

MAJA S. K. RATKJE

# Breaking the News

Flute, Piano, Violin, Violoncello





Maja S. K. Ratkje 2010:

# Breaking the News



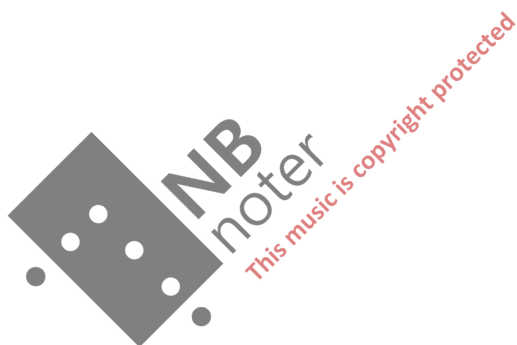
*written for The pearls before swine experience  
with support from NOMUS*

The performers must get hold of a newspaper, preferably local, from the same day as the performance. It must be written in a language that is understood by at least one of the performers. English speaking news services on the net can be used if no other option.

The newspaper must be covering the following topics:  
International Politics, Sports, Culture and Environmental Politics.  
One article for each topic is chosen and prepared for the performance.  
The piece will always change according to the news of the day.

*Breaking the News* is written for Flute (+piccolo), Piano, Violin and Violoncello.  
The performers take turns in reading the articles in the performance.  
A megaphone may be used, but not for the whole piece.

The piece can be performed without amplification, but the text must be heard.



# Breaking the News

## 1. International Politics

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Make an entrance. Show the newspapers, hand them out, turn pages etc. When ready, start to play.

Flute

Piano

Violin

Tempo is calculated with the following equation:

$$\text{♩} = \text{number of different names in article} \times \text{number of countries involved} \times 10$$

Each time a country or ethnic group is mentioned, the reader stops and one or two of the performers (can also be the violinist) improvise something that could be taken for folk music from that region. The reader gives cue when to go on. Start always again from letter A! Make no unnecessary pause before and after intersection! When text ends, make a decrescendo till out through Coda.

Improvise with dynamics and articulations according to tempo and what is read.

**A**

If tempo  $\geq 200$ , use Piccolo Flute (8va)

### Maestoso, like a National Anthem

(From the national anthems of Belgium and Thailand.)

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

*p*

*f*

*Ped.*

*Ped. ad lib.*

*molto espress.*

*f*

2

3

Play top note (high D) only if tempo  $\geq 200$  (with Piccolo Flute (8va)).  
If not, stay on low D for one quarter note.

6

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

11

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Jump to Coda on last pass

16

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

(dim.)

Rep. x times | Coda

22

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

# Breaking the News

## 2. Sports

♩ = 100 Menuett

28

Fl.

*pizz.*

*mp*

Pno.

*mf*

*inside the piano, plucked, with nails or similar*

*l.v.*

*(keep sust. pedal down)*

*con sord.*

*lightly*

*5*

*5*

Vln.

*pizz.*

*p*

Vc.

34

Flute player starts reading from the top of the chosen article, interrupted by playing.  
 Sound almost as eager as a real sports commenter, make it a part of (as a contrast to) the music!

Fl.

Pno.

*sempre Ped.*

*(ord.)*

Vln.

*arco*

*pp*

*pizz.*

*p*

42 (stop reading)

(continue reading)

Fl. *f* *mp*

Pno. *l.v.*

Vln. *chicharra (Tango technique)* *mf* *p* *arco*

Vc. *mf* *pizz.* *p*

49

(stop reading)

Fl. *p* *f*

Pno. *l.v.*

Vln. *pizz.* *hard crush tone (no particular pitch)* *chicharra* *p* *f* *f*

Vc. *mf*

Repeat only if the article is long enough.

57

tongue ram  
(sounding pitch major seventh below)

Fl. *f*

Pno.

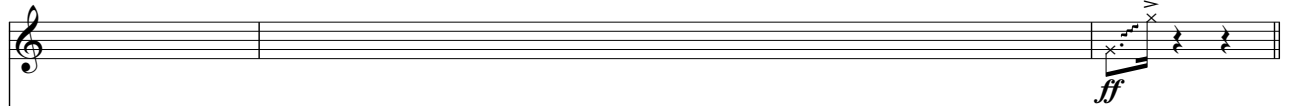
Vln. *senza sordino* *pitched crush tone* *arco* *mf* *5* *3*

