

**Producing Incantations:
Salvatore Sciarrino's Works for Flute**

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts, The City University of New York

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Abstract

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Salvatore Sciarrino's works hold a seminal place in the avant-garde repertoire of the late twentieth century. Sciarrino's musical language is not widely understood, nor are his unique techniques for playing many instruments. Of the two instruments he most consistently favors, the piano and the flute, the flute is the instrument with which he repeatedly achieves human intensity and breathable warmth. In this dissertation I show how he creates a new sonic palette, fabricating a new instrument out of the traditional flute, a "superflute" of sorts.

Using his first volume of solo flute music, I borrow Sciarrino's own analytical tools to analyze these works, using his "figures" as interpretive, as well as analytical, tools. Sciarrino's flute works appears a daunting undertaking to flutists because of their notation and the almost complete absence of any traditional flute sonorities. I provide a guide to learning the techniques of his works and turning those physical techniques into musical gestures while suggesting possible interpretations through my experience of learning the pieces.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Salvatore Sciarrino's works hold a seminal place in the avant-garde repertoire of the late twentieth century. He is a composer who constantly pushes the capabilities of both his musicians and audiences. According to Gavin Thomas, Sciarrino is "one of contemporary music's strangest and most distinctive universes, one which almost completely rejects conventionally produced sounds, exploiting instead the grey area at the very edge of instrumental technique."¹ In all of his music, he creates new sound worlds, fashioning "new" instruments out of traditional ones, and finding the place on the edge of sound and silence. Whereas many of his contemporaries turn to electronic music to achieve similar transformative effects with sounds, Sciarrino has focused on the outer realm of traditional, acoustic instruments.

Sciarrino's quiet textures often teeter on the threshold of the audible; much of his music exists within *niente* dynamics. Indeed, his work *Un'immagine di Arpocrate* for chorus, solo piano, and orchestra is a depiction of Harpocrates, the Greek god of silence.² The quiet in Sciarrino's music draws the audience in to truly listen and find the boundaries between sound and silence, an ever more difficult task in a world that is constantly growing louder. However, his silences are not gentle ones; within the small, delicate textures, violent

¹ Gavin Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity. Gavin Thomas Introduces the Remarkable Music of Salvatore Sciarrino," *The Musical Times* 134 (April 1993), 193.

² *Ibid.*, 193. David Metzger also mentions that "Sciarrino is the only composer to have invoked a god of silence" (see his "Modern Silence," *Journal of Musicology* 23 [Summer 2006], 364).

moments burst forth, like “the eruption of a volcano viewed from afar,” creating tension inside of *niente*.³ Through his experimentation with the limitations of sound production in both means and quantity, Sciarrino has created an individual and recognizable compositional voice.

Born in 1947 in Palermo, Italy, Sciarrino was first drawn to the visual arts and was already intrigued by abstract painting at a very young age. He turned to music, and in this field is something of an autodidact, although he had brief training with Antonino Titone and Turi Belifiore, as well as some work with Franco Evangelisti on electronics. Sciarrino’s first premiere was in 1962, and from his early twenties, he was already a leader among Italian avant-garde composers.⁴ He lived in Rome and moved to Milan in 1976 to teach at the Conservatory. Once his compositional career allowed, he moved to a small Umbrian town (Città di Castello) to withdraw from the music community and create within a greater sense of isolation.

Sciarrino attempts to begin anew or return to the beginning with his music. His music approaches the beginning of sounds, a stylized representative of natural sounds, and a return to a mystic mythology of creation. In writing for such extremes on the edge of sound, bordering silence, Sciarrino calls for his audience to listen in a fresh way. In the present world with such an abundance of stimulation, this *azzerare* (return to zero) resets our ears. Thomas writes of Sciarrino’s “basic desire to *compose* each note, to reconsider the

³ “L’Éruption d’un volcan vue de loin.” This is Sciarrino’s definition of the “Sciarrino sound” (see Salvatore Sciarrino, “Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” Interviewed by Kaltenecker, Martin and Gérard Pesson, *Entretiens* 9 [December 1990], 137).

⁴ Hodges, “A Volcano Viewed from Afar,” 22.

basic constituents of music, rather than simply composing *with* notes.”⁵ Beyond that, Sciarrino tries to compose a new world with each piece of music. Beginning again, returning to zero with the start of his sound world, Sciarrino creates a realm that disassociates itself from the traditional techniques and sounds of instruments.

Even with his fresh approach and unique voice, Sciarrino is nevertheless, like all composers, tied to the past and “never really cuts the umbilical cord with tonal music, its gestures, its forms.” Sciarrino “summons tonality like a shadow that passes behind the discourse.”⁶ In *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi (Figures in Music: from Beethoven to Today)*, Sciarrino writes about music and visual art of the past, using his concept of *figures*, descriptions of compositional processes, connecting modern concepts of technology and science to historical art. He uses older forms and quotes past music in a fantastic way, translating “the old form using other levels, other tensions, other unities, with a new logic – they then become monstrous forms, chimeras.”⁷ We hear the music of the past in an affected manner, just as silence and the sounds of nature are heard as chimeras of reality in Sciarrino’s music, rejecting the role of art as a replication of what is true.

Because true silence can never truly be found in music or life, Sciarrino’s hushed moments usually still include the performer producing sound, even if it is virtually

⁵ Thomas, “The Poetics of Extremity,” 194.

⁶ “L’art de Sciarrino ne coupe jamais vraiment le lien ombilical avec la musique tonale, ses gestes, ses formes – il la cite comme ombre qui défilerait derrière le discours.” Martin Kaltenecker, “L’exploration du blanc,” *Entretiens* 9 (December 1990), 110.

⁷ “Quand je reprenais des formes anciennes (comme la sonate), c’était à la manière de Borgès, de façon fantastique, étrange. Je traduisais la forme ancienne au moyen d’autres hauteurs, d’autres tensions, d’autres unités, avec une nouvelle logique – ce sont alors des formes monstrueuses, des chimères.” Salvatore Sciarrino, “Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” *Entretiens* 9 (December 1990), 136-7, as quoted in Ju-Ping Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2006), 39. See page 39 for more discussion of the older form that Sciarrino employs.

inaudible. Sciarrino shares John Cage's fascination with the limits to human perception of silence, that even in an anechoic chamber one cannot be in total silence because "even in an empty room there are still heartbeats."⁸ Hearing one's own body in music is important for Sciarrino and one of his flute solos is entirely based on this premise.⁹ He carefully manipulates instruments into "infinite rumbling of microscopic sonorities."¹⁰ What we hear is carefully constructed white noise with outbursts.

Composers including Debussy, Varèse, and Stockhausen show the fascination that many twentieth-century composers had with the evocative and symbolic nature of the flute, and Sciarrino is no exception. The flute was one of the first instruments created by man, next to the voice and percussion, and as Sciarrino has "always worked with myths and enchantments," he works well with the medium, transforming the instrument into a mythological creation of its own.¹¹ Some of his greatest experiments with sounds and colors are some of his early works for the flute. For him, the flute represents a return to the beginning for both its mythological ties and its great range of varied techniques and timbres. A few well known flutists have championed his music, and they are becoming more popular for performers. However, while his works are groundbreaking and extend the technical possibilities of the flute, they are not widely known or understood, especially in the United States. These works deserve to be the subject of deeper study because of their inherent beauty, as well as their contribution to the advancement of the flute as a

⁸ Salvatore Sciarrino, "Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Kaltenecker, Martin and Gérard Pesson, *Entretemps* 9 (December 1990), 140.

⁹ See the discussion of *Aton* in chapters 3 and 4.

¹⁰ Metzger, "Modern Silence," 364.

¹¹ Salvatore Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino: L'œuvre pour flute entre mythe, rite et magie," interview by Luisa Curinga, *L'imaginaire musical entre création et interprétation*, ed. and trans. Mara Lacchè (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006), 258.

constantly evolving instrument. Just as Sciarrino places emphasis on the return to zero when beginning a piece, so should the flutist begin learning his music from a place of restarting the flute and approaching the instrument as if it were new again, returning to the time when the instrument was a mystery and every sound was an exciting beginning. In that way, the flutist can construct Sciarrino's new instrument using his repertoire of sounds as building blocks that comprise a new music.

Sciarrino has written about his own music and his method of discussing other music, most specifically in the book *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi*.¹² Grazia Giacco in *La notion de "figure" chez Salvatore Sciarrino* details much of what Sciarrino addresses in his book.¹³ In addition to his own writings, several articles have been written on Sciarrino's music. Gavin Thomas introduced Sciarrino in "The Poetics of Extremity," the first article in English about the composer. Nicolas Hodges and David Metzger have also contributed important research on the composer. Much research on Sciarrino is in Italian and French, which leaves few resources in English for musicians. An entire issue of the French publication *Entretemps* was devoted to a Sciarrino dossier, including an interview delving into Sciarrino's aesthetic. Ju-Ping Song's detailed dissertation "Writing the Sonic Experience" delves into Sciarrino's concept of "figures" and analyzes his piano sonatas, writing about the perception of sounds in his music. Brahim Kerkour's dissertation "Beyond the poetry of silence" discusses music perception and compositional process in Sciarrino's *Introduzione all'oscuro*.¹⁴ Megan Re Lanz's dissertation "Silence: An Exploration

¹² Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi*.

¹³ Giacco, *La notion de "figure."*

¹⁴ Ju-Ping Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience: An Analytical Narrative of a Journey into Salvatore Sciarrino's Five Piano Sonatas (1972-1994)" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2006). Important articles are: Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity"; Hodges, "A Volcano Viewed from Afar: The Music of Salvatore Sciarrino"; and

of Salvatore Sciarrino's Style Through *L'Opera per Flauto*" writes about silence in Sciarrino's music, as well as on how to perform this music, focusing on flute and embouchure placement in Sciarrino's various techniques.¹⁵

There are also a few articles specifically exploring the numerous pieces Sciarrino has contributed to the flute repertoire. Hodges, "A Volcano Viewed from Afar: The Music of Salvatore Sciarrino" examines *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*, and Thomas's "The Poetics of Extremity" discusses *Rondo* for flute and orchestra. Most of the articles on Sciarrino's music mention his affinity for the flute, but few specifically analyze his flute works. One exception, Francesco Giomi and Marco Ligabue's "The 'Enchanted' Sound Objects: Aesthetic-Cognitive Analysis and Musical Signification Strategies," is an important analysis lauded by the composer for its unique and non-quantitative approach of *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*. Luisa Curinga's interview with Sciarrino specifically addresses his flute music and has been translated into French, detailing the history and impetus behind many of his flute works.¹⁶

This study aims to serve as an introduction to and explanation of Sciarrino's flute repertoire and as a learning guide and analytic resource for the performer. This dissertation is divided into two parts. The first examines Sciarrino's music and aesthetic from an analytical perspective, while the aim of the second part is to introduce Sciarrino's flute music to performers. I discuss Sciarrino's music and figures, analyze the seven flute

Metzer, "Modern Silence." The Sciarrino issue of *Entretemps* is extremely informative: Gualtiero Dazzi, Martin Kaltenecker, and Gérard Pesson, "Sciarrino Dossier," *Entretemps* 9 (December 1990): 107-57.

¹⁵ Megan Re Lanz, "Silence: An Exploration of Salvatore Sciarrino's Style Through *L'Opera per Flauto*" (D.M.A. diss., University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2010).

¹⁶ Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," 257. My translation of this interview into English can be found in Appendix 2.

pieces in the first volume of *L'opera per flauto*, and provide a performance guide to potential performers of his music.

Chapter 2 describes Sciarrino's relationship to the flute and his ideas on form, his figures, outlined in *Figures in Music: from Beethoven to Today*.¹⁷ In chapter 3, I take Sciarrino's own analytical tools to analyze these works, using his figures as interpretive, as well as analytical, tools in my analysis of his flute pieces.¹⁸ Chapter 4 offers a performance guide aimed at flutists, explaining Sciarrino's symbols and discussing how to produce the unique techniques and sounds in his pieces. Sciarrino's flute works appear to be a daunting undertaking to flutists because of their notation and the almost complete absence of any traditional flute sonorities. I provide a guide to learning the techniques of his works and turning those physical techniques into musical gestures while suggesting possible interpretations. In comparing his notation with other composers of extended techniques and creating a performer-friendly edition of *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi*, I hope to give musicians a more accessible entry into Sciarrino's scores.

Through his own analysis of music, his beautiful notation, and his unique sound world, Sciarrino is a composer worthy of in-depth study. His flute music pushes the limits of both technique and musicality. Through understanding his flute oeuvre as a whole, flutists can more thoroughly learn some of the individual pieces, as well as become more intimately acquainted with the possibilities of the instrument.

¹⁷ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*.

¹⁸ My charts of each of the pieces are modeled on Francesco Giomi and Marco Ligabue's analysis (see their Francesco Giomi and Marco Ligabue, "The 'Enchanted' Sound Objects: Aesthetic-Cognitive Analysis and Musical Signification Strategies," in *Les Universaux en musique: Actes du quatrième congrès international sur la signification musicale*, ed. by Costin Mioreanu and Xavier Hascher [Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1994], 419).

Chapter 2: Sciarrino's Flute and "Figures"

This chapter explores Sciarrino's ideas on music and form, as well as his relationship to one of his favorite instruments. I begin with writing about the new sonic landscape of the flute and Sciarrino's relationship to and use of the flute. Sciarrino uses the instrument in a way that is unique and has inspired other composers.

Additionally, Sciarrino's method of analysis gives insight to how he works as a composer. I define and discuss the figures that Sciarrino introduces in his book *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi*. They are: accumulation and multiplication, little bang, genetic transformations, and windows form.

2.1 The new sonic landscape of the instrument.

Luigi Russolo, futurist composer of the early twentieth century and author of *The Art of Noises*, writes about "noise-sound" in his manifesto, displaying the six families of noises that will be heard in the "Futurist orchestra." These categories include rumbles, splashes, screeches, groans, mumbles, wheezes, and sobs.¹ Russolo's idea of music was to

¹ Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noises* (New York: Pendragon Press, 2005), 10.

manipulate sounds into almost surreal combinations, taking imitations of life and nature and turning them into a phantasmagoria of noise.

The new orchestra will achieve the most complex and novel aural emotions not by incorporating a succession of life-imitating noises but by manipulating fantastic juxtapositions of these varied tones and rhythms. Therefore an instrument will have to offer the possibility of tone changes and varying degrees of amplification.²

While Russolo was extreme in his views of music imitating nature, the many sounds he listed all became available in the music of the twentieth century, although not to the exclusion of more traditional sound production. Despite their differences in intent, Sciarrino and Russolo both believe that instruments should be capable of more than their traditional roles in music. Rather than *noise-sound*, Sciarrino composes in *noise-music*, merging the qualities of daily life and nature with that of the rich history of Western music. The flute, in both its traditional and its current development, is a perfect vehicle for this type of music.

In the past century, there have been significant developments to, and experimentations with, flutes and flute playing. Flutists are increasingly expected to play outside the boundaries of traditional flute playing, employing “extended” techniques. Two immensely helpful manuals on modern flute techniques are Pierre-Yves Artaud’s *Present Day Flutes* and Robert Dick’s *The Other Flute*.³

² Ibid., 11.

³ Robert Dick, *The Other Flute* (St. Louis: Multiple Breath Music, 1989). This performance manual is an indispensable resource for those composers and performers wanting to visit the expanded realms of the instrument and is the most exhaustive and impressive. Earlier guides to extended techniques are Bruno Bartolozzi, *New Sounds for Woodwind* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) and James J. Pellerite, *A Modern Guide to Fingerings for the Flute* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., 1964). Pierre-Yves Artaud, *Present Day Flutes* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot, 1995) is a compendium of techniques similar to *The Other Flute*, geared toward a European flutist. Recently, Gergely Ittzés published interactive multiphonic software (see www.flouble.com).

In writing *The Other Flute* in 1975, Robert Dick argued against perceived limitations in the flute's sound. Instead of a melodic instrument limited to its traditional singing tone, he found the beauty in the other, in possibilities beyond the realm of tradition. He denied the accuracy of some commonly held perceptions of the flute:

1. The flute has only one basic tone quality and its ability to vary that quality is sharply limited.
2. The flute can produce only one note at a time.
3. The mechanical construction of the Boehm flute allows production of only a few microtones⁴

With these constraints removed from the composer and performer's concept of the flute's sound, there are almost limitless possibilities available. Sciarrino shares this newer concept of the flute; the first of his works for solo flute, *All'aure in una lontananza*, delves into his unique, new timbres, breaking away from previous limitations on the instrument. Coincidentally, the piece was composed soon after Robert Dick's compiling of his performance manual. Until this time, the flute was a very traditional instrument, dotted with a few instances of playing outside the instrument's conventional, melodic role. Most of the early forays of writing "special effects" into the fabric of the instrument's timbre were made by flutist composers, and while many of them are interesting, there are a few pieces from the 1970s that are wonderful examples of extended technique, expression, and compositional prowess. Sciarrino's flute works are some of those examples. Most of his flute pieces involve only extended techniques, with no traditional flute sounds entering Sciarrino's palette, making the rare use of conventional tones sound akin to an unusual technique—in a way, creating an entirely new instrument.

⁴ Ibid., v.

During the years of Sciarrino's output of *L'opera per flauto, Vol. 1* Robert Dick

comments:

We are in a time of growth and change for the flute, a time when limitations, both technical and conceptual, are being left behind. The flute is taking on roles never before imagined, that of a polyphonic instrument, for instance, or that of a quickly changing voice capable of being drum-like one instant, ephemeral the next, then showing surprising power.⁵

The flutist's role in the evolution of the instrument, its capabilities and teaching has been crucial in creating flutists (and flutes) capable of the type of playing demanded by composers such as Sciarrino.⁶ Robert Dick "set out to remove the non-traditional aspects of the flute—such as unusual tone qualities, microtones, multiple sonorities, 'bending,' etc.—from the category of 'special effects' and into the realm of valid musical materials."⁷ In doing so he freed the flute into a sonic realm of possibilities and opened the door for composers and performers (and those who do both) alike. Extended techniques had become a part of the flutist's repertoire and started to be incorporated into the beauty of the flute's tone—multiphonics with a range of colors, dynamics, vibrato, and so forth. Although this was the case for very few flutists at the time, this level of playing is becoming standardized among professional musicians today.

⁵ Robert Dick, *Tone Development through Extended Techniques* (St. Louis: Multiple Breath Music, 1986.), 7.

⁶ In addition to his prominent role in the development in extended techniques, Dick has been seminal in technological advances to the instrument, including the invention of the Glissando headjoint, a mechanical advance in the flute that allows for smooth glissandi, akin to a whammy bar.

⁷ Robert Dick, *The Other Flute*, v.

2.2 Sciarrino's relationship to and use of the flute.

Sciarrino's musical language is not widely understood; nor are his unique techniques for playing many instruments. Of the two instruments he most consistently favors, the piano and the flute, the flute is the instrument with which he repeatedly achieves human intensity and breathable warmth. Sciarrino believes that "the flute is one of the freest instruments in its relationship with breath and the human body, and for this reason, it has given me a lot of possibilities."⁸ The flexibility of the instrument together with its earthy quality, being so closely correlated to breath and the voice, has given Sciarrino the ability to create sounds linked to nature that he is not able to achieve in his works for other instruments, such as the piano or strings. (Even coughing into the instrument is included in his catalogue of timbres.) However, in his attempts at recreating nature, Sciarrino never wants listeners to forget that they are listening to artifice:

In the usual aesthetic of our time we speak of imitation as something negative. . . . Thus the tendency towards abstraction is a reaction against a bourgeois art based on the representative. . . . When this conflict of abstraction and imitation has lost its ideological force, the relationship of art to nature re-emerges. . . . I think it is possible now (something I have often done) to develop a new relationship with nature. . . . Music can imitate real sounds, but must do so in a way so that one hears the artifice; to reproduce exactly is useless.⁹

Unlike many composers who try to replicate nature, Sciarrino injects some nature into his highly stylized compositions.

⁸ "La flûte est un des instruments les plus libres dans le rapport avec le soufflé et avec le corps humain et, pour cette raison, il m'a donné beaucoup de possibilités." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 259.

⁹ Sciarrino, "Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino," *Entretiens* 9 (December 1990), 138-9, as translated in Gavin Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity," 194.

In more than a dozen works for solo flute, five concerti with flute soloist, as well as numerous chamber works featuring the flute, Sciarrino creates a new sonic palette, fabricating a new instrument out of the traditional flute. His particular affinity for the flute draws on his belief that the instrument's "tradition is tied up with ancient rites, and who was magical since it was invented by the gods" and that it is on an even more primitive level, "tied to the act of creation," noting that in many myths, "the world is even created with a sound of the flute."¹⁰ Sciarrino's love for the flute is closely linked to his affinity for mythology. His titles are often descriptors of myth, and his music often evokes the ethereal and otherworldly. Speaking to the mythological resurgence in the flute role, he writes:

Before, the flute, even if often used, was only an instrument among others and wasn't specifically destined for particular compositions. For the solo flutist, everything commenced with *Syrinx* or, a little earlier, with *Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

Even the second poem in Ravel's *Schéhérazade* is titled "The Enchanted Flute." But its enchanting role exploded possibly with the alto flute in *The Rite of Spring*, and with the affirmation of its triple "essence" (piccolo, flute, alto flute) in *Daphnis and Chloé*, where it becomes for moments a sort of "superflute."¹¹

Sciarrino's music is a continuation of this traditional, enchanted role of the flute, even while he has virtually invented a new instrument.

In his prolific writing for the flute, including two works that employ more than one hundred flutists, he has created a new timbral realm, his own "superflute." Sciarrino has

¹⁰ "La tradition est liée aux rites plus anciens, et qui était magique puisque inventée par les dieux . . . le monde même est créé avec un son de flûte." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 257.

¹¹ "Car auparavant, la flûte, même si très utilisée, n'était qu'un instrument parmi beaucoup d'autres et elle n'était pas destinée spécifiquement à des compositions particulières. Pour la flûte soliste, tout commence de *Syrinx* ou, un peu avant, du *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

Même le deuxième poème dans *Schéhérazade* de Ravel s'intitule *La flûte enchantée*. Mais son rôle enchanteur explose peut-être avec la flûte en *sol* du *Sacre du printemps*, et avec l'affirmation de sa triple « essence » (piccolo, flûte, flûte en *sol*) dans *Daphnis et Chloé*, où elle devient par moments une sorte de « super-flûte ». Ibid, 258.

composed a dozen flute solos, ranging wildly in character, but all making use of the limits of the instrument's timbre and technical capabilities. He has also written six *concerti* that feature the flutist as soloist, including *Il cerchio tagliato dei suoni*, for four flutists and one hundred peripatetic flutists, and *Studi per l'intonazione del mare*, scored for contralto, four solo flutes, four solo saxophones, one hundred flutes, one hundred saxophones and percussion. Despite this huge orchestration, this piece still has moments of his characteristic delicacy, often bordering on silence. The flute reigns dominant in Sciarrino's chamber music, especially his vocal chamber music, notably in *Aspern Suite* and *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile*, in which he weaves the two sonorities of flute and voice together beautifully.

Expanding on the lineage of Western music, he has transcribed J.S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue, d, BWV565, for amplified flute and wrote extraordinarily graceful cadenzas for the Mozart flute concertos. In his own music, he often paraphrases other music of very different instrumentation or genre, as in the 1939 song "Aquarela do Brasil" by Ary Barroso, which Sciarrino heard in the film *Brazil* and used in *Morgana*, or quoting late Beethoven final movements as the basis for *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*, or the third movement of Beethoven's String Quartet in A minor, op. 132, *Canzona di ringraziamento offerta alla divinità da un guarito*, from which Sciarrino's title *Canzona di ringraziamento* is derived.¹²

Although extended techniques for the flute were widely exploited in the twentieth century, Sciarrino has ventured further in creating an entire language from these sounds,

¹² Hodges, "A Volcano Viewed from Afar," 23.

almost completely evading any use of traditional sonorities. Responding to the flute's importance to his poetry:

Yes, surely! Above all technically, for its potential of sounds; the results are evident and opened horizons. The flute is one of the freest instruments in its relationship with breath and the human body, and for this reason, it has given me a lot of possibilities. When I began to write for the flute, I was actually going to explore nearly untouched territory. I wrote a lot for this instrument, but it was especially a question of creating some effects and traditional notes. I tried to take this instrument into consideration, not to change it, but in order to give it a new physiognomy, an expressive force that seems missing in its earlier repertoire.¹³

Most of his flute pieces involve only extended techniques, with no traditional flute sounds entering Sciarrino's palette, making the rare use of conventional tones sound akin to an unusual technique. While his flute pieces are all steeped in these new timbres, there is never the feeling of listening to a pyrotechnic circus, which is sometimes the case with pieces based solely on extended techniques. Sciarrino makes just that criticism of much modern music: "That always disturbed me, having always thought that one of correct criticisms to make with modern music relates to using sonic material simply for creating effects."¹⁴ Sciarrino successfully uses the sounds as the means for musical expression, referring to himself as a "soundologist," as opposed to using the music to display technique and compositional prowess.¹⁵ In a very similar way, he uses silence for expression. His use

¹³ "Oui, bien sûr ! Surtout techniquement, pour ses potentialités d'émission ; les résultats sont évidents et ouvrent des horizons. La flûte est un des instruments les plus libres dans le rapport avec le souffle et avec le corps humain et, pour cette raison, il m'a donné beaucoup de possibilités. Quand j'ai commencé à composer pour la flûte, j'allais en réalité explorer un terrain presque vierge. J'ai beaucoup écrit pour cet instrument, mais il s'agissait surtout de créer quelques effets et des notes traditionnelles. J'ai essayé de prendre en considération cet instrument, non pour le renouveler, mais afin de lui donner une nouvelle physionomie, une force expressive qui semblait manquer dans son répertoire précédent." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 259.

¹⁴ "Cela m'a toujours dérangé, ayant toujours pensé qu'une des critiques justes à faire à la musique contemporaine concerne l'utilisation du matériel sonore pour créer simplement des effets." Ibid., 266.

¹⁵ Martina Seeber, notes to Salvatore Sciarrino *Orchestral Works* (2008), CD, KAIROS Production 0012802KAI, 10.

of silence, incorporation of strange textures into his musical vocabulary, and relationship to the biological and organic, renders Sciarrino's flute music so intensely intimate. His writing for the instrument is explicitly tied to the concept of the breath. As air flows in and out of the lungs, so his music fluctuates in and out of the range of the audible. In listening to Sciarrino's works, especially those for flute, one is able to hear the edge of sound where it meets silence, his " 'zero-sound' dynamics."¹⁶

The process of finding true interpretations of Sciarrino's compositions has taken a number of years; the composer says that it was not (for almost a decade) until after the early 1980s that his pieces were faithfully rendered because, "the way in which the performers tried to analyze reality was filtered by what they expected of it . . ."¹⁷

Performers evolve along with the techniques needed for new music, and sounds that were not possible formerly are now realizable for the devoted musician.

The determination of the technique of my pieces was gradual, on the part of the flutists as well as mine. Myself, in the beginning, I thought that certain things were impossible, because I was basing it on the experimental and uncertain data of the interpreter. The latter couldn't overcome a certain limit of control, even though the result was always a little approximated. Over time, while my writing evolved, especially through consolidation and enrichment of sounds and articulations, my requests to performers became technically more precise.¹⁸

As time has passed in Sciarrino's compositional career, his language has become more attainable, as well as more expressive. His later scores improve on imparting these

¹⁶ Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 3.

¹⁷ "La façon par laquelle les exécutants essayaient d'analyser la réalité était filtrée par ce qu'ils attendaient d'elle" Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 261.

¹⁸ "La détermination des techniques d'émission de mes morceaux a été graduelle, de la part des flûtistes ainsi que de la mienne. Moi-même, au départ, je pensais que certaines choses étaient impossibles, car je m'appuyais sur la donnée expérimentale et incertaine de l'interprète. Ce dernier n'arrivait pas à surmonter une certaine limite de contrôle, si bien que le résultat était toujours un peu approximatif. Le temps passant, alors que mon écriture évoluait, surtout à travers une consolidation et un enrichissement de sons et d'articulations, mes requêtes auprès des exécutants devenaient techniquement plus précises." Ibid., 260.

directions to the performer. With the rise in technical ability, the possibility of emotional renderings of his pieces increases. Interpreters are able to imbue the rich emotional and mythical content of his scores into performances. As David Metzger points out, much of Sciarrino's oeuvre is operatic in feel:

The feelings and sensations in Sciarrino's works, on the other hand, not only ring out but are declared. Characters wear their hearts on their sleeves, telling us passionately and pointedly about the envy that overwhelms them, the entanglements of lust, or the delirium in which they wander.¹⁹

This is especially true in how Sciarrino uses the flute, which he feels is particularly tied to the natural and mythological world.

2.3 Definitions of Sciarrino's "figures"

In writing with gestures that consist of tones on the frontier of sound, from key clicks to harmonics to blowing soft air sounds through the mouthpiece, it is possible and helpful to develop a new sense of analyzing this compositional language.²⁰ In developing a manner in which to discuss his (and others') music, the composer relied on methods of discussing other fields of study: visual art, computer language, and science. In his book *Figures in Music: from Beethoven to Today*, Sciarrino uses music from Beethoven to himself and his contemporaries to delve into the gestures that form music and how we as musicians and listeners today, in our world of overwhelming sound, can truly hear and

¹⁹ Metzger, "Modern Silence," 365.

²⁰ Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity," 194.

understand art music, its form, gestures and its meaning.²¹ To Sciarrino, form is dependent on the individuality of the piece. “Each work meets its proper form, that is an arrival point, not a container that one fills, in a scholastic manner.”²²

His term “figures” describes form as an interpretive tool, a “representation of formative patterns that *create* shape and build structure in musical works.”²³ Figures are not a blueprint but help describe compositional processes common among many great works, and they introduce a unique method of listening. Sciarrino’s figures are: accumulation, multiplication, genetic transformations, little (big) bang, and windows form. These tools relate music to temporal growth, layering, and change in technological and physical allusions. Each of these figures takes its name from a discipline other than music: computer language (windows form), mathematics (accumulation and multiplication), and science (genetic transformations, little (big) bang). His five main figures aim to “retrace their origins” (“a rintracciare le origini”) in other fields, showing why they are common across disciplines.²⁴ They are “a progressive process of the spatialization of sonic elements,” each figure relating to the spatial-temporal disconnect in modern life that can be heard, according to Sciarrino, beginning with Beethoven.²⁵

When asked by Martin Kaltenecker about the ideal analysis of his own music, Sciarrino replied that he would not like a quantitative analysis—which he believes is

²¹ Salvatore Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi* (Milan: Ricordi, 1998) is a compilation of his lectures that Sciarrino delivered in Rome at “la Salle Multimédia du Palais des Expositions in October 1995. In the book, Sciarrino uses other disciplines and art forms to develop a method of discussing music from the point of view of a modern day listener.

