L'érotisme sacré

trio for flute, cello and piano

Taylor Brook

Composed for the Electric Noise duo of Montréal, Quebec.

concert notes

L'érotisme sacré was composed for the Electric Noise duo of Montréal.

The title of this piece comes from the work of the philosopher Georges Bataille, who connected eroticism with the sublime, religious rituals and death. This work takes slowed-down moan samples as it's primary source, from which the melodic and harmonic material is derived. In my experience, these zoomed-in moans tap into an immediate physical reaction in the listener, as perhaps hearing someone scream or a child crying does. However, due to the extreme time stretching of the sound files, the nature of the reaction is somewhat ambiguous and estranged. In the end, these samples serve as a theme from which I develop the all aspects of the work, creating variations and broader forms that are, hopefully, palpably connected to the original source.

This work is roughly eleven minutes in length and is comprised of one continuous movement.

microtonality and just intonation

Although there are many microtones in this work, much of the harmony is quite consonant. The microtones are used to approximate just intervals, therefore small adjustments should be made by ear to play these intervals perfectly in tune. I advise the performers to listen for the root of the chord (when present) in order to understand their particular role in the harmony.

The following accidental nomenclature is also used to approximate exact pitches:

 approximately 1/4 tone flat or sharp

 approximately 1/6 tone flat or sharp

 approximately 1/12 tone flat or sharp

The accidentals showing the twelfth-tone (one sixth of a semitone) alterations should be thought of as extremely small inflections of the pitch. This minute alteration in pitch equals the difference between the just major third (the fourth harmonic, accessible on any string or brass instrument) and the equal temperament major third. Wind players need not use alternate fingerings for these pitches, instead they should inflect the pitch slightly as performers must do in tonal music performance practice when tuning the third of a chord. In other words, it is best to treat the notes with these accidentals as if they required a slight inflection for the sake of good tuning.

The sixth-tone (one third of a semitone) alteration equals the difference between the seventh harmonic and the equal temperament minor seventh. In other words, the seventh harmonic is a sixth-tone flat of the equal temperament minor seventh.

The quarter-tone alteration should be precisely halfway between the equal tempered pitches. The quarter-tone alteration can be heard at the 11th partial of the harmonic series, which is exactly halfway between the perfect fourth and the tritone.

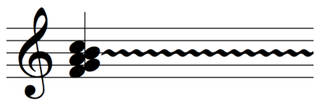
The most important thing to keep in mind is that the goal of these microtones is often to realize acoustically consonant harmonies; if the performer can recognize their role in the harmony, this will ensure optimal tuning of the microtones.

general notation

⟶ arrow - Signifies a gradual change from the marking at the beginning of the arrow to what is marked at the end. For example, if you find in your part an “ord” marked with an arrow leading to “alto sul tasto” then it should be executed as a gradual movement of the bow from the ordinary playing position to the alto sul tasto position for the duration between the beginning and end of the arrow.

Glissandi must be performed for the entire duration of the note.

 - unmeasured tremolo (fluttertongue)

 Play randomly, in a trill-like manner, the given notes.

use of electronics

The electronics part of this work consists solely of premade soundfiles diffused through a stereo speaker setup. A surround sound version may be realized by mixing the stereo version live. The soundfiles are cued by a foot pedal, which may be used by the flutist or pianist. The score includes a staff for the foot pedal, showing precisely when it should be engaged. The content of the cues are notated on four staves in the score beneath the piano and flute. Some cues are of substantial length and require the performers to follow the electronics parts in terms of timing. Other cues are very short, often consisting of a single chord. A Max/MSP patch has been written in order to diffuse these cues with the foot pedal.

The live instruments should also be amplified slightly and with some reverb added. This should create a convincing blend between the live instruments and electronics.

flute notation

At times, the flute is given an indication to “trill D and D-sharp trill keys”. This should not be realized as a clean, diligent trill, but rather a quasi-random constant light palpitation between these two keys. This is a technique that has been used extensively by Salvatore Sciarrino in his works. Furthermore, the intensity (speed/level of obscuration of the notated pitch) of the trill may be indicated by crescendi markings.

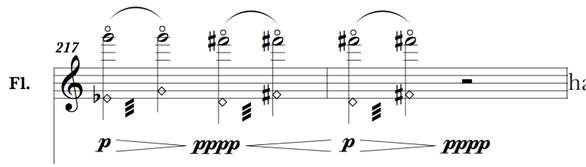
Λ - tongue accent

≻- breath accent

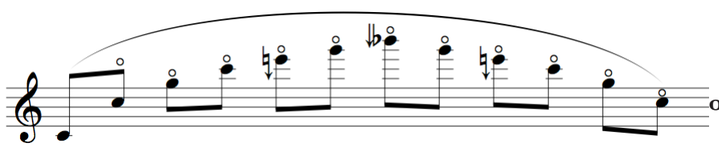
aeolian - Pitched air. The dynamics indicated while using this technique do not refer to absolute volume, but more to the amount of effort on the part of the flute player.

alternate fingerings - Alternate between two different fingerings for the same pitch.

bisb. - bisbigliando - Use multiple alternate fingerings for the same pitch.



harmonics trill - a bisbigliando trill, played by fingering the diamond noteheads while producing the appropriate harmonic. The result will be a quiet and fragile gesture.

