

Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf

## Concept and Abstraction

### *void – kol ischa asirit* and *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*

In the program note for the premiere of my orchestral piece *void – kol ischa asirit*, its commissioner, Hans-Peter Jahn, termed it my most conceptual and simultaneously most sonically transparent work; I have to agree with him. More than any other piece, it is based on a strong conception—a concrete story, an extra-musical narration—but in such a way that the music still “works” if one is unaware of this background. For if one knows it, one can never listen to the work in a purely intra-musical way again—which is almost a disadvantage. But what should one do, what should I do? This story simply happens to exist. And the context of my *void* cycle rules out keeping silent about it.

In 2000 I read the memoirs of Stella Müller-Madej, a survivor of the Holocaust, of Auschwitz, who worked for Oskar Schindler as a young girl and thus escaped death. This book, which I consider no less worth reading than Anne Frank’s famous diary, contains the following passage:

A strange murmur goes through the rows, the murmur of bustling people, a crowd scared to the point of madness. The Germans yell, ‘Stand still!’ My teeth chatter, even though I’m keeping them clamped tightly together; they just keep chattering. Mama pushes me to her place. Something happens between the women: they push and shove one another from one place to the next, and everyone in the row tries to take someone else’s place. Now we know what “decimation” means: a German walks along the row, counts to ten, and pulls out every tenth woman by the neck with the curved handle of his cane.

I don’t manage to reach Mama’s place, they’re already too close to me, and I decide to volunteer if Mama is pulled out. What’s the point of living without her? There’s still Papa, but he has Adam. I remember how they were talking quietly once, back in the ghetto. They said that if one of us died, we’d all choose death. I made sure to remember that. I try to work up some hatred for the two who got us into this situation, but my thoughts escape me. Things are looking bad for us, but I want to live, even if I’m hungry, exhausted and half frozen to death. I don’t want much—just to live.

I feel another push. I think it’s time now. No, one of the women has pushed me aside, I see madness in her eyes. Before I can even defend myself, Head Squad Leader Landstorfer and his men appear as if out of nowhere. He strides down the rows, slows his pace, and I close my eyes, thinking I can already feel the walking stick around my neck. I hold my breath; maybe I’ll suffocate, maybe my heart will stop beating, maybe I’ll die here on the spot of my own accord. I can hear everything, I hear it so clearly that it hurts, pounding in my head. I

don't look up, but I know he has stopped. Faster, faster, or I'll step out of line myself, I can't take it anymore! And suddenly: 'Out!' Someone pulls on my arm, not my neck. I open my eyes. He pulls the struggling woman, the one who had pushed me to her place at the last moment, out of the row. The woman screams that it's not her place and clings to my sleeve. But I stand there and don't move. Landstorfer strikes her hand with his whip. She lets me go, falls to the ground and rolls about, screaming again and again that it's not her place.

Tears run down my swollen face. I'm crying because a few centimetres can make the difference between life and death. I'm crying for joy that she wanted my place. I'm crying because in a few minutes, she'll die and I won't. 'It's a miracle, it's a miracle,' Mama repeats with trembling lips.

No, it's not a miracle, it's fear, that inhuman fear; she miscalculated...

When I heard the rattling of the machine gun from the hill, I felt sick; I thought I would vomit. I'll always see the face of that woman before me. I didn't want that. It was my place, and someone else died for me. Was there any sense in that? But in the end, I could be killed today or tomorrow or the day after.<sup>1</sup>

This story shook me as few others among the many stories from the Shoah. On the surface, it describes a decimation, the killing of every tenth person in a row, a punitive procedure familiar from military history. This decimation is bad enough. But here a child is to be murdered, a Jewish girl, in no other place than Auschwitz. The fate of the Jewish people, most of all during the National Socialist dictatorship in the name of Germany, has long been one of my greatest human traumas. But what exactly happens here? A woman counts, supposedly realizes that she is a number ten, and tries to save her life by sacrificing the young girl next to her, pushing her into her own place. But she miscalculates, and consequently saves the young life while causing her own execution: an entanglement of guilty connections. Though it is understandable for someone to attempt to save their own life, no one has the right to send another person to their doom. At the same time, it would be too harsh to view the woman's mistake as a just punishment, for there can be no justice in such a barbaric situation. Now Stella survives. Can she feel any happiness about it, knowing that she should really have been shot in the woman's place? We know that Holocaust survivors often feel guilty towards those who died, guilty because they lived while the others did not. Here this guilt is heightened because Stella owes her survival to a miscalculation and the woman's death.