²² Sciarrino, “Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Kaltenecker, Martin and Gérard Pesson, 137.

²³ Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 18. Song delivers an in-depth explanation of Sciarrino’s figures in her dissertation on his piano sonatas, and they are also detailed by Grazia Giacco (see her *La notion de “figure” chez Salvatore Sciarrino* [Paris: L’Harmattan, 2001]).

²⁴ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 22

²⁵ Salvatore Sciarrino, “Dell’interrogare: Incontro con Salvatore Sciarrino,” Interview with Marco Mazzolini, *Sonus: materiali per la musica contemporanea* 2.3 (June-Aug. 1990), 48.

overused in today's theoretical world and is neither very scientific nor impartial—but instead an “anthropological analysis.” Sciarrino states:

One cannot stop with only the simple acoustic symbols, nor continue to play more or less with relationships. Each language, every human action involves the whole. When one enters the emotional domain, the qualitative criteria come into play. For that I would like an anthropological analysis that goes from the most profound categories of the composition.²⁶

In his figures, he is attempting this, and with the relation of his figures to other academic fields, Sciarrino is subsequently finding the human experience in music. He takes the hard sciences and, while transforming their descriptive languages into describing art, attempts to deal directly with contemporary themes and languages in his own descriptions, noting, “languages transform themselves rapidly. And yet, a few figures of music remain recognizable for a long time in spite of their distant periods and styles.”²⁷ From Beethoven through the present day, society exists in a world of rapidly growing technology, increased noise levels, and an impersonal relationship with the contemporary arts. With Sciarrino's unique method of analysis, he attempts to create a more holistic approach to discovering how the modern listener or viewer can experience and relate to art. Analysis becomes a manner in which to discuss the experience of the audience, the performer, and the composer.

²⁶ Salvatore Sciarrino, “Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” 135-6. In response to being asked about the ideal analysis of his music.

²⁷ Salvatore Sciarrino *Le figure della musica: da Beethoven a oggi* (Milan: Ricordi, 1998), 22, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2006), 16.

2.4 Description of the five “figures”

Accumulation and Multiplication:

Both of these figures relate to growth and are very similar. Giacco writes that, “Accumulation and multiplication are two aspects of the same principle of organization that is very close to our physiology and of nature in general: growth.”²⁸ With growth arises a beginning from *niente*, or space. The concept of space (silence) resounds throughout Sciarrino’s œuvre, and from that stillness comes different types of growth. Wassily Kandinsky writes of extremely similar concepts in *Point and Line to Plane*:

Also, in nature’s unmixed realm, this accumulation of points occurs frequently; it is invariably purposeful and organically necessary. These nature forms are in reality small space particles and carry the same relationship to the abstract (geometric) point as to the pictorial. However, the whole “world” can, on the other hand, be looked upon as a self-contained cosmic composition which, in turn, is composed of an endless number of independent compositions, always self contained even when getting smaller and smaller. In the final analysis, all of these—large or small, have been originated from points, to which point—in its original geometric essence—everything returns.²⁹

Kandinsky speaks of the concept of growth in nature, specifically that of accumulating points. Similarly, Sciarrino’s idea of his music is intrinsically tied to his views on nature. His music explores the “passage” from stillness to fullness; rather than residing in one extreme or the other, the movement and the journey are important. It is a change from an initial state to a final condition. It is the “growth of elements, of articulation, of energy, sound . . .

²⁸ “L’accumulation et la multiplication sont deux aspects d’un même principe d’organisation qui est très proche de notre physiologie et de la nature en général : la croissance.” Giacco, *La notion de “figure,”* 85.

²⁹ Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane* (New York: Dover Publications, 1979), 38-9.

of density. To pass from the empty to the full means to fill the space.”³⁰ Emptiness and its presence, and the moving toward and away from such emptiness, are central concepts in Sciarrino’s music because they pertain to the way in which we experience nature. He describes accumulation as he sees it in everyday life:

The processes of accumulation strike our eyes every day. During his lifetime, man incessantly accumulates around himself: trash, things, experiences. Any perceivable field gives us an idea of this process: the world, in itself, might it not be an unfolding expansion? At the end of a listening, haven’t we accumulated signals and stimuli and tensions in our memory? Accumulation is a process so attached to our physiology that one can suppose it inherent in the functioning of our spirit. It is pertinent, then, to refer to specific examples. Returning to the city from the country, one may notice the irregular gathering of houses. . . . It begins to rain, and we look at the floor of our balcony: the drops are scarce and separated by dry zones; then, the whole surface is filled. With all positive growth there is a corresponding negative one. While the houses gather, vegetation diminishes, as when rain falls dry spaces are reduced. Therefore, in relation to the wetness we have passed from an initial rarefied situation to a final saturated situation. The passage from a lesser density to a greater density constitutes a process of accumulation.³¹

It is the randomness in the day to day, in the actions of nature. With the accumulation of experience, growth, or density comes a negative space, a film negative if you will, a diminishing of space or silence. Sciarrino’s concept of accumulation deals with growth in a more chaotic, heterogeneous manner, while in multiplication the development is much more regulated. These two are very closely related, apart from their degree of chaos.

Accumulation is untidy growth, while multiplication is a much more ordered process. “The passage from a lesser density to a greater density constitutes a process of accumulation.”³²

Events grow in a chaotic way, and while augmenting also lose an aspect of themselves.

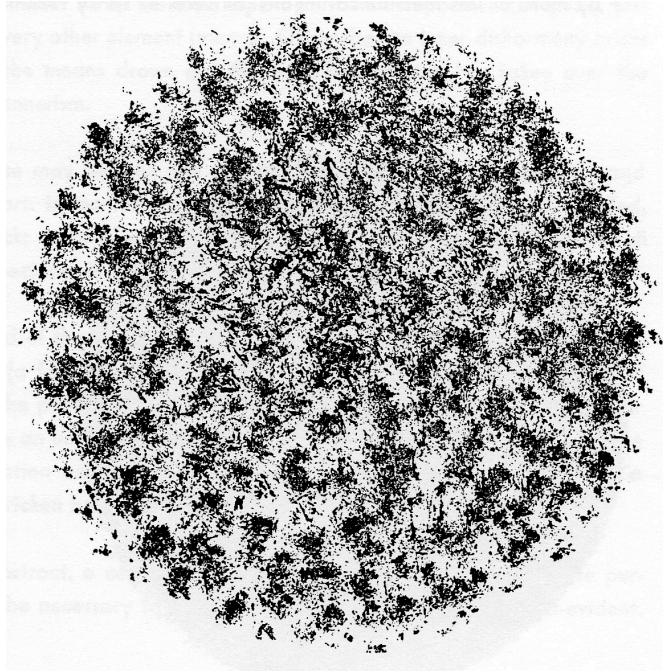
³⁰ “. . . croissance d’éléments, d’articulation, d’énergie sonore [...] de densité. Passer du vide au plein signifie remplir l’espace.” Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 27, as quoted in Giacco, *La notion de “figure,”* 85.

³¹ Sciarrino, *Le figure della music*, 28, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 26.

³² “Il passaggio da una minore densità di eventi a una maggiore costituisce un processo di accumulazione.” Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 28.

Sciarrino defines the process of accumulation as a chaotic and heterogeneous growth, tending toward “a point of saturation or rupture in anticipation of an explosion in which the energy is dispersed.”³³

In each of his musical examples, Sciarrino shows this tendency toward frenzied growth. This mirrors the images of Kandinsky’s example of “Concentric complex of points of free form,” shown in Example 2-1.³⁴ The points expand outward in a chaotic, seemingly random fashion. Sciarrino’s graph of the beginning of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony shown in Example 2-1 displays similarities in the growth of the music to Kandinsky’s accumulation of free form points.

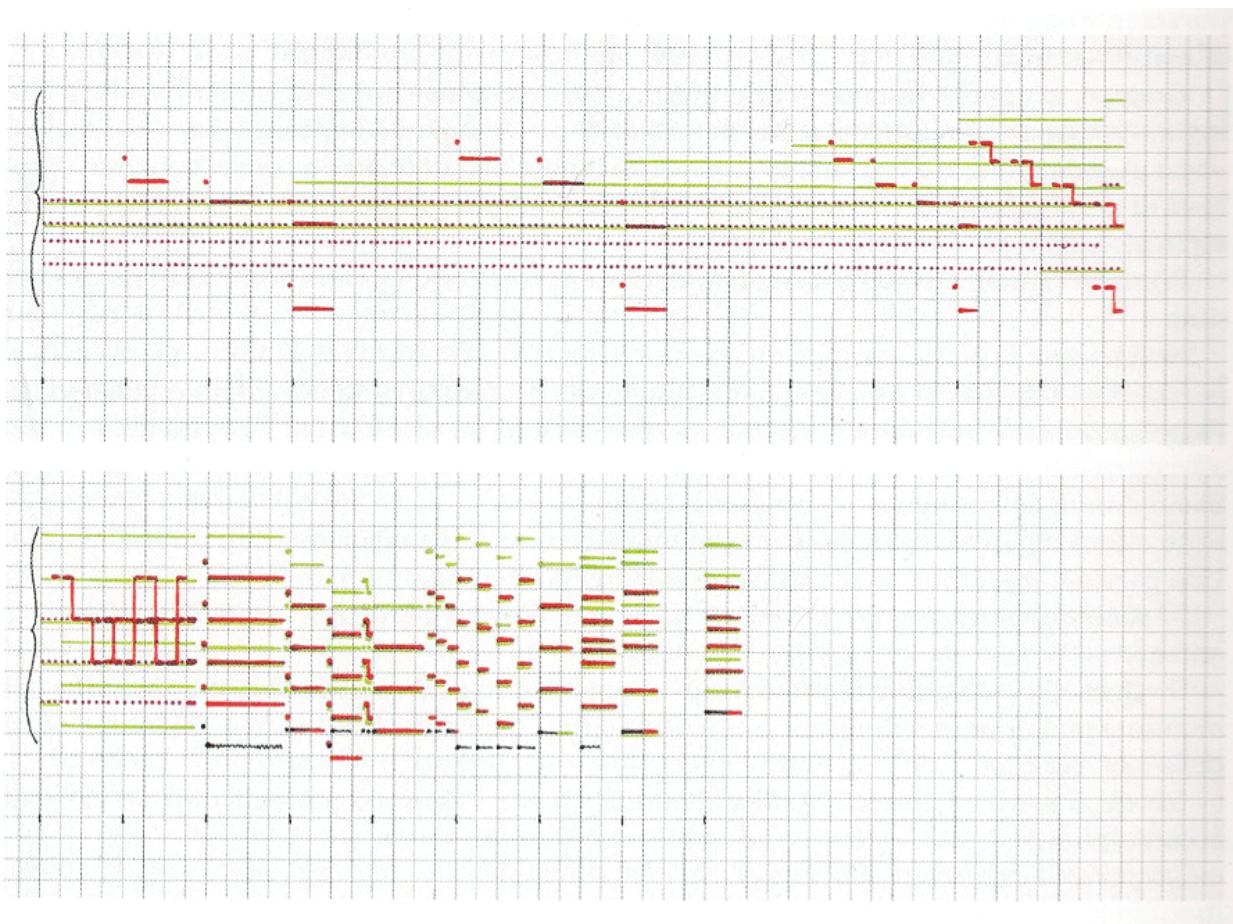


Example 2-1. Kandinsky’s “Concentric complex of points of free form.”³⁵

³³ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 27, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 25.

³⁴ Sciarrino points out musical examples of accumulation in: the Prologue to Wagner’s *Rheingold*, the finale of Act II of his *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the second of Debussy’s *Trois Nocturnes*, the introduction to Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*, Rossini’s *Barber of Seville* Symphony, Stockhausen’s *Kontra-Punkte* and *Gruppen*.

³⁵ Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, 51.



Example 2-2. Sciarrino's graph of the opening to the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9³⁶

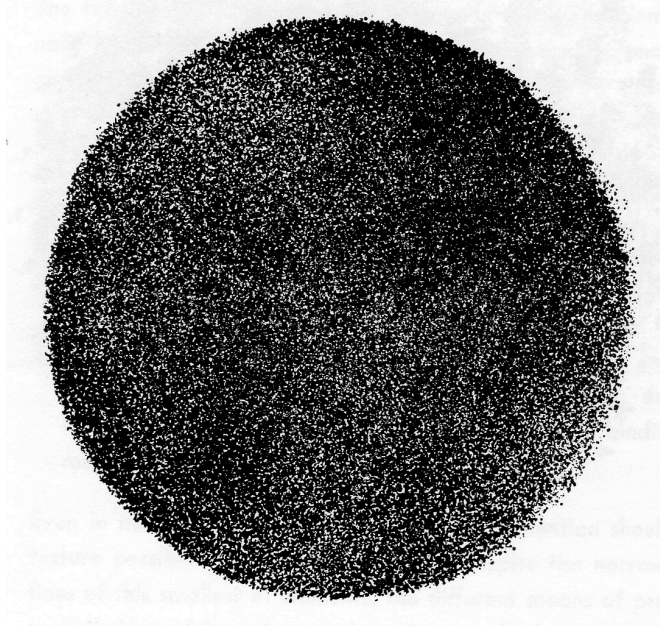
The process of growth here is gradual, yet does not feel ordered. The woodwinds (green) grow in intensity and strings (red) enter at surprising moments growing more dense as everything comes to meet on the tutti chord in measure 16.

When growth occurs in a more regulated and expanding manner, Sciarrino uses the term multiplication. The difference between accumulation and multiplication is clear in Kandinsky images of circles in *Point and Line to Plane*. In multiplication, a large point forms from several smaller points (see Example 2-3), as opposed to Kandinsky's

³⁶ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 30.

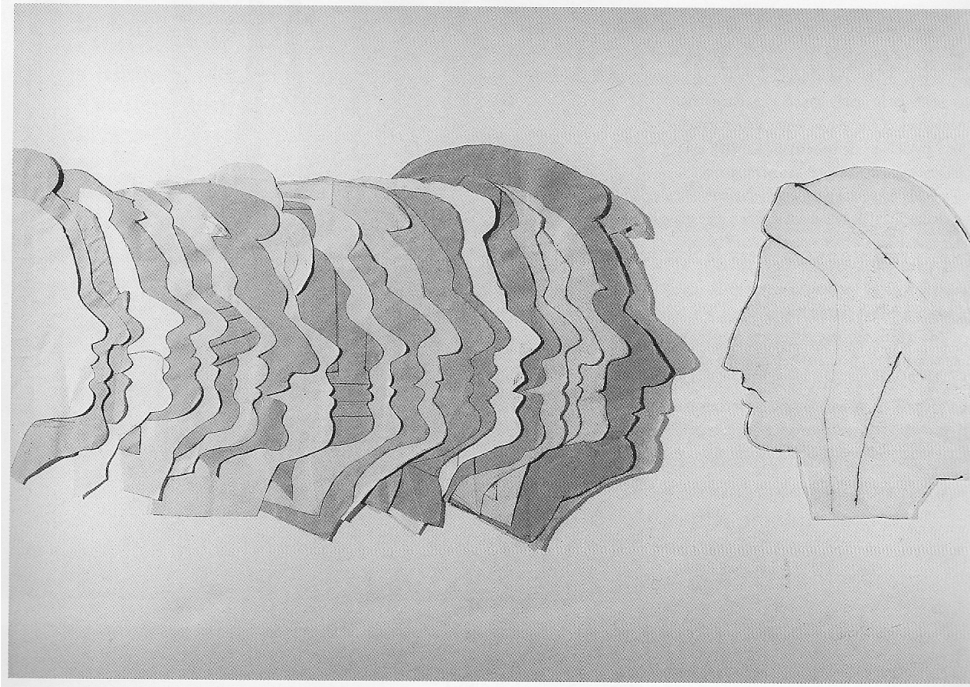
version of accumulation, in which free-formed points form a “concentric complex.”

Multiplication is a more uniform version of accumulation. Gestures and their subsequent music grow in density in a regulated way.



Example 2-3. Kandinsky's "A large point formed out of small points"³⁷

³⁷ Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, 52.



Example 2-4. Mario Ceroli, *I poeti* (1965): an example of multiplication

Mario Ceroli, sculptor and set designer, was highly influenced by pop art, which can be seen in his repetitions of human figures in Example 2-4. In each repetition there is growth and change in a highly rhythmic, even way.³⁸ Andy Warhol achieves similar effects with his iconic paintings of Campbell's soup cans.

The clearest musical example that relates to this growth and change is the fugue, as Sciarrino points out:

The idea of the Fugue resides in this mixture of theme and homogeneous weaving. Or, more precisely, in the emergence of the recognizable theme against a changing and varied background. . . . The gradual entrance of the voices constitutes a process of regular, homogeneous, proportional

³⁸ In this painting (as in the concept of multiplication) one theme emerges out of a static background, from Dante's face facing the left in thin tissue paper to the faces in heavier, darker paper on the other side (friends of Ceroli). The figures pose a question as they multiply: are they "in awe of the legendary figure, or confirms the unparalleled superiority of life over story?" Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 44.

accumulation (because substantially modular, that is, periodic and repetitive). That is the process of multiplication.³⁹

Multiplication occurs in many of the flute pieces; Sciarrino composes static backgrounds and out of them emerge specific gestures at greater density. Examples of multiplication that Sciarrino mentions include: fugues, the *Allegro assai vivace. Alla Marcia* from the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the beginning of the third movement of Mahler's First Symphony, and *Daphnis et Chloé*. "Ravel is an example of a small process of multiplication happening within a larger process of multiplication to create what Sciarrino calls 'the phenomenon of perceptive ambiguity.'"⁴⁰

Genetic transformations:

Genetic transformation is a term from molecular biology referring to the altering of cells in order to change their genetic material (DNA). Sciarrino once again defers to the realm of science for words to use his own field. Genetic transformations in music are processes of change (as opposed to creation), and occur freely in modern music.

The way in which the gestures are kept alive is through what Sciarrino calls *genetic transformation*. This occurs on two levels: the events themselves (and elements within) are in constant motion, in constant development, while maintaining their original identities – this is genetic transformation on the gestural (or element) level.⁴¹

³⁹ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 42, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 29.

⁴⁰ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 52, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 30.

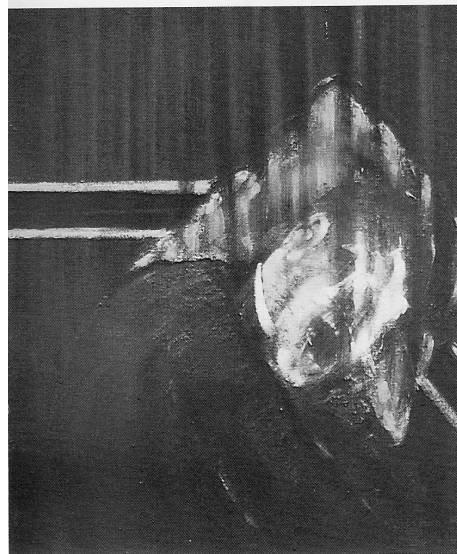
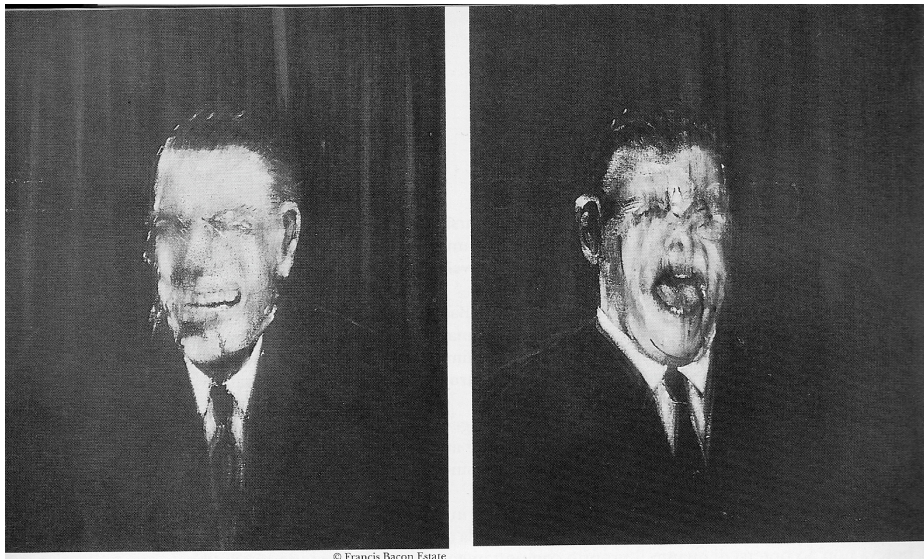
⁴¹ Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 92.

The change in the music is created by a mutative impulse. As a way of explaining many of these free transitions in today's music, Sciarrino writes, "In this way, we induce the idea of a large quantity of transformations, a quantity that becomes qualitative mutation," in a work.⁴²

Sciarrino notes many more visual examples than musical ones. Genetic transformations seem to appear more exclusively in recent music than the other figures, although Sciarrino gives Beethoven as one example. In nineteenth-century Persian rugs, we see "a kind of intuitive, physiological improvisation."⁴³ There is a repetition in them through which change emerges. *Three Studies of the Human Head* by Francis Bacon shows how one can see in the three panels the transformation of a man's face (see Example 2-5). First, it is representative and clear, and progresses through the triptych to the destruction and reversal of what is human/recognizable. The man's suit is disappearing into the dark background, and in the third his face is extremely blurred into the background as well, a process that changed gradually from the relative clarity of the first panel. This triptych could be seen as a theme, the face, and mutating variations, crumbling and devolving.

⁴² Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 79, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 31.

⁴³ Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 32-3.



Example 2-5. Francis Bacon, *Three Studies of the Human Head* (1953); example of genetic transformation⁴⁴

The clearest musical example of genetic transformations is theme and variations, as in the fourth movement of Beethoven's String Quartet op. 131.⁴⁵ Instead of a common halting feel between variations, Beethoven's variations "pursue a continuous flow of music"

⁴⁴ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 86.

⁴⁵ Other examples given in *Le figure della musica* are: Gérard Grisey, *Prologue* and in the pointillism of the beginning to Stockhausen, *Kontra-Punkte*.

(“perseguire un flusso continuo di musica”).⁴⁶ Sciarrino’s graph of the theme, first variation, and part of the second, shows a slow transformation of the material that evokes a Sol LeWitt wall drawing. One of the leaders in the Minimalist art movement, LeWitt’s wall drawings are prime examples of subtle changes in imagery contributing to a whole.

Steve Reich’s *Come Out* shows how faint alterations in music can take the listener to a very different aural place. The beginning starts out with a very clear articulation of a sentence, which (as in the Bacon painting) devolves and overlaps itself over time.

On a microscopic level, the metamorphosis is hardly perceptible, but “we lose ourselves in the flowing motion, . . . finding ourselves being carried far away from the human voice we originally started with.”⁴⁷

Minimalism is largely a reflection of genetic transformations in music. These subtle changes in the surface of the music affect how the listener perceives identical or extremely similar material. Sciarrino’s music is rife with these delicate changes yet is more steeped in the heritage of Western forms. The genetic transformations are simply one aspect of his composition without excluding other techniques, leading to a highly individualized style. As music courses ahead, it alters and evolves while almost suggesting stasis; “the music tends toward an uninterrupted flow of contractions and dilations, accumulations and rarefactions.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 84.

⁴⁷ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 83, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 32.

⁴⁸ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 95, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 32.

Little bang:

Little bang, unlike the four other figures, pertains more to localized events in music, quicker changes that can occur suddenly, as opposed to the deeper formal elements of the other figures. Sciarrino, always fascinated by the natural and scientific world, clearly derived little bang from the 1927 Big Bang theory.⁴⁹ As Giacco points out, it is not the science of the theory but the image derived from the concept.⁵⁰ She defines Sciarrino's "little bang" as follows:

The moment where a *triggering element* produces a change from one situation to another (for example, from a situation of stagnation, of standstill, to a situation of movement).⁵¹

Sciarrino draws on a haiku from the great seventeenth century poet Bāsho to show how little bang creates change:

The ancient pond
A frog leaps in
The sound of water.⁵²

Here Bāsho creates the atmosphere of stillness, calm, and the eternal in the first line. With the second line a sudden moment of change disrupts the previous state and with it the eternity of the moment, creating the impetus for the final line of the poem, which links the two previous ones in a moment of sensory immersion in timelessness. "In our perception is

⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that Frederic Rzewski also uses the term "little bang," although in the very different context of improvisation. See his "Little Bangs: A Nihilistic Theory of Improvisation," *Current Musicology* 67/68 (2002), 377-86.

⁵⁰ Giacco, La notion de "figure," 97.

⁵¹ "Le moment où un *élément déclencheur* produit un changement d'une situation à une autre (par exemple, d'une situation de stagnation, d'arrêt, à une situation de mouvement)." Ibid., 97-8.

⁵² "L'antico stagno / salta una rana / rumore d'acqua." Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 70.

the inherent need to connect. . . .”⁵³ This happens with events in our daily lives, poetry, and most certainly music.

A lighthearted example that Sciarrino notes is cartoon music to a Walt Disney cartoon featuring Goofy. Sudden changes in the music set off actions in the animation. Occurrences of little bang arrive as the impetus for other event to occur, even when the event happens at the end of a piece or large section, as in the final chord of the finale from Act II of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*—Sciarrino marks the tutti, orchestral chord off with a dramatic red rectangle showing the emphasis on the complete change of spatial-temporal moment—or when the event is soft, as Sciarrino points out occurs in his *Sonata II* for piano.⁵⁴ Here the thicker density is what marks off these moments, rich instances of change that send the piano off on virtuosic murmurings before being cut off once more by another battering of transformation. Despite the seeming disconnect of these outbursts (loud or soft), we hear them as connecting elements between them and the other flowing gestures.

Sciarrino writes about two types of little bang. The first is “an unforeseen event that intervenes in a static musical situation, not without consequences”⁵⁵ Sciarrino’s music is rife with these events. Each of the flute works, as we shall see in the next chapter, contains instances of stasis, interrupted by a new sonic gesture (and a different extended technique) that begins a move away from the inert motion. The other is an “explosion and the fragments it throws” (“l’esplosione e i frammenti che essa scaglia”), as in the opening of the

⁵³ “Nella nostra percezione è insito il bisogno di collegare...” Ibid., 68.

⁵⁴ See Ibid., 74.

⁵⁵ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 68, as quoted in Song, “Writing the Sonic Experience,” 37.

first movement of Pierre Boulez's *Pli selon pli*.⁵⁶ The opening chord shocks the system and is followed by a long trail of sound decay as the chord resonates. In this piece the explosion is more akin to a "big bang," a qualifier that Sciarrino applies to this figure, as the proportions of the explosions can change.

Windows form:

Windows form is a polyphonic approach to time. As in multiple windows in a video game or a computer screen, one is able to see multiple presences simultaneously running together while still occurring in their separate existences. As Jonathan Kramer points out, in our current society, we live in a time of "temporal multiplicity."

We are preoccupied with time, but it does not seem to be an immutable force. We manipulate . . . time rather than submit to it. Clocks are everywhere, declaring the pervasiveness of "real" time. . . . Not only are we concerned with compartmentalizing and manipulating the pervasive "now," but also we are more oriented toward the future and the past than were previous generations. . . . The future has invaded the present. Yet our age is also steeped in historical consciousness, from nostalgic reminiscences to reactionary politics to scholarly interests in the past.⁵⁷

This idea of being in one place yet feeling directed simultaneously in different directions and times is the spatial-temporal discontinuity to which Sciarrino refers with this figure. As he introduces windows form, Sciarrino's ideas closely resonate with Kramer discussion of discontinuity and other aspects of time in music.

⁵⁶ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 68.

⁵⁷ Jonathan Kramer, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988), 163.

Today, time does not flow as in the past: it has become discontinuous, relative, variable.

Variable: as we move from one end of the world to another, we compress and dilate time.

Relative: we can communicate with distant countries where, at the same time, watches indicate a different time.

Discontinuous: we can stop time, interrupt it – by simply taking a photograph. In looking at it afterwards, we insert, in our present, a rectangle from the past.⁵⁸

In Sciarrino's music one can hear all of these manipulations of time in music.

Song defines windows form as, "A form of overlapping events intruding upon and interrupting each other, which for Sciarrino, always implies the double qualification spatial-temporal."⁵⁹ Added to this is the ability for each of the events to continue in its own timeline, regardless of the other layers around it. Examples of this abound in pop culture: film, computer games, comic strips, and windows on computers.⁶⁰

In the final analysis, our children use windows form in daily life, with a great deal of naturalness: when in video games you have to take a trip, in the entire screen it is the present moment, while in a smaller rectangle, there is that which we did and that which we still have to do. That was to say that the same thing is lived with relativity: it's as if one were in the live moment, but also very distant from this moment, by seeing it nevertheless all as a whole. At the end of the day, it is nothing other than Einstein's conception of time. It is like when we look at a photograph and there is interference between the image in front of us, elsewhere, and the present that surrounds us.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 97, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 19.

⁵⁹ Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 20.

⁶⁰ It is interesting to note that Sciarrino developed the terminology before the Windows operating system came into existence. "I used the terminology 'windows form' ten years before the Windows did, and precisely at the end of the 70s, during my classes at *Città di Castello*." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 264.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 265.

Another Italian composer, Donatoni, resonates with the idea of Sciarrino's windows form when he speaks of panels in compositions.⁶² Despite the fact that today we are used to seeing the world in this manner, there are many older examples of windows form in art.

For Sciarrino, windows form in the arts began with Michaelangelo and Beethoven,

in particular with the creation of the *Tombes de Médicis*. . . Personally, at the time of all my visits, I had felt a disagreeable sensation; I always felt the disconnect between the world of the sculptures and the world of the architecture. . . . They give the impression of being placed there temporarily: the two elements touch but they don't have a relationship between themselves. It is the principle of windows form.⁶³

While the realization of the architecture and the sculpting took place concurrently, they still exist on two different levels and do not seem concerned with the style of the other, resulting in contradicting curves between those of the statues and those of the architecture.

