



MUSIC BY ALEX MARTHALER

- FULL SCORE -

the music in
their strings

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(2014)

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INSTRUMENTATION
(varies between movements)

Violin
 Violoncello

Piano

2 Percussion

1: Suspended cymbal (shared), crotales, chimes
2: Suspended cymbal (shared), bass drum, 2 small bells

Pre-recorded electronics

PROGRAM NOTE

Egon Schiele (1890-1918) lived in Austria at a time of inward exploration, following in the footsteps of his mentor Gustav Klimt. Schiele's art is a precursor to Expressionism, with an immediacy that defies language and understanding. While most known for his erotic paintings and drawings (these resulting in his brief imprisonment in 1912), I have found inspiration in Schiele's collection of self-portraits and landscapes.

The paintings and poetry selected here recognize the dichotomy of the innermost self, grapple with the placid and terrifying power of water, and find solace in the harmonic cycle of trees. *the music in their strings* is intended to be listened to as a whole, with the paintings and poetry partnered with the music: I believe that the music is much more meaningful when paired with its inspiration.

the music in their strings explores many of the themes found in Schiele's work—it attempts to reconcile the beauty and melancholy found in the most mundane events and locations of life. The self-portraits here offer intimate, even confessional, portraits of Schiele's psychological state, and are among his most haunting and revealing works. Even still, his landscapes seem to reflect the fragility and character of the human soul. The final movement, “[*everything is living dead*]”, suggests a tranquility between the worlds of the living and dead, the separation of the soul, and the essence of nature.

Schiele was a man poised at the edge of explanation, compulsively staring into the darkness unseen, trying to understand the inner soul. *the music in their strings* strives to be a musical version of this journey.

– Alex Marthaler

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15. [everything is living dead] <i>2:35</i>	70

* Denotes that the movement is included on the accompanying CD as “electronics only”

Total time: approximately 45’

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Since *the music in their strings* was conceived as entirely pre-recorded (I hesitate to call it a “tape piece,” as tapes are becoming obsolete), certain adjustments must be made if performing it in a concert setting. Several movements work well with the accompanying audio CD, which includes the “electronics only” tracks for movements 2, 7, 9, and 14, and the entirety of movements 4, 6, and 13. In these cases, the pianist triggers the audio to start and stop; these are notated in the score. Any movement may be performed without the electronics; some simple adjustments will be necessary. The pianist is always to play off of the full score.

It is possible that the instruments may be amplified and minimally processed in a live performance. Amounts of reverb, echo, and delay can be used, and performers have the liberty to experiment with what and how much to process within the hall. Performers are also invited to consider presenting Schiele’s artwork with the music, either as a projection or as a supplement to the audience’s program.

the music in their strings may be performed in its entirety, in sets (with similar instrumentation), or as single movements. The following are suggestions for 4 sets. In the case of performing a single movement or a set, the marking “From ‘the music in their strings’” must accompany the movement’s titles (movements should be renumbered).

<i>Violin and piano</i>	1. Self-Portrait with Striped Shirt	<i>Violin, violoncello, and piano</i>	1. [i traversed the wet roads]
	2. Mountain Torrent		2. The Self-Seers
	3. Small Tree in Late Autumn		3. The Old Mill (<i>percussion omitted</i>)
<i>Violoncello and piano</i>	1. Double Self-Portrait	<i>Violin, violoncello, piano, percussion (selected movements)</i>	4. [everything is living dead]
	2. Four Trees		1. Double Self-Portrait
	3. Small Tree in Late Autumn (<i>adapted part incl.</i>)		2. The Self-Seers
	3. The Old Mill		
	4. [amidst blue smoke]		
	5. Mountain Torrent		
	6. [everything is living dead]		

the music in their strings

Music by Alex Marthaler

1. [i traversed the wet roads]

Tentative and introspective ♩ = ca.58

Piano

r.h. mp
l.h. pp

on keys

hesitating

with fingernail on strings
Ped. al fine

on keys, strings muffled slightly with finger (or felt)

6

on keys, strings muffled slightly with finger (or felt)

on keys

2. Self-Portrait with Striped Shirt

Melancholic, with rubato ♩ = ca.58

1 Violin
(Track number on
accompanying CD)

Electronics: Pulsing violin drone (G, D) throughout

5

p with sensitivity

10 **11**

mp

14

p *pp*

sul A *poco rit.*

18 a tempo, somewhat defiantly

ghostly

sf *p* *sf* *p*

20

sf *p* *sf* *pp*

poco sul pont. *quick gliss.*

22 normal

sf *pp*

moving toward sul pont.... *poco*

fade into electronics

3. Double Self-Portrait

Flowing, yet always with disquietude (poco rubato) ♩ = ca. 64

Violoncello

Piano

p

And. with harmony

3 *sim.*

5

mp

8

mp

4. [the waters within me]

Note: All clarinet lines crescendo from *niente* to *mp* or *mf*, then fade to nothing. The effect should be of notes “coming into focus,” then receding back into the texture. All trills begin slowly, then faster, then slow again.

