

Nolan Krell

Chiaroscuro: Thank you I am Destitute

for solo voice and media

2021

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Total Duration: 5'00"-20'00"

To Maria Eduarda Mendes Martins and Christopher Butterfield

“Instrumentation”:

Vocalist

Computer (laptop) with Max/MSP

Headphones / ear buds

Solid black mask

Chair

Camera capable of recording video

1 pre-existing video

1 Max patch

Speakers and projector (for live performance)

This piece is part 3 of ‘A knife at all times’.

September-December 2021

Traditional territories of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples (Victoria, BC)

Nolan Krell

Performance Directions:

General Organization:

This piece sees a vocalist sitting in a chair with their own self projected on top of them. The pre-recorded vocalist is a performance of this same piece filmed earlier in the same day (aiming for as identical-looking to the living vocalist as possible). The pre-recorded vocalist sits down and then the living vocalist sits down after them but they are wearing a mask.

The vocalist’s musical material is comprised of short movements which the Max/MSP patch dictates the order and placement of to the performer through ear buds. Movements can be repeated and cut short. The number of movements and the length of them vary from one iteration to another.

The pre-recorded vocalist video is a silent video which is, like the musical material, repeated, cut, and frozen based on the Max patch’s generation. Here, we see the result on screen.

Once decided by the Max patch, the piece will move to the “coda” where all voice sounds will stop and only the pre-existing video will play (with sound).

Dramaticism:

It should be noted that certain creative liberties may be taken by the performers and curators with regards to design and setup. However, there are certain necessities which are required for the performance.

The piece begins with the video showing the pre-recorded vocalist sitting down. Once they are in their chair, the living vocalist enters the stage and sits down.

While performing, the living vocalist has 2 options regarding the score: 1) memorize the score and remain static, facing forwards the entire performance, or 2) set up the score in some way which spatially separates the movements and requires their head to move to look at them. These movements should be quick and moderately jarring.

All mouth movements in the piece should be slightly exaggerated.

At the “coda” section, the performer should immediately stop what they’re doing and look straight ahead, frozen.

The mask that the living performer is wearing can be made out of any material, it can be crude or extravagant (but not distractingly so). It is solid black and covers their face down to the bridge of their nose. The audience should only see their mouth and below.

Notation:

Before looking at the notation, it is paramount to understand its organization. The written musical material consists of 6 nearly identical movements. They are all based on the same foundation but have their own unique deviations. When the performer is asked to begin a new movement (“Number X in 3...2...1...”), they are given a few seconds to collect their bearings and go to the start of the new movement (movements will always begin at the start).

ALL MATERIAL IS PERFORMED AS QUIET AS PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE.

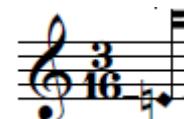
The notation asks the performer to create a number different sounds with their voice. There is almost no traditional singing in this piece; it is a series of whispers, whimpers, and mouth sounds.

There are two types of staves, one with 5 lines and one with 1 line. In the 5-line staff, pitch is a parameter and in the 1-line staff, pitch is not a parameter and noise is paramount. Most notehead types are relegated to either 5-line or 1-line staves but some overlap.

On 5 lines:



Circle = sung (almost always within a glissando)



Diamond = *sotto voce*

On 1 line:



Circle = spoken



Square = whispered

3:

X = percussive/plosive sound



Headless = mouthed with no voice.

(Note that sometimes headless notes occur in the 5-line staff. This indicates an extension of a glissando without a specific pitch.)

There are two lines of text. The top line are words and phrases in English, German, and French. The languages are indicated through typesetting with English as nothing, **German** as bold, and *French* as italic. The bottom line of text are IPA phonetics written in [square brackets].

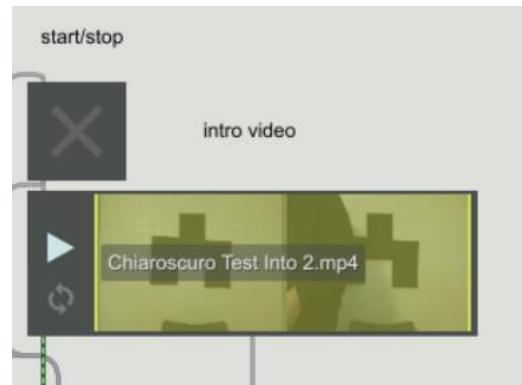
The voice in this piece should not be thought of as a monophonic instrument. Instead, it is a complex of physical tension between flesh, air, and being. Many of the directions in this piece call for impossibilities: physical contradictions within the mouth. The performer should attempt to perform all of the written material but they should know that almost none of it is totally realizable. If a contradiction is presented, neither extreme should be clear; there should be an artificial, rounded middle-ground.

