb, A and C#. These pitches abide to a rhythmic phrase as found in the first 4 measures of the piece.



Figure 1.1) Mm. 1 – 4 *Triadic Memories*

While the pitches G and Bb do not rhythmically alter throughout most of the opening section, the G# - D & A - C# gesture is rhythmically transformed every 4 measures. The 4 measure phrase (see Figure 1.1) is rhythmically varied with each restatement usually offset by a 16th rest. We can see an example of this by comparing mm. 1 - 4 to mm. 11 - 14.



Figure 1.2) Mm. 11 – 14 *Triadic Memories*

Comparing mm. 1 – 4 and 11 – 14 shows the following permutations:

- G# - D in m. 11 shifted one 16th rest earlier than in m. 1.
- A - C# in m. 12 shifted two 16th rests earlier than in m. 2
- D - G# in m. 13 shifted one 16th rest later than in m. 3
- C# - A in m. 14 shifted two 16th rests later than in m. 4

With each restatement of the 4 measure phrase, the music cycles through a pattern of two dotted 8th note rests, one 8th rest and one 16th rest transforming the G#, D, A, C# gesture.

Patterns of Rest mm. 1 - 90

Mm. 1 - 4	γ γ γ γ̇	Mm. 47 - 50	γ γ̇ γ γ
Mm. 7 - 10	γ γ γ γ̇	Mm. 51 - 54	γ̇ γ γ γ
Mm. 11 - 14	γ γ̇ γ γ	Mm. 55 - 58	γ γ γ̇ γ
Mm. 15 - 18	γ γ̇ γ γ	Mm. 59 - 62	γ̇ γ γ γ
Mm. 19 - 22	γ̇ γ γ γ	Mm. 63 - 66	γ γ γ γ̇
Mm. 23 - 26	γ γ γ̇ γ	Mm. 67 - 70	γ γ̇ γ γ
Mm. 27 - 30	γ̇ γ γ γ	Mm. 71 - 74	γ γ γ̇ γ
Mm. 31 - 34	γ γ̇ γ γ	Mm. 75 - 78	γ γ̇ γ γ
Mm. 35 - 38	γ̇ γ γ γ	Mm. 79 - 82	γ γ γ γ
Mm. 39 - 42	γ γ γ̇ γ	Mm. 83 - 86	γ̇ γ γ̇ γ
Mm. 43 - 46	γ̇ γ γ γ	Mm. 87 - 90	γ γ γ̇ γ

Figure 1.3) Patterns of Rest mm. 1 - 90

Since the patterns of rest between each phrase are quite similar, the rhythmic gestures between phrases are also similar – as seen in comparison of mm. 1 – 4 & mm. 11 – 14. Comparing these selections shows there are 5 identical patterns repeating across numerous 4 measure phrases:

- Mm. 1 – 4 & 7 – 10
- Mm. 11 – 14, 15 – 18 & 75 – 78
- Mm. 19 – 22, 27 – 30, 43 – 46 & 51 – 54
- Mm. 23 – 26 & 55 – 58
- Mm. 39 – 42 & 87 – 90

While these phrases are identical, symmetrical repetition is difficult to establish due to the proximity of each restatement. For instance, the pattern in mm. 23 – 26 occurs again in mm. 55 – 58. Because the distance between each pattern is rather large, about 30 measures, it is difficult to hear an association between the two. There are instances in which repetitive patterns occur consecutively but there is always a dimensional alteration coinciding with the repetitive patterns. For instance, mm. 11 – 14 & 15 – 18 have the same rhythmic pattern consecutively but there is a change in register, and timbre, in m. 15. While the rhythmic gesture is the same between both phrases, the timbre between the two selections is quite different diminishing the possibility of true repetition.

Since the rhythmic variations are quite nuance, nothing larger than a shift of a dotted 8th note, and Feldman is using the same 4 rest pattern, there is a sense of regularity in the first 90 measures of the piece. The opening section feels as if the music is not progressing, as if the music is still. However, in actuality, rhythmic cells are changing every 4 measures and the work is consistently evolving. Due to the regularity between the repeating 6 note

gesture and the diverse rhythmic patterns, a listener develops a sense of expectation and foreseeability as opposed to strict reiteration.

When phenomena is regular (isochronous), repetitions lead to a concept of rhythm (Moles 1966, 68). In this case, rhythm is discussed as a consistent pattern of activity, not as a musical duration. The criterion of an isochronous rhythm is after an event one expects the following one (Moles 1966, 68). The occurrence of an isochronous event creates a sense of expectation and foreseeability.

Unicity —————> repetition possible —————> isochronism —————> periodicity
 Unforeseeability but unforeseeable statistically foreseeable foreseeable

In *Triadic Memories*, what is isochronous is the rate of change of the rhythmic cell, which is every 4 measures. A listener may adapt to these rhythmic alterations consistently occurring every 4 measures; however, one is unable to distinguish what the following rhythmic change will be. The new pattern could be any of the 14 laid out above (see Figure 1.3) making it difficult to foresee what will occur in the next restatement.

An ordered phenomenon tends to give rise to forms (Moles 1966, 66). The perception of these forms (i.e. pitch, rhythm, dynamic, etc.) emerge from periodicity. An event is periodic when it repeats itself at the end of a duration or period of time. Periodicity expresses temporal structuring based upon the mathematical expectation of knowing the coming evolution on the basis of past evolution (Moles 1966, 69). In his essay *Tempus ex Machina*, composer Gérard Grisey provides a hierarchical chart of periodicity.

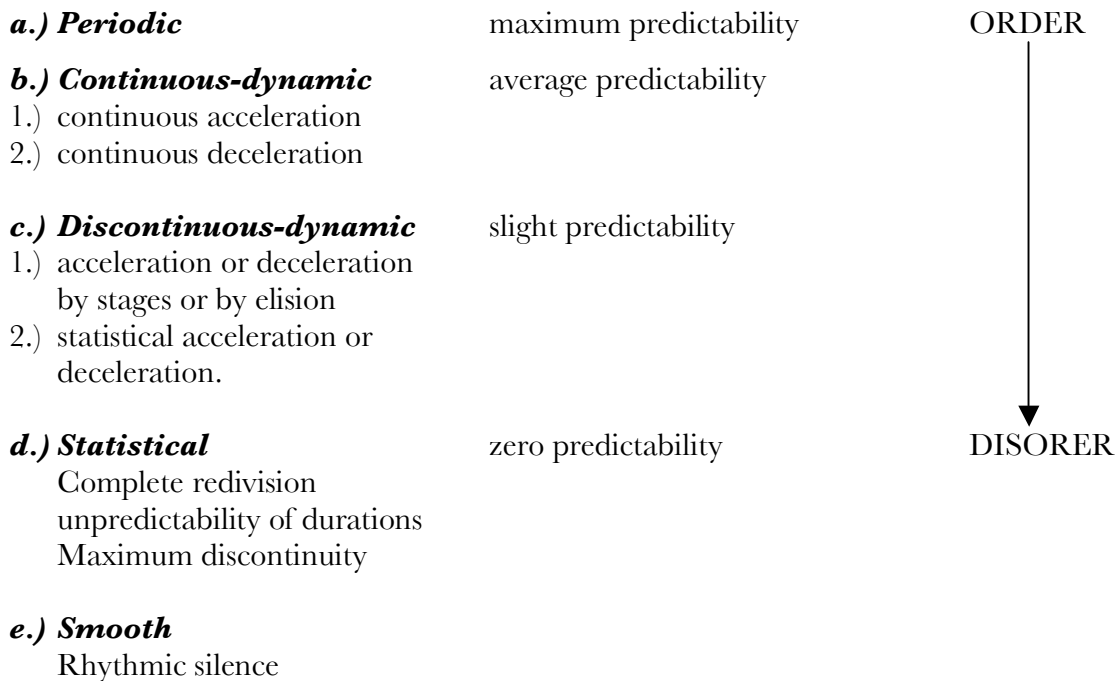


Figure 1.4) Chart of periodicity from *Tempus ex Machina*

Based upon Grisey's chart, the opening of *Triadic Memories* would lie in the Statistical category due to the unpredictability of durations. While material has an isochronous rhythm, alterations in rhythmic gesture occurring every 4 measures, a listener is unable to discern which of the 14 patterns of rhythmic variation will statistically come next. By avoiding a periodic order while simultaneously using an isochronous rhythm, Feldman deviates from symmetrical repetition resting on the boundaries between stasis and expansion. While the rhythmic transformations converge repetition and expansion, Feldman also gradually transforms registers to recontextualize the otherwise constant 6 note gesture.

To perceive is to select. As temporal events unfold during a musical discourse, we constantly scan to decompose messages into sequences of intensive elements transmitted into an order. This decomposition is based on tendencies set forth by Gestalt psychologist Max Wertheimer in his essay *Laws of Organization of Perceptual Forms*. Wertheimer states

that stimuli having similar characteristics tend to be grouped together. For example, patterns within a sequence of (0) and (+) result from a *factor of similarity*.

00 ++ 000 +++ 0 + 00 ++

The symbols are grouped as (2, 2, 3, 3, 1, 1, 2, 2), due to the visual similarities.

In the case of a sequence consisting of a singular stimulus, i.e. (8), our organizational process segregates the message into units based upon visual and/or temporal space – the *factor of proximity*.

888 8 88 8 88 8888 88 8 88 8

By this factor, the sequence is organized as (3, 1, 2, 1, 2, 4, 2, 1, 2, 1.) Auditory information occurring quite close in temporal proximity will be heard as contiguous or as a simultaneous *clang*.² Sounds of similar timbre or pitch-register (of similar pitch) tend to seem “connected (Tenney 1964, 29).” The *factor of similarity* applies to various musical dimensions such as amplitude, envelope, temporal and vertical density as well as any attribute of sound we are able to distinguish from another. In a collection of sound-elements, those that are similar will tend to form *clangs* (Tenney 1964, 36).

