


Ben Smith


the ineluctable modality of the audible
(Water Music)


Solo Piano


Performance Notes


Accidentals refer only to notes they immediately precede.
(Nevertheless, natural signs are occasionally employed for ease of reading.)


 to be depressed silently, *except* where the note is a harmonic, in which case the upper, diamond-headed note indicates the resultant pitch, the lower note being struck on the key


 silently depressed chromatic cluster


 harmonics lying in between the standard boundaries, producing faint multiphonics - the closest actual harmonic is shown, and the accompanied 'ghost' pitch is notated in parentheses


 very particular harmonics to be found *before* the dampers - these produce multiple pitches when struck, and are characterised by a peculiar beating


 second-escapement action


 muted, around one inch from the tuning pegs (around the centre of the higher string)


 half-muted, allowing the fundamental pitch to be clearly heard (on lower strings, the muting finger should be placed directly next to the tuning pegs, on high strings, the muting finger is best placed at the very end of the string, near the bridge)

 muted "pitch-bend"; the arrow denotes a gradual increase in finger pressure /motioning away from oneself on the muted string with the desired resultant pitch indicated above

mart.  strike the strings with the knuckles (or with the finger tips on the bass strings) - in general, aim for the centre area of the strings; the resulting sound should be a percussive 'boom', somewhat lacking in fundamental pitch, but with a harmonic richness

 scrape the fingernails over the strings, motioning sharply away from oneself - take care to differentiate between scapes in the middle and bass ranges of the piano

 dampen the string around one inch from the tuning pegs (occasionally, other dampening actions are to be employed, with the palm, for example)

pizz. plucked with the fingertip, inside the main body of the piano (*ord.*)  nail pizz

sul pont. (s.p.) plucked as near to the tuning pegs as possible

sweep liquido (sw.) a particular glissando - fingers should glide lightly over the strings; creating a diffuse, breathy sound with little noticeable attack - the final pitch should be clearly articulated in those glissandi not marked legato

N.B. The speaking part should be spoken in a neutral, calm tone; the rhythms to be interpreted as a general guide only. Take care not to rush or shorten any sound. Rather, err on the side of elongation - especially with fricative phonemes - so that a palpable sensuality may be communicated to the listener.

Programme Note

This work forms part of a series of pieces that are framed around Gilles Deleuze's conception of the Image.

The musical Image is aimed at in three major ways (all of which, importantly, lead to silence): detonation (attacks; the things that turn silence into an inevitability), combination (silence but not really silence; obscuring membranes, layerings), and dissipation (the journey toward silence; the inescapable ephemerality of silence itself, its internal destruction).

the ineluctable modality of the audible takes various motivic and generic gestural fragments traditionally associated with water music (using the piano music of Ravel and Debussy as a primary source for material) then distorts and re-contextualizes them in alien environments. Amongst the various (increasingly destructive) processes at play, three basic kinds of material (melodic fragments, accompanying figures, and pedal points) are explored and combined in different ways - in particular around the boundaries of their respective territories - as well as being transformed sonically.

The title takes its name from James Joyce's *Ulysses*: "Stephen closed his eyes to hear his boots crush crackling wrack and shells. You are walking through it howsomever. I am, a stride at a time. A very short space of time through very short times of space. Five, six: the *nacheinander*. Exactly: and that is the ineluctable modality of the audible."

the ineluctable modality of the audible (Water Music)

Ben Smith

placid ♩ = ca. 60

Lis ten: a four - word - ed wave speech: s i: s u: h(a) r s(i)

whispered

pizz. sul pont. mp *ord. p* (on key) ¹¹ *mp*

Sost. Ped.

5 r s(ə) i: s(ə) u: s(u). Ve-he ment breath of wa ters a mid sea snakes rear-ing hor-ses rock-s in

più f (low e only) *szu.*

(Sost.) *Sost. Ped.*

11

3/4 3 3 7/8 3 7/16

cups of rocks it slops f- lo - p s - lo - p s- la - p bound - ed in bar- rels...

mp *più f* *f* (palm)

13/16 13/16

(Sost. Ped.)

Ped. *con forza!*

16

8^{va}

6

5

6

ffz *mp* *cresc. brillante* *fff* *pp fragile* *p* sotto voce - legato sempre

pizz. pizz. *scz.*

6/4 3/4 11/16 3/4

11/16 11/16

p quasi onda

1/2 Ped.

