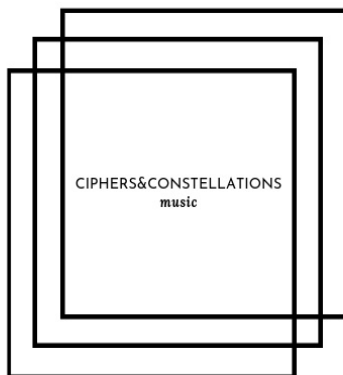


Full Score in C

# **presumably dogs do not reflect upon thinking itself**

*for 3 horns*  
(2019)

**Maya Miro Johnson**



## Program Notes

*presumably dogs do not reflect upon thinking itself*, a Gerber Commission, was created in March and April of 2019 for the Fresh Inc Festival. I was asked to write on the broad subject of identity, which I saw as a challenge to delve even more deeply into a subject which had been the focus of several recent pieces already.

My aim was to discover a previously unexplored perspective, which I eventually found in the contents of *Why the World Does Not Exist*, by the contemporary German philosopher Markus Gabriel. The book addresses epistemological concepts such as solipsism, existence, aesthetics, and dualism; its unique way of confronting these ancient dilemmas left an indelible impression on me, working its way into the music I was writing at the time.

Thus, *presumably dogs...* explores the identity of being human, the edges which define us, the tendencies which distinguish us from other animals. As Gabriel says, "*The human being is that which wants to know what or who it is.*" I would go a step further and say that the human being is that which knows what it is but can't do anything about it.

We value purity and desire escape from the earthly simply because we cannot achieve either. In fact, what makes us human is the unique ability to perceive what we cannot attain, a desperate longing to concretize the incorporeal things or fantasies which our disproportionately powerful minds invent.

In this piece, I have created two motifs whose interaction represents the extreme frustration or self-loathing born of consciousness being beholden to the body. The panting, anxious air tones you hear presented at the start of the piece represent our reality as creatures, whereas the simple, almost *Unanswered Question*-esque melody that serves as its consistent opponent depicts our ideals as thinkers, which hover about our heads, gnats we glorify as gods.

After this opening presentation of the themes, the piece then flickers between the two ideas, which become more and more complex with each variation. Eventually the whole thing unwinds itself and retraces its steps to almost where it began, its aspirations to escape the cyclic nature of human existence thwarted.

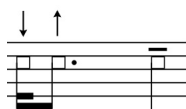
The piece is ultimately about the suffering brought about by our unusual ability to be aware of our awareness. However, it is not all so dreary, necessarily; it can be a weakness but also a strength, a curse but also a blessing. Our imagination and ability to see beyond the concretely real are what allowed me to create this piece, after all, and are the source of many good things in human existence, such as art, compassion, and scientific discovery. In *presumably dogs...*, I seek to make us appreciate the fragility of our illusions and the strength of our beliefs. We as a species need to be not only more aware but also more wary of this linguistic magic which we work on ourselves, this assumption that our individual truths are in reality universally self-evident.

*"Humans are differentiated from other animals neither because they think nor because they are rational... to have consciousness does not presuppose that one has a theory of what consciousness is... Presumably dogs do not reflect upon thinking itself, as this is a questionable privilege of human beings on our planet."*

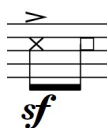
From *Why the World Does Not Exist*, by Markus Gabriel

**Maya Miro Johnson**  
April 22nd, 2019

## Performance Notes



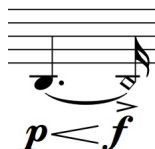
**Breath vocalizations:** audible inhale through the mouth with a "who" sound is indicated with a down arrow, similar inhale is indicated with an up arrow, and a tenuto marking without any arrow indicates a "shh" sound on an exhale. There are two types of breath tones: inside the mouthpiece and independent of the instrument. These are clearly marked with written instructions, though the latter is more frequent. They are also executed completely without the instrument, using only the mouth.



**Mouthpiece slaps:** slapping the center of the mouthpiece with the palm of the hand, creating a resonant percussive sound. Indicated with an x notehead. Often alternating with exhales outside of the mouthpiece.



**Flutter tongue:** a tasteful, open sound is preferred, with just a fleck of dirt. Growl can be used alternately.



**Crescendo to a tongue ram:** execute a clear, pure, linear crescendo and then cut off immediately with a non-aggressive tongue ram, creating a thick popping sound, like a "thwack". In solo moments, the notated rhythm is a guideline.



**Singing into the horn:** humming into the mouthpiece. This effect is entirely an echo or ghostly penumbra around the same phrase played full out in another horn. Notated in C.

*This commission was made possible by the Steven R. Gerber Trust.*

# presumably dogs do not reflect upon thinking itself

Maya Miro Johnson (2019)

## Panting

♩ = 84 with the boxes

Horn in F 1

Horn in F 2

Horn in F 3

ca. 6"

ca. 6"

ca. 6"

vocalizations without instrument

*pp* semplice

vocalizations without instrument

*pp* semplice

vocalizations without the instrument

*pp* semplice

♩ = 60

senza tempo

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*pp*

**A** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

ca. 8"

Musical score for three horns (Hn. 1, 2, 3) starting at measure 8. Each horn part is boxed and includes fingerings and dynamics. Hn. 1 has a *pp* dynamic and a trill. Hn. 2 has a *pp* dynamic and a trill. Hn. 3 has a *pp* dynamic and two triplets. The music ends at measure 11.

senza tempo

Musical score for three horns (Hn. 1, 2, 3) starting at measure 9. Hn. 1 has a whole rest. Hn. 2 has a melodic line with a crescendo and decrescendo, and a dynamic change from *pp* to *p*. Hn. 3 has a whole rest. The music ends at measure 11.

