

dayton hare

whereof

one

cannot

speak

for unaccompanied SATB choir

commissioned by the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival – Yale School of Music.

language disguises thought.
the limits of my language
mean
the limits of my world —
whereof one cannot speak,
thereof one must be silent.

— after Ludwig Wittgenstein's
Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus

Notes for Performance

In general, only minimal vibrato should be used.

Glissandi should start part way through the rhythmic value of the note, rather than at the beginning.

The outer sections of the piece are aleatoric. The conductor is responsible for the timing and cuing of these sections.

During the first large section, approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the choir should be assigned to the “unvoiced” choir, which is tasked with articulating consonants. This group is then evenly split into two subgroups. Members of this group should remain standing with their normal sections rather than separately as a block, and should be drawn equally from different voice types. After the end of the first aleatoric section, these singers should return to singing their regular voice part.

During the first aleatoric section, singers are provided with IPA for vowels and consonants. All the phonetic sounds in this section are sourced from the complete text.

Words are often broken down into their smallest constituent sounds. Excluding the aleatoric opening section, when singers are asked to produce these sounds their source word will be provided in brackets underneath the lyrics, with the sound bolded, to clarify pronunciation.

If asked to sing a consonant sound on a pitch, use a schwa (\emptyset) shadow vowel.

Program Note

When I was a kid I had an impossibly difficult time understanding lyrics in music. Whether it was the Top 40 Hits on the car radio or hymns in church, my brain always wanted to classify the voices I heard solely as instruments, as timbres and nothing more. It took a deliberate effort on my part to be able to hear the voices as actually saying something, as meaning something, adding an additional layer of communication to the message of the music.

whereof one cannot speak in some ways tries to dramatize this experiential movement. It starts with the text — a little poem about language I cobbled together from fragments of Wittgenstein — broken into their smallest constituent phonemes, signifying nothing, functioning as sound alone. Over the course of the piece these sounds are pulled together into larger and larger chunks of the text, laboriously moved out of the realm of abstraction and, bit by bit, into recognizable language with meaning to convey. Only by the final sections of the piece can one actually hear what the words are trying to say.

duration c. 5 minutes

whereof one cannot speak

Commissioned by the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival – Yale School of Music.

after Ludwig Wittgenstein

dayton hare

cued, out of time, but slowly, emerging from nothing

Unvoiced

1 5" 10" 2 5" 5"

Unvoiced 1
Unvoiced 2

n < f pp - n
do not coordinate between singers, a rustling of consonants

s t k t k t k [etc.] s

n < f pp - n
do not coordinate between singers, a rustling of consonants

s t k t k t k [etc.] s

cued, out of time, but slowly, emerging from nothing

1 5" 10" 2 5" 5"

Voiced

1 2 3

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

ppp tremulous, shimmering
do not coordinate between singers, each at a slightly different pace
choose a random line of vowels each repeat

1 2 3

Unvoiced

4 5 6 7 8

U. 1
U. 2

t k t k t k [etc.]

f s p s p s p [etc.]

Voiced

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Soprano solo
Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

p < f

ppp tremulous, shimmering
do not coordinate between singers, each at a slightly different pace
choose a random line of vowels each repeat

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

whereof one cannot speak

U. 1

Unvoiced

9 10 11 12 13

5" 3" 5" 10"

n *f* *p* *pp*

θ *p s p s p s [etc.]* *s*

U. 2

Unvoiced

9 10 11 12 13

5" 3" 5" 10"

n *f* *p* *pp*

θ *t k t k t k [etc.]* *s*

1

Voiced

S.

A.

T.

B.

14 **15** **16**

10" 15"

p *mp* *p*

ks ks ks [etc.]

p *mp* *p*

ts ts ts [etc.]

join with the voiced choir

ar a æ i

1

Unvoiced

14 **15** **16**

10" 15"

quasi canon w/ ten. solo, overlap and interrupt with greater frequency over time

mp sighing, expressive 3x

i → æ

soprano solo

join with the voiced choir

end solo

sometimes sing parenthesized note, sometimes omit

end solo

1

Voiced

S.

A.

T.

