

Adieu Sequence

for sheng, viola & percussion (one player)

陳慶恩
CHAN Hing-yan

Composed specially for a project
in collaboration with David Clarke (HKU)
Duration: ca 9'

ADIEU SEQUENCE – for sheng, viola & percussion (one player)

Adieu Sequence is a musical sketch inspired by David Clarke's *Portrait of Things*, a series of photographic images originally taken using Polaroid instant film. Despite its relative brevity, the piece has a gestation period much longer than I expected. While I have seldom used visual arts to explain my music, when David first showed me the images in early 2011, I was instantly captivated by their deliberate blandness, and was very much enticed by the idea of bidding a musical farewell to a vanishing medium. Within the 18 months thereafter, a few attempts to work on the composition were interrupted by a chain of time-sensitive projects. Among the many drafts produced in this period include a close-to-finished suite in seven short movements, each of which pays homage to a compositional strategy much disdained by most contemporary composers. Not until the early summer of 2013 when the University Museum had confirmed putting up the exhibition did I eventually decide to discard all previous drafts and start all over again.

As in several of my other works composed after 1996, the musical fabric of *Adieu Sequence* results largely from the elaboration of tiny cells into a sort of mosaic design. This time-hallowed technique seems to function in much new music, irrespective of style, as a primary structural *modus*. The result is a sonic incantation cast in a simple two-part design framed ritually by four strokes of Tibetan finger cymbals. In the first half, the *sheng* (Chinese mouth-organ) and the vibraphone together create a web of delicate dissonances, onto which three viola phrases are superimposed, with the last one bringing to a brief climactic apogee. The *sheng* then slowly walks off stage while continuing its sparse and tenuous chords. The structural downbeat comes in the second half of the piece when fragments of Chopin's *Étude* Op. 10, No. 3 (nicknamed "Farewell"), performed by the onstage viola and vibraphone, are in dialogue with the offstage *sheng* and gradually segue into a tranquil close. In such manner, the Chopin quotation and the theatrical gesture of the *sheng*'s processional recall the concluding pages of Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony.

Chan Hing-yan

聲影留別 - 為笙、中提琴及敲擊而作

《聲影留別》的創作靈感源自祈大衛一系列名為 "Portrait of Things" 的攝影作品，影像的原稿均用寶麗萊即影即有菲林拍攝。這闕不到十分鐘的音樂速寫，漫長的寫作過程是我意料之外。在此之前，我甚少用視覺藝術來解說我的作品，但當祈大衛二零一一年初跟我談及這個合作時，我登時被那一系列影像的 "刻意不修飾" 深深吸引，還有，為即影即有菲林這種瀕臨絕跡的成像媒材作個音樂告別，是多麼有意思啊！誰料往後的十八個月卻好事多磨，創作三番四次被一連串不容延誤的計劃打斷。其間荒廢的草稿，包括一首接近完成的小組曲：我原來的構思是寫七個短小的樂章，每個樂章用上一種聽似過時，而大部份當代作曲家又疵之以鼻的手法。若不是今年初夏，香港大學博物館定下展期，我決定盡棄前稿，從頭開始，這個作品可能還得擔擱下去。

《聲影留別》和我大部份一九九六年以後創作的作品一樣，是以拼貼或並置的形式，將精簡的音響元素連在一起，我深信這創作方法既能歷久常新，又能經得起時間考驗。樂曲由兩下西藏指鈸開始，樂音如呢喃咒語般在空中緩緩響起。前半部由笙與鋼片琴織起一道吹彈可破的不協和音網，為中提琴的三個樂句作鋪墊。後半部音樂豁然明朗，空靈的笙徐徐離開舞台，與鋼片琴及中提琴演奏的蕭邦《練習曲》作品 10 第 3 號的片斷遙遙對話，餘音裊裊。最後，樂曲由兩下西藏指鈸如宗教儀式般結束。蕭邦《練習曲》作品 10 第 3 號俗稱「離別曲」；冉冉遠去的笙，「離別曲」的引用，隱隱指涉的，是海頓《告別交響曲》的終章。

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CHAN Hing-yan
Autumn 2013

1 ♩ = ca 2 or 3 seconds; notes with a pause should be 5 or 7 seconds!

