

# less-sense

trio for soprano, clarinet in A and percussion

duration – ca 9 '

commissioned by and dedicated to Silje Marie Aker Johnsen

composed by Jan Martin Smørdal, 2007

lyrics – from St. Augustins "Confessiones", book III

english by R. S. Pine-Coffin (Penguin Classics, 1961)

## General remarks

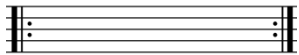
This piece is to be performed as if improvised. As a consequence, the performers are encouraged to learn passages by heart, and through the whole performance be inspired by the theme of the piece, presented in the lyrics (there are no religious connotations what so ever).

All three performers must have an old mechanical metronome, some pencils, and a sheet of paper. The latter is used for off-score scribbling, if needed.

Quarter tones are notated, chromatic upwards and downwards:



Fermatas:      short      medium      long



These segments are to be repeated for as long as prolonged line suggest. This will always produce unsynchronized timing.



Pencil scribbling, from left to right. Individual tempo, but steady.



This clef indicates that all notes are to be played one quarter tone flat

## Lyrics:

I - "How, how good you were, how good, I fell in love, how, how good, I did"

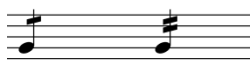
II - "H(ow), h(ow)... good, how good, how good you were. How, how good to me, how good you were"

III - "My own choosing, my own snare, my, own, my own, (a) snare. I fell in lo-love, my own snare, own choosing. Fell in love, a snare of my own choosing. How good, good, I fell. Own.

IV - " So I clouded it's clear water with hell, with hells –so I clouded it's clear water with hell, with hell, clouded river, hells black river of lust"

V - "How good you, you were to me, you, good to, good to me. For you m-mixed much bitterness i-in-n that cup of pleasure".

## Remarks for soprano:



Both meaning unison trill. The first is random and light, the second a more noisy sheep sound.



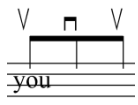
Whisper. The placement of lyrics in the staff suggests a pitch, almost inaudible.



Still whisper, but more pressure on vocal cords.



The letters describing the shape of the mouth, rhythm is accentuated breathing



Whisper words. If no word, breathe according to the rhythm. "Downstroke" = exhale, "upstroke" = inhale.



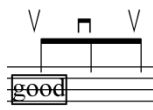
Highest possible pitch



As written; whisper lyrics according to rhythm. Straight line = same pitch.



As above, but with an even glissando.



Enclosed lyrics are to be spoken, i.e. with relative pitch suggested through placement on staff.

Throughout the piece every syllable will melt words together, leaving the vowels long and static; “clo – ude – di-tsclea – rwa – te<sup>®</sup>” resulting in new syllables that will function as accent. The accentuating of single words shall always be exaggerated, either with a guttural (“l”), with tongue (“Did”) or with lips (“Bitterness”).

#### Remarks for clarinet:

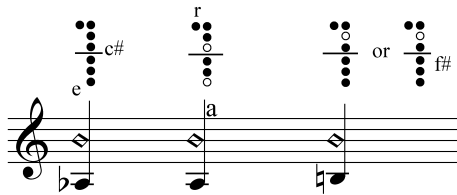


- Even gliss. (in this example played, downwards = pitchbending) within the rhythmic segment.

Notes containing an O = original clef, notes containing A = alternative clef (pitch may differ +/- a quarter tone). The performer “lock” the A to each tone, i.e. if a C# is played alternatively in the beginning of the piece, it will remain the same alternative in the end.



The performer chooses a multiphonic from the root (here: Ab).



Multiphonic suggestions, from Kristine Tjogersen (premiere performance).



The performer chooses a multiphonic with Bb” as the most sonorous tone, the root may therefore vary. It might be suggested whether the next root is lower/higher, if several multiphonics on with same center tone are to be played.




Breathe through instrument holding the pitch.




“Pouring sound”: take off mouth piece, blow in the pipe accentuating with tongue stopping the air. Pitches are approximately suggested.

#### Remarks for percussionist:

### Instruments:

- Five piece section consisting of non-pitched metallic sounding instruments with breakdrum on top line of staff and a rim on bottom line. Things in between might be bells, metal waste and so forth. Try making a sense of scale. Played with metal mallets or similar.
- Vibraphone. Played with soft mallets and chopstick (see below).
- 2 suspended cymbals, preferably 18" and 22". Played with chopstick and milk-creamer.
- 2 tam-tams, tuned F + Ab
- Acoustic guitar, tuned in like this: A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are: E2 (below staff), Bb1 (below staff), Bb2 (below staff), F2 (below staff), Bb2 (below staff), Bb3 (below staff), and Bb3 (below staff).
- 3 different sized triangles, suspended like upside down pyramids. Played with bow.

