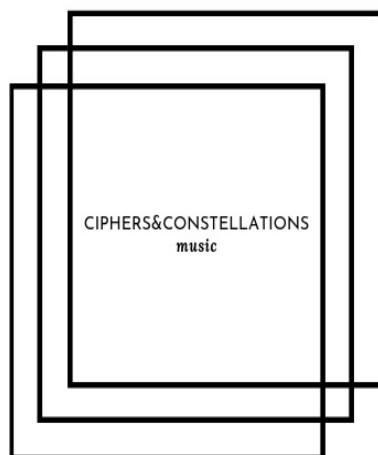
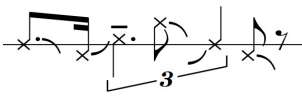


Ineluctable Modality of the Visible **a passacaglia**

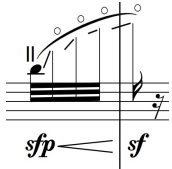
Maya Miro Johnson
(2020)



Performance Notes



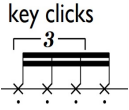
imitating speech: begin on any middle-range note arbitrarily. Mimic the rhythm and inflection of the speaker (notated gesture merely a suggestion). A singsong quality is desired, much more so over any specific set of pitches (avoid patterns).



harmonic gliss: begin on the given pitch and glissando upwards quickly for approximately 5 32nd notes (specific overtones are not given so as to allow performer ability to explore the glissando itself, rather than achieve a brilliant goal note).



air tongue rams: tongue rams with little to no pitch, following the given contour with fingerings (avoid a scale).



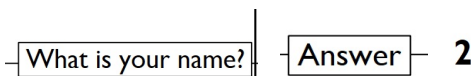
key clicks: almost an incidental sound, only as loud as it is (don't force an extreme articulation).



multiphonics: clarinet multiphonics are notated with diamond noteheads. The suggested pitches are guidelines for the type of interval desired but need not be followed strictly.



letter articulation: using the mouth shape of the given letter, articulate air into the moutpiece. Pitch is negligible, but avoid patterns in creating the downward shape.



question and answer/speech notation: the speaker's role is notated ambiguously in time, even in the metered sections. This is to allow for different accents and durations of speech. The timing of the answer is more strict. Numbers above the staff indicate the numerical order of the questions.

N.B.

Regarding mutes:

The double bass must have two binder clips which they will attach to indicated string (first 1 clip on IV and then 2 clips on I), near the bridge on the playing side. The first scenario will produce a deep buzz, and the second will produce artificial harmonics despite full pressure in LH.

The horn must use the quietest mute or method of playing available to them.

The overall dynamic contour of this piece is very quiet, and dynamics must be observed closely. String harmonics are notated with a standard notehead and open harmonic symbol. Artificial or 4th harmonics are notated as usual.

Regarding the role of the speaker:

The speaking role can be performed by anyone comfortable with public speech and performance. They can be a musician, actor, orator, or anyone off the street. However, they must seem assured of themselves onstage and confident in the timbre of their own voice. Most likely, most halls will require this speaker to have either a handheld or clip-on microphone. They may stand at a lecturn or memorize the part (though it is encouraged for them to perform with the score).

The speaker should adjust the volume of their speech in relation to the texture or loudness of the ensemble. The voice should always be heard distinguishably, however, it may at times be overtaken superficially by the ensemble.

Theatricality need not be imposed, but the questions should be asked in a manner that befits their content. The speaker could be considered a late night show host-type character. The questions are either Neutral, Invasive, or Unanswerable, and are constructed to follow certain sequences that either alternate between the quotidian and the absurd, or slowly decay via entropy into the bizarre from the small-talk. The voice of the speaker can be interrogative, overly charming, monotone, whimsical, wistful, acerbic, sardonic, or completely neutral, but always as seems best in the moment.

Regarding the pacing of the answers: for the unmetred sections, the musicians simply need to respond organically to the question within 1-4 seconds of its asking, and coordinate the answer with a collective cuing method such as a breath. The answers should be as unrehearsed as possible (i.e. do not decide in advance what answer you will respond with; however, it is acceptable to have a range of answers prepared and choose one dependent upon the context of the moment).