Vc. *f*

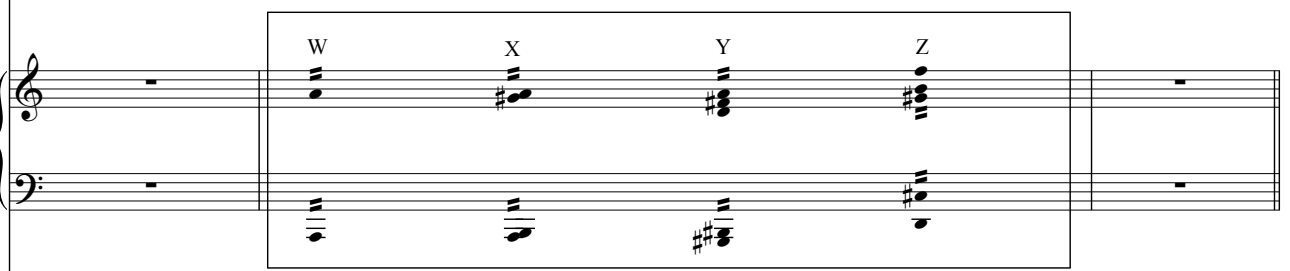


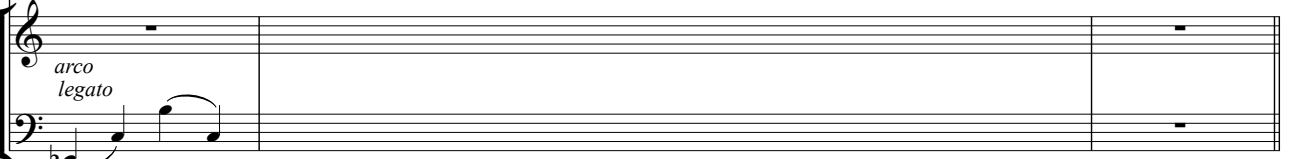
62 (continue reading)


jet-whistle!

Fl. 

Use four numbers (W, X, Y, Z) from the article and repeat each chord w, x, y and z times.  
 If no numbers or not enough numbers, repeat a chord five times.  
 Repeat till end of article and make variations with dynamics and tempo. More and more dramatic.

Pho. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

Cello and violin improvise as if making a soundtrack for a cartoon with the sport mentioned in the article.  
 Continue till the end of the article.

# Breaking the News

3. Culture


Jazz-rock ♩ = 140

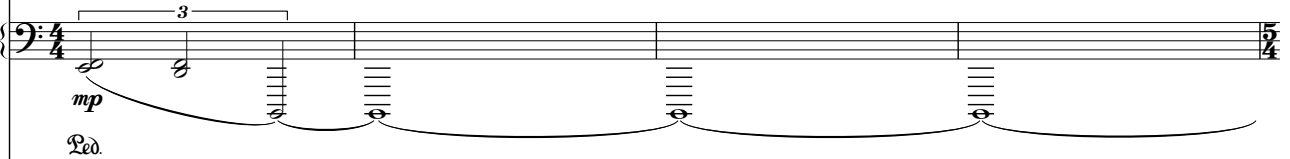
(From Rage Against the Machine, Eurovision Song Contest (Olivier Messiaen))

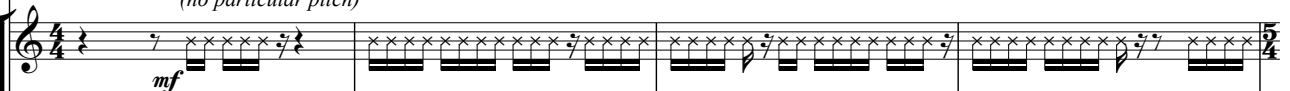
68 sing through the flute, "out of tune", like humming loudly to a song on headphones


Fl. 

74 ♩ = 120

Fl. 

Pho. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

hard crush tone  
(no particular pitch)

Flute player imitates the reading as accurate as possible using key-clicks and other percussive sounds on the flute. Follow and vary dynamics. Fast passages.

78

Fl.

Piano starts reading from the top of article.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

82

Fl.

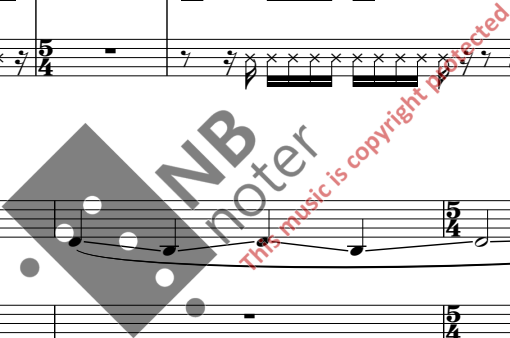
*mf*  
(stop reading)

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

continue singing through the flute



86

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

89

Fl.

*ff* jet-whistle! *fl.*

Piano continue reading

Pno.

*Red.* *l.v.*

Vln.

