TREMULOUS IMAGES:
A Portfolio of Original Compositions Based on and
Informed by Static Visual Art

Joseph Hillyard

Volume 1 of 4: Portfolio of Compositions 1

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Presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of
Philosophy (Music) in Composition
A Slideshow of Sideways Horizons

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for string quartet

2014-17
A Slideshow of Sideways Horizons is the response to sixteen photographs from conceptual artist Rolf Sachs's album Amazon Express. Each photograph, taken from the bow of a converted trawler at various points on a month-long voyage, is split halfway by the horizon with the sky taking the top half and the sea taking the bottom half. Each instrument in the ensemble 'reads' the relevant photograph from left to right from their respective position on the score (violin 1 represents the top quarter of the photograph, violin 2 represents the second quarter down, and so on). As such, the violins represent the sky, while the viola and violoncello represent the sea. All instruments are predominantly concerned with colour: pale/dark; soft/intense; warm/cool. As these colours evolve across the photograph (as well as encountering objects such as clouds and vapour trails), so the inherent movement of these static images becomes apparent.

Performance Notes

Each movement should last c.45".

For ease of synchronisation within the ensemble, it is recommended that each performer plays from the full score.

Notation is proportional – a note’s duration is dependent on the distance to the next note. Rhythmic notation is not exact unless otherwise stated (e.g. a minim lasts longer than a crotchet, but not necessarily twice as long).

The intention for each movement is to begin as though the music has been present for a while. A fade-in is not necessary, but it is important that there is no accent on the first note unless otherwise stated. Similarly, the end of each movement should hint that the music continues after it has finished. Do not be too abrupt with the final chord/figure, but do not pause. As smooth a transition as possible between movements is essential.

An ideal performance would include projections of the photographs onto a screen behind/to the side of the ensemble through the use of a carousel slide projector. There is no linear narrative to these photographs and so the ensemble is permitted to perform these movements in any order they see fit. It is necessary that the corresponding photograph be projected for the duration of the movement being performed.
Special Notation

- Hold note for duration of thick line
- Two connected figures occur at same time
- Scratch tone
- Very slow bow speed
- Vibrato/wide vibrato
- Gradually move towards next figure
- Repeat boxed figure for duration of dashed line
- Half-pressure fingering
- Follow the melodic contour of the line. No glissando. Legato. Fluctuating rhythm
Early Evening, Storm Cloud Overhead (2/16)

Vln. 1
meno sul pont.,
rich

sul pont.,
light pressure
ord. gliss.
sul pont.,
light pressure

Vln. 2
p
pp
p

regular, unrhymthic bowing,
fluctuating quickly in and
out of tune

brief harmonic on G♯.

Vla.
mp

regular, unrhymthic bowing,
bending slowly to 1/4♯ and 1/4♭

brief harmonic on C♯.

Vlc.
mp
Warm Evening Glow, Dark High Cloud (3/16)

regular, unrhymthmic bowing,
bend between 1/4# and 1/4½
poco sul pont.

regular, unrhymthmic bowing,
bend between 1/4# and 1/4½
poco sul pont.

flutter finger with
each bow stroke
quasi gliss.

sim. to beginning,
bend between semitone
above and below

poco
sul
tasto
t

I, gliss.

II, gliss.

bend widening to semitone
above and below
Evening, Post-Sunset Glow with Vapour Trails (4/16)
Early Evening with Vapour Trails (5/16)

Vln. 1

*regular unrythmic bowing, fluctuating quickly in and out of tune, meno sul tasto

Vln. 2

brief harmonic on Eb.

Vla.

regular unrythmic bowing, bending slowly between 1/4# and 1/4b, meno sul tasto

brief harmonic on C#. brief harmonic on Bb.