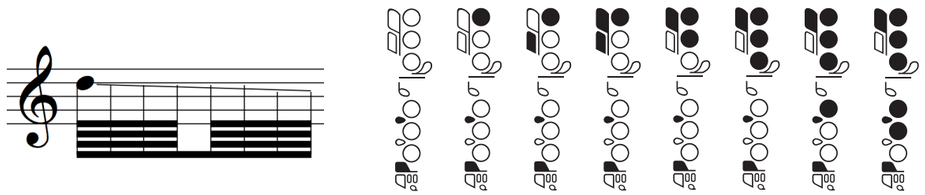


overblowing harmonics - flute only. Forcefully blow fundamental note to produce overtone.

microtonal segments

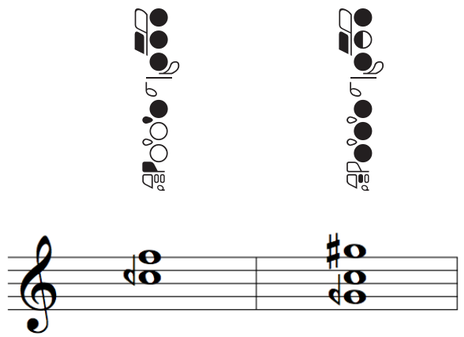
The flute performs rapid microtonal passages in this piece. These passages only use microtones that are easy to finger, usually requiring the performer to play a normal fingering pattern while leaving out one key high up on the instrument. The segments descending from G4 to C-sharp5 this method of fingering is true, whereas from the D5, a more complex fingering is required:

flute microtonal segment on D:



multiphonics

The multiphonics provided below should be possible on any flute in the dynamic ranges written in the score. If any of the multiphonics prove to be impossible, the performer should find an alternate multiphonic that corresponds as closely as possible with the pitches and dynamics of the notated multiphonic.



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♩ = 60

Flute

as fast as possible, repeating

gradually bend up a quartertone

bend back down

pp

pppp *p* *pppp*

ppp *p*

Pedal

Piano

fast as possible

8va

mp *ppp*

UNA CORDA

pp

ped.

Electronics

vocal timbre

flute harmonics trill

p

6

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

El.

bisb.

pppp *mp* *pppp*

pp *mp*

aeolian

D - D#

pppp

fast as possible

8va

ped.

flute bisb. trill

mp

flute bisb. trill

mp

vocal timbre

mp

flute bisb. trill

flute singing and playing

p

flute harmonics trill

flute harmonics trill

p

vocal timbre with random bending

p

flute multiphonic

pp *mp*

12

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

El.

norm. → aeolian

slow whistle tones ad lib

norm. → aeolian

norm. → aeolian

norm.

p f mp f mp mp f mp pppp

fast as possible

8va

mp pp pppp pp pppp p pppp

ped.

flute harmonics trill

flute singing and playing

p

18

quarter-tone bends or microtonal segments ad lib.
half-aeolian

4" 3" 2" 4" 5" 7"

mp

piano timbre with vocal samples

mp

♩ = 42

poco accel.

♩ = 56

24

aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm.

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

flute timbre

El.

31

aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm. aeolian → norm.

not too loud (maintain a calm affect)

D - D#

not too loud (maintain a calm affect)

(quarter-tone bends or microtonal segments ad lib.)

5" 5" 5"

34 calmly

Fl. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

Pd.

calmly
randomly play given notes in a trill-like fashion

Pno. *pp* *mp* *mp* *mp*

depress gradually depress gradually depress gradually

ped.

moan samples from the opening flute timbre

El. *mp* *mp* *mp*

5" 5" 5"

37

Fl. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

Pd.

Pno. *mp* *mp* *mp*

depress gradually depress gradually depress gradually

ped.

El. *mp* *mp* *mp*

♩ = 80

40 bisb. D - D# D - D# D - D# D - D#

Fl. *fp* *mp* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mf* *fp* *f*

Pd.

fast as possible take med-hard wool mallets

Pno. *f* *pp* *pp* *mp* press silently

ped. sost. ped.

piano timbre

El. *mf*

vocal timbre

pp *mp* *pp*

♩ = 60

45

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

El.

ppp p 3 p mf

aeolian → norm. → aeolian

12:8

pp mp pp

norm.

aeolian

(aeolian) (norm.)

a → n → a → n → a → n → a →

ppp mp mp mf

with mallets in piano

pppp p pppp

sost. ped. →

strum with the flesh of finger in piano

p

pizz. (pluck inside piano)

mp

strum with the flesh of finger in piano

pp p mp

mp

piano attacks with flute resonance

drone of wind timbres

51

n → aeolian

12:8

mf

aeolian → norm. → aeolian

12:8

ppp f mp

flz. (norm.)

mfp mf pp mp ppp

pp

with mallets in piano

ppp mp ppp

sost. ped.

ped.

