

SCORE

Tss...t

for string quartet
with instruments and voices amplified

7'30"

Fintan O'Hare

I had in mind a small mechanical object - each part bound and strung to the next, this structure hung with the disconnected syllables and sounds of speech - in phrases that move and come to rest

Performance notes

This is a music of extreme smallness - it should be played with as little physical movement as possible.

Both instruments and voices must be amplified for this piece - unless performed in a very small space. This will require 2 microphones for each player (one for the instrument and one for the voice) and stereo speakers for the quartet. Instrumental and vocal parts should be panned a small amount to correspond to the layout of the players.

s.p. = sul ponticello

s.t. = sul tasto

m.s.p. = molto sul pont. - this should be almost on the bridge, a very scratchy sound with little of the written pitch

m.s.t. = molto sul tasto - this should be very airy, aiming for an even balance of noise and pitch (easier to achieve on a lower string)

harmonics are played ordinario always

pppp should be barely audible without amplification

'white noise' - finger note as if playing a harmonic, but also dampening the string below the written pitch with fingers to produce a soft scraping without any defined pitch - notated as a black diamond with 'w.' This is always molto sul tasto.

Each player has a vocal part written above the instrumental part. This collection of syllables and vowels should be whispered (unvoiced) and staccato consonants should be whispered with a small amount of breath in the given vowel. Sounds are either pitched approximately high, medium or low as indicated by their position on the stave.

All sounds are written in the International Phonetic Alphabet and should be as clean and clear as possible:

i as in see

u as in blue

ʌ as in strut

oʊ as in go

æ as in apple

special sounds:

ss(o) half whistling - a combination of 'ss' sound and tight 'o' vowel shape - indeterminate high pitch

The final section of this piece requires each player to have a small plant pot of different sizes - the first violin having the smallest and the cello having the largest. Each player will also need a triangle beater or similar metal object to scrape with. The pots are either struck (x notehead) or scraped around the rim (normal notehead).

These should be held up to the nearest microphone.

composed 2021

unperformed

Tss...t

Fintan O'Hare

♩=104 in a kind of unison, with as little physical movement as possible

voice: *ppp* whispered, *pppp*
fff PA Ti

Violin I: m.s.t.* *ppp*

Violin II: *ppp* whispered Tss TA, w. II* *pppp*

Viola: w. II* *ppp*, m.s.t.* *ppp*, w. III *ppp*, m.s.t. *pppp* whispered Tss

Cello: *pppp* whispered Ti → u, m.s.t.* *pppp*

voice: 8 *pp* Kæ Ki, ord. → m.s.t.

Vln. I: *pp*, *pppp*

voice: *pppp* Tss TA

Vln. II: m.s.t. *ppp*, *pppp*

voice: *pp* Kæ

Vla.: m.s.t. s.p. *ppp*, m.s.t. *pppp*

voice: *ppp* Ti → u

Vc.: m.s.p. *pp*, w. II* *pppp*, m.s.t.

*m.s.t. molto sul tasto - very airy, aiming for an even mix of noise and pitch
m.s.p. molto sul pont.

* w. II 'white noise' on specified string: see notes

15 *ppp*
 voice *fff* PA Ti

Vln. I *ppp* *pppp*

voice *m.s.t.*
 Vln. II *pppp* *ppp* *ppp*

voice *m.s.t.*
 Vla. *ppp* *ppp* *pppp* *ppp*

voice *w. II*
 Vc. *ppp* *ppp*

A

voice *ppp* Tss PA Ti

Vln. I *m.s.t.* *ppp* *pppp*

voice *m.s.t.*
 Vln. II *sim.* *w. II* *m.s.t.* *ppp*

voice *m.s.t.* *w. II*
 Vla. *pppp* *ppp*

voice *w. I*
 Vc. *ppp*

22 *pp* *pppp*
 voice Kæ *fff*

Vln. I *ord.* *m.s.t.* *pp* *pppp*

voice *s.p.* *m.s.t.* *w. IV*
 Vln. II *pp* *pppp*

voice *m.s.t.*
 Vla. *pppp*

voice *w. IV*
 Vc. *pppp*

30

voice

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

sim.

ord.

m.s.t.

ppp

pp

pppp

ppp

fff

PA

Ti

TA

Ti

TA

Ti → u

w. III

m.s.t.

w. II

ppp

pp

pppp

ppp

m.s.t.

Tss

TA

sim.

pppp

37

[B]

voice

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

voice

Vc.

m.s.t.

pppp

ppp

pppp

ppp

ss(o)*

pp

Kæ

Ki

ord.

m.s.t.

w. I

pppp

pp

Tss

Ti

Tss

m.s.t.

s.p.

w. III

m.s.t.

w. II

pp

ppp

pppp

ppp

pp

KΛ

Ti

u

PA

m.s.p.

m.s.t.

ppp

*ss(o) half whistling - a combination of 'ss' sound and tight 'o' vowel shape

43

voice: ord. → m.s.t.