*ff*

Vc.

*ff*

Like in rap music, the flutist should repeat or say simultaneously some of the words together with the main reader (pianist).

(jet-whistle!)

93

Fl. 

Pno. *mp*  
*Red. ad lib.*  


Vln. 

Vc. 

continue reading, but take breaks when necessary in order to play correctly if the article is related to jazzmusic, let eight notes swing

97

Fl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

101

Fl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Vc. 

Every time a Name is mentioned by the main reader, the other musicians respond to the name by repeating it loud, can be unsynchronised. Flutist continue repeating other words as before in addition to this.

105

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

109

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

113

Rep. x times

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

117

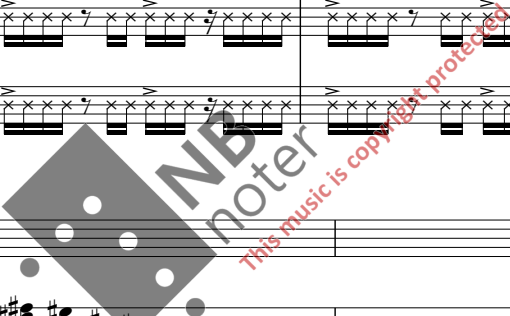
Continue when article is finished.

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.



# Breaking the News

## 4. Environmental Politics.

Chose five words as a group plus three to five words each from the article. Spell the words with the music below, with notes corresponding to each letter. Musicians play as a group or individually. The celloplayer decides when a group word (tutti) is performed by giving a cue from 1 to 5 to the whole group. The violinist leads the tempo within a group word. Individual playing is overlapping, simultaneous or with breaks between. Make musical phrases with the words! When article is finished, go to coda.

Celloplayer starts reading the article while playing after approx. 2 min. Make breaks if needed.

**System 1 (Measures 121-128):**

- Flute:** Measures A-H with dynamics *p*, *mp*, *mp*  $\leftarrow$  *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *p*, *f*. Includes *fl.* and *tongue ram*.
- Piano:** Measures A-H with dynamics *p*, *p*, *mp*  $\leftarrow$  *f*, *mp*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*. Includes *8va*.
- Violin:** Measures A-H with dynamics *p*, *mp*, *f*, *f*, *p*, *p*, *mf*. Includes *pizz.*, *pizz. fast, but distinct*, *pizz.*, *pitched crush tone*, *ord.*, *non vib.*
- Viola:** Measures A-H with dynamics *p*, *p*, *f*, *mp*, *f*, *mp*, *p*, *pp*. Includes *pizz.*, *pitched crush tone*, *ord.*, *pizz.*

**System 2 (Measures 129-136):**

- Flute:** Measures I-N with dynamics *ff*, *f*. Includes *pizz.*, *fl.*
- Piano:** Measures I-N with dynamics *ff*, *mp*, *f*, *f*. Includes *8va*, *tender; but swift*, *fast*, *3*.
- Violin:** Measures I-N with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *f*. Includes *sul G*, *knock on wood*, *hard crush tone (no particular pitch)*.
- Viola:** Measures I-N with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *f*. Includes *sul C (arco)*, *knock on wood*, *hard crush tone (no particular pitch)*.

135

Fl. O P Q R S T U  
*pizz.* *fl.* *blow air through the flute pizz.* *jet-whistle*  
*f* *mf* *mf* *ff*

Pno. O P Q R S T U *as fast as possible*  
*pp* *p* *5* *strike strings (low register) inside the piano* *p* *mp*  
*(sust. ped.)*

Vln. O P Q R S T U  
*knock on wood* *pitched crush tone* *bow the bridge* *knock on wood*  
*f* *f* *mf* *mp* *f* *3*

Vc. O P Q R S T U  
*knock on wood* *knock on wood* *knock on wood*  
*f* *f* *f*<sup>3</sup>



142

Fl. V W X Y/Ü Z Æ/Ä Ø/Ö Å/AA  
*blow air through the flute while clicking the keys frantically*  
*mf* *mf* *ff*

Pno. V W X Y/Ü Z Æ/Ä Ø/Ö Å/AA  
*mf* *p* *l.v.* *z* *mf* *mp* *mf* *pp*  
*8<sup>th</sup>*

Vln. V W X Y/Ü Z Æ/Ä Ø/Ö Å/AA  
*ord.* *chicharra (Tango technique)*  
*mf* *f* *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc. V W X Y/Ü Z Æ/Ä Ø/Ö Å/AA  
*f* *f*

Coda ♩ = 120

150

Fl. *mp*

Pno. *pp*

Vln. *con sord.*

Vc. *mp*

156

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

162

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

168

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

*l.v.*