After deciding to ingrate this scene into my music theater work *void – Archäologie eines Verlustes*,<sup>2</sup> which I conceived together with my Jewish wife

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1 Stella Müller-Madej, *A Girl from Schindler's List* (London: Polish Cultural Foundation, 1997).

2 See Egbert Hiller, "'Vergangenheit als radikale Gegenwart'. Claus-Steffen Mahnkopfs Opernprojekt *void – Archäologie eines Verlustes*," in: Ferdinand Zehentreiter (ed.), *Die Musik von Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf* (Hofheim: Wolke, 2012).

Francesca Yardenit Albertini,<sup>3</sup> I thought hard about how to base music on this story. It would be a music to Auschwitz—the most dangerous thing there is. The pathos of dismay, the highly concrete feelings of mortal terror, panic, despair, helplessness, the concreteness of a shooting—all of this would be suitable material for program music. And yet that is precisely what respect for the things that happened prohibits. (*Fatelessness* by Imre Kertész is, in my opinion, the most convincing Holocaust novel because it manages to tell the story as plainly as possible, almost aloofly, and without any moral commentary.) How, I asked myself, can the total reduction of human beings to abstract numbers, this reification and dehumanization, be represented in music?

So I decided—early on, almost a decade before actual composition—on a radical abstraction: a work that would last exactly ten minutes, not a second less or more (hence conducted with a click track), and consist of only one musical element: a succession of ten exactly identical rhythmic impulses. The piece is thus monomotivic, unmelodic, unsentimental and unagogical—the exact opposition of my other music. Substance [*Gehalt*], I firmly believe, results from a radical individuation of the musical approach<sup>4</sup>, and should therefore not be repeated in any other work.<sup>5</sup>

A rhythmic etude, in a sense. But the narration had to be translated into music; this occurs in two orchestras. *First*, as the music consists largely of gaps, it required the silence of the orchestra, from which the ten-instrument groups emerge against a static sonic background. I therefore composed a “second orchestra,” a score with a harmonic field covering the entire pitch range and thinning out to the middle register, in which each orchestral musician (there is a complete *divisi*) plays three notes of the total chord consecutively<sup>6</sup> and ever faster (a rhythmic canon in all instrumental parts). This “sound mist” ends exactly when the large orchestral *tutti* enters, after which the entire chordal field is heard as the final sonority.<sup>7</sup> This second score was prerecorded—as quietly as an orchestra can play—and is played back at very low volume through two loudspeakers placed at the back of the orchestra.

3 She died in March 2011. For her biography, see Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, *Deutschland oder Jerusalem. Das kurze Leben der Francesca Albertini* (Springe: zu Klampen, 2013).

4 See Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, *Gehalt in der Musik*, in *Musik & Ästhetik* 63 (2012). See my essay “What Is the Meaning of Musical Substance?” in this volume.

5 The other orchestral piece in the *void* cycle—*humanized void*—is therefore completely different. See Hansjörg Ewert, “Between Lines. Vorbereitungen zu einer Interpretation des Orchesterstücks *humanized void* von Claus-Stefen Mahnkopf,” in Zehentreiter, *Die Musik von Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf* (see footnote 2), and Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, “The Inclusion of the Non-Own. On Five Works with Foreign Material,” in Mahnkopf et al. (eds.), *Musical Material Today* (= *New Music and Aesthetics in the 21st Century*, Vol. 8) (Hofheim: Wolke, 2012).