A more recent example in art is Max Ernst's *Il giardino di Francia*, shown in Example 2-6.

⁶² Sciarrino, however, claims that the concept of windows form is more in keeping with Stockhausen than with Donatoni. See Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 264.

⁶³ Ibid., 265.



Example 2-6 Max Ernst, *The Garden of France* (1962)

In this painting we see different levels of the spatial-temporal discontinuity. Along with the ironic map-like image appears, “a parallel dimension, painted with impeccable technique of the past” (“una dimensione parallela, dipinta con impeccabile tecnica d’altri tempi”).⁶⁴

There are two different levels of consistencies, yet they coexist in this painting.

This technique can be seen in literature quite often, from the spatial-temporal discontinuity of Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* to the poetry of Emily Dickinson.⁶⁵ In Dickinson’s poetry, her frequent use of the em-dash allows for this spatial-temporal discontinuity in words. Her habit of using varieties of strange and unconventional dash-like

⁶⁴ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 98.

⁶⁵ In her most experimental novel, Woolf creates a series of “presents” through the voice. Using soliloquies, the voice jumps around to the various characters at various places in the narrative, while eventually gleaning the truth to one sequence of events that exists in many different ways at the same time.

symbols contributes to this feeling of disrupting worlds that are moving in a parallel manner. Sciarrino brings attention to her poem “As if the Sea Should Part.”

As if the Sea should part
And show a further Sea—
And that—a further—and the Three
But a presumption be—

Of Periods of Seas—
Unvisited of Shores—
Themselves the Verge of Seas to be—
Eternity—is Those—⁶⁶

Sciarrino delights that in this poem, “we discover a universe in layers that can be peeled like an onion.”⁶⁷ The reader is introduced to the current seas before them, but those seas unfold to reveal eternity in the present. The present glides in and out around the past. “To enter and exit. This is precisely the mechanism of windows form, the mechanism of our mind.”⁶⁸

Sciarrino shows numerous examples of windows form in his book.⁶⁹ In Helmut Lachenmann’s *Salut für Caudwell* for two guitars, each guitarist plays in a different sound world, speaking over and through each other, evoking discontinuous time. Stockhausen’s *Kontakte* is a montage of different elements. “Stockhausen did not record anything in the outside world; he has recreated it in the studio. In the studio arose the echoes of reality.”⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Boston: Bay Back Books, 1961), 740.

⁶⁷ “Scopriamo un universo a strati che può essere sfogliato come una cipolla.” Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 127.

⁶⁸ “Entrare e uscire. Questo il meccanismo della forma a finestre, il meccanismo della nostra mente.” Ibid., 145.

⁶⁹ Other examples of windows form, according to Sciarrino, appear in: Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, the beginning of the fourth movement and the second movement; Beethoven, String Quartet op. 131, Presto; Beethoven, Eighth Symphony, beginning of the fourth movement; Mahler, First Symphony, first movement; Stockhausen, *Hymnen*, *Kontakte*, and *Momente*; Sciarrino, *Cadenzario* and *Efebo con radio*.

⁷⁰ “Stockhausen non ha registrato nulla del mondo esterno, egli lo ha ricreato in studio. In studio ha suscitato gli echi della realtà.” Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 123.

In “recreating the world” in short, artificial segments, alternate realities come about. In his own work for solo flute, *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*, the short, weak percussive sounds butt against an entirely different powerful gesture, leading us to hear the piece on two different planes.

Even the instrumentation in many of Sciarrino’s orchestral works could be seen as an example of windows forms. His orchestral pieces “are in keeping with the generous standards of a late Romantic symphony, which satisfy the higher expectations of a modern audience with regard to sheer volume.”⁷¹ These forces emit sounds bordering on the audible, creating music with a concomitant visual presence, existing in two places in music history at once.

Each of these figures are recognizable in Sciarrino’s music. The listener perceives the multiple temporalities, growth, subtle transformations, and strange outbursts. In the next chapter, I will give brief analysis of each of the seven works in *L’opera per flauto*. While I discuss the various figures in each piece, I focus on the qualities of his sound materials and the form in his music.

⁷¹ Martina Seeber, notes to Salvatore Sciarrino *Orchestral Works* (2008), CD, KAIROS Production 0012802KAI, 10.

Chapter 3: The Works for Flute

This chapter briefly analyzes the flute works in *L'opera per flauto: All'aure in una lontananza, Hermes, Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?, Canzona di ringraziamento, Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono, L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton, and Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi* using Sciarrino's analytical tools, his figures. As most of his flute works are unmeasured, with the exception of *Fra i testi*, I will refer to musical examples either by their timings according to the Roberto Fabbriciani recording or by their page, system, and the significant feature of the beginning of the passage.¹ Thus, a passage beginning on the jet whistle on the second line of the second page of *Come vengono* would be: 13-2-jet whistle.²

Francesco Giomi and Marco Ligabue analyze "The 'Enchanted' Sound Objects" in their paper "Come vengono."³ Sciarrino lauds them for graphing the listening experience of the piece in a way that shows the listening experience and arrives near the composer's goals. In fact, Sciarrino plans his pieces visually, plotting how different gestures and sound materials will interrelate on graphs that he keeps from the public view. "The graph helps you to project the whole, to combine it, superimpose it, fragment it, and much else."⁴ In the Curinga interview he says,

¹ Salvatore Sciarrino, *Fabbrica degli incantesimi*, Roberto Fabbriciani, flute (Col legno LC 07989), compact disc. This was the first recording of this set of pieces, and all of these pieces were composed for Fabbriciani.

² This method of labeling comes from Song's "Writing the Sonic Experience," in which she uses a similar method to show examples from the piano works.

³ Giomi and Ligabue, "The 'Enchanted Sound Objects,'" 411-26.

⁴ Sciarrino, "La genialità? Il segreto è nell'universo infantile." *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 2 (Apr.-June 1999), 229, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 15.

[Giomi and Ligabue] do not depart from the score, but in listening, translated it graphically. This graphing of the piece leads us, in practice, almost exactly to the initial diagram. It is an extremely significant approach, because it is completely beyond the official canon or even academic analysis, but somehow more relevant.⁵

Giomi's and Ligabue's charts are a model for those in this chapter.

3.1 Sciarrino's sound world

The nature of Sciarrino's music relies heavily on creating a new sound world, beyond manipulating pitches. His gestures are often more important than the pitches comprising them. According to Sciarrino, in approaching his music one should avoid solely quantitative analysis. When asked how his music should be analyzed, Sciarrino answered, "For me, a really useful analysis must violate all taboos, grapple with signification, render us conscious."⁶ His ideal analysis is much like his music, which violates the established ideas of sound. His solo flute pieces, as with much of his output, are steeped in extended techniques and strange sounds, but they do not feel like a simple pyrotechnical display, a common error with many pieces written solely for extended techniques. Sciarrino uses the flute's sounds toward a musical end, as opposed to using the music to display what the flute can do.

⁵ "Ils ne partent pas de la partition, mais de l'écoute, traduite en graphique. Cette graphisation du morceau nous conduit, en pratique, presque exactement au diagramme initial. C'est une approche extrêmement significative, car complètement au-delà des canons officiels ou même académiques de l'analyse, mais en quelque sorte plus pertinente." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 275.

⁶ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 135, as quoted in Song, "Writing the Sonic Experience," 210.

Narrative elements abound in these pieces. Not only does Sciarrino provide a narrative in each of these seven works, a common thread courses through the works in this set. The pieces in *L'opera* are interrelated through sound materials, form, and continuity of mythological and ancient references. The last piece, *Aton*, is an introduction to *All'aure*, the first, and there are companions throughout the collection.⁷ Indeed, through all of them are “referential relations” that connect these works and make them not only distinctively the works of Sciarrino, but clearly belonging to each other.⁸ With each composition he also responds technically to the previous work. “Salvatore Sciarrino’s notion of each of his works ‘correcting’ the last one” creates a sense of continuity both in the sound material used and the progression from one piece to the next.⁹ In *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi*, Sciarrino uses the multiphonics Fabbriani showed him for potential use in *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton. Canzona di ringraziamento* borrows the final material from *Come vengono gli incantesimi?* and develops it to capacity, fleshing out ideas that were not feasible in *Come vengono gli incantesimi?*. These commonalities connect the seven works in *L'opera*. Between the pieces there is “recurrence, association, restatement, and return,” using similar sound objects to transform the material into new collections reminiscent of what happened before.¹⁰

⁷ Sciarrino places *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton* as the “last” piece. Even though *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi* was written after *Aton*, it is a sort of encore to the others. It was an afterthought to the other six compositions with *Aton* fully completing the cycle.

⁸ Judy Lochhead, “Joan Tower's Wings and Breakfast Rhythms I and II: Some Thoughts on Form and Repetition,” *Perspectives of New Music* 30, No. 1 (Winter, 1992), 141. Lochhead uses the characteristic of recent music to find new ways to analyze contemporary works. In this analysis, she confronts the idea of structure and form in Tower’s piece and in new music in general.

⁹ Ian Pace, “Never to Be Naught” *The Musical Times* 138, No. 1857 (Nov., 1997), 20.

¹⁰ Lochhead, “Joan Tower's Wings and Breakfast Rhythms I and II,” 136.

While many of his pieces use rather traditional forms – borrowing on ternary, strophic, and rondo form, the listening experience is something different all together. Thomas writes of a need to listen for form in a new way in this music. “Sciarrino’s music demands not only the concentrated attention to microscopic sound effects, but also that one renounces traditional listening expectations – the search for form, dialectic, ‘meaning.’”¹¹ There are many extra musical associations in Sciarrino’s music, stemming from the evocative titles, as shown in Figure 3-1.

Figure 3-1. Titles with translations/explanations:

<i>All’Aure in una lontananza</i>	“To the aura in the distance”
<i>Hermes</i>	psychopomp, guide to the souls of the dead
<i>Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?</i>	“How are incantations produced?”
<i>Canzona di ringraziamento</i>	“Canzona (Song) of Thanks”
<i>Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono</i>	“Venus, may the Graces adorn her with flowers”
<i>L’orizzonte luminoso di Aton</i>	“The luminous horizon of Aton”
<i>Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi</i>	“Between the words dedicated to clouds”

Three of these seven titles refer directly to Greek and Egyptian mythology. The other pieces, while not directly tied to mythology, are still related to creation and magic. *All’aure in una lontananza* is about creation. *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?* is about magic (enchantments). *Canzona di ringraziamento* is song of thanks for the creation of the

¹¹ Thomas, “The Poetics of Extremity,” 194.

previous piece, and *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi* transforms a generally monophonic instrument into a massive chord producer.

Sciarrino's interest in mythology extends to an exploration of memory through the use of repetition and silence. His sounds that flutter around silence create a memory of sound. According to Pesson, repetition and memory are intertwined in Sciarrino's sound world.

[He] often insists on the role of memory in the formal perception of his works, introducing the listener into a cylindrical universe where each figure is repeated, early or late.¹²

Thus his works become pieces of mythology themselves; each is a creation myth of the beginning of a new sound realm.

Gavin Thomas writes about Sciarrino's sound materials: "Each motive is fixed like a tiny sculpture in sound. It does not progress or develop, like a natural phenomenon it simply *is*."¹³ Though small gestures are extremely important in Sciarrino's music, each sound sculpture develops from the one before. Often the sounds themselves create stasis in their repetition. Additionally, through the sound objects' repetition, change occurs subtly (genetic transformation) and slowly transforms the music into different sound materials, creating a deeper sense of form. Figure 3-2 shows the interconnectedness of the sounds in each of these pieces. These sounds are the materials used throughout his flute repertoire. While on the surface the sounds simply exist, they transform the musical space into a new creation and reconstruct the flute into the "superflute."

¹² "Sciarrino, qui a souvent insisté sur le rôle de la mémoire dans la perception formelle de ses œuvres, introduit l'auditeur dans un univers cylindrique où chaque figure sera répétée, tôt ou tard." Gérard Pesson, "Heraclite, Democrite et la meduse," *Entretiens* 9 (December 1990), 144.

¹³ Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity," 194.

Figure 3-2. Techniques divided by work

Name of piece	Techniques Used
<i>All'aure in una lontananza</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. covered air (a₁) 2. covered partial (a₂) 3. covered passing (a₄) 4. fluttered covered air (a₆) 5. jet whistle (a₅) 6. timbral trill (b₁)
<i>Hermes</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. jet whistle (a₅) 2. timbral trill (b₁) 3. melodic harmonic series (b₂) 4. natural harmonic-based chords (b₃) 5. tongue ram (c₁)
<i>Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jet whistle (a₅) 2. melodic harmonic series (b₂) 3. natural harmonic-based chords (b₃) 4. fingered trill glissando (b₄) 5. G shimmer (b₅) 6. fingered glissando while holding main note (b₆) 7. tongue ram (c₁)
<i>Canzona di ringraziamento</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fingered trill glissando (b₄) 2. G shimmer (b₅) 3. fingered glissando while holding main note (b₆) 4. timbral trill (b₁) 5. melodic harmonic series (b₂)
<i>Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. covered air (a₁) 2. covered partial (a₂) 3. jet whistle (a₅) 4. vibrato on high partial (a₇) 5. covered passing (a₄) 6. tongue ram (c₁) 7. key click (c₂)
<i>L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. exhalation (a₈) 2. inhalation (a₉) 3. coughing (a₁₀) 4. timbral trill (b₁) 5. natural harmonic-based chords (b₃) 6. fingered trill glissando (b₄) 7. fingered multiphonics (b₈) 8. tongue ram (c₁)
<i>Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fluttered covered air (a₆) 2. tongue ram (c₁) 3. key click (c₂) 4. natural harmonic-based chords (b₃) 5. fingered multiphonics (b₈) 6. covered whistle tones (a₃)

3.2 Analysis

What follows are brief examinations of each of these seven pieces.

All'aure in una lontananza

What is stillness? It is in no way merely the soundless. In soundlessness there persists merely a lack of the motion of entoning, sounding. . . . As the stilling of stillness, rest, conceived strictly, is always more in motion than all motion and always more restlessly active than any agitation.¹⁴

As is often the case with Sciarrino's music, *All'aure in una lontananza* ("To the aura in the distance") teeters on the threshold of the audible, while a great quantity of action and sound occur simultaneously. The hush in many of his pieces allows the performer to draw the audience into Sciarrino's world, while also creating an awareness of the outside, ambient world happening around them. Despite Sciarrino's fascination with silence, there are very few moments when pure silence actually appears in his flute pieces. The silence that the listener perceives comes from the ghost-like, hushed sounds that create the illusion of silence, a memory of what silence is. The performer is meanwhile in a great state of motion and agitation, fluttering around the edge of sound.

All'aure was written in 1977 for the flutist Roberto Fabbriciani to be played on either alto flute or C flute. While Sciarrino had previously written music for the flute within an ensemble, his first solo for the instrument marks a new beginning in his writing. "I had the notion to restart at the beginning, because the piece started from the rhythm of the

¹⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 206-7.

breath and represented the cosmogony of the flute.”¹⁵ The flute’s creation as an instrument and its sound production are both reliant on the breath. Sciarrino’s flute creation myth begins with shadows of sounds, using covered air sounds, establishing a new realm from which to cleanse the ears of his audience.

The title is taken, in altered form, from the sonnet *In una lontananza* by the Renaissance poet Cavalier Marino. The poem’s last line is “Without my two and only stars, to mine eyes, the stars do not shine nor, far from my sun, does the sun shed any light on me.”¹⁶ The darkness of the poem coincides with the setting in which the piece was written. Sciarrino says that “perhaps by chance, but significantly nonetheless, *All’aure in una lontananza* was begun during an off-season visit to Capri during the melancholic days of a somewhat rainy spring.”¹⁷ In the music, one could easily perceive the imagery of fog or mist clouding over human action. In this piece, introverted and thoughtful lyricism contrasts with more anxious and eerie air sounds.

¹⁵ “J’avais l’impression de recommencer du début, car la pièce partait du rythme de la respiration et représentait la cosmogonie de la flûte.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 260.

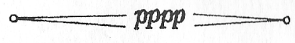
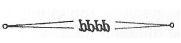
¹⁶ *In una lontananza*.

Già non poss’io, per girne ove non splende
l’ardente de’ begli occhi amato lume
e varcar peregrino o poggio o fiume,
sottrarmi al grave ardor che ’n me s’apprendre.
Anzi, se da la fiamma, che l’offende,
allontanarsi il cor tenta e presume,
fa com’augel che ’l foco ha ne le piume,
che quanto fugge più, vie più l’accende.
E pur (sì dolce ard’io) de le facelle,
onde mi strugge Amor più che non sòle,
vago, mirar non so luci men belle.
Senza le mie due stelle uniche e sole
non son lucenti agli occhi miei le stelle,
né lunge dal mio sol m’è chiaro il sole.

¹⁷ Luisella Botteon, “The Œuvre for Solo Flute” trans. by Steven Lindberg in accompanying booklet, *Fabbrica degli incantesimi* performed by Roberto Fabbriciani. Col legno LC 07989, compact disc.

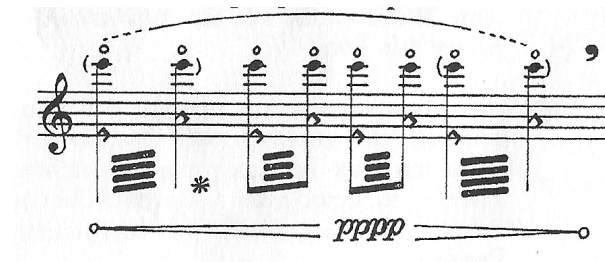
All'aure in una lontananza divides into three distinct sections, designated by both their sound materials and the pitch relationships. Section I lasts for five-and-a-half minutes, half the length of the piece. Section II is a development of the less prominent sounds heard in Section I. The pitch center moves, and there is a dramatic shift in the foreground of the piece. Section III returns to material found in Section I, this time shortened greatly, both in the duration of the section itself (there is no repeat in this final section) and in the truncation of gestures. The result resembles A, B, A¹, or ternary form, as shown in Figure 3-3, giving the memory of earlier music, a mutated version of what came before, a common thread in Sciarrino's oeuvre.

Figure 3-3. *All'aure in una lontananza*

Section	Section I (A)	Section II (B)	Section III (A ¹)
Pitch center	E	D	E-flat
Mass/makeup	b ₁ = foreground ¹⁸ a ₁ , a ₂ = background	a ₁ , a ₂ = foreground b ₁ = background	b ₁ = foreground a ₁ , a ₂ = background
Dynamics	Predominantly  with a few <i>cresc.</i> to louder dynamics (<i>mp</i> , <i>mf</i> , <i>f</i> , <i>sf</i>)	Louder. Predominant <i>cresc.</i> to <i>p</i> or <i>f</i>	Predominantly  with fewer large <i>cresc.</i>
Timing	0'00"	5'34"	8'28"

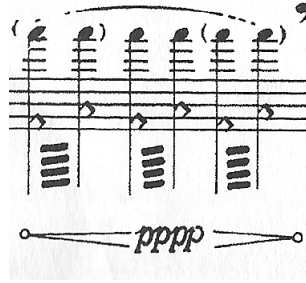
¹⁸ In this instance, I am using the original meanings of foreground, middleground, and background and am not referencing their Schenkerian meanings.

Sciarrino uses three groups of sound materials in *All'aure*, and their presence delineates the sections of the piece. They are: (a) harmonics, (b) air, and (c) jet whistles, all of them broken up into subcategories of materials. The piece is primarily based on harmonics; these sounds create both stasis and the move away from stasis in this piece. Stasis is created by returning constantly to harmonic timbral trills on the stasis tone (see Example 3-1), giving the impression of stillness in the trills, and the rest of the piece interacts with this immobility.



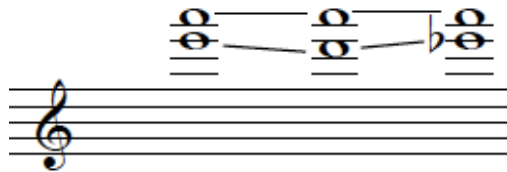
Example 3-1. (b₁) Timbral trills on stasis pitch

The stasis tones move E-D-E-flat in the three sections of the piece. The closeness of these central pitches aids in the smoothness of the genetic transformation between sections, morphing almost unnoticeably between the foreground sounds. The interplay between the timbral trill on stasis pitches and the timbral trill on non-stasis pitches (Example 3-2) is integral to the piece, giving a sense of the melancholic stasis of the rain.



Example 3-2. (b₁) Timbral trill on non-stasis pitch

In the A section, the E to A relationship is paramount (perfect fourth), and this shifts in the B section to D to A (perfect fifth), and in the C section E-flat to A (tritone) is important, moving the farthest away in the harmonic series upon which the piece is formed. The focus on the central pitch of E and its relationship to the A a fourth above is outlined in Example 3-3.

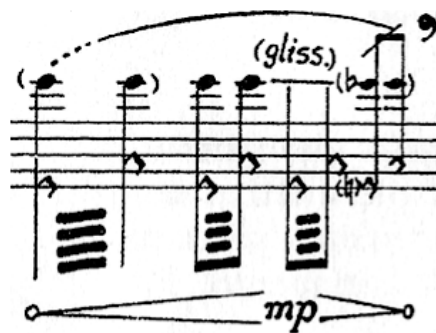


Example 3-3. Voice leading of the three sections of *All'aure in una lontananza*

Subterranean (especially when performed on alto or bass flute) air sounds punctuate the stasis, resulting in a transformative interface of the sound material to that of Section II, where air sounds predominate.¹⁹ *Glissandi* to or from stasis mark the genetic transformation on a “cellular level” of the pitch falling or rising to an approximated new level (see Example 3-4). The harmonic sound material that contains the most motion is the

¹⁹ Giomi and Ligabue offer the idea of interface among the main sections when discussing *Come vengono*. Interface sections “represent places where sound material is ‘exchanged.’ Their function is to anticipate or recall material from the other sections of the musical narration.” Giomi and Ligabue, “The ‘Enchanted Sound Objects,’” 413.

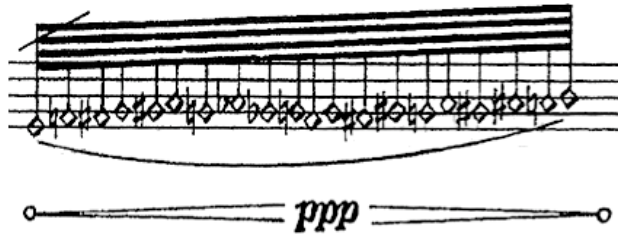
quick, trembling harmonic gesture, creating a flurry of commotion usually surrounded by much more static sounds (see Example 3-5). The other main sound materials of the piece are pitched air sounds (see Example 3-6), created by completely covering the aperture of the mouthpiece and blowing very softly, emitting a tone a seventh below the written pitch, giving the piece, which has stayed in the upper register, some weight in the lower tessitura.



Example 3-4. (a₃) Glissando to or from stasis



Example 3-5. (a₄) Quick, trembling harmonic gestures



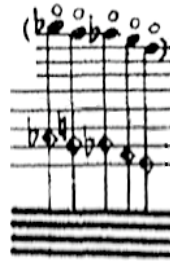
Example 3-6. (a₁) Covered air sounds (sounds a seventh below written pitch)

In Sections I and III, we hear the static harmonic timbral trills as the foreground of the piece, creating a sense of white noise. The introduction of covered air sounds that then become the main material later is an example of genetic transformation. The covered air sounds are introduced slowly until they take over as the main motive of Section II. The timbral trills continue through the new sounds, but now they are subordinate to the covered air sounds. When the timbral trills return as the basis of the last section, it is as though they were in the background the whole time, emerging this time with no breath mark (used to demarcate most phrases in this piece) to introduce Section III.

There are two other related sounds, involving whistling tones. High partials create faint, high pitches with the mouthpiece covered (see Example 3-7). Moving between these two sounds creates a transition effect and an eerie and airy sound that hints at the higher partials (see Example 3-8), which Sciarrino notates as a black and white diamond. Moving toward these sounds intertwines the harmonics and the air tones.

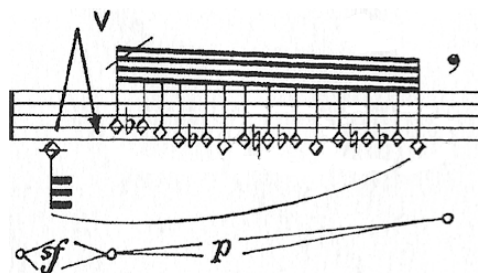


Example 3-7. (a₂) Covered and angled to achieve whistle tones (sounds 2 octaves higher than written)



Example 3-8. (a₄) As above but angling towards getting whistle tones

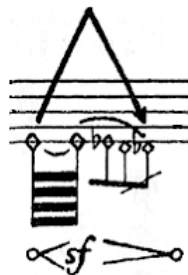
The next type of sound materials, jet whistles, adds explosions of sound and impetus toward motion (little bang). Pure jet whistles are generally the trigger for a new phrase, usually in the air category (See Example 3-9). The first occurrence, however, moves to an unusual non-stasis harmonic timbral trill. The little bang of the jet whistle is the prolepsis to change, prior to the introduction of air sounds.



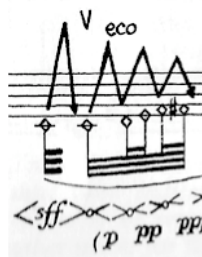
Example 3-9. (a₅₋₁) Pure jet whistle

Two other gestures are created from jet whistles. They occur with moving notes (a₅₋₂), creating a falling figure or accentuating the forceful nature of the jet whistle (see Example 3-10). Sciarrino also uses the jet whistle, which often evokes a violent and mechanical atmosphere in music, in order to create a laughter effect (a₅₋₃), returning to his idea of the cosmogonical nature of the flute as tied to the human body and the breath (see Example 3-11).

Additionally, there is one minor sound object in the piece, the growl or fluttered covered air. However, partially because of its isolation and occurrence at the climax of the piece, the effect of this one sound is extremely important. Sciarrino often points to the inspiration for his music in nature, and this sound is very animalistic, arriving at a place of unrest in the piece, almost a warning against the chaos surrounding it (see Example 3-11).



Example 3-10. (a₅₋₂) Jet whistle with moving notes



Example 3-11. (a₅₋₃) Jet whistle laughter effect

Hermes

Hermes was written in 1984 at the behest of *Comune di Chiusi* and is dedicated to Roberto Fabbriciani. This is his second solo work for the flute. The performance notes point to the ethereal nature of the piece:

With me, music inhabits a threshold region. Like dreams, where something both exists and does not yet exist, and exists as something else as well. And where these sensations, the most fleeting of them, cross the threshold of unconsciousness with the blink of an eye: outside, they are prolonged, sharp and clear, having survived the passage from drowsiness. . . . Impenetrable white city of Hades – before flinging oneself into the heart of my labor, measuring the circumference of its walls, wearing oneself out at a gate where there are no gates, and yet, here they stand before us.²¹

In *Hermes*, Sciarrino relies almost exclusively on harmonics to create his collection of sound materials. He treats the harmonics as single notes creating melody from the natural harmonic series of the flute and as chordal sonorities based on natural harmonics. Sciarrino views the harmonics as the soul of the sound.

Hermes is the psychopomp, that is to say the guide of souls. The technique that I developed at the time wanted to extract the soul from the sound; the title is born from that affinity. From the practical point of view, there was this isolation of harmonics, either melodically or harmonically. The chordal sounds occurred almost as a joke.²²

As almost every note in the piece is derived from the flute's natural harmonics, the pitches are limited by the available harmonics, usually quite out of tune and difficult to distinguish in the extreme high range of the instrument. As a result, most of the chords are subordinate to the colors they produce.

²¹ Sciarrino, *L'opera per flauto*, 7.

²² "*Hermes* est le psychopompe, c'est à dire l'accompagnateur des âmes. La technique qu'à l'époque je mettais au point, voulait extraire l'âme du son : le titre est né de cette affinité. Du point de vue pratique, il y avait cet isolement des sons harmoniques, soit mélodiquement soit en accord. Les sons en accord sont survenus presque pour rire." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 262.

Sciarrino treats extended techniques as motives in *Hermes*; in addition to harmonic-derived sounds, he also uses jet whistles, covered air sounds (only seven notes), and tongue rams. There are three main timbral motives in this piece, interspersed with three other brief gestures created from non-traditional tones and used to interrupt the sound palette. The flute becomes a polyphonic instrument through multiphonics, transforming into a sonic generator with wildly differing colors.

Sciarrino uses these different motives to create a multi-layered fabric and juxtaposes the figures in windows form. Windows form in this piece is the simultaneous continuation of multiple elements: the near and far, loud and soft, *vivo* and *sospeso*. The first example of this is the opening. As show in Example 3-14, the piece begins with a *fortissimo* multiphonic chord followed by a *pianississimo*, static melodic line based on the natural harmonic series of C (the lowest note on many European flutes).

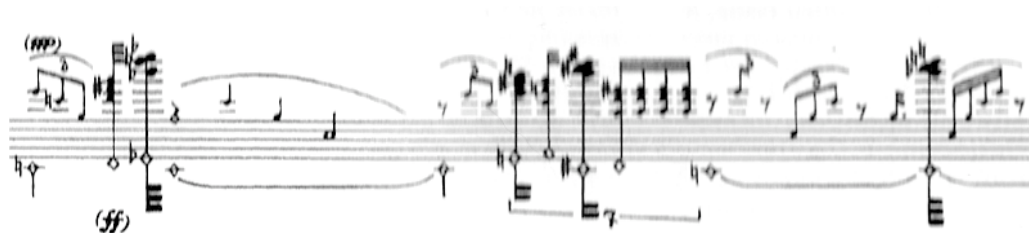


Example 3-14. *Hermes* opening line (8-1-senza tempo 1)



Example 3-15. Multiphonic motive (8-1-Vivo)

Small fragments of *fortissimo* chords soon interrupt the calm of this motive, foreshadowed by the opening of the piece (Example 3-15). This is a frequent tactic in Sciarrino's compositional language. Many of his pieces are marked not only by his quiet and intimate textures but are juxtaposed with extremely loud and outlandish sounds. Here, though, both the hushed melodic line and the outbursts are related motives, both based on harmonics, the unifying force behind the piece. When Section III of the piece begins, the chords occur only eighteen times, as opposed to approximately one hundred in Section I, and many more than that in Section II. To Sciarrino, windows form is also "a polyphony of time, or dimensions" ("polyphonie de temps, de dimensions"), the idea of dreams both existing and not existing.²³ By abutting these two figures and using the multiphonic motive to cut off the harmonics melody, Sciarrino plays with his listener's concept of time (see Example 3-16). These two motives continue through the first section in different layers, creating a polyphonic façade, similar to Baroque works for solo melodic instruments that create the illusion of polyphony. The multiphonics accumulate while the melodic line grows more choppy and fleeting, often containing one sixteenth or sixty-fourth note more than is comfortable, as in (1-5-E triplet).



