

After thought
for 2 flutes

Wilson Tanner Smith
April 2015
revised May 2016

Program note

This piece is informed by reflection on memory, and the idea that though in real-time an event may occur in little more than an instant, recollection of that instant allows one to prolong what might have first lasted ten seconds for ten minutes, hours, days... And further, that in recalling what may have initially been an isolated occurrence, one's reflecting on the same events is tinged by what has happened since or before, by perceptions of who or what may have been involved, by the weather today...

The music is organized, then, as a recollection of the first gesture/phrase of the piece. The longer sections that follow are explorations of that first phrase. Though the dilated progression through that original material is linear (i.e. as it occurred initially), there are hints of other moments than that upon which the current "focus" might be, just as memory blurs the events of that which is being recalled. We don't get a clear picture, but rather whisperings of it—in the music, gestures are freely associated with the first phrase, with each other, and with other seemingly distant ideas.

This piece was written for Alexandria Hoffman and Andrea Cunningham in March and April of 2015 as part of Claire Chase's residency at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. It was premiered at Alice Millar Chapel on April 16, 2015.

Revised May 2016.

Winner of 2nd Prize in the 3º Concurso de Composição (Third Composition Competition)
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Performance notes

- Portions of this piece written in unmetered staves are to be played relatively freely, with loose adherence to a pulse. Note positions within and across staves should serve as a guide for the players' interactions/reactions with/to each other
- Microtonal indications are given by arrow symbols either on their own, or attached to accidentals. When a note has an arrow next to it, the player should bend the ordinary or given fingering up or down with the embouchure. Strict intonation is not necessary, but the resulting pitch should be within a whole-step of the original written pitch.
- In the opening gesture, and in general with loud/intense sections, it is acceptable to allow some sloppiness or grit into the sound. For example, jumping into the next partial in crescendi, or breath noise emerging—the notation is a starting point and should be taken as the focus, but do not work too hard to contain/suppress imperfections that might emerge.
- Notes in the third system of page 2 should be played according to the duration of flagged notes, and rhythmic placement and interaction between parts should be derived from spatial relationships across the shared beam, as well as from the context of the passage within the piece.
- Alternate, quartertone, and extremely high fingerings are given as fingering diagrams, usually above the noteheads they are to be played on. Some are listed as verbal descriptions of finger configurations (e.g. "finger E_b and vent LH [left hand] middle finger slightly").
- Sung pitches are indicated by dotted, open noteheads; half-air/half-pitch (as well as varying degrees or air/pitch balance as described by accompanying text indications) by wedge-shaped heads; air sound only by square heads (produced by blowing over embouchure hole); and key clicks by crossed heads

- Players should be situated directly opposite/facing each other using separate music stands

Performance time: ca. 6 minutes

After thought

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April, 2015 (rev. May 2016)

Flute 1 *very fast and frantic* *rip to very high pitch* *(overblow is ok)* *lip bend* *vib towards end of note*

Flute 2 *sing/play* *fff* *mp* *ff* *f* *rip to high*

sung pitch slide down and cut out nearing rip

ca. 70 *lip down* *(ord.)* *gliss.* *slower*

f *p blend* *mp* *pp*

sing slightly below played pitch *gliss up (voice stay)* *until out of breath (not suffocating, though)*

mf *f* *fmp* *mf* *mp* *pp*

air sound + key clicks *mp*

airy *steady, slowing at fermatas* *between air sound and pitch* *3/4 air, 1/4 pitch*

mf

ca. 63 *steady* *becoming airier with dim.*

3/4 air, 1/4 pitch *1/2 a, 1/2 p* *p* *pp* *ppp*

3/4 a *1/4 p* *pitch* *as fast as possible*

mp *p* *mf*

ord. thin ord.

p *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *fff*

slower a tempo

gliss. non vib --> slow vib

mf *pp* *mp* *sp*

exasperated cutoff (expelling breath)

metered, ca. 66

p *mp* *ppp* *mf* *ff* *fff*

voice gliss down, cutting off after D#

bring out higher partials with cresc.

fast, agitato

ff *pp* *mp* *f*

ca. 70

hold as long as possible, cut off by fl.2
flutter dissipates after arriving at D #

pp *mp* *pppp* *f* *mp* *fff*

"harmonic punch,"
unspecific high partial cluster
Cutting off fl.1

3

ca. 60

"harmonic punch,"
unspecific high partial cluster

pause long enough
for sound to just die

Musical score for the first system. The piano part (bottom staff) begins with a **fff** dynamic, followed by a **pp** dynamic. The violin part (top staff) has a **ppp** dynamic. A crescendo leads to a **ff** dynamic, followed by a **ppp** dynamic. The system ends with a double bar line.

Musical score for the second system. The piano part (bottom staff) starts with **ffp**, followed by a **ff** dynamic. A triplet of notes is marked with a '3' and **ffp**. The violin part (top staff) has a **ffp** dynamic. The system ends with a double bar line.

expel rest of breath quickly;
exasperation

harsh cresc.

to air only

Musical score for the third system. The piano part (bottom staff) starts with **mf**, followed by a **fff** dynamic labeled "frantic, intense", and then **fp**. The violin part (top staff) has a **pp** dynamic. The system ends with a double bar line.

3/4 air
1/4 pitch

p as loud as needed
for a hint of pitch

pushing forward at times ca. →

3/4 a, 1/4 p
whistle tones ok

Musical score for the fourth system. The piano part (bottom staff) starts with **p**, followed by **pp** and **p**. The violin part (top staff) has a **mp** dynamic. A triplet of notes is marked with a '3'. The system ends with a double bar line.

mf

p

whistle tones

pp

articulate B at your leisure

p

3/4 a
1/4 p

air ----- pitch ----- air

p mp n

match fl. 2

w.t.

mppp soft as poss.

mp

pp < mp > p pp

ppp soft as poss.

p < mp >

pitch → air

p < mf > pp

♩=58
microtonal chorale; towards stasis

finger A w/ LH, play microtones randomly (nonsequentially)
by fingering with RH; play according to rhythm

a tempo

mp airy: 1/2 a
1/2 p

mf

mp

rall. . . .

a tempo

sim., Ab/G# fingering

mf

mp

mf

sim., Ab/G# fingering

riten. a tempo

riten.

mf

finger high Eb

riten. a tempo

riten.

finger high Eb and vent
LH middle finger slightly

slow; freely take time
half-step bend to D \flat

pp

pp

w. l.

w. l.

pitch - - air - - airy pitch

air sound + key clicks
clicks dissipating w/ dim

p

pp

n

long fermata; embrace this suspended moment

w. l.

air sound + key clicks
clicks dissipating w/ dim.

n

as long as possible without losing pitch integrity, sense of *stasis, rest*
1/3 a, 2/3 p

pp

as long as possible without losing pitch integrity, sense of *stasis, rest*
1/3 a, 2/3 p

pp