### Preparations:

- Vibraphone has its pedal down throughout the piece; it might be a good idea to lock it/tie it.
- A chopstick rubbed with rosin is required; while placed 90 degrees upwards from cymbal/ vibraphone, glide downwards along the stick with thumb and index finger. This will make the instrument resonate.
- A milkcreamer is also required, , which is a small cheap battery driven thing. Attach a thread (or similar soft material) where it's spinning. The tempo of the spinning depends on the length of thread and pressure of index finger on the spinning part.

# less-sense

1

Off-stage Start metronome\* ♩=112 10" On-stage, begin soon

Soprano

ff Ho - w ho - wgo

Ecstatic

Off-stage Start metronome\* ♩=94 10" On-stage, begin soon

Clarinet in A

f ff f 3

Hasty

Off-stage Start metronome\* ♩=72 10" On-stage, begin soon

Percussion

ff 3

Angrily

break-drum metal rim

Follow metr. tempo

S.

yo - u were

fff How

ho - - w

good

fell

Cl.

ff f mf f ff f

Perc.

3 5 3 5 3 5 3 6

\* - Metronomes are started by any fourth person

S. *in* (a) *lo* (ve) Ho-w Ho-w go - od did:

Cl. *ff* 5 5 5 *ff* *f* 3

Perc. (To susp. trs)

*p* *fff*

Repeat 3x - 4x. At will, scribble out small score segments from this part with pencil, 2-3 times, then continue playing from after deleted segment. Scribbling = *ff*, 3"-5"

Metronome off, loud scribbling

10"

$\text{♩} = 60$

*ff* H(ow) H(ow) H(ow) H(ow) H(ow) H(ow) (no pause) *f*

Repeat 3x - 4x. At will, scribble out small score segments from this part with pencil, 2-3 times, then continue playing from after deleted segment. Scribbling = *ff*, 3"-5"

Metronome off, loud scribbling

8"

$\text{♩} = 60$  If appropriate, scribble untill note (no pause) *mp*

Repeat 3x - 4x. At will, scribble out small score segments from this part with pencil, 2-3 times, then continue playing from after deleted segment. Scribbling = *ff*, 3"-5"

Metronome off, loud scribbling

12"

$\text{♩} = 60$  w/bow To Vib. + t.t. (no pause) *fff*

Susp. triangles

2

less-sense

3

♩=52

Almost irritated

S. *mf* Ho - wgo-od *mp* Ho - wgo - od *f* H(ow) H(ow) *p < mp* Ho wgo - od *p < mp* yo uwere *pp* *ff* H(ow) H(ow)

Cl. *ppp* *mp* *p* *p < mp* *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vibraphone  
Tam tams *mf* *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp* *ppp* *mf* *mp* *mp* *ppp* *mf*

S. *f* Ho - w *mf* H(ow) *mf* wgo-od to me *mp* Ho wgo odyo uwe (re) *p* aprx. 12"

Cl. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *(p)* *mp* *p* *pp*

Vib.+t.t. *(pp)* *mp* *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *mf* *ppp* *mp* *p* aprx. 12" Vibraphone w/chopstick+soft mallet



3

S.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
 My o — wn choo — si ng my ow n sna — reow n ow n my ow — n a sna — (re)  
*mf mp pp (pp) mf mp p*

Cl.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
*p mf mp p*

Vib.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
*p* Sustain w/chopstick loud as possible *(p)* *(p)* (loud as poss.)

S.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
 I fe — lli — na lo(ve) lo — (o) ve my ow — nsna(re) ow n choo sing Fe lli — nlo vea sna — reo  
*mf f*

Cl.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
*f mf pp ppp*

Vib.  $\text{♩} = 56$   
*mp* (loud as poss.) *(p)*

relax throat  
 soft as poss.

NB  
 noter  
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S. *f* my\_ ow\_nchoosi ng Ho\_\_\_\_\_ wgo\_ odgo od I fe llfe\_\_\_\_\_ ll ow n *fff* scribbling indiv. tempo apx 7"

Cl. *f* scribbling indiv. tempo apx 7"

Vib. *ff* scribbling indiv. tempo apx 7" To cym. w/chopstick

Back of mallet+chopstick

*mf* *f* *mp* *fff* *fff*

4 ♩ = 40-50

S. *pp* steady ad lib trem., soft syllables So I clou de di tsclea rwa te rwi thhe llwhi thhe lls So I clou de di tsclea rwa te *p* more frekvent trem.