Example 3-16. Windows form in *Hermes* (8-5-E triplet)

²³ Giacco, *La notion de "figure,"* 65.

In the first section, the multiphonic figure is simply an interruption to the repose of the melody. The chords accumulate in number and proportion to the *sospeso* melody until they surpass it and become the main material of the second section, an onslaught of sound to the listener.

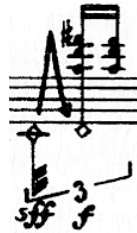
The timbral trill with a chromatic glissando motive, heard only as aside earlier in the piece, dominates the last third of *Hermes*, shown in Example 3-17.



Example 3-17. Timbral trill motive (8-4-gliss.)

This figure is the return to both silence and inward agitation. Every crescendo begins at *niente* and never achieves more than a piano dynamic, and in this almost inaudible section there is a release or, in fact, more of a dissipation of the buildup that occurred in the first seven and half minutes of the piece. Sciarrino uses a similar relaxation of energy at significant moments in this piece and throughout his flute works, most notably in *Come vengono*. The longest strain of the opening melodic figure (8-9-harmonics) arrives after a series of three long pronouncements of the chordal motive. Again, once the chordal motive has really taken hold, the listener is treated to four short *pianissimo* timbral trills, then a brief statement of the chordal motive again, only to be interrupted by the invasion of silence into the piece for three-and-a-half beats.

The following three gestures are used as commentary and interruptions throughout. The jet whistle (Example 3-18) appears throughout the entire piece, especially in the more active second movement, but the air sounds and the tongue rams only occur in the third and final section of the piece, in their quietness almost seeming like recollections. Holding the mouthpiece between the teeth and using soft breath directly into the flute produces the next sound material (see Example 3-19). Tongue rams interrupt the smooth melodic lines in the first and last sections of the piece (see Example 3-20). These gestures return the ear towards silence and the subtleties of white noise.



Example 3-18. Jet whistle interruption (8-6-sff)



Example 3-19. Covered air sound (10-5-ma piano fiato)



Example 3-20. Tongue ram interruptions (10-5-tongue ram)

The listener is drawn in to the characteristics of the quiet, from the dissolution of the jet whistle to the barely perceptible covered air sounds. Many of Sciarrino's works focus on this; one example is *Vento d'ombra* for chamber orchestra, in which the sound rarely rises above the audible. In using these short, interrelated timbral motives as the basis of his music, he creates a work on several planes moving concurrently and the piece manages to exist on strata of silence and extreme activity simultaneously.

Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?

"How Are Incantations Produced?" is also dedicated to Roberto Fabbriciani and was commissioned by Comune di Milano for the conference "*Intorno al Flauto Magico.*" The works commissioned for this conference were all responses to Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, specifically the vocal virtuosity found in the Queen of the Night aria. In taking Mozart's title quite literally, Sciarrino composed a piece with the intention of creating magic through the flute and seems almost tongue-in-cheek about using the flute, giving his motivation as an "uncommon place association: the flute was the subject, the topic of the exhibition, and it

thus had, in my opinion, to become the theme of my composition.”²⁴ The resulting incantations are created as the flute is transformed into a percussive and harmonic instrument. In his book the composer writes of three “enchantments” created in this piece:

First spell: the flute makes a sound like a drum (and sometimes, a heartbeat). It's not usual that the human mouth produces percussive sounds on a wind instrument.

Second spell: during evocation, when the process begins, the length of the periods is based on prime numbers from one to nineteen (magic numbers!), in turn chaotic.

Third spell: the sounds of this piece that are made each grow differently. Percussive pulses are weak and have no echoes; the jet whistles have long echoes in any environment. The rapid essence of these sounds cause the flute sound pulses, while still vibrating in the air above the notes. The flute is a monophonic instrument, i.e. it may produce one sound at a time, but with the mobility of this music it actually becomes a physically polyphonic instrument.²⁵

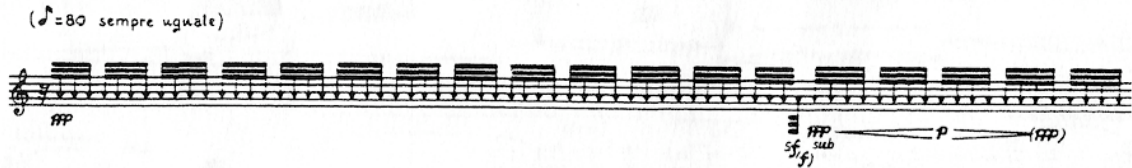
The piece begins almost imperceptibly with tongue stops, transforming slowly into a culminatory display of multiphonics and jet whistles, the virtuosity reminiscent of final movements of late Beethoven through Liszt in the accumulation of growth. However, the full incantation appears to fail as it dissolves into tremolo glissandi. Sciarrino creates an additional spell with the absence of noticeable breathing in the piece; it is almost magical how the flutist continues performing throughout without seeming to breathe at all (and without needing to use circular breathing to achieve this impression).

In *Come vengono*, Sciarrino begins by creating static planes of repetitive motion (see Example 3-21). Once the ear is comfortable listening to the new interrupting element in the sound, another is introduced. This piece has the most forward momentum of any in the set

²⁴ “. . . une association non banale : la flûte était le sujet, le thème de l'exposition, et elle devait donc, à mon avis, devenir le thème de ma composition.” Curinga, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” 263.

²⁵ Sciarrino, *Le figure della musica*, 116-7.

through the constant motion in Sections I and II. In the beginning, all elements remain the same, except for slight bursts dynamically.



Example 3-21. Beginning of *Come vengono*. Creating a static plane (12-1-opening)

This allows the listener to accept the sound of the tongue rams as the impetus for the rest of the piece. Once the accents and dynamics begin to feel static, two new elements are introduced: jet whistle and rhythmic variety in the form of triplets and rests, infringing upon the prior stasis. With the subsequent fermata on space (not over a rest), silence punctuates and highlights these new elements. Only steady thirty-second notes were present until this point, giving the small shift in texture a novelty that propels the listener’s interest. The three triplets leading up to the fermata provide a microcosm for the collapse in sound that will occur later in the piece, prolepsis to the future incantations (see Example 3-22).



Example 3-22. (12-6-jet whistle)

After a short phrase serving as analepsis to the first subsection, the motion of the piece increases. From this point until the climax of the piece, the density and motion increase and add tension to the music (also clear in the physicality of the piece at that point). Awkwardly strange rests are interspersed with quintuplets and faster flurries of notes, juxtaposed against the frequent reappearance of the opening repetitions of the tongue rams on A (and sometimes on B-flat).

The sound materials used are limited until the bottom of the second page; only tongue attacks, jet whistles, and multiphonics are present. Sciarrino originally thought to use flute and percussion in this piece, “the eternal companions of the past” (“les éternels compagnons d’autrefois”).²⁶ However, in the first two sections of the piece, he instead transforms the flute into both instruments.

According to Giomi and Ligabue, the form of the piece is comprised of preparation, tension/climax, and relaxation/conclusion.²⁷ Each of these sections inhabits a different sound world, as if they are played by different instruments.

In *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*, in addition to augmentation which is very physiological and natural because of the process of accumulation, there is also that interference of strange elements. The piece presents thus a discontinued form.²⁸

The piece accumulates from *niente* (beginning with a rest) to the explosion of the climax at 5’52” with the long burst of multiphonics.

The acceleration of the discourse caused by the motion inside the central section creates a state of tension which – on the level of signification

²⁶ Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 266.

²⁷ Gioma and Ligabue, “The ‘Enchanted’ Sound Objects,” 425.

²⁸ “Dans *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi ?*, outre la forme augmentative qui est très physiologique et naturelle à cause du processus d’accumulation, il y a aussi cette interférence d’éléments étrangers. Le morceau présente ainsi une forme discontinue.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 265.

strategies – represents the climax of the piece, a kind of manifestation of the enchantment which performs the transformation from the initial state (section A) to the final one (section C).²⁹

Just as “trash, things, and experiences” grow in our lives, the music here grows chaotically, and in doing so it transforms almost as if Sciarrino conjures a flute out of a drum.³⁰ As each transformation of sound occurs, there are “interface” sections, transitions that use material from both the former and the next sections in order to elide them with a simultaneous sense of anticipation and memory.³¹

Prime numbers organize the chaotic accumulation of *Come vengono*. Groups of sounds objects cluster into prime number groups as they build, Sciarrino’s second evocation. For example, in the second section jet whistles are clustered in a seemingly chaotic group. As shown in Example 3-23, the groupings of *pianissimo* jet whistles are, in fact, all prime clusters of notes, [5, 13, 2, 3] respectively.

The image shows a musical staff with a series of notes and rests. Below the staff, there are four groups of notes, each enclosed in brackets. The first group contains 5 notes, the second contains 13 notes, the third contains 2 notes, and the fourth contains 3 notes. Above the staff, there are dynamic markings: *pp sub.*, *pp*, *pp*, and *pp simile*.

Example 3-23. Prime number collections in *Come vengono*. (13-7-*pp sub.*)

²⁹ Gioma and Ligabue, “The ‘Enchanted’ Sound Objects,” 426.

³⁰ See the previous discussion of accumulation in chapter 2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 413. Giomi and Ligabue use the term “interface section” to describe a transition section that slowly transforms from previous material into the next section. The sound materials thus serve as memory and forshadowing simultaneously.

This organized buildup occurs throughout the piece until the climax, creating chaos in the steady tempo.

Canzona di ringraziamento

Canzona di ringraziamento was written in 1985 for the Italian composer Goffredo Petrassi, a good friend of Sciarrino's. It is a companion to *Come vengono*, and the two are intended to be played together. *Canzona* starts *attaca* from the *Come vengono* and is intrinsically linked to the music that precedes it. Not only are they musically linked, the narrative of *Canzona* was born directly from the result of the success of *Come vengono*. The title is an homage to Beethoven's *Molto adagio* from the String Quartet in A minor, op. 132. *Canzona di ringraziamento offerta alla divinità da un guarito, in modo lidico (Molto adagio)* "Hymn of thanksgiving to the divinity, from a convalescent, in the Lydian mode." It is a "song of thanks" both for its dedicatee, composer Goffredo Petrassi, and, "a thanks to the spirits for the good success of the enchantment [of *Come vengono*]." ³² The sound materials used are: glissando effect, harmonics, and timbral trills.

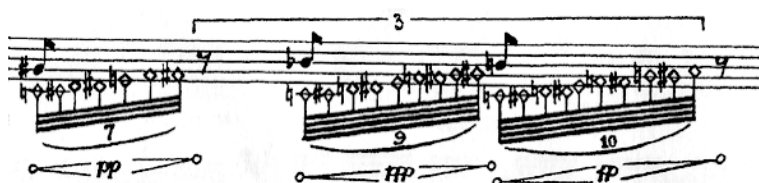
Figure 3-4 maps the form of *Canzona*, showing the important categories affecting the passages: the material, dynamics, density, and tension.

³² ". . . un remerciement aux esprits pour la bonne réussite de l'enchantement." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 264.

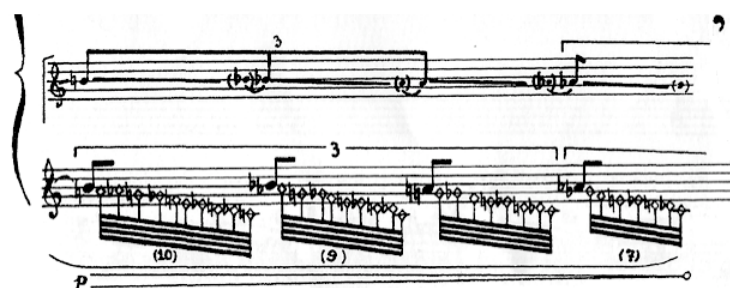
Fig. 3-4. *Canzona di ringraziamento*

Sections	A	A ^I	A ^{II}	A ^{III}	CODA
Sound materials	b _{4,5} /b ₁ b ₆	b _{4,5} /b ₁ b ₆	b _{4,5} /b ₁ b ₆	b _{4,5} /b ₁ b ₆	b _{4,5} /b ₁ b ₅
Density	Thick	First rest at 1'09"	Sparse, lots of rests	Thick, no silence/like beginning	
Tension/Motion	No silence, but all stasis	Most tension Most erratic in build up and rhythmic motion	Stasis		<i>Morendo</i> to end
Dynamic	<i>pp</i> (one small <i>cresc.</i>)	Lots of <i>cresc.</i> <i>ppp</i> to <i>f</i>	<i>più p poss.</i>		Continues soft <i>ppp/pp</i>
Timings	0'00"	0'57"	3'12"	5'23"	6'09"

Almost all the sound materials in the final section of *Come vengono* occur in *Canzona*. In Section III of *Come vengono*, however, the music creates the effect of dissipation away from the masses of sound in Section III, dying away into *niente* (see Example 3-24). The beginning of the Section III of *Come vengono*, which introduces the new sound materials, mirrors the end of the first section of *Canzona* (see Example 3-25) and creates another one of *Come vengono's* "incantations." In *Come vengono* the fingered trill glissando is the final dying away; the character of the sound material now changes into the basis for creation in the piece, the happy thanks for the success of the previous enchantments.



Example 3-24. Beginning of final section of *Come vengono* (14-2-fingered glissando)



Example 3-25. End of first section of *Canzona di ringraziamento* (17-1-fingered glissando)

The piece is in strophic form, with four sections and a brief coda, creating a platform for the fluttering tremolo, harmonics, and glissandi to come to the fore. According to Sciarrino,

Canzona di Ringraziamento resonates and extends certain aural elements, thus suspended in the end, in order to make a purely strophic piece, that leads according to an opposite development, completely fluid.³³

The repetition of form and sound materials creates the fluidity of the piece. While the two pieces are companions, *Canzona's* relatively fewer sound objects could possibly be a reaction to the wealth of material in *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*. With the repetition of sound objects in *Canzona* combined with the strophic form, Sciarrino creates a stasis of floating sound.

Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono

“Venus, may the Graces adorn her with flowers” was commissioned by *Rassegna di Nuova Musica di Macerata* and is dedicated to Roberto Fabbriciani.³⁴ *Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono* uses two categories of sound materials: air (covered air sound, covered air sound with high partials, and jet whistles), and percussive (key clicks and tongue rams). Sciarrino states the reasons for the techniques he uses in this piece: “By using sounds in a certain way (for example murmurs of keys), I not only proposed to systematize them, but especially to ennoble them, since before, they represented only effects scattered like

³³ “*Canzona di Ringraziamento* résonne et étend certains éléments sonores, ainsi suspendus dans le final, pour en faire un morceau purement strophique, qui avance selon un développement opposé, tout à fait fluide.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 264.

³⁴ The three Graces are: Aglaia (Splendor), Euphrosyne (Festivity), and Thalia (Rejoicing).

peppercorns.”³⁵ The systemization of these sound materials is shown in the dominance of the foreground sounds over the other sound materials (see Figure 3-5).

³⁵ “En utilisant des sons d’une certaine manière (par exemple les rumeurs de clefs), je me proposais non seulement de les systématiser, mais surtout de les ennoblir, étant donné qu’auparavant, ils ne représentaient que des effets dispersés comme des grains de poivre.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 268.

Fig. 3-5. *Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono*

Sections	I	B	II	III
Mass/makeup	A a ₂ foreground, a ₁ , a ₄ middleground; interruptions of c ₁ , c ₂	interface section	C ₂ foreground, a ₁ , a ₅ middleground; c ₁ background	c ₁ foreground, a ₁ , a ₅ middleground; c ₂ background
Density/Motion	Uniform density and motion with interruptions growing		Higher density, constant momentum until end (except for suspension at 6'25") acceleration to → <i>vertiginoso</i>	
Tension	Relaxed	Growing tension	High tension with spastic bursts until end	
Dynamic	a ₁ , a ₂ , a ₄ = <i>pp</i>	c ₁ , c ₂ = <i>sf</i> or <i>f</i>	c ₂ = <i>pp</i> a ₅ = <i>mf</i> a ₁ = <i>pp</i> c ₁ = <i>sf</i>	c ₁ = <i>pp</i> a ₅ = <i>sf</i> c ₂ = <i>pp</i>
Timings	0'00"		4'44"	6'29

The piece is divided into three main sections, Sciarrino's favored form. The first section focuses on air sounds and lasts longer than half the piece, reminiscent of the first section of *All'aure*. Section I divides into two parts. Air sounds completely comprise Section I-A. There is a moment of suspension at the first instance of a key click (23-5-key click) followed by a held note, which stops the motion before it begins to grow, marking the end of Section I-A (see Example 3-26).



Example 3-26. Suspension of time in *Venere* (23-5-key click)

This expands to a foreshadowing of the next two sections at (23-5-key click) when both key click and tongue ram interrupt the whistling texture (see Example 3-26). These interruptions occur and accumulate until the second section of the piece when the key click moves to the fore. Each instance of an interruption in the Section I-B is either an isolated note or a prime number collection of notes. All of the key clicks and tongue rams in Section I-B add up to seventy-one, another prime number, as shown in Figure 3-6. Prime numbers play an important role in Sciarrino's music (this is *Come vengono's* second incantation) and his associations with magical transformation. Section I-B, with its interruptions, serves as

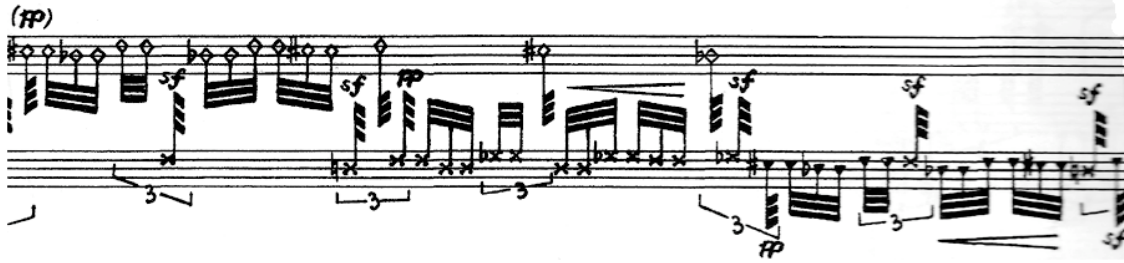
an interface or transitional section, foreshadowing what will predominate for the rest of the piece.³⁶

Figure 3-6. Accumulation of percussive interruptions in Section I of *Venere*

23-7- key click	7 c ₁ , 1 c ₂
24-1- key click	3 c ₁ and c ₂ mixture
24-2- key click	3 isolated c ₁
24-3- key click	2 c ₁
24-3-2 nd key click	5 c ₁
24-4- key click	13 c ₁ and c ₂ mixture
24-5- key click	1 isolated c ₁
24-5-2 nd key click	19 c ₁ and c ₂ mixture
24-6- key click	17 c ₁ and c ₂ mixture
Total	71

Section II introduces a more regular pulse after the erratic nature of the grace notes in Section I. Once the key clicks establish themselves as the main sound material in this section, there is a sequence of sorts that builds the intensity through its repetition (Example 3-27). It consists of covered air sounds or jet whistles followed by three air/jet whistles with key clicks or tongue attacks separating them and followed again by three of the percussive sounds broken up by the other percussive sound. There are seven variations on the sequence, shown in Figure 3-7.

³⁶ See footnotes 19 and 31 (in this chapter) for Giomi and Ligabue's description of interface sections.



Example 3-27. First occurrence of sequence (25-4-*pp*)

Figure 3-7. Variations on sequence

1	5:21	full
2	5:30	full
3	5:40	shortened
4	5:44	full (with extension of second half)
5	5:59	shortened
6	6:05	full but second half reversed
7	6:14	shortened, leads to <i>vertiginoso</i>

The sequences lead to a *vertiginoso* passage (breathless), which continues to the end with one interruption from Section I material, a little bang creating a memory of past material and providing the transition to Section III.

This piece ascends to the climax similarly to *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*. It does not die away as its predecessor though but continues the intensity, albeit quietly, possibly the intensity of the Graces.

L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton

“The Luminous Horizon of Aton,” dedicated to Roberto Fabbriciani, imbues the listener with an impression of a living organism emerging from the flute. The sounds are primarily respiratory; the lungs, amplified by the flute, breathe in and out, creating rhythm from the breathing of the flutist and blurring the line between the flute and the flutist. This is similar to the effect created in *All'aure in una lontananza*, where the breathing of the flutist determines the tempo of the piece, although in *Aton* the effect is stripped down to the bare minimum, resulting in a more extreme and dramatic result. Breathing and coughing create the main motives of the piece, interrupted throughout by other effects. *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton* uses many of the techniques that are heard in the previous pieces in the set, and the result is a conclusion to the volume imbued with a sense of memory. Sciarrino points to the cyclical nature of this cycle,

It is the final piece, but in reality it comes just before the beginning, that is to say before *All'aure in una lontananza*. When *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton* finishes, *All'aure in una lontananza* starts, and it is if the listener felt everything inside the lungs of the flutist. Even in *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton*, the sound is generated starting from the breath.³⁷

The breath links all of the works in this collection of Sciarrino's flute music.

The title “The Luminous Horizon of Aton” looks to Egyptian mythology. The Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaton, devoted to the sun god, named the isolated city he built for both the god and him, Akhetaton, “the horizon of Aton,” where Aton was worshipped as

³⁷ “C'est le dernier morceau, mais en réalité il vient avant le début, c'est à dire avant *All'Aure*. Quant *Aton* finit, *All'Aure* commence, et c'est comme si l'auditeur ressentait tout à l'intérieur des poumons du flûtiste. Même dans *L'Orizzonte luminoso di Aton*, le son est généré à partir du souffle.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 269.

“the creative principle of all life, the father of all men” and is one of the earliest examples of monotheism.³⁸ Sciarrino notes:

It is extraordinary to see how, sometimes, certain intuitions bring to us more than we thought. Egypt is a distant civilization, and thus gives the sense of origin. In the Mediterranean, the Egyptians were one of the first peaks of civilization.³⁹

It is fitting then that *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton* is the culmination of the previous works in the set.⁴⁰ About *Aton*, Sciarrino believes:

The spread of this physiological rhythm originates in the articulation of overshrill harmonic *clusters*, so that certain sounds are emitted and replayed like there was a *delay* that reoccurs occasionally and late. It is a rather curious piece: it is instrumental but it also has a dimension tending forwards; it is ideally super-technology. It contains mythology and the origin, precisely because it is based on this sense of breath, and at the same time, it is very evolved.⁴¹

Aton encapsulates the sound materials used in the previous five pieces. This can be seen in the map of the piece in Figure 3-8. In this way it is also an introduction that comes at the end, an analepsis to the beginning of his relationship with the flute.

³⁸ Arthur Cotterell, "Re," *A Dictionary of World Mythology* (Oxford University Press, 1997), <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t73.e53>> (May 10, 2011).

³⁹ "Il est extraordinaire de voir comment, parfois, certaines intuitions nous apportent plus que l'on pensait. L'Égypte est une civilisation lointaine, et donne ainsi le sens de l'origine. Dans la Méditerranée, les Égyptiens ont été un des premiers sommets de la civilisation." Curinga, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," 269-70. This is Sciarrino's response to being asked if the breath is a link between the set of pieces.

⁴⁰ *Fra i testi* was almost an afterthought to the six previous pieces, when Sciarrino wanted to use more of the multiphonics given to him by Fabbri. *Aton* was meant to be the last piece of the set, and it is a sort of father to the rest of the pieces.

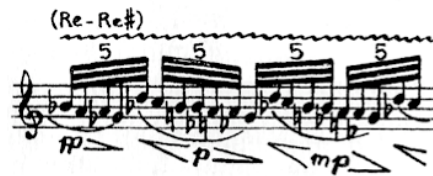
⁴¹ "De la propagation de ce rythme physiologique prennent leur origine les articulations de *clusters* d'harmoniques sur-aigus, alors que certains sons sont émis et réécoutés comme s'il y avait un *delay* qui les repropose occasionnellement et en retard." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 269.

Fig. 3-8. *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton*

Sections	I		II	III (brief analepsis to Section I)	IV
Mass/makeup	a ₈ , a ₉ foreground (also b ₈ , c ₁ interruptions)	silence	a ₈ , a ₉ foreground a ₁₀ middleground (also b ₃ , b ₄ , b ₈ , c ₁)	a ₈ , a ₉ foreground (also b ₈)	Beginning of <i>All'aure</i> (b ₁)
Density	Sparse		Growing to thicker density, more events	Sparse	
Motion/Tension	Stasis/Uniform	Suspended	Growing to most tension and chaos	Stasis/Uniform	Stasis/Calm
Dynamic	Determined by breath		As in Section I but louder because of sound materials	As in Section I but with greater dynamic range	Mostly niente to <i>pppp</i> with one <i>cresc.</i> to <i>mp</i>
Timings	0'00"	5'50"	5'53"	9'52"	10'44"

lontananza, but with the additional marking *un'ombra di suono*, “a shadow of sound.”

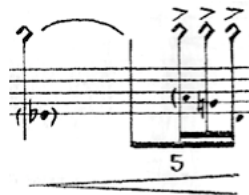
Interspersed with the breath and melodic sound materials are noise elements with pitch: coughing and tongue rams (see Example 3-32). Sciarrino created the novel sound of coughing into the flute while changing the fingered pitch.



Example 3-30. (c₁) Trill key glissando (30-3-glissando)



Example 3-31. (c₂) Harmonics timbral trills, creating a memory of *All'aure* (30-6-*un'ombra di suono*)



Example 3-32. (d₁) Coughing (29-8-cough)

Silence exists strangely in this piece. While it has very little true silence, the sound rarely goes above a residue of a note, bringing the reduction of sound as close to silence as many people ever hear. Sciarrino's relationship with silence is very similar to Cage's in

allowing it to exist as part of the sound of the music. Even so, they treated silence differently. When Cage visited an anechoic chamber and in the room he heard two sounds, his nervous system and his blood circulating, he realized that true silence never exists, leading to works such as *4'33"* in which he allows the noise of nature (or of man) to take over and participate in the music.⁴² Sciarrino, in his use of extremely quiet dynamics, allows the music to be part of the space and invites the ambient "silence" of the room to become part of the music. In this volume of pieces the beginnings of *Aton* and *Come vengono* are the most affected by ambient sounds.

Repetition is an extremely important element in this piece and in Sciarrino's music in general, allowing the listener to become a part of his sound world. Sciarrino states:

It is also the sense of that which I call *delay*, indispensable because it is the mechanism of memory that functions thus, going a little forward and a little behind. . . . Logic starts to build when there is a repeated experience: no form of knowledge is possible if there is no repetition of an experience. Knowledge begins with the repetition and that coincides with the knowledge of the piece: it's at the moment of writing and of hearing that I compose the universe, on the basis of the degree zero, that is to say the beginning of the piece itself.⁴³

When Section III returns to Section I material and Section IV returns to the beginning of *All'aure*, one hears the sounds in a new way, as memories instead of something new. They now have added substance without the novelty they carried with them in the beginning of

⁴² Erwin Schulhoff's *Fünf Pittoresken* from 1919, is an early and silent predecessor to John Cage's *4'33"*. The piece's central movement "In futurum" requires the pianist to perform an intricate score comprised only of silence. Cage is a more appropriate comparison to Sciarrino, however, because Schulhoff's brief experiment with silence is a humoristic Dadaist interpretation of silence, whereas Cage's forays into silence are more serious and extended.

⁴³ "C'est aussi le sens de ce que j'appelle *delay*, indispensable car c'est le mécanisme de la mémoire qui fonctionne ainsi, en allant un peu en avant et un peu en arrière...La logique commence à se construire quand il y a une expérience répétée: aucune forme de connaissance n'est possible s'il n'y a pas de répétition d'une expérience. La connaissance débute avec la répétition et cela coïncide avec la connaissance du morceau : c'est au moment d'écrire et d'écouter que je construis l'univers, en partant du degré zéro, c'est à dire le début du morceau lui-même." Ibid., 270.

the piece. The sound materials become part of the music fabric and are less techniques for technique's sake.

Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi

Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi ("Between the words dedicated to clouds") was written in December 1989 for the *Salerno Festival I grandi appuntamenti della musica 1990*, and as with many of these pieces, is dedicated to Roberto Fabbriciani. The seventh and last piece in the set, it was written after Fabbriciani had given Sciarrino a list of multiphonics that worked well, making the composer want to explore them more than he had previously done in *Aton*. The result is a highly virtuosic study on multiphonics. Sciarrino writes that he "tried to see how it would be possible to transform a list of sounds into a composition."⁴⁴ From that list, he primarily employs multiphonics with alternate fingerings: eighteen *forte* multiple note chords referred to as numbers 1-18 throughout the score, and six soft low dyads labeled A-F, shown in Examples 3-33 and 3-34. In Figure 4-2, each multiphonic is shown in a chart with hints on how to play them.

Sciarrino uses some multiphonics based on natural harmonics, which he exploits in many of his pieces. Also used are: covered whistle tones, covered flutter tonguing, tongue rams, key clicks, and covered harmonics. In focusing on multiphonics to this great extent, He "designed this composition as the metamorphosis of the metamorphosis, that is to say

⁴⁴ "J'ai donc essayé de voir comment il serait possible de transformer une liste de sons en une composition." Ibid., 268.

the metamorphosis of the metamorphic object.”⁴⁵ He transforms the flute into a chordal instrument, and further transforms that instrument into a percussion instrument, moving from chords to whistle tones to key clicks. This treatment of the flute as a chordal and percussion instrument is Sciarrino’s final incantation of the set.

Example 3-33 consists of 18 numbered measures. Above each measure is a fingering diagram for the right hand, showing finger positions (1-5) and breath marks (circles with a vertical line). The notes in the measures are: 1) G4, A4; 2) G4, A4; 3) G4, A4; 4) G4, A4; 5) G4, A4; 6) G4, A4; 7) G4, A4; 8) G4, A4; 9) G4, A4; 10) G4, A4; 11) G4, A4; 12) G4, A4; 13) G4, A4; 14) G4, A4; 15) G4, A4; 16) G4, A4; 17) G4, A4; 18) G4, A4.

