

An Infinite Moment

For piano and tape

Ian Percy

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Duration: ca. 7' 32"

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2012/13

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This single-movement electroacoustic composition for orchestral piano and tape was realised during spring 2012. The work was remixed and part recomposed in May 2013. The live part is composed from the cycle of fourths. This is explored as a consonant 12-tone language in developing lines of counterpoint and brief passages of harmony. The left-hand bass reiterations provide a timbral colour and alternate rhythmic momentum to the part, which is often subservient to the right-hand in both dynamic and gesture.

The infinite nature of the cycle influenced the musical character of the initial sketches, which in turn led to the title for the piece. The frozen, yet infinite 'pitch-centre' is set against the swelling and expressive textures of the tape culminating in a lyrical conclusion in duet where the musician is invited to improvise upon a given framework. The concrete audio was composed entirely from the soundworld of a Steinway grand piano and realised around the form of the existing acoustic score. The relationship between the two is quite symbiotic, but that relationship allows for flexibility in timing, phrasing and performance.

An Infinite Moment is an expressive piece, with moments of drama, tension and release within cycles of subtle crescendo and lyrical statement.

Thanks go to Gabrielle-Sarah Williams for recording the primary sound material from which the concrete parts were composed.

00'28" 00'34" 00'42" 00'48" 00'54" 00'58" 01'02" 01'05"

A ♩ = 54 Hesitant ambient momentum within a very loose pulse...

8

scrape *p*

CUE rattle & bass Tibet *mf* *mp* *p* *pp* 01'05"

CUE bass percussion *f*

CUE ambient resonance

f **CUE** bass bell *mf* **CUE** bass bell *ff* **CUE** thick bass attack

Note: Piano key must be held down at all times as it acts as the open pedal for the string

00'28" 00'34" 00'42" 00'48" 00'54" 00'58" 01'02"

CUE
strike note as tape dims & wait for rattle & bass

Pitches written for harmonics are approximate guidelines and the musician should find their own preference. Some artificial harmonics produce more than the two notes of the fundamental and harmonic.

string harmonics with right hand [node 2] [nodes 1 & 2] **CUE** react to bass percussion vib.

strike & hold key [left hand] *pppp*

strike the string with the side of the thumb in a subtle ricochet bouncing action (right hand). *rubato* [strings] *p*

string harmonics with right hand [node 2] *mf* strike & hold key [left hand] *ppp* *mp*

[nodes 1 & 2] *mf* *f* **CUE** react to bass percussion vib.

8^{vb}

01'06" 01'10" 01'13" 01'16" 01'20" 01'22" 01'24" 01'26" 01'30" 01'36"

poco rit.. [♩ = 48]

15

mid-bass percussion
bass percussion & delay
metal click
quiet percussion

rattle
bass bell
concrete diminuendo
descending glissando
swirl scapes
thin clicks
tape fades

mf *mp* *pp* *p* *f* *mf* *mp* *pppp*

CUE

3
delay repeat

3

01'06" 01'10" 01'13" 01'16" 01'20" 01'22" 01'24" 01'26" 01'30" 01'36"

strike the string with the side of the thumb in a subtle ricochet bouncing action (right hand).

[node 3] vib.
[nodes 4, 5 & 6]
vib.
[to keys]

pp *mp* *f* *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

rubato

(8)

Ped.

01'46" 01'49" 01'52" 01'55" 01'59" 02'04"

4 **B** ♩ = 58 Patient motion within a perpetual progression (poco rubato throughout)...

repeating hi&lo percussion loop

approx.

bass percussion more audible

pppp

CUE tape percussion just audible

CUE mp

ambient resonance

Depending upon the reverberation of the room, the musician may wish to thin down some of the reiterations in the left hand, but this must not sacrifice any change in pitch.

8^{vb}
Ped. pppp ppp ppp pp

02'08" 02'12" 02'16" 02'20" 02'24"

repeating hi&lo percussion loop

approx.

poco rit. [♩ = 52]

CUE bass drum triplet

mf

CUE ambient resonance

thin clicks

CUE

buzz

f mf f mp

(8) p mp p pp

6 **D** 02'58" 03'02" 03'06" 03'11" 03'15"

39

ambient resonance

scrapes

mp

mf

mf

mp

bass drum

3

approx.

3

3

3

subtle bass drum cresc.

8va

rubato

[upper phrase seems to dismantle]

p

ff

mf

f

rubato

8vb

ppp

f

44 03'19" 03'25" 03'28" 03'34" 03'36" 03'41" 03'47" 03'52" 03'58"

poco rit.

ambient resonance

tape whistles

mp

mf

mp

pp

pppp

pppp

8vb

ppp

pppp

bass bell

CUE

CUE

bass drum

approx.

3

6/4

4/4

thin clicks

perussion loop fade in

buzz

CUE

bass bell phrase

04'02" **E** ♩ = 58 **With renewed vigour and purpose...**

repeating hi&lo percussion loop

51

6 3 3 3 3

04'06"

04'10" *poco rit.*

6 3 3 3 3

04'14"

04'20" ♩ = 50 7

quiet tone

buzz

ambient resonance *mf*

scrape

concrete growth towards cresc...