Vlc.

p mp

sul pont.
gliss.
meno sul pont. sul pont.

mp

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

p

pp

p

pp

p

pp

p

pp
Morning, Glare of First Light (6/16)
Midday, Cool Brilliant Sunshine Overhead (7/16)

sul pont. poco sul pont. sul pont.

faster, unrhythmic bowing, bend between 1/4 and 1/4 (leaving resultant is fine)

regular, unrhythmic bowing, fluctuating quickly in and out of tune, sul pont.

*fast, arhythmic bowstrokes, still bending to adjacent 1/4 tones (leaving resultant is fine)

regular, unrhythmic bowing, fluctuating slowly in and out of tune

don the cusp of a pure note and white noise (hold Es.)
Daytime, Storm Cloud Overhead (10/16)
Morning, Calm Blue Sky and Bluer Sea (11/16)
Dusk, Two Small Clouds Barely Visible (12/16)

sul pont.
light pressure

PPP

sul pont.
light pressure

PPP

slow, unrythmic bowing,
bending slowly in and out
of tune, meno sul pont.,
light pressure

PPP

slow, unrythmic bowing,
bending slowly between 1/4#
and 1/4s, meno sul pont.,
light pressure

PPP
Night, the Last Semblance of Blue Sky (13/16)
Before First Light, Sky Rising from the Sea (14/16)

- **Vln. 1:**
  - Scratch tone
  - Sul tasto
  - Gliss.

- **Vln. 2:**
  - Fluctuate slowly between
  - Sul pont. and sul tasto

- **Vla:**
  - Sul pont.
  - (Hold G
t.)
  - Gliss.

- **Vlc.:**
  - Sul pont.
  - Gliss.
Early Evening, Bright Sky with Islands (15/16)
Late Evening, the Dying Embers of Sunlight Obscuring the Islands (16/16)
Layer Drawing: the Sky Above the Sea

- 

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for contrabass

2017
Amazon Express, by Rolf Sachs, is a photo album documenting the view every ten minutes from the bow of a converted trawler on a month-long voyage from the Mediterranean to the Pacific coast. For Layer Drawing: the Sky Above the Sea, I have chosen a single day’s worth of photographs (approximately an hour before dawn until an hour after dusk), responding to the overriding colour of the sky as well as physical objects such as clouds and vapour trails. A single bar represents a single photograph.

The idea to place each photograph in chronological order, creating a slowly evolving linear narrative of otherwise temporally isolated events, alludes to the “Layer Drawings” of Nobuhiro Nakanishi. Translucent landscape photographs, captured in very quick succession, are hung in sequence (similar to the slides of a photo projector) to produce a brand new landscape when viewed from afar.

Notation

This work is written in proportional notation. The duration of each bar is determined by a single long, slow bowstroke. Each barline is met by a brief, unrushed pause allowing the performer to reposition the bow in preparation for the following bar.

Thick horizontal lines following noteheads signify the duration of said note. There should only be silence upon arrival at a barline. Should an accidental precede a notehead, it is assumed that the previous durational line continues until said notehead. Wavy horizontal lines signify vibrato: narrow waves signify gentle vibrato; wide waves signify heavy vibrato.

Duration: c.12’-16’
Layer Drawing: the Sky Above the Sea

Joseph Hillyard

smooth, contemplative

Scordatura

Contrabass

 light bow pressure

etc.

5

gentle vib.

sul pont.

ord.

etc.

normal pressure

sul pont.

gentle vib.

ord.

rich

rich.

gentle vib.

(etc.)

sul tasto

10

rich

sul pont.

sul tasto, rich

ord.

0

III

(ord.)

sul pont.

pp p

pp p

pp p

15

ord.

(0 III)

(0 III)

(0 III)

(etc.)

mf p

mf p

f p

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Vortex,
January 1932

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for soprano, bass clarinet, trombone, viola, and percussion

2017
Upon a visit to the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, I came across *Vortex*, a silver gelatin photograph by Edward W. Quigley. The subject of this photograph is ambiguous. The outline could suggest the petals of a rose, but the texture indicates many tiny objects (salt crystals, perhaps?) caught in a maelstrom. The likelihood is that it is the result of Quigley's experimentation with manipulating light through the use of glass or prisms—a technique he honed for fifteen years previous to *Vortex*.

