Christopher Stark

DEPOSITION

after Pietro Lorenzetti

for Cello, Piano, and Electronics

(2013)

PROGRAM NOTE

Deposition was inspired by Pietro Lorenzetti's frescoes in the Lower Church of the Papal Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi. The frescoes, which were painted in the early-fourteenth century, depict scenes of the Passion, and they are well-known examples of the early use of naturalism in Italian art—which Pietro and his younger brother Ambrogio were instrumental in introducing. In the fall of 2012 I visited the Lower Church, and I was particularly struck by the deposition scene. The hauntingly moving expression on Mary's face, the simple and bleak--gristly even--portrayal of the removal of Christ from the cross, and the disorienting use of early perspective techniques, immediately conjured up musical associations for me. The cello's material is built around a long falling chromatic line derived from the lamento bass, and the piano's material is derived from an eight-note melody created using the letters of Lorenzetti's last name--both of these materials are presented at the conclusion of the composition. The electronics are intended to add an element of 'otherworldliness' to the piece as a representation of the mythological and supernatural weight of the subject matter. The electronic material is generated through recording and playing back the cello and piano material at different speed and pitch ratios in an attempt to position it in relief to the 'worldly' live performers. The piece is ten minutes in duration, and it is affectionately dedicated to Gjertrud Schnackenberg, with whom I first viewed the frescoes.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

- The volume of the electronics should always match the volume of the live performers.
- There is no tempo for most of the piece, but rather approximate timings of events; therefore, variability as it pertains to individual expressive rhythm is highly encouraged.

ELECTRONIC REQUIREMENTS

1 Laptop with Max/MSP
1 Mixer with 2 Inputs (from the Laptop) and 2 Outputs (to the Speakers)
2 Powered Speakers
Cables and Power

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

Elizabeth Lyon, cello & Xak Bjerken, piano
Barnes Hall, Cornell University
20 October 2013

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to Gjertrud Schnackenberg

DEPOSITION

after frescoes by Pietro Lorenzetti in the Lower Church of the Papal Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi

for Cello, Piano, and Electronics

Christopher Stark

Senza misura, delicatissimo, dolente

≈ 7.5"

Cello

sempre ad lib.

pp

Piano

pp sempre

Electronics

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

*accidentals carry through staves, but not across systems

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≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

CUE 1

≈ 7.5"

Elec.

Vc.

B♭

Ped.

CUE 2

CUE 3

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

B

Ped.

CUE 4

≈ 7.5"

CUE 5

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

C

Ped.

CUE 6

≈ 7.5"

CUE 7

"𝄽"

≈ 7.5"

C♯

Ped.

CUE 8

≈ 7.5"

"𝄽"

"𝄽"

(reverse piano sounds)

≈ 4"

(no electronics)

≈ 4"

CUE 9

≈ 20"

non harm. (con vib., poco a poco)

D

E♭

...

CUE 10

≈ 20"

"𝄽!"

ff

(norm.) ---------- sul pont.

tr

ff

≈ 6"

≈ 3"

≈ 1"

8va

8va

"𝄽!"

pp *sempre, the electronic drone should envelope the piano*

mf ***ff***

as fast as poss.

...

CUE 11

≈ 10.3"***

Elec.

+46

+46

pp

pp *sempre*

norm., simile al principio

Vc.

+46 **

p *subito (match the electronics)*

*These figures should be rhythmically & dynamically identical to the figure in the first system at the top of this page. The space between the gestures decreases in the second system, but the gestures should remain similar.

** The clef indicates a transposition of 46 cents sharp or ≈ 1/4 tone. Tune to the cello and piano in the playback, not to the live piano.

*** This is the approximate duration of the recorded sample slowed down by 72.7%. Follow the pacing of the recording.

≈ 10.3"

pp (match the electronics)

D

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

A

≈ 10.3"

C

Ped.

*The piano part should be rhythmically 180 degrees out of phase with the piano playback throughout this section.

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

B

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

B

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

C

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

A

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

+46

E

8vb

+46

D♭

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

8va

A♭

D

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

+46

F

8vb

+46

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

8va

B♭

D♭

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

+46

F♯

8vb

+46

≈ 10.3"

+46

+46

8va

A

B

B

Ped.

≈ 10.3"

+46

G

8vb

+46

≈ 10.3"

"𝄽"

+46

+46

8va

B

B

Ped.