6 E.g. vn 24: 94-88-85; vn 23: 93-86-81; vn 22: 91-89-83 of the harmonic field.

7 94 notes (total harmony) in 73 instruments, hence with 21 double stops in the strings.

The rhythmic canon is in triplet sixteenths using the following number series: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-10-12-14-16-18-21-24-27-30-33-36-40-44-48-52-56-60-65-70-75-80-85-90-96-102-108-114-120-126 (see Example 1).

### Example 1

Example 1 displays a musical score consisting of six staves. Each staff contains a sequence of notes, with pitch numbers written above them. The numbers are: 516, 510, 504, 498, 492, 486, 480, 474, 468, 462, 456, 450, 444 (Staff 1); 438, 432, 426, 420, 414, 408, 402, 396, 390, 384, 378, 372, 366 (Staff 2); 360, 354, 348, 342, 336, 330, 324, 318, 312, 306, 300, 294 (Staff 3); 286, 282, 276, 270, 264, 258, 252, 246, 240, 234, 228, 222 (Staff 4); 216, 210, 204, 198, 192, 186, 180, 174, 168, 162, 156, 150 (Staff 5); 144, 138, 132, 126, 120, 112, 108, 102, 96, 90, 84, 78 (Staff 6); 72, 66, 60, 54, 48, 42, 36, 30, 24, 18, 12, 6 (Staff 7). The notes are connected by horizontal lines, indicating a continuous melodic line across the staves.

The disposition of the harmonic field corresponds with that in *humanized void* and consists of the following eighth-tones, quartertones and semitones, 94 pitches in all (see Example 2).

### Example 2

Example 2 displays a musical score consisting of three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The notes are connected by horizontal lines, indicating a continuous melodic line across the staves. The pitch numbers are: 34, 36, 39, 42, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60, 67, 70, 73, 77 (System 1); 84, 85, 88, 94 (System 1, Treble staff); 1, 6, 7, 10, 17, 21, 24 (System 2, Bass staff); 29, 32, 35, 37, 44, 50, 57, 59, 64, 65, 68, 71, 75, 80 (System 2, Treble staff); 83, 89, 90, 91 (System 2, Treble staff); 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 14, 19, 23, 26, 28 (System 3, Bass staff); 30, 31, 33, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45, 47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 56, 61, 62, 63, 66, 69, 72 (System 3, Treble staff); 74, 76, 78, 79, 81, 82, 86, 87, 92, 93 (System 3, Treble staff); 3, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27 (System 4, Bass staff).

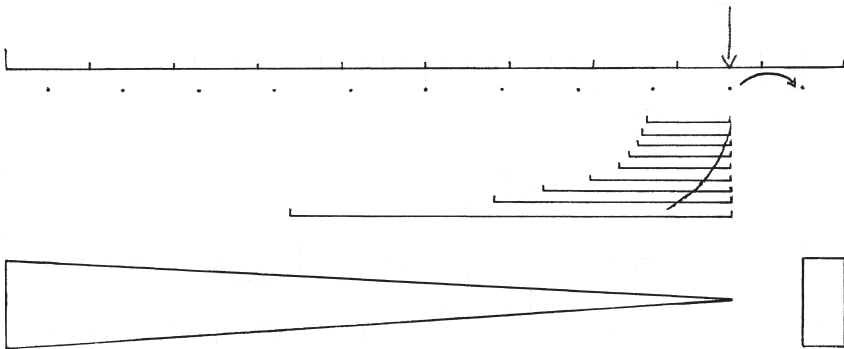
*Second*, the first orchestra plays (in concert) the ten-impulse unit (Example 3) exactly 100 times, in various augmentations between lasting between one and 54 seconds.