It is this ambiguity and implied sense of movement that has informed *Vortex, January 1932*. Instruments orbit and intertwine, their melodies fashioning similar shapes but progressing at different rates. The structure follows the main line of the photograph, beginning in the top-right corner and ending at the lowest point of the same right-hand edge after several changes of direction and intensity.

### Performance Notes

This score is written in proportional notation. Each bar represents five seconds, while the thick, horizontal lines following each notehead represent that note's duration. Due to the nature of this method of notation, the ensemble may choose to include a conductor in the performance, who would indicate every barline. Alternatively, the performers may prefer to use stopwatches to synchronise a performance.

On the occasions that durational lines meet an accidental or a clef change, assume that the sound continues until the next notehead is reached.

**PERCUSSION:** Durational lines are omitted except at the appearance of rolls on the bass drum. Instead, instructions of *l.v.* and *l.v. sempre* are included. This is so there is no chance of durational lines being interpreted as rolls.
Vortex, January 1932

Joseph Hillyard

Score in C

smooth, unavering

Soprano

Bass Clarinet in B

subtone

breathe as necessary

Trombone

con sord. (harmon - stem in)

con sord.

Viola

Percussion:

Vibrphone, Crotales,

Bass Drum

Vibrphone - motor on

10"

B. Cl.

Tbn.

breathe as necessary

pp sempre

25"

Sop.

pp sempre

breathe as necessary

B. Cl.

open hum

Tbn.

40"

Sop.

Tbn.

senza vib.
sul tasto

Vla.

pp sempre

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6'10"

Sop.

B. Cl.

Tbn.

Vla.

Perc.

6'25"

Sop.

B. Cl.

Tbn.

Vla.

Perc.

until B.D. is silent
A Single Reed Captures the Wind

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for flute, bass clarinet and piano

2016
I am interested in the work of abstract landscape photographer Frances Seward. When investigating her portfolio, I came across an image that reminded me of home. Home, for me, is Wirral, Merseyside (UK), where reeds grow plentifully, particularly in my favourite coastal areas.

Seward’s image, *East Wind II*, appears (to my eyes) to show a reed in time-lapse being manipulated by the wind. In reality, this image is the result of a long exposure of glass. Still, this photograph demonstrates the elusive quality of the wind: how we can only ever see it through its actions.

**Notation**

*A Single Reed Captures the Wind* is written in proportional notation with thick horizontal lines following each notehead to show the note’s duration. Unless there is a noticeable gap, all movement to the following note should be as smooth as possible (allowing for breathing). Should a durational line not meet the next note due to an accidental or a clef change, assume the initial note is held until the next note arrives.

It is recommended that performers use the full score so as to more easily remain synchronised.

Barlines are equidistant with each bar representing five seconds.

Vertical dotted lines show events that must occur simultaneously.

Piano: staggered ascending chords are intended as flourishes.
A Single Reed Captures the Wind

Joseph Hilyard

Flute

Bass Clarinet in B♭

Piano

Soft, with space

5''

5''

e tc.

Ped ad lib.

4

15''

30''
The Storm Took Them All

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for voices SSA 2014
The Storm Took Them All

Scattered remnants of the ship could be seen in the distance.
Blood stained the icy wall of the shore.
The voice cried softly from outside the wooden door:
“Let me in! I’m the only one left.
The storm took them all.”
He tried to stand, tears down his face.
“Please, it's cold.”

Only the dawn was left by the storm.
There was a sound at the window.
His breath was still.
Slowly, he turned.

From behind the windowsill appeared the delicate hand
of a child.
His face flush and timid.
Frightened eyes.
He recognised the sound.

