OPHELIA. Her heart is a clock

By

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Abstract

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In Heiner Müller’s play Die Hamletmaschine, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s Hamlet, the character Ophelia’s entrance is signaled by the words: “OPHELIA. Her heart is a clock.” It is unclear if this line is to be delivered by an actor, whether it is meant for the audience to hear, or whether it is a stage direction to be internalized by those in the production. As an image, it is an arresting one, evoking associations between a quintessential literary archetype and traditions of femininity with mechanization, dehumanization, and capitalism. It is a robust metaphor for chamber music—the human playing the musical “machine” that is her instrument, the relationship of the individual within and against the group, and the reification of art (and artists) into a product, which is produced and distributed.

Springing from my interest in poetry and theater, words themselves play an integral part of OPHELIA. Her heart is a clock. The rhythm of speech forms the basis of the piece’s musical language, and through the vehicle of text, the players reveal themselves from behind their “music machines,” machines through which they breathe, touch, scrape, pluck, scream, and strike. Their voices emerge only to be subsumed anew into the din of music-noise. Each instrumentalist is a character, their voices and their music distinct, in discourse about “life” and “love” in all their ecstasies and depravities.

OPHELIA. Her heart is a clock was premiered by Ensemble Linea at the Festival Musica in Strasbourg, France on 3 October 2015.
for Melanie
Acknowledgements

I dedicate this dissertation to my family who has supported me through many years of study and personal struggle, especially my partner Noah who gave me the courage to persevere despite all the difficulties and doubts as well as the reminder that much of life and music is play. I could not have completed my degree studies without the loving support of my community of friends who gave me ongoing and endless encouragement in my nine years at UC Berkeley – to Hunter, Danny, Walker, Sivan, Anicia, Nell, John, and Melanie . . . thank you.

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Thank you all.
OPHELIA. Her heart is a clock (2015)

Bass Flute, doubling Flute
Oboe
Bass Clarinet, doubling Clarinet
Trumpet
Percussion (1 player)
Piano
Violin
Viola
Cello
Double Bass (with low-C extension)

Score is written in C
Approximate duration: 15’
Written for Ensemble Linea and the
2015 Festival Musica Academy
Text composed, collected, and cut-up by the composer

Instrumental Disposition:

Piano          Perc.
               Oboe  Clarinet
Flute  Clarinet  Trumpet
Viola  Cello
Violin

Conductor

AUDIENCE
no thoughts thoughts thoughts thoughts thoughts you'll know the truth

The text is fragmented in many instances throughout the piece, in a sort of musical aphasia. The pronunciation in these instances should remain consistent as if the whole word were to be pronounced.

Words may also be fragmented into single vowel and consonant sounds and are contained within brackets [ ]. These should be pronounced according to the context given. In most instances, they subscribe to the sounds in the International Phonetic Alphabet.
Flutter-tongue

 Indicates "breathy" timbre, almost no discernible pitch content; "toneless"

 Indicates a mixture of "breathy" timbre and pitch

 Humming or murmuring while playing the instrument, creating a "complex" timbre

 Indicates an fluttertongue by rolling the "R," almost without any breath, covering the embouchure hole with the tips of the lips

 Indicates a timbre that is mostly "breathy" and diffuse and one that is a combination of pitch content and breath, respectively. The arrow between them indicates a gradual transformation from one timbre to the other.

 Indicates "ordinario" playing

 [k] Indicates a smooth transition from one consonant to the next.

 Embouchure notation: ⟨l − r⟩ "open embouchure," "half-closed embouchure," "closed embouchure." The arrow indicates a smooth transition from one position to another.

 Indicates audible inhale ("up-bow") and exhale ("down-bow") into flute with CLOSED MOUTHPIECE (indicated by the black square); accompanied by breath articulations [bh] (as in head, heavy, hell) or the fricative [s] (as in switch)

 [k], [t], [f] are vocalized into the flute with OPEN MOUTHPIECE (indicated by the white square). These should be very percussive and sharp. It is helpful to make a "smiley face" with the mouth in order to shorten the distance between the air-explosion and the mouthpiece.

 Flute Overblow:

 Encircled numbers correlate to the harmonic "regions" above the fingered pitch (fundamental).

 Decoupling:

 When the flute is divided into 2 staves, the top stave indicates mouth and embouchure articulations. Depending on where the articulation falls in comparison to the staff-line determines its relative "pitch" or "height."

 The bottom stave indicates pitches to be fingered. Fingered notes should be struck as forcefully as possible for maximum key click sound.

 Oboe:

 Bisbigliando (timbral trills) are played as fast as possible

 Double-trill (trills at double speed): occur when one alternates between the two D trill keys using one finger of the right and left hand, and between the two E-flat keys, the two F keys, or the two A-flat keys and furthermore when one trills with 2 fingers of the right hand alternately on the same key of the F-sharp tonehole. Fingerings are indicated in the oboe part.

 Multiphonic on the given pitch; taken from Veale/Mahnkopf's "The Techniques of Oboe Playing," published by Barenreiter. Fingerings are indicated in the oboe part.