Example 3



In compositional terms, the aim was to invent one hundred “orchestrations,” individuations of dynamics, sonority, playing techniques, register, harmony (every note, whether monophonic or chordal, comes from the field disposition) and sometimes the duration of the impulse in relation to the subsequent rest. These were integrated into the piece’s form, which follows a simple dramaturgy. The first of the ten *tutti* attacks enters after 30 seconds (see Example 4 [points] and 5, m. 6); these follow at intervals of 54 seconds. Nine further macro-rhythms are attached to the last of these (vertical arrow). The interval between the tenth attack and an expected eleventh is filled by a climactic orchestral crescendo (bent arrow). (Below this one sees the second orchestra with the thinning and the static final chord.)

Example 4



Having defined the 100 orchestrations, the next step was to distribute them appropriately.<sup>8</sup> This also led to the formation of “solo groups,” for example: m. 11: fl, ob, arp, perc (metal) 1, vc (Example 6); m. 31: ob, pf, tam-tam, cb; m. 60: cl, timp, vl, tr; m. 38: cfg, tb, va, cor, picc, crot; m. 69: tbn, vc, ratchet, cymbals, cl, fg (Example 7). The rhythmic augmentations correspond to different tempi and were either adapted to a scale of sixty-fourth note quintuplets or converted into x:y tuplets. They are as follows:

<sup>8</sup> As the rhythms are strict, instrumental overlaps had to be avoided.

Example 5: *void – kol ischa asirit*, m. 6

The image displays a page from a musical score, likely for a symphony, featuring a variety of instruments. The staves are arranged in two columns. The left column includes Piccoli 1-4, Oboi 1-3, Clarinetti 1-3, Clarinetto basso, Fagotti 1/2, Contrafagotto, Corni 1/2, Corni 3/4, Trombe 1-3, Tromboni 1-3, Tuba, Pianoforte, and Percussione 1. The right column includes Violini 7/8, Violini 9/10, Violini 11/12, Violini 13/14, Violini 15/16, Violini 17/18, Violini 19/20, Violini 21/22, Violini 23/24, Viole 1-3, Viole 4/5, Viole 6-8, Viole 9/10, Violoncelli 1-4, Violoncelli 5-8, Contrabbasso 1, Contrabbasso 2, Contrabbasso 3, Contrabbasso 4, Contrabbasso 5, and Contrabbasso 6. The score includes musical notation, dynamics (e.g., *p*, *ff*), and performance instructions (e.g., "großer Holzhammer und Reconschläge").

Smallest level: 1" [10]

10 x 1 second (example: metal 1 [m. 12] [Example 6])

Small-scale level: 1.329" to 17.188" [59]

10 x 1.329" (example: arp [m. 12] [Example 6])

9 x 1.767" (example: ob [m. 12] [Example 6])

8 x 2.349" (example: fl [m. 12] [Example 6])

8 x 3.123" (example: cb [m. 31])

4 x 4.152" (example: vl [m. 38])

5 x 5.52" (example: vl [m. 60])

5 x 7.33" (example: cor [m. 38])

4 x 9.75" (example: cfg [m. 38])

3 x 12.96" (example: tbn 3 [m. 87])

3 x 17.188" (example: tb [m. 89])

Medium-scale level: 22.93" to 42.13" [21]

3 x 22.93" (example: arp, highest note, with coin [m. 38])

3 x 24.3" (example: bass drum, superball [m. 47])

3 x 24.85" (example: sand block [m. 29])

3 x 25.6" (example: bcl, low, fluttertongue [m. 61])

2 x 26.65" (example: chain on cymbal, damped with hand [m. 24])

2 x 28.09" (example: bullroarer [m. 17])

2 x 30.1" (example: cb harmonics [m. 82])

1 x 32.9" (stones [m. 9])

1 x 36.75" (wooden hammer in roller [m. 88])

1 x 42.13" (12 vn, muted [m. 35])

Large-scale level: 60" to 540" [10]

1 x 60" (perc [*bak*], fff) [m. 77]

1 x 63" (4 picc/3 tr/pf clusters, whip) [m. 76]

1 x 66" (tbn/vn/vc gliss.) [m. 75]

1 x 71" (gong drum/4 cl) [m. 74]

1 x 81" (ob multiphonic/va/cor) [m. 72]