Sost. Ped. (sempre)

21

4:3

4/4 4/4 3/4 4/4

mf *ord.* *mp*

s.p.

26

7:5

8va

11/16

11/16

(Sost. Ped.)

1/2 Ped.

33

4:3

7:5

mf

mp

s.p.

ord.

Ped.

40

4:3

5:4

mf

s.p. (with top note)

insistente

(on key)

Ped.

45 *lontano*

pp (E)

molto

p

mp cresc.

ord.

poco

Ped.

sotto voce - dragging

(with top note)

(Sost. Ped.)

49

f quasi crotales

f

mf misterioso

poco

quasi poch. mart. - à la ped. boom (pre-echo!)

mart. (knuckles)

pizz. 4:3

p echo

s.p.

1/2 Ped.

Ped.

(slow)

54

mf sim.

poco

f

4:3

mpz on key

s.p.

Ped.

*Sost. **

agitato poco accel.

60 (F) (touch node)

p *sff* *mp* *molto* *ffz*

3 3 3

11 11 11

Sost. Ped. (sempre) →

(inversely) entropic

♩ = ca. 64

64

ppp *pppp* senza direzione

mp *mfz*

rall. focused

♩ = ca. 54

pizz.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

5:4 8:5 5:3

una corda (Sost. Ped.) → Ped. →

mart. - à la ped. boom

68

mpz

mp 3 3

4:3 3 3

9/16 9/16 13/8 13/8

(Sost. Ped.) →

74

mf *p* *sp delicato* *f* *molto*

pizz. *pizz. s.p.*

Ped. *(Sost. Ped.)*

3 5 3 2 11 3 5:4 5/4

81

sfz *mp* *mf f* *più f* *fz* *mf* *mf*

mart. echo *mart.* *Led.* *poco allarg. intenso*

3 6:5 5:4 3 7/8

85

fz *fpp diffuso* *p* *p*

pizz. *(Eb)* *(m.s.)* *pizz. (different strings)*

(scrape) *m.d. on key* *s.p.* *wave**

3 4:3 3 5:4 3/4 3/4

* A very quick change of pedal, allowing the sustained sonorities to diminish gradually.

accel agitato poco a poco

93

(pizz.) 3 1
più >
(on key) 5
(with top note) pizz.
p sotto voce
pp
s.p.
mart. echo
più pizz.
s.p.
5

Ped.

Sost. *

una corda

99

mpz *pz* subito meno mosso
♩ = ca. 48
cresc. agitato
s.p.
mf
6
mf
(sudden release)
Ped.

107

5:4 *fz* 3 *meno f* *sf*
(finger bounce on node)
Ped.

110

3 *mf* 7:4 *p* cresc. *ffz*
4:3 4:3 3
Ped.

111

3 3 3

8^{va} 5:4

(A#)

7/16 7:4

fz mp ff ffz mf

3

(tutti)

113

p molto cresc. brillante ad lib.

f sfz ffz fffz

poco Ped.

Sost. Ped.

allarg. intenso

sempre molto secco

fff sPPP moltiss. ffff

114

aggressivo

with stuttering momentum *ff* stridente

♩ = ca. 72

mf mp calmo legato

Ped. Sost. Ped. 8^{vb}

118 *ff*

ff *f* *più f* *fz*

121 *8va con forza* **agitato distruttivo** *p* (palm cluster) *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* ³

ffz *mp* *cresc. poco a poco* *mf* *f* *mf*

ffz *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

(fist) *Ped.* *8va*

125 *ff* *ffz* ^{8 8} **subito largo tranquillo** *p dolce!* *ffz* *f più cresc.*

mf *cresc.* *p dolce!* *ffz* *f più cresc.*

Ped. *pizz.* *on key* *(Bb)*

128

8^{va}

fffz

6:5

3

allarg.

ff

3

3

molto tenuto

3

ffpp

una corda

8^{vb}

8^{vb}

8^{vb}

8^{vb}

(wave)

meditativo - morendo poco a poco al fine
 ♩ = ca. 48

133

And, spent, its speech cea-ses. It f - lows pur-ling

p lontano
pizz. s.p.

(gradually remove)

una corda

Ped. *delicato!*

(B^b)

137

wide-ly flo-wing

f-loa-ting foam-pool

flo-wer un-fur-lin - g.

Listen

una corda

una corda

pizz.

pppp

3

pochiss.

8^{va}

palm - quasi mart.

pizz.

retorico

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