I wrote this piece while also reading Joyce's *Ulysses*, and inevitably the constant presence of the book's effervescent language began to invade my headspace indefatigably, autonomically. A voice simmered in the back of my head, repeating the phrase from the opening of Chapter 3, *Proteus*, over and over again, like an earworm musical phrase, unshakeable, inexplicable ("Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes..."). Ineluctable modality of the visible, ineluctable modality of the visible, ineluctable modality of the visible...

Hence, I began to think in dualities: yes/no, false/real, here/there, us/them, me/you, self/not-self, fact/fiction, correlation/causation. This led me to the ultimate dichotomy of question and answer. Pondering the delightfully unpredictable predictability of icebreaker questions, such as those found on late night show interviews before getting to the matter of whatever the guest is selling, I envisioned this piece as a makeover of both the quotidian and the quotation. By asking the players to be indisputably honest with their answers to questions that range from the mundane to the invasive to the absurd, a type of vulnerability and spontaneity is created for which musicians search their whole lives to obtain in their most intimate and powerful performances.

Over the course of the piece, the bind of a strict dialectic is stretched until the ensemble revolts; by the end, the speaker, imposer of this aesthetic two-party system, loses all power to necessitate a response, and in fact, impotent, ceases to have any influence, finding its own questions broken into single words and tossed back at it by the liberated ensemble. Just as such, when the electorate refuses to subscribe to the commands of the mainstream narrative, the written future becomes unwritten into chaotic authenticity, often harnessed by the wrong forces, but ultimately a powerful manifestation of the human spirit.

-Maya Miro Johnson
April 13th, 2020

*"In quintessential triviality
for years in this fleshcase a shesoul dwelt"*

-James Joyce, Ulysses, Ch. 9

Instrumentation:

Flute
2 Oboes
Clarinet in B \flat
Horn in F
Violin
Double Bass
Speaker
Conductor

Duration:

ca. 10'

Questions:

1. To start things off, What is your name?
2. What is your full name?
3. Who are you?
4. Who do you think you are? [Myself]

5. What is your telephone number?
6. What are the numerical coordinates of your street address?
7. In what year were you born?
8. How old does that make you?
9. Who are your parents?
10. How old were they when you were born?
11. Do you have a favorite parent?
12. Are you lying?

13. Do you feel anxious when you look at the stars?

14. Who are you really?
15. Why would you say that?
16. How did you say that?
17. Say what?
18. Are you hard of hearing?
19. Are you color-blind?

20. Have you ever seen a ghost?

21. Where did you grow up?
22. Do you love that place?
23. Do you think one should love one's country?
24. Pledge unending loyalty?
25. Would you betray your house for your cause?

26. How are your folks?
27. Who are your folks?
28. How do you pronounce the word "tomorrow" (spells out)
29. Are you a morning person?
30. Are you in mourning?
31. Does mourning become you?

32. Do you remember a time before?
33. A time before a war?
34. Do you like strudel?
35. How about Virginia Woolf?
36. What are you afraid of?
37. What can you remember?
38. Why do you refuse to remember?

39. Why do you refuse?
40. Why do you?
41. Why do?
42. You?
43. Why?
44. Do I?
45. Who is?
46. Would you?
47. Who are?
48. Are you?
49. Am I?
50. Who?

Commissioned by the Sarasota Music Festival and Jeffrey Kahane, Music Director

Ineluctable Modality of the Visible

a passacaglia

Maya Miro Johnson
(2020)

With honesty

	I	2	3
Flute		Answer	Answer
Oboe 1		Answer	Answer
Oboe 2		Answer	Answer
Clarinet in B \flat		Answer	Answer
Horn in F		Answer	Answer
Violin		Answer	Answer
Double Bass		Answer	Answer
Speaker		What is your name?	What is your full name?

