Title
Sniper's Lake: Music for Dance

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Sniper’s Lake: Music for Dance

by

Sivan Liat Eldar

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music and the Designated Emphasis in New Media in the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Edmund Campion, Chair
Professor Cindy Cox
Professor Franck Bedrossian

Summer 2016
Abstract

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In September 2014 I began collaborating with choreographer Miřenka Čechová and director Petr Boháč of Spitfire Company on a new dance production called Sniper’s Lake. We started with a conversation about the body. Miřenka, who was working with refugees at the time, was searching for a physical language based on running and its variations: escape, endurance, direction, exhaustion; also fear, joy, energy, purpose. She chose six dancers from Prague, Berlin and Oslo to work with over a period of five months. Her choreography emerged gradually during that period, at first from the dancers’ bodies and personalities, and later on from their dynamic as a group of individuals entirely new to one another.

The music emerged in parallel. I chose an ensemble of six clarinets to interface with the dancers, and spent two months in Prague and Pilsn watching the rehearsals unfold while composing the first sketches. The relationship between the dance and the music was constantly in flux during that period. In some sections (like Tides) the music was the catalyst for the movement, while in others (like Loops) the music mirrored the dancers’ gestures. Miřenka’s guiding principal was the form: the dancers were to physically overexert themselves during the first thirty minutes of the performance without reaching a resolution. To achieve this progression, I decided to focus on cyclical events rather than on linear time. At the heart of each event is a cyclical rhythm that unfolds musically, then visually. These events, in turn, constitute the four sections of Part 1 of the score for Sniper’s Lake.
Part 2 presents itself in a more narrative form. Much of the sound is produced live by the dancers as they begin to explore the stage’s physical barriers: contact mics are placed on the backdrop screen, allowing them to excite the surface with their body and voice. The notated portion of part 2 consists of loose arrangements of source materials given to me by Miřenka: an iso-polyphonic folk song from Albania, and a spoken rhythmic representation of Swan Lake’s ‘Danse des petits cygnes.’ In the context of the performance, these short, rather flexible, musical sentiments serve as references to the act of escaping in its many forms.

Sniper’s Lake was premiered at Bærum Kulturhus in Sandvika, Norway, on March 26th 2015.
to my grandfather
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I would also like to thank other members of the music department: Jeff Lubow, Adrian Freed, John MacCallum, and the rest of the CNMAT community, for answering many unsolicited questions over the years, and for always being generous with their time. Jay Cloidt for being my go-to person for recording/mixing/mastering advice, and for being a friend. David Milnes for reminding me what it is like to really know and love a piece of music. And of course my colleagues, who keep inspiring me with their passion.

Special mention should be made to my collaborators on Sniper’s Lake: Miřenka Čechová and Petr Boháč, who introduced me to physical theater, who trusted me so completely as a collaborator, and who always pushed me outside of my comfort zone. And Clarinet Factory, for being the ideal musical partner for this project, for playing the music so beautifully by making it their own.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my family: to my mother, without whom I wouldn’t be who I am today. To my beautiful brother who always makes me laugh. To my grandmother, who inspires me every single day. And to Claire, for being the pillar of reason and love in my life.
Visual documentation

PART 1

I. Lanes

II. Traces
III. Loops

III. Tides
PART 2

I. Kaba

II. Pas de quatre
Sivan Eldar

Sniper's Lake

Music for Dance

for 6 clarinets

Commissioned by Spitfire Company
Supported by an EEA Grant from Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway

2015
INSTRUMENTATION

4 Clarinets in B♭ (3rd doubling Bass Cl.)
2 Bass Clarinets with low C extension

Duration ca 25’

The score is transposed.

Accidentals apply within the measure.
Trills signify an alteration between the notated pitch and a whole step above it, unless otherwise indicated.
Trills and tremolos should always be as dense as possible.

SPECIAL NOTATION

Air sound only.

Combination of air sound and pitch.

The smaller notehead is softer and gentler. The overall gesture is reminiscent of a yodel.

