Tidying of the Tides

Solo baritone

for Frank Wörner

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2020

GENERAL NOTES

The inspiration for this piece is the unfolding of unending, cyclical, time. Different cycles of materials and qualities come and go at different paces and from their superposition the form of the piece emerges while distinct events pass by. It is intended to represent the immensity of the passage of time, the blossoming of the universe, condensed in a more or less short time and compressed in the minimal space of the intimacy of a solo singer.

NOTATION

The score is divided in several sections:

As for rhythm, all notes and events are written in the score with proportional notation. There is a grid on top **(1)** showing divisions of time as an aid for placing all the elements on time. This subdivision represents a rate of about 50 beats per minute or slower, but is not intended to represent a pulse, since the music should feel always pulseless.

In the middle of the score there is the staff **(2)** with all the information related to pitch. Above the staff there are dynamic markings **(3)** and below the staff there are indications related to voice qualities **(4)**. On the uttermost top there are also indications related to breathing. All of these will be discussed further in the following sections.

PITCHED MATERIAL NOTATION

There are different ways in which the pitch events have been notated throughout the piece:

- In the first and last sections (sections **A** and **G**) all pitch events are synchronized to the rhythm of the bottom part (the part showing transformations of voice qualities). Each note is given a black notehead (●) independently of their duration and they should last since the next note. Notice that every time that a note starts at a defined point there is an arrow pointing to them coming from the bottom.

- In the middle sections (from **B** to **F**) pitch events are not synchronized to the bottom part. In these sections, rhythm is defined only for the timbral parameters. Note durations, instead are very flexible and they are notated in four levels as follows:

  - 𝄐 (white notehead with a fermata sign)   from 4 to 6 seconds
  - 𝅝 (regular white notehead)   from 2 to 5 seconds
  - ● (regular black notehead)   from 0.5 to 2 seconds
  - ✦ (dashed notehead)   always as fast as possible

  In section **E** there are also long notes that should be sustained until the next pitch event. They are notated with a whole note notehead followed by a thick arrow:

- During these central sections several pitch cycles arise and they are organized in loops. This is an example of a loop from section **C**:
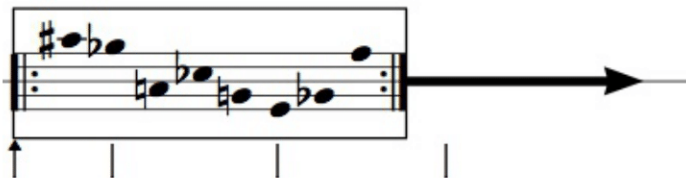
The loop is represented by regular repetition signs inside a box and it is followed by a thick arrow showing that the repetition has

to continue until the next event. Notice that the starting point of the loop is specified by an upwards arrow just like in sections **A** and **G**. The rhythm inside the loop is only represented with noteheads as explained above. In this case all notes have regular black noteheads and thus they should each span 0.5 to 2 seconds. The performer is free to use these boundaries to accommodate them within the more precise rhythm of other events happening at the same time without any obligation to do so in a regular or an irregular way.

- When a new loop begins after another, the last iteration of the first loop has to be complete in order to move from the first loop to the second one without missing the last notes of the former. This means that some extra time may be added if necessary at these points and this is shown with a fermata with the indication F.L. (for "finish loop").

- A more convoluted form of loop can be found in sections **B** and **F**. This is an example of an evolving loop from section **B**:

There are two boxes containing a loop each with the same pitches but using different rhythmic values. Both boxes are enclosed into a bigger box and the first box is connected to the second one with a thin arrow. This means that the performer should start cycling the first loop—the beginning of which, as always, is marked with an upwards arrow—and slowly morph into the second one for the whole duration of the event which is represented by the thick arrow. The second loop, even if it is stated right next to the first one, should only be established at the end of the event. In this example the first loop begins with a note with a duration between 4 and 6 seconds and the rest of the notes are performed as fast as possible; by the end of the process of gradually shortening the first one and

stretching the other ones each iteration, they should all be between 0.5 and 2 seconds long. The reverse rhythmic process takes place in section **F**.

