Mary Bellamy

the other side of air

piano quintet

(2017)

Written for the Bozzini Quartet and Philip Thomas
with immense gratitude for their commitment and expertise.

.....inner worlds now
the most practised/
of distances, as
the other side of thin air:
pure,
immense,
no longer habitable.

Rainer Maria Rilke
(c.1918)
performance notes

strings

special staffs

- range staff: lines mark lowest, middle, and highest pitch on specified string
- bow between fingers staff
- bridge, tailpiece, and body staff

special clefs

- bow passes between specified fingers in normal bow position, produce a noise sound with lots of interference

symbols

positions

- sp: sul ponticello
- st: sul tasto
- po: ordinary
- on mute
- on bridge
- on side of bridge
- behind bridge
- on tailpiece
- on side of instrument
- tap body of instrument
- rub body of instrument
- highest or lowest point on string

bowing types

- clt: col legno tratto
- clb: col legno battuto
- crino: with hair of bow

indeterminate notation

- apply a lot of pressure, move the bow in small circles, remain in one position
- stems without noteheads are indeterminate pitches
- stems with circular noteheads are indeterminate harmonics
indeterminate harmonics across the range staff, as fast as possible, no accuracy is expected in terms of rhythm or number of harmonics

mute
unmute

mute all strings and find a random non-pitched noise sound, use a light and fast bow to produce airy noise sounds, expect random harmonics

any multiphonic on the specified string, always played sul ponticello with slow bow speed, produced just before the point of a natural harmonic on specified string

apply full pressure and use a very slow bow, slow bow movements, break the sound, mute strings, appears in low, medium and high register

glissandi

sweeping bow action moving swiftly between sul ponticello and sul tasto
sliding bow action moving swiftly between sul ponticello and sul tasto

glissandi often combined with bowing close to the fingers, as the glissando moves downwards the bow moves towards sul tasto, as the glissando moves upwards the bow moves towards sul ponticello

slowly move the bow between sul tasto and sul ponticello whilst also changing string, staying in the highest position possible throughout

small glissando up and down at the highest point on specified string

microtones
quarter- and three-quarter-tone sharp
quarter- and three-quarter-tone flat

piano
symbols
unordered roll
plectrum
china egg cup
a glass
fingernail
produce harmonic

clusters
ordinary cluster

roll cluster upwards and downwards within the given range, use all five fingers in a rolling motion

gliss the whole cluster upwards to an indeterminate higher cluster

n.b.: all clusters are chromatic black and white note clusters

inside the piano
the inside strings are to be played with: fingernails, a glass marble, bicycle rubber, a plectrum, fishing wire (used to bow the strings), a china egg cup, an e-bow, a coin, a billiard ball, and a super-ball

gliss on strings, on bridge
Sweep across strings with palm

sweep the fingers across the strings in a wide circular motion moving progressively lower then returning higher, range is approximate

sweeping slide action along the string starting wide and getting progressively narrower

press the pedal abruptly to create resonance, hold the pedal down to sustain the resonance

Slide china egg cup on strings

slide the egg cup along the string, the player should aim for small movements that generate some pitch and some friction

Small movements with the plectrum vertically along the string, break the sound

using full pressure, slowly slide the plectrum against the string in very small movements, break the sound

move the finger muting the string towards the hammer, then back again, to change the timbre of the note and the amount of damping of the string

Pizz strings

pluck the strings within the given range in a random order as fast as possible

tap string with glass marble

palm cluster, approximate pitch on the strings in the given range, use a battuto hand action
A burst of sweeping movement

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pn.
Hovering, suspended in air

Vn. I

(ppp) \( \rightarrow \) \( f \) \( \rightarrow \) \( p \) \( \rightarrow \) \( f \) \( \rightarrow \) \( p \) \( \rightarrow \) \( ppp \)

Bow side of bridge

(nf)

Vn. II

Behind the bridge

(ppp)

Va.

Bow mute

(ppp) \( \rightarrow \) \( f \)

Vc.

Bow tailpiece

(ppp) \( \rightarrow \) \( f \)

(p)

Rob bicycle rubber on strings, slowly bring out harmonics, high register

Pn.
Hovering, suspended in air

Suddenly more movement

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va

Vc

Pn.

Rub the string with bicycle rubber in a vertical direction.
Slow speed to bring out as many harmonics as possible, high register.
Unmeasured bar

Bow close to fingers, follow fingers with bow

Unmeasured bar

China egg cup, small circular motion along string

Unmeasured bar

Unmeasured bar

Unmeasured bar
Splintered

Full pressure, move bow in small circles, remain in one position

Turn glass upside down and turn slowly in circles on the strings in the given range
Full pressure, move bow in small circles, remain in one position

Airy, with complex noise/interference

Pass bow between fingers
Dissipated with airy noise sounds

Unmeasured bar

Vn. I:

Unmeasured bar

Vn. II:

Unmeasured bar

Va:

Unmeasured bar

Vc. I:

Unmeasured bar

Vn. II:

Unmeasured bar

Pno.
Vn. I

\( \text{p} \quad \text{f} \)

Vn. II

\( \text{f} \quad \text{ppp} \)

Vla

\( \text{f} \quad \text{ppp} \)

Vc

\( \text{f} \quad \text{ppp} \quad \text{mf} \)

Pno.

\( \text{f} \quad \text{mf} \)

Tap string with glass marble

Palm cluster on strings

Rub strings with fingers

Mute string keys
Move towards hammers
Full pressure, move bow in small circles, remain in one position
Floating, suspended in air

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pn.
Floating, hovering, airy

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pn.
Alternate slowly and irregularly between the strings
spmtl

(Vn. I)

(Vn. II)

(Vc)

(Pn.)

(Ped.)
Floating, airy

Rubber on strings, high register, slowly to produce harmonics

(keys)
Colourful, airy, noise sounds

Vn. I

sf2

mf

Vn. II

f

pp

f

ppp

mp

f

pp

mp

Vc.

Coin scrape

Slowly tap strings with finger

Pn.

Circular motion with palm on strings

Slowly tap strings with finger
Static, broken

Alternate freely between strings

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc

Pn.

Ped.
**Dissipated**

Vn. I

- LH
- elb
- jeté
- crino

- \( f \)
- \( p \)
- \( f \) ppp

Vn. II

- \( ppp \)
- \( f \)

Va.

- pizz.
- arco
- po

- \( f \) ppp

Vc.

- clt
- II

- \( f \)

- \( p \)

Pn.

- (e-bow)

- Sweep glass marble across strings
- Slow pressured rub

- \( p \)
- \( sf \)
- \( pp \)
- \( f \)
Violin I:

- *spinnl gliss
- cib jet
- crino arco spinnl

Violin II:

- mf
- pp
- unmeasured bar
- fast
- Rub body

Viola:

- pizz.
- st IV/III

Cello:

- ppp
- p
- unmeasured bar
- st IV/III

Piano:

- Irregular tremolo
- Slow pressed rub

Remove e-bow and allow sound to fade.
Rub bicycle rubber on strings, slowly, bring out harmonics, high register.