Repeat the note(s) freely, with slight accelerando.

Inhale / exhale.

Transition gradually.
Part 1

I. Lanes

Simply, con moto \( \frac{\dot{c}}{c} = 128 \)  

\( \text{poco rit.} \)

\( \text{a tempo} \)

Transposed Score
dedicated to Spitfire Company and Clarinet Factory

SNIPER'S LAKE
music for dance for six clarinets

Sivan Eldar

Bass Clarinet 1

Bass Clarinet 2

Clarinet in B♭ 1

Clarinet in B♭ 2

Clarinet in B♭ 3

Clarinet in B♭ 4

B♭ Cl. 1

B♭ Cl. 2

B♭ Cl. 3

B♭ Cl. 4
A a tempo, lightly
Poco pesante

Bb Cl. 1

Bb Cl. 2

Bb Cl. 3

Bb Cl. 4

Cl. 4

Cl. 3

Cl. 2

Cl. 1

63

Cl. 4

Cl. 3

Cl. 2

Cl. 1

70

Cl. 4

Cl. 3

Cl. 2

Cl. 1
Con bravado, poco a poco
II. Traces

Like a lullaby, gentle, expressive \( (\text{q} = c.46) \) \( \text{rit.} \) \( \text{Poco più mosso} \)

Clarinet in B♭ 1

Clarinet in B♭ 2

Clarinet in B♭ 3

Clarinet in B♭ 4

Bass Clarinet 1

Bass Clarinet 2

B♭ Cl. 1

B♭ Cl. 2

B♭ Cl. 3

B♭ Cl. 4

B. Cl. 1

B. Cl. 2

Primo Tempo

II. Traces
Meditative ($\approx c.50$)
Poco più mosso

(poco) sub. p

mp
III. Loops

Poco nervoso \( \frac{\text{b}}{\text{c. 122}} \)

Clarinet in B♭ 1

Clarinet in B♭ 2

Clarinet in B♭ 3

Clarinet in B♭ 4

Bass Clarinet 1

Bass Clarinet 2

\( \text{B♭ Cl. 1} \)

\( \text{B♭ Cl. 2} \)

\( \text{B♭ Cl. 3} \)

\( \text{B♭ Cl. 4} \)
Nervoso (≈ c.130)

* a regular whole-step trill. The grace note should be repeated freely (though rather sparsely) as an extra staccato attack (reminiscent of the opening)
Repeat this eight-measure section 2-4 times. As you repeat, begin to vary the accent placement freely.
Breathy texture, especially on accented notes.

Transition gradually from air sound to breathy pitch. Add tongue stops and breathy consonants ("sh" "ch") to enhance the breathy texture, especially on accented notes.
Transition gradually from air sound to breathy pitch as before. This time also vary the accent placement freely.
* Gradually improvise on the rhythmic patterns and vary the placement of the accents, so to create a constantly-shifting rhythmic texture.
Same process as in measure 89.
Like a choir of sighs \( \left( \text{j} = c.100 \right) \)

accel. poco a poco
With swing (\( \dot{\text{\text{J}}}=c.138 \))
This is a loose arrangement of a four-part iso-polyphonic folk song from Southern Albania. It consists of a melody (clarinet 1), an ornamental counter melody (clarinet 2), a pedal drone (clarinet 3), and a rhythmic drone (clarinet 4).

Intonation is one of the most beautiful features of this style. As you play through the song, experiment with extra narrow and extra wide vibrato, with vibrato trills (in clarinet 1), and with microtonal inflections. In each phrase there should be the tension between "harmonic" unison and the beatings of small intervals. Embellish freely, and repeat as needed.
II. Pas de quatre

Pesante \( \frac{4}{4} \) c. 120

**Clarinet in B**

- **Bass Clarinet 1**
- **Bass Clarinet 2**

---

**Tutti**

- **Bb Cl. 1**

---

**mp**

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**più accel.**

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**accel. poco a poco al fine**

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