Example 3-33. Multiphonics in *Fra i testi*

Example 3-34 consists of six lettered measures (A-F). Above each measure is a fingering diagram for the right hand, showing finger positions (1-5) and breath marks (circles with a vertical line). The notes in the measures are: A) G4, A4; B) G4, A4; C) G4, A4; D) G4, A4; E) G4, A4; F) G4, A4.

Example 3-34. Soft dyads in *Fra i testi*

⁴⁵ “J’ai conçu cette composition comme la métamorphose de la métamorphose, c’est à dire la métamorphose de l’objet métamorphotique.” Ibid., 268.

Fig. 3-9. *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi*

Sections	I	II	III
Mass/makeup	b ₈ foreground a ₆ , a ₃ , c ₁ background	a ₃ foreground b ₈ middleground c ₂ , b ₃ background interruptions	c ₂ foreground b ₈ , a ₆ , c ₁ interruptions
Density	Dense, chordal	Thicker/fewer rests	Sparse
Motion/Tension	Increasing in tension and momentum	Momentum stays until Section III	Dying away with two little bang interruptions
Dynamic	b ₈ = <i>f</i> a ₆ , a ₃ , c ₁ = <i>p</i>	a ₃ = <i>pp</i> with b ₈ = <i>pp</i> c ₂ , = <i>ppp</i> b ₃ = <i>ff</i>	c ₂ = <i>pppp</i> b ₈ = <i>f</i> a ₆ = <i>cresc.</i> c ₁ = <i>p</i>
Timings	0'00"	5'57"	9'27"

Like *Venere, Fra i testi* divides into three distinct sections, each based on a different sound material (see Figure 3-9). Section I focuses on loud multiphonics with many rests in between each phrase, as shown in Example 3-35.

Example 3-35. Opening of *Fra*

Partway through Section I, Sciarrino introduces covered whistle tones and quieter dynamics in m. 68, which slowly become the principal texture, beginning a genetic transformation from Section I to II, as shown in Example 3-36. Section II uses mostly quiet whistle tones in descending arpeggios, releasing much of the tension from earlier in the piece, and Section III focuses primarily on key clicks with one final burst reminiscent of the opening section (see Example 3-33). Like many of his other solo flute works, the first section is significantly longer than the other two sections.



Example 3-36. Beginning of genetic transformation to Section II of *Fra* (mm. 68-71)

In Section III, each key click phrase contains seven notes, returning to Sciarrino's fascination with prime numbers. In the last phrase, a short burst takes the place of the first key click. The effect is that of the quiet percussive effects on the flute trying to replicate the giant sounds of Section I, creating an extremely small little bang to finish the set (see Example 3-33). In fact, prime numbers comprise much of the formal design of this piece. Almost all of the multiphonic phrases in Section I contain a prime number collection of notes. This continues with other sound materials throughout. One of the most unusual parts of this score is Sciarrino's use of time signatures, for example 2/12 or 2/24 + 1/8. He rarely uses time signatures or even barlines in his writing. While these time signatures can prove overly complicated for performing, they seem to separate out the prime number phrases clearly. Chapter 4 delves into the performance aspect of these pieces in more detail.



Chapter 4: Performance Issues and Techniques

Flutists, even those extremely familiar with the range of possible sounds on the flute, confront a new set of challenges when learning and performing Sciarrino's music. As Thomas writes:

Sciarrino's disembodied works – a fragile tissue of harmonics, multiphonics, breath tones and key clicks – ignore all that is normally considered the substance of music, stripping away everything except the very extremities of sound, the residue, the noise of bow on string, the sound of breathing, as though the whole of western musical tradition had been filtered down to its constituent atoms.¹

For instrumentalists who have spent years mastering how to perform music's substance, performing Sciarrino's music, or any composer's music whose language is based on unusual techniques, requires special skills. This chapter is a guide to learning the techniques involved in performing Sciarrino's flute works and turning those physical techniques into musical gestures while suggesting possible interpretations. Also included is a discussion about the flutists with whom Sciarrino has worked closely.

4.1 Learning *L'Opera, Vol. 1*

One of Sciarrino's goals in his solo works is to transform the musician into a magician; the flutist performs in "the grey area at the very edge of instrumental

¹ Gavin Thomas, "The Poetics of Extremity," 193.

technique.”² The transformative quality of many of Sciarrino’s works creates the “superflute” discussed in chapter 2. This “new” instrument arises from the innovative sound world he creates. Sciarrino’s flute is no longer the instrument of Bach, Debussy, or even Varèse; instead, we hear new sounds based on extended techniques and the respirational nature of the instrument. In order to perform Sciarrino’s works, it is necessary to become intimately familiar with his language and the types of sounds and techniques that he uses, practicing and improvising on the limits of flutistic sounds.

Sciarrino believes that repetition is the basis of the enchantment of his works:

Repetition is the basis of knowledge, I reaffirm it: it is necessary to have an experience at least twice to have the minimum degree of knowledge. In denying the importance of repetition, one denied the basis of language and the basis of knowledge.³

Repetition for the flutist learning Sciarrino’s music has three components: becoming intimately acquainted with his oeuvre, sound materials, and specific pieces.

Figure 4-1 is a chart of the techniques Sciarrino uses in the first volume of his flute works. While some of these effects have worked their way into the flutist’s catalogue of sounds and, therefore, do not need to be explained in full, Sciarrino was the first to notate some of these and often uses a unique method of notation. Thus it is beneficial to become familiar with his style of notation. These effects are divided into three categories: air, pitch, and percussive, as mentioned in chapter 3. Air sounds are pitched or non-pitched breathy sounds. Pitch sounds divide into two subcategories: melodic and harmonic. Melodic pitch sounds are distinctively related to one pitch that creates a line and include trills and

² Ibid., 193.

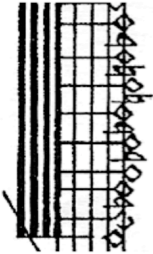

³ “La répétition est à la base de la connaissance, je le réaffirme: il faut faire au moins deux fois une expérience pour avoir le degré minimum de connaissance. En niant l’importance de la répétition, on niait la base du langage et la base de la connaissance.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 270.


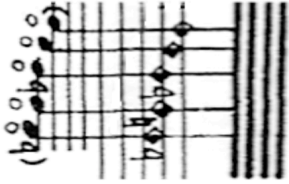
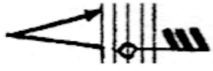
glissando effects. Harmonic pitch sounds create chords and multiple sonorities. The two percussive effects that Sciarrino employs—tongue rams and key clicks—use the flute’s percussive qualities. While both those effects are pitched, they are distinctive in that they produce the drum-like effects that are essential to Sciarrino’s relationship with primitive sounds. Figure 4-1 describes each sound technique that Sciarrino employs, labeling it and showing in what piece(s) Sciarrino uses it.⁴ These different types of sounds employed by Sciarrino transform the instrument into one that can tremble on the threshold of silence or explode with giant chords.

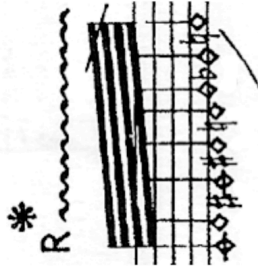

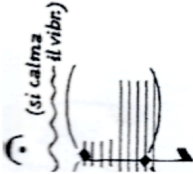
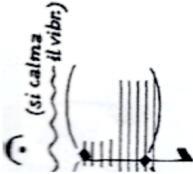
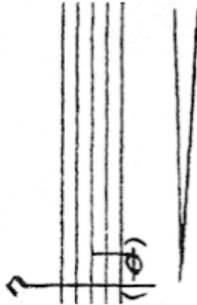
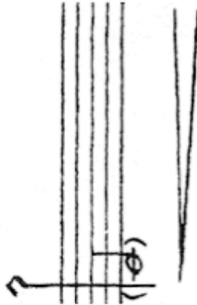
While some of these sounds fit into more than one category, it is important to note the distinction. Often, these pieces are sectioned off according to primary categories of sound. For example, *Venere* is harmonic at first, percussive later, while *Come* begins percussive, then is primarily harmonic, and lastly dissipates into multiple other categories.

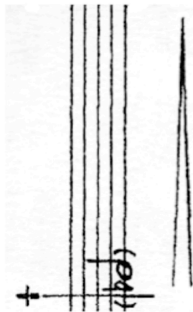
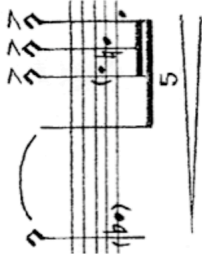

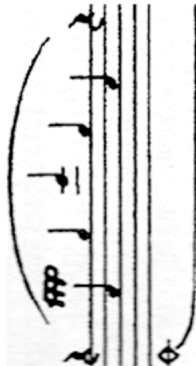
⁴ Lantz includes a chart of some of these symbols that are unique to Sciarrino, along with their meaning. Lantz, *Silence*, 67.

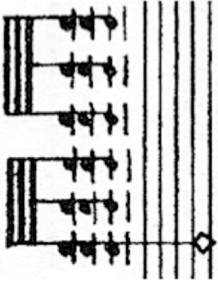
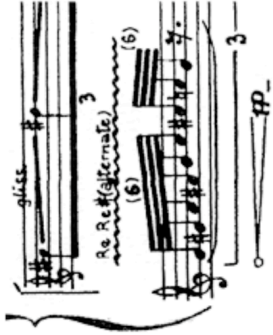
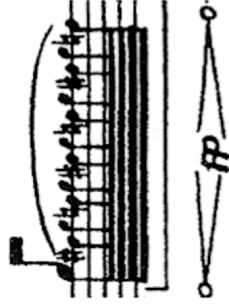
Fig. 4-1. Sound materials found in Sciarrino's *L'opera per flauto*

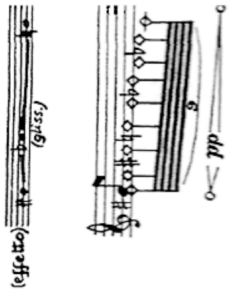

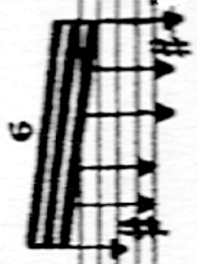
Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Covered Air (Breath tone)	Pitched, covered air sounds – sounds a seventh below written pitch)	Air (a ₁)	<i>All'aure,</i> <i>Venere</i>	Cover embouchure completely and blow into tube. Angling the headjoint more or less gets more or less pitch.
	Covered Partial	Cover embouchure and blow gently at an upward angle with the embouchure hole two-thirds blocked to achieve a whispering sound at various partials.	Air (a ₂)	<i>All'aure,</i> <i>Venere</i>	This is similar to the faint harmonics achieved when blowing air through the flute to warm it up. Also similar to the most angled part of jet whistles.
Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:

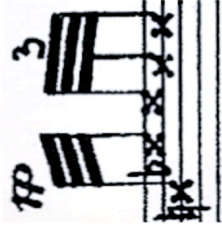
Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Covered whistle tone	Similar to covered partial but without most of the embouchure hole covered	Air (a ₃)	<i>Fra</i>	The lower lip extends below the lip plate.
	Covered Passing	Transition between covered air and covered partial.	Air (a ₄)	<i>All'aure</i>	This is a transition between two sounds and does not need to be quite exact with each note.
	Jet Whistle	Cover embouchure hole entirely with lips and blow forcefully into flute at an upward angle.	Air (a ₅)	<i>All'aure, Hermes, Come, Venere</i>	See Villa Lobos Assobio a Játo for an early example of jet whistles.

Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
 <p>* R </p>	Fluttered covered air	Covered air sound but with flutter tonguing (or rolled uvula) for a growling “Rrrr” effect	Air (a ₆)	<i>All'aure, Fra</i>	This works better with the tongue than the uvula.
 <p><i>(si calma il vibr)</i> </p>	Vibrato on high partial	While playing covered partial, add vibrato	Air (a ₇)	<i>Venere</i>	This is just like the covered partial but with vibrato. This sounds better when the amplitude of the vibrato is larger going above the note and smaller below.
 <p></p>	Exhalation	Finger lower pitch and exhale with entire lip plate inside mouth	Air (a ₈)	<i>Aton</i>	With exhalation and inhalation, closing the back of the throat slightly with help save air and increase volume.

Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Inhalation	Finger lower pitch and inhale with lip plate entirely inside mouth	Air (a ₉)	<i>Aton</i>	Angle air out slightly.
	Coughing	Finger pitch in parentheses and cough into flute with lip plate inside mouth.	Air (a ₁₀)	<i>Aton</i>	Angle directly into the embouchure hole (do not angle in or out). This will achieve the most resonance.
	Timbral trill	Trill between the lower notes to achieve harmonics with shifting timbres; also known as <i>bisbigliando</i>	Pitch, melodic (b ₁)	<i>All'aure, Aton, Hermes</i>	Vary the speed of the timbral trills.
	Melodic harmonic series	While holding and not playing the fingering for the lower note, play the melody above.	Pitch, melodic (b ₂)	<i>Hermes, Come</i>	Transpose these melodic lines up, and practice with normal fingerings/tones as well.

Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Natural harmonic-based chords	Using the fingering written in the diamond notehead, play a multiphonic with the following notes.	Pitch, harmonic (b ₃)	<i>Hermes, Come vengono, Fra??</i>	Practice separating the notes in the chords, as in Examples 4-6 and 4-7.
	Fingered trill glissando	Chromatic runs on lower notes while rapidly alternating trill keys, creates the effect of a fluttering glissando between C# and D#	Pitch, melodic (b ₄)	<i>Come, Canzona</i>	See page 98. Rotate arm from ulna to achieve continuous rapid trilling.
	G-shimmer	Rapidly alternating first and third finger while holding a G.	Pitch, melodic (b ₅)	<i>Come, Canzona</i>	See page 98. Remove right thumb from tube of the flute to free motion.

Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Finger glissando while holding main note	Keep one key half-holed on the left hand while playing the run with the other fingers	Pitch, melodic (b6)	<i>Come, Canzona</i>	To help the glissando, roll the headjoint in and out as well as change the fingers. This will make the glissando smoother and wider.
	Fingered multiphonics	Using designated fingering, play both notes	Pitch, harmonic (b7)	<i>Aton, Fra</i>	Work on each chord individually, playing the notes from low to high. The lettered multiphonics in Fra are a great place to start for this work, as they are much easier to produce.
	Tongue ram	Also called tongue attack. Cover embouchure hole completely and expel tongue completely into hole.	Percussive (c1)	<i>Hermes Come vengono, Venere, Fra</i>	Breathe through nose during long stretches of this technique, found in Come vengono. The resultant sound is a major seventh below written pitch (minor seventh on alto flute)

Example	Name	Description	Category	Used in:	Hints:
	Key click	Without blowing, tap the keys to achieve percussive pitch	Percussive (c ₂)	<i>Venere, Fra</i>	Clicking using the G key (third finger on left hand) produces the loudest key click.

Through using these techniques, Sciarrino's music transforms the flute into his "superflute." He is aware that composers in the late twentieth century often use newer effects for the goal of technical manipulation of the instrument and, instead, prefers his techniques to be part of musical expression, rather than simply a virtuosic display.

That always disturbed me, having always thought that one of the correct criticisms to make of modern music relates to using sonic material simply for creating effects. In my opinion, on the contrary, the new techniques should not only become the object of inquiry and of study, but also be ennobled.⁵

It is important, then, to play these sounds like they are part of the normal palette of flute sounds, to show the music instead of the pyrotechnics.

In learning these pieces, as well as other works based in extended techniques, the flutist should isolate each effect and sound out of context. Throughout my practice sessions I developed tone studies on the techniques, working on the mechanics of the sounds and incorporating them into my daily vocabulary. Additionally, I used "Sciarrino sounds" as the basis of my improvisations and warm ups, resulting in improvement in my traditional flute sound and more strength in my embouchure. It is imperative to live with these sounds for some time to create a sense of ease with them in order to let Sciarrino's music speak, instead of simply sounding like a series of interesting sounds. I spent so much time experimenting and compartmentalizing all these sounds that now my improvisations are infused with Sciarrino effects. Once familiar with his sounds, the process of learning more of his pieces becomes much simpler, despite his sometimes-complicated notation.

⁵ "Cela m'a toujours dérangé, ayant toujours pensé qu'une des critiques justes à faire à la musique contemporaine concerne l'utilisation du matériel sonore pour créer simplement des effets. À mon avis, au contraire, les nouvelles techniques devraient non seulement devenir objet d'enquête et d'étude, mais aussi être anoblies." Ibid., 266.

Extended techniques are beneficial for a flutist, in both expanding one's ideas of what is possible and in strengthening and improving one's technical abilities to augment traditional playing. As Robert Dick writes:

Another important – and not well enough known – reason for flutists to work with new sonorities is that this will greatly benefit traditional playing. This work develops the strength, flexibility and sensitivity of the embouchure and breath support, increasing the player's range of color, dynamics and projection. The ear is strengthened, too: one must hear the desired pitch clearly before playing it when familiar fingerings are not used.⁶

Portions of works that are based largely on extended techniques can also be used effectively as etudes for traditional flute playing. Taking a cue from Dick's *Tone Development Through Extended Techniques*, I created exercises and etudes based on the different sounds found in Sciarrino's works. Section 4.2 contains a performer's guide for each piece with prescriptions on how to learn some of the more unfamiliar techniques and incorporate them into performance.

4.2 Pieces in *Opera per flauto, Vol. 1*⁷

All'aure in una lontananza

Sciarrino asks his performers for a large time commitment to learn his works: "In addition to the psychological question and the mental openness, there is also a very

⁶ Dick, *Tone Development*, 7.

⁷ Lantz also gives descriptions of how to play the techniques in these pieces. She focuses a great deal on embouchure and flute placement. Lantz, *Silence*.

important request for study, engagement.”⁸ Sciarrino recognizes the challenge of relearning the instrument in order to play it in a new way. He is interested in *All’aure* reflecting the rhythm of the breath, a natural and biological rhythm and sound, intertwined with the physicality of the performer.⁹

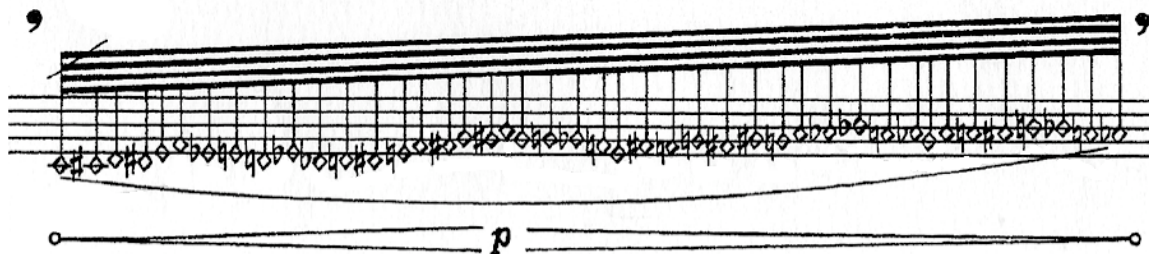
In learning the score to *All’aure* (and the other pieces in this set), while becoming physically familiar with the mechanics and subtleties of these sounds, it is important to learn these techniques away from the score. I recommend taking the low chromatic runs in the piece and using them as exercises in circular breathing, low register, tone, and chromatic scale. This helps not only to learn the piece itself, but also to spend more time focusing on traditional playing. I would use Dick’s *Tone Development Through Extended Techniques* book to work on harmonics in general, and use this piece create as the basis of technical exercises drawn from the score. The section on *Venere* will discuss how to play the covered air and covered partial sounds.¹⁰

I advise working on all the covered air runs with a full tone to work on both tone and finger technique in the low register while including the hairpins to get a better sense for the phrases and transform this piece into an etude for more traditional playing. The first instance of this figure could be played like an exercise, as shown in Example 4-1 and Example 4.2.

⁸ “Outre la question psychologique et l’ouverture mentale, il y a aussi une requête d’étude, d’engagement, très importante. La technique d’émission nécessaire pour jouer *All’Aure* demande au moins quinze jours de préparation.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 267.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 260.

¹⁰ Lantz show a helpful diagram of the different options in the angle of the flute when working on the covered air sounds. She refers to them as Aeolian sounds. Lantz, *Silence*, 37-8.

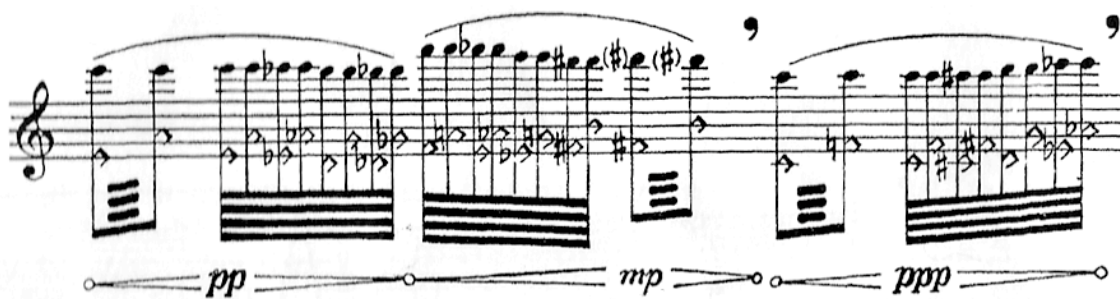


Example 4-1. *All'aure* example of covered air sound (4-5-covered air)

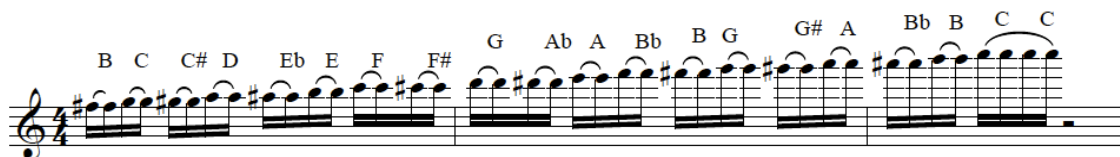


Example 4-2. Example of above *All'aure* passage turned into finger exercise

To work on the harmonics, play scales while switching harmonic fingerings. Based on similar exercises in *Tone Development Through Extended Techniques*, it is beneficial to work on scales that include variation from the main fingering to a harmonic-based one. In the exercises below (Exs. 4-3, 4-4, and 4-5), the low-note fingering is displayed for each harmonic.



Example 4-3. *All'aure* example of harmonic trill gesture (5-1-harmonic timbral trill)



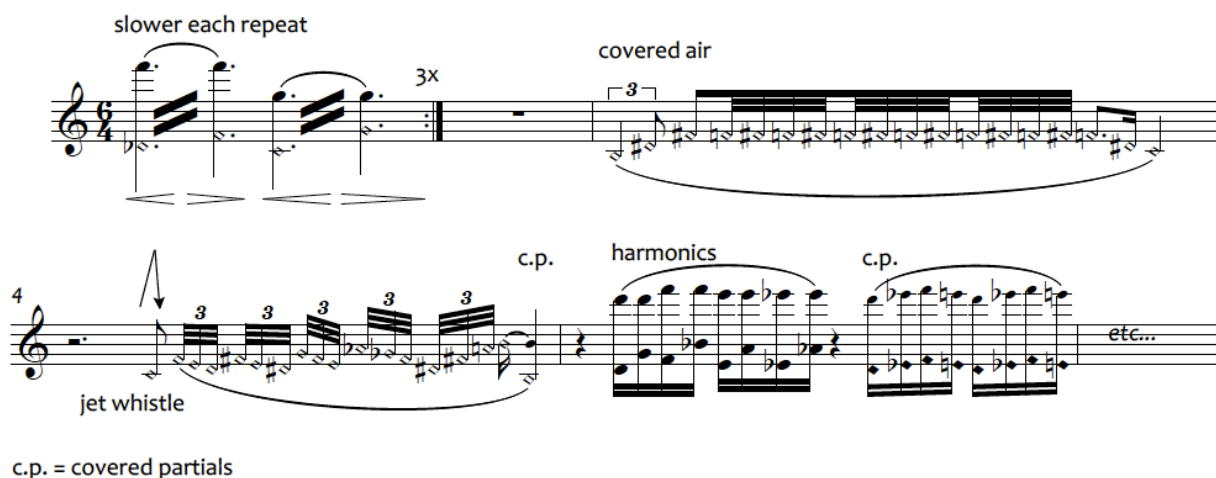
Example 4-4. Ascending harmonic exercise base on *All'aure*



Example 4-5. Another harmonic scale exercise base on *All'aure*

It is also helpful to play through all the gestures in the *All'aure* with real fingerings, working to vary the speed of the timbral trills to augment the desired phrasing.

I found it most useful to begin with improvising based on the techniques found in these pieces. This allowed me the freedom to approach the music with these sound materials already in my arsenal. In Example 4-6, I transcribed the opening of an improvisation based on the techniques found in *All'aure*.



Example 4-6. The beginning of an improvisation on *All'aure*

Hermes

In *Hermes*, Sciarrino asks the flutist to “try, ever searching for an impure sound – that is, for a richer timbre, as from an ancient instrument – rotating the flute a bit.”¹¹ As ever, Sciarrino is reaching back to the ancient and human imagery that persist in his work. While working on these strenuous techniques that may be new, flutists should keep in mind that beauty, albeit impure, of sound and of technique is the main goal.

Playing this piece requires a great deal of physical strength. The harmonics, though one of the most common of the “extended techniques,” and probably well known to most flutists, require a great deal of precision. When learning *Hermes*, performers will find it beneficial to experiment improvising on the harmonic series. However simple the improvisation may be, it will be extremely useful in becoming acquainted with these techniques. When improvising on the techniques in this piece, it is helpful to alternate between natural harmonic-based chords and passages of melodic harmonics series, as well as incorporating traditional notes and other sound materials. In Example 4-7, I provide a sample of the very opening of one of my improvisations on *Hermes*.

¹¹ Sciarrino, *L'opera para flauto*, 7.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with many notes, some of which are beamed together. It includes dynamic markings: *t.p.* (tutti piano), *molto accel.*, *molto rit.*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *p*. There are also markings for 'jet whistle' and 'harmonics'. The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains a melodic line with triplets marked '3'. It includes markings for 'normal' and 'harmonics'.

Example 4-7. The beginnings of an improvisation based on *Hermes*

The extreme upper harmonics require even more flexibility and precision to achieve the needed clarity. One should use the harmonic series based on C, but focus on other fundamentals as well in order to attain greater comfort with them and strength of embouchure. Transposing the melodies in *Hermes* up a second and third will lend ease to the actual melody. Each note must be heard in one's head before playing. When working with harmonics, flutists should refer to Dick's suggestions for various exercises and incorporating harmonic practice into repertoire and etudes. Remember while working on harmonics, which greatly strengthen the embouchure, it is important to spend time in the low register as a counter to the tense embouchure of harmonics.¹² When learning this piece, I advise to first separate out the harmonics from the multiphonics in order to focus on the phrases in each of the gestures before merging the two techniques and playing the music as written. Additionally, it is useful to play the melody substituting the real

¹² Dick, *Tone Development*, 14-22.

fingerings to work on the phrasing and flow of the intervals, away from the strain of attempting all the harmonics.

The multiphonics are rigorous for the performer and border on the impossible. Sciarrino says, “An illusory polyphony is thus produced, generating yet other relationships, so as nearly to lead the pedantic ‘reader’ into apparent contradictions.”¹³ This is the transformative power of *Hermes*; it changes the flute into a powerful, polyphonic instrument. At first, while gaining strength and working on the multiphonics, the upper pitches might not yet be achievable, in which case the flutist can strive for the effect while focusing on the musical line. As these techniques are very tiresome, it is best to begin incorporating them into daily practice. One should work on these every day starting with five or ten minutes and increasing over time to build up strength. In order to be able to perform these works, a flutist needs to be in shape, both “flutistically” and physically.¹⁴ Beginning with the easiest multiphonics in the piece (the low second inversion triads), focus on each chord individually, as shown in Example 4-6.¹⁵ It is best to play each note in the chord individually from the lowest to highest and then combine the pitches two at a time until it is possible to achieve all three pitches. Continue this work with the other multiphonics (see Example 4-8), working up to the stratosphere. Again, this work should be counterbalanced with time spent in the low register.

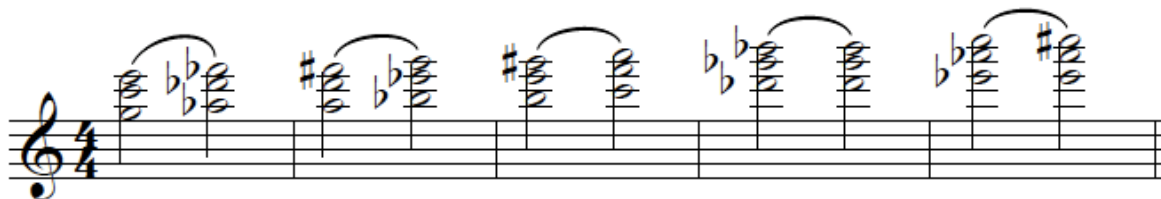
¹³ Sciarrino, *L'opera para flauto*, 7.

¹⁴ Robert Dick advised me in lessons to get to a gym! This music requires physical skills beyond most of the flute repertoire.

¹⁵ Exercise adapted from Dick, *Tone Development*, 47-8.



Example 4-8. Practice pattern for individual multiphonics



C Db D Eb E F Gb G Ab A

Example 4-9. Multiphonic strength builder

The one extended rest appears two thirds of the way through this section (9-9-rest), and even that is not a complete silence. In a live hall the accumulation of sound will continue through the rest. It seems as though Sciarrino was told that the flutist would need a rest by this point in the score, and he then incorporated it into the motion into the climax of the piece. In the beginning section, Sciarrino asks for the breaths to be completely silent, while recognizing the difficulty with this suggestion.¹⁶ He also advises that the markings *senza tempo* and *Vivo* “aim rather at more intense articulations of the tempo suggesting an essentially emotive psychic dimension.”¹⁷ In this way, the tempo is more a marking of expression than of speed.

¹⁶ Sciarrino, *L'opera para flauto*, 7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?

