

2018.4a Sebastian Adams

Commissioned by the East Cork Early Music Festival, and composed in September 2018.

For any four string instruments

Duration: indeterminate

[est. 5 minutes – but far longer performances are acceptable. The duration will be a direct result of the speed the In Nomine cantus firmus is played at. The pulse in the cantus firmus does not need to be strict, particularly if the piece is played slowly enough that a pulse will be hard for an audience to discern]

When chords of two notes or more are indicated, players are to choose one note to play. Players do not have to play the same note for an entire bar (where the instruction indicates more than one attack is to take place in the bar) but can freely choose between the available notes.

It is very important that stillness is maintained in the three general pauses, and in the rest in bar 54.

Octave is free throughout the piece, except in the first and last bar, where it is important that at least the top three voices (and maybe all four) are on an exact unison. The specific octave of these notes can still be adapted to different needs.

The entire piece is to be played so quietly that the sound produced is unstable!

GLOSSARY:

SYNC. – (synchronised) – players play notes in rhythmic unison, based on the remaining instructions

INDIV. – (individuals) – players play freely as individuals

REG. – (regular) – a player's notes are of equal lengths, or if in a rit./accel. are expanding or contracting in even proportions

IRREG. – irregular – no periodicity should be discernible

G – irregular microtonal glissandi around the played notes (mainly subtle inflections). Ensure no rhythmic patterns emerge within these glissandi

TRILLS – trills, using notes that make sense according to the players' understanding of the piece's harmonic world

CRYE – Play repeated notes in a rhythm that calls to mind the Crye In Nomine by Christopher Tye. This need not be strict imitation of the Tye rhythm.

LONG/MEDIUM/SHORT – indications of note length

TREM. – unmeasured tremolo

[In nomine à 4]

2018.4a

VERY SLOW – without obvious pulse
(voice 4 leads changes of bar throughout)

1 SYNC.
2 LONG
3 imperceptible changes
between notes

1 SYNC.
2 LONG
3 G
imperceptible changes
between notes

4

1 2 3 4 5

1 INDIV.
2 LONG with short silences
3 NO G
Each player plays molto pont.
once between here and end of bar 10

1 INDIV.
2 LONG with short silences
3 molto pont.

4

6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

1 SYNC.
2 SHORT
3 IRREG.
TRILLS (occasional)
G (occasional)
Never play the same note twice in a row

INDIV.
As before, but desynchronise:
players choose to either speed up or
slow down. Alter direction of speed-change
if you feel in sync with another player.

4

14 15 16

1 SYNC.
2 ACCEL.
3 REG. (accel. proportional
throughout bar)
NO TRILLS
G (more frequently
as time progresses)

1 INDIV.
2 RIT.
3 IRREG.
CRYE
[short pauses between Cryes]

1 SYNC.
2 LONG
3 REG.
RIT.
TRILLS
sul pont.
[Optionally play grace note
figure after a long note]

4

17 18 19 20 21 22 23

1 INDIV.
2 LONG getting shorter
3 REG.
TRILLS
G

1 INDIV.
2 ACCEL. by playing notes more and more often
3 SHORT
[occasionally append grace note figure to your notes]

4

24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

1
2
3
4

32 33 34

INDIV.
IRREG. > SATURATED
Accel. to saturation point*

ABRUPT SILENCE / G.P.

* Continue to pick up pace, turning individual notes into clustering runs (never play the same note twice in a row). String more and more notes into gestures, gradually removing any sense of breath or definition between gestures. Each player should play the grace note motif once, at a dynamic of *p* (the only rise in dynamic in the entire piece).

1
2
3
4

35 36 37

SYNC
LONG

Voice these chords amongst yourselves (i.e. pre-assign notes in a way you like). Attempt to achieve an even quieter sound than elsewhere in the piece. Between the first two chords, Voices 1-3 play the grace notes in unison, but so quietly that the audience should only hear them by accident. One player should play A on the second chord (b. 36). They precede this with a Bb appoggiatura.

1
2
3
4

38 39 40 41 42

INDIV.
IRREG.
TREM.
Vary bow placement.
Voice 2: very short notes (irregular)
Voice 1,3: Medium notes (irregular)

INDIV.
REG.
GRADUAL ACCEL.
TREM.
Vary bow placement
2: SHORT
1,3: MEDIUM
[Play more notes as accel develops]
Occasionally play the grace notes around your note.

1
2
3
4

43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

SYNC.
REG.
RIT.
TREM
G
molto tasto
MEDIUM, with pauses between notes
[Each player plays grace notes once]

INDIV.
IRREG.
TRILLS Occasionally
TREM. Occasionally
molto tasto
MEDIUM, getting LONGER
[Each player may play grace notes once, optionally]

1
2
3
4

51 52 53 54 55

SYNC.
REG.
LONG
molto tasto G, occasionally
(less as time progresses)

SYNC.
very long

2018.4b

S. Adams
v: 24/09/2018

[In nomine à n]

1-n

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47

48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55

For any group of carefully chosen instruments.

All players play the in nomine cantus firmus (printed above) at individual tempi.

The overall speed should be very slow.

Everyone should play so quietly that the sound produced is very unstable.

Seek interactions between your notes and those played by others at all times.

Feel free to vary your speed.

Players may start at the same time or with staggered entries.

The piece is over when the last player finishes playing the entire cantus firmus.

2018.4c [for any number of instruments]

Version 1: In rehearsal, play 2018.4b, and record it. Listen back to the recording and pick between 2 and 5 chords from the recording which produce particularly beautiful interactions. Attempt to recreate these chords in an order of your choosing. Play each chord once, with each chord lasting anywhere from thirty seconds to twenty minutes. Seek interactions, and play as quietly as possible.

Version 2: As above, but choosing chords from 2018.4a instead. This can be achieved either by rehearsing 2018.4a or by choosing from the score.