Feldman begins *Triadic Memories* with an extreme contrast in range of the piano (see Figure 1.1) The 6 note gesture ranges from G#1 – D1 & A1 – C#1 in the left hand and G6 – Bb6 in the right hand, each hand being 5 octaves apart. Due to the expansive proximity of range, the gestures are segregated and cannot be perceived as a unit i.e. the left hand is one voice and the right is another. Furthermore, another reason for the segregation is the difference of timbre. The lower range of the piano has a distinguishable timbre in relation to the higher range. Therefore, their timbres are vastly dissimilar

² A sound or sound-configuration which is perceived as a primary musical unit or aural gestalt.

further separating both voices. Because they are perceived as segregated, the pitch material of each gesture do not relate - intervallic and harmonic relationships are difficult to establish. Throughout the first 90 measures, Feldman progressively joins these two registers together and then apart again. In mm. 1 - 4, the left and right hands are furthest in range from one another. However, in m. 43 the same 6 note gesture is being played within the same register – the 4th octave.



Figure 1.5) Mm. 43 – 44 *Triadic Memories*

At this juncture, due to the factor of proximity and the pitch's timbral similarity, the material in both the left and right hands are heard as a unified structure. What were two voices in m. 1 has become a homogenous collection in m. 43. Because both voices are unified, and the sustain pedal is held down throughout the duration of the piece, there are numerous intervallic relationships between the pitch material at this juncture. The most prominent interval is a 2nd. As Feldman states, "The music is made of essentially just two different kinds of intervals: a minor second, a major second, which of course is also a minor seventh and a major seventh (Feldman 2000, 155)."

Mm. 43 – 50 Organized as Minor 2nds:

G – G#
C# – D
A – Bb

Mm. 43 – 50 Organized as Major 2nds:

G – A
G# – Bb/A#

Prior to this juncture, we hear these same pitches arranged as 7ths beginning in m. 35



Figure 1.6) Mm. 35 – 36 *Triadic Memories*

Mm. 35 – 36 Organized as Major 7ths:

G# – G
D – C#
Bb – A

Mm. 35 – 36 Organized as Minor 7ths:

A – G
Bb/A# - G#

There is an additional manner in which to organize these pitches. In regards to composing *Triadic Memories* Feldman states, “If the piece does not sound overly chromatic at times, it’s naturally because the sevenths that I superimpose have the old memory of a familiar triad (Feldman 2000, 156).” If we consider the 6 note gesture as a collective cluster of interwoven pitches, we can conceive of triadic relationships between various pitches as well as the 7th chords which Feldman made mention.

Organized as Thirds:

A – C# - Major 3rd
G – Bb – Minor 3rd
Bb – D – Major 3rd
Bb/A# - C# - Minor 3rd

Organized as Chords/Triads (Memories of triadic figures/sonorities):

Bb – D – A – Major 7th Chord
A – C# - G# - Major 7th Chord
Bb/A# - C# - G# - Minor 7th Chord
G – Bb – D – Minor Triad

Such a manner of intervallic thinking may relate to Feldman's preliminary thought process on constructing the piece:

I'm trying to balance, a kind of coexistence between the chromatic field and those notes selected from the chromatic field that are not in the chromatic series. And so I'm involved like a painter, involved with gradations within the chromatic world. And the reason I do this is to have the ear make these trips. Back and forth, and it gets more saturated. But I work very much like a painter, insofar as I'm watching the phenomena and I'm thickening and I'm thinning and I'm working in that way and just watching what it needs...

The memory of these chords/triads is created within the resonant field. All of these intervals circulate and exist simultaneously in the same temporal field where a listener can make these back and forth trips Feldman describes. The initial attack of each pitch is the more blatant intervallic relationship – it is the birth of a relationship. The accompanying resonance is where the pitches are free to explore – it is the existence of relationships. A listener has the freedom and temporal ability to redefine these sonorities within the resonant field. Each restatement is a courtesy allowing another opportunity to hear and rebuild intervallic relationships of a sonority in a different manner. What could be a minor 2nd, major 7th or a relationship to a triad is simultaneously present and flourishing in various ways with each restatement of the 4 measure phrase. While the 4 measure phrase is the most prominent material guiding the structure of the opening section, there is an additional isochronous rhythm of timbral phraseology guiding a sense of temporal modulation.

Each shift in register occurs on a relatively consistent rhythm – every 8 measures. When these transformations occur, the timbre/texture is altered based upon the octave range in which the 6 note gesture is being played. As previously stated, the difference between the lowest range of the piano and the highest is drastically different in terms of

timbre, texture and dynamic. Similar to the permutations of rhythmic material, Feldman uses a specific pattern of timbral shifts creating a distinct phraseology.

Timbral Phrases by Transformations in Register

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| - Mm. 1 – 6 Range of the 1 st octave & the 6 th | - Mm. 69 – 70 Range of 1 st octave & 6 th |
| - Mm. 7 – 14 Range of the 1 st octave & the 6 th | - Mm. 71 – 74 Range of 1 st octave & 7 th |
| - Mm. 15 – 18 Range of 2 nd octave & the 6 th | - Mm. 75 – 78 Range of 1 st octave & 3 rd |
| - Mm. 19 – 26 Range of 2 nd octave & the 5 th | - Mm. 79 – 80 Range of 2 nd octave & 3 rd |
| - Mm. 27 – 34 Range of 3 rd octave & the 5 th | - Mm. 81 Range of 3 rd octave & 5 th and 6 th |
| - Mm. 35 – 42 Range of 3 rd octave & the 4 th | - Mm. 82 Range of 4 th octave & 5 th and 6 th |
| - Mm. 43 – 50 Range of 4 th octave both hands | - Mm. 83 – 84 Range of 3 rd octave & 4 th |
| - Mm. 51 – 54 Range of 3 rd octave & 4 th | - Mm. 85 – 86 Range of 3 rd octave & 5 th |
| - Mm. 55 – 58 Range of 3 rd octave & 5 th | - Mm. 87 – 88 Range of 1 st octave & 6 th |
| - Mm. 59 – 62 Range of 2 nd octave & 5 th | - Mm. 89 – 90 Range of 1 st octave & 7 th |
| - Mm. 63 – 68 Range of 2 nd octave & 6 th | |

Figure 1.7) Timbral Phrases of mm. 1 – 90 of *Triadic Memories*

Until m. 51, a majority of the timbral phrases are 8 measures long with the exception of mm. 1 – 6 and mm. 15 – 18. Due to this consistency, a perceived isochronous rhythm emerges creating a foreseeable pattern of timbral change. After so many repetitions of the same pattern, one can expect a shift in register of the left and/or right hand every 8 measures. While the pattern is fairly consistent throughout the first 50 measures, after m. 50 the changes become more sporadic and shorter. Starting in m. 51, the length of the timbral phrases changes from 8 measures to primarily 4 measures, half the length of the previous isochronous rhythm. Furthermore, starting in m. 79 the timbral phrases decrease to 2 measures in length. Feldman increases the rate of register transformations from every 8 measures to 4 and finally to every 2 measures. While the tempo is not

fluctuating in these sections, the diminishing duration of timbral phrases suggest an increase of tempo as restatements of the perceived patterns are accelerating. By m. 79 the timbral phrases are changing 4 times faster than where they began in m. 7. Temporal modulations, due to the rate in which timbre is shifted, further balances the work between stillness and progression. Feldman gives an impression of consistent temporality. The music remains in one tempo throughout the opening section while subtly accelerating from the gradual compression of duration of each timbral phrase.

In conclusion, *Triadic Memories* rests on a synapse of methodical motion and introspective stillness. By cycling through a series of rhythmic patterns in an isochronous rhythm, gradually shifting register and altering timbral fields in an accelerating pattern, the opening of *Triadic Memories* consists of dimensional expansion on numerous levels simultaneously. At the same time, Feldman abides to an economical amount of material such as the 6 note gesture, the patterns of rests and a 4 measure phraseology. The music progresses in a nonlinear fashion expanding in an array of directions at different rates of change. Feldman states, “Structure cannot be constructed in the linear fashion but must be seen in its entirety. One must then work on the exact proportion. The time structure then makes it possible to create music on a canvas or better yet not unlike the architect’s four walls or the engineer’s bridge across a river. Structure then makes us ask what the basic materials are and what is unnecessary. (Noble 2013, 4).” *Triadic Memories* conjoins and blurs the boundaries of symmetrical repetition and expansion of musical stimuli tampering with foreseeability and a listener’s expectations of how the music behaves and evolves.

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Raised by Visual Artists

In August of 2005 I was staying in Astoria, Queens with typographer Amanda Harbour. Amanda had an overpriced studio apartment off Broadway which she had resided in for 2 months, at that point. She was studying at Parson around this time and was well on her way towards being kicked out which occurred about 6 months later or so. Amanda was extraordinarily gifted, wildly creative and forcefully influential. She had been working on a new typeface and was sketching out the capital letter “A” for about two weeks. When she would leave the miniature, cigarette smoked caressed studio apartment, I would turn on the two overhead red lights, allow my eyes to adjust to the crimson filled room and examine the sketch left on her drafting table. It was covered in erased lines and palm prints created out of pencil lead residue. In the center of these drafting marks was a beautiful, developing “A.” I could see the meticulous care she had for this object, for this letter. I had never thought of typeface as an art nor letters as objects which could be transformed and creatively crafted. I was intrigued with this process of creating a single letter. Guiding each line to a harmonious meeting of careful symmetry. Due to my interest in her work and typography, Amanda shared the work of Jasper Johns with me. We looked through a book featuring a collection of his *Gray* work. She discussed the symmetry, the potential of color and various visual techniques with me. I liked Jasper Johns’ work very much. The paintings were stimulating while being subtle and modest. There was an entire world within the color gray. I could see each letter/number was precious to Johns. Each object had to be in the exact position it was placed surrounded by a specific choice of colors and hues, each with its own unique personality. The conversations I shared with Amanda in the unconscious hours of the

night over terrible coffee and obscure music playing subliminally underneath our voices in the red light began to influence my thoughts on my own music. I began to think of organizing sounds within time in a similar obsessive manner as Amanda did lines within space.