1 x 100" (pf) [m. 68]

1 x 135" (woodwind fluttertongue, metal guiro) [m. 62]

1 x 199" (*pp*, low: 2 fg, tbn, tb, gong, bell plate, 3 vc) [m. 50]

1 x 318" (cb, descending arpeggio) [m. 28]

1 x 540" (orchestral *tutti*, *ff* poss.) [m. 6]

### Example 6: *void – kol ischa asirit*, mm. 11/12

*Third*, some form of irregularity or exception had to be composed into one part of the piece, as it would otherwise be completely mechanical, and also because the story from Auschwitz involves a miscalculation, an incorrect placing of numbers. Furthermore, the work's tension had to be maintained. I therefore decided on a *tutti* in the form of an orchestral crescendo lasting 54 seconds, as with the interval between the main attacks. All instruments carry out an interrupted ascending motion over a range of approximately an octave. The 14 pitches are distributed according to a rhythmic chain of 55 eighth notes (5-1.5-2.5-6-2-4-5-5-5-3-5-5-4-5-1-6-3.5), and this chain runs 49 times as a rotating canon assigned irregularly to the instruments, giving each one a rhythm of its own. The order of their entries is as follows: vn 1/2, vc 1/2, picc 1, cor 1, va 1/2, vn 3/4, ob 1, cfg, tr 1, vn 5/6, cb 1/2, cl 1, tb, vn 7/8, vc 3/4, picc 2, va 3/4, tbn 1, fg 1, vn 9/10, cb 3/4, cor 2, vn 11/12, ob 2, va 5/6, vn 13/14, vc 5/6, tr 2, picc 3, va 7/8, vn 15/16, fg 2, cor 3, vn 17/18, cb 5/6, picc 4, vn 19/20, tbn 2, ob 3, va 9/10, vn 21/22, vc 7/8, tbn 3, cl 2, cor 4, bcl, vn 23/24, tr 3, cl 3.

The intended effect of a large crescendo spiraling upwards is not achieved through a general (dynamic) crescendo, but rather an increase of density resulting from the following progression in the sound-to-silence ratio: 2 measures 40%, 2 measures 50%, 2 measures 66%, 2 measures 80%, 1 measure 100%. Morphologically speaking, the main elements are ascending crescendo *glissandi* coming out of nowhere (each desk of players using two different playing techniques) (Example 8); groups of ten are assigned to the brass and wooden hammer.



Example 7: *void – kol ischa asirit*, mm. 69/70, excerpt

[illegible]

## Example 8

This orchestral crescendo (“steamroller”) could be called the climax—it is prepared by the overall dramaturgy, yet is surprising because it is not triggered by a general orchestral crescendo. (The orchestral fabric is too perforated for that; see Example 9.)

It would amount to kitsch, admittedly, if this event were located at the Golden Section and there were subsequently enough time for the musical tension to wind down again. Instead, 30 seconds are left over in which one hears the aftershock in isolated fragments of the ten-note figure, as well as the field chord coming from the second orchestra. Here I inserted ten cimbalom strokes (over 12 seconds) into the recording: a damped C2 from my cimbalom solo *Hommage à Mark André*.<sup>9</sup> There is no time to process the shock. In a sense, the piece is merciless.

★

I had long had a *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough* on my agenda, though without a clear notion of the format, conception or form. When the Canadian tuba player Max Murray began studying composition with me and showed me the possibilities of this instrument (which has been greatly neglected in solo repertoire), the inspiration came to me—probably in part because Ferneyhough’s 70<sup>th</sup> birthday was not far off. The piece is written more for a tuba player than for tuba, as the performer must also use their voice and play various percussion: two crotales, three objects, a rattling instrument and two foot-activated whips. The 14-minute piece is divided into 70 sections tracing the course of Ferneyhough’s life from

9 When I discovered this sound in the late 1980s, I associated it with a guillotine falling in a deep, echoing crypt. One might also imagine someone knocking on their coffin from the inside.