B.

gradually begin to coalesce into an eighth-note rhythm in the coming tempo; in effect, slow down

gradually begin to coalesce into a sixteenth-note rhythm in the coming tempo; in effect, slow down somewhat

quasi canon w/ sop. solo, overlap and interrupt with greater frequency over time

mp sighing, expressive 3x

i → æ

sometimes sing parenthesized note, sometimes omit

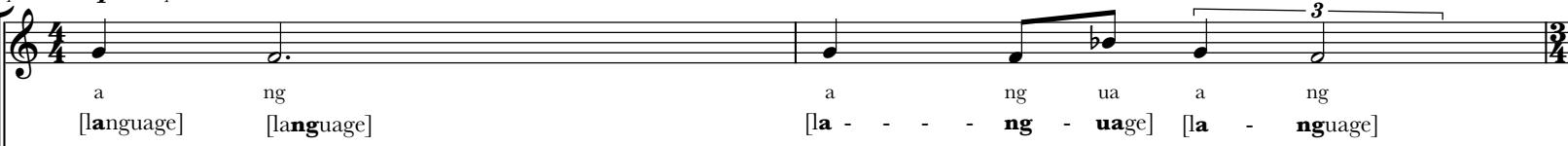
end solo

i → æ ar i → æ

gradually begin to coalesce into an eighth-note triplet rhythm in the coming tempo; in effect, slow down

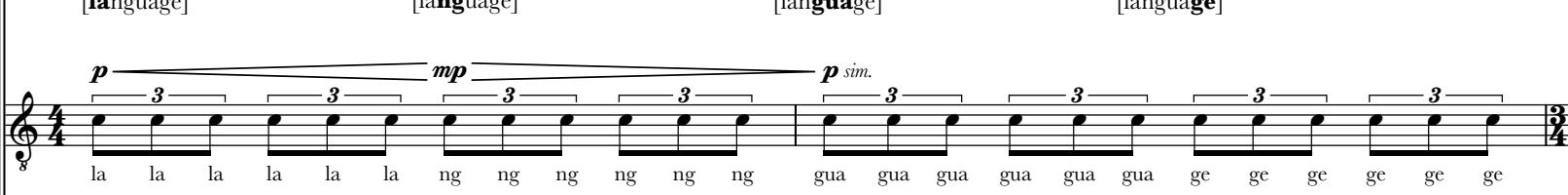
slow down the pattern gradually

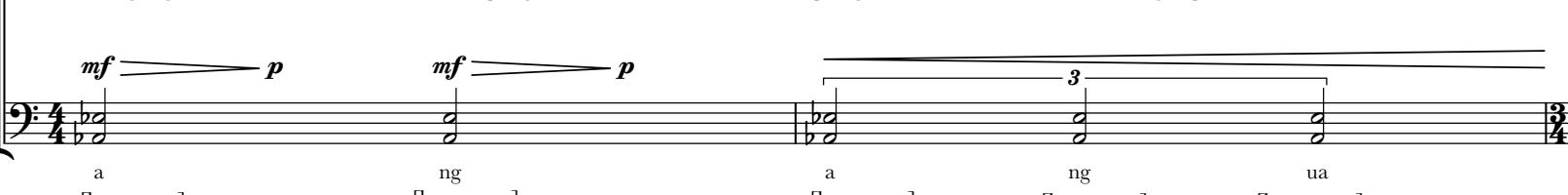
$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 52$ **in time, still somewhat indistinct**
mp *still expressive*

1. 

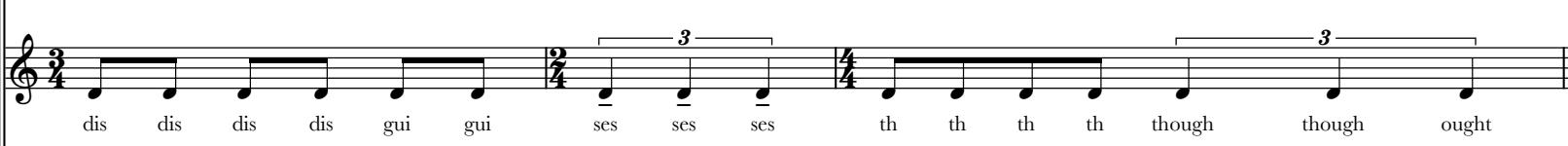
2. 

A. 

T. 

B. 

1. 

2. 

A. 

T. 

B. 

$\text{♩} = 60$ slightly faster, with a sense of intensity

6

S.

T.

B.

A.

8

S.

T.

B.