A psychological processional ♩ = 100

This system of the score includes four Clarinet parts (Clarinets 1, 2, 3, and 4) and an Electronics section. The music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats. The Clarinet parts feature long, sustained notes with a trill in the first measure of the second measure. The Electronics section includes a Tam-tam (with sticks) and Frame Drums, with a circled '2' indicating a second measure. The bass line of the Electronics section has a *mp* dynamic marking and a long note with a trill.

This system continues the musical score for the four Clarinet parts and the Electronics section. The Clarinet parts continue with their sustained notes and trills. The Electronics section features a series of trills in the first measure of each of the five measures, with a circled '4' indicating the fourth measure.

5. The Self-Seers

Note: All tempo changes occur "subito" on the beat they are marked (1, 2, 3, or 4).

Mechanical and maniacal

$\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$

Violin *mf detached*

Violoncello *mf detached*

3 $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$

Vln. *cresc.*

Vc. *cresc.*

5 $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$

Vln.

Vc.

7 $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$

Vln.

Vc.

9 $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 100$ $\text{♩} = 80$ $\text{♩} = 64$

Vln. *cresc.*

Vc. *cresc.*

6. [the agony of thought]

As a detached observation, or a distant memory ♩=88

all notes are even: non-accented, non-expressive

Voices 1 (Ah)
Soft attack/release

mp throughout

Voices 2 (Ah)
Soft attack/release

mp throughout

Synth Pipe Organ

3 *mp*

with freedom, sempre legato

Field recording from Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Elverson, PA
July 19, 2014

Electronics

Detailed description: This system contains measures 1 through 6 of the piece. It features four vocal staves (Voices 1 and 2, each with two parts), a Synth Pipe Organ, and an Electronics track. The time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as ♩=88. The music is characterized by even, non-accented, and non-expressive notes. The organ part includes a circled number '3' and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The field recording source is cited as Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Elverson, PA, dated July 19, 2014. The electronics track is represented by a solid black bar.

7

Voices 1

Voices 2

Synth.

Elec.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 7 through 12. It features four vocal staves (Voices 1 and 2, each with two parts), a Synth track, and an Electronics track. The time signature is 4/4. The tempo is 88. The music continues with even, non-accented, and non-expressive notes. The synth part includes a circled number '7' and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The electronics track is represented by a solid black bar.

7. The Old Mill

Gently and steadily ♩=98

Violin

Violoncello

Percussion

Piano

Electronics

4

pp

Lead. with harmony

Soft E. Piano

pp

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of the musical score. It features five staves: Violin (treble clef, 4/4), Violoncello (bass clef, 4/4), Percussion (two staves, 4/4), Piano (grand staff, 4/4), and Electronics (treble clef, 4/4). The Piano part includes a circled number '4' in the first measure and a *pp* dynamic marking in the second measure. The Electronics part starts with a *pp* dynamic and a 'Soft E. Piano' instruction. The Percussion part is currently silent.

5

Pno.

p

mp

+Soft pad doubles piano l.h.

Elec.

p

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the musical score, starting at measure 5. It features two staves: Pno. (grand staff, 5/4) and Elec. (treble clef, 5/4). The Pno. part has a *p* dynamic in the first measure and a *mp* dynamic in the second measure. The Elec. part has a *p* dynamic and a '+Soft pad doubles piano l.h.' instruction. The Pno. part includes a fermata over the second measure and a repeat sign at the end of the system.

8. The Bridge

Hazily ♩ = 74

always emphasize top notes

Piano

p

Ped.

5

9

13

17

mp

9. [amidst blue smoke]

Note: It is suggested that players use a stopwatch for this movement; timestamps are in relation to the beginning of the electronics.

Still, with almost no movement bell of cymbal

Percussion

ca. 0:15

mp

Synthesizer

Soft pad

5

Field recording from Slough Gundy/Little Falls, Flambeau River, Winter, WI
July 3, 2014

Electronics

Perc.