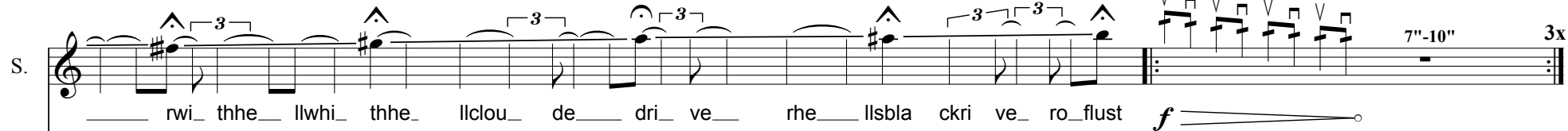
Cl. *pp* steady ad lib. tr(4) more frekvent tr(4) *mf* *p*

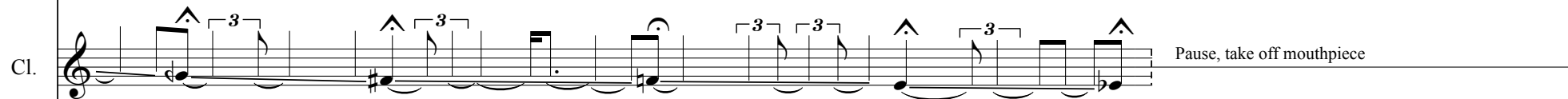
Cym. w/chopstick random harmonics alternate cymb. at will, slowly stop cymb. at rests ("...rwi...") *mf* *sim.* alternate cymb. at will, slowly *sim.*

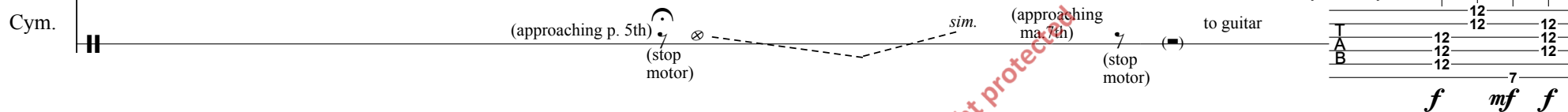
less-sense

Mi  
3P  
4P  
5Mi  
7Ma  
7

♩ = 90, soprano only

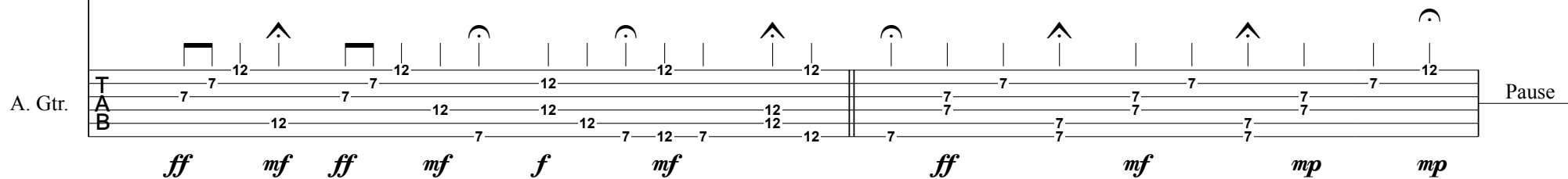
S. 

Cl. 

Cym. 

S. (breathing cont.) 

Cl. To pencil 

A. Gtr. 

**Soprano (S.)**  
 Lyrics: you (ou) (ou) (ou) good to good to me-e for you  
 Dynamics: *p* *f* *mf* *f* *f* *mp* *f* *f*  
 Performance: hold breath 5"

**Clarinet (Cl.)**  
 Performance: repeat

**Triangle/Bow (Tr. ang. w/bow)**  
 Performance: fast as possible let ring, triangles w/bow, repeat

**Soprano (S.)**  
 Lyrics: m (m) (m) (m) mi (i) ixed much bit ter ness (i) n (n) n (n) that cup of plea (ea) sure  
 Dynamics: *mp* *f* *f* *ff* *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *f* *ff* *f* *mp*

**Clarinet (Cl.)**  
 Performance: (repeat until rest sign)

**Triangle/Bow (Tr. ang. w/bow)**  
 Performance: (repeat), let ring