A.

(A)

(B) a tempo

rit. *> pp* *f*

1 *mp* m m m m my— w w world world world—
[my] [world]

2 *mp* m m m m y y w w w w world world world—
[my] [my] [world]

A. *mp* m m m m y y w w w w world—
[my] [my] [world]

T. *p* *f* *p* w w w w w w w where
[whereof]

B. *p* *f* *p* w w w w w w w where
[whereof]

15 *pp* *pp*

1 — one can

S.

2 *pp* *pp* one can

A. *pp* *pp* one can

T. *f* *p* *pp* w w w w w where where of of of
[whereof] c c ca ca ca can can can no no not
[cannot] [cannot]

B. *f* *p* *pp* w w w w w where where of of of
[whereof] c c ca ca ca can can can no no not
[cannot] [cannot]

whereof one cannot speak

(C)

19

S. spea
[speak]

2. spea
[speak]

A. spea
[speak]

T. n n n no not ea ea eak
[not] [not] [speak] [speak] ppp

B. n n n no not ea ea eak
[not] [not] [speak] [speak]

22

S. there there there of of one one one one
there there there of of of of of of of of one

2. there there there of of of of of of of of one

A. there there there there there there of of of of of of of of one one
there there there there there there of of of of of of of of one one

T. there there there there there there of of of of of of of of one one
there there there there there there of of of of of of of of one one

B. there there there of of of of one one one one
there there there of of of of one one one one

(D)

25

S. must must must must must must be be be be be be si - lent
must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent

2. must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent
must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent

A. must must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent
must must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent

T. must must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent
must must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent

B. must must must must must must must be be be be be be si - silent

28

p *f* **p < f** **p** *< f* rit. **pp** *tenderly* **ppp**

1 must must be be si - lent si - lent si - lent one must be si - lent must be

S.

2 must must must be be si - lent si - lent si - lent one must be si - lent must be

A.

must must must must must be be be be si - lent si - lent si - lent one must be si - lent must be

T.

must must must must be be be be si - lent si - lent si - lent must be

B.

must must must be be si - lent si - lent si - lent

(E)

34

calm and clear

1 si - - - - lent

S.

2 si - - - - lent

A.

si - - - - lent

T.

si - - - - lent lan - guage dis - guis - es the thought. the

B.

si - - - - lent lan - guage dis - guis - es the thought. the

pp *with quiet intensity*

pp *tenderly*

pp *with quiet intensity*

39

S. *pp ethereal*

A. *pp ethereal*

T. *mp*
li - mits of my lang - uage mean the li - mits of my world

B. *mp*
li - mits of my lang - uage mean the li - mits of my world

41

S. one can - not speak can - not speak can - not speak

A. one there -

T. there - of one must be si - lent there - of

B. there - of one must be si - lent there - of one must be

ppp murmuring

44

S. *pp* *mf* there - of one must be si - lent

A. *pp* *mf* one must be si - lent be si - lent

T. *pp* *fp sub* be si - lent

A. - of one must be si - lent one must be si - lent be si - lent

T. one must be si - lent of one must be si - lent one must be si - lent be si - lent si - lent si - lent si - lent

B. si - lent of one must be si - lent one must be si - lent must be si - lent si - lent si - lent si - lent

out of time, cued, as at the beginning

(1) ————— 5" ————— 10" ————— 10"

S. 1 **pppp hum** mm

(2)

alto solo **ppp murmuring** different emphasis with each repetition; in general, speed up then slow down through the figure, but feel free to alter the rhythm for different stresses you may repeat either line, or both, as you like
the li - mits of my lan-gage mean the li - mits of my world

A. **pppp hum** mm

T. **pppp hum** 8 mm different emphasis with each repetition; in general, accelerate through the figure, but feel free to alter the rhythm for different stresses
bass solo **ppp murmuring** lan-gage dis-guis-es the thought

B. **pppp hum** mm

(4) ————— 10" ————— 5

repeat with a somewhat steady rhythm, but occasionally elongating syllables at random slower than the other soloists

ppp murmuring

must be si - lent

S. 1

alto solo

A. different emphasis with each repetition; in general, speed up then slow down through the figure, but feel free to alter the rhythm for different stresses you may repeat either line, or both, as you like
ppp murmuring

tenor solo there - of one must be

T.

bass solo

B.