Almost one year after this encounter in Astoria, I met Keith Judge at a music venue in Chicago. Keith was primarily a painter at this time though he had interests in writing, photography and film. He worked about 6 blocks away from me on Wacker Dr. in downtown Chicago so we would get together quite frequently during our lunch breaks. On this particular day, Keith was discussing a new piece he was working on. He wanted to incorporate natural elements from the city into his new work. At a stoplight, Keith reached into the base of a street light post and pulled out a handful of dirty leaves covered in tar-like grime. He rubbed the substance through his fingers saying, “This is what I want to use. I should use this.” Keith was always rummaging through undesired nooks of the city. He would frequently comment on architecture, the color of certain objects and the behavior of visual stimulation. He shared a painting of his with me entitled *Triptych*.



Figure 2.1) *Triptych* – Keith Judge

I remember feeling a sense of captivating interest and assurance when I first saw this painting. I was unaware painting could exist like Keith's *Triptych*. He taught me about Abstract Expressionist painters and instructed me to read *The Artist's Reality – Philosophies of Art* written by Mark Rothko. As I became exposed to the work of Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still, Franz Kline, Ad Reinhardt, etc. I began to imagine how I could emulate these visual influences and ideas sonically.

I visited the Art Institute of Chicago quite frequently. I was obsessed with Francis Bacon, Alberto Giacometti and Mark Rothko. I could sit in front of a painting for an indefinite amount of time. I could stand in front of *Figure With Meat* until the museum closed if I wanted. The work was still, as was I. Neither one of us had to leave. Paintings are reliable; you always know where you can find them.

Visual artists raised me to be a composer. What these artists were discussing visually resonated with me and inspired me to organize my thoughts into notated music. For me, sounds are less reliable; they appear, exist for a period of time and leave us – they are temporal. However, the process of creating a sculpture or painting is also temporal. Materials are shaped, molded, abandoned, elongated, diminished and made malleable over a period of time. Yet, when the work is complete we do not have access to this process – the process becomes fixed. The temporality is now abandoned for a still image which does not change. As I began to write notated music, I realized I have the ability to work with elements that are temporal and fixed simultaneously by focusing on the recursive process of building a musical gesture. My works *Countenance*, *Butchered and Consumed by the Facets of Extension* and *As a Portrait of Absence* were each influenced by specific painters. These works demonstrate how I treat musical phrases as my material (plastics),

duration as a tool to shape such materials and time as my canvas to work within – as in visual artwork.

Countenance was written in the summer of 2011 for Ensemble Dal Niente consisting of alto flute, English horn, baritone saxophone, violin, viola, cello and contrabass. It was my first attempt at creating something concerned with temporality as well as stasis.

Countenance was directly influenced by the painting *Nude Descending a Staircase* by Marcel Duchamp.

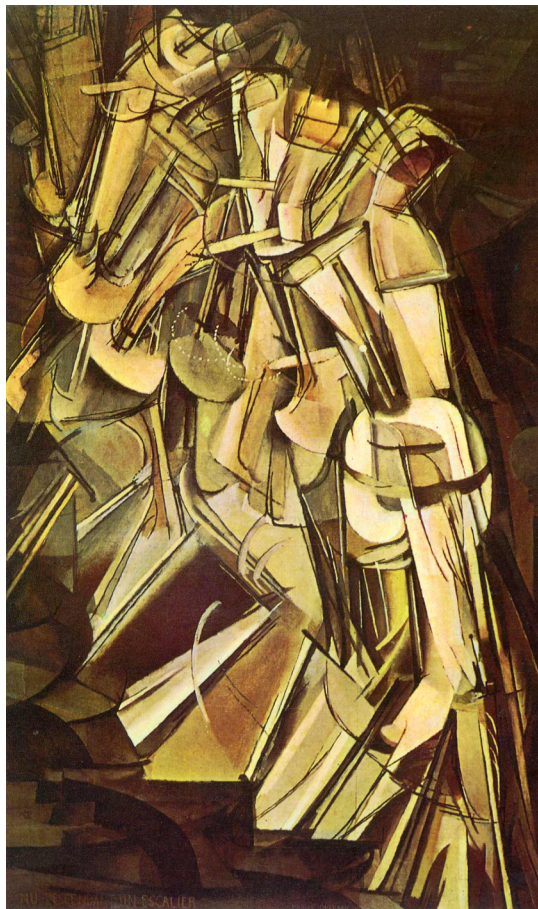


Figure 2.2) *Nude Descending a Staircase* – Marcel Duchamp

The *Nude* was Duchamp's first exploration in Cubism. He describes, "...I decided to get away from all the influences I had been under before. I wanted to live in the present, and the present then was cubism. You see, in 1910, 1911 and 1912 cubism was new: the

approach was so different from the previous movement that I was very much attracted toward it. I became a cubist painter and gradually came up with the *Nude* (Duchamp 1973, 129).” In conversation with Duchamp, James Johnson Sweeney describes the *Nude* as, “having movement in it (Duchamp 1973,130).”

Reading that short phrased opened creative opportunities for me. I realized movement is achieved based on an elapse of time. In the absence of time, motion cannot exist. In the *Nude*, we can see the process of an object, the nude figure, starting at one point and reaching another. What is most important for me is not the beginning and arrival point for the figure but rather the space in between these points – the motion. We can visually see the motion even though we are looking at a fixed medium. Within this painting, we see the elapse of time, the progression of a figure and it’s behavior within the barriers of time. We see an impression of motion because the reality is motion does not truly exist in this fixed painting.

At the same time I was exposed to this work, I was beginning to write *Countenance*. I wanted to achieve a similar idea giving the impression of movement without actually having progression. What was Duchamp’s nude figure was my musical motif. I wrote the following passage in alto flute to act as my figure:

The musical score is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a single note on the first line (F4) marked with a fermata, a slur, and the instruction "senza vib." above it. Below the note is a dynamic marking of *p*. Following this, a complex melodic line is written with a slur and a fermata. This line includes a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked with a "3" and a slur, followed by a quarter note (B4) marked with a slur and a fermata. The dynamic marking *mp* is placed below the first note of this complex line, with the instruction "(main voice/ soft attack)" written below it. The complex line continues with a quarter note (C5) marked with a slur and a fermata, followed by a quarter note (D5) marked with a slur and a fermata. The dynamic marking *mp* is repeated below the D5 note. The line concludes with a quarter note (E5) marked with a slur and a fermata, with the instruction "senza vib." above it. A bracket above the final two notes (D5 and E5) is labeled "5", indicating a fifth interval.

Figure 2.3) *Countenance* musical figure

Just as Duchamp showed gradations of temporality with his *Nude* figure, I wanted to do the same with this musical gesture. My solution to creating a similar effect was to have each instrument gradually introduce the same melodic figure but with slight rhythmic variation from the initial alto flute line. As opposed to writing any rhythmic or melodic permutations of this figure consecutively, I had them to occur simultaneously as a heterophonic musical texture. The duration of the figure is about 4 ½ beats. All permutations had to begin and end within this temporal frame. The start and end of this duration is the beginning and arrival points of the figure. In between these points is where the motion is free to exist – where the figure is descending. The alto flute acts as the main voice followed by imitative entrances of the cello, English horn, viola, baritone saxophone and violin.

The image displays a musical score excerpt from the piece *Countenance*. It features six staves. The top staff is for the Alto Flute, marked 'senza vib.' and 'p', with a melodic line that includes a triplet of eighth notes and a quintuplet of eighth notes. The second staff is for the English Horn, also marked 'senza vib.' and 'p', with a similar melodic line. The third and fourth staves are for the Cello and Viola, respectively, both marked 'pppp' and 'p', with rhythmic patterns of eighth notes. The fifth staff is for the English Horn, marked 'S.T. molto vib.' and 'senza vib.', with a melodic line that includes a triplet of eighth notes. The sixth staff is for the Cello, marked 'p', with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, *(mp)*, *pppp*, and *p*, and includes performance instructions like 'blend with flute'.

Figure 2.4) Excerpt from *Countenance*. Entrances of cello and English horn

Each entrance introduces a variant aspect of the figure. It could be an aspect of the beginning of the figure building towards the end, as in the cello line, or beginning at the end and working backwards, as in the English horn. As the layers begin to build upon one another, the clarity between instrumental timbres becomes increasingly obscure. Timbres blend together to create a homogenous, drone-like sound. This layering process continues to build until the actual “image” is fully exposed in measure 54-55.

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'Countenance'. It consists of multiple staves, likely representing different instruments or voices. The score is written in a standard musical notation with various dynamic markings and performance instructions. Key elements include:

- Dynamic Markings:** The score uses a range of dynamics from *ppp* (pianissimo) to *p* (piano), with *mp* (mezzo-piano) also present.
- Performance Instructions:** Phrases like "senza vib." (without vibrato) and "S.T." (Sordano Tenore) are used to guide the performer.
- Articulation and Phrasing:** Slurs, accents, and breath marks are used to indicate phrasing and articulation.
- Technical Markings:** Fingerings (e.g., 3, 5, 7) and other technical notations are provided for specific passages.

Figure 2.5) Excerpt of *Countenance*. Full musical image.

Once the image has been established, it is repeated about 5 times without any additional modifications. Listeners are invited to stay with the image, change perspectives and admire various aspects of the texture. At this point, I am treating the image as a fixed painting. Of course the musical image is concerned with temporality as it unfolds over a portion of time; however, since the musical material is not shifting, a listener can stay with the image for a relatively extended period. It is a fine barrier between boredom and perspective freedom. In measure 60, a second image is introduced with similar behavior as the first.

