st131.1.50



sumtone

:

michael edwards

in limine

for two (or one) soprano saxophones and computer

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sumtone
Neckarhalde 38
D-72070 Tübingen
Germany
info@sumtone.com
www.sumtone.com

in limine is based is based on the syllabic and verse structure of Eugenio Montale's (1896-1981) 1924 poem of the same name (provided below with William Arrowsmith's translation):

Godi se il vento ch'entra nel pomario vi rimena l'ondata della vita: qui dove affonda un morto viluppo di memorie, orto no era, ma reliquiario.

Il frullo che tu senti non è un volo, ma il commuoversi dell'eterno grembo; vedi che si trasforma questo lembo di terra solitario in un crogiuolo.

Un rovello è di qua dall'erto muro. Se procedi t'imbatti tu forse nel fantasma che ti salva: si compongono qui le storie, gli atti scancellati pel giuoco del futuro.

Cerca una maglia rotta nella rete che ci stringe, tu balza fuori, fuggi! Va, per te l'ho pregato,—ora la sete mi sarà lieve, meno acre la ruggine . . .

Rejoice when the breeze that enters the orchard brings you back the tidal rush of life: here, where dead memories mesh and founder, was no garden, but a reliquary.

That surge you hear is no whir of wings, but the stirring of the eternal womb. Look how this strip of lonely coast has been transformed: a crucible.

All is furor within the sheer wall. Advance, and you may chance upon the phantasm who might save you: here are tales composed and deeds annulled, for the future to enact.

Find a break in the meshes of the net that tightens around us, leap out, flee!

Go, I have prayed for your escape—now my thirst will be slaked, my rancor less bitter . . .

The third of a set of pieces based on Montale's poetry, in limine (Latin: at the threshold) takes its impetus from the imperatives of the poem: Rejoice, Look, Advance, Find, Leap, Flee, Go. These active verbs are countered, however, both in the poem and the music, by the static, timeless quality of the reliquary, the coast, the wall; the summer heat of Montale's native Liguria.

Also at work is a deliberate distortion of musical proportions: sections at the beginning are compressed to an unusual degree, they rush through material to the point where musical ideas are only hinted at, creating an almost schizophrenic musical atmosphere. Later, sections and material are stretched to the point where the musical fabric almost tears or bulges into ungainly shapes; like a reflection mutated in a hall of mirrors.

The composition of *in limine* was made possible by the support of the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Board

performance directions

Tempo changes are to be strictly observed, i.e. a tempo increase/decrease should always occur where indicated. However, the actual tempi may deviate slightly from those given, as deemed necessary by the performers.

Considerable rubato may be practised within any given phrase: rhythms are fluid. In particular, the quite distinct relation between triplet 16ths and 9:8 16ths may sometimes be blurred by small, local accelerandi/ritardandi. At other times however an immediate speed change (as the immediate following of one by the other of these rhythms would strictly indicate) may be preferable: the performers' taste in this matter is the deciding factor.

Accidentals carry throughout the bar but are repeated in parentheses as necessary.

Except where otherwise indicated, meter changes necessitate rhythmic units to retain the same temporal duration, i.e., when changing from 3/2 to 5/4, a quarter note is equal in both meters.

electronics

essential equipment:

- the Max/MSP audio programming environment (version 4.5 or above) running on a suitable Macintosh or PC computer.
- multi-channel sound card (minimum 2 channels mic/line-in, 8 channels line-out)
- the Max/MSP performance patches supplied by the publisher on CDROM (email hire@sumtone.com, order online at http://www.sumtone.com/performance-materials.php, or write to the address at the front of this score).
- MIDI faders (8 minimum) plugged into the computer's sound card. These should send volume messages to Max/MSP on separate MIDI channels to control the relative levels of the live and computer sound sources. If controller numbers must be sent instead of MIDI channels, then the "midi-faders" patcher in Max will have to be suitably reprogrammed
- one condenser and (preferably) one clip-on microphone for each saxophone, connected to the sound card either directly or via a mixing desk
- sound system: eight loudspeakers are preferred. They are to be placed around the audience as follows:
 - 1 2
 - 3 4
 - 5 6
 - 7 8

Performances with less loudspeakers are possible by combining two or more channels onto one speaker on the mixing desk or in software (the outputs of Max/MSP or the sound card configuration).

The person(s) controlling the electronics is responsible for triggering sound files, controlling live processing (granular synthesis), and mixing all of the live and computer-generated sound sources together. The computer software is so configured that the sound files and live processing parameters are triggered sequentially: to step through the piece the performer simply presses either the space bar or the down-arrow key on the computer keyboard, or a foot pedal attached to the MIDI faders, whichever is more convenient.

Two tracks of 4-channel sound files overlap each other during the performance; the points in the score where these are to be triggered are indicated by an arrow (as well as the sound file name triggered). An RMS (loudness) curve of a mix of these tracks is given underneath the saxophone parts.