Max/MSP and Videos:

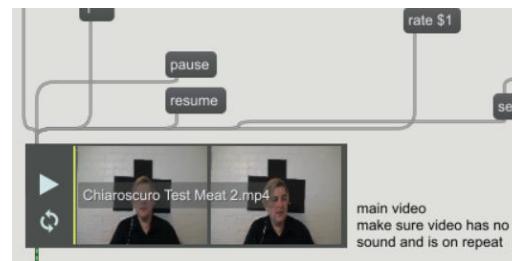
First, the pre-recorded performance video must be made. This will be a recording of a performance (without the mask) or projected video.

After recording, split the video into two parts. The first part should be the introduction: the performer entering and sitting down. (The performer should take some time after they have sat down to just sit; this is the time where the live performer will enter and sit in the live performance.) The second part should be the remainder of the performance.

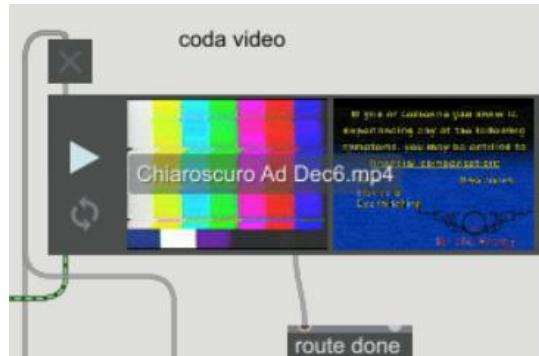
The intro will be brought into this part of the Max/MSP patch “chiaroscuro videotpatch.maxpat” (top right):



The remainder should be brought into this part of the patch (top left) (don't forget to set it to repeat):



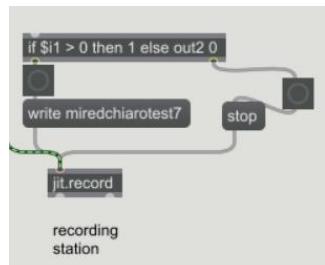
Finally, the pre-existing video (“Chiaroscuro Ad Dec6.mp4”) should be placed here (middle right):



On performance, press the toggle at the top right and the piece will start generating random video material and organizing the order of the movements after playing the intro video. Turn the dac on to send the sound to the performer to receive instructions from the patch.



If you are interested in recording the video output, hook the recording station up to the main start/stop toggle.



Text: (presented alphabetically with no regard to whether the word or phrase is used or not)

C'est rare

Chapeau

Chouette

Cope

Face

Fähig

Faire

Fille sept (seven)

Focus

Frühschicht

Il fait chaud

Météo

Nachher

Out

Pfeffer

Psyche

Rauch

Sa force

Safari

Saucisse

Schatzi

Schuhe

Shake

Siehst

Soccer

Sophia

Soufisme

Suche

Tu sais

Versuch

Wie hoch

Other:

In a digital setting, the projection should be replaced by a “green screen” effect, placing the pre-recorded performance on top of the “live” performance.

The notation presented is strict in its direction but the strictness is merely a catalyst for expression. The piece should vary from one performance to the next, and even more from one performer to the next.

