CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM PIERCE

ON A POEM OF BAUDELAIRE

“Je t'adore à l'égal de la voûte nocturne”
from Les Fleurs du Mal

High Voice
Two Violins
Viola
&
Accordion

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Je t'adore à l'égal de la voûte nocturne

Je t'adore à l'égal de la voûte nocturne,
Ô vase de tristesse, ô grande taciturne,
Et t'aime d'autant plus, belle, que tu me fuis,
Et que tu me paraît, ornement de mes nuits,
Plus ironiquement accumuler les lieues
Qui séparent mes bras des immensités bleues.

Je m'avance à l'attaque, et je grimpe aux assauts,
Comme après un cadavre un choeur de vermisseaux,
Et je chéris, ô bête implacable et cruelle !
Jusqu'à cette froideur par où tu m'es plus belle !
Notes:

The score is notated by switching between semi-spatial notation, and traditionally barred sections. The semi-spatial sections are often event oriented, meaning that the passing of time is often dictated by a soloist by which the events around the solo can be aligned. In the sections where there is no apparent solo, I have notated general times in terms of seconds from one event, to the next. This timeline is notated above the staff in brackets, with the approximation in seconds of the event. The barred sections should be treated normally, with an approximate metronome marking provided at the beginning of the passage.

It is important that these two sections blend together seamlessly, that is to say that the audience should not be able to audibly discern when bar lines are present – the entire score should be performed very expressively, and with a great freedom.

Because there are no measure numbers, I have used two separate types of rehearsal markings throughout: A – S, and then a number system, 1 – 10, which can be used to mark the passing of time, and align events when no bar lines are present. With this in mind, the conductor’s role is an important one, they will control the ensemble by cuing the entrances of the events, and aligning the performers, as well as the traditional role when bar lines are present.

For reference, the rehearsal markings are as such:

A – D: Semi – spatial notation

D – H: Normal (bar lines are present)

I – M: Semi – Spatial notation.
   The vocal line should be performed with great liberty, and the events should be aligned around the singer.

N – O: Normal
   Two bars after rehearsal letter ‘O’ there is a substantial improvised section for the vocalist. While the singer will fall out of time, the ensemble should stay in time. At P, the ensemble should be aligned, and for this reason it is probably an advantage if the singer and conductor worked out a system by which they can effectively communicate the alignment at P.

P – S (ending) Semi – spatial notation
Notes regarding parts:

Spatial scores, while no less accurate than normal notation, can be confusing for performers (the passing of time can no longer be gauged by bar lines). For this reason I have treated the parts in a slightly unconventional manner.

Strings: (2 Violins, Viola)

Each of the string players parts are coupled with the other string parts. The two other strings in the part will be reduced for the player, and should aid in understanding how the events are spatially aligned.

Accordion:

The accordions part will be coupled with the vocal part in a similar manner.

Singer:

The singer should use an 81/2 by 11 black binder and sing from the score. Ideally the vocalist should have their part memorized, although singing with the score will aid in aligning the events.

Notes regarding performance: (nomenclature)

All standard notational practices should be adhered too, unless specifically stated otherwise.

**Glissando:** should be performed for the entire duration of the marked note. Glissandos should not be performed like a portamento.

**Trilled Glissando:** should be performed much like the glissando, over the full duration of the note value.

All other non-standard notation is explained in the score.
ON A POEM OF BAUDELAIRE

"Je t'adore à l'égal de la voûte nocturne"
from Les Fleurs du Mal

For Katy

Christopher William Pierce
Adagio
con sord.
Solo
expressive

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Voice
Acc.

ca. 4
Accordion: Notes placed within the box are to be performed by undulating slowly between the given pitches, varying order, pattern and duration. The desired effect should be akin to chimes gently being rustled in the wind.
Adagio  \( \frac{d}{80} - 88 \) ca

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Acc.

\( \text{gliss.} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{fp} \)
Ad libitum, meno mosso $(q = \text{ca} \ 60)$

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Voice

Acc.

Vln. I

Voice

Acc.
Vln. I

Voice

Acc.

Vln. I

Voice

Acc.

sul ponticello

(repeat 3 note pattern)

ca 1

ca 4

ad lib

(cont. r.h. in similar fashion until cue)

Je t'adore

ca 1

ca 4
Et t'aime d'autant plus, belle, que tu me fais,
ornement de mes nuits,

ron-ique-ment a-ccumeler les lieues

Ah
Qui séparent mes bras des immensités bleues.
start in the normal position, and slowly move to pont.

Solo. Freely improvise in a stylistically coherent manner with the rest of the piece. Notes should generally be within the bounds of the tonality of the piece. Solo should be free, and bravuristic, so traversing outside of the tonality is permissible, so long as the singer is capable, and comfortable in doing so. General characteristic of the line is start loud, and gradually decrescendo. General registral characteristics should mirror the dynamics, start high, end low.

clusters refer to general register, and not to specific pitches.
gradually slow

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Voice

Acc.

gradually slow

(D)

gradually slow

(Cb)

Sul G.

(Cb)

(Cb)

(Cb)
Ad libitum, meno mosso (\( q = \text{ca} \ 60 \))

\( \text{Vln. I} \)

\( \text{Vln. II} \)

\( \text{Vla.} \)

\( \text{Voice} \)

\( \text{Acc.} \)
repeat until conductors cue
avoid any alignment that might occur between the other strings

improvise on the notes of the cluster using quick, and scattered rhythm with both the left, and right hands. The general effect should be movement within the sonority of the cluster. continue until conductors cue.
sim., add a low staccato cluster to the texture. The general effect should be jarring. The low cluster should occur sparingly, and at with no discernable pattern.
Je m'avance à l'attaque, et je grimpe aux assauts, Comme après un cadavre un chœur de vermisseaux

Spoken
Should be performed with natural inflection, and with declination.
Ad libitum, meno mosso ($q = \text{ca 60}$)

Et je chéris,

(soft, in similar fashion until cue)
Jusqu'à cette froideur
par où tu m'es plus belle.