

INSTRUMENTATION

3 soloists: Clarinet Bb (doubling Bass Clarinet), Bassoon, Cello;

6 players on stage: Flute, Oboe, Piano, Violin and Percussion: (vibraphone, marimba, two double bass bows (for vibr. and mar.), crotales (sounding 15va), high thundersheet, sizzle cymbal, low tam-tam);

3 off-stage instruments (situated in the back of the hall): Horn, Viola, Contrabass.

SYMBOLS

ACCIDENTALS

 -1/4, +1/4, +3/4-tone - up and down arrows placed on standard alterations represent intonation that is very slightly higher or lower (less than a quarter tone)

Accidentals are valid only for one note, the only exception to this is in the case of immediately repeated notes within the same bar.

GENERAL SYMBOLS

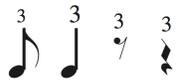
 as quietly as possible (if possible, without an attack)

 tremolo (strings) or flutter-tonguing (winds)

 return to normal

 progressive change from ord. to tremolo/fluttertonguing, progressive change from trem./flutt. to ord.

 move from the smooth sound to tremolo (or to flutt.)



triplet eighth-note, triplet quarter-note and their respective rests (notation used in the "fractional bars")

SYMBOLS FOR THE STRINGS

s.p. sul ponticello

a.s.p. alto sul ponticello (very close to the bridge so that harmonics are heard more than the fundamental)

s.t. sul tasto

ord. return to normal playing

—————> **s.p.** gradually change to sul ponticello

—————> **s.t.** gradually change to sul tasto

—————> **ord.** gradually change to normal playing

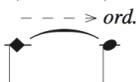
SYMBOLS FOR THE WINDS



breath only (no precise pitch should be perceptible)



move gradually from a normal note to breath



move gradually from breath to a normal note

M – Multiphonic

All multiphonic fingerings and embouchure instructions are provided at each occurrence of a multiphonic.

All of the fingerings for multiphonics and other extended techniques were given to the composer through collaboration with individual performers.

METRIC NOTATION

In this score the quarter-note is the basic rhythmic unit. Time signatures such as 2, 3, 4, etc... indicate bars of 2, 3, 4, etc... quarter-notes. $1/2$, $1/3$, $3/4$, etc... are fractions of quarter notes, i.e. beats equal to one eighth-note, one triplet eighth-note, three sixteenth-notes, etc...

examples: $1/2 + 2$ is a bar containing three beats of different durations, i.e. eighth - quarter – quarter;

$3 + 2/3$ is a bar containing four beats of different durations, i.e. quarter - quarter - quarter - triplet quart;

$\frac{3+2}{2}$ is a bar containing two beats of different durations, i.e. dotted quarter – quarter.

X

for this time signature the timing is expressed in seconds – it should be flexible, based on the evolution of the sounds; the relative placement of the entrances is the most important feature; the conductor should only cue, not beat.

DYNAMIC NOTATION

Where rhythmic precision in the execution of dynamics is necessary and long note values are present, dotted lines have been placed on the relevant staves to show the location of each beat. Density within other lines may force equal durations to differ in appearance, thus it is these marked divisions, not apparent spacing, that should be observed.

PROGRAM NOTE

L'abîme is scored for a trio of Bass Clarinet, Bassoon and Cello soloists complemented by an on-stage ensemble of Flute, Oboe, Piano, Percussion, Violin and a trio of French Horn, Viola and Double Bass in the rear of the hall.

Much rhetoric in the new music world focuses on the acoustically arbitrary division of sonic material into pitch vs. noise, but reality is much more fluid. In this piece, the noise-based techniques in the soloists are the source of almost everything one hears, but those sounds are projected, distorted, diffused and replicated in the mostly pitch-based ensemble parts -- like images reflected again and again in a hall of mirrors. This creates a kaleidoscope of doubles and resemblances that shift gradually over time as one moves through this very disorienting space. *L'abîme* was commissioned by and written for the Talea Ensemble.