**B** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

ca. 8"

Musical score for three horns (Hn. 1, 2, 3) starting at measure 12. Each horn part is boxed and includes fingerings and dynamics. Hn. 1 has a *pp* dynamic and a triplet. Hn. 2 has a *pp* dynamic and a sextuplet. Hn. 3 has a *pp* dynamic and two triplets. The music ends at measure 15.

13

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*pp*

*ppp* poss.

incredibly thin, light, and distant; questioning, incorporeal

**C** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

ca. 8"

16

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*p* più agitato

*p* più agitato

*p* più agitato

$\text{♩} = 60$

*pp*

18

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*mp*

*pp*

*mp*

23

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*p* *mf*

*p*

27

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*mp* *mf* mechanical *fp*

*mf* *mf* mechanical mouthpiece slap

*mf* mechanical *sf* *sf* *pp*

31

senza tempo

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

mouthpiece slap

*sf* *p* < *f*

*sfpp* < *f* *pp* dolcissimo



**D** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

ca. 8"

vocalizations without instrument + mouthpiece slaps

Hn. 1  
*mf sf sf sf sf*

Hn. 2  
*mf sf sf 3 sf sf*

Hn. 3  
*mf 3 3 3 3 sf<sup>3</sup> sf*

♩ = 84 alternating breath and slapping the mouthpiece **poco accel.** **E** ♩ = 96

Hn. 1  
*sfp sff*

Hn. 2  
*pp*

Hn. 3  
*sfp sff pp*

**molto accel.**

♩ = 144

Hn. 1  
*pp*

Hn. 2  
*mf*

Hn. 3  
*f*

♩ = 154

40

Hn. 1 *ff* *sff*

Hn. 2 *f* *ff*

Hn. 3 *ff*

**F** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes) ca. 10"

43

Hn. 1 *f* more frantic *p* *f* *p* *f*

Hn. 2 *f* more frantic *p* *f* *p*

Hn. 3 *f* more frantic *p* *f* *p* *f*

**G** ♩ = 92 gradually increasing in volume until letter J

44

Hn. 1 *p* *pp*

Hn. 2 *pp* *p* *pp*

Hn. 3 *pp* *p* *pp*

48

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

52

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

55

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*sf*

*f < sf*

*mf*

*f*

*sf*

*f*

*sf*

8 58 //

Hn. 1  
Hn. 2  
Hn. 3

*sf ff sf*  
*sf ff sf*  
*sf ff sf*

3 3 3 3

**H** ♩ = 92

62 ♩ = ♩ (sim)

Hn. 1  
Hn. 2  
Hn. 3

*f molto agitato sf sf sf*  
*f molto agitato sf sf sf*  
*f molto agitato sf sf sf*

66

Hn. 1  
Hn. 2  
Hn. 3

*sf sf sf sf*  
*sf sf sf sf*  
*sf sf sf sf*

3 3 3 3

70

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

74

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

78 80

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

ca. 10"

82

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

like laughing

like sobbing

like hyperventilating

*ff* uneven and manic

**Poco meno mosso**

$\text{♩} = 116$

85 **molto rall.** . . .

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*pp* *f ma dolcissimo*

*pp*

*f ma dolcissimo*

90

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*f ma dolcissimo*

3

95

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*ff*

*ff*

3

3

12

99

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*ff* 5

3

102

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

(pitch can bend)

*p*

3

**K**

106

senza tempo

*p* very distant

*ppp* like an echo

singing into instrument

$\text{♩} = 94$

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

3/4

4/4



108

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

ca. 8"

110

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

111 ♩ = 84

poco rit. . . . .

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

14

115

L ♩ = 72

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

*ppp*

*ppp*

119

poco rit.

Hn. 1

*ppp* poss.  
incredibly thin and light

Hn. 2

*pp*  
incredibly thin and light  
singing into instrument

Hn. 3

*ppp* like an echo

vocalizations without instrument

ca. 8"

♩ = 60

Hn. 1

*p*

Hn. 2

*p*

3

3

Hn. 3

*p*

3

3

3

125 **poco rit.**

Hn. 1

Hn. 2 *ppp poss.*

singing into instrument

Hn. 3 *pppp*

**M** (approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

130 **ca. 8"**

Hn. 1 *pp*

Hn. 2 *pp*

Hn. 3 *pp*

131 ♩ = 60 **senza tempo**

Hn. 1 *ppp poss.*

*incredibly thin, light, and distant; questioning, incorporeal*

Hn. 2

Hn. 3

**Morendo**

(approx. ♩ = 84 within the boxes)

ca. 8"

133

Hn. 1

*pp*

Hn. 2

*pp*

Hn. 3

*pp*

**senza tempo**

134

ca. 5"

Hn. 1

*ppp*

Hn. 2

Hn. 3