Sciarrino has said, “I love to diversify and always find new solutions, new perspectives.”¹⁸ The sonic palette expands in *Come* and it is in this piece that he achieves his first “superflute.” Here, the flutist should become both a flute and a drum. Sciarrino’s first aim in composing this piece was to, “unite the flute and the drum, the eternal companions of the past, in a single creature. It isn’t me who invented the *tongue-ram*.”¹⁹ The tongue ram evokes a distant percussion, especially at the *pianississimo* dynamic pervasive through much of the first section. While Sciarrino did not create this technique, his use of tongue rams is unprecedented. In the opening section, the flutist appears not to breathe at all.²⁰ Sciarrino says that Fabbriani originally did not believe this level of endurance possible, and then he realized that one can breathe comfortably through the nose while performing this technique, as the flutist only uses the air in the mouth. This allows the music to appear seamless and transforms the flute into a percussion instrument—Sciarrino’s first spell on the listener.²¹

Come, like *Hermes*, is an endurance test for the performer. As with the really high, natural harmonic-based multiphonics, one needs to build up strength to be able to play both the tongue attacks and the repeated jet whistles in this piece. Begin by playing

¹⁸ “J’aime varier et trouver toujours de nouvelles solutions, de nouvelles perspectives.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 280.

¹⁹ “Unir la flute et la tambour, les éternels compagnons d’autrefois, dans une seule creature. Ce n’est pas moi qui ai inventé le *tongue-ram*, car c’est un effet apparu dans des partitions d’autrui, vers la fin des années 70, et il était utilisé de temps à autres.” Ibid., 266.

²⁰ Other composers who wrote for this technique before or around the same time as Sciarrino include: Robert Dick, Marcin Blazewicz, Klaus-Steffen Mahnkopf, Heinz Holliger, and Toshio Hosokawa. Helen Bledsoe, “Graded Repertoire with Extended Techniques for unaccompanied Flute, Piccolo, Alto and Bass Flute,” <http://helenbledsoe.com/erep.html>, accessed 24 April 2012.

²¹ Ibid., 266.

repeated tongue rams or jet whistles in short bursts, then increase the durations in order to get in the shape needed to play these effects in the pieces. It is advisable to practice some scales and etudes incorporating these techniques as well as improvising with focus on repeated *ostinati* of these effects.

In improvising on this piece, I generally conflated the techniques and atmosphere of *Come* and *Canzona*. Example 4-10 shows the opening of an improvisation in which I aimed to use the tongue ram as the background material to the other sound materials. This helped in gaining endurance through the long passages of repeated tongue rams at the beginning of *Come*.

rhythm is free except in the repeated tongue rams, which are very rhythmic

rapidly alternate between trill keys

tongue ram t.p. t.p. t.p.

t.p. jet whistle etc...

Example 4-10. Opening of an improvisation based on *Come* and *Canzona*

Canzona di ringraziamento

Come vengono and *Canzona* should ideally be performed as a set with *Canzona* following *attaca*. This piece contains the fewest effects in the Sciarrino repertoire,

consisting simply of melodic pitch sounds: fingered trill glissando, G-shimmer, and fingered glissando while holding main note. For a true rendering of this piece, the performer must be able to circular breathe, adding another dimensions of complexity to the piece. Although possible breathing places are incorporated into the score, part of the magic of sound transformation (and the result of the incantation from *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*) in this piece is derived from the seemingly endless capacity of both the music and the flutist as a physical performer. Being able to play for this long with no stopping point feels quite similar to performing a Baroque piece with constant sixteenth-note passages, such as the first movement of Bach's A Minor Partita, or nineteenth-century showpieces. Incidentally, circular breathing can prove equally effective for showpieces!

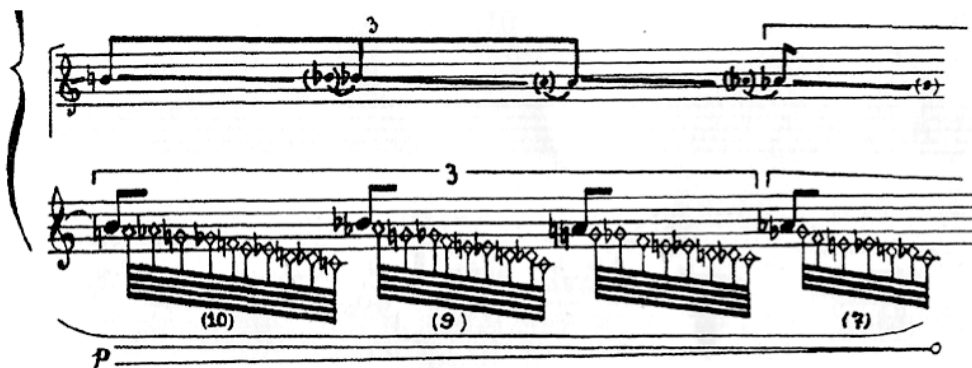
In that same vein, it is important for the performer to have very little tension in the wrist throughout this piece. With the G-shimmer and the fingered trill *glissandi*, the hand will get tired quickly if it holds more tension than necessary, as these techniques continue almost uninterrupted throughout the whole piece. With both trill effects, remove the right thumb from its resting place on the tube and start the motion from much higher in the arm, much like a pianist with tremolo, using the rotation of the forearm to create the rapid undulations. Pianist Josef Hofmann advises that a tremolo is "a feeling as if the whole arm was subjected to an electrical current."²² In a similar way flutists should feel as though the tremolo starts from a higher place in the arm, rotating the wrist with the ulna, instead of trying just to wiggle the fingers quickly. The photo in Example 4-11 shows the thumb and wrist position for G shimmer and fingered trill *glissandi*.

²² Josef Hofmann, *Piano Playing: With Piano Questions Answered*. (Philadelphia: Dover, 1976), 11.



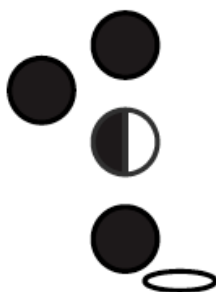
Example 4-11. Hand position for G-shimmer

The finger *glissandi* while holding a main note are not very clear in the score (see Example 4-12), especially as there is no preface to this piece.²³ To render this technique seamless, think of the hands as independent. For example, for the glissando from the A hold down the left hand fingers as seen in Example 4-13, while using the right hand to finger the white diamond noteheads.



Example 4-12. Fingering glissando in *Canzona* (17-1-fingering glissando)

²³ The other six pieces in this volume all contain a preface with some explanatory notes on how to play the piece. It is possible that this piece does not include notes as Sciarrino view it as an extension of *Come*.

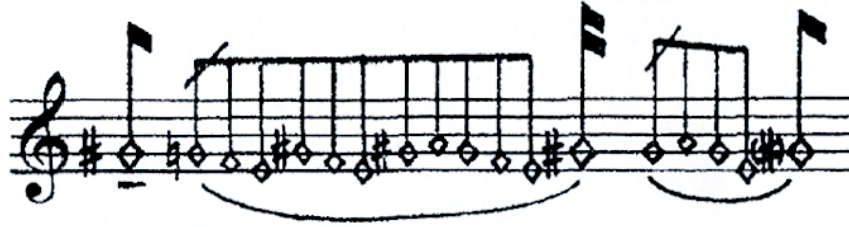


Example 4-13. Left hand position for A glissando

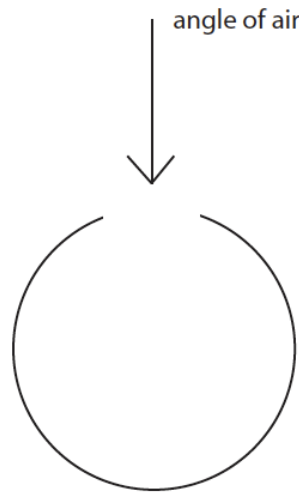
Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono

The majority of *Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono* is spent almost completely with the embouchure hole of the flute covered. Sciarrino is ennobling not only the systemized techniques found in *Venere*, but also this alternative method of sound production with the flute. The only exception to covering the embouchure is the key click, which cannot be covered because it would sound a major seventh below the notated pitch. This sound appears only a handful of times in the first two thirds of the piece, before the percussive section.

In the first two effects (and the *glissandi* in between the two), the angle of the air is crucial to achieving the desired affect. Like in *All'aure*, the covered air sound is produced with the air directing straight into the aperture of the flute. Example 4-15 shows the angle of air needed in the covered air sound in Example 4-14.

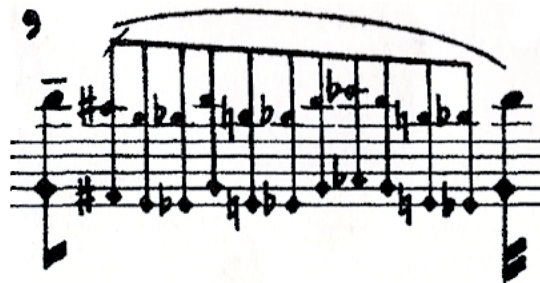


Example 4-14. Covered air sound in *Venere* (23-1-1st covered air sound)

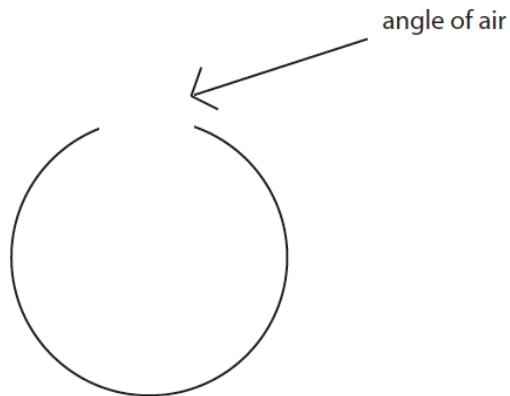


Example 4-15. Angle of air for covered air sound

The high partial sound shown in Example 4-16 requires directing the air at the opposite wall of the embouchure hole (see Example 4-17), aimed similarly to a *pianissimo* high note. The resulting sound is reminiscent of a whistle tone with additional residual sounds.



Example 4-16. High partial effect in *Venere* (22-4-eighth note)



Example 4-17. Angle of air for covered partials

Venere's last two pages (from 25-1-*se necessario* until the end) contain the two main elements from *Come* (tongue rams and jet whistles) with the addition of key clicks. Similar practice techniques can be applied in this piece, working on the separate elements and building up endurance in the tongue rams. In my improvisations on *Venere*, I worked at first with elements separated into phrases and later towards seamlessly switching between the various techniques, treating them as motives instead of disparate sounds (see Example 4-18).

Musical notation for Example 4-18, consisting of two staves. The top staff features a sequence of notes with downward-pointing arrows above them, labeled "jet whistle". This is followed by a note with a fermata and the label "vibr.", and then a triplet of notes with the label "key clicks". The bottom staff begins with a triplet of notes marked with 'x' symbols, followed by six groups of notes, each with a slur and the label "c.p." (covered partials) underneath. The piece concludes with "etc...".

Example 4-18. Beginning of an improvisation based on *Venere*

L'Orrizzonte luminoso di Aton

This piece recognizes the role the body plays in creating sound.²⁴ The body, the sound generator, becomes also the sounds themselves. Routine bodily functions are elevated to the status of art: breathing in and out, coughing. It is important to find a sense of stillness within the undulating motion of the breathing. This is true in many of these pieces; do not let the body get caught up in the tension of the music to overcompensate for the sounds that contain a lot of aural tension within them. The breathing of this piece is determined by the tempo of the flutist's breath, and it in turn determines, ideally, the breathing of the listener.²⁵ The flute becomes an amplifier of the performer's lungs. These inhalations and exhalations can be found in other pieces of Sciarrino's for larger ensemble, with various instruments executing them – for example, in *Introduzione all'oscuro*.²⁶ Metzger compares this sound, also found in *Infinito nero*, not just to breathing, but to the heartbeat.²⁷

In Curinga's interview, Sciarrino tells a story about his friend in the audience of *Aton* who started coughing at the exact moment of Roberto Fabbriani's coughing. His friend was quite embarrassed, but Sciarrino himself was pleased and notes that often the

²⁴ Dick, *Tone Development*, 9. In describing the process of throat tuning, Dick writes, "The flute is not just the tone made in the instrument, it is a complex combination of the flutist and the flute." The throat vibrates sympathetically with the flute if it is tuned (in singing position for) the note one is playing and the body of the flutist can change the sound dramatically. While Sciarrino write very different music, he blurs the lines between the flutist and the flute.

²⁵ Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 274.

²⁶ Brahim Kerkour, "Beyond the Poetry of Silence: Musical Process and Perception in Salvatore Sciarrino's *Introduzione all'oscuro*" (D.M.A. diss., Columbia University, 2010), 18.

²⁷ Metzger, "Modern Silence," 368.

culprit usually “has problems breathing or is experiencing some emotions to hide.”²⁸ For him, the relationship of the space and the audience becomes part of the music, and thus the music becomes more a part of the world.

Through improvising based on this piece, the flutist can practice the extremely slow pace of the music and aim to achieve a natural pulse in breathing in and out of the flute. In my improvisations on this piece, I aimed to achieve a static, meditative quality in the breath, while incorporating short bursts of quiet activity inside of the techniques.

Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi

This piece is the most difficult in the set. Sciarrino says about *Fra i testi*, “A good flutist, with this piece of great virtuosity, can become a magician: it is another composition of enchantments, because it is founded on the transformation of things.”²⁹ In working on this piece, take the initial page with all the fingerings listed and learn each of the multiphonics individually, discovering the weak and strong notes in each chord (see Example 4-19 and 4-20). Lantz writes that “*Fra i testi* is difficult not because it is challenging to produce a single multiphonic, but because the piece is made up of chains of multiphonics. The difficulty in producing many multiphonics in succession is in executing

²⁸ “Surtout s’il a des problèmes respiratoires ou éprouve quelques émotions à dissimuler.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 274.

²⁹ “Un bon flûtiste, avec ce morceau de grande virtuosité, peut devenir un magicien: c’est une autre composition d’enchantements, car elle est fondée sur la transformation des choses.” Ibid., 268.

the new, often awkward fingerings.”³⁰ This is true of many of multiphonics, but some are not practical. The shape of the gestures and phrases is more important than a note-perfect rendition of the piece. While in some of these chords it is impossible to get every note, many of them do work after significant time spent working on them and building the necessary embouchure strength. Figure 4-2 shows which multiphonics are practical and tips for production with easily readable fingerings. The ease of response is on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the easiest of multiphonics in the set and 5 being impossible to produce. It is interesting to note that while working on these pieces, I bought a new headjoint, and this change in my setup helped me produce many of the notes in these multiphonics that I could not previously achieve.

Example 4-19. Multiphonics in *Fra i testi*

The soft dyads shown in Example 4-20 are much easier to attain and play with a good tone. These come from the list of multiphonics that Fabbriani gave to Sciarrino in preparation for *Aton*. These multiphonics are much more common in the flute literature today than are those in the first set, and most advanced flutists should be familiar with them.

³⁰ Lantz, *Silence*, 62.



Example 4-20. Soft dyads in *Fra i testi*

As in the other pieces, improvising on these multiphonics is extremely beneficial in order to increase their familiarity. When improvising on this piece, I took successions of multiphonics from a measure or two in the piece and explored the individual pitches formed by the multiphonic fingering, as well as various voicings of the chords. Example 4-21 shows a brief section of an improvisation based on measure 30 of *Fra*.

Example 4-21 shows an improvisation on measure 30 of *Fra*. The top section is marked "Very slowly" and features five measures of music with a *ff* dynamic. Each measure contains a chord with a wavy double-headed arrow above it, indicating fluctuation between notes. Below each measure is a chord diagram. The bottom section is marked "faster" and shows a more complex improvisation with multiple notes per measure. Below this section are several chord diagrams. A legend at the bottom left shows a wavy double-headed arrow with the text: "= fluctuate between individual notes of the chord, playing them individually and in various pairings".

Example 4-21. Part of an improvisation on mm. 30 of *Fra*

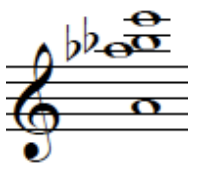
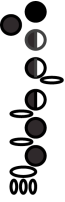


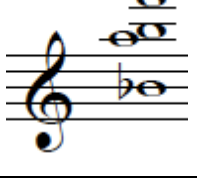



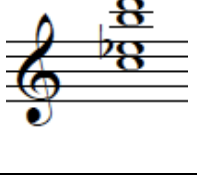
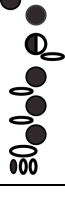
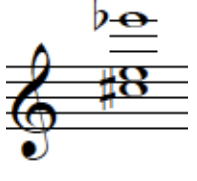



Figure 4-2: Chart of *Fra* multiphonics with explanations


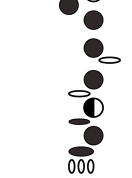
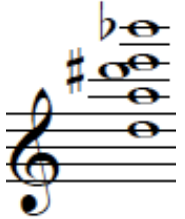
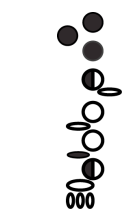

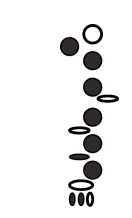

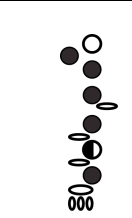
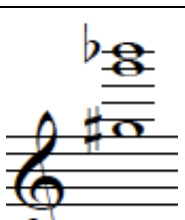
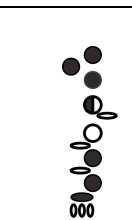
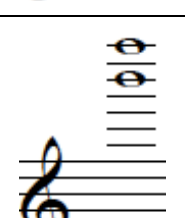
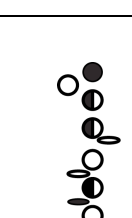
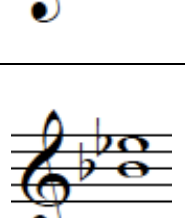
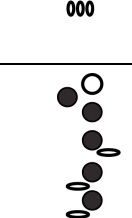
Number	Multiphonic	Fingering	Ease of response	Angle ³¹	Notes
1			2	slight C	Rolling out slightly will help produce the Eb. Focus on the low E.
2			3	U to slight C	It is difficult to get both the F and G. Rolling out more will help with the G. Aim for the F# and C#, while giving more focus to the F#. The F and G will appear with an extremely vertical aperture.
3			3	C	The Ab is quite sharp. Focus on the low G.
4			3	U to slight C	The G is marked incorrectly as an F in the introduction to the score. The A is almost a quarter tone flat. Similar in production to #2.
5			2	U	The A is quite flat. Focus on the A and drop jaw to get lower pitches.











³¹ U = normal

▷ = rolled in

C = rolled out

6			3	U to slight C	Similar in production to #2.
7			2	U	The Bb is very flat.
8			3	U to slight C	Similar in production to #2.
9			3	slight C	Focus on the B. This works better at softer dynamics.
10			4	slight C	C is flat. Eb and B are very flat. Difficult to get all four pitches.
11			2	U	Shift right hand over to play trill key with middle finger, next key with ring finger, and last with pinky.
12			4+	U	A is very difficult, especially with the C#. Aim to get C#, E, Eb, and hints of the A.

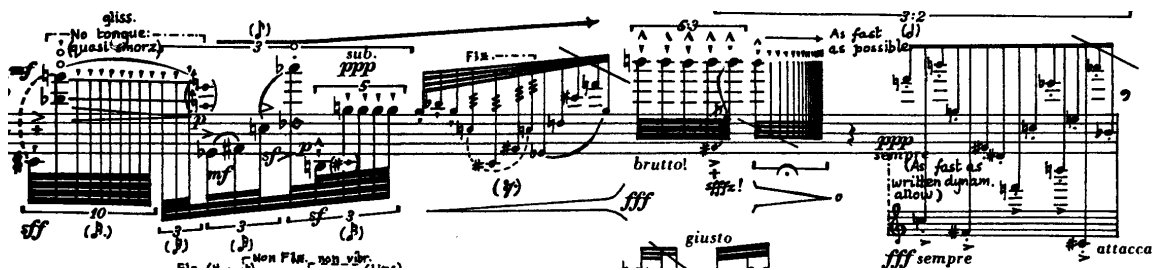
13			2	U	Play trill key and half-holed key with the same finger. Similar in production to #11.
14			4+	C	E is difficult. Aim for the other notes.
15			4+	U	Very difficult with small hands. Extend right hand ring finger beyond the key to get both trill key and key.
16			4+	U	C and Eb are very flat. Difficult to play both C and Eb. Aim more for the C.
17			4	slight C	G# is flat. Aim for outer notes of chord.
18			5	C	Not possible to get both pitches.
A			1	U	Focus on the lower note (weaker pitch).

B			1	U	This multiphonics is more in tune with the B key down (not marked in Sciarrino's notation as it was designed for a C foot.)
C			1	U	Focus on the lower note (weaker pitch).
D			1	U	
E			2	U	The D is stronger if the headjoint is turned in very slightly.
F			1	U	

Improvising on the multiphonics, as well as dissecting them individually (see Example 4-6 and 4-7) and working with throat tuning and singing, will give the performer a sense of control with these sounds. While the tempo is marked at $\text{♩} = 104$, Sciarrino's writes that

that would be the ideal tempo.³² Roberto Fabbriciani’s recording of the piece hovers around $\text{♩} = 88$, while Mario Caroli’s recording is closer to the $\text{♩} = 104$ tempo.

While Sciarrino’s scores are often very clear and aesthetically aligned with the sounds heard, there are many notational issues in *Fra i testi*.³³ Sciarrino is very careful about his notation, but it is not always clearly explicit. For performers, learning difficult pieces with extended techniques is often a twofold process: learning the technique and music, and gaining literacy with the score. Learning a Brian Ferneyhough score, such as *Cassandra’s Dream Song* or *Unity Capsule*, is extremely difficult owing to the detail – one might say over-detail – of the score, as well as the technical demands of the piece (see Example 4-22).



Example 4-22. Part of the score to Ferneyhough’s *Cassandra’s Dream Song* (end of section A)

³² The marking at the beginning of the score is “(♩ = 104, sarebbe ideale)” Sciarrino, *L’opera para flauto*, 32.

³³ Lantz discusses the complexity of Sciarrino’s scores. While I agree that *Fra*’s score is overly complicated, I contend that the scores to *Canzona* and *Venere*—in the multiple staves—accurately show the space and different planes of sound, bringing the concept of windows form to the foreground. Lantz, *Silence*, 26-31.

Sciarrino is often contrasted with Brian Ferneyhough in the clarity and playability of his scores. He has said:

My works want to allure, but they do not want to please everyone. Their complication must be an intrinsic richness; it is not worthwhile to complicate listening through traps or pitfalls. Contrary to Ferneyhough, I think that the work must, as much as possible, be given to the listener.³⁴

Often Sciarrino's aesthetic of elegance and simplicity transfers into the practicality of the score. However, in *Fra i testi*, the score is extremely dense and renders difficult a completely accurate interpretation, as shown in Example 4-23.

Example 4-23. mm 53-4 of *Fra i testi*

While Sciarrino's notation allows the performer to see the structure of the piece, it does not provide the flutist with ease of learning. The time signatures—for example $1/8 + 3/20$ in m. 3 or the series of three measures beginning in m. 49 of $6/8 + 1/24$, $5/16 + 4/20$, and $15/16 - 1/32$ —are not conducive to easy digestion of the score. This section edges closest to Ferneyhough's type of notation. With the two types of multiphonic chords (*forte* multiple

³⁴ "Mes œuvres veulent séduire, mais elles ne veulent pas plaire à tous. Leur complication doit être une richesse intrinsèque, ce n'est pas la peine de compliquer l'écoute par des pièges ou des chausse-trappes. Au contraire de Ferneyhough, je pense que l'œuvre doit le plus possible être donnée à l'auditeur." Sciarrino, "Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Kaltenecker, Martin and Gérard Pesson, 137.

note chords not based on the harmonic series labeled 1-18 and soft low dyads labeled A-F), the score becomes overly busy and complicated.

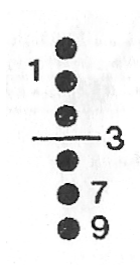
The effectiveness of a piece is greatly determined by how well one can interpret the score. I propose that an edition of *Fra i testi* written in simpler notation would make learning the piece much easier for flutists.³⁵ See Appendix 3 for a practice edition of the entire piece. When performing one can switch back to the original score, as this would prevent having stands going across the stage to hold the music.

The multiphonic fingerings are much easier to read in diagram form instead of just numbers or a combination of a diagram and numbers, as one can see in comparing Example 4-24 with 4-25.³⁶ Sciarrino bases his fingerings off those of Bartolozzi.³⁷ This system is designed to be used with a C foot flute. Key 9 is the low C, overlooking the low B on most modern American flutes. In Example 4-25, the numbers from the Bartolozzi fingering system that Sciarrino uses are listed next to their corresponding keys for one of the multiphonics that Sciarrino employs in *Fra*. The circles for the first three fingers remain the same for both types of notation, but the thumb, pinky, and trill keys change from a numbering system that must be memorized to a more visually accurate representation of the keys. Because the picture looks like the keys on the flute, it is for obvious reasons more readable and preferable to Bartolozzi's system, especially in a score full of multiphonics.

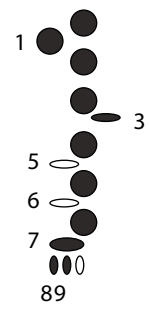
³⁵ My notation for this edition is based on Robert Dick's. Also, see examples by Michael Colquhoun, Ian Clarke, Wil Offermans, and others.

³⁶ Bartolozzi and Artaud both present fingering notations that contains exclusively numbers. One has to be familiar with that set of notation in order to read those fingerings. Sciarrino uses a combination of diagram and numbers, which is more familiar for European flutists (see Pierre-Yves Artaud, *Present Day Flutes* [Paris: Gérard Billaudot, 1995] and Bartolozzi, *New Sounds for Woodwind*).

³⁷ Lanz gives a detailed description of Bartolozzi's fingering system, with a chart that shows the keys on the flute that correspond with the numbers in his notation. Lantz, *Silence*, 61.



Example 4-24. Multiphonic #5 from *Fra i testi*



Example 4-25. Multiphonic #5 in diagram notation

In Examples 4-26 and 4-27 are an excerpt of the first three measures from the original notation of *Fra i testi* and my new performer's edition. I included the multiphonic fingerings in my edition in order to help the performer. Instead of having to memorize the fingerings for each multiphonic numbered 1-18 and A-F, the performer can instead focus on larger issues of phrasing, dynamics, and which notes should be brought to the foreground. I also changed the time signatures to reflect how the flutist counts the rhythm, thinking of three notes of a quintuplet instead of 3/20 of a beat.

(♩ = 104 sarebbe ideale)

Example 4-26. mm 1-3 of *Fra i testi*

sarebbe ideale ♩ = 104

Ex. 4-27. The beginning of a performance edition of *Fra i testi*
(See Appendix 3 for the complete version.)

4.3 Sciarrino's flutists

In writing music of such technical complexity and in using techniques that have been rarely or never before notated, Sciarrino has held close, collaborative relationships with flutists. According to the composer, his “compositions become a force of nature” in the

hands of flutists Manuel Zurria and Mario Caroli, and Sciarrino has joined master classes that Caroli has taught on his compositions for the flute.³⁸ When writing *Aton*, Sciarrino asked Roberto Fabbriciani for a list of multiphonics. After not using all of them in *Aton*, Sciarrino wrote *Fra*, creating a piece from a list of sounds.³⁹

Although Sciarrino relies on his respected instrumentalists as resources and executors of his music, he does not start from the limitations of the instrument, or simply what the flutist (Fabbriciani for these seven pieces) advises.

Certainly the relationship with the performers is very important. However, in general and especially these last years, I always had a clear idea of what I wanted.⁴⁰

After having worked with flutists, he began pushing more toward what he had not previously heard, even if the performer denied the playability of what he wrote. “With time, I learned to be more resolute in the requests and, if I was sure of that which I wanted, to not let me be discouraged by negative responses.”⁴¹ Sciarrino pushes the limits of the instruments. In doing so, he raises the level of technique and musicianship for the flutists who take on the challenge of his music.

It is interesting to note that Sciarrino never worked with Severino Gazzelloni, the best-known Italian flutist of the mid-twentieth century. Composers such as Berio, Boulez, and Stravinsky wrote pieces for him, and “Gazzelloni was the most important performer of

³⁸ “Mes compositions dans leurs mains deviennent une force de la nature.” Sciarrino, “Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino,” interview by Curinga, 267.

³⁹ Ibid., 268.

⁴⁰ “Certainement le rapport avec les exécutants est très important. Toutefois, en général et surtout ces dernières années, j’ai toujours eu une idée claire de ce que je voulais.” Ibid., 266.

⁴¹ “Avec le temps, j’ai appris à être plus résolu dans le requêtes et, si je suis sûr de ce que je veux, à ne pas me laisser décourager par les réponses négatives.” Ibid., 267.

new flute music during the 1950s through '70s."⁴² However, Sciarrino did not feel that his style of playing really honored the composer's wishes. As an Italian composer, he would have grown in the shadows of such a vivacious performer. "Ultimately, the idea that all one could extract from the flute repertoire at the time of Gazzelloni was pyrotechnical and the opposite of that which interested me."⁴³ In the early 1970s, Sciarrino was in search of a new generation of contemporary musician, stating he "didn't like the '*gazzellonismo*' way of playing."⁴⁴ Gazzelloni was a virtuoso in the traditional European style; he played on a gold C-foot flute. This would have rendered much of Sciarrino's music impossible.

When Sciarrino first began writing for the flute, he knew only a few flutists who were up to his demands. Now he sees many younger flutists able to perform his music.

The attitude of the new generations of performers, in relation to new music, is more flexible or natural. We are in front of a certain generational fracture: the historic interpreters were often cold and objective, while the young people start from the perfect knowledge of the score to become interpreters.⁴⁵

Musicians' technique has improved, as more performers are open to playing contemporary music that goes beyond the traditional realm. With this guide, my hope is to encourage many other flutists to delve into the Sciarrino's language and works.

⁴² Claudia Anderson, "Miazawa," <http://www.miyazawa.com/artists/miyazawas-artists/north-america/claudia-anderson/#interview> (2011), accessed 10 December 2011.

⁴³ "Au bout du compte l'idée que l'on pouvait extraire du répertoire pour flûte aux temps de Gazzelloni était seulement pyrotechnique et à l'opposé de ce qui m'intéressait." Sciarrino, "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Curinga, 259-60.