From bar 127, live granular synthesis is performed using the saxophone signals as input. The level of this is controlled by a separate MIDI fader and it is left to the performer to determine the relative mix of this element of the electronics.

For more details about the software or performance of this piece, please send email to info@sumtone.com or write to the address at the front of the score.

schräg

This German word is used occasionally and with its double meaning: 1) angled/skewed (i.e. the saxophone should be held at an angle, to the left or right of the normal playing position, and with an attendant change in timbre); 2) unorthodox, wild, risqué (with regards to tone production).

SV

sotto voce: an 'under-voiced' note, where the pitch is only very slightly discernible and the overall tone quality is very diffuse, with more or less breath sound depending upon the context.



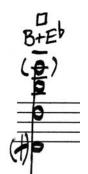
Quarter-tone flat Quarter-tone sharp



Growl: sing/growl into the instrument causing a rough tone quality. The pitch of the sung/growled note is not important but it should not be heard as a pitch in and of itself separate from the played note.



Arrows are used to indicate transition from one state to another. In this case the introduction of a growl tone should be gradual rather than instantaneous.



Multiphonics:

- 1. These are based on fingering tables kindly provided by Marcus Weiss from a manuscript to be used in a book to appear in 2006.
- 2. Fingerings are indicated by a basic note (in this case low B flat) plus the modification (here with (i.e. plus) the E flat key).
- 3. Pitch deviations of less than a quarter tone are indicated by arrows, possibly attached to an accidental.
- 4. In order to improve ease reading, once multiphonic pitches are given, any ties are made to a "noteless" rhythm written above the stave.
- 5. In all cases, for this work the pitches indicated are to be considered approximate: a tone quality fitting to the current musical context is to be considered more important than a perfectly accurate representation of the notes indicated, thus modifications of the fingering indicated may be made either for a more fitting tone or, indeed, better realisation of the pitches.
- 6. Not all of the notes indicated may sound with the given fingering and dynamic, so they are considered to be the possible array of notes that may or may not sound.
- 7. The open square above a multiphonic means that the multiphonic should begin (and perhaps remain, depending upon context) very diffuse, perhaps "from nothing", and, that individual pitches in the tonal array should enter and recede gradually.
- 8. A pitch given in parentheses is one that may result from this fingering but that should be avoided in this instance.



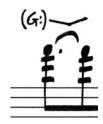
Multiphonic trill: the indicated finger (in this example 1) is to open (-) and close (+) the key in the indicated rhythm. Real trills, where rhythm is not explicitly given, are similarly notated, e.g. tr:1



"N" indicates normal fingering, "A" alternative. In choosing alternative fingerings for notes, be sure to choose ones that are tonally differentiated from the normal fingering so that such a passage as this example results in an audible rhythm and not just a single held note. Such alternative fingerings may deviate slightly (in any case considerably less than a quarter tone) from the normal pitch. The result of such rapid alternations between normal and alternative pitches can be thought of as a sort of wah-wah effect.



"Smack-back": attack the note viciously but with the diaphragm rather than the tongue, overblowing and sucking back through the instrument, creating a wild and unpredictable tone.



Growl-glissando: the sung/growled note glissandos down and back up, generally without an attendant pitch change in the played note, though this may sometimes also be indicated, desirable, or in fact unavoidable in the given context (ad libitum).



Hollow square note-heads indicate "breath tones". These consist exclusively of air blown through the instrument and no actual pitch, unless "+sv" is indicated, whereupon a "sotto voce" tone should be added to a predominantly breathy note.



Hollow diamond note-heads indicate "tongue stabs". Such notes should be played with a staccato attack, but a full sounding note should not be produced. The required effect is one of a short, dry tongue click producing a note with no real body to the pitch. If longer durations are indicated, breath tones are implied (and sometimes notated) following the attack.



Cross noteheads indicate key clicks. Where possible the reed should be closed with the tongue to achieve maximum resonance. In any case, key/finger movement should be exaggerated to create the maximum effect.



A cross through the stem indicates a slap tongue, which may be at a loud or soft dynamic.



A slash through a note means attack without the tongue, i.e. with the breath alone. An upward arrow through a note means suck/breathe in (as opposed to blow through) the instrument.



When glissando target notes (either small note heads or main notes) are in parentheses, they involve no change of fingering; otherwise, the glissando should be effected with the embouchure (in both cases) then at the very end a fingering change to the indicated note should be made.



Accents under a slur/tie are diaphragm accents only.



At the end of the piece the players are asked to mime: make a (possibly exaggerated) movement as if to play, appear to hold a tone and visibly (exaggeratedly) break off at the end of the 'note'. This should be synchronised with the computer player who will be providing sonic material for these mimes.

in limine

duration c. 17:43

michael edwards 2003-5