Example 9: *void – kol ischa asirit*, mm. 78-83, without strings

The musical score is a complex orchestration for a large ensemble, excluding strings. It spans measures 78 to 83. The instrumentation includes:

- Woodwinds:** Piccolo 1-4, Oboe 1-3, Clarinet 1-3, Bassoon 1-3, Flute 1-3.
- Brass:** Cor 1-3, Trumpet 1-3, Trombone 1-3, Tuba.
- Percussion:** Snare Drum, Cymbal.

The score is written in 4/4 time. It features a variety of musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *pp*, *f*, and *sfz*. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The overall structure is highly detailed and complex.

1943 to 2012, in the sense that my music refers via loose association to works completed in the respective years. Sections without conventional pitched tuba playing appear in the first years (until 1965), then later in years when no work was completed, and also towards the end (Example 10, m. 8).

The references are highly varied. They can be associative (Example 11, m. 57, bottom register), structural (Example 12, m. 25 with four notes corresponding to four players), notational (Example 13, m. 44 with three staves), conceptual (Example 14, m. 66a, “very philosophical”) or also material (Example 15, m. 28, the note A in several octaves). The pitches are derived from two quotations: the openings of *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* (1981) (Example 16, m. 39) and *Etudes transcendantales* (1985) (Example 17, m. 43). The note rows are strung together in transposition and read in alternation [ $a_1, b_1, a_2, b_2, c_3, \dots$ ]; all sections therefore had to be composed from start to finish. The morphology follows the beginning of the Second String Quartet (Example 18).

The durations of the individual sections are based on the following pattern: four central sections (the Second String Quartet because of its morphology, the String Trio as the key work of a “turn,”<sup>10</sup> *Shadowtime* as the largest work and *Chronos-Aion* as a major work of his late period) lasting 45 seconds; 30 seconds of *Time and Motion Study III* order to introduce the voice; *Bone Alphabet* to introduce the percussion; and *On Stellar Magnitudes* for the connection between singing and instrumental performance. Certain secondary works are kept deliberately short (6 seconds). All other times (see overview) follow processes of expansion and contraction.

The piece uses a text created by removing parts of the famous passage on Anna Livia Plurabelle from Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. This is mostly delivered in 2004, the year of *Shadowtime*, in a manner that highlights a particular aspect of this tribute: that of slapstick. It is for others to judge whether I succeeded in writing a piece with a clear slapstick character, but I certainly made an effort. The instrument and “furnishings” (mutes, percussion with mallets, foot-activated whips, voice, thimble) create a theatrical scenery, which means that the work must always be seen as well as heard. Thus the music’s flow is crudely chopped up into little “bits,” each announced or interrupted by a very loud whip stroke. The musical figures do not develop any discursivity, tending instead towards self-devaluation. Musical sense is constantly evoked, yet fails to establish itself.

Why slapstick for one’s own teacher? Alban Berg would presumably have dedicated a “serious” work to Schönberg. A complexist string quartet, or at least a work of spiritual kinship would have made sense. But I chose the least typical aspect of Ferneyhough’s truly multi-faceted music—as it were the exception, the surprise, the “misstep.” The composer himself has admitted to incorporating slapstick elements, especially in the work *Seven Tableaux Vivants Repré-*

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10 See Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, “Ferneyhoughs Streichtrio,” in *Musik & Ästhetik* 1/2 (1997).

Example 10: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 8

1950

8

sostenuto

pp

7:6

3

7:5

13

8

ffff

Example 11: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 57

1999: *Unsichtbare Farben*

57

quasi invisibile

39:48

ppp

ppp

Example 12: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 25

♩ = 36

1967: *Sonatas for String Quartet*

25

kraftvoll

5

3

5

5

5

9

3

3

ff

mf

p

fff

Example 13: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 44

1986: *Mnemosyne*  
*parallel-universal*

The score for Example 13, m. 44, is a complex musical passage. It features a piano part with intricate rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The dynamics range from *ffz* (fortissimo with accent) to *mp* (mezzo-piano). The score is marked with a 1986 date and the title *Mnemosyne* by *parallel-universal*. The notation includes various symbols such as *ff*, *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *ffz*, along with rhythmic markings like 3, 11, and 13.