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$\text{♪} = 50$

I

Voice

$\text{2} \frac{1}{8}$ $7:8$ $5:4$ $3:2$ $3:2$ $5 \frac{1}{16}$ $6:5$ $2 \frac{1}{8}$ $4:3$ $7 \frac{1}{16}$

na-ch - her [f] [x] ch - a - peau [u] [ʃ] mé [ʃ] [θ] té - - - o [e]

$4 \frac{7}{16}$ $7:8$ $5:7$ $6 \frac{1}{8}$ $3:2$ $7:8$ $3 \frac{1}{16}$

[u] r - a - u - ch [x] [x] [ʃ] cope c'est [ɸ] [s] s - iehst [e] il -

$6 \frac{3}{16}$ $7:8$ $5:6$ $3 \frac{1}{8}$ $7:6$ $4 \frac{1}{8}$ $3:2$ $13 \frac{1}{16}$

— fait [f] chaud [ɸ] [s] [ʒ] psy - ch e —

10

13

cisse soc - cer früh - schi - cht ver - sucht [f] [a]

16

5:4

sa [f] force [θ]

4

12

4

fis [ʒ] [θ] [o]

me tu sais face [ʒ] [o] [x]

6

8

he [u] [o] [ɸ] [a] [i]

15

6

4:5

7:8

5:6

5:4

11:14

5:4

out fä - hic [ç] [f] wie [f] hoch [f] [ɸ] scha - [ç] tzi [f] [ʃ][ɸ] sept [a][s]

4

10

13

cisse *früh - schi - cht ver - sucht* [f] [a]

9:8 7:6

16

10:9

5:4

4

sa [f] [θ] [i] -

12

4

6

jis *me tu sais face he*

5:4

16

[i] [ɛ] [θ][o] [u] [o] [ɸ] [a] [i]

[ɔ] [x]

15

6

out *fä - hig wie hoch scha - tzi sept*

4:5 5:4

7:8

5:6

11:14

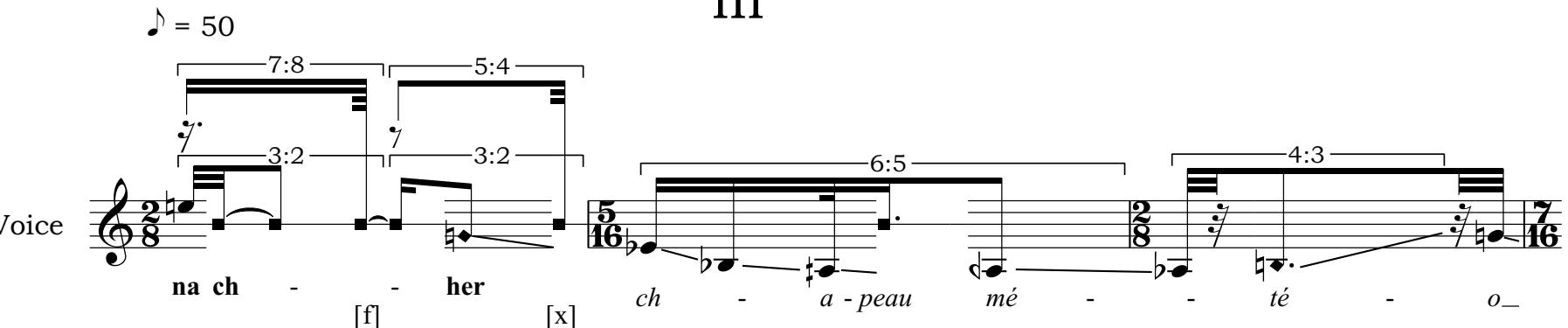
5:4

[ɛ] [f] [f] [f] [ɸ] [f] [c] [f] [ʃ][ɸ] [a][s]