- In sections **C** and **D** loops are affected by modifiers. These are also shown inside boxes and interrupt the flow of the loop at certain points of time synchronized with the rhythmic texture shared with rest of the events and thus the specific moment when the modifier takes place is indicated with an upwards arrow. Take for example the previous loop discussed from section **C**:
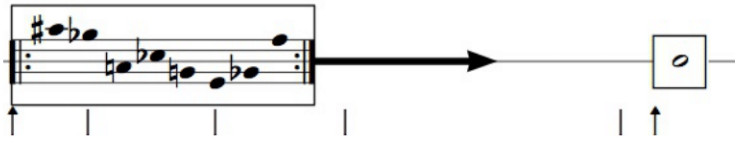
The modifier in this case is the single white notehead. This means that the performer cycles through the loop in a normal fashion but, at the point where the modifier takes place, whatever pitch they are singing is held for 2 to 5 Seconds instead of the 0.5 to 2 seconds that are assigned to the black headnotes. This affects only a single note and from the next note onwards all pitches should revert to the durations specified in the loop until the next modifier appears. In section **D** the loop is made up of white noteheads but while cycling the loop the performer will encounter modifiers consisting of single dashed black noteheads and thus the single notes that will coincide with the modifier are to be sung as fast as possible instead of for 2 to 5 seconds.

- In addition to loops and modifiers, there are inserts. Inserts interrupt the loops and are shown in dashed boxes:

They happen at a defined point in time and thus their beginning is marked with an upwards arrow. All inserts consist of dashed black noteheads and they are the only staccato material (to be performed with quick glottal stops). They interrupt whatever material is going on—a loop or a sustained tone—like a secondary layer. The sound is interrupted but, when the insert ends, the previous material does not resume at the

point where it stopped. Instead, it continues as if the insert never happened. So, when a loop with shorter notes is interrupted by a more or less long insert (for example, during the second loop in section **C**) some notes may be skipped over. The loop should continue in the mind of the performer and then resume normally after the insert is done. Like quickly switching between two radio stations, one layer does not affect the other: inserts should not sound integrated with the loop but an abrupt change to something unrelated.

BREATHING

- As it is indicated by a slur that begins on the first note of the piece and reaches the last one, the whole piece should feel as a single uninterrupted phrase.

- The cycle of breathing is one of the most important cycles going on in the piece and thus the inhalations should be audible (except for sections A and G). With some glottal resistance or tongue resistance, breathing should be heard throughout. The approximate duration of inhalations is specified for each section:

    - Section **A**   as quick as possible / inaudible
    - Section **B**   2 seconds
    - Section **C**   1,5 seconds
    - Section **D**   1 seconds
    - Section **E**   0,5 seconds
    - Section **F**   less than 0,5 seconds
    - Section **G**   as quick as possible / inaudible

- The cycle of breathing constitutes another layer superimposed to the two layers discussed above. This means that the recurring inhalations will interrupt the sounding of some of the material at several points but, as was the case with inserts, everything that is going on should continue in the mind of the performer; it will be obscured to the audience but, when the inhalation is done, everything should continue as normal, with as many events skipped as necessary.

- Even though both breathing and inserts can interrupt loops, inserts take precedence above all. This means that an insert can interrupt an inhalation. For example: the performer is performing a loop that is followed by an insert. At a certain point before the insert begins the performer needs to take a breath. The inhalation obscures the loop but the performer reaches the insert mid-inhalation. Then, the inhalation should stop and the insert be performed with whatever breath the performer has at that point. When the insert is done the inhalation resumes and takes as long as specified in the score—compounding the parts before and after the insert—and, when the inhalation is finally done, the loop reappears at the point where it would be if it had not been interrupted by neither the inhalation or the insert.

  The depth order of the tree layers can be summarized like this:
  [[loops] can be obscured by **breaths]** can be obscured by **inserts**.

DYNAMICS

- Dynamics range from $\textbf{\textit{ppp}}$ to $\textit{f}$. The majority of the piece is quiet, only reaching $\textit{mf}$ and $\textit{f}$ at a couple of points. These louder moments should not feel exaggerated: it is better that the $\textit{f}$ feels like a $\textit{mf}$ than a $\textit{ff}$. In the context of

the piece there is no need for a climax, only an unfolding of time and a collection of things passing along. It is austere and nothing should feel too important.

- Regarding agogics, a difference has been made for practical reasons between written crescendo and diminuendo and their equivalent "hairpin" signs. The later are to be performed in a more pronounced fashioned than the former. Thus, *cresc.* followed by < represents a crescendo that begins more gradually and becomes more exaggerated later on.

VOICE QUALITIES

Below the pitch staff there is a line showing, in proportional notation, transformations of the voice through changes of several parameters. This section of the score is where the rhythm is specified with vertical lines and when one of these lines is synchronized with a pitch event (note, loop, modifier or insert) it is shown with an upwards arrow. It is divided in three sections:
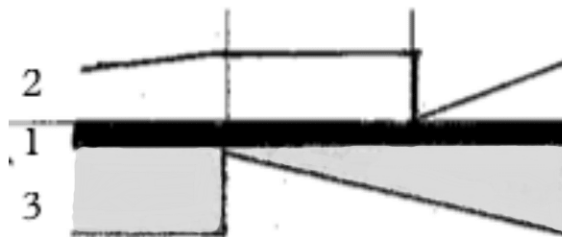
A central black line **(1)** shows the degree of resonance of the voice, vibrato and transitions between voiced and unvoiced sound. The white space on top **(2)** shows the mouth's opening. And the grey space at the bottom **(3)** shows the projection of the voice.