≈ 5.5"

≈ 2.25"

G♯

8vb

senza vib., sul tasto flautando

+46

+46

+46

≈ 2.25"

≈ 27.5"

8vb

norm. (con vib. poco a poco)

cresc. poco a poco

"𝄽"

≈ 27.5"

8va

Elec.

≈ 8.25"

≈ 4"

≈ 1.4"

(norm.)

sul pont. *tr*

Vc.

ff

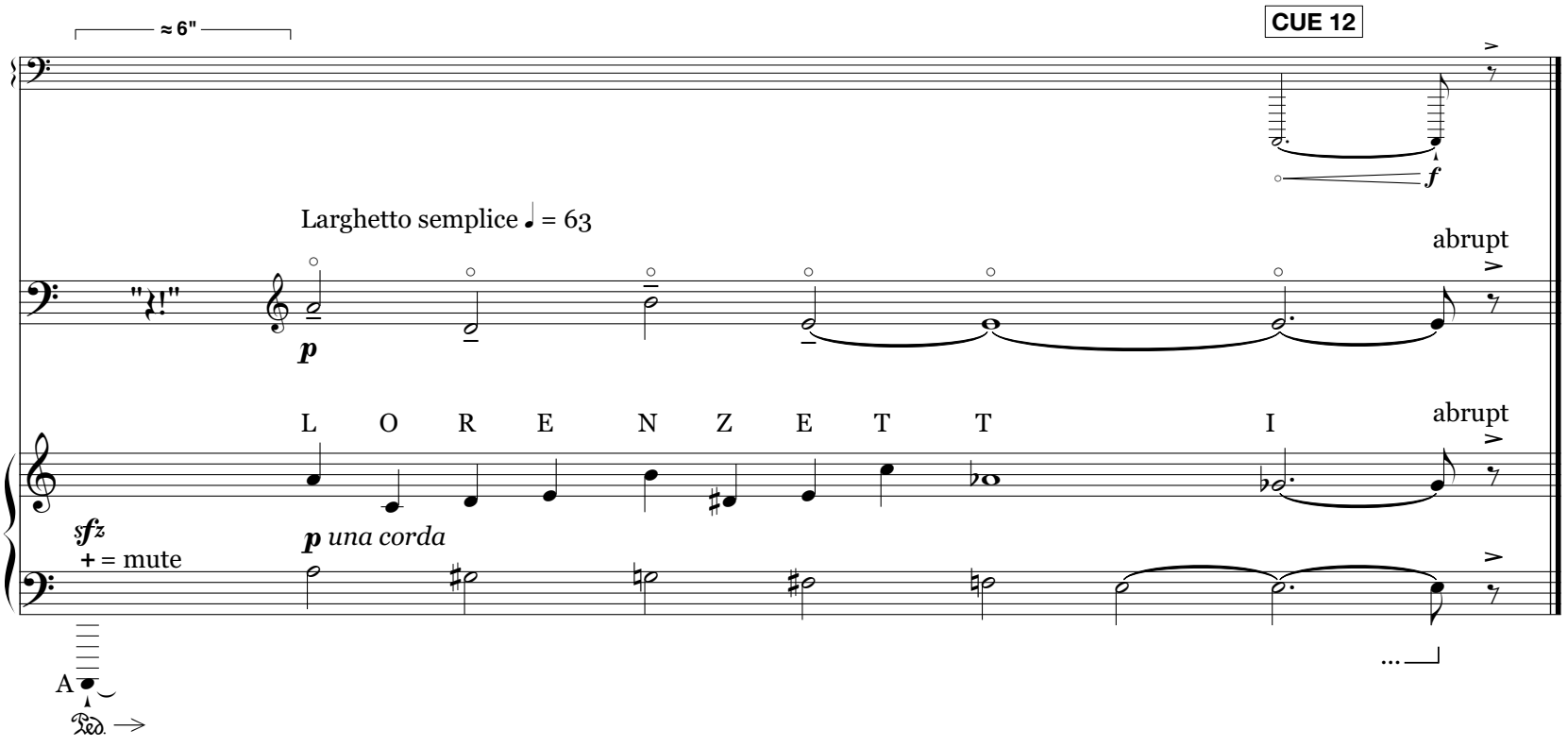
"𝄽"

"𝄽"

"𝄽"

"𝄽"

match rhythm of piano in playback


≈ 6"
CUE 12
Larghetto semplice ♩ = 63
abrupt
L O R E N Z E T T I
abrupt
sfz
+ = mute
p una corda
A
Ped.