

MAYBE IT MIGHT BE...

— *for Alto Flute, Mezzo Soprano, Double Bass, Guitar (Acoustic), and Electronics*

Bofan Ma

(2016)

Programme Note

“The perfect painting is the empty canvas. I fill it up because I love the process of painting.”

— Vahe Berberian

I cannot express enough how thankful I am to Vahe. We first made contact in the period of me seeking frantically for an individualised musical language that incorporates a certain extra-musical element. We talked a lot, in regard to what is it that he finds interesting most of the time - the subject that drew a great attention to me is ‘layers’. He sees every layer as a mistake that cannot be corrected once it is already put onto the canvas. Hence what he does is that he establishes another layer on top of them until the ‘mistakes’ are covered but not entirely untraceable.

Thus this piece is an outcome of both of us working towards an consensus of aesthetics, in accordance with the notion of layers stated above. I recall having him comment on our works once that they have one thing in common - they are ‘minimalist’ works with atonal characters. Although until today I am still not certain that I understand what he meant by it, somehow I agree with him subconsciously. The atonal characters may refer to the superficial complexities in texture (both visually and aurally), whereas deep down we both believe that what we enjoy the most is actually the process of creating some sort of shapes that do not symbolise anything.

maybe it might be...

---- for Alto Flute, Mezzo Soprano, Double Bass, Guitar, and Electronics

Dedicated to artist Váhe Berberian, the 2016 'Hearing Art Seeing Sound' Festival, and Ensemble x.y

Bofan Ma
(2016)

♩ = 60 (♩ = 120)

Alto Flute

Mezzo Soprano

Double Bass

(Tuning) IV III II I

Guitar

(Tuning) ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ①

Electronics

x 2

12"

13/♩ (3/♩ + 5/♩)

⑥ ③ ⑤ ⑤

p

5

DELAY (200 M.S.)

pp

6"

11/♩ (3/♩ + 4/♩)

⑥ ③ ⑤ ⑤

p

5

DELAY (400 M.S.)

pp

6"

	x 3	x 4	x 3
A. Fl.			
M-S.			
Db.		6" 	6"
Gtr.	7/4 (3/4 + 4/4) 	15/4 (5/4 + 5/4) 	17/4 (3/4 + 4/4 + 3/4)
Electronics			

1 1/2 (4/4 + 3/4) x 2 5/4 4/4

B

A. Fl. 4''

M-S. 4''

Db. 4/4 1 1/2 (4/4 + 3/4) 5/4 4/4

Gtr. 4''

Electronics 4''

ffp < ff ffp < ff ffp < ff ffp < ff

ffp < ff p < ff ffp < ff

flz. (flutter tongue)

Se(p) - p! Se(p) - - p! Se(p) - er(rr) - p!!

III. ord. (first time only) M.S.P. ord. M.S.P.

f pp pp ff p fff

6 3 5 5 5

p

FROZEN (undetermined pitch)

pp mp pp

hold still, count seconds instead of beats

hold still, count seconds instead of beats

hold still, count seconds instead of beats

11/8 (4/8 + 3/8)

C

A. Fl.

R
(tongue ram)

K.C.
(key clicks without blowing)

7"

M-S.

sf

sf

f

p

ff

7"

b

Em(b) - b!

11/8 (4/8 + 3/8)

7/8

M.S.T.

M.S.P.

hold still,
count seconds
instead of beats

Db.

pp

ff

pp

ff

11/8 (4/8 + 3/8)

7"

Gtr.

6 3 5 5

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F 11/8 (1/8 + 4/8 + 1/8) x 2

A. Fl. *p* *ff*

M-S. *sf* *mp* *ff* *p* *sf* *p* *ff* *flz.*

t! Mm(ay)- ay! Jeb, jeb! Er(rr)---

Db. *pp* *pp* *ff*

ord.
(first time only)

Gtr. *p*

6 5 3 5 2 4 4

Electronics *pp*

DELAY (600 M.S.)
(STRAIGHT, NO PITCH SHIFTING)

5'' 7''

G 7/8 (3/8 + 4/8)

pp

p

5 2 5 4 4 3

pp PITCH SHIFT

DELAY (400 M.S.)

9/4 (4/4 + 2/4 + 3/4)

H 7/4 (3/4 + 4/4)

A. Fl.

*) A phrase/bar along with its following fermata is a figure;
 The lengths of all fermatas from here are ad lib. (between 1-4 seconds, until being instructed otherwise later);
 The 4 figures here are represented by circled numbers ①②③④;
 The completion of playing all 4 figures forms a statement.

Ad Libitum ♩ = 72 (M-S. ONLY)

① (breathy whisper)

M-S.

**) Performing sequence in the first statement: ①②-①③-①④;
 Performing sequence ad lib. after the first complete statement until new materials are introduced;
 Repeating of figures within a statement ad lib. after the first one.
 Order of beats within ① and ④ should be randomised after the figures' first appearance;
 Skipping of beats within ① and ④ ad lib. after the figures' first appearance;
 Repeating of beats within ① and ④ ad lib. after the figures' first appearance;
 Each repetition of either ① or ④ should be different from any of its precedents.

length
ad lib.
(c.1-4")

9/4 (4/4 + 2/4 + 3/4)

7/4 (3/4 + 4/4)

M.S.P.

Db.

7/4 (3/4 + 4/4)

9"

Electronics