♩ = 40 bpm tutti rit... tutti accel... ♩ = 46 bpm

The image shows a musical score for a section titled "Second musical image". It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is marked with a tempo of ♩ = 40 bpm and the instruction "tutti rit...". The second system is marked with a tempo of ♩ = 46 bpm and the instruction "tutti accel...". The score features multiple staves with various musical notations, including dynamics such as *p*, *mp*, and *ppp*, and performance instructions like "senza vib.", "molto vib.", "amblo vib.", "S.T.", and "semp vib.". There are also numerical markings (3, 5, 7) and bracketed phrases. The score concludes with a double bar line and the instruction *ppp*.

Figure 2.6) Excerpt of *Coutenance*. Second musical image

The second image begins with the full heterophonic texture and gradually disintegrates to the foundational melodic figure in the alto flute, and finally to a complete absence of the figure in measure 80.

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'Countenance'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a piano part (treble clef) and a violin part (treble clef). The piano part features dynamic markings of *ppp*, *p*, *mp*, and *pp*. The violin part includes performance instructions such as 'senza vib.' (without vibrato) and 'vib.' (with vibrato), along with a triplet of eighth notes. The second system continues the piano part with dynamics *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*, and the violin part with dynamics *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. A second ending bracket labeled 'II' is present in the violin part of the second system. The score concludes with a double bar line and the number '72'.

Figure 2.7) Excerpt of *Countenance*. End of second musical image

This main, heterophonic and recursive section of *Countenance* was successful for me. I felt I achieved a balance between progression and stasis. A melodic figure was introduced in a very clear, conventional manner and was morphed into a dense, textural plateau. Within this ethereal mass, listeners could hear a sense of motion while listening to a line that is essentially repeating over and over again for about 4 minutes. I took these ideas of temporal frames, musical figures, images and temporality and expanded upon them even further in my saxophone quartet.

Butchered and Consumed by the Facets of Extension for saxophone quartet was written in November of 2011 for Anubis Quartet. When I began to work on this quartet, I was feeling confined and bombarded by influence. I felt I was losing a sense of my foundational self and was being forcefully influenced by social and environmental stimuli around me. This feeling of decrease, compression and a subtle withering away is what resurfaced my attraction to the work of Francis Bacon, especially his portraits.



Figure 2.8) *Study After Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* – Francis Bacon

I read a book entitled *The Logic of Sensation* by Gilles Deleuze. In this work, Deleuze analyzes various works of Bacon in a poetic and philosophical way. A few topics interested me from these writings. The first was the concept of Bacon's blurriness. Deleuze discusses two types of blurriness in Bacon's work. In regards to the first, he writes, "...the blur is obtained, not by indistinctness but... by the operation that consists in destroying clarity by clarity (Deleuze 2002,9)." The second case of blurriness "is obtained by the techniques of free marks or scrubbing, both of which are also among the precise elements of the system (Deleuze 2002, 9)." It was insightful to hear what seemed to be Bacon's active aggression and deconstructive mannerisms was actually very carefully planned and approached – "destroy clarity by clarity."

From this, I wanted the main section of my quartet to be fluid and legato with a blurred sensibility. As opposed to writing something aggressive to convey my current sense of confinement, I would make something precise and eerily delicate. Just as in *Countenance*, I wanted to continue with my explorations of heterophonic textures so each instrument could not be distinguished from one another – this also had to do with losing my sense of self. Everything must be the same, sound the same and behave the same. I came up with the following passage:

Butchered and Consumed by the Facets of Extension (For Anubis Quartet) -edward hamel-

C. Score

Legatissimo & slurred throughout.
Fluid, gentle, ethereal, and enigmatic. ♩ = 66

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Figure 2.9) Excerpt of *Butchered and Consumed*

Each instrument is performing the following sequence of musical gestures:

- A descending lip bend as low as possible
- An ascending lip bend as high as possible
- A trill
- An ascending - descending lip bend as low as possible.

Although each instrument is performing the same motif starting at the same pitch in a canonic-like manner, they are performing in separate temporal fields by use of triplets.

Each voice is cycling 3, 5, 7 and 9 triplet figures. These temporal canons create an intricately woven, homogenous texture. The use of lip bends is my way of “scrubbing” the musical motif. The starting pitch of the motif begins to descend by a semitone with each entrance forcing the musical texture to bleed in a descending manner – much like the faces of Bacon’s portraits (see Figure 2.7)

The second influential concept from Deleuze was what he called “*descending-rising* opposition (Deleuze 2002, 65).” This inspired the opposition of time and the potential of negating directionalities by overlapping ascending and descending lip bends. Deleuze uses the 1944 triptych of monsters to describe, “a descending head whose hair is falling downward, and an inverted head whose screaming mouth is aimed upward, are placed on either side of the head with the horizontal smile (Deleuze 2002, 65).”

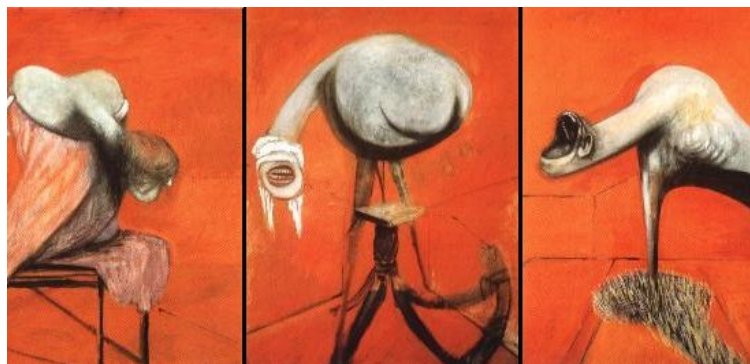


Figure 2.10) *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* – Francis Bacon

Deleuze finds similar behavior in the *Studies of the Human Body* stating, “the two recumbent Figures in the middle panel are flanked, on the left, by a form that seems to rise up from its shadow and, on the right, by a form that seems to descend into itself and into a puddle (Deleuze 2002, 65).”



Figure 2.11) *Studies of the Human Body* – Francis Bacon

The last concept I attained from Deleuze was taken from Messiaen’s comments on active rhythm, passive rhythm and attendant rhythm. Messiaen states, “Imagine a scene in a play between three characters: the first acts in a brutal manner by hitting the second; the second character suffers this act, since his actions are dominated by those of the first; lastly, the third character is present at the conflict but remains inactive (Deleuze, 2002, 60).” I conveyed the idea of active, passive and attendant in the second section of the quartet. The section opens with voices 1 and 3 playing a sustained and stable multiphonic – the duration of the multiphonic is based on the breath capacity of the players. These voices act as the attendant, inactive voices. Voice 4 begins to play a short motif after 10 seconds of the multiphonics. Voice 4 is the active voice as it contains more rhythmic, dynamic and melodic activity – there is actual motion. The entrance of Voice 2 follows shortly after Voice 4 consisting of a simple trill – this is the passive voice. Voice 2 can only begin once Voice 4 becomes active – it depends on voice 4 to exist. However, both voices 2 and 4 depend on the existence of 1 and 3 since the breath capacity is guiding the

duration of the phrase. In this work, the attendant/inactive voices are the landscape which all other stimuli exist upon and within.

Figure 2.12) Excerpt of *Butchered and Consumed* – second section

In a single breath, sustain multiphonics until loss of breath creating a natural diminuendo to silence. Blend with Tenor.

In a single breath, sustain multiphonics until loss of breath creating a natural diminuendo to silence. Blend with Alto 1.

Alto Sax: (breathily) (begin shortly after Baritone) $\downarrow = 30$ bpm Legatissimo/durred ppp

Ten. Sax: (breathily) (begin shortly after Alto 1 & Tenor) $\downarrow = 60$ bpm Legatissimo/durred $ppp pppp$

Bar. Sax: (breathily/definite pitch) tr ppp

Diminuendo to silence following Alto 1 & Tenor

Diminuendo to silence following Alto 1 & Tenor

(rest until each instrument reaches silence/is out of breath)

In a single breath, sustain multiphonics until loss of breath creating a natural diminuendo to silence. Blend with Tenor.

In a single breath, sustain multiphonics until loss of breath creating a natural diminuendo to silence. Blend with Alto 1.

Alto Sax: (breathily) (begin shortly after Baritone) $\downarrow = 50$ bpm Legatissimo/durred ppp

Ten. Sax: (breathily) (begin shortly after Alto 1 & Tenor) $\downarrow = 66$ bpm Legatissimo/durred $ppp pppp$

(definite pitch) tr p

(definite pitch) mf p

Diminuendo to silence following Alto 1 & Tenor

Diminuendo to silence following Alto 1 & Tenor

(rest until each instrument reaches silence/is out of breath)

Figure 2.12) Excerpt of *Butchered and Consumed* - second section

The handful of pieces I completed after *Butchered and Consumed...* dealt with very similar musical ideas. My language did not evolve much further than what I had done with *Countenance* and *Butchered and Consumed...* – mainly because I did not seek out any new painters. I was expanding on musical ideas I had achieved and wanted to stretch them to their fullest capabilities, or what their full capabilities were at that time. It was a little over a year later when I delved further into the work of Alberto Giacometti which altered my musical thinking and forced me to reconsider my approach to composition.

As a Portrait of Absence for solo violin was written in January 2013 for Leah Asher.

