Gradual Music
for ensemble

Richard Glover
Gradual Music

Richard Glover

Instrumentation:

Trumpet
French Horn
Trombone

Piano (with three eBows)

Violin
Viola
Cello

Programme note

In his 1968 manifesto *Music as a Gradual Process*, Steve Reich describes ‘that area of gradual (completely controlled) musical process, where one hears the detail of the sound moving out away from intentions’. The process is controlled, but the sounds themselves are uncontrollable, working ‘away from intentions’ autonomously.

This uncontrolled surface layer is made manifest in *Gradual Music*; the divisions between sound, process and form become less relevant.

Written for musikFabrik for performance at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, 28 November 2009.

Duration c. 9 – 12’

Transposed score
Gradual Music

Performance instructions

**Trumpet and French Horn**

Glissandi may be played using either lip glisses or the moving of tuning/valve slides. Half-valving should not be used to produce a glissando. Alternative fingerings may be used as and when necessary; they are not provided in the score as the player may prefer to use tuning slides for glissandi.

**Strings**

Aim for a similar dynamic between the open-string drone and stopped glissandi tone. Ensure this dynamic matches the brass. Use beating patterns where possible to gauge small micro-intervals between the open-string and stopped note.

**Piano**

The pianist may prefer to use a wedge for the sustain pedal; ensure it can easily be removed for the end of the piece.
Gradual Music

Performance instructions

Black noteheads indicate a short held note, so that there is some overlap between glissandi. Glissandi should last between 15 – 25", and should be played as linearly as possible. No vibrato should be used throughout the piece.

The ensemble dynamic should be slightly louder than the eBow drones. Players should use a minimum of attack at all times. The focus of the piece is naturally-occurring subtle fluctuations within the surface layer; emphasis should be placed on a steady dynamic throughout.

Both the brass and string families should each act as one instrument. Visual cues should be used to ensure players enter and exit simultaneously.

The open-string drones are played continuously throughout the piece. These drones should end simultaneously with the release of the piano sustain pedal.

The following pairs of instruments continue on from each others' glissandi:

Trumpet — Violin
French Horn — Viola
Trombone — Cello

While it is acknowledged that the microtonal pitches will be approximations, players should aim to match the pitch of their instrumental pair at the beginning of each glissando as best as possible.
Gradual Music

Microtonal notation

*Gradual Music* utilises a twelfth-tone equal-tempered scale, i.e. twelve notes to every whole tone.
Gradual Music

Richard Glover

Horn in F
Trumpet in B♭
Trombone
Piano
Violin
Viola
Violoncello

Place eBows on strings in the order G, A & D
Strings begin once eBows have established drone

Place eBows on strings in the order G, A & D
Strings begin once eBows have established drone

Gradual Music

Richard Glover