Vln. I: *ppp*, *pp*, *pppp*

voice: *ppp* Tss TA, *pp* Kæ Ki, s.p.

Vln. II: *ppp*, *ppp*, *pppp*, *pp*

voice: *pp* Ti TA, *pppp* Ti TA, *pp* KA, ord. → m.s.t.

Vla.: *ppp*, m.s.t. w. II, *pp*, *pppp*

voice: w. I, w. I, w. I, m.s.p., *pp*

Vc.: *pppp*, w. II, w. II, *pp*

48

voice: *pppp* Tss

Vln. I: m.s.t., *pppp*

voice: *pppp* Ti TA

Vln. II: m.s.t., *pppp*

voice: *pppp* TA, w. II

Vla.: m.s.t., *pppp*

voice: *pppp* TI → u

Vc.: w. IV, w. II, w. IV, *pppp*

55

voice *ppp* fff PA Ti
pp Kæ Ki
 ord. → s.t. ord. s.t. m.s.t.

Vln. I *ppp* m.s.t. w. IV
pp *pppp*

voice m.s.t. s.p. m.s.t. *pppp* Tss

Vln. II *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pppp*

voice *ppp* Tss Kæ Kæ *pppp* TA ToŮ Tæ Ti TA *pppp* ss(o) w. I #

Vla. *ppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice *pp* Ti → u

Vc. w. III m.s.p. m.s.t. *ppp* *pp* *pppp*

59

voice fff PA *pppp*

Vln. I *pppp*

voice KΛ

Vln. II m.s.t. *pppp*

voice

Vla. m.s.t. w. III *pppp*

voice

Vc.

D

66

voice *pp*
Kæ Ki
ord. → m.s.t.
ppp *pp* *pppp* *pppp* *ppp* *pppp*

Vln. I

voice *ppp*
Ti → u
Tss
m.s.t. w. IV m.s.t. w. IV m.s.t.
ppp *pppp* *ppp* *pppp*

Vln. II

voice *pp*
KΛ
s.p. m.s.t.
w. III s.p. m.s.t.
pp *pppp* *ppp* *pppp*

Vla.

voice *pppp* *ppp*
fff Ti → u
w. II m.s.t.
ppp *pppp*

Vc.

70

voice

Vln. I

voice

Vln. II

voice

Vla.

voice

Vc.

E

74

voice *pp*
Kæ Ki
ord. → m.s.t.

Vln. I *pp* *ppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice *pppp*
Tss
ord. → m.s.t.

Vln. II *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

voice *pp*
KA
s.p. m.s.t. *pppp* *fff*

Vla. *pp* *ppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice *ppp*
KA KA

Vc. m.s.p. *pp* *ppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

78

voice *pppp*
fff_PA Ti
m.s.t. w. IV

Vln. I *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice m.s.t.

Vln. II *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice *pppp*
Tss

Vla. *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice m.s.t.

Vc. m.s.t. *pppp* *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

F

voice 85 *pppp*
fff
m.s.t.
PA Ti

Vln. I *pppp*

voice *pppp*
Tss
w. IV
m.s.t.

Vln. II *pppp*

voice *pppp*
Tss

Vla. *pppp*
w. III w. IV w. III m.s.t.

voice

Vc. m.s.t.
pppp

voice 91 *pp*
TA
pp *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
Kæ fff
Kæ Ki

Vln. I ord. → m.s.t. m.s.p. ord. → m.s.t.
pp *pppp* *ppp* *pp* *pppp*

voice *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
Ti Ti Ti
Kæ Ki
ord. → m.s.t. w. IV

Vln. II m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
Ti → u: w. III m.s.t.

voice m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
Ti → u Toŭ Tæ Ti Kæ TA TA

Vla. m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
m.s.p. m.s.t. w. III m.s.t.

voice *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*
Ti → u Toŭ Tæ Ti Kæ TA TA

Vc. m.s.p. m.s.t.
pp *pppp*

95 G

voice *pp* Kæ

Vln. I *ppp* *pp* *pppp* ord. m.s.t.

voice *ppp* *pppp* Ti → u Tss w. IV

Vln. II *pppp* *ppp* *pppp* m.s.t.

voice *ppp* *pppp* *ppp* *pppp* Ti TA TA TA

Vla. *pp* *pppp* *ppp* *pppp* m.s.t. w. II w. IV

voice *ppp* Tss

Vc. *pp* *pppp* *ppp* *pppp* ord. → m.s.t. w. II ord. → m.s.t.



101

voice *pppp* *fff* w. III m.s.t. w. II m.s.t.

