

A, E, O, U.

For Clarinet, viola, and piano

James Oldham

(2017)

A, E, O, U.

Instrumentation

Viola
Clarinet in B^b
Piano

Score in C

Duration: c. 6' 00"

Performance directions

for 'Elegiac (E)' section

The contour graphic dictates a build in tension and dynamic but decrease in tempo.

Pitches only need to be together at vertical dotted lines. Players may be out of sync otherwise.

Piano bass notes break the tension - Piano broken chords increase the tension.

for 'Jocular (O)' section

Piano should play the scales and arpeggios with smugness.

The three consecutive rests at the top of the passage is to encourage the player to milk those notes as much as possible rather than suggest a particular duration.

Programme notes

The material for A, E, O, U. is derived from the book Eunoia by Christian Bök. Eunoia consists of five chapters Chapter A, Chapter E, Chapter I, Chapter O and Chapter U. Each chapter only contains the vowel suggested by its respective title. The author suggested that each vowel when isolated in such a way possesses its own characteristic 'A is courtly, E is Elegiac, I is lyrical, O is jocular, U is obscene'.

Initially, I developed a system of translating each phoneme of the English language into pitch and articulation. A harmonic structure was devised the vowels and each vowel has its own chord. Once passages of the text had been meticulously translated into pitch and articulation, I applied Bök's vowel characteristics to create contrasting musical material. Each vowel has its own characterised music and the structure is freely composed. Some 'vowel music' contains more of the original system than others; some contain virtually nothing.

Chapter I did not make it into this piece.

A, E, O, U.

for Clarinet, viola, and piano

James Oldham

(2017)

1 Obscene (U)
♩ = 90

Clarinet in Bb

Viola

Piano

6

Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

very pushy

extremely wide

slippery

9

2

Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

turbulent

turbulent

open palm cluster

open palm cluster

13 **2/4** **4/4** **3/4** **3** Courtly (A) $\text{♩} = 100$ **3/4** **4/4**

Cl. *f* *p* *f* *ff* *mp* *f*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mp* *f* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff* *ff*

Pno. *ff*

15^{ma} 8^{vb} 8^{vb}

20 **4** **5/4** **4/4** **5/4** **4/4**

Cl. *p* *ff* *p* *f* *mf* *p* *<* *f* *p*

Vla. *ff* *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf* *p* *ff* *ff* *mf* *ff* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff* *mf* *mp* *<* *mf* *ff* *mp*

Pno. *ff*

15^{ma} 8^{vb} 8^{vb}

26 **4/4** **6/4** **5** **4/4**

Cl. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *<* *f* *p* *f* *mp* *f*

Vla. *f* *ff* *mp* *p* *mp* *ff* *mp* *mp* *ff* *mp* *ff* *mp* *ff* *ff* *p* *mp* *ff* *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mf*

15^{ma} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb}

32

Cl. *mp f p f mp*

Vla. *ff mf ff mp ff mp ff*

Pno. *ff* *heavy touch* *f*

2/4 6/8 3/4 6/8

39

Cl. *f p f f*

Vla. *ff mp mf ff mp ff mp mf ff f ff*

Pno. *mp legato* *ff*

4/4 2/4 4/4 3/4

7

45

Cl. *p ff* *long pause*

Vla. *mp ff mp ff mp ff mf* *extremely wide* *sul pont.* *build to scratch*

Pno. *ff*

3/4 4/4 *Obscene (U)* *4=90* *4/4*

51 **4/8** Courtyly (A) $\text{♩} = 110$ **2/4** **6/8** **4/4** Obscene (U) **2/4**

Cl. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* rit. *ff*

Vla. arco *ff* *p* < > *mp* sul pont. *ff* *mf* arco *ff* arco *mp* *ff* *ff*

Pno. *ff* *ff*

8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb}

58 **2/4** **4/4** **2/4** **6/8** **4/4** **2/4**

Cl. *ff* sul pont.

Vla. *ff* *mf*

Pno. *ff*

8^{vb}

65 **2/4** **6/8** **4/4** **10**

Cl. *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Vla. to scratch *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Pno. *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb} 8^{vb}

71

Cl.

3/4

4/4

molto rit. to a stand still

Vla.

mf

gliss.

Pno.

15^{ma} (white note) gliss.

15^{ma} (white note) gliss.

8^{vb}

(E) section:
 Contour graphic dictates a build in tension and dynamic but decrease in tempo.
 Pitches only need to be together at vertical dotted lines, players may be out of sync otherwise.
 Piano bass notes break the tension, piano broken chords increase the tension.

75

11 Elegaic (E)

12 as much glissando as possible

13 Obscene (U) ♯=90

3/4

Cl.

sul pont.

scratch

scratch

scratch

scratch

Vla.

ff

Pno.

tense

thunderous

sim.

slippery

ff

8^{vb}

79 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ 14 Elegaic (E)

Cl. *ppp* (sul pont. to scratch sim.)

Vla. *ppp*

Pno. *f* 8^{va}

85 (U) Elegaic (E) $\frac{2}{4}$

Cl. *ff* (sul pont. to scratch sim.)

Vla. *ff*

Pno. *ff* *f* 8^{va}

91 **15** (U) Obscene $\text{♩} = 90$

Cl. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

Vla. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

Pno. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

97 $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ **16** Jocular (O) $\text{♩} = 90$

Cl. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vla. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Pno. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

102 $\frac{5}{4}$ **17** Elegaic (E) $\frac{4}{4}$ **18** (O) $\text{♩} = 100$

Cl. $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vla. $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Pno. $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

107

Cl. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vla.

Pno.

ff *f* *ff* *f*

8^{va}

113

Cl. $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vla.

Pno.

ff *ff* *f*

8^{va}

121

Cl. $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

Vla.

Pno.

f *ff* *f* *ff* *f*

8^{va}