

ben smith

**alone; silently**

(female voice & string trio)

## Performance Notes

Accidentals refer only to notes they immediately precede (natural signs are usually employed for ease of reading). Quarter tones should in general should be treated as tempered pitches. However, when employed chromatically - and especially when marked *legato* - intonation may be considered more flexible (inflectional).


The numerous silences which punctuate the work should not be considered in any way 'rests'. They can, however, convey absence of material; whether it be obscured, or imagined as shifting between realms of perceptible and imperceptible (*inécoutable*). Either way, a sense of a concentrated will to sound/hear should be maintained throughout these passages.

Though the work is not intended to be explicitly 'dramatic', the physical aspect of any gestures in performance (especially those within the intended stillness of any silent passages) should be carefully considered. That is, rests should ideally not be 'cluttered' with preparations for upcoming gestures and the like, and page turns should be co-ordinated between players.

The vocalist and string trio should be situated at either sides of the stage, as far apart as possible; so that methods of communication and synchronization between players is rendered more difficult than usual. This particular layout is devised in order to bring to the fore the trio's representation of the vocalist's distant 'inner voice' or 'other', with which she is desperately attempting to connect, yet simultaneously refusing to acknowledge. To this end, performers should also aim to dress identically or noticeably similar, so that the vocalist and string trio may be seen as one-and-the-same; ripped apart.

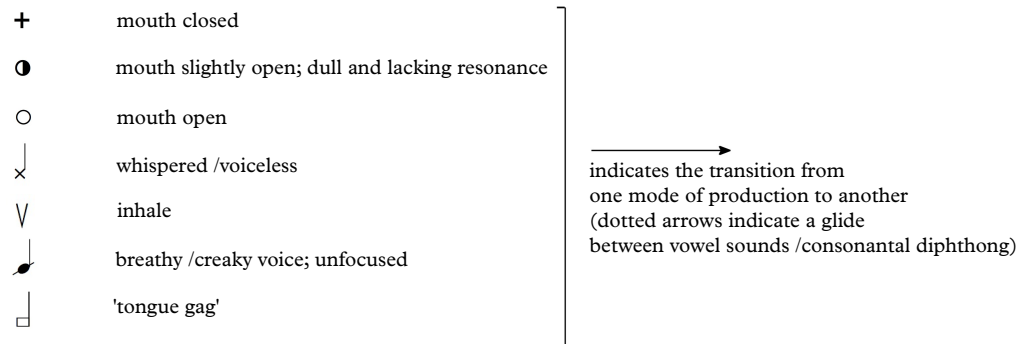
### Voice

*flaut.* flautando - airy, 'white' tone; always quiet and *non vib.*

 *molto vibrato* - somewhat exaggerated

*non vib. (n.v.)* - without vibrato;

*poco vib. (p.v.)* - slight, wavering - distinctly *unnatural* - vibrato (not operatic!), with minute, unstable fluctuations



### Programme Note

singing alone  
 watching memory fail over  
 again like a little ritornello -  
 schizophrenic,  
 but only like all memory is -  
 full of forgotten images,  
 and nothing, and noise

There are numerous vocalizations called for throughout the work, across all parts. These fall into two main types:


1) fragment-sounds (notated above the relevant stave, with a beam extending for the duration of the sound), which are to be whispered /unvoiced throughout. These sounds are written using standard IPA symbols.

2) stream-of-consciousness text (notated above the relevant stave, with headless stems), which are to be almost-whispered throughout (that is, spoken with 'natural' inflection, but as if faded 'memory-images', *private* recitations).

All vocalizations should be calmly executed and always blended with the general musical context. Take care not to rush or shorten any sounds, so that a palpable sensuality is communicated.

### Strings

*flaut.* flautando - always to be played *sul tasto* and *non vib.*

 *molto vibrato* - somewhat exaggerated

*non vib. (n.v.)* without vibrato

*poco vib. (p.v.)* very slight vibrato, like a old phonograph


*vib. largo* slow and ghostly (spectral) - microtonally inflected


*pst /mst* *poco /molto sul tasto* (the latter bowed or plucked as near to the left hand as is practical)

*psp /msp* *poco /molto sul ponticello* (the latter bowed as near to the bridge as possible, or with the bow hair partly on the bridge; the resulting sound should be slightly airy and almost entirely devoid of the fundamental pitch)


*clb /clt* *col legno battuto /tratto* - a very small proportion of hair should be retained  
*½ cl* *½ col legno tratto* - bowed partly by the hairs, partly by wood of the bow

*gettato* a single, rapid bouncing bow action, sometimes accompanied by a glissando in the left hand  
*gett. poi sostenuto* a throw bow action transitioning smoothly to sustained pitch

 Bartók pizz (when preceded by a dampening sign *all* strings should be completely choked, so that only a sharp 'rebound' attack is heard)

 dampen the string

 overpressure 'crescendo'

 overpressure downbow

**N.B.** The cello scordatura is notated at *sounding* pitch in the score.

### Text

mona, speak mèn-some (what or?)

giedd-dè; sing ful geomorre (bi me), lie  
 alone on my insides; mésa – you-I  
 ripped apart (næfre gesomnad), can't won't  
 speak; silent shifting united never  
 wæs – traces of what Ic was before this  
 (no other) time: méσαι-night, no moon, won't  
 gone silent. nobody's there, and the hours  
 go by, betweenot (spoken never), can't  
 this song wrece; fullsad – united before  
 that. they you mon-alone, dead someago

I can feel you watching me

– but I don't want them to hear.