CUE

wait for bass attack

rubato

f *ff* *mf*

8va

Ped. *mp* *p* *mf*

04'26" **F** ♩ = 58

repeating hi&lo percussion loop

56

6 3 3 3 3

04'30" *poco accel.*

04'34"

04'38"

04'41"

04'45" ♩ = 72

hi percussion fades
lo percussion cresc.

lo percussion fades

CUE

bass attack

buzzing & scraping

tape cresc...

crescendo texture of string stabs & scrapes

fff

bass bell

rubato

mf *fff*

8va

turn, but wait for aggressive string stab cue

8

p *f*

04:47" 04:49"

8 **G** ♩ = 72 A brief & gratuitous crescendo... poco rit.

04:52"

04:56"

05:00" **H** ♩ = 58

05:02"

05:03"

61

shriek

metal click

string stab

ff

bass bell

mp

descending glissandi

p

whistles, scrapes & buzzing

mf

bass bell

CUE

8^{va}

[whole-tone clusters]

3

3

3

f

mp

mf

expressive rubato

[sequence of stacked fourths]

8^{vb}



05:05"

05:09" poco rit.

05:13"

05:18"

05:24"

05:31" [♩ = 40]

05:36"

65

subtle crescendo of buzzing strings

whistles & thin tones

thin clicks

quiet percussion

CUE

bass bell

mp

ambient resonance

p

pp

CUE tape fades

Turn, but wait for the bass bell rhythm to begin.

05'41" 05'43"

05'48"

05'53"


06'00"

06'07"

06'14"

06'19"

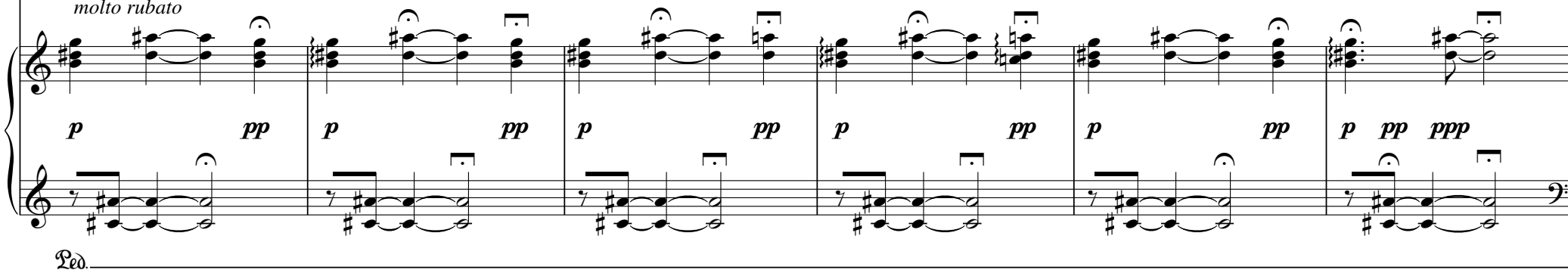
I ♩ = 56 Relaxed and responsive to tape... poco rit. [♩ = 40] 9

72  bass bells continue through to the end in a gradual diminuendo

ambient resonances and incidental sound

Rhythm should feel improvisational, but not repetitive and responsive to the concrete rhythms. Notation is approximate, variant voicings, different registers and attacks can be considered.

molto rubato



p *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *ppp*

Ped.

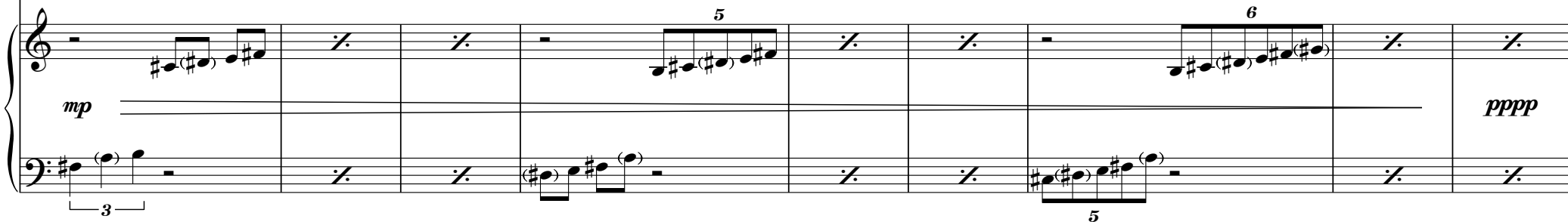
ca. 06'24" A lyrical conversation between two medium...

J ♩ = 60 An improvised conclusion... poco rit. [♩ = 40]

78 **CUE** thin clicks tape continues gradual diminuendo towards silence

- a. Musician can sit in silence.
- b. Musician can continue to cycle through the chords (above) in decrescendo as the tape fades towards silence.
- c. Musician can improvise with the given notes (below) in sympathy with the rhythm & atmosphere of the concrete events and drift towards silence with the tape.
- d. Musician can improvise with the given notes in sympathy with the concrete events and at the point of near silence move on to the final gesture (fig.K) played inside the piano.

Brackets indicate preferred resolving notes for the improvised phrases. The pitches/improvisation can be played on the keys or on the strings, but must stay in this specific register.



mp *pppp*

3 5 6 5

ca. 07'16"

ca. 07'32"

K ♩ = 54 A final reflection from an infinite moment...

87

fading concrete events

Note: Piano key must be held down at all times as it acts as the open pedal for the string

If the musician chooses to do so, wait until the tape is near silent before playing this gesture very quietly on the strings. The first C should be audible before the tape is mute.

strike the string with the side of the thumb in a subtle ricochet bouncing action (right hand).

musician can ad-lib with this ostinato and drift away into silence

hold key silently [left hand]

[strings]

ppp *p*

rubato

Keep key held down

pp *pppp*

8^{vb}

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