Vln. I *pppp* w. III m.s.t.

voice Tɔ TA *pppp* *fff* w. I

Vln. II *pppp* w. IV w. II w. III m.s.t.

voice w. III w. IV m.s.t. w. III w. II w. I

Vla. *pppp* w. III w. IV m.s.t.

voice w. IV m.s.t. w. II w. I

Vc. *pppp*

108

H

voice: Kæ
ord. → s.t. ord. → m.s.t.
Ti → u Ti → u

Vln. I: *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

voice: m.s.t. ord. w. IV m.s.t. *pppp* Tss TA

Vln. II: *pppp* *pp* *ppp* *pppp* *pp* *ppp* *pppp*

Vla.: s.p. m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp* w. II

voice: TA Ti TA

Vc.: m.s.p. m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp* w. II

114

voice: Kæ Ki
ord. → s.t. ord. → m.s.t. w. III m.s.t. *pp* *pppp* *fff* w. II m.s.t.

Vln. I: *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pppp* *pppp*

voice: TA Ti TA *pppp* Ti

Vln. II: *pppp* w. IV m.s.t. w. II m.s.t. w. I m.s.t.

Vla.: m.s.t. s.p. *pp* *pppp* *ppp* *pppp* w. II w. I m.s.t.

voice: Kæ Ti → u

Vc.: m.s.t. m.s.p. *ppp* *pp* *pppp* w. II w. I

119

voice

Vln. I

ord. *pp* *pppp* m.s.t. secco

Vln. II

m.s.t. *pp* *pppp*

Vla.

pppp

voice

Ti TA Ti TA Ti

Vc.

124

I

voice

Vln. I

m.s.t. secco w. II m.s.t. w. II m.s.t. w. II m.s.t.

pppp

Vln. II

w. III secco m.s.t. w. III w. II w. III m.s.t. w. III w. II w. III m.s.t. w. III w. II

pppp

Vla.

w. II w. III secco w. II w. III w. II w. III w. II w. III

pppp

voice

fff *fff* *fff* *fff*

Vc.

w. IV secco w. III w. II w. IV w. III w. II w. IV w. III w. II

pppp

140 **K**

voice

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

TA TA

w. IV w. III w. II w. III w. IV w. III w. IV

m.s.t. w. III w. III

ppp *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

Tss Tss

3 *pppp*

145

voice

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

w. IV m.s.t. w. IV m.s.t. w. II w. III w. II w. III w. IV

m.s.t. w. III m.s.t. w. III w. III w. IV w. III w. IV

w. III w. III

pppp *pppp* *pppp* *pppp*

Tss Tss

152 L

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pppp*

Vln. I *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pppp*

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Vln. II *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Vla. *ppp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

voice *pp*

Vc. *pppp* *pp* *pp* *pppp*

Lyrics: Ti → u, Kæ TA, Kæ Ki, Tss, Ti TA, Kæ, PA Ti, Kæ

Performance markings: w. IV, m.s.t., w. II, ord. → m.s.t., m.s.t., s.p., w. III, w. II, m.s.t., ord. → m.s.t., w. IV, m.s.t., m.s.p. w. II, m.s.p., w. IV

157

voice *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vln. I *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Vln. II *ppp* *pppp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Vla. *ppp* *pp* *pppp* *pp*

voice *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Vc. *ppp* *pp* *pppp* *pp* *pppp*

Lyrics: fff PA Ti, Kæ, TA, Ti → u, Ti

Performance markings: w. IV, ord. → m.s.t., ord., (ord.), m.s.t., ord., m.s.t., s.p., m.s.t., s.p., m.s.t., s.p., w. I, w. IV, w. II, m.s.p., ord.

163

voice

Tss

fff

Ti → u

Vln. I

m.s.t.

ord. → m.s.t.

m.s.p.

pp

pppp

pp

pppp

pp

pppp

pp

voice

Kæ Ki

Vln. II

m.s.t.

w. II

w. III

m.s.t.

pp

pppp

pp

pppp

pp

voice

Ti

TΛ

TΛ

KΛ

Vla.

m.s.t.

w. II

w. III

m.s.t.

m.s.p.

pp

pppp

pp

pppp

Vc.

w. I

ord.

ord.

pp

pppp

pp

pppp



167

voice

M

Vln. I

w. II

w. III

w. II

pppp

voice

w. III

w. IV

w. III

pppp

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

m.s.t.

pppp

172

voice

Vln. I

w. III w. II

w. III w. II

w. III w. II

Vln. II

w. IV w. III

w. IV w. III

w. III w. IV

Vla.

Vc.



176

voice

Vln. I

w. III w. II

w. III w. II

change to pot

Vln. II

w. IV w. III

w. III w. IV

change to pot

Vla.

change to pot

Vc.

change to pot

N Pots - held notes are a continuous circular motion around the rim, staccato notes are a single dampened hit

Vln. I *ppp* sempre

Vln. II *ppp* sempre

Vla. *ppp* sempre

Vc. *ppp* sempre



Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.



Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.