6

ca. 0:45

8

crotales, bowed

mp

small bell (higher)

ca. 0:50

mp

Synth.

6

Elec.

10. Mountain Torrent

Deliberately, with continuously growing intensity ♩ = 84

Violin

Piano

pp

(electronics continue from previous movement)
Red. with harmony

5

pp

with a warm, yet strong tone; like soft velvet

8

pp

if possible, a percussionist may press pause

9

pp

poco a poco cresc.

14

poco a poco cresc.

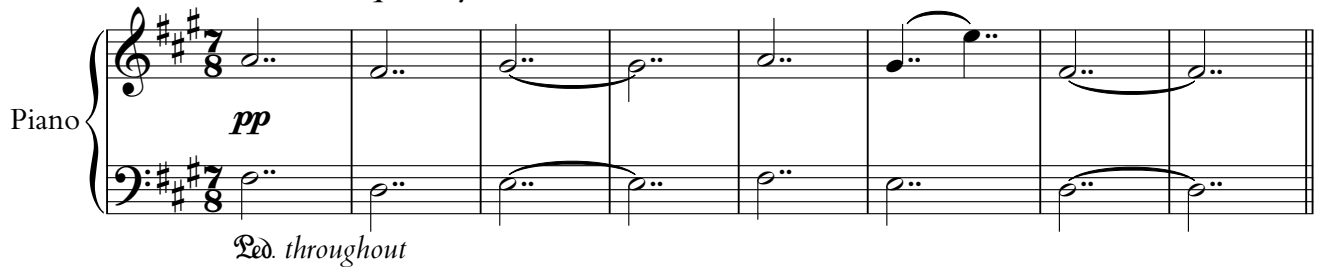
11. Autumn Trees

Somewhat quickly ♩ = 94

Piano

pp

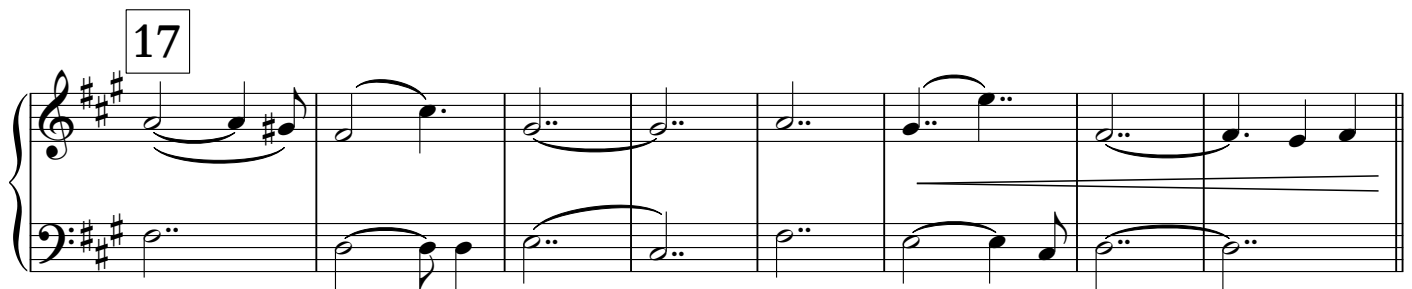
Ped. throughout



9



17



25

p

3



32

33

mp

3



12. Four Trees

Gently, poco rubato ♩ = 58-62

poco rit.

Violoncello

Piano

p

Ped.

5 a tempo

mp

Ped.

9

Ped.

44 *rit. al fine*

pizz.
p

13. [the high trees all walked]

Superficially placid, but somewhat restless ♩ = 58-60

Clarinet 1

Clarinet 2

Clarinet 3

Clarinet 4

Piano

6 *pp*

r.h. rustling, uneven, almost indiscernable
l.h. sonorous, full, flexing

mp Ped. al fine

Electronics

Evolving soft pad, droplet sounds

14. Small Tree in Late Autumn

Fragile, like a forgotten music box ♩ = 108

Violin

Pre-recorded piano:
(do not play live)

Piano

7

pp

Violin harmonics w/delay
8^{va}

Electronics

ppp

4

Pno.

Elec.

8

Pno.

Elec.

8

15. [everything is living dead]

Slowly and freely, decaying and intimate ♩ = ca.46-48

Violin *sparse, coldly*
p *mp*

Violoncello *sparse, coldly*
p *mp*

Piano *p*

Ped. throughout

Vln. ⁶ 3+2+2

Vc. ¹³ *mp*

Pno.