Marc Sabat

‘Hope’
music for 2 voices and 6 instruments

PLAINSOUND MUSIC EDITION
‘Hope’

*music for*

a female voice and a male voice
bass flute
clarinet in Bb
piano
violin
viola
cello

*on words by*
Philostratus (the elder)

*in an English literal translation by*
Christian Wolff

Marc Sabat
2000
for Kerstin
Notes:

The music to be played at a soft but comfortable dynamic throughout \( p - mp \), connecting the notes as smoothly as possible. Both the stepwise chromatic line (voices), and the slow melody of longer sustained tones (piano) should be equally balanced, so that there is no distinction between ‘foreground’ and ‘background’.

The vocal lines are written in relatively extreme registers of both voices - nonetheless the two voices should match volume as much as possible and attempt to produce as even a legato line (between them) as is possible. The very lowest tones in the female voice may have to be intoned quietly, in which case the male voice should adjust his tone to match, and conversely the highest tones of the male voice may require a gentle falsetto tone.

The piano plays (alternately) normal tones (on the keyboard) and tones plucked (using the fleshy part of the fingers) inside the piano, the pedal remaining depressed throughout the piece. When the same note is plucked twice in near succession, different strings should be used to avoid damping the previously vibrating tone (i.e. thumb on the rightmost string, 3rd finger on the leftmost string). When the same note is first played on the keyboard, and plucked shortly thereafter, it is suggested to have the plucking finger already touching one of the strings before striking the key. Thus only two strings are struck into vibration by the hammer, allowing the third to be plucked without first damping it. At the end of the piece, the remaining resonance sustains for the full duration of the bar, and then the pedal is slowly lifted to damp the sound, over approximately 2-3 beats.

The other instruments play at a slightly softer volume throughout, to blend with the tones of the voices and piano, producing a shared timbre that does not foreground either individual tone. Longer tones in the instruments to be fully sustained (without decay in volume) until the next piano note, producing a connected melody. The string instruments require distinctly different muted timbres: rubber (violin), wood (viola), a heavy metal (brass/lead) practice mute (cello).

The bass flute and clarinet parts in the score are transposing (octave higher and in Bb, respectively).
‘Xenia’
(‘guest-gift’ - ‘still life’)

(It is) a fine (good, beautiful) thing both to gather-figs and not go by these (figs) as speechless (pictures). Figs black (dark) with juice dripping are heaped on vine leaves, and depicted (drawn, written) with breaks of the skin. Some have just cracked open (gaped) disgorging (spitting-dribbling) their honey, some just split on account of such ripeness. Near them a branch has dropped, by Zeus, not bare or empty of fruit, but shadowed are figs, some raw (unripe) and still ‘green’ (left under leaves to ripen, maybe), some wrinkled and over-ripe, and some about to turn (go rotten) revealing the flower of their liquid, and on the end of the branch a sparrow digs through to what seems the very sweetest of the figs. All the ground is strewn with chestnuts, some of which are rubbed free of the burr, others lie quite shut up, and others show the burr breaking at the lines of division. See, too, the pears on pears, apples on apples, both heaps of them and piles of tens, all fragrant and golden. You will say that their redness has not been put on from the outside, but has bloomed from within. Here are gifts of the cherry tree, here is fruit a very harvest-bounty in clusters in a basket, and the basket is woven, not from alien twigs, but from branches of the plant itself. If you were to look at the binding-together of the vine-branches and at the grape-clusters hanging from them and at how there are gaps (between the clusters) one by one, you’ll sing Dionysos, I know, and speak of the vine as ‘Lady Giver of the Grapes’. You’d say that the grapes too in the picture are for eating and ready-for-wine. And this is the sweetest thing: on a leafy branch is yellow honey already within the comb and ripe to stream forth if the comb is pressed and on another leaf is cheese new curdled and quivering and there are bowls of milk, not merely white but gleaming for the cream floating upon it makes it seem to gleam (‘cream’ strictly means ‘fat’).

from
‘Imagines’ (‘Eikones’) book I, #31

written by
Philostratus (the elder)

*literal English translation from the original Greek (with variants)* by
Christian Wolff, after Fairbanks
female voice:

Marc Sabat

\[ \text{'Hope'} \]

Bass Flute:

- \( P \) sempre quasi legato

Clarinet in Bb:

- \( P \) sempre quasi legato

Piano:

- \( mp \) sempre quasi legato

- ped. al fine (f.v. sempre)

Female Voice:

- \( mp \) sempre quasi legato

- It a good ti thing to ther and go these as less tures. Figs dark juice ping heaped

Male Voice:

- \( mp \) sempre quasi legato

- is fine beau ful both ga figs not by figs speech pic black with drip are on

Violin:

- \( P \) sempre quasi legato

- con sordino (rubber)

Viola:

- \( P \) sempre quasi legato

- con sordino (wood)

Cello:

- \( P \) sempre quasi legato

- con sordino (metal practice mute)
from and how are the terms by you'll Dinny I and of vine 'La Gi of Grapes.'
say the too the ture for ting rea for And is swee thing: a fy is low ney

that grapes in pic are ea and dy wine. this the test on lea branch yel ho al
B. Fl.

Bb Cl.

norm.

Pno.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

70 rea with the and to forth the is and a ther is new dled quiring there bowls milk mere white

70 dy in comb ripe stream if comb pressed on no leaf cheese cur and ve and are of not ly

-12-
B. Fl.

Bb Cl.

norm.

Pho.

pizz.

F

M

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

lift pedal gradually over 2-3 beats

Berlin, 01.09.00
Marc Sabat
Gioseffo Zarlino

for variable instrumentation

PLAIN SOUND MUSIC EDITION
Gioseffo Zarlino (2015)
for variable instrumentation

With every new consonance come new possibilities for melodic movement as well as new harmonic complexities, paradoxes and dissonances. Tonal systems evolve, reflecting musical practice, discovering new perceived relationships of sounds.

Inspired by his reading of the remarkable scientist-musician Claudius Ptolemy, in 1558 the Renaissance Italian theorist Gioseffo Zarlino describes a diatonic and chromatic tonal space defined by rational intervals between the numbers 1 through 6 (the Senario). This space expands the Pythagorean division of the octave, including consonant thirds and sixths to better describe the contemporary practice of vocal counterpoint. In addition to the major whole tone 8:9, produced by moving between the perfect fourth 3:4 and perfect fifth 2:3, there is a minor whole tone 9:10, between the perfect fifth 2:3 and major sixth 3:5. A singing voice sometimes makes a major tone step, at other times a minor tone step, almost without consciously perceiving the small enharmonic difference of a comma between them.

Zarlino describes how these two whole tones produce two diatonic species of the melodic major third 4:5 (major+minor, minor+major). In my piece, the two main voices move mainly by tones, occasionally by a pure major third, making consonant counterpoint. The comma differences are composed and notated; by intoning simple ratios, the two voices realise different size tones. Their successive combinations outline three different thirds: the Ptolemaic 4:5 (major+minor or minor+major), Pythagorean 64:81 (major+major), and the small third 100:81 (minor+minor) sometimes heard in Byzantine chant.

Zarlino’s proposal to sing in 5-limit Just Intonation is part of a century-long exploration of diatonic/chromatic/enharmonic tone systems and music. Unlike his contemporary Nicola Vicentino, who separates genera to seek out the enharmonic, Zarlino sees the greatest subtlety and beauty in diatonic genera mixed with subtle chromatic and enharmonic intervals. Both theorist-composers opened doors to a remarkable universe of microtonal explorations.

My “Zarlino” is the third in a series of pieces inspired by ideas in the history of music theory, which I seek to experience and unfold in a sounding world.

Berlin, 17 February 2016
Gioseffo Zarlino

for a female voice and a male voice, bass flute, clarinet in B♭, piano, violin, viola and cello

in memoriam Friedemann Weigle

Marc Sabat

Repeat ad libitum, as precise intonation desires

(G only on repeats) Tune the natural pitches F, C, G, D, A, E in pure untempered fifths and intone all intervals as justly as possible. An arrow notates a correction by one syntonic comma (80:81) to produce pure thirds and sixths.

Bass Flute

Clarinet in B♭

Piano

Female Voice

Male Voice

Violin

Viola

Violoncello