 Teeth on reed, highest pitch possible

 Right embouchure

 Inhale through the reed

 B-flat Clarinet & Bass Clarinet:

 NB: both clarinets are tuned down ¼-tone for the entirety of the piece

 Indicates "breathy" timbre, almost no discernible pitch content; "toneless"

 Indicates a mixture of "breathy" timbre and pitch

 Indicates a timbre that is mostly "breathy" and diffuse and one that is a combination of pitch content and breath, respectively. The arrow between them indicates a gradual transformation from one timbre to the other.

 Indicates "ordinario" playing
Slap tongue

Split-tone (sion fenu) multiphonics using regular fingerings. The numbers correlate to the harmonic regions above the fundamental, illustrated on a staff above the given pitch

Flutter-tongue

Singing while playing the instrument, creating a "growling" timbre

Indicates audible inhale ("up-bow") and exhale ("down-bow") into the clarinet

**Trumpet:**
The trumpet part requires the following accessories –
- straight mute
- harmonic mute (no stem)
- a CD (held loosely against the bell and vibrates against it, creating a distorted timbre)

Indicates "breathy" timbre, almost no discernible pitch content; "toneless"

Indicates a mixture of "breathy" timbre and pitch

Highest possible pitch

Singing while playing the instrument, creating a "growling" timbre

½ valve: producing a breathy, distant timbre by depressing the valves only halfway

**Percussion (1 performer):**

The percussion part requires the following accessories –
- hard yarn mallets
- soft yarn mallets
- hard plastic mallets
- large triangle beater
- drumsticks (lighter – 5A or smaller)
- two (2) superball mallets
- Styrofoam block (to rub on the bass drum head)
- Tibetan bowl

NB: Bass Drum (symphonic) head should be coated

Scrape across the surface of the instrument (e.g. Tam-tam, China cymbal, the resonant pipes of the vibrashake, etc.)

Head hit: Strike the instrument but leave the mallet on the surface (no rebound) to dampen the resonance (e.g. vibrashake, tom-tom, kick drum, etc.)

Scrape the metal pipe, block, woodblock, or Tam-tam rapidly across its surface

Drag the superball mallets across the surface of the Bass Drum (symphonic) with a lot of pressure to produce low, resonant, rough timbre that is somewhat irregular in dynamic

**Piano:**

NB: the highest note (C8) should be muted with drafting tape, producing a percussive, "clicking" timbre and the lowest F4 of the piano (A0-B1) should be prepared with aluminum foil to give it a distorted, buzzing timbre.

The piano part requires the a CD jewel case to scrape the lowest strings.

Dampen the string of the given pitch with the hand that is not playing

Dampen the string of the low pitch notated with the right hand in such a way that a harmonic is produced. This is achieved by locating an easily accessible harmonic node prior to playing, marking it, and dampening the string there. Any harmonic is fine.

Strike the lowest strings inside the piano with an open palm (sustain pedal must be depressed)

Indicates a pitch cluster, which is performed by using the palm, hand, or forearm to simultaneously play the ambitus of pitches given (while it is best to play both black and white keys, aim to play as many of the notes in the given ambitus as possible).

Indicates a full cluster, which is performed using one or both forearms and covering all the notes (full chromatic) contained within the given ambitus.

Scrape the lowest strings in a rapid, explosive manner (sustain pedal must be depressed)
Scrape the lowest string in a rapid, explosive, and irregular manner for the given duration (sustain pedal must be depressed).

**Strings:**

ord. – ordinario
s.p. – sul ponticello
s.a.p. – alto sul ponticello ("almost" on the bridge, rich in harmonics/noise)
s.t. – sul tasto
a.s.t. – alto sul tasto (on the fingerboard, as close as possible to the left hand)

The dotted-arrow between bow positions indicates a gradual movement from one position to another:

batt. – battuto (strike the strings with the bow)
cl ric. – col legno ricochet (throw the wood of the bow across the strings)
cl tratto – col legno tratto (bow with the wood)
cl batt. – col legno battuto (strike with the wood of the bow in a straight, downward motion)
crime – "hair" (crime or arco cancels any col legno bowing)

**Bow Pressure:**

\[ \text{Sudden, accented bow overpressure} \]

The above indicates a transition from normal playing bow pressure to extremely strong pressure (snoring, perforated, or scratch timbre where there is no discernible pitch) to extremely light (flautando) pressure.

**Glissando:**

Indicates a normal glissando; if indicated, pitches are not to be re-articulated and simply serve to aid orientation and finger position

Very slow upward glissando

Very slow downward glissando

**Explosive gesture; similar to glissando or a "crazy," exaggerated vibrato**

Played "behind the bridge" on the winding of the string

Highest possible pitch

Bartók (snap) pizzicato

Pizzicato strum (always dampered)

Left-hand pizzicato

Vertical jété – aggressively bring the bow down on the strings directly vertical, allowing the bow to bounce but not drawing in horizontally as you would with a regular jété
\( f = 112-104\), a little quicker, headlong

take C flute

e = 112-104, a little quicker, headlong

use hand to "mute"

hi metal blk

**Sim**, **Pizz**

take C flute
\[ \ \]

\[ J = 124-144, \text{Tempo I – free tempo but rhythmically strict} \]
B.Fl.