RESONANCE OF THE VOICE

- The central line can be thin or thick. Thin means diffused, untimbered, and thick means resonant, timbered. There are also transitions between these two states. The following example shows diffused **(1)** and resonant **(2)** states as well as a transition from resonant to diffused **(3)**.
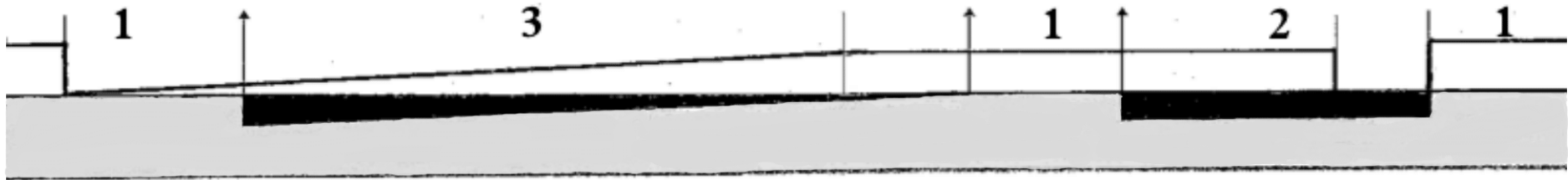
- This parameter affects the production of vowels: with a diffused timbre every vowel takes place in a different position of the mouth, they should be overenunciated, while with a very timbered voice all vowels fall in the same place of the mouth.

- The level of resonance when the line is thick is different at different sections. This is specified with letters bellow the staff showing 4 levels of resonance in total:

A   a bit resonant, not as resonant as lyrical singing
B   resonance of lyrical singing
C   a bit exaggerated resonance, some nasality
D   very exaggerated resonance, close to overtone singing

When one of these levels is stablished, the level is maintained until a new letter appears.

VIBRATO

- When the central line is straight, as in the previous example, it means "no vibrato". A wavy line, instead, means that the fragment above has to be sung with vibrato, as in the next example—which also contains a transition from resonant to diffused:
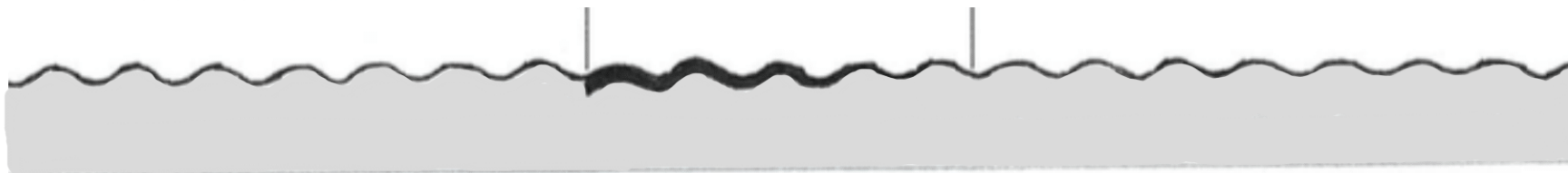
- There are no transitions with vibrato, it is eather "on" or "off". There is, however, a distinction between different types of vibrato concerning the amplitude and the speed. For each of these two parameters are three levels: normal, less than normal, and more than normal—normal being the kind of vibrato more natural to the singer's voice. The notation for this is a symbol on top with the shape of a cross. The vertical line represents amplitude and the horizontal line represents speed. Plain lines represent a normal level, bigger lines with arrows pointing outwards represent more than normal, and smaller lines with arrows pointing inwards represent les than normal.

For instance, the vibrato in the left example should be sung with normal speed and bigger amplitude than normal. And the vibrato on the right should have a normal amplitude and a faster speed than normal.
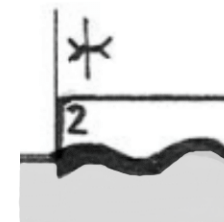
After one of these symbols is stated, the vibrato will remain the same kind until a different symbol changing the vibrato type appears.

VOICED / UNVOICED

- There are several points throughout the piece where the voice transitions from a voiced (normal) state to a state of unvoiced sound which, in general, can be thought as a whisper but depending on what is happening with the rest of the vocal parameters and dynamics can have different qualities such as cracking of the voice. This disintegration of the sound is represented by disintegrating the central black line into dashes that become smaller. When the dashes start to become bigger again, it represents a transition back to normally voiced sound.

