

recitation, code, and (perhaps) round

fifteen minutes for choir with metallic or wooden percussion instruments

michael winter (la, 2009)

Now Trips a Lady, Now Struts a Lord

Lost my cat-

gland in the Chat

Sanctus

[sans-culotte]

blot

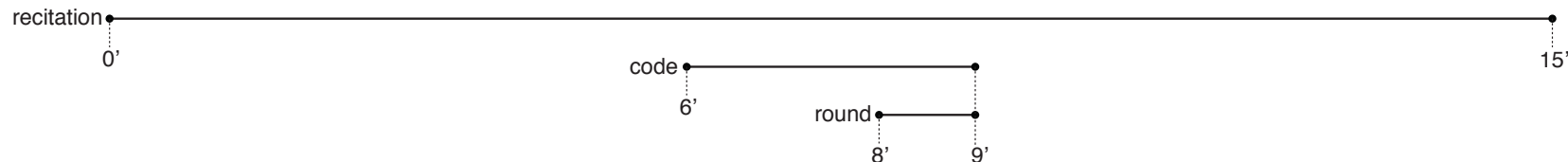
from view, My Wick

You--

recitation, code, and (perhaps) round

fifteen minutes for choir with metallic or wooden percussion instruments
text: Now Trips a Lady, Now Struts a Lord; *Elizabeth Winder (2009)*
written for the Canticum Ostrava for premiere at the 2009 Ostrava Days Festival
-*michael winter (la, 2009)*

- two or three parts: a recitation (plain; chant-like), a code (rising from the ether; cacophonous), and (perhaps) a round (glorious; strident) occurring at overlapping times (as diagrammed below). each individual part is described separately on the following pages. if possible, performers should distribute themselves throughout the performance space. singing should be minimal with no vibrato or other embellishments.



- the code and the round should end abruptly. all players end his or her currently sung tone simultaneously with the others.
- the round is optional and can be sung independently if the occasion warrants.
- note that the pitches of the piece derive from a harmonic series. in the more traditional music notation provided in the score, above each note is a corresponding cents-deviation (one-hundredth of a tempered semitone) from the nearest pitch in twelve-tone equal temperament. performers should familiarize themselves with the scale below transposed into his or her respective range.



- recitation (bass)

- a repeated recitation of the poem on a low g. slow. with drawn-out vowels and variable pacing of each syllable. repeated for the entire duration of the piece, which may only end on the final word. clear. not loud.
 - this part may be solo or with several low voices. in the latter case, the ensemble should experiment with homophonic recitations (with the start and end of each syllable cued by one performer at a time). the ensemble may also try independent recitations per performer. in this case, the performers should enter and exit staggered with the first and last recitation sung by only one performer.
 - the recitation may be accompanied by a continuous, pitched tone in unison with and sustained throughout the recitation. the entrance of the recitation and possible accompaniment may be accented with a percussive attack that decays slowly. the exit may be accented with a percussive attack that is punctuated. if the recitation is accompanied, the performer shall feel free to take longer pauses between words and repetitions of the poem.

- code (as many vocalists as possible—in all ranges)

- each performer sings words from the poem chosen in succession arbitrarily (that is, no particular order). pitches are also chosen arbitrarily from a set. the first, second, and third measures in the music notation below give the sets for time 6' – 7', 7' – 8' and 8' – 9', respectively. pitches may be transposed by any number of octaves. one pitch per word. the general texture goes from sparse to dense. to ensure this trajectory, durations of the tones should start long and get shorter (and louder) throughout the three minutes of the part.

- available pitches



- during the singing of each word, the performer realizes, with their respective percussion instrument, the code associated with the given word (provided below; read left to right) as follows: disturbing the space to the extent possible, 'zeroes' are realized as one hard strike of the instrument and 'ones' are realized as loud rattles or rolls.

- for example, if the player plays a metal pot, a 'zero' could be realized as a hard strike on the outside, while a 'one' could be realized as a vigorous shaking of the beater inside the pot that strikes the (in)sides in rapid (and perhaps arhythmic) succession.

lost	my	cat	gland	in	the	chat	sanctus
0 0 0 0	0 0 0 1	0 0 1 0	0 0 1 1	0 1 0 0	0 1 0 1	0 1 1 0	0 1 1 1
sans	culotte	blot	from	view	my	wick	you
1 0 0 0	1 0 0 1	1 0 1 0	1 0 1 1	1 1 0 0	1 1 0 1	1 1 1 0	1 1 1 1

- round (four groups—each in any range)

- performance of the round should be at a rather fast tempo and should sound at a dynamic that matches or is slightly above the rest of the ensemble. the round is composed of two possible parts: a ground and possible alterations. the first two groups of performers must start with the ground. successive groups may start with the ground or an alteration. the numbers above the ground indicate the start time of each group relative to the start of the round. after one reading of the poem performers are free to alternate between the ground and alterations.

- ground

- the ground of the round (shown below in traditional notation) may be transposed by any number of octaves. where durations are given below the words (with no notes in the staff above), performers are allowed to choose from any of the available pitches (again in any octave) notated below the ground.

- available pitches

- alteration

- an alteration is any manipulation of the ground that preserves the order of words in the poem. pitches must be from the above set (including octave equivalents). one pitch per syllable. the preferred method of alteration is constructed as follows. partition the sequence of symbols below such that the partitions *generally* contain more than 3 and less than 7 symbols. then rearrange the partitions creating a new sequence. performers may create several of these sequences prior to performance. an alteration is realized by starting on any pitch and reading the entire sequence of symbols from left to right. ↑, ↓, and — indicate that the next pitch *must be* higher, lower, or the same, respectively. ⇕ indicates that the performer *may choose* whether the next pitch is higher, lower, or the same. one pitch per syllable. performers may group any number of words into a phrase. tones should generally be short in duration however the last note of a phrase may sustain longer. performers may try to alter and realize the sequence during performance (that is, in ‘real-time’) by realizing disjunct subsequences of the sequence below in no particular order.