The shade pulled down silently against the shadow.
Lost in the doorstep of the empty house.
“Help me. I’m trying to find my way home.
I’m sorry. And I miss you.”

Lyrics written by Brian McMahan
Adapted by Joseph Hillyard
The Storm Took Them All

Joseph Hillyard

Chilling calm $\frac{3}{4} = c.104$

**pp legato** stagger breathing

Scatt-ered rem-nants of the ship could be seen in the dis-tance.

Scatt-ered rem-nants seen in the dis-tance.

Scatt-ered rem-nants of the ship in the dis-tance, the dis-tance.

Blood stained the icy walls of the shore. The voice

Blood stained the walls of the shore. The voice

Blood stained the icy walls of the shore, the shore. The voice cried soft

cried softly from the door: *Let me in!

cried softly from outside the wooden door: Tears down his face, he

- ly from outside the wooden door. He tried to
I'm the only one left. The storm took them all. Please, it's cold. It's tried to stand, tears down his face. The voice cried softly. He tried to stand, tears down his face. The voice cried softly. He tried to stand, tears down cold. Only the dawn was left by the storm, by the storm was his face. Only the dawn was left by the storm, the dawn was left by the storm. "Please, it's cold, please, it's cold. Let me in, let me in. "Please, it's cold. Let me in. Please, it's cold, the window. His breath was still, Please, it's cold. Let me in. Please, it's cold, please, it's cold. Let me in. Please, it's cold, please, it's cold.
Slowly he turned, he tur(ned) - nn...d.

From behind the window-sill appeared the delicate hand of a child. His face flush and timid, flush and frightened eyes. Flush and timid, frightened eyes. He recognised the timid, frightened eyes. Flush and timid, frightened eyes. He recognised the sound, he re-
The shade sound. Flush and timid. He recognised the sound. The shade pulled down, the
cog-nised the sound. Fright-ened eyes. He re-cog nised the sound, re-cog nised the sound. The shade
pulled down si-lent-ly ag-ainst the shad-ow. Lost in the
shade pulled down si-lent-ly ag-ainst the shad-ow. Lost in the
door-step of the emp-ty house. "Help me, help me. I'm try-ing. Help me. I'm try-ing to
-step-of the emp-ty house. "Help me. I'm try-ing to
door-step of the emp-ty house. "Help me, help me. I'm try-ing to
find my way. Help me. I'm trying to find my way home. Find my way home. Help me. I'm sorry. Find my way home. I'm sorry. And I miss you. I'm sorry. And I miss you, I miss you. I miss you, I miss you. I'm sorry. And I miss you.
Memories
Breathe Through
Desolate Ruins

JOSEPH HILLYARD

for harp

2016
Having attended a talk given by Welsh artist Ivor Davies at the opening of his retrospective exhibition at the National Museum Cardiff (Wales, UK), I was struck by his refusal to remove the dust that had accumulated on works that were perhaps several decades old before putting them on display in the gallery. The dust embodies the history of the work and calls to mind events that have occurred in the time between the work’s completion and today.

The dust-laden artworks displayed at Davies’s exhibition recalled to me all the times I have been enchanted by ruinous buildings, and specifically Tintern Abbey (Wales, UK), where the history of the place is sensed in the rubble and fills the gaps where that rubble once was.

Duration: c.5'00"
Memories Breathe Through Desolate Ruins

Joseph Hillyard

All notes \textit{fu}

Slow and sparse. Like an echo $\textit{f} = \textit{c.54}$

\begin{align*}
&\text{D}\#, \text{C}\#, \text{B}\#
\\&\text{E}_b, \text{F}_b, \text{G}_b, \text{A}_b
\end{align*}

Harp

\begin{align*}
&\text{pp}
\\&\text{F}_b
\end{align*}

\textbf{A}

\begin{align*}
&\text{F}_b
\end{align*}

\textbf{B}

\begin{align*}
&\text{F}_b
\end{align*}