When Leah and I decided to work on a piece together, we set out to write something short and concise. Initially, the work was to be 45 seconds in length but we quickly found we had more to convey. Along with being a violinist/violist, Leah is a visual artist. We would talk extensively of our interests in various painters, of my interest in her work and her interest in my relationship with visual arts. Of all painters we would discuss, Giacometti was the most influential to us both at the time. Leah had extensive knowledge of his work and shared some quotes of his with me. One in particular was of most interest to me:

"Until the war, when I was drawing I always drew things smaller than I believed I saw them: in other words, when I was drawing I was amazed that everything became so small. But when I wasn't drawing, I felt I saw heads the size they really were. And then, very gradually and especially since the war, it has become so much a part of my nature, so ingrained, that the way I see when I'm working persists even when I'm not working. I can no longer get a figure back to life-size. Sometimes, in a cafe, I watch the people going by on the opposite pavement and I see them very small, like tiny little statuettes, which I find marvelous. But it's impossible for me to imagine that they're life-size; at that distance they simply become appearances. If they come nearer, they become a different person. But if they come too close, say two meters away, then I simply don't see them any more. They're no longer life-size, they have usurped your whole visual field and you see them as a blur. And if they get closer still, then you can't see anything at all. You've gone from one domain to another. If I look at a woman on the opposite pavement and I see her as very small, I marvel at

that little figure walking in space, and then, seeing her still smaller, my field of vision becomes much larger. I see a vast space above and around, which is almost limitless. If I go into a cafe my field of vision is almost the whole of the cafe; it becomes immense. I marvel every time I see this space because I can no longer believe in - how can I put it? - a material, absolute reality. Everything is only appearance, isn't it? And if the person comes nearer, I stop looking at her, but she almost stops existing, too. Or else one's emotions become involved: I want to touch her, don't I? Looking has lost all interest."

I was quite moved by the passage, "...at the distance they simply become appearances." I had already dealt with my music as being impressions of something but to be "simply appearances" meant something entirely different to me. I had always worked with delicate textures. Textures which were precious and elegant but I had yet to work with extensive levels of faint dynamic levels. I wanted to push the idea of what an impression was to me and play with the boundary between complete silence and active sound. I wanted to bring a listener's perspective quite closer to the sounds, to the performer and to the piece itself. I read passages from a book entitled *Giacometti: Three Essays* written by Jacques Dupin which lead to the realization of the piece.

When I frequently visited the Art Institute of Chicago back in 2006 one of my favorite pieces was *Caroline* by Giacometti.



Figure 2.13) *Caroline* – Alberto Giacometti

I enjoyed the distant, sketch-like nature of the piece. As a viewer, I was given a faint impression of a figure. All of the aspects of the figure were present in order to distinguish form: that is shaped like a hand so it is a hand, that is a head, shoulders, etc. Yet, it was absent of color, the female figure was not flesh toned, the intricacies of her face were not represented. All that remained was the foundations of a portrait. Dupin describes the work of Giacometti as, “figures of petrified incompleteness (Dupin 2003, 9).” Leah and I wanted to work with this concept in mind, the impression of a solo violin piece. I worked off of the quote, “to make and unmake incessantly is to diminish, to deaden each gesture, to drown it gently in sequence and number, as the sea absorbs its waves (Dupin 2003, 15).”

The main focus of *As a Portrait of Absence* is the delicacy of attack. We wished to write a bold and present piece and then retreat from clear pronunciation. We used different methods of delicate attacks such as faint dynamics, $\frac{1}{2}$ col legno, artificial harmonics and gradually moving from stopped touches to harmonic/delicate touches. The hair of the bow is to be moderately loose throughout the piece so as to focus on the friction of the bow to string emulating the sound of a pencil to paper.

The piece opens with an artificial harmonic A6 played “ppppp.” This moment sets the piece. It is a brief, faint statement - almost unsure it actually occurred.

Violin

Unless otherwise specified, each artificial harmonic should be played
molto vibrato, expressive, and always with stopped touch.
Each bow change should have an initial forte attack i.e. *ffff*
Bow hair should be moderately loose throughout

Mournful, delicate and precious $\text{♩} = 40 \text{ bpm}$

moderate tremolo speed
molto diminuendo

trémolo as fast as possible

$\text{♩} = 96 \text{ bpm}$
 ◆ muted touch
 molto S.T./1/2, end legno
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a dynamic marking of *pppp*. The first measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The second measure contains a dotted quarter note C5, followed by a quarter note D5, and a half note E5. The third measure contains a dotted quarter note F5, followed by a quarter note G5, and a half note A5. The fourth measure contains a dotted quarter note B5, followed by a quarter note C6, and a half note D6. The fifth measure contains a dotted quarter note E6, followed by a quarter note F6, and a half note G6. The sixth measure contains a dotted quarter note A6, followed by a quarter note B6, and a half note C7. The seventh measure contains a dotted quarter note D7, followed by a quarter note E7, and a half note F7. The eighth measure contains a dotted quarter note G7, followed by a quarter note A7, and a half note B7. The ninth measure contains a dotted quarter note C8, followed by a quarter note D8, and a half note E8. The tenth measure contains a dotted quarter note F8, followed by a quarter note G8, and a half note A8. The eleventh measure contains a dotted quarter note B8, followed by a quarter note C9, and a half note D9. The twelfth measure contains a dotted quarter note E9, followed by a quarter note F9, and a half note G9. The thirteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note A9, followed by a quarter note B9, and a half note C10. The fourteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note D10, followed by a quarter note E10, and a half note F10. The fifteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note G10, followed by a quarter note A10, and a half note B10. The sixteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note C11, followed by a quarter note D11, and a half note E11. The seventeenth measure contains a dotted quarter note F11, followed by a quarter note G11, and a half note A11. The eighteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note B11, followed by a quarter note C12, and a half note D12. The nineteenth measure contains a dotted quarter note E12, followed by a quarter note F12, and a half note G12. The twentieth measure contains a dotted quarter note A12, followed by a quarter note B12, and a half note C13. The score ends with a *pppp* dynamic marking.

Figure 2.14) Excerpt of *As a Portrait of Absence*

Measures 1 – 15 are sketch-like statements. There are large portions of rest between each musical gesture as if one is setting the foundations of a portrait. Something should go here, this alternative idea should be placed here, this should repeat here, etc. The main musical idea of the piece happens in measure 16 – 24. It is essentially an ascending and descending minor triad sequence grouped by a specific numeric sequence:

Main sequence (mm. 16 – 18): 3, 2, 2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 1, 2, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, 3

♩ = 112 bpm
 stopped touch ———— ◊ harmonic/delicate touch ———— ◊ harmonic/delicate touch ———— ◊ harmonic/delicate touch
 molto S.T. flautando

16 *pppp* *p*
 19 *ppp* *mp* *p* *ppp* *p*
 22 *p* *ppp* *f* *mp* *f*

Figure 2.15) Excerpt of *As a Portrait of Absence*

Throughout this main section, the attack of the left hand is moving from “stopped touch” gradually to “harmonic/delicate touch” making the pitches near inaudible. Listeners have a few measures of clear melodic motion only to hear the material gradually fade into hazy remnants of what was once potential progression.

The following section developed from Dupin’s passage, “There is, or at least there was, an instinct of cruelty in Giacometti, a need for destruction (Dupin 2003, 17).” Measure 25 begins with abrupt, sharp down bows of the once delicate artificial harmonic from the opening passage. The material is now restated with a destructive, spastic personality changing the character of the piece for 7 measures.

$\text{♩} = 96 \text{ bpm}$

27 *f*

28 *f*

29 *f*

30 *f*

31 *pppp* *subito*

◆ muted touch
maho S T / 1 / 2 col legno
(3, 3, 2) (3, 4, 2) (4, 2, 3) (2, 4, 3) (3, 2, 4) (4, 3, 2) (2, 4, 3) (3, 4, 2) (3, 4, 2)

Figure 2.16) Excerpt of *As a Portrait of Absence*

“Giacometti can only present us the rough draft of an unaccomplished, unfinished undertaking. A reflection, an approximation of reality – of that absolute reality which haunts him – and which he pursues in a kind of amorous or homicidal furry (Dupin 2003, 52).” This “approximation of reality” was what Leah and I hoped to convey with this short, 4 minute work. It is quite contrasting within a short period of time providing an entire world of possibilities but remaining in the unaccomplished and unfinished. I have heard Leah perform this work numerous occasions and each time I can hear new aspects of a figure distinguishing new forms: this event functions in this manner, this phrase is not a phrase at all, there is a new motivic collection.

As I reflect upon these images, I find direct similarities in the visual appearance of each score. *Nude Descending a Staircase* contains similar visual elements as *Countenance*, the smeared paint which was once a portrait in *Study After Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* looks the same as the notation of *Butchered and Consumed* and the near vacancy of material in *As a Portrait of Absence* mirrors *Caroline*. I continue to take inspiration from visual arts and recontextualize them sonically. My music has very recursive, static behaviors in an effort to give perspective freedom to listeners. It is a hope to achieve a similar private intimacy one may have with a still and motionless painting but exemplified through a temporal and fleeting musical medium.

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Identity is Inherent in Creation

Our identities are not created by our own free will. They develop and codify from our subjective interaction with our environments. Identities are malleable; they change gradually over time due to sociological and cultural impositions. The developmental process contorts and kneads our identity based upon our subjective experiences, social interactions and the geographical environments in which we surround ourselves – consciously and unconsciously. How we identify ourselves at the age of 18 is quite different than how we negotiate our identity at the age of 40. Furthermore, how we identify ourselves living in Manhattan, New York would be quite different than if we were living in Mexico City. As composer Morton Feldman once said, “I’m not my own man. I’m a compilation of all the important people in my life.” Feldman is saying sociological interactions and environments shaped facets of his identity - it was not entirely shaped on his own.

Our ethnicities are also a result of cultural imposition. Culture can be defined as the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group. These customs are inflicted upon us to create a facet of our identity known as race and/or ethnicity. We identify ourselves and are identified by others as Hispanic, African American, Asian, White, etc. based upon one’s racial or ethnic background. While we generally praise the significance of our cultural identities, they are often assumed, imagined and expected and can detract us from an understanding of our foundational selves. Freud writes, “...a person becomes neurotic because he cannot tolerate the amount of frustration which society imposes on him in the service of its cultural ideals...(Freud 1961, 38).”