8 4 5

Fl. Answer Answer Answer

Ob. 1 Answer Answer Answer

Ob. 2 Answer Answer Answer

Cl. Answer Answer Answer

Hn. Answer Answer Answer

Vln. Answer Answer Answer

Db. Answer Answer Answer

Speaker Who do you think you are? What is your phone number?

pp

ppp tongue stop

pp



14 6 7

Fl. Answer Answer Answer

Ob. 1 Answer Answer Answer

Ob. 2 Answer Answer Answer

Cl. Answer Answer Answer

Hn. Answer Answer Answer

Vln. Answer Answer Answer

Db. Answer Answer Answer

Speaker What is the numerical coordinate of your street address? In what year were you born?

key clicks

pp

ppp

A

accel.
 9

18 8 ♩ = 54

Fl. 2/4 Answer

Ob. 1 2/4 Answer

Ob. 2 2/4 Answer

Cl. 2/4 *p*

Hn. 2/4 *pp* *sf*

Vln. 2/4 Answer

Db. 2/4 *p*

Speaker How old does that make you? Who are your parents?

p *mp* *mp*

10 11 12 //

22

Fl. *pp* *

Ob. 1 *mp*

Ob. 2 *mp*

Cl. Answer *mp*

Hn. Answer

Vln. Answer *mp*

Db. Answer *mp* *sfp* *sf*

Speaker How old were they when you were born? Do you have a favorite parent? Are you lying?

Answer Answer Answer

*fast tongue rams with little to no pitch, just contour (do not play a scale)

B

25 13

Fl. *pp*

Ob. 1 *p*

Ob. 2 *p*

Cl. *pp*

Hn. *pp*

Vln. *pp*

Db. *pp*

Speaker **||**

Do you feel anxious when you look at the stars?

28 14 15

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. 1

Ob. 2 **||** Answer

Cl. **||** Answer

Hn. *ppp*

Vln. *ppp*

Db. *ppp*

Speaker **||**

Who are you, really?

How do you know that?

quietest mute possible

34 16 17 5

Fl. **Answer** *pp*

Ob. 1 *mf*

Ob. 2 *mf*

Cl. soft multiphonic
remove mute *pp*

Hn. **Answer**

Vln. **Answer** *mp*

Db. **Answer** *pp*

Speaker **How can you say that?** **Say what?**

C accel. $\text{♩} = 60$

39 18 19

Fl. **Answer** *p* **Answer** *p* *sf*

Ob. 1 *sfp* *sfp*

Ob. 2 *sfp* *sfp*

Cl. **Answer** *sfp* *pp*

Hn. *sfp* *pp*

Vln. *sfp* **Answer** *p* *sf*

Db. *sfp* *p* *sf*

Speaker **Are you hard of hearing?** **Are you color-blind?**

Fl. Answer

Ob. 1 *sfp*

Ob. 2 *sfp*

Cl. *pp*

Hn. *pp*

Vln. *pp*

Db. *pp*

Speaker Have you ever seen a ghost?

take same mute

sf

sf

sf

sf

sf

sf

D

47 21 22

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. 1 Answer

Ob. 2 Answer

Cl. Answer

Hn. Answer

Vln. Answer

Db. Answer

Speaker Where dd you grow up? Do you love that place?

multiphonic trill, allowing any overtone to sound

ppp

ppp

ppp

E ♩ = 54

53 breathe ad lib, staggered 7

Fl. Answer *p* extremely vague

Ob. 1 Answer *p* extremely vague

Ob. 2 Answer *p* extremely vague

Cl. Answer *p* extremely vague con sordino

Hn. Answer *p* extremely vague

Vln. Answer *p* extremely vague

Db. Answer *p* extremely vague

Speaker

57 23 **F** 24

Fl. Answer

Ob. 1 Answer

Ob. 2 Answer

Cl. Answer

Hn. Answer

Vln. Answer

Db. Answer

Speaker Do you think one should love one's country? Pledge unending loyalty?

Fl. **Answer**

Ob. 1

Ob. 2 *sf*

Cl. *sf*

Hn. *ppp*

Vln. *sf* IV

Db. *ff* (binder clip on E string)

Speaker **Would you betray your house for your cause?** **How are your folks?**

66 27 **G** ♩ = 56

Fl. *p* *pp*

Ob. 1 *p* *pp*

Ob. 2 **Answer** *pp* ord.

Cl. **Answer** *pp*

Hn. remove mute *pp*

Vln. *pp* 5

Db. *ff* *pp*

Speaker **Who are your folks?** **How do you pronounce the word T-O-M-O-R-R-O-W?**

69 *
 Fl. T O M M O R O W
 Ob. 1 *mp, in relief to other textures*
 Ob. 2 Answer
 Cl. Answer
 Hn. *pp*
 Vln. *f* 5 *f* 5
 Db. *pp*
 Speaker

9

71 29
 Fl.
 Ob. 1 *p*
 Ob. 2 Answer
 Cl. *sfp* *mp in relief to other textures*
 Hn. *p*
 Vln. *mf* 5 3 5
 Db. Answer
 Speaker Are you a morning person?