⁴⁴ "Je n'aimais pas le « *gazzellonismo* » comme façon de jouer." Ibid., 260.

⁴⁵ "L'attitude des nouvelles générations d'interprètes, par rapport à la nouvelle musique, est plus souple ou naturelle. Nous sommes devant une certaine fracture générationnelle : les interprètes historiques étaient souvent froids et objectifs, tandis que les jeunes partent de la connaissance parfaite du texte pour devenir des interprètes." Ibid., 267.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 The flute in Sciarrino's other music

In addition to Sciarrino's two volumes of solo flute works (*L'opera*, Vol. 2 contains *Addio case del vento*, *L'orologio di Bergson*, *Morte Tamburo*, *Immagine Fenicia*, and *Lettera degli antipodi portata dal vento*), the flute plays a large role in much of his oeuvre. Many of his flute sounds and effects easily carry over into the other wind and string instruments, balancing and blending easily in a chamber and orchestral setting. He has written many chamber pieces for flute and one other chordal instrument (harp, harpsichord, piano). Some of the larger, more notable chamber pieces include: *Introduzione all'oscuro*, *Aspern Suite* (a theatrical piece based on Henry James's novella *The Aspern Papers* and drawing on Renaissance themes, traditional texts, and parts of Da Ponte's libretti for Mozart) *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile*, and *Infinito nero*.

Sciarrino has composed two solo concerti for flute and orchestra: *Rondo* and *Frammento e adagio*, as well as two concerti for multiple soloists: *Sui poemi concentrici* (in the second and third movements) and *Postille*. In recent years Sciarrino has expanded to a larger conception of the flute (his "superflute"), albeit with effects just as quiet: *Il cerchio tagliato dei suoni* for four flute soloists and one hundred peripatetic flutes and *Studi per l'intonazione del mare*, for an extreme number of performers (both mentioned in chapter

2). This huge battery of performers plays with the audience's conception of large sound, combining an absurd amount of players with fragile textures.

In keeping with his interest in music from the past, Sciarrino has transcribed many pieces for the flute, including: *3 canzoni del XX secolo* (Three Twentieth-Century Songs), Guillaume de Machaut's *Rose, Liz*, Mozart's Adagio K356/617a, and *Medioevo presente*. Sciarrino's cadenzas for the Mozart flute concerti are elegant, succinct, and honor the style of Mozart, one of his favorite composers. His transcription of Bach's Toccata and Fugue, BWV565 for amplified flute conjures the original epic organ work into a much smaller scale while retaining the sense of grandeur, creating an "amazing metamorphosis of dinosaur to mouse!"¹ As these pieces show, Sciarrino is constantly looking both at the past and the future simultaneously. His flute music juxtaposes older forms and a reverence for the ancients and mythology (*Hermes, Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono* among others) while still breaking new boundaries. For example, in *Rondo*, while paying homage to Classical music, Sciarrino gives the flute almost exclusively harmonic sounds. This existence in two places at once aligns with his concept of windows form and allowing him to live in multiple compositional worlds that are not opposing but floating alongside each other.

¹ Mario Caroli, notes to *Fauno che fischia . . .* (2007), CD, Attacca, 28118.

5.2 Closing thoughts

When I first discovered Sciarrino's music, I was playing one of his orchestral pieces for a freelance concert. I had never heard of Salvatore Sciarrino before, and I did not understand the music, primarily due to the players' approach to the score. The musicians were playing each note as a strange and foreign technique, without imbuing musical meaning nor paying much attention to the dynamics and not always achieving the desired effects for which Sciarrino asked. I thought there might be something more to the composer's musical intent, and I wanted to discover more about Sciarrino's music. My curiosity piqued, I began listening to as much Sciarrino as I could find and immediately fell in love with his delicate textures and strange sonorities that simultaneously felt oddly natural and synthetic, meditative and disconcerting, creating a unique, sensual sound world.

Sciarrino's music contains the "*noise-sound*" of rumbles and groans, but takes it further. Instead of leaving them as is, he creates "*noise-music*," elevating these sounds heard in life and imbuing his music with the past. Sciarrino's figures show his interest in the integration of music with other fields of study: visual art, computer language, and science. While Sciarrino's music desires some contextualization for audiences, wonderful interpretations of his music transform the concert hall into a new sound realm, creating a meditation on quiet flurries of activity, bringing the "residue of performance" to the foreground, not just highlighting the outer margins of instrumental technique, but reveling

in them.² There is a shifting of perception in listening to Sciarrino's music; the expected sounds do not often occur, as if with every phrase Sciarrino is reminding us that, as he says in an interview, "as long as there is man, there is no silence, and when there is perception, there is music."³

In the performer's perception of Sciarrino's scores, there can be a "breach between score and music."⁴ Despite all the action contained within Sciarrino's sounds, there is a delicacy in his calligraphy that reflects the sounds for which he aims. For example, in looking at the clear diamond noteheads in *All'aure*, the performer cannot but achieve a sound that verges on the precipice of sound itself. However, reading each of the chords in *Fra i testi* requires processing a great deal of information and is cumbersome. There is sometimes a lack of simplicity and clarity that could easily be achieved with different notation. With all the ink on the page, the performer understands the intention of sound but the effect is rendered difficult. More variety and simplicity in his notational style could enhance extremes that are in the music, from extreme power to the edge of existence.

My primary purpose with this dissertation is to share Sciarrino's enchanting incantations of sound with other flutists and to emphasize that learning this difficult music based on completely different sonorities can be beneficial not simply for their own sake and beauty, but also in order to strengthen one's "traditional" playing. In creating exercises and taking the time to live with the extended techniques found within *L'opera per flauto*, a flutist's technique and musicality can be greatly expanded. In living with these sounds for a

² Metzger, "Modern Silence," 365.

³ "Tant qu'il y a l'homme, il n'y a pas le silence, et quand il y a perception, il y a musique." Sciarrino, "Entretien avec Salvatore Sciarrino," interview by Kaltenecker, Martin and Gérard Pesson, 140.

⁴ Giomi and Ligabue, "The 'Enchanted Sound Objects,'" 411.

while and investing in the vocabulary of a composer, one can create a sense of ease about the techniques in order to let the music breathe.

Sciarrino's flute works can appear to be a daunting undertaking to flutists because of the almost complete absence of any traditional flute sonorities. Mastering the techniques found within his pieces takes much commitment, yet the music inside of the techniques and unique sounds is immensely rewarding. With Sciarrino's works, the flutist is free to fashion a "superflute," existing on the edge of sound, transforming into a drum, a chordal instrument, a pair of lungs, and amplified breath, all while maintaining a fascination with the small and the delicate.

Appendix 1: Catalogue of Sciarrino's Works Involving Flute

Solo

All'aure in una lontananza, alto flute (also flute or bass flute) (1977)
Morgana, Parafrasi di Brazil, flute (1983)
Hermes, flute (1984)
Canzona di ringraziamento, flute (1985)
Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?, flute (1985)
Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi, flute (1989)
L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton, flute (1989)
Venere che le Grazie la fioriscono, flute (1989)
Addio case del vento, flute (1993)
Morte Tamburo, flute and dry acoustics (1999)
L'orologio di Bergson, flute (1999)
Immagine Fenicia, amplified flute (1996–2000)

Chamber

Small (2-4 instruments)

Siciliano, flute, harpsichord (1975)
Esplorazione del bianco II (1986)
D'un faune, alto flute, piano (1980)
Fauno che fischia a un merlo, flute, harp (1980)
Il motivo degli oggetti di vetro, 2 flutes, piano (1986–7)
Omaggio a Burri, alto flute, violin, bass clarinet (1997)
Muro d'orizzonte, alto flute, English horn, bass clarinet (1997)
Tre duetti con l'eco, flute, bassoon, viola (2006)

Large (5 or more instruments)

... da un divertimento, 10 instruments (1968–70)
Sonata da camera, 16 instruments (1971)
Di Zefiro e Pan, 2 flutes, 2 oboe, 2 clarinet, 2 bassoon, 2 horn (1976)
Quintet no.2, wind quintet (1977)
Attraverso i cancelli, 14 instruments (1977)
Introduzione all'oscuro, 12 instruments (1981)
Raffigurar Narciso al fonte, 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, piano (1984)
Il tempo con l'obelisco, flute, clarinet, bassoon, violin, viola, violoncello (1985)
Lo spazio inverso, flute, clarinet, celeste?, violin, violoncello (1985)
Prologo in terra, flute, clarinet, string quartet (1985)
Il silenzio degli oracoli, wind quintet (1989)
4 intermezzi, instruments (1997)

In nomine nominis, flute, English horn, bass clarinet, violin, viola, violoncello, percussion, piano (2001)

With Voices

Aspern Suite, Soprano, 2 flutes, percussion, harpsichord, viola, violoncello, (1979)

La perfezione di uno spirito sottile, 1 voice, flute, percussion (1985)

Nuvolario, 1 voice, flute, trumpet, percussion, 2 violas (1995)

Cantare con silenzio, 6 voices, flute, percussion, electronics (1999)

Infinito nero, 1 voice, octet: flute, oboe, clarinet, percussion, piano, violin, viola, violoncello (1998)

Concerti

Rondo, flute, chamber orchestra (1972)

Frammento e adagio, flute, orchestra (1986–92)

Sui poemi concentrici, (1987):

I, violoncello, orchestra

II, flute, clarinet, violoncello, orchestra,

III, flute, violin, viola d'amore, orchestra

Postille, flute, violin, viola, orchestra (1993)

Il cerchio tagliato dei suoni, 4 flute soloists, 100 peripatetic flutes (1997)

Studi per l'intonazione del mare, 1 voice, 4 solo flutes, 4 solo saxophones, 100 flutes, 100 saxophones, percussion (2000)

Libro notturno delle voci, flute, orchestra (2009)

Transcriptions

3 canzoni del XX secolo, flute, piano, (1984)

G. de Machaut: Rose, Liz, 1 voice, flute, clarinet, bassoon, viola, violoncello, (1984)

J.S. Bach: Toccata and Fugue, d, BWV565, (amplified) flute (1993)

W.A. Mozart: Adagio K356/617a, flute, trumpet, percussion, 2 violas (1994)

Medioevo presente, flute, trumpet, percussion, 2 violas (1994)

Cadenzas

Mozart Flute Concerti (1989-1991)

Boccherini Concerto in D Major (1993)

**Principal publisher: Ricordi

Appendix 2: Translation of Luisa Curinga's interview with Sciarrino

"A Conversation with Salvatore Sciarrino:

The Works for Flute Between Myth, Rite, and Magic"

Luisa Curinga

The following translation of this extract of Luisa Curinga's interview with Salvatore Sciarrino is taken from "Une conversation avec Salvatore Sciarrino: L'œuvre pour flute entre mythe, rite et magie." *L'imaginaire musical entre création et interprétation*, ed. and trans. Mara Lacchè, 257-81. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006 and is © Editions l'Harmattan.

Q: In your opinion, what is the origin of traditional and popular designations for certain instruments, for example that the flute is a magical instrument and the violin is diabolical?

A: I think that, at the base of all this, there is a categorical refusal on the part of the Christian world of all that appears in the sphere of eroticism, of all that has some sort of place among vital instincts, of all that is irrational and is tied to previous sacred tradition. A consequence of this rejection is that which was sacred for pagans became diabolical for Christians: for example, snakes became the symbol of evil, the goat became the Devil incarnate, and so on. Christians feared free love above all. Faced with this subject, the ancients had a positive attitude, like the civilizations that we call primitive but that aren't at all. Most likely the qualification of magic, with a somewhat disturbing connotation, negative, of an instrument like the flute (whose tradition is tied up with more ancient rites,

and that was magical since it was invented by the gods), resulted in Christianity fear of facing these aspects of the human experience.

Q: Indeed, the flute has divine origins in practically all the cultures of the world, and it is one of the first musical instruments in history.

A: Yes. Moreover, in all primitive cultures, the flute is tied to the act of creation: the world is even created with a sound of the flute. It seems that important themes were often cited but seldom actually developed; among scholars who are occupied with this, Maurius Schneider led, with his research and his writings, with a seminal work.

Q: The conception of magic in music, of ancestral origin, has not been lost through the centuries, but remains and is transmitted, sometimes in a hidden manner, without ever having disappeared completely, in spite of Catholicism. It came to influence even the composers of the twentieth century through those of today. It is precisely in the twentieth century that we witness the reclamation of the primitive and myth. And the flute has always had a large importance in all magic rituals, being tied to cosmogonical myths and with those of human creation.

A: That aspect is very familiar to me. I have always worked with myths and enchantments. The attention paid to primitive cultures exploded with the openings of the first ethnographic museums, around 1860-1870, but from the artistic point of view, the phenomenon manifested itself in the first years of the twentieth century. The first

exposition of the Cubists presented, by alternating them, barely painted pictures and African tribal masks. On the basis of this observation, one can understand that the idea of primitivism enters modern times strongly tied to the concept of modernity.

Q: Previously, the concept of magic in music did not find an obvious way, neither in music nor in other cultural manifestations, but persisted especially in folklore and fables. Thus, in the twentieth century we witnessed at the same time a recovery of the primitive, of rite and of myth and an extraordinary renaissance of the flute, which became a well-loved and important instrument.

A: Yes, because before, the flute, even if often used, was only an instrument among others, and wasn't specifically destined for particular compositions. For the solo flutist, everything commenced with *Syrinx* or, a little earlier, with *Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

Even the second poem in Ravel's *Schéhérazade* is titled "The Enchanted Flute." But its enchanting role possibly exploded with the alto flute in *The Rite of Spring*, and with the affirmation of its triple "essence" (piccolo, flute, alto flute) in *Daphnis and Chloé*, where it becomes for moments a sort of "superflute."

Q: Can you talk to me about your flute pieces?

A: For the flute, between 1977 and 1989, I wrote seven pieces of long duration, and then a short one, *Addio case del vento* (1993), in which the brevity was intentional, in that the goal was changing register. Recently, I have composed two others: the first, *l'Orologio di*

Bergson, written last September [1999]. Born out of the vocal and instrumental cycle *Cantare con silenzio*, it functions as an interlude; it is an implacable piece, hard as wrought iron. It is an etude on time in which persistence of regularity is used to alter the rhythms of perception. It is simple, but effective and especially new in its directional discoveries. It speaks to us of the apparent objectivity of time and of its reality and total subjectivity.

Q: Thus, we regain in *L'Orologio di Bergson* attention particularly turned to perception that has always figured into your compositional style?

A: That's true, and in that case I turned my attention to the measuring of time. *Bergson* was the first [piece] to speak about the subjectivity of time: that explains the title. From *Cantare con silenzio* came a second flute piece that was modified in comparison to the original version with voices: its called *Morte Tamburo*, and it was to be created in the course of that year. Then there was another in gestation, for amplified flute, that I started in 1996 and that I wished to finish that year. Thus, in total, my works for solo flute add up to ten pieces, plus I haven't stopped.

Q: Ten pieces for solo flute, plus the numerous chamber and orchestral works in which you have used the instrument: so the flute is an important instrument in your poetry!

A: Yes, surely! Above all technically, for its potential of sound emission; the results are obvious and open horizons. The flute is one of the freest instruments in its relationship with breath and the human body, and for this reason, it has given me a lot of possibilities.

When I began to write for the flute, I was actually exploring nearly virgin territory. I wrote a lot for this instrument, but it was especially a question of creating some effects and traditional notes. I tried to take this instrument into consideration, not to renew it, but in order to give it a new physiognomy, an expressive force that seems missing in its earlier repertoire. Ultimately, the idea that all one could extract from the flute repertoire at the time of Gazzelloni was pyrotechnical and the opposite of what interested me. When I began to approach the flute, we were already living in the climate of Darmstadt.

Q: What are the characteristics that render the flute more interesting in your eyes?

A: First, like I already said, for its potentials of sound emission. This interest wasn't planned because it all arrived gradually. In reality I used the flute in a manner already repeated in my first important orchestral works, composed beginning in 1967. In 1972, I wrote a piece for flute soloist and orchestra. I searched for a flutist who could do that which I demanded of him, and I didn't like the "*gazzellonismo*" way of playing. Thus, I resisted Gazzelloni; I am perhaps the only one who didn't write for him. The determination of the technique of my pieces was gradual, on the part of the flutists as well as mine. Myself, in the beginning, I thought that certain things were impossible, because I was basing it on the experimental and uncertain data of the interpreter. The latter couldn't overcome a certain limit of control, even though the result was always a little approximated. Over time, while my writing evolved, especially through consolidation and enrichment of sounds and articulations, my requests to performers became technically more precise.

All'Aure in una lontananza, the first solo flute piece some many years later, in 1977. I had the notion to restart at the beginning, because the piece started from the rhythm of the breath and represented the cosmogony of the flute.

Q: This reference to the rhythm of the breath is very interesting and reflects the ancestral conception of the flute as a symbolic instrument of essential breath, strongly tied to the physiology of the human body!

A: That is true, but at the time I was not aware of it, as it consists of a mythological attitude or a projection of the times: I imagined this piece, I wrote it and I fulfilled it. Thus, time passed and the interpretive discourse evolved. The execution, interpretation, or details were not resolved immediately; some years passed before that happened. At the time of the first performances of *All'Aure*, flutists had resorted to a technique completely different than what I had asked for, and in trying to define the piece, they found the easy way out. I looked for the "*canna scarica*"¹ effect, and to achieve it, flutists initially made accommodations, but without measuring up to the technique that I asked for. After time, myself, I learned that there existed other methods of approach permitting the instrumentalist to be able to ↑ simplify things: for example, the amount of air necessary for the production of these sounds was less, but, not being a flutist, I could not ask for it to be diminished drastically.

¹ For this expression, Sciarrino means the effect obtained when the tube of the flute, is released from the air, which should not begin to vibrate.

It was clear that, in seeing high notes written, the performer was brought to use more air than necessary, without arriving at what I had asked: indeed they blew too much, while a control, so to speak, “minimal” sound emission would have been required.

Q: That is true: I myself have experimented with how *All'Aure* demands a type of sound emission completely different than what flutists are used to. Your music demands a return to the beginning [*azzerare*], it's the same for the technique: it is necessary to make a clean sweep of all the habits of standards of playing and go again from zero, with an approach free from prejudices and made up techniques in advance.

A: Indeed, the particularity of this mode of playing saw to it that the instrument played in that manner changed in intonation: for example, the embouchure turned completely in produces an tone a seventh below. But that was defined slowly. The discoveries and techniques became clear in going forward: besides, all new things need a certain amount of time to be understood. The way in which the performers tried to analyze reality was filtered by what they expected of it; for this reason, the true realization of my music only took place after the early 1980s.

All'Aure is a piece that had already had some success with flutists (but not only this piece), in particular for the attention given to the physical act of the breath, for the way in which it was developed, for the absence of time in meter, substituted by the physiological pulsation.

The following composition, *Hermes*, came several years later, in 1984. Following the publication of *All'Aure*, I wanted to change radically: the piece was written with a certain

fatigue, in a period where I had to force myself to go forward, to overcome the inertia that we all have. It is a work based on natural harmonic multiphonics and on this subject, I would like to tell a peculiar story: I remembered that, while I was writing, Roman students came to see me. I did not have the time to tidy up my papers that they drew closer and asked me, "What is this piece?" I responded, "It is a piece for four clarinets." As they also saw strange chords, they welcomed my words without marveling at them.

Q: *Hermes* is an example of numerous titles of your compositions that recall myth. What can you tell us about this?

A: In the case of *Hermes*, the score is preceded by a little introduction. Hermes is the psychopomp, that is to say the guide of souls. With the technique that I developed at the time, I wanted to extract the soul from the sound; the title is born from that affinity. From the practical point of view, there was this isolation of harmonics, either melodically or harmonically. The chordal sounds occurred almost for fun; indeed, I used this technique for the first time in a *scherzo* to use like an encore, a *scherzo* that I gave to Roberto Fabbriciani, who plays it on different occasions. There is a paraphrase from *Brazil* that is called *Morgana* (this is the return of the reference to enchantment); the theme is made both recognizable and obscured, as in the mirage of Morgana, until the moment when it becomes clearly identifiable with the melody of *Brazil*. In the final section, the flute makes all the harmony, this characteristic trick of the song, with this technique of multiphonics, executed with staccatos.

A lot of my new techniques come from arrangements, half-joking transcriptions, like with the songs, partly learned, as in the case of *Vanitas*. That comes to me just now, for in the act of arranging we are not only in search of something that goes a little away from the normal, but it is possible to use all material with a more important sense of ease. In utilizing this technique in a small fragment and in repeating with Roberto [Fabbriciani], I proposed to him to produce something similar, but melodically. We were in Arezzo, and I had taken along some staves of music to him; he told me that it was necessary to work there, but that it was realizable. One month later, I brought him *Hermes*: it was no longer a question of trying, but of starting to interpret a completed and final text.

The two following pieces were written in 1985 and were called respectively *Come vengono gli incantesimi?* and *Canzona di ringraziamento*.

Come vengono gli incantesimi? was born as a commission in the framework of the exposition *Intorno al Flauto Magico* (Author of the Magic Flute), that took place in Milan. The organizers asked me for a composition inspired by the “Queen of the Night,” with its vocal virtuosity, but I’d always rejected, until then, the vocal pieces inspired by “Queen of the Night,” and to want to change the agenda. I said I intended to compose a piece of magic for the flute, and it was timely. At the beginning, they remained rather perplexed, but vis-à-vis my firmness, they accepted.

Q: Why then, on that occasion, did you want to write a piece for flute? It indeed seems that the other commissioned compositions were for ensemble or for mixed groups.

A: The reason lay in a peculiar association: the flute was the subject, the topic of the exhibition, and it thus had, in my opinion, to become the theme of my composition.

Q: Wasn't *The Magic Flute* considered simply as a pretext?

A: No, on the contrary, it would not be a reference to Mozart's opera but a more profound suggestion. In my opinion, the composer should not make a historical report; however, all the other pieces commissioned on this occasion quoted *The Magic Flute*. As a whole, I personally found the concert very boring. My piece was the penultimate one of nine, and it was such a wave of innovation, it struck the audience as well, that at the end of the concert, a group of Milanese journalists asked me to write another one to be played, a few months later, in Pantelleria. Thus *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile* was born, for flute and voice, written in August 1985.

Q: In what sense is *Canzona di ringraziamento* a response to *Come vengono gli incantesimi*?

A: *Canzona di ringraziamento* was born from of a play of words, as a thank you to Goffredo Petrassi, to whom it is dedicated. I experienced gratitude for him, who, in his time, was kind to me. The title is derived from Beethoven. For the third movement of the Quartet in A minor, op. 132 is called *Canzona di Ringraziamento*. It is from this Italian, a little archaic and a bit nostalgic, that came the term *canzona*, rather than *canzone*.

Q: Isn't it also a showing of thanks for the success of enchantment?

A: Naturally, there was an explanation about this in the program note. Indeed, I wrote a note on the *Incantesimi*, in speaking of *Canzona*; this piece is a thanks to the spirits for the good success of the enchantment. I thought of the two pieces together, and the idea pleased me a lot, because they are complementary: the work *Incantesimi* has a rather irregular physiological form, chaotic, a bit unpredictable, which goes completely empty suddenly, therefore above all an anti-rhetorical form and in the end contrary to all strategy, I find that the piece is well-constructed, singular peculiar, and *Canzona di Ringraziamento* resonates and extends certain sonorous elements, thus suspended in the end, in order to make a purely strophic piece, that leads according to an opposite development, completely fluid. In the end, *Come vengono gli incantesimi?* is an example of the process of accumulation crossed with a windows form of technological origins.

Q: When you speak of “windows form”, does that have the same meaning as that which is used in computer science?

A: Yes, the significance is that used with computers, but I used the terminology “windows form” ten years before the Windows® did, and precisely at the end of the 1970s, during my classes at *Città di Castello*.

Q: Even Donatoni uses something analogous when he speaks about compositions with panels.

A: Exactly. But I worked out this concept according to Stockhausen, who precedes him.

Q: And where does the “method” begin from in particular?

A: Not in particular to preparatory operations, but to the music that it achieves: certain of his compositions, in their results, are articulated in windows form. At the bottom of it is a space-time discontinuity, but without a conception of post-Einsteinian time, the idea of windows form isn't conceivable. It is not by accident that Donatoni uses the term “with panels” because the panels can be brought closer. Windows form is on the contrary something stronger, it's like a short circuit in the point or along lines, or two dimensions that cannot communicate, are touched. It is as if, at times, we “were” in the years B.C.E. while continuing our discourse.

Q: It is as if we say: “let us open the window?”

A: More still, because it is a spatiotemporal window. I speak some about this in my program notes between the late 70s and early 80s; much later, with the advent of Windows, the term was circulated so much that now, when one says “windows form” everyone understands, especially those who work in computer sciences. In the final analysis, our children use windows form in daily life, with a great deal of naturalness: when in video games you have to take a trip, in the entire screen it is the present moment, while in a smaller rectangle, there is that which we did and that which we still have to do. That was to say that the same thing is lived with relativity: it's as if one were in the live moment,

but also very distant from this moment, by seeing it nevertheless all as a whole. At the end of the day, it is nothing other than Einstein's conception of time. It is like when we look at a photograph and there is interference between the image in front of us, elsewhere, and the present that surrounds us.

In *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?*, in addition to augmentation which is very physiological and natural because of the process of accumulation, there is also that interference of strange elements. The piece presents thus a discontinued form.

In my opinion, the first to have this consciousness of space-time discontinuity, was Beethoven, in music, and Michael-Angelo, in art in general, in particular with the creation of the *Tombes de Médicis*. On this subject, I must be opposed to the general opinion of critics to whom the tombs represent a balanced and harmonic unit. Personally, at the time of all my visits, I had felt a disagreeable sensation; I always felt the disconnect between the world of the sculptures and the world of the architecture. The stones of the architecture were carried out by stonecutters while Michael Angelo did the sculptures, without however being concerned with trimming the base of it. For this reason, the statues appeared on the sarcophagi and the surfaces of contact do not coincide. The curves of the statues and those of the architecture are different. They thus give the impression of being placed there temporarily: the two elements touch but they don't have a relationship between themselves. It is the principle of windows form.

Q: I read in an interview that, when you wrote the *Incantesimi*, you had wanted to have the flute and drum play together...

A: Indeed I thought to unite the flute and the drum, the eternal companions of the past, in a single creature. It isn't me who invented the *tongue-ram*, because it is an effect that appeared in scores of others, before the end of the 70s, and it was used in the time of others. That always disturbed me, having always thought that one of correct criticisms to make with modern music relates to using sonic material simply for creating effects. In my opinion, on the contrary, the new techniques should not only become the object of inquiry and study, but also be ennobled. It is for this reason that I asked Roberto Fabbriciani to try to use tongue-ram in a rhythmic and continuous manner. In the beginning, he thought that it wasn't possible, because it was too tiring; but eventually we saw that it could be done. Thus, also in this case, the piece happened, that Roberto still played in an extraordinary manner. He noticed that the tongue-ram can be done while breathing in and out, and, in fact, one never hears the breath. One of the magical things of this piece resides in the fact that one never hears breathing, as a result the first critics stated that it was a composition based on key percussion; in breathing in or in breathing out, one manages to play the rest of the piece, without ever hearing the breathing.

Q: Thus, the composer also anticipates the techniques?

A: In general. The same thing came to me as much with pieces for flute, as with those for violin, like the *Sei Capricci*. [Salvatore] Accardo had never worked with me before; he accepted the music and then he developed the technique. In my opinion, that should always occur thus, because otherwise, the ability of the text to be projected into the future would lose value.

Q: Moreover, while working together, is it possible to improve and refine the techniques?

A: Certainly the relationship with the performers is very important. However, in general and especially these last years, I always had a clear idea of what I wanted, that is with Fabbriani or Accardo. Initially, the latter says to me that certain super high-pitched sounds that I asked of him were impossible; me, I was sure of the opposite. At some point, having come a long way in this direction, I myself became an expert: I continued my requests with more awareness of what was possible or not, and also with more courage. I understood that, in general, the instrumentalist tries and says "no, that cannot be done," because he pretends to be able to succeed at it immediately, and he has a certain passive resistance. He doesn't search and he doesn't find. With time, I learned to be more resolute in my requests and, if I was sure of what I wanted, to not let myself be discouraged by negative responses.

Q: The passive resistance that you talk about is possibly due to the fact that the new music requires a new approach of the instrument, apart from the academic techniques, and a new way of seeing. And not everyone is ready to face the prospect of overcoming the limitations.

A: Certainly, but not uniquely: in addition to the psychological question and the mental openness, there is also a very important request for study and engagement. The technique of sound emission necessary to play *All'Aure* demands at least fifteen days of preparation. I had already used it in orchestra, but the results were practically next to zero: I was

however sure of what I wanted and convinced that it could be done, and I insisted, always between courage and unconsciousness, two basically contiguous feelings.

To obtain successful results with interpreters, a collaboration based on confidence is necessary, and, at the end of the day, I was lucky. Formerly it was more difficult, in particular because there were not more than one or two performers able to do what I asked. Probably, among the concert performers, the number did not increase, but among the people that deal with music, knowledge progressed. Thus, now we can discuss these problems almost retrospectively, while before, that would not have been possible.

Today I find flutists more ready to play new music, while the performances around fifty years were more problematic. The manner of measuring the new and instrumental technique mature with time. What was difficult for the preceding generations now becomes perhaps simpler; or better, the difficulty remains, but, at least, the sense of the mystery, of fear, is lost. Consequently, the approach can become more direct, more objective, and thus, fortunately, can change: one then truly begins to make music.

On this subject, I noticed that the attitude of the new generations of performers, in relation to new music, is more flexible or natural. We are in front of a certain generational fracture: the historic interpreters were often cold and objective, while the young people leave the exact knowledge of the text to become interpreters. Flutists like Manuel Zurria and Mario Caroli have a marvelous relationship with the public, and my compositions become a force of nature in their hands.

Q: *Venere che le grazie la fioriscono* is the composition that follows *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi*, right?

A: Yes, it is from April 1989 and it is a composition that I tried to still change, by increasing the quantity of sonic material employed and by introducing all the flutistic techniques that the avant-garde had previously used and that I had not yet used because everyone was doing it. By using sounds in a certain way (for example key clicks), I not only proposed to systematize them, but especially to ennoble them, since before, they represented only effects scattered like peppercorns. Wanting to write a cycle of at least six pieces, in August of the same year, I also wrote *L'orizzonte luminoso di Aton*, that showed marvelous insights in my opinion.

