

Slow Music

for any instruments

Notes on the Music

I love Brian Eno, Arvo Part, and even Phillip Glass. To me, much of their music is so beautifully still, seemingly stationary at first listen, but nevertheless containing a slowly evolving narrative.

I've found that up to this point I have gravitated towards a very active narrative in my music. A comment I often hear from those unfamiliar with classical music (or the concept of narrative through sound as opposed to words) is that "it sounds all over the place!", or "why did it change all of a sudden?". This is an understandable reaction, as not everybody is used to hearing sound as a language in itself.

These pieces are explorations of a different style. They explore a soft, slowly evolving narrative, and are much more stationary than active. These pieces are improvised, so that those playing are also the composers.

Keenan Reimer-Watts

May, 2017

I.

Notes on Performance

The notes that are smaller are generally to be played at a softer dynamic than the full-sized notes. There could be something like an echo/canon effect in the piece.

Performers can come in and out of the texture, playing whatever notes they like on the page, but of course everyone has to be in the same place (*or at least, same bar.) In this way, the texture can vary, becoming more or less dense as performers come in, or drop out.

The specific 'voices' given are numbered - players can be assigned a part. This can also direct the order in which the voices enter.

Performers repeat as much as they like, ending the piece when it feels right.

No instruments are indicated, which is meant to imply that this can be played by any instruments. If being performed with a voice, hum softly. If some notes are not within the range of the instrument, feel free to jump an octave.

Performers can harmonize in 3rds, 6ths, 10ths. Of course, this may not always work out, but just try to keep the consonance of the piece in mind. It should sound spacious and calm, and quietly expressive. Veer on the side of the lydian mode, using F# instead of F over a C chord, for instance.

Keep in mind that before repeating, there is a pause in the sound, as indicated by the breath mark.

for Ioana Dragomir, something less active

I.

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The musical score is written for three staves: Treble Clef (top), Piano (middle), and Bass Clef (bottom). The time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number (1, 5, 9, 13). The first system includes six numbered first endings (1-6) indicated by boxes above the notes. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system features a key signature change to one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The fourth system concludes with a 'lunga' section, marked with a fermata and a longer note value, indicating a sustained or held note.

II.

Notes on Performance

This piece is much more harmonically oriented in nature than Slow Music I, although there is still a very slow melody (the upper voice of each chord) that should come through as it is played.

Between each chord there should be silence, at least the length of a deep breath in and out. The length of the chords can last as long as the performers like. Each chord should swell in and out, as indicated. Each section should have an overarching dynamic shape.

This can be performed by any instruments. However, when playing keep in mind a lower, darker sound.

This is to be played start to finish, repeating each section only once.

Performers are free to improvise, keeping in mind the overall character of the piece and the harmony in each bar.

II.

n. *sim.*

9

16

24

31

38

lunga