The role of culture in the arts works in a similar manner. Quite often when an artist wishes to evoke a cultural aesthetic into a work, they impose the customs conventionally associated with a specific ethnicity. In music, if a work is “to sound Japanese” one may use a koto or shakuhachi - instruments conventionally used in traditional Japanese music. Or, a composer may use a sitar if a work is to sound “Indian.” However, would that also mean a work sounds “German” if a composer uses a violin or a flute? The result of such compositional choices is often a mere *impression* of a culture, as opposed to an *expression* of one’s subjective understanding of and experience with a culture. That is to say, every individual has his or her own experience of what it is to be Hispanic, for example – it is not objectively consistent throughout. If an artist identifies his or herself as a specific ethnicity, that element of their identity would inherently exist within their work. As a Brazilian/American composer once said to me, “When someone asks me what is Brazilian about my music I simply say, ‘me.’ I do not need to use a cuíca to sound Brazilian, it is naturally a part of who I am.”

Furthermore, if a composer wishes to pay homage to a culture or cultural event, it is more creatively effective to express his or her own beliefs without attempting to recreate the cultural background of such an event with sound. In the works *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima (1960)* by Krzysztof Penderecki and *Symphony No. 5 Hiroshima (1953)* by Masao Ohki, the composers share their personal beliefs on the emotional and horrific event of the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan in 1945. While one composer is Polish and the other is Japanese, both works are equally astounding examples of how the catastrophic bombing of Hiroshima can be honored without the need for cultural quotations or mimicking. Each piece also demonstrates how the composer’s cultural identities impact their work

and also how these identities create relationships between otherwise vastly different cultures.

In his article *Music and Identity*, Simon Frith states, “Identity is thus necessarily a matter of ritual, it describes one’s place in a dramatized pattern of relationships – one can never really express oneself ‘autonomously.’ Self-identity *is* cultural identity (Frith 1996, 125).” The impossibility of autonomous expression would mean an artist’s work is not an expression solely from a foundational self but rather an expression influenced by such “pattern of relationships” and “rituals.” What do these patterns of relationships and rituals consist of? The process of creating a cultural identity entails an exposure to the customs or traditions associated with such cultures. A person considers themselves of an ethnic background due to their nationality and the heritage which has been passed down through generations. Such heritage or rituals gives one direction in how to shape their own impression of themselves. The ethnicity we are primarily exposed to from childhood is the culture we conventionally associate with. As an example, I am half Mexican and half Swedish. I was primarily raised around the Mexican side of my family and was immersed in the language, customs, foods, religious beliefs, etc. shared by my family. I identify with my family; therefore, I identify myself as Mexican more than I do Swedish. As another example, I have a colleague who was born and raised in the Philippines but moved to California around the age of 10. Living in Los Angeles for almost 14 years has altered various traits of his ethnic identity. His Filipino accent has basically altered into an American accent and he is gradually losing the understanding of the Filipino language. However, despite these changes he still identifies himself as Filipino as it was a large part of his upbringing. While cultural rituals, customs, languages, etc. influence and aid in the development of our self-identity, the absence of certain facets do not necessarily take

away who we are. In other words, there is no definitive equation to create a cultural identity. Every individual has his or her own definition of ethnicity, tradition and culture. Identity is a gradual process which changes overtime. As Frith states, "...in talking about identity we are talking about a particular kind of experience, or a way of dealing with a particular kind of experience. Identity is not a thing but a process – an experiential process... (Frith 1996, 110)."

Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima:

While cultures may be vastly different from one another, there are certain relationships which can be built from similar customs, rituals and historical events. Though a composer may have no direct relationship to a specific culture, a composer may find similarities between their subjective experiences and relate it to a culture or cultural event. The work *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* by Krzysztof Penderecki is an example of how subjective experiences shape an identity and can relate to a vastly different culture.

Penderecki's work is for string orchestra and was written between 1959-60. It took third place in the Grzegorz Fitelberg Composers' Competition in 1960. The work was originally titled *8'37* but was changed after Penderecki heard its first performance. Penderecki states, "I was struck by the emotional charge of the work... I searched for associations and in the end, I decided to dedicate it to the Hiroshima victims." While Penderecki does not have a first hand experience with the bombing of Hiroshima, he can relate to the attack due to his experience living through WWII. Penderecki stated, "...the problem of the great Apocalypse (Auschwitz), that great war crime, has undoubtedly been in my subconscious mind since the war...(Haylock 1994, 3)." In this work there is universality of communication between the musical medium, the means of

communication, and aesthetic, the expression of social/political turmoil. It deals with a horrific event taking place in Japan yet is a reflection of social/political injustice just as Penderecki experienced first hand from WWII. Penderecki finds a relationship between the historic event and his first hand experience to create an expressive voice for the victims of such crises.

The work consists of passages where players are asked to play between the bridge and tailpiece of a string instrument, striking the body of the instrument, microtonality, etc. all of which are unconventional techniques in relation to traditional performance practice. Here is the “Abbreviations and Symbols” page.

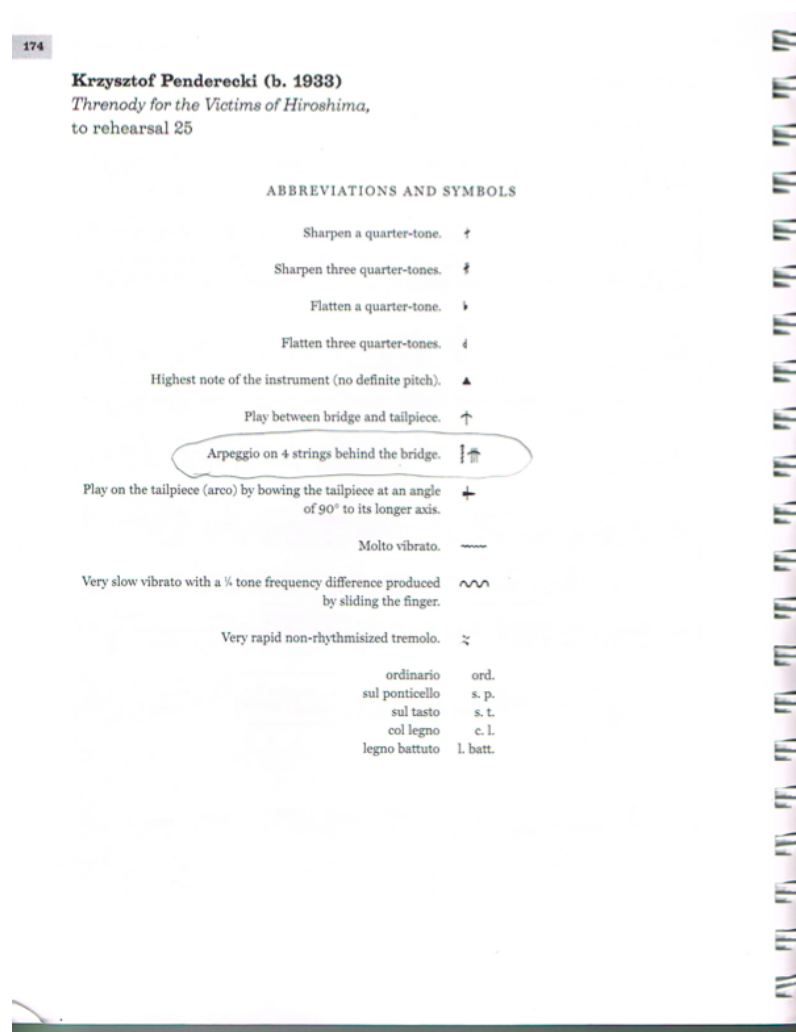


Figure 3.1): Instructions Page of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*

The work opens with the orchestra playing their highest pitches at the dynamic fortissimo. The resulting sound is a powerful, jolting affect as if there is an initiation into a realm of horrific turmoil. The strings gradually move from straight tone to molto vibrato as the dynamic decreases from fortissimo to pianississimo.

We move from the sudden eruption of sound to a dazed, wandering, paused moment of retrospect. It is as if we are given a moment to process the chaotic event which had just occurred.

The image displays two pages of a musical score for Krzysztof Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. The top page, numbered 177, shows the beginning of the piece. The score is written for 24 Violins, 10 Violas, 10 Violoncellos, and 8 Double Basses. The music is characterized by a unique style with many accidentals and dynamic markings. The bottom page, numbered 178, continues the score with the same instruments. The score is written in a unique style with many accidentals and dynamic markings.

Figure 3.2): Page 1 of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*

The work continues to explore microtonality, visceral effects such as aggressively striking the body of each instrument and an extreme range of dynamic and pitch space.

The notation of this work is rather unconventional in relation to the common Western notational system i.e. the five line staff. Penderecki's notation is more visually expressive and deconstructive than the conventional Western notational system.

Penderecki abandons the grand staff and instead uses symbols rather than pitches (as in Figure 3.3, page 3), discards notated rhythm, uses various sized bold lines to denote the range of a chromatic cluster (as in Figure 3.3, page 6.) What we see on the page is similar to what we hear in the concert hall. It is as if there was once a clear, drafted layout and it was obstructed, torn apart, broken and rearranged into something else. The notation itself can be an expression of political/sociological turmoil and devastation.

The image displays a page of a musical score for Krzysztof Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. The score is arranged in a vertical stack of staves. On the left side, the instruments are labeled: 24 Vln., 10 Vln., 10 Vlc., and 8 D.b. The score is divided into two 15-measure sections by a vertical dashed line. Above the first section, a rehearsal mark 'H' is present. Performance instructions are written above the staves, including '1 batt. pizz. arco', 'pizz. arco', '1 batt. arco', and 'arco'. The notation includes various rhythmic figures and dynamic markings. At the bottom of the page, two '15'' markers indicate the duration of the sections.

