

Dedicated to Jelena Bazova

Maurick Reuser

Sublimity in a
Panoramic Eternity

For organ solo

Introduction

In the period that I was engaged with a choir in my hometown, playing the piano and organ in religious services, I was inspired to write a piece for organ, because I was fascinated with the instrument's possibilities. A tone can last as long as you want to, and combined with a colouring/registration of your own choosing, I was enchanted completely.

In this piece, I work with expanding and contracting time. The changing meters throughout the piece make this clear: the number of beats in each 'bar' gradually diminish, increase and fluctuate. I wanted the music to have something illogical and unpredictable, like the breathing of something living, be it an living animal or something more abstract like a forest or ocean. This piece consists of two big breathing cycles, with in between smaller cycle of fluctuating time. Not only the harmonies accelerate and slow down: the pulse in the pedal follows the expanding and contracting of harmonic time virtually parallelly. The slow stable walking of the melody in the third layer and is a constant reference point for the other two elements.

In order to be able to set a familiar yet unknown atmosphere as well as to bypass traditional harmonic linearity, I wanted to avoid chromatic and tonal harmony in favour of modal harmony. I used the second mode of limited transposition, categorized by Olivier Messiaen, set in various degrees throughout the piece. Sometimes the harmony and melody share the same mode, but embellishments, reinforced with rhythmic anomalies, often touch the other modes which results in subtle and nuanced musical expression. Passages around bar 6-7, 18 and 29 are sublime moments to me. The harmonies imposed on pedal tone Ab do not occur naturally in the modes and therefore add a kind of unexplainable tension, inclining to induce something unexplainably but romantically emotional.

A few days after starting the piece I read about Jikkenkoubou (experimental workshop, and the Japanese Postwar Avant-Garde composer Yuasa Joji. I was delighted that I could work with a more Japanese conception of time. I got most inspiration when studying the music by Yuasa and his search to create a nonlinear experience of musical time, which is for example expressed by expanding and contracting musical cells in space and time¹. Galliano also says that the grace notes in Yuasa's piece (Cosmos Haptic II) carry a great deal of musical information, which can be related with the traditional Japanese conception of music with its cosmological significance to each sound and subsequently its great stress on sound quality and (microtonal) shadings.

By using the organ for this piece, I hope to reach something transcendental too. For me, the sound of the organ has a capacity to enchant, absorb and include everything in the surrounding space. Moreover, the organ feels almost extra-terrestrial to me, because of it's mechanical as well as eternal and immense majestic properties. It's not a piece to express one's own individual feelings primarily: the purpose would be to look and feel broader and become included in the newly created musical world, as bystander, virtually objective, instead of as protagonist and subjective interpreter.

Therefore the titles has become *Sublimity in a Panoramic Eternity*.

Maurick Reuser

22th of September 2020

¹ Galliano, L. (2002). *Yōugaku: Japanese Music in the Twentieth Century*. Maryland, USA: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

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Lentement ♩ = 55 env.

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Organ

mp cantabile espressivo

p

Pedals

p en dehors

3

cresc.

6

mp

10

cresc.

3

12

mf

14

pp

pp

17

Musical score for measures 17-19. The treble clef contains a melodic line with slurs and various accidentals (flats and sharps). The bass clef contains chords with slurs. The bottom staff shows a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs.

20

mp

p en dehors

p

Musical score for measures 20-23. The treble clef contains a melodic line with slurs and dynamics. The bass clef contains chords with slurs and dynamics. The bottom staff shows a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and dynamics.

24

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

Musical score for measures 24-26. The treble clef contains a melodic line with slurs and dynamics. The bass clef contains chords with slurs and dynamics. The bottom staff shows a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and dynamics.

26 5

Musical score for measures 26-27, system 1. Treble clef: melodic line with slurs and accidentals. Bass clef: accompaniment with slurs and ties. A third bass clef line shows a simple bass line with rests.

27

Musical score for measures 27-28, system 2. Treble clef: melodic line with slurs and accidentals. Bass clef: accompaniment with chords and slurs. A third bass clef line shows a simple bass line with rests.

29

f

m.s. *8va*

f

Musical score for measures 29-30, system 3. Treble clef: melodic line with slurs and accidentals. Bass clef: accompaniment with chords and slurs. A third bass clef line shows a simple bass line with rests. Dynamics include *f*, *m.s.*, and *8va*.