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The Bunker...String Quartet

For violin, viola and two violoncellos

To be performed in the Dalston Bunker

William Davy Cole

Instructions for all four players

Independently of one another, the four players perform a continual succession of
- **sound – silence – sound – silence** – etc. throughout the duration of the piece.

1. Pitch

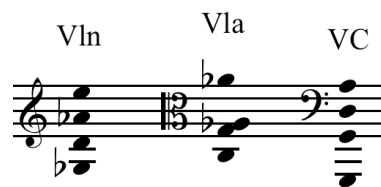
The sounds can either be three or two pitches played simultaneously or a single pitch played alone.

All pitch must be derived (ab libitum) from within the small range of F quartersharp – A quarterflat (inclusive). Every pitch(point) within this range is permissible and at any (and every) octave.

When sounding multiple pitches simultaneously, the players can choose pitches (within the range) that are at the same octave (see example A below) or at different octaves (see example B).



To facilitate the sounding of multiple pitches simultaneously, it is advisable that the players tune their instruments as follows:



Violin tunes A and G strings (II and IV) down a semitone, viola tunes A string (I) down a semitone and D string (II) down a tritone, violoncellos tune C string (IV) down a fourth.

Players can repeat pitches or combinations of pitches across successive soundings, although the pitch material shouldn't remain exactly constant for too long.

Players are encouraged to explore all possibilities, i.e., of the number of pitches sounded, the pitch(point)s chosen, combinations of pitches, different octaves etc.

Players may also sound stable or fixed pitches, ‘gliss.’ from one pitch to another, or perform any kind of vibrato or bending of pitch so long as they remain within the specified range.

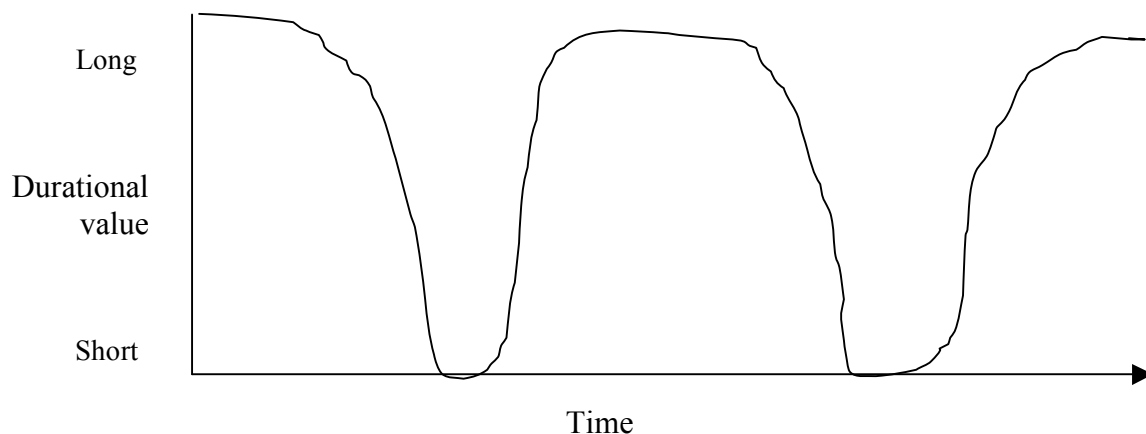
2. Durational Values

Between the extremes of long and short, durational values must contract – expand – contract – expand – etc. throughout the piece like a swinging pendulum.

The sounds and silences must progressively and continually get shorter towards extremely short, or shortest possible, (i.e., tremolo) and then longer towards extremely long (i.e. 2 minutes +), then shorter towards extremely short, then longer towards extremely long, etc.

Sound and silence must always be proportional, so that when there are very long sounds, there are very long silences and when there are very short sounds, there are very short (or no) silences.

The contraction and expansion (or acceleration and deceleration) should exponential (see example below), but the length of time that one ‘cycle’ takes is entirely up to the player (variation is encouraged).



Players can start at any point in the cycle between extremely long and extremely short.

3. Other

All sounds must be bowed.

All dynamics, bow positions, bow pressures, bow speeds, etc. are entirely ad libitum. Players are encouraged to incorporate a great deal of variation and to explore the broadest range of possibilities of sound quality, utilising their knowledge and understanding of their instruments, and testing the physical potentialities of their own bodily expression.

The duration of the piece is unspecified: all players end when they are ready, although there should be some level of agreement prior to performance to avoid any huge disparities (such as one player continuing half an hour after all the others have finished!)

The players will be positioned at specific points in the Bunker, which have been chosen to maximise its acoustic properties.

William Davy Cole
7/7/2014