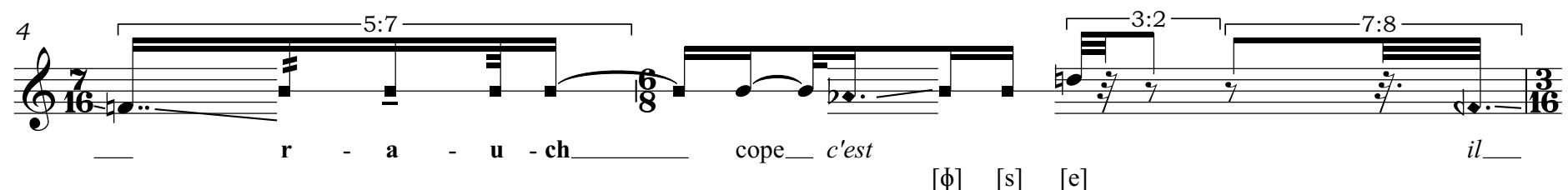
III

$\text{♪} = 50$

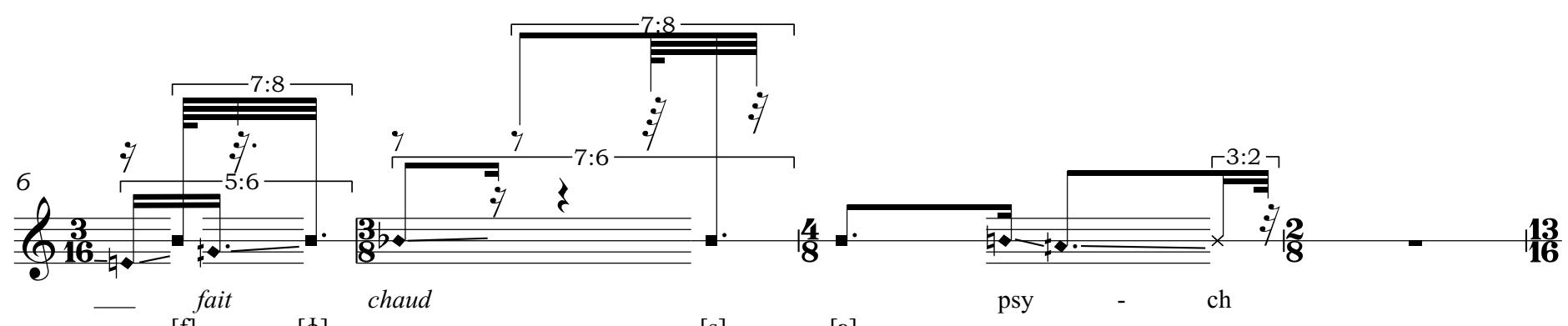
1

Voice 

4



6



10

12

15

IV

$\text{♪} = 50$

Voice

2

7:8 5:4 3:2 5:16 4:3 7:8 16

[f] [x] [ʃ] [u] [ʃ] [ʃ] [θ] [e]

7:8 5:7 3:2 7:8

4

7:16 8 3:2 7:8 3:16

[u] r - a - u - ch cope c'est s - iehst il

6

7:8 5:6 7:8 7:6 4:8 3:2 13:16

fait [f] chaud [ʃ] [z] psy - ch e

10

13 16

9:8 7:6 3:2

10:9

5:4

cisse soc - cer **früh - schi** - cht ver - sucht su - che faire sa force

[a]

[f] [θ]

9 16

12

4 8

5:4

9 16

me tu sais face_ he

[z] [i] [θ][o] [ʒ] [o] [x] [u] [o] [ɸ] [a] [i]