Example 14: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 66a

2008: *Chronos-Aion*

66a

The score for Example 14, m. 66a, is a complex musical passage. It features a piano part with intricate rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *mfz* (mezzo-forte with accent). The score is marked with a 2008 date and the title *Chronos-Aion*. The notation includes various symbols such as *pp*, *p*, *mfz*, and *senza sordina* (without mutes). The score is also marked with a 7:5 ratio and a 17:10 ratio.

Example 15: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 28

1970: *Cassandra's Dream Song*  
 eindeutig

28

ff

pp

mf

p

ff

Example 16: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 39

♩ = 70

1981: *Lemma - Icon - Epigram*  
 gestisch

39

pp

fff

f

p

mp

mp

mf

f

mp

sub.

Example 17: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 43

1985: *Etudes transcendantes*  
 poetisch

43

mf

p

f

pp

ppp

ff

p

Example 18: *Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough*, m. 38

in der Zeit der Figuren 38b

38a

38c

38d

38e

38f

38g

38h  
(ritmo e dinamica ad lib.)

38i

38j

38k

38l

38m

38n

38o

38p

38q

38r

38s

38t

38u

38v

38w

38x

38y

38z

38aa

38ab

38ac

38ad

38ae

38af

38ag

38ah

38ai

38aj

38ak

38al

38am

38an

38ao

38ap

38aq

38ar

38as

38at

38au

38av

38aw

38ax

38ay

38az

38ba

38bb

38bc

38bd

38be

38bf

38bg

38bh

38bi

38bj

38bk

38bl

38bm

38bn

38bo

38bp

38bq

38br

38bs

38bt

38bu

38bv

38bw

38bx

38by

38bz

38ca

38cb

38cc

38cd

38ce

38cf

38cg

38ch

38ci

38cj

38ck

38cl

38cm

38cn

38co

38cp

38cq

38cr

38cs

38ct

38cu

38cv

38cw

38cx

38cy

38cz

38da

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38fm

38fn

38fo

38fp

38fq

38fr

38fs

38ft

38fu

38fv

38fw

38fx

38fy

38fz

38ga

38gb

38gc

38gd

38ge

38gf

38gg

38gh

38gi

38gj

38gk

38gl

38gm

38gn

38go

38gp

38gq

38gr

38gs

38gt

38gu

38gv

38gw

38gx

38gy

38gz

38ha

38hb

38hc

38hd

38he

38hf

38hg

38hh

38hi

38hj

38hk

38hl

38hm

38hn

38ho

38hp

38hq

38hr

38hs

38ht

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senting the *Angel of History as Melancholia*, one of the parts of *Shadowtime*. In addition, I expect some “British humor” on the part of the presentee.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, this piece is not simply a higher form of tomfoolery; it displays the instrument in all its diversity, with over 50 musical ideas, textures, notational approaches and sonic images—in short, a “proper” solo piece for tuba.