SHENG
Repeat Reh. 1 for a few times, if needed, on hearing the unison attack of the viola and vibraphone at the second measure of Reh. 4, complete the then segment and stop. Prepare to come in again at Reh. 5 (see next page).
(Use a traditional 21-reed D Sheng throughout)

♩ ca = 42 very freely

Sheng
Tibetan Finger Cymbals (Ting Shags) (hit then shake)

Perc.
fz fz

Vib.
The bowed vibraphone part is played ONLY in the first cycle of Reh. 1.
(Cello/DB bow, fan off)

L.v. sempre

Vib.
(Cello/DB bow, fan off)

VIOLA
Start Reh. 2 approximately here at the first cycle of Reh. 1.

Sh.
p mf p mf p mf p mf p mf

Vib.
(Cello/DB bow, fan off)

PERC.
Change to mallets, and go to Reh. 2.a

Vib. (med. hard mallets, fan off)

2.a ♩ ca = 40 very freely

PERC.
Repeat this cycle (Reh. 2.a), if needed, on hearing the ending attack of Reh. 3, play three more chords and stop. Then go the next page to join the viola at Reh. 4.

PERC.
Start Reh. 2.b approximately here

2 ♩ ca = 42 like a cadenza, solemnly

Vla.
arco modo ord.
sfp subito

12/4 con espressivo

4/4 poco sul tasto [ca. 7 sec.]

VIOLA
Pause for circa 7 seconds, then start Reh. 3.

3

Vla.
arco modo ord.
sfp subito

12/4 con espressivo

4/4 poco sul tasto [ca. 7 sec.]

VIOLA
Pause for circa 7 seconds, wait for the vibraphone to start Reh. 4.

PERC.
On hearing the ending attack here, play three more chords (of Reh. 2.a) and stop. Then go the next page to join the viola at Reh. 4.

4

Vla.
arco modo ord.
con espressivo

13/4 poco a poco agitato

10/4

8/4 poco a poco sul tasto

SHENG
On hearing the unison attack of the viola and vibraphone here, complete the then segment of Reh. 1 and stop.

5

♩ = ca 2 or 3 seconds; notes with a pause should be 5 or 7 seconds!

Sh.
p mf p mf p mf p mf niente

SHENG
Start to walk away from the rest of the ensemble!

VIOLA
Prepare for the entry at Reh. 6, see next page.

Vib.
(Cello/DB bow)

L.v. sempre

Vib.
(Cello/DB bow)

PERC.
Change to mallets, wait for the entry at Reh. 10, see next page.

6 ♩ = 42

Sh. [SHENG From afar, with distance!]

F. CHOPIN: Op. 10 no. 3 "Farewell" etude
(Come in while the vibraphone is still ringing!)

con sord.
sul tasto supreme

Vla. *mp* *mf* niente

7 ♩ = ca 3 or 4 seconds senza misura!

Sh. *pp* *mf*

8 A tempo ♩ = 42

Sh. niente

F. CHOPIN: Op. 10 no. 3 "Farewell" etude
modo ord.

Vla. *mf* niente

Vib. *lv sempre*
(med. hard mallets, very slow fan)
mp sempre niente

9 ♩ = ca 4 or 5 seconds senza misura!

Sh. [SHENG From afar, with distance!]

pp *mf*

10 A tempo ♩ = 42

Sh. [SHENG Go to Reh. 10.a, wait for the viola and vibraphone!]

F. CHOPIN: Op. 10 no. 2 "Farewell" etude

Vla. *mp* *f* niente

Perc. *mp* *f* niente

[SHENG Start Reh. 10.a approximately on the second beat of this measure. From afar, with distance!]

10.a ♩ = ca 4 or 5 seconds senza misura!

Sh. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* niente

[SHENG Go to Reh. 11.a]

11 F. CHOPIN: Op. 10 no. 2 "Farewell" etude

A tempo ♩ = 42 molto rall.

Vla. *mp* *mf* niente

Perc. *lv sempre*
mfz *mfz* *mfz* *mfz* niente

[VIOLA & PERC. Start Reh. 11 just before sheng finishes the last note of Reh. 10.a]

[PERC. Go to Reh. 12 below, wait for the sheng!]

[SHENG Start Reh. 11.a approximately on the fourth beat of this measure. From afar, with distance!]

11.a ♩ = ca 4 or 5 seconds senza misura!

Sh. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* niente

12 very slow and freely!

Tibetan Finger Cymbals (Ting Shags) Perc. (hit then shake)

mp *mp*

[PERC. Start Reh. 12 immediately after the sheng's last note is cut off.]