[freely compiled fragments of Sappho, Sophokles, Old English songs of lament, other things,  
 and a text by Leo Doulton]

for Patricia Auchterlonie

# alone; silently

Ben Smith

searching, stuttering, intensely focused ♩ = 58

dal sussurro n.v. mp cresc.

ff — aggressivo

molto accel.

molto agitato brutto (subito ♩ = 132)

absolute stillness - breathe just before the opening bar

(12")

scordatura:

all mordants span a semitone, unless otherwise indicated

Voice: a

Violin: II psp, ffz assoluto non vib., ord. (n.v.), ff marcato violento

Viola: II pst, p.v., ffz molto marc., ord. (n.v.), ff marcato violento

Cello: pp flaut. (sempre sotto voce)

4

III, II, I, psp, ord., 3, 3, 5:4, III, II, III, 5:4, n.v. I/II

sfzp, ff, mf, ffz, fzp, smf, ffz, sfzp

Tempo I - poco tranquillo (subito ♩ = 58)

ppp sempre spectrale (flaut.)

8

p, n.v., mpz, n.v., p.v.

psp, 3, 3, ord., 5:4, II, mf, 5:4, III, 1/2 cl - n.v., flaut. fragile, pppp, 5:4, pst 1/2 cl - n.v., III, flaut. fragile, pppp, 5:4, flaut. fragile

14

(almost whispered) *ppp sotto voce*

ord. clt IV

ne f e

me - sa you I, rip

of what I was be-fore this no o-ther

*pppp*

*psp clb*

*molto flaut.*

*pochiss.*

*III/II*

21

*p.v.* *pochiss.* *n.v.*

a

there and hours go by be-tween - not

*pochiss.*

*p possibile*

*p possibile*

*poco*

27

*mpz* *più pressando* **Tempo II** (♩=132)

ord.

*p possibile*

*fpp*

II ord.

*ff marcato violento*

*mf* *ffz*

ord. I

*ff marcato violento*

*fzmp*

*ff*

Tempo I (♩=58)

31

ppp flaut. *n.v.* *poco* *p.v.*  
a (n) o

ord. 3 5:4 3  
*fz* *ffz*

psp 5:4  
*mf* *ff* *ffz*

psp 5:4 ord.  
*mf*

mp *fz* *ffz* *mf*

36

pst 1/2cl - n.v. *pppp* flaut. fragile  
so

ord. clt IV 11 5:4 *pochiss.*

III pst 1/2cl - n.v. *pppp* flaut. sim.

*ppp* sotto voce (almost whispered)  
sa you I ripped a - part shift - ing u - ni - ted ne - ver was s

*molto* flaut.

41

*n.v.*  
ju s no

go by be - tween not spo - ken nev - er can't this

s - ong full - sad u - ni - ted be - fore that they you mon

*ff* marc. sim.

clb



♩ = 72 **rall.** ♩ = 56

63

pizz. sempre **pst** **ppp dolciss.**

IV III 5:4

II 3 III

IV <sub>o2</sub> (l.v. sim.)

II IV

3 III II

IV 5:4

pizz. sempre **pst** **ppp dolciss.**

II III <sub>o2</sub>

II 3 III

IV <sub>o6</sub>

I/II (l.v. sim.)

II III <sub>o2</sub>

II 3 III

II/I

3 5:4

searching still, molto doloroso ♩ = 48

71 very slowly bring hands up to face and hold over mouth - remain motionless

III/II

3 <sub>o2</sub>

II 3 III

II <sub>o2</sub> 5:4

III 3 <sub>o2</sub>

III/IV <sub>o4</sub>

3 III IV

III

II <sub>o5</sub>

II

I

II 3 III

II <sub>o2</sub>

II/I

IV <sub>o4</sub>

II <sub>o2</sub>

II I

3 5:4

3 5:4

79

*dal sussurro* **pppp** (sempre bocca chiusa)

n.v. 5:4

practice mute sul III  
mst clt molto flaut.

**pppp cantabile dolciss.**

3 <sub>o2</sub>

3 5:4

IV <sub>o5</sub>

3 3

3 <sub>o2</sub>

3 3

3 5:4

3 5:4

3 5:4

3 5:4

3 5:4

3 5:4

Delalande - Troisième Leçons de Tenebres (Vendredi)

86

*p.v.*

*pochiss.*

(mouth open behind hands - intermittent punctuations of choked noise)

92

**ppppp** *privato ma agitato*  
 2<sup>nd</sup> time: silently mouth words only

a - lone on my in-sides mé-sa an't won't speak si-lent shif - t t Ic was be-fore this no o-ther time mé-sai night no moon won't gone si-lent no-bo-dy's there are hours go by be-tween notspo-ken ne-ver can't

97

**pppz** (both times)

thi - f be-fore that you na-lone dead some-a -go I can feel you watch-ing me but I don't want them to hear mo-na spea-k men - s ing ful geo-mor-re bi me lie a-lone on my



102

in sides mé-sa you-I ripped a-part næ-fre geo-som-nad can't won't speak si-lent ch no - bo-dy's there and hours go by be-tween not spo-ken ne-ver can't this song wre-ce u - ni-ted be-fore this some-a - go

2<sup>nd</sup> time: eyes shut suddenly and forcefully

1<sup>st</sup> time only



107

(hold as long as possible)

arco clt (III) mst

arco clt (IV) mst

*p* possibile

*p* possibile

*p* possibile