Figure 3.3): Pages 3 & 6 of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*

3.4

10

1-12 Vln.

13-24 Vln.

10 Vla.

10 Vlc.

8 D.h.

18" 20"

*Flageolet tones.

Figure 3.3): Continued

While Penderecki is not Japanese and there are no direct musical quotations within the work, there are still Japanese associations. One of the most important characteristics relating to the manner in which a listener perceives the work is the title. I recall images of Japanese victims, towns/villages being destroyed as seen in photographs and films. The title sets an expectation and draws up imagery before even hearing the work. Once the piece begins, these images are exemplified and reinforced. However, after learning of Penderecki's experience with Auschwitz, I also think of images of WWII. Both of these cultural events fill my psyche which makes the piece an emotional, moving experience almost difficult to listen to. Penderecki effectively exemplifies his own beliefs on the attack of Hiroshima based upon his subjective experience with Auschwitz. I feel the piece would be more of a transgression if it contained musical quoting from Japanese cultural references or Japanese instruments in attempts to capture Japaneseness. Instead, Penderecki creates a connection between a specific Japanese event and the creation of a post WWII Polish composer by focusing on the emotions, trauma and turmoil experienced between victims of such apocalyptic events.

Symphony No. 5 Hiroshima:

Japanese composer Masao Ohki composed *Symphony No. 5 Hiroshima* in 1953. Much like *Threnody*, it is a dedication piece to the horrific event. Ohki's *Hiroshima* is in a European Neo-Romantic style. Dissonant harmonies continuously weave in and out and settle on unresolved chords. It is as if the work continues to wander around aimlessly resting upon unstable harmonies dissolving into one another. Different than Penderecki, Ohki's *Hiroshima* deals with the heartfelt and crippling sociological turmoil which ensued after the bombing in a more gentle, somber-like style.

Hiroshima was inspired by a series of 15 paintings titled *The Hiroshima Panels* created by Iri and Toshi Maruki. The series took 32 years to complete and are held in the Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels in Higashi-Matsuyama, Saitama, Japan. Iri Maruki explains, “One atomic bomb in one instant caused the deaths of more people than we could ever portray. Long-lasting radioactivity and radiation sickness are causing people to suffer and die even now. This was not a natural disaster. As we painted, through our paintings... these thoughts came to run through and through our minds (Maruki, Iri Voices Education Project).”

The paintings depict the catastrophic aftermath of the bombing as well as more violent images of bodies being burnt engulfed in the atomic fire.

The title of each painting:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - Ghosts | - Yaizu |
| - Fire | - Petition |
| - Water | - Mother and Child |
| - Rainbow | - Floating Lanterns |
| - Boys and Girls | - Death of American Prisoners of War |
| -Atomic Desert | - Crows |
| - Bamboo Thicket | - Nagasaki |
| - Rescue | |

Ghosts



Fire



Mother and Child



Rescue

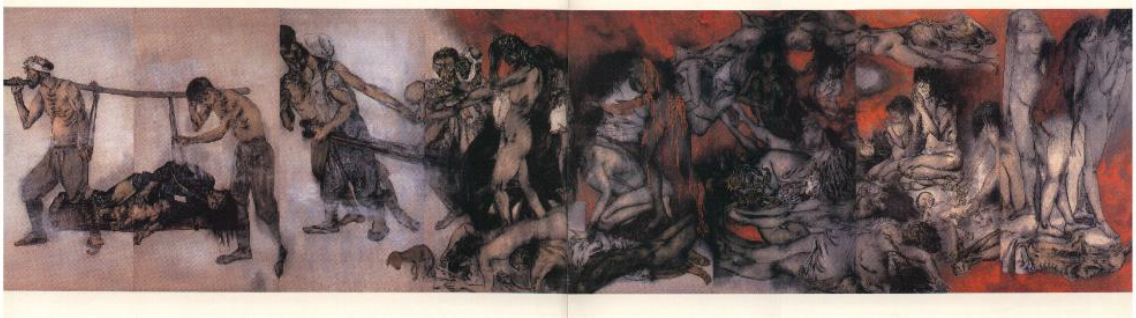


Figure 3.4): Panels 1, 2, 8 & 11 of *The Hiroshima Panels*

Ohki's Symphony contains 6 movements with each title deriving from the first six works of the series:

- Ghosts: It was a procession of ghosts
- First: Next moment first busts into flames
- Water: People wandered around seeking for water
- Rainbow: All of a sudden black rain poured over them and then appeared a beautiful rainbow
- Boys and Girls: Boys and girls died without knowing any joy of human life and calling for their parents
- Atomic Desert: Boundless desert with skulls

For me, what is most powerful about the work is the expressive, graphic and haunting titles such as *Boys and Girls*... I imagine scorched bodies wandering in the midst of a black haze in utter confusion, disbelief and agony. There are attempts at grasping a sense of logic and sensation but each attempt fails and the wandering, lonely agony continues until a concluding collapse and a submission to the destruction. From reading these emotional and descriptive titles, I think of similar imagery as I did in Penderecki's work while also thinking of the *Hiroshima Panels*.

While this specific work is without any prominent musical Japanese quoting, there are elements which derive from Ohki's Japanese background. The work seems to float in and out of harmony and disharmony – usually focused on disharmony. Ohki grew up playing the shakuhachi which has "... a sound as natural as the wind blowing in the pines (Malm 1959, 174.) One of the technical characteristics of the shakuhachi is the array of different tone qualities. Performers can move, "from a whispering, reedy piano, growing to a ringing metallic forte only to sink back into a cotton-wrapped softness, ending with an almost inaudible grace note" (Malm 1959, 174.) From such a rich, vast span of tone qualities, much shakuhachi music evokes feelings of mystery, melancholy and the impression of aimless wandering. Ohki's background of playing and hearing music of the shakuhachi flute is a facet of the harmonic wandering in *Hiroshima*. As listeners, we search for the resolution of chords but continue to move fluidly from one unresolved realm to another. The choice of creating an unresolved, wandering feel could also derive from Iri Maruki's comment, "We carried the injured, cremated the dead, searched for food, and found scorched sheets of tin to patch the roofs. With the stench of death and the flies and the maggots all around us, we wandered about in the same manner as those who had experienced the Bomb." The same feeling of wandering was also created in the *molto vibrato* section of Penderecki's *Threnody*.

While Ohki is interested in Japanese traditional music, he is also passionate about Romantic Era European musical repertoire and integrates elements of both styles together. *Hiroshima* has the enigmatic musical behavior of traditional Japanese music while the harmony and instrumentation derives from European music of the Romantic Era. The composers Ohki emulated which inspired him to be a composer are from a European musical background – Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Brahms. The work of these

individuals is what shaped his musical identity. While he is Japanese and is quite interested in the heritage and rituals of Japanese culture, his musical training and interests also lie in Romantic Era European concert music. In this work, there is a sort of fusion between Japanese musical behavior and European repertoire. Ohki's relationship to the shakuhachi influenced the manner in which *Hiroshima* continuously searches for stable harmony in more fluid, enigmatic textures while the harmonic structure and instrumentation derive from Romantic Era European repertoire.

In Conclusion:

Both of these composers expressed their emotional, political, sociological views regarding Hiroshima. Neither composer included stereotypical cultural quoting, Japanese instrumentation or scales/modes into their works. Yet, each piece is effective and builds a relationship between a facet of post war European and Japanese identity. As listeners, we are moved by the music and we consider our own views on Hiroshima regardless of what ethnicity we identify with. We are brought into cultural turmoil and are left in remorseful contemplation. Each of these composers expressed their subjective experience with a chaotic event and achieved emotionally charged works. Wassily Kandinsky states, "The artist must have something to say... (Kandinsky 1977, 54)." An artist should be concerned about this, "something to say." What ever it is an artist finally "says" will envelop all of their identity, all of their being. However, cultural *impressions* simply say, "I am or am familiar with [said nationality], and that is all." As listeners, we are not provided with the substance of the artist's expression but rather an imitation of various attributes of a culture which do not entirely define a culture. A culture cannot be summed up with a few auditory traits such as instruments, scales, rhythms, etc. As Anthony Storr stated," Becoming what one is is a creative act comparable with creating a work of art

(Frith 1996, 108).” Ethnicity is a facet of our identity; it will always be a part of who we are. It is innate in our artwork as creation is an illustration of how we negotiate our ever changing identity and reality.

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As a Portrait of Absence

for solo violin

- edward hamel -

$J = 96 \text{ bpm}$

23

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

31

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

37

$J = 112 \text{ bpm}$

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

43

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

49

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

55

♣ mixed touch
 modus S7/77 and figure

61

Remain
- edward hamel -
for piano

Remain

-edward hamel-

Patent and delicate $J = 60$ bpm

$J = 144$ bpm

$J = 60$ bpm

$J = 144$ bpm

$J = 60$ bpm

$J = 144$ bpm

$J = 60$ bpm

$J = 144$ bpm

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27 $J = 60 \text{ bpm}$

$J = 144 \text{ bpm}$

32 *una corda*

Begin using a lighter touch as various pitches are absent from the gesture

Continue performing this gesture without depressing the keys. The only sound should be fingers and keys striking against the top of the keys

29

$J = 144 \text{ bpm}$

34 *una corda*

(no audible pitch) → light touch with sporadic, faint pitch → Norm.

