

*...between fragmented  
silence...*

for four male voices and pitch-pipes

(April 2001)

Richard Whalley

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# ...between fragmented silence...

Four male voices:

Duration: c.7-8 minutes


- counter-tenor
- tenor 1
- tenor 2
- bass / baritone


...each equipped with pitch-pipes, tuned chromatically from middle C to the C above.


Performance instructions:


1) This piece should be performed as simply and as directly as possible, with very little (if any) vibrato, and a constant slow, lilting tempo (unless indicated otherwise).

2) Special notation



 Usual singing tone.

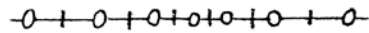
 No definable pitch, whispered.

 A breathy tone, but still with some pitch (as indicated).

 Pitch-pipe (notated at sounding pitch)

3) Elementary pitch-pipe technique

Unless otherwise indicated it should be assumed that the pitch-pipe is blown into, with direct contact between the singer's lips and the instrument. If there doubt this is indicated by the notation:  (i.e. closed). The notation:  (i.e. open), indicated that the pitch-pipe should be blown into from a distance of about 1 cm.

The notation:  (bars 29-30 / 33) indicates a tremolo between open and closed, accelerating or decelerating as shown.

Multiphonics (e.g. bar 32, bar 52, etc.) are simply produced by blowing into the pitch-pipe and singing at the same time, which is not as difficult as it sounds!

#### 4) Pronunciation

The text of the piece is built exclusively out of just ten words (in order of appearance): *silence, unutterable, dreams / dreaming, sung, space, ecstatic / ecstasies, sudden, tranquil, breaths / breathing, thoughts.*

Occasionally these words are fragmented into their component parts, and the pronunciation of these fragments should always be dictated by the word from which they are taken. For example:


- *si* (bar 10) comes from the word *silence*, so should be pronounced so as such (rhyming with “eye”, not with “see”).
- *e* (bar 78) comes from the word *breaths*, and should be pronounced as such.

At times where the word of origin may not be obvious the spelling of vowel sounds is altered so as to make the pronunciation clear. For example:

- *ee* (bar 26) / *ee-eem* (bar 30) both come from the word *dream*.
- *ai* / *spai* (bar 42) both come from the word *space*.
- *see* (bar 59) is part of the word *ecstasies*, stretched over 5 bars.

Also at times consonants from the some of the parent words may be isolated. For example:

- *lll...* (bar 21) from *silence*.
- *mm* (bar 34) from *dream*.

The notation:  from the word *dream*, in bars 28-30 / 33 indicates that the *m* should be rearticulated, once again accelerating or decelerating as shown.

A consonant in brackets (e.g. *unu(t)*, from the word *unutterable* in bar 61) indicates that the consonant should be shaped in the mouth, but not sounded (a glottal stop).

#### 5) Out-of-tempo whispering

There are a number of passages where text is whispered very fast to normal speech rhythms. It is important that the whispering is delivered as “naturally” as possible, and does not sound stilted; too much regularity of internal rhythm within these words should be avoided, they should sound as if they are evolving spontaneously.

First performance: The Hilliard Ensemble, in Paine Hall, Harvard University, May 2001.

Duration: c. 7-8 mins

# ... between fragmented silence ...

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$\text{♩} = 42$

for 4 male voices and pitch-pipes

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

Counter-tenor

Tenor 1

Tenor 2

Bass

PITCH-PIPE

PPP cresc. --- pp --- P

PPP mp PPP PPP cresc. --- pp --- P

(8) (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14)

Counter-tenor

Tenor 1

Tenor 2

Bass

VOICE absolutely still; no vib. (ad lib.)

VOICE no vib. (ad lib.)

VOICE no vib. (ad lib.)

VOICE

allow pitch to bend downwards

allow pitch to bend downwards

mp mf f ff possibile sffz

pp mp pp

sub f f-sub pp

si i

si i

si i

si