I wasn't content with the six pieces for flute, so I composed another one. For the *Luminous Horizon of Aton*, I had asked Roberto Fabbriciani for a list of multiphonics, sure from the point of view of production—i.e. that they are always produced in a strong way. Those were the sounds that I hadn't used in *Aton*, and the list stayed with me. I thus tried to see how it would be possible to transform a list of sounds into a composition. Thus, in December 1989 *Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi* was born which, excluding the introduction, starts with a structure composed by alternating enumerations and pauses. The multiphonics at the foundation of the piece have the characteristic of coming out *ff*, and I had the idea to remove the pressure gradually, in order to then obtain the false fundamental ones. A good flutist, with this piece of great virtuosity, can become a magician: it is another composition of enchantments because it is founded on the transformation of things.

Q: Magic, enchantment, transformation: is it, almost, about an alchemistic concept?

A: Also, probably. It is a composition of extremely accelerated metamorphosis, like the movement of a cloud, even if, as I say it, it is a cloud with angles, because it seems to be a piece... angular.

The enumeration of sounds transformed themselves into music and voyage in time: the first transformation is in a Darmstadtien language, with the use of *acciaccature* as with Messiaen or with Boulez. While this discourse evolved later on, other parallel languages emerged. The development is varied and surprising like that of a cloud.

I designed this composition as the metamorphosis of the metamorphosis, that is to say the metamorphosis of the metamorphic object. Amongst my pieces for flute, this one has the most varied sonic material: there are, it seems to me, seven types of sounds.

Q: This aspect distinguished it from the greater share of your other compositions since, in general, the musical material in your pieces is very restricted.

A: Yes, it is very restricted, but in *Testi*, the different techniques are precisely like characters, and more exactly like different layers of language, each with its own character. It is therefore a polyphonic piece, as an element disappears, another takes over: the result is a continual metamorphosis, because one passes from more complex sounds to “click” the most infinitesimal, without realizing how one got there.

I would still like to add something about *L'Orizzonte luminoso di Aton*, which closes an ideal series of six pieces, with a kind of cyclicity: it is the final piece, but in reality it comes just before the beginning, that is to say before *All'Aure*. When *Aton* finishes, *All'Aure*

starts, and it is if the listener felt everything inside the lungs of the flutist. Even in *L'Orizzonte luminoso di Aton*, the sound is generated starting from the breath. Sounds come out while exhaling and others while inhaling, as in some tongue-rams, and the rhythm is generated by coughing. The spread of this physiological rhythm originates in the articulation of overshrill harmonic *clusters*, so that certain sounds are emitted and replayed like there was a *delay* that reasserts itself periodically and late. It is a rather curious piece: it is instrumental but it also has a forward-tending dimension; it is ideally super-technology. It contains mythology and the origin, precisely because it is based on this sense of breath, and at the same time, it is very evolved.

Q: Thus the breath turns out to be guiding principle that binds the whole cycle of the works for flute, and the same sense of breath that is found in *All'aure* and in *Aton*?

A: Absolutely, and in this respect, even the title is significant. Do you know what the *Horizon de Aton* is? The adjective "luminous" is mine that I added, but the *Horizon de Aton* was the name of the village founded by the heretic pharaoh Amenhotep IV, called Akhenaten. I recently learned that all the important structure in ancient Egypt had a name, and the designation of "horizon" was traditional. I discovered after that the Cheops pyramid was called the *Horizon of Cheops*. It is extraordinary to see how, sometimes, certain intuitions bring to us more than we thought. Egypt is an ancient civilization, and thus gives the sense of origin. In the Mediterranean, the Egyptians were one of the first peaks of civilization.

Q: In your music, memory and tradition are important elements: is this because they are indispensable in order to progress?

A: Exactly, and *L'Orizzonte luminoso di Aton* is composed in this perspective. It is also the sense of that which I call *delay*, indispensable because it is the mechanism of memory that functions thus, going a little forward and a little behind.

Q: For the listener, to hear something already heard can be reassuring.

A: That is true only in part. As concerns meaning, the repetition is a redundancy, but at the primary stage of language, repetition is essential. Logic begins to build when there is a repeated experience: no form of knowledge is possible if there is no repetition of an experience. Knowledge begins with repetition and that coincides with knowledge of the piece: it's at the moment of writing and of hearing that I construct the universe, on the basis of the degree zero, that is to say the beginning of the piece itself.²

Q: The repetition is also the fundamental rule of enchantment.

A: Certainly, and this affirmation of anthropologists was refused by the avant-gardes of modern music (for example, by Boulez), because they refused the expression, the erotic, the irrational. Certain avant-garde musicians wanted to burn the witches like the inquisitors.

² This is Sciarrino's concept of *azzerare*.

We could not, we should not use repetition because it was at the base of magic. But, in reality, it was also the basis of language: there was so much more at stake than magic.

Repetition is the basis of knowledge, I restate it: it is necessary to have an experience at least twice to have the minimum degree of knowledge. In denying the importance of repetition, they denied the basis of language and the basis of knowledge: I have always been aware of this fact, and I strongly expressed my convictions in the early 1970s, achieving the result of upsetting many people, as well as a certain theoretical isolation.

Q: Were these ideas against the mainstream?

A: Yes, they were, but at a certain point I began to study and I could not keep silent: the fact that these are not populist or conformist ideas, did not matter to me. They became almost a manifesto of my music. Ultimately, they represented only the need to say, "Let us start to reason." Mine was a realization of intellectual, cultured man, who was not yet conscious of being such: I put my ideas in writing, while saying "in my modest opinion."

I advanced parallel to the linguistics studies, ignored completely by musicians. At that stage, I did not know them and, for this reason, I did not have the authority to say, "this is said by someone else."

Currently, my intention to propose a naturalistic approach as possible in music, becomes more and more authoritative, because it parallels certain trends of foreign linguistics. What I say is confirmed among scientists who collect the idea of universal phraseological models of language: certain basic mechanisms of the most remote languages

are common anyway. There are researchers who have made discoveries, very interesting for us as musicians, through the observation of birdsong.

I strongly uphold my ideas, which earned me a lot of critics, henceforth it is easy to equate “naturalism=imitation of reality.” But it really makes no sense; reality is not replicable, we can only stylize it. This means that everyone “speaks” the truth.

In many musical circles, that is unfortunately not clear. Indeed, how is it possible that a piece can remain indifferent, or must it really be separated from the world where we live? It is not possible to think of this, because it means cutting off its ties... How can we think of music as something detached from the world? It is unthinkable that there is no link; we are sclerotic unable to find it: we are not obliged to do it, but hiding behind an official position does not allow us to move forward. Ultimately, it is because of this catch that the music does not communicate: on the one hand some musicians say that the music does not mean anything, and on the other, there is a technocratic attitude that if the public does not know the music, they don't understand it. This means limiting the public and the aesthetic significance of music. However, none of us claims to understand a Picasso exhibition only if we are able to paint; on the contrary, the artistic language of Picasso has value for us all, and not only for the experts.

Q: Now, can we talk about *Addio case del vento*?

A: This piece was born very simply, following a commission of a piece citing Mahler, intended for the Mahler Festival of Tokyo (1993). Even in this case, I wanted to compose a piece of contrast: having composed seven large pieces, I thought that the following [next

one] must have different proportions and sounds whose birth would be gradual. It was, therefore, a cosmogonic work, even if very short, with something deeply Japanese, with the character a little blunt with the stylized gestures of the Noh theatre. The title is related to Fabbriani's childhood: certain stories in which he spoke about the farmhouses scattered in the Apennine Mountains where his grandparents live, influenced me. These houses have evocative names: *Ca' del vento* (House of the Wind), *Ca' de pecheto [del peccato]* (House of Sin). . . . I also found the linguistic influence of Venice to the interior of the peninsula fascinating.

Then, in 1999, *L'orologio di Bergson* arrived, of which we were spoke about at the beginning of our conversation and about which I would like to add something. This is a piece that is based on the periodic recurrence of a bang: within repeated spaces that form, other sound elements appear which have their own directionality, which can be from left to right or vice versa. The sound objects, in effect, can be faster or slower than the period of bang [little bang]. If the object passes from right to left, it is read backwards, as it appears at the last note and disappears with the first. If instead it comes in the opposite direction with respect to time, and thus with a faster frequency, in order to join the scansions of the period, it is within the window of time in mind, and leaves by the back, going in the opposite direction with respect to time. Using this discovery with a score, with sung words, we get a clear and impressive result, since we hear what we hear, without understanding it. Even if the syllables are always the same, as the directionality changes, the language becomes quite mysterious, and yet the score doesn't change: only the direction of the material changes. The score used in *Cantare con silenzio* is very simple and refers to the experience had by Bergson before beginning a lesson: he drank a glass of water, he put a

spoonful of sugar in it and said: “it is necessary to wait for the sugar to dissolve.” So I used this sentence. The result is incredible: it makes us hear the phrases in the opposite direction.

The solo flute piece wasn’t written before the one with text [*Cantare*], so this formal discovery was built initially with sound objects and then with text, but the principle used and the same. I had this notion; I immediately realized it and I heard it a few weeks later: I must say the effect was overwhelming. I think it is one of the most extraordinary works that I have written.

Q: Your music is pervaded by silence, and the sounds are often at the limit of audibility. What is, for you, the importance of silence? Is its purpose to put the listener to the test?

A: In effect, it impresses an atmosphere of attention as the listener hears more than before, and that is because the events, at certain strategic points of the composition, border on the limit of perceptibility. The performer would sometimes like to play more strongly, thinking it’s better to make it heard; on the contrary, when he abandons himself to silence, listening becomes much more intense and with incredible clarity that we normally do not have. I believe that these works give us the opportunity of exercising our powers of perception; the listener is not only helped to hear the piece, but also to hear the world differently.

Q: We can speak of a sort of ecology of hearing.

A: Yes, the “cleanliness” of the ear is fundamental: without it we cannot listen to any piece. For old music, it is easier, because it is familiar and we do not reject it. On the other hand, the ear instinctively rejects new music, so it is necessary to make this operation of relaxation, of open-mindedness and “cleansing” of the ear.

Q: In a certain sense, in connection with the role of silence, your music displays a particular attention given to the sound in its germinal moment.

A: Yes, with the sound that is born. Attention is engrained in me, and it is about this that I reflected and theorized on, but which is born in an instinctive way. I am thus, I feel more than the others, with more attention, more emotions. Anyway it is transmitted automatically in what I write, even if I do not want it to be.

Recently, for a friend, I made a transcription of *Sophisticated Lady* for big band. I have not listened to it yet, but people who have played and conducted it said to me that it seems like one of my works. Of the notes of the melody that remains recognizable, I made an operation of reduction to its most simple expression and increased in contrast between the full and empty. I have already transcribed this song other times: but in this case, having the big band at my disposal, henceforth a popular band, somewhat akin to the accordion or the guitar, and not wanting to use it as a popular instrument, I took care, and thus I reinvented it. The result is the “silent sound” and the increased attention to listening.

Q: In the concept of “silent sound” isn’t there the intention of recreating a new spatial-temporal dimension?

A: Yes and no. It is instead the revelation of the mechanism of pure and simple listening, which is a psychological fact before even being acoustical. It is necessary to be conscious that, if no one listens, the sound does not exist.

Then, what does the composer work on? Above all, the perception of the listener. In my music, there is a shift of attention away from the objective world of the text, of language, towards what occurs to the listener, and his way of perceiving. It is a fundamental tool to understand what I do. With regard to silence and all that makes listening subtler, I believe that my music leads to an enormous refinement in aural sensitivity. Cage is considered the master of silence, but the sounds he uses are already nobler compared to those of reality. My sounds, on the contrary, have characteristics enabling them to blend with natural sounds. When one listens to one of my pieces in a concert hall, one can suddenly hear external sounds, sounds that have never been heard in this room, because listening is more attentive.

I also noticed that, in connection with certain nodal points of a composition, or the situation is stretched to the maximum, and there is the need of deemphasizing, arrived at a turning point that is a resolution, we hear, almost in parallel, a coughing fit in the audience. When one plays *Aton*, during which, at a certain moment, the flutist must produce the coughing fits in the flute, almost always, a moment before, there is somebody who coughs, especially if he has problems breathing or is experiencing some emotions to hide. The breathing of this piece determines the breathing of the listener. The first time that a dear friend, with pulmonary emphysema—and being aware of her disease I paid a lot of attention to her—listened to *Aton*, she began to cough practically at the same time as

Roberto (Fabbriciani): she was upset and she excused herself a lot, but for me it was not a problem. On the contrary I considered it physiological, and that gave me a perfect validation.

Q: So the physiology of a piece corresponds to the physiological nature of breath?

A: Exactly. Naturally, this is something desired, calculated, but they are totally intuitive calculations, empirical, relating to different contexts. There is no gilded section (*sectio aurea*) which can tell us that we must insert an element or another. These choices are the responsibility of the composer.

Q: Is there, in some of your compositions, a symbolic use of numbers?

A: I use a lot of numbers: the proportions are all numbers. Being a composer known for his formal perfection, it is clear that I work with numbers, although I am not a pseudo-scientific terrorist. More specifically, I work on the measurement of elements in physical reality: on geometry rather than arithmetic, and the relativity of perceptions. Geometry is the basis of perceptible form.

I never used serialism to separate parameters, but I use serialism with the recurrence of figures: I use the serialization in a non-Orthodox manner, but for me, more important, because I act on what we hear. What interests me more is the independence of the design of the composition with respect to a pre-organization, since the organization is made based on characteristics of the piece of work, in the deployment of its various

different kinds of graphics, depending on what I needed. For this reason, I always wrote with diagrams, different kinds of graphs, depending on what I needed. This allows me to control all the proportions, either intended or unintended, and irrational elements.

Q: Does this method enable you to check, with listening, the design that is behind a composition?

A: Yes, and to confirm that I would like to quote a much more interesting attempt, an analysis of *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?* done by Marco Ligabue and Francesco Giomi. They do not depart from the score, but in listening, translated in graphically. This graphing of the piece leads us, in practice, almost exactly to the initial diagram. It is an extremely significant approach, because it is completely beyond the official canon or even academic analysis, but somehow more relevant.

Q: Then, according to you, a descriptive analysis “à posteriori” that does not depart from the score but is based on listening or takes its departure from the description, is more intelligent than an analysis that takes us back to the preexisting laws.

A: Yes, I find that it is more modern.

Q: Giomi and Ligabue’s analysis, of electronic musicians, is analogous to that descriptive kind, used as the first macro-structural approach of electro-acoustic compositions. On this subject, what is your relationship with electronic music?

A: I have worked a lot with electronic music, although without having achieved much. In the new work for flute I only use amplification, while in *Cantare con silenzio*, I used the flute with a very particular *live*: the sound of the flute creates resonance with percussion instruments that are never struck. This resonance is thus re-elaborated in real time and is repeated, by creating an artificial ambiance intermittently with acoustics of the room.

Years of experiments were necessary to do something of seemingly very simple: I started in 1995, with Alvise Vidolin and Nicola Bernardini at *Tempo-Reale* [Real Time], continuing then with Vidolin and Mario Caroli in Padua. At some point, the experiment started to bear fruit and the piece started to function. Through the memorization, the lag does not lead to any return, but to an alternative space created by the sound of the flute, with a particular vividness and a richness of sound.

Q: Can we talk more about *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile* which, although not a solo flute piece, seems extremely pertinent for talking about themes of myth and magic?

A: Yes, it is a composition that is closely tied to the world of myth. Written for flute and voice, it was composed in 1985 and premiered at Pantelleria, accompanied by a flight of kites loaded with bells. The text that I set is from Orphic tablets, also used by Nono in *Das atmende Klarsein*. I put it to music without knowing that Nono had also used it, and the first to notice it was Paolo Petazzi. Nono had used just a fragment, inserted in the collage of ancient texts of Massimo Cacciari, in which isolated words are sometimes used. What is odd is that *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile* is dedicated to Nono.

Q: Did the dedication come after the discovery of using some of the same text?

A: No. I dedicated it to Nono in 1985, because the work seemed a question and a response to certain problems, also felt by him. It is a ritual piece, funereal, because it is associated with the idea of regret, of loss of the earth—pollution is rising to unacceptable levels. But I accept this, just as I accept life and death. That was the year before Chernobyl. I had written a letter to Nono that I never sent, because I did not want to worry him, considering the state of his health.

Later, when I imagined the piece, I wanted to simply portray it as a ritual of burial – and that went with the choice of the Orphic text – which must take place in the desert, where the absence of humans is perceptible. Thus, the piece was related to kites, to wind. The text is the guide engraved on a tablet, accompanying the deceased so that he remembers what he was to say to the guardian of the source. “*Ardo di sete e muoio* [I burn and die of thirst]” says the soul; the guardian then responds: “*ma bevi alla fonte a destra del cipresso* [but drink right at the source of the cypress].” The characters are not declared. The failure to understand it makes this very beautiful text mysterious. Do you know why one speaks about the source to the right side of the cypress? Because there are two sources: one is the memory, the other is the forgetting. Mnemosyne, mother of all the muses, for the ancients, is the foundation of culture; instead forgetting [oblivion] represents the total loss, dispersion. This is exactly the opposite compared to the Buddhists! The mechanism that underlies our culture is that of memory. The nine Muses are the daughters of Mnemosyne. Therefore, it is necessary to drink from the source of memory to also be able to refine

consciousness [conscience]. We cannot have a conscience if we do not remember what we embodied. All these concepts are related to the Orphic and Pythagorean.

The text continues: "*chi sei e donde vieni? Della terra sono figlio e del cielo stellante* [Who are you and where do you come from? I am the son of the earth and the stellar sky]." It was I who translated "*stellante* [stellar]" rather than "*stellato* [starry]".

Q: Once more, you have used the flute in a composition tied to ritual and to myth: why?

A: I have used the flute because it is a threnody. The problem of cosmogony reappeared: can I build a universe with the flute? In *La perfezione di uno spirito sottile* there is also the idea of creating a character composition, in appearance, extremely disproportional concerning the relationship between duration and the number of performers: there are only two, and the work lasts around forty minutes.

Q: Even the compositional elements are very few.

A: Yes, there is a sonic material that is, in moments, rarefied but extended. In listening to the piece, we lose the concept of time. But not purely: there is the sense of enchantment, of persistence, that is to say the genre of repetition that destroys the perceptual horizon. The intervals sound like new. For the voice, it is difficult to intone certain intervals: the piece is long and, within, the temperate comes into play with the stormy.

Q: On listening, even time seems to flow in a different manner, and the voice of the two protagonists mixes in timbre and in the fashion of sound production, so that it becomes difficult to distinguish them.

A: Yes, particularly in the half-step that is the smallest element from where the lamentation departs, the threnody. The voice and the flute fit together, it is true. Being a musician, you notice the linking elements. By if you try for a moment to forget everything, you discover that, actually, the piece proclaims heterogeneity.

The flute always gravitates to the voice without coinciding with it, except for the initial cell, which is determined. In the end, the flute becomes like a gigantic animal that cries and truly frightens.

Città di Castello (Ombrie, Italie), February 10, 2000.

Q: Two years have passed since our last conversation. During this time, your production for the flute has enriched further. The last time we hardly mentioned the work *Morte Tamburo*, which you had yet to create. Can now speak to us about it in a fuller way?

A: *Morte Tamburo* was born according to the notes for the last part of *Cantare con silenzio*, with which it shares the beginning and the end. *Morte Tamburo* starts with a kind of fenestration, with clear blocks and chaotic periods of *tongue-rams*, interrupted by a space of far away and immobile *tongue-rams*, persisting on only one note. Progressively, this

continual alteration of *tongue-rams* is empty and changes. The immobile line begins to descend while, during the fenestration, leave the *tongue-rams* gradually and enter other elements; the sensation is that of space, because the time is geometrically delineated and has margins. We can thus call it periodic space-time, in which two dimensions alternate intermittently: the events, in their respective windows, can pass into the temporal and anti-temporal direction.

Q: That didn't already happen in *L'orologio di Bergson*?

A: In effect, that was already present in the previous works, but in *Bergson* that technique is exploited by itself and constitutes the form of the piece. For example, the large pulsation, that tightens itself imperceptibly, and that then enlarges itself, creates a sort of indefinable stupor. Even after repeated hearings, we never succeed to dominate the piece. The aberrant perspectives can render even the simplest elements interesting.

In *Addio case del vento*, there are already some simpler elements that entered in the domain of the invisible windows, move and then disappear: they move from right to left, therefore in the anti-temporal sense. Furthermore, in *Addio case del vento*, the *shadow-cluster* is present for the first time, according to the definition of Caroli: they are groups of natural harmonics from which one takes away the sound; a whistle remains.

Q: To return to *Morte Tamburo*, why did you want to give it that title, immediately evocative of a tribal dance?

A: It's a provocative title because the content of the work is based on the modern concept of chaos. The text with which this music was associated from the beginning, speaks about "possible infinities," of rustling in the continual birth and death, speaks about the quantum vacuum and the reservoirs of the universe. As I developed it, it came out a very beautiful text.

The title is because, just at this point in the cantata, one arrived at the musical and textual concretization of the concept of death: the things that pass, the sand that sweeps along the objects with it, until the moment when the river, clogged with garbage, gets blocked. And at this time the dance starts; there is death, but at the same time begins a new creation.

Q: Is there then a sense of death and rebirth, of regeneration?

A: Exactly, and it is for this reason that there is a black and aggressive, but luminous, dance. At the same time, there is also the sense of a work "stone by stone," a new universe that builds itself. The music sings creation, on a scientific text that sounds like an ancient, sacred text.

Q: In *Morte Tamburo*, is there a reference to percussion?

A: Yes, in the sense of the death, of the deafening stupor of the heartbeat, as if the maddened heart could listen. It is an apparent contradiction: for me there is no creation, there is no meaning for the man who does not celebrate life in death and death in life.

In the text of *Cantare con silenzio*, the moment of death refers to sand: “many things and sands dragging the things and sand, that forms a barrier. At one point the river stops flowing because it exhausted itself already.” The reflection is inspired by the philosopher Michel Serres, but radically elaborated.

Q: Even in *Come vengono prodotti gli incantesimi?* the flute is transformed into percussion...

A: Yes, the technique is the same, but the result is very different. As you know, I love to diversify and always find new solutions, new perspectives. In effect, it is not a rehashing, because the explosion or the apparent chaos of *Morte Tamburo* is the opposite of the organized formation of sounds of *Incantesimi*, the concepts of order and disorder are the same.

Q: What can you tell me about the indications for breathing and the use of pebbles?

Certain *tongue-rams* are superimposed in part autonomous from the breath. It is a detail that can function only in a dry acoustic; in resonant spaces, we do not perceive the difference: thus I wanted to make two distinct versions. When the very violent rhythmic scansion begins, one passes without noticing the *cluster* of natural sounds of the flute to the murmur of beating pebbles. The percussion of the stones seem to be heterogeneous, while the two sounds mix, turn into each other. The text is struck up on this elementary scansion: “*con un fruscio perenne il vuoto Quantico manifesta la sua esistenza. Sono la apparizioni folgoranti di tutti I possibili. Di essi il vuoto Quantico è il serbatoio infinito. In principio erano*

due serbatoi infiniti, quello dei possibili e il serbatoio di energia che costituisce la curvatura dello spazio-tempo." I substituted the expression "to the origin," with the expression "in principle," that brings with it a biblical hieratic. In *Morte Tamburo*, it differentiates the part where the flute freezes during these blows, which are not present here. It is about *shadow-clusters*, which appear gradually: apparently tearing, they permit in reality an absolutely brilliant flutistic virtuosity and drive the piece to its conclusion. With Caroli, we made a purely acoustic execution of it.

Q: At our last meeting, we spoke about a piece you were going to finish, but I did not know the title. Now I know that it is *Immagine fenicia*, and so another reference to civilizations of the Mediterranean.

A: The title was already then established. You know that I come from a Phoenician Town, Palermo. The piece was begun in 1996, it was near complete, and it was finished in 2000. I never like to talk about my works before their conclusions.

Q: Does *Immagine fenicia* have to be played with amplified flute?

A: That depends on the acoustics of the hall. It sounds like a very inoffensive piece of music, while a typological substitution with the same functions is made, through a periodic structure. The element that makes the depths then becomes the element that breaks the base. At the end, there remains only an infinite *glissando*. It is as if the music continued to rise. It is a study on curves and the infinite rise.

Q: We have thus arrived at you most recent flute work, *Lettera degli antipodi portata del vento*.

A: Yes, it is a letter to Kurtag, who I met in Paris during a series of concerts that had been dedicated to me, and that he assisted with. His figure in the room had become for me a kind of landmark. He invited me to his home to have tea, and to thank him, instead of exchanging words, I wrote this piece for him. The title wished to say simply that it is a semi-incomprehensible music, like a language that came from afar. I think that he liked the composition. Kurtag retains a marvelously childish enthusiasm—a very beautiful form of curiosity and participation in what is different than him.

Q: In this piece, *shadow-clusters* also appear.

A: Yes, and they descend gradually or slip downwards; the piece is entirely based on the descent. It is like a lamentation, a variation on the moan: the material is always descending and the characteristic element of the lament is descent. I believe that it would be nice to stop with this work, which is now the twelfth piece for solo flute.

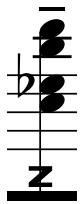
Città di Castello (Ombrie, Italie), April 6, 2002.

(Translation of the Italian by Mara Lacchè)

(Translation to English by Roberta Michel)

Appendix 3: Performing edition of *Fra I testi dedicati alle nubi*

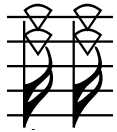
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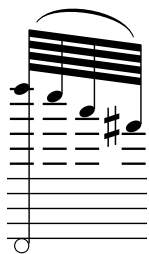
Flutter tongue



Fluttered covered air (a₆)



Breathy sound, used with soft dyads. The breath should be audible



Covered whistle tone (a₃)



Key click (c₂)



Tongue ram (c₁)

Multiphonics in Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi

The image displays a musical score for multiphonics, organized into three systems of staves. Each staff contains musical notation (notes, rests, and accidentals) and corresponding fingerings (represented by black and white circles) for the left and right hands. The notes are often beamed together to indicate simultaneous sounds.

System 1 (Measures 1-9):

- Measure 1: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: Right hand (R) 1-2-3-4, Left hand (L) 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 2: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. Notes: D5, E5, F#5, G#5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 3: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 4*: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 5: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 6: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 7: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 8: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 9: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.

System 2 (Measures 10-17):

- Measure 10: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 11: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. Notes: D5, E5, F#5, G#5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 12: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 13: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 14: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 15: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 16: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure 17: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.

System 3 (Measures 18-18):

- Measure 18: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure A: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure B: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure C: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure D: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure E: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.
- Measure F: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: R 1-2-3-4, L 1-2-3-4.

* The G above the staff is written incorrectly as an F in Sciarrino's introduction to the score.

Fra i testi dedicati alle nubi

for solo flute

Salvatore Sciarrino
practice edition by Roberta Michel

sarebbe ideale ♩ = 104

The score consists of four systems of music, each with a staff and fingerings below. Measure numbers 1, 5, 11, and 17 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Dynamics include *ff*, *p*, *fff*, and *ff sempre*. Fingerings are shown as circles with numbers 1-5. A triplet of three notes is marked with a bracket and the number 3. A 16-measure rest is shown in measure 16.

legatiss.

Variante 20

sub. 3 3 3 *mf*

(*ff*) 3 sub. *ff* *mp* *ff* *p*

(verso il grave)

28 *ff* *p* *ff* *f*

32 *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

36 *ff* *p* *f* *ff*

(verso l'acuto)

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of four systems of music. Each system includes a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a corresponding guitar tablature below it. The first system starts at measure 16 and includes a 'Variante' section from measure 20 to 24, marked 'legatiss.' and 'sub. 3 3 3' with a dynamic of 'mf'. It also features a 'verso il grave' section. Dynamic markings include 'ff', 'mp', 'ff', and 'p'. The second system starts at measure 28 and includes dynamics 'ff', 'p', 'ff', and 'f'. The third system starts at measure 32 and includes dynamics 'ff' and 'p'. The fourth system starts at measure 36 and includes dynamics 'ff', 'p', 'f', and 'ff'. It also features a 'verso l'acuto' section. The score is written in a style typical of guitar sheet music, with detailed fingering and articulation instructions.

40

ff *p* *ff* *mf*

44

ff *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

49

mf *ff*

51

(verso l'ac.) (verso il gr.)

p *ff*

53

mf *ff*

55 *f* (*f*) *<f>* *<mf>* *<mp>* *<p>* *<pp>* *<pp>* *<pp>*

56 *ff* *ppp* *<pp>* *<pp>* *f*

58 *ff* *p* *ff*

60 *sub. pp* *f* *ff sub.* *ppp* *ff*

62 *ff*

64

(mf) ff p

66

p ff 3 <ppp> sim. ff

70

<ppp> ff 5 mf ff

72

p <ppp> ff <ff>

75

mp <ppp> <pp> <p> <mp> <mf> <p>

77

ff

R

p

pp

ff

80

p

R

ff

(ogni colpo quasi gliss.)

mp

R

pp

p sub.

83

p

pp

p

p

85

5

pppp

p

pp

88

ppp

p

pp

89

ppp

pp

ppp

p

ppp

92

pp

3

3

93

p

sim.

ppp

(senza marcare gli attachi)

pppp

94

p

pp

ppp sub.

p

pp

96

p

3

3

97

pp ppp pppp p sim. pppp

98

p pp sim.

mf mf f mp

101

p pp ppp pppp pp

103

pp ppp pp sim. mf

5

p

crescendo

modificare pro-

pppp³

-gressiva, mente l'attacco

104

pp

3

105

pp

5

5

3

4

5

p

e più soffio

(come prima)

3

4

4

4

pppp

ff

più soffio (a poco a poco)

106

p

3

107

p

3

4:4

4:4

fff

108

pp p ppp p mf p ff p p 3 3 3

pp mf (pp) pp f

4:4

110

pp mf (pp) pp f

mp pp, dolce

p ff pp sub.

4:4

112

p ff pp sub.

mp ppp f p ff p ff

114

f p ff p ff

p

117

p

ff

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