35

$J = 144 \text{ bpm}$

40 *una corda*

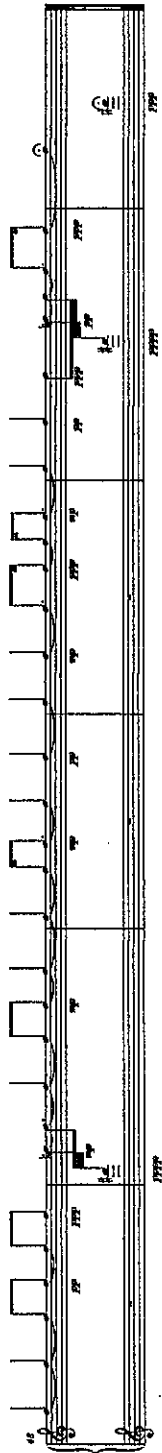
$J = 54 \text{ bpm}$

Perform 13 times in :40"

42

$J = 54 \text{ bpm}$

47 *una corda*



Sedentary Knead

for baritone voice, bass clarinet, flugelhorn & trombone
-edward hamel-

Sedentary Knead (for Lechang) - Edward Tann -

C Score

As if gradually moving further away very carefully, emphasize the slowing down of time by means of the phrasing. The phrasing should be such that the instrument should blend into one another to create a unified sound. $\text{♩} = 52 \text{ bpm}$

Baritone Voice

Bass Clarinet

Flagehorn

Trombone

Under otherwise noted, use phrasing which blends best with the ensemble!

Slightly underneath voice, but higher and trillier.

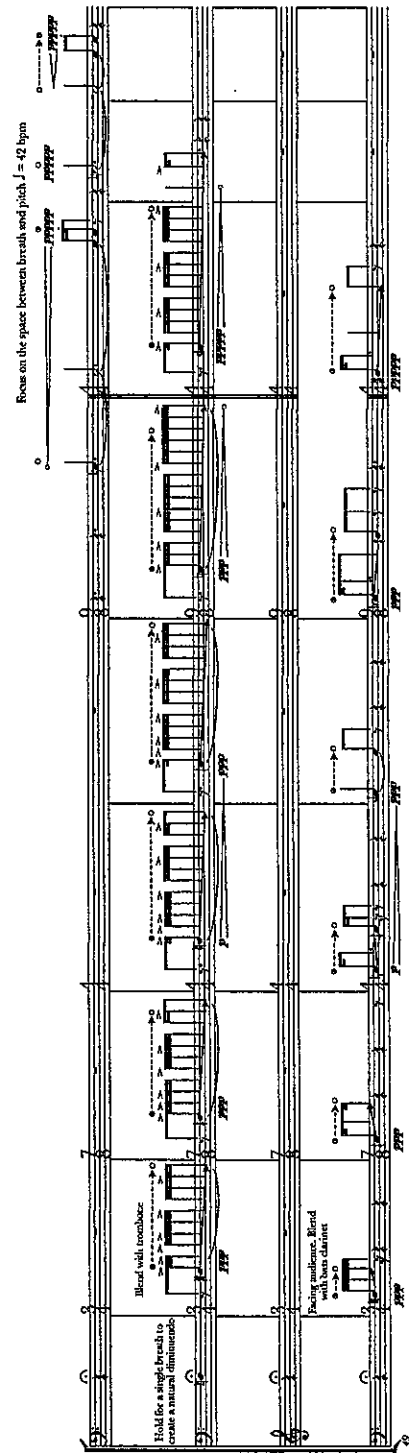
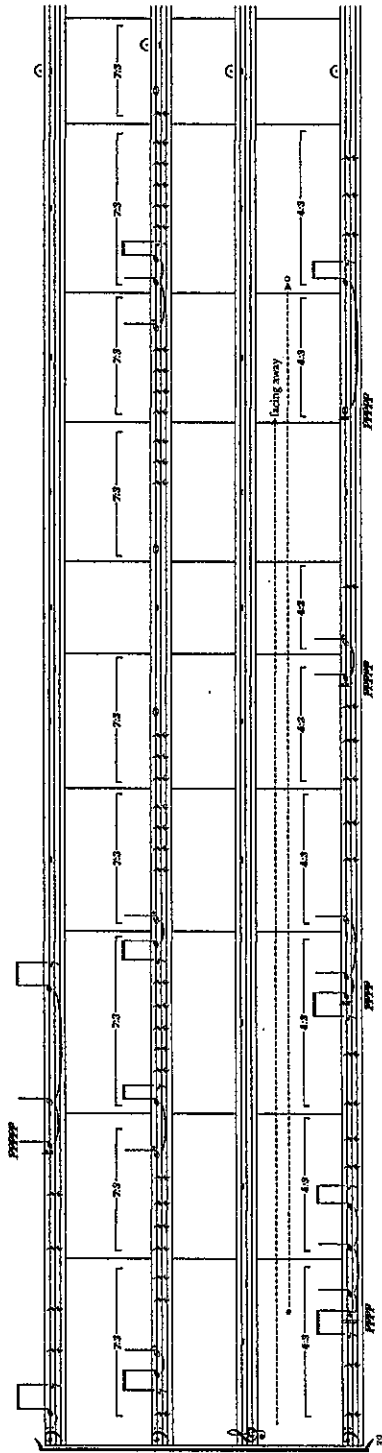
p

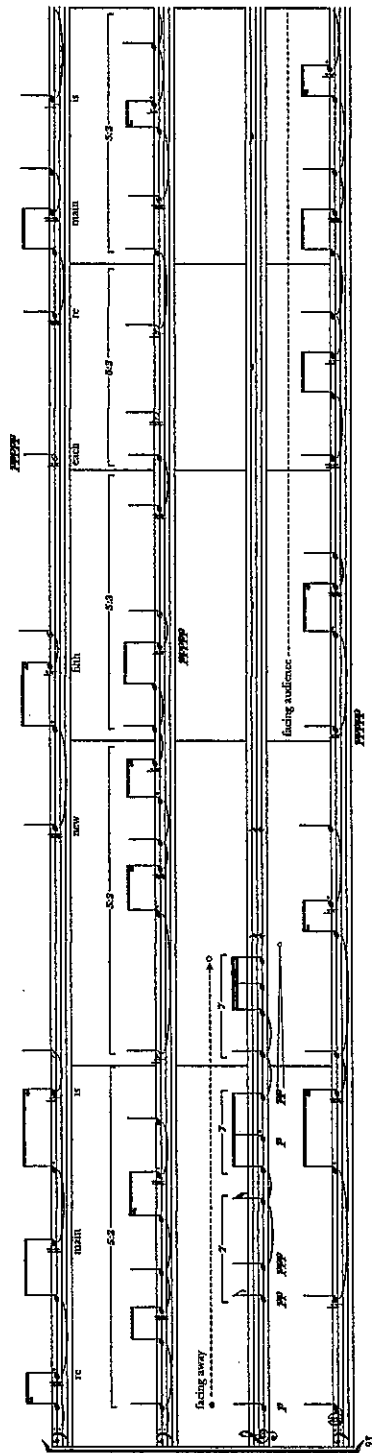
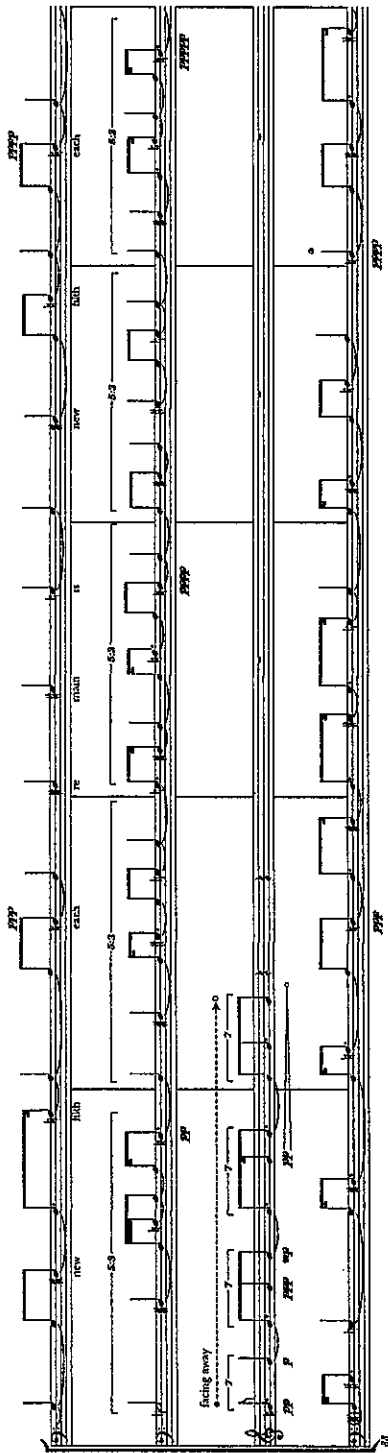
pp

ppp

Musical score for page 26, consisting of five staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamic markings include *ppp* (pianississimo), *pp* (pianissimo), and *pp* (pianissimo). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The page number "26" is located at the bottom right corner.

Musical score for page 27, consisting of five staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamic markings include *ppp* (pianississimo), *pp* (pianissimo), and *ppp* (pianississimo). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The page number "27" is located at the bottom right corner.





breath with intonation, faint pitch

musical score for page 710, featuring multiple staves with notes and rests, and dynamic markings like pppp.

710

breath, no pitch

musical score for page 715, featuring multiple staves with notes and rests, and dynamic markings like pppp. Includes the instruction "facing audience".

715

Musical score for page 210. The score consists of five systems, each with three staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The page number 210 is located at the bottom right corner.

f = 42 bpm *hiss* *clinet* *and* *tritone* *only*

Musical score for page 212. The score consists of five systems, each with three staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The page number 212 is located at the bottom right corner.

Musical score for measures 70-79. The score is written on five staves. The bottom staff contains a vocal line with lyrics: "Facing audience". The music is in a common time signature and features a series of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The notation includes various musical symbols such as stems, beams, and slurs. The page number 70 is located at the bottom left corner.

Musical score for measures 80-89. The score is written on five staves. The bottom staff contains a vocal line with lyrics: "Facing away". The music continues with similar rhythmic patterns to the previous page. The notation includes various musical symbols such as stems, beams, and slurs. The page number 80 is located at the bottom left corner.