*articulating the letters into the flute with air, fingerings according to given contour (but not scale)

10 73 30 flz.

Fl. *p*

Ob. 1 *mf* *f* *mf*

Ob. 2 *mf* *f* *mf*

Cl. Answer *p* flz.

Hn. *sf* arco

Vln. *sf*

Db.

Speaker Are you in mourning?

75 molto accel. 31

Fl. *p* *sfp*

Ob. 1 *sfpp* *sfp*

Ob. 2 *sfpp* *sfp*

Cl. Answer *sfp* almost interrupting the question take same mute con sordino

Hn. *pppp*

Vln. *pp* *sfp*

Db. *sfp*

Speaker Does mourning become you?

32

33

78 **H** ♩ = 54

1/2 air

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. 1 *ppp*

Ob. 2 *p* 3

Cl. *ppp* 1/2 air

Hn. breathe ad lib.

Vln. *ppp*

Db. *ppp*

Speaker **||** Do you remember a time before? A time before the war?

81 34

35

molto accel.

Fl. *pp*

Ob. 1 *pp*

Ob. 2 *f* 3 *p* *ppp* *p*

Cl. *ppp* *p*

Hn. *pp* *p* con sordino

Vln. *pp* 3

Db. *p* imitate the speaker's inflection exactly, humorous *sim.* 3

Speaker **||** Do you like strudel? How about Virginia Woolf?

84 ----- 36

Fl. *mp*

Ob. 1 *mp*

Ob. 2 *mp*

Cl. *mp*

Hn. *mf*

Vln. *pp* *semplice*

Db. *pp* *buzzing unnervingly*

Speaker: What are you afraid of?

4/4

87 ♩ = 60 37 38

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. 1 *ppp*

Ob. 2 *ppp*

Cl. *ppp*

Hn. *ppp*

Vln. *ppp*

Db. *pp* *buzzing unnervingly*

Speaker: What can you remember? Why do you refuse to remember?

4/4

p *sotto voce*, imitating inflection of speaker, almost mocking

harmonics sul II

39

40

91

Fl. *sim.*

Ob. 1 *f*

Ob. 2 *f* 6

Cl. *p*

Hn. *pp* 3

Vln. *ppp* *pp*

Db. *p*

Speaker Why do you refuse to remember? Why do you refuse?

94

41

42

Fl. *Do you?*

Ob. 1 *f* *p*

Ob. 2 *f* *p*

Cl. *p*

Hn. *Why do you?* *p* IV

Vln. *p* 3

Db. *pizz.* 5 *mf* 5

Speaker Why do you? Do you?

14

98 43

Fl. *pp*

Ob. 1 *f*

Ob. 2 *f*

Cl. *pp*

Hn. **||** Do you?

Vln. *p*

Db. *p*

Speaker **||** Why? Why?

100 44

Fl. **||** Why? Who is?

Ob. 1 *mp* *sempre dim.*

Ob. 2 *mp* *sempre dim.*

Cl. *pp*

Hn. **||** You? Why?

Vln. *p*

Db. *p*

Speaker **||** Why? Do I?

102 45 46 47 48

Fl. Who is? Who are? Who are?

Ob. 1 5 3 *ppp* *n* Are you?

Ob. 2 *ppp* Why? Am I?

Cl. *sempre dim.* *n*

Hn. Who is? You?

Vln. *ppp* *ppp* IV

Db. *pp* arco

Speaker Would you? Why? Why?



105 49 50

Fl. Who are? You? You? Am I?

Ob. 1 Am I? Why? You?

Ob. 2 Would you? Would you? Why?

Cl. *n* Am I?

Hn. Are you? Are you? Are you?

Vln. *n*

Db. Who?

Speaker

7-15 times, becoming gradually softer and indistinguishable;
spacious

108

Fl. Who?

Ob. 1 Who? *inflected*

Ob. 2 You? You?

Cl. Why? *n* Why? *inflected*

Hn. Am I?

Vln. Who?

Db. *n* Am I? *inflected* Am I?

Speaker