UNA CORDA
on keys

pp p p pp ppp

pp p

57

Fl.

flz.

aeolian

12:8

mp p mp pp f

aeolian norm.

ppp mf ppp

aeolian norm. aeolian

12:8 6

ppp mf pp

Pd.

release UNA CORDA

take mallets

press silently

with mallets (rub for gliss)

p

pppp

mp pppp

with mallets, randomly striking the strings in the given range

ppp

Pno.

sost. ped.

El.

63

Fl.

D - D#

norm. aeolian

fp f ppp

D - D#

aeolian norm.

fp mf p mf pp

aeolian norm.

mf

aeolian

pppp

Pd.

Pno.

sost. ped.

El.

68

Fl.

aeolian → norm. → aeolian

10:8

D - D#

norm.

ppp fp f

ppp mp ppp mf ppp

D - D#

n a etc.

flz.

10:8

ppp f

aeolian

ppppp

Pd.

Pno.

on keys

p

pp

press silently

sost. ped.

sost. ped. →

El.

74

norm. → aeolian

12:8

flz.

f

pp mf pp

mf

ppp

aeolian

ppppp

Pno.

mp ppp

pp

p

ppp

with mallets in piano

ppp mp ppp

sost. ped. →

El.

79

norm. → aeolian

aeolian

norm.

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

(mallets)

on keys

pizz.

sost. ped. ped.

El.

piano timbre

85

aeolian → flz.

half-aeolian

D - D#

flz. → aeolian

(norm.)

with mallets

on keys

ped.

♩ = 90

90

quarter-tone bends

bisb.

D - D#

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

piano timbre

flute harmonics trill

95

flz.

flz.

D - D#

trill speed

bisb.

101

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

flute harmonics trill

bend up quartertone

106

bisb.

flz.

vocal timbre

flute timbre

cresc. poco a poco

111

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

D - D#

D - D#

D - D#

piano timbre

flute harmonics trill

116

bend up quartertone

bisb.

bisb.

vocal timbre

flute harmonics trill

cresc. poco a poco

121

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

flute harmonics trill

vocal timbre

piano timbre

piano timbre

D - D#

126

D - D#

D - D#

D - D#

D - D#

flute timbre

130

Fl.

D - D#

D - D#

D - D#

D - D#

bisb.

bisb.

bisb.

slow wide vib.

bisb.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

piano timbre

El.

134

Fl.

aeolian

half-aeolian

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

piano timbre

El.

piano with flute resonance

cresc. poco a poco

138

12:8

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

D - D#

flute timbre

vocal samples

142

piano with flute resonance

piano timbre

piano timbre

decresc. poco a poco

148

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

fff

p

D - D#

f

sub.p

f

p

randomly play given notes in a trill-like fashion

fp

ff

mf

8vb

152

mp

bend up quartertone

fp

ff

D - D#

mf

ff

mf

p

mf

ff

mf

randomly play given notes in a trill-like fashion

8vb

ff

156

(𝅗𝅥 = 𝅗𝅥) ♩ = 95 **poco rit.** ♩ = 80

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

vocal samples

El.

161

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

calmly
aeolian → norm. → aeolian

flute multiphonic

flute timbre

→ norm. → aeolian

168

with intensity

flz.

D - D#

norm.

Fl.

Pd.

with intensity

15ma

Pno.

ped.

depress gradually

rough vocal samples begin

El.

piano timbre

piano resonance drone

cresc. poco a poco

174

norm.

flz.

D - D#

norm.

180

8va

f ff f

flz.

D - D#

ff

norm.

p

p cresc.

Fl.

Pd.

15ma

ff

5 5 5

tr

p

fff

8va 15ma

5 5 5

sfffz

ppp

Pno.

ped.

depress gradually

release gradually

ped.

depress gradually

El.

186

fff

fff

p cresc.

fff

ffp

fff

ffp

ffp

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

192

♩ = 60

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

El.

8va

fff

ffff

ff

ped.

flute harmonics trill

aeolian trill

mf

soft moan sample throughout the electronics solo

mp

p

flute bisb. trill

flute harmonics trill

flute multiphonics

199

gradually bend up a quartertone

bend back down

pp

piano timbre

♩ = 42

205

Fl.

Pd.

Pno.

ped.

El.

piano timbre

flute harmonics trill

211

aeolian norm.

aeolian

piano resonance