## Overview

Year	Work	Duration	
1943		16 "	Mouthpiece attack; breath
1944		16 "	Breath, movement towards closing
1945		18 "	White noise into the closed mouthpiece (dark/ bright)
1946		19 "	Inhale a few times, quasi sfz
1947		20 "	Variation on 1943
1948		23 "	“Melody” with valve changes
1949		14 "	Phonetic: B
1950		13 "	Variation on 1948
1951		10 "	“Highest note,” as quiet as possible
1952		9 "	Phonetic action
1953		8 "	Variation on 1948
1954		6 "	Striking of the mouthpiece
1955		6 "	Tongue clicks into the instrument
1956		5 "	Plosives (quasi echo of foot-activated whip)
1957		5 "	R/r unvoiced
1958		4 "	R/r voiced
1959		4 "	Phonetic: B
1960		3 "	Panting
1961		3 "	Murmuring
1962		3 "	Metal
1963		2 "	Rest
1964		2 "	Rest
1965		1 "	Rest
1966	Coloratura	7 "	“Grand” melody with pitch center in the middle
1967	Sonatas for String Quartet	7,5 "	Four levels
1968	Epicycle	8 "	Quartertunes
1969	Missa Brevis	10 "	Sustained note sung in unison
1970	Cassandra’s Dream Song	10,5 "	Note A in 5 octaves
1971	Firecycle Beta	11 "	2 levels
1972		4,5 "	Hissing
1973			
1974	<i>Time and Motion Study III</i>	30 "	<i>Voice, consonants from the text</i>
1975	Transit	11,5 "	Low register
1976	Unity Capsule	12,5 "	Voice and instrument simultaneously
1977	<i>Time and Motion Study I</i>	13 "	Trill
1978		5 "	Fricative into the instrument
1979	La Terre est un Homme	14 "	Dense
1980	Second String Quartet (x3)	45 "	Morphology
1981	Lemma-Icon-Epigram	12,5 "	Quotation
1982	Carceri d’Invenzione I	10,5 "	Fluttertongue

11 Ferneyhough’s latest works contain 1/2048<sup>th</sup> notes; I therefore took the liberty (alluding to the end of Berg’s *Three Orchestral Pieces*) of giving the final note a duration of 1/16384<sup>th</sup>. This extreme brevity corresponds dialectically to the long life I wish Ferneyhough.

1983	Adagissimo	6"	Morendo
1984		5,5"	Drum on instrument with fingers
1985	Etudes Transcendantales	9"	Quotation
1986	Mnemosyne	8"	3 staves
1987	Third String Quartet	9"	Fast runs
1988	La chute d'Icare	10,5"	Top register
1989	Trittico	6"	Morendo
1990	Fourth String Quartet	11"	Alternating between voice and instrument
1991	Bone Alphabet	30"	<i>Percussion</i>
1992	Terrain	13"	Two-part
1993		6"	"Lung rehearsal"
1994	<i>On Stellar Magnitudes (x2)</i>	30"	<i>Voice and instrument simultaneously</i>
1995	String Trio	45"	Adagio (with diaphragm, flz., gliss.)
1996	Incipits	13"	4 beginnings
1997	Flurries	6"	Morendo
1998		6,5"	Percussive attacks
1999	Unsichtbare Farben	12"	Bottom register
2000	Opus Contra Naturam	12"	Virtuosic
2001	Stelæ for Failed Time	11"	Requiem, lamento
2002		7"	Con sordina
2003	Les Froissements des Ailes de Gabriel	11"	Pointillistic
2004	Shadowtime	45"	Slapstick
2005	Fifth String Quartet	10"	"Boxing fight"
2006	Plötzlichkeit	9"	Low melody
2007		7,5"	Senza sordina
2008	Chronos-Aion	45"	Essay (dual notation)
2009		8"	
2010	Sixth String Quartet	8"	"Stretta"
2011		9"	Noisy unscrewing of valves
2012	Finis Terrae	7"	Valve sounds

Notes:

Gray: sections without references to works, no regular instrumental playing

Small print: short sections without ideas of their own, only *morendo* sustained note

Italics: 30" sections

Bold: 45" sections

*Hommage à Brian Ferneyhough* was composed between December 2012 and February 2013 (it was premiered by Max Murray on June 2, 2013 in Victoria, Canada). The idea came to me in the weeks leading up to the premiere of *void – kol ischa asirit* (November 24, 2012). So there was only a short interval separating the works, yet they are completely different—the one deadly serious, the other ironic; the one reductionist, the other abundant; the one planned long in advance, the other following an instantaneous inspiration; the one for full (double) orchestra, the other for a soloist; the one indebted to a historical event, the other to a present-day person. But that is the beauty of basing music on substance: it inevitably leads to completely different works.

Translation: Wieland Hoban