  The following example shows part of a transition from voiced to unvoiced and back to voiced in combination with vibrato and no vibrato and with transitions from diffused to resonant and from resonant to diffused:
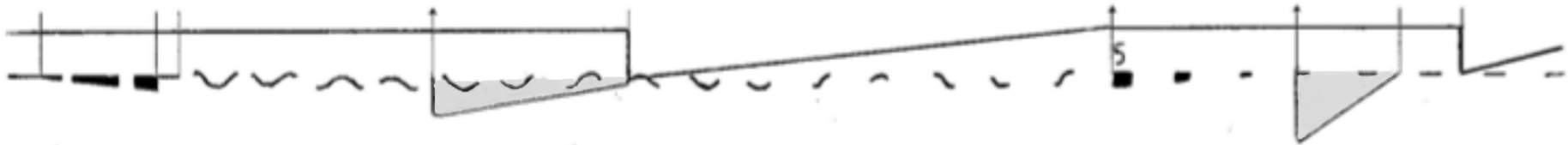
MOUTH OPENING

- Just above the central black line there's a white space comprised of rectangles and triangles that shows the degree of mouth opening. The bigger the space between the central line and the top line is, the bigger the mouth opening. This degree of openness is also stated with a number inside the white space going from 1 to 5. 1 represents the lips barely open and 5 represents fully open mouth. When the line is all the way down, touching the central line, it represents mouth closed, as in the sound *m.*
  In the previous example, for instance, the mouth is open at the beginning, it suddenly closes and starts to open again gradually until arriving to level 5 where it stays for some time until it closes and begins to gradually open again.

- At levels 1 through 4, the singer has to cycle through different positions (vowels), always moving between physiologically consecutive positions. One example could be: $i - e - \varepsilon - a - a - \mathia - o - u - i - e - \varepsilon$ ..., but the cycle can be adapted to fit the language of the performer. The production of a vowel will be affected by the different levels of mouth opening and resonance so it should be thought of as a cycle of positions inside the mouth rather than a cycle of sounds.

  o At level 1 the cycle is the fastest. Each cycle should last about 0,5 second.
  o At level 2 the cycle is slower. Each cycle should last about 1 second.
  o At level 3 each cycle should last about 2,5 seconds.
  o At level 4 each cycle should last about 5 seconds.
  o At level 5 the cycle doesn't move continuously as in levels 1–4. Instead, the position is locked and the changes between one vowel and the next are synchronized to the vertical lines connected to the central line.

PROJECTION

- Under the central line there is a grey section comprised of rectangles and triangles that shows the degree of projection of the voice.

- When there is no grey area the voice is not projected. This means that the performer is asked to keep the voice to themselves, so to speak, as if singing for oneself and the voice could only reach the vicinities of their body. When the grey area appears, the voice should be projected towards the audience.

- There are two levels of projection. When the distance between the bottom line and the central line is one centimetre, the voice is fully projected, reaching the back of the audience. When the distance is half a centimetre, the voice is only halfway projected. The following example shows these two levels in two events where the voice changes suddenly from not projected to projected and back.
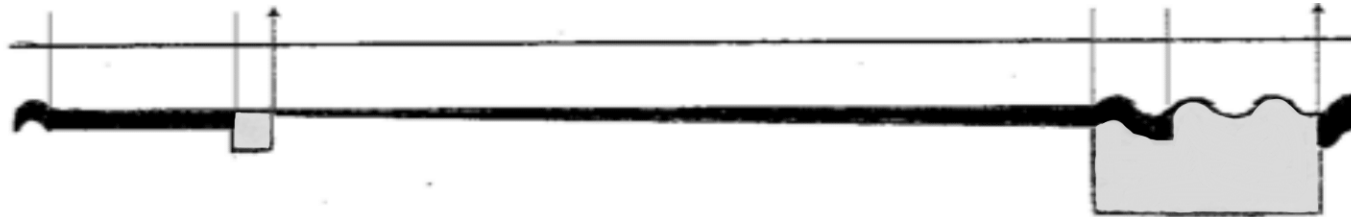
GENERAL NOTES

- Every sudden change of quality marked on the score should be abrupt and as clear and stressed as possible.

- All the vocal changes—opening of the mouth, projection, timbre quality, voiced or unvoiced, vibrato—take place whether the performer is normally singing or inhaling, in which case the setting of the mouth and the changes within this setting influences the sound of the sonorous inhalation.

- Generally speaking, even if some parameters go against each other, such as a diminuendo with increasing projection or a transition of resonance obscured by an unvoiced quality or by a breathing, there has to be the intention to modulate these parameters in the way it is written because is from this tension that the whole array of expressive qualities arise in the performance.

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