15

4:5

7:8

5:6

5:4

11:14

5:4

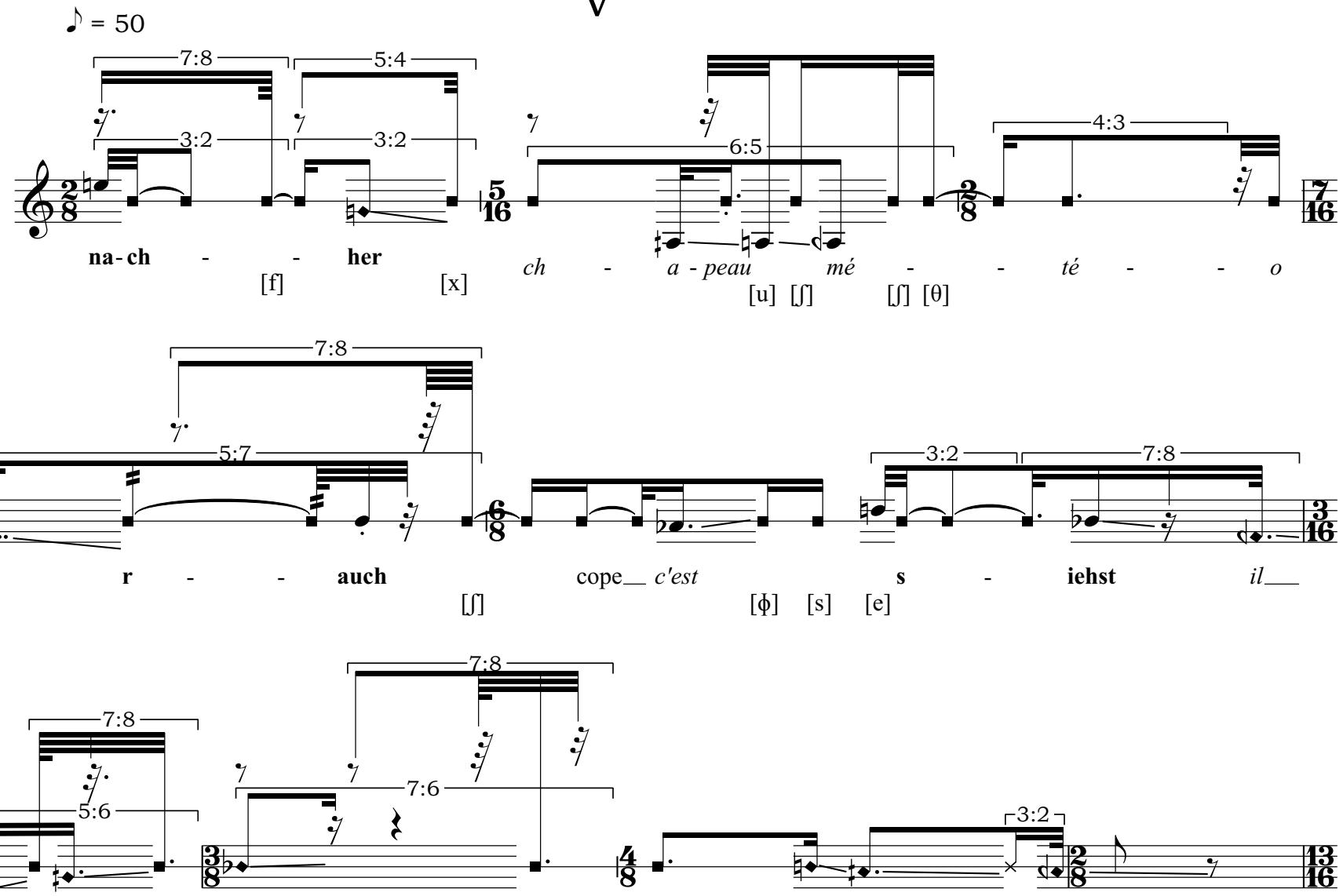
16

out fä - hic [ç] [f] wie [f] hoch [f] [f] scha - [ç] tzi [f] [f] [ç] [a] [s] sept

V

$\text{♪} = 50$

1

Voice 

2

3

4

5

6

10

13

cisse soc - cer früh - schi - cht ver - sucht [f] [a]

10:9 5:4

sa [f] force [θ]

12

4 8

pfeff - fer [z] fis [θ] [o] me tu sais face [z] [o] [x] [u] [o] [ϕ] [a] [i] he

6

15

6

ou - t fä - hig [ç] wie [f] hoch [f] [ϕ] [f] scha - [ç] tzi chou - ette shake fille sept

4:5 5:4 11:14

VI

$\text{♪} = 50$

Voice

2 $\frac{5}{8}$ na - - chher [x] ch - a - peau [u] [ʃ] mé [ʃ] [θ] té - - - o [e] 7 $\frac{16}{16}$

4 $\frac{7}{16}$ r - a [a] - u [x] - ch [x] [ʃ] - - - 3 $\frac{16}{16}$

6 $\frac{3}{16}$ fait [f] 7 $\frac{8}{8}$ 5:6 chaud [Φ] 7 $\frac{7}{6}$ fo - cus [s] [ʒ] 4 $\frac{4}{8}$ psy - - - ch - e [θ] [s] [θ] [ʃ] [c] 3 $\frac{16}{16}$

10 13

4:5 9:8 9:16 10:9 5:4

[o] [o] [a] sa [f] [θ] force [f] [θ]

12 4 5:4 9:16 6:8

[θ] me tu sais face he

[z] [o] [x] [u] [o] [φ] [a] [i]

15 6:8 4:5 5:4 5:6 11:14 5:4

out fä - hig wie hoch [ç] [f] [f] [f] [f] [f] [f] chou - ette [f] [f] [f] [f] [f] [f] [f] sept