B.Cl.

Pno.

Db.

C Tpt.

C Tpt.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

not with CD

remove CD

Tenorum

with CD case

grainy, draw bow as slowly as possible

grainy, draw bow as slowly as possible
Rall.

Fl. 97 take C flute

Gb.

Bb Cl.

C Tpt.

perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vla.

Vic.

Db.
[Sheet music page with musical notation and text annotations]

- The notation indicates various instrumental parts, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (B. Cl.), C Tuba, Pecce (Pec.), Piano (Pno.), and other sections.

- The text annotations include dynamic markings (e.g., ff, fff, p, pp), performance instructions (e.g., scrape lower strings longitudinally as fast as possible, VERRATEN, NOT REGULAR), and specific musical techniques (e.g., à la corde).

- The tempo is marked as Tempo 2, and the page is titled with an indication of note values (2− 4−4−4, Tempo 2).

- Additional symbols and abbreviations are used throughout the notation to convey specific musical instructions and dynamics.
a tempo = 88-96, Tempo 3

Spoken:

Tomatoes morning has been canceled

In my bad day my bad day so many days here in my bad day

m. soft mallets

SPOKEN: 

Bo do if ever day here in my bad day

Dampen string with III
Fl.

with my bleeding hands

Ob.

PP

B. Cl.

pppp-

"D"  ppp

C Tpt.

Perc.

china cymbal  snare drum

Pno.

Fl.  Ob.

B. Cl.

C Tpt.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Db. Voice

with my bleeding hands

Danish unions  time

my home

fling open the battle

that was my home
no thing will come of no thing
Accel. ..........................

Fl.

Ob.

B. Cl.

C Tpt.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Via.

Vic.

Hn.

Db.

ind. $\frac{3}{4} = 60-84$

175

pp

out of my heart

$< \text{slate cymbal}$

$\text{chime cymbal}$
take double-bass bow

spoke what we feel not what we ought to say

6' flute

spoken:

$pp$

$\text{out of my heart}$

$\text{out of my heart}$

$\text{out of my heart}$

$\text{out of my heart}$

$\text{out of my heart}$
Rall.

Fl.  take Bass Flute
Ob.  p
B. Cl.  take Bass Clarinet
C Tpt.  p
Perc.  take hard mallets
(take triangle beater)
Pno.  f
Vln.  (f)
Vla.  (f)
Vlc.  (f)
Va. Voice
Db.
\[ \text{Obs.} \quad \text{Bass Flute} \]

\[ \text{Bass Clarinet} \]

\[ \text{C Tpt.} \]

\[ \text{Perc.} \]

\[ \text{Pno.} \]

\[ \text{Vln.} \]

\[ \text{Vla.} \]

\[ \text{Vlc.} \]

\[ \text{Db.} \]
do you want to eat my heart?

[v] Children

[w. hard mallets] and original metal pipes

Catch me dead

[f] and original metal pipes
Here, the glances last a little longer.

“Here, the glances last a little longer.”

She even from the back. (Hi, my hand meets the eyes of my mother and “His” face – my Lord and Savior, his bloodied face, throwing shade; his eyes are full of suffering, and I am full of shame.

His eyes removed, his sight granted to the government to study the weak, the dispossessed.

Writing to the seller, I say nothing but red. I see blood.

I am angry but all I can do is weep.

No pain, no thoughts, no pain, no thoughts.

No pain, no thoughts, no pain, no thoughts.

No pain, no thoughts, no pain, no thoughts.

No pain, no thoughts, no pain, no thoughts.

Sweet songs from the belly of a sleeping beast.

Additional studies found it effective at 20, 21, and 26 milligrams.

But I can’t remember how.

Valium is effective at 15 milligrams per day divided into 3 equal doses throughout the day. Although studies found it effective at 10, 11, and 14 milligrams.

Bass Dr.

Perc.

Pno.

Db Voice

Vlc Voice

Vln Voice

Vla Voice

C Tpt.

B.Cl.

Ob.

s.fl.

Conductor: Cue the GP after a short pause when the players finish speaking.

Conductor: Cue the next measure after the last player finishes his/her text.
I want to be a machine
\[ \text{subito} \quad \text{\( \tilde{\text{J}} \) = 60-36, spacious, resonant, eerie} \]
molto Rall.
Pianist/Conductor: while the tempo fluctuates (Rall. or accel. or subito), this note remains at a constant tempo ($\frac{1}{4} = 112-104$) until the first beat of m. 251 until the first beat of m. 251
poco Rall.

\[ \text{a tempo } \frac{2}{3} = 112-104 \]
Rall. .............
molto Rall.

286

B.Fl.

Ob.

B.Cl.

C Tpt.

Perc.

Pno.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Db.

rumbling, noisy, perforated timbre

poco decresc.
slowly scrape the surface of the Tam-tam in a circular motion creating a glassy, metal timbre w. Tibetan bowl

rumbling, noisy, perforated timbre

detune IV string~8vb decresc.