AND WE ARE INSUBSTANTIAL

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Committee:
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ABSTRACT

Marilyn Shrude, Advisor

*And We Are Insubstantial* is a sixteen-minute Mass for eight voices, percussion, piano, and solo viola, an ensemble inspired by and based on Morton Feldman's *Rothko Chapel* (1971). The piece contains the five traditional sections of a sacred Mass: the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, all of which are connected by continuous music.

The inspiration behind *And We Are Insubstantial* comes from the composer's own experiences with Christian liturgy. These experiences were the basis for a work that followed the performative act of receiving the Eucharist as understood in its theological and historical context. The composition focuses on the timbres of the words within the service as musical material; text selections from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer are meant to convey the feeling of actual participation in or observation of the Mass, and the traditional Latin texts are fragmented and deconstructed during most of the work, becoming complete only at the Agnus Dei. The Agnus Dei, as the climax of the liturgy is the point at which the participant asks God for mercy as he or she approaches the Eucharistic table to partake in the blood and body of Christ, symbolized through bread and wine. The action of participation is ultimately life-giving and life-affirming, a joyous act. Thus the work ends with both peace and joy as the individual, having consumed the elements, leaves with completion and profound satisfaction.

The sound world of Morton Feldman's *Rothko Chapel*, Sofia Gubaidulina's *Sonnengesang* (1997), Luciano Berio’s *O King* (1968) and Kaija Saariaho's *Nuits Adieux* (1996) played important roles in influencing the initial direction of *And We Are Insubstantial*. These composers' works provided compositional reference points for the desired effects in the piece.
for Rachel, who knew why I wrote this before I did
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Voice:

The singing style should be closer to "natural singing," with less vibrato than traditional Western singing.

Diction:

-- All text follows Latin, English, or IPA pronunciation. Spoken words are in English and should be most comfortable and idiomatic for the individual. The given rhythms and pitches are only approximate.

-- Vowels that appear in brackets are to be sung or spoken according to the following IPA pronunciation guidelines:

  i : as in tea
  e : as in say
  a : as in tall
  u : as in boot
  o : as in toe

-- The following recurring consonants are pronounced:

  r : as in Italian ritardando
  k : in isolation is always very percussive, nearly guttural
  (s) : is always sharp and distinct like a hiss.

Notation:

\[
\text{\textbf{X}} \quad \text{\textbf{O}} \quad \text{\textbf{x}}
\]

-- x noteheads indicate spoken passages

\[
\text{\textbf{M}} \quad \text{\textbf{m}}
\]

-- no noteheads indicate whispered passages

\[
\text{\textbf{O}} \quad \text{\textbf{O}} \quad \text{\textbf{O}}
\]

-- a half-hole above a note means the notes are to be sung or spoken in a breathy manner.
Viola:

s.t.: sul tasto  
s.p.: sul ponticello  
m.s.p.: molto sul ponticello

Percussion:

Specific mallet changes are indicated; all others are left to the best judgement of the percussionist.

Required percussion: bass drum, vibraphone, chimes, crotales (2 octave), temple blocks, suspended cymbal.

Vibraphone pedaling ad lib. unless notated otherwise.

Suggested set-up:

Piano:

+ -- play muted

Notes for all performers:

-- All accidentals carry through each measure.

-- Any other non-standard technique is described as a note in the score

-- Any accidental with an arrow - \( \text{\text{-}} \) \( \text{-} \) - means to sing/play slightly higher or lower

-- [accel. or rit.]
And with your spirit, B.B. 

The Lord be with you, T.T. 

Almighty God, T.T. 

Lord have mercy, B.B. 

* * * 

* Rhythms approximate (see performance notes)
known and from whom no secrets are hid

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
Lord have mercy

Amen

Lord have mercy

Amen

Almighty God who for gives all who truly re pent

con moto \( \frac{4}{4} \) = 72

con moto \( \frac{4}{4} \) = 72

Viola
A better sound will result from rolling about halfway down the chimes.
suddenly, with punctuated energy

\( q = 108 \)
These gifts of bread and wine

Great is the mystery of faith

Accept our praises

(whispered)

Great is the mystery of faith

Heavenly Father

agitated, rapidly fluctuating in intensity

agitated, rapidly fluctuating in intensity

agitated, rapidly fluctuating in intensity
These gifts of bread and wine
these gifts

Sanctus Sanctus

body and blood body and blood
Sanctus Sanctus

may be uns to us his body and blood
Sanctus

body and blood
Sanctus

Great is the mystery of faith

(s) mystery (s)

Great is the mystery of faith

Do —

Do —

Do —

Perc.

Crotales

— Temple Blocks —

Symbol —

Temple Blocks —

-whispered-

Pno.

Vla.

165
in the same night he was betrayed
he took bread
This is my body

do this in remembrance of me

given for you

Vla.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith.

We remember the offering of himself made once for all upon the cross.
Give us this day our daily bread for give us our sin(s) as we for give

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name Give us this day our daily bread (s) (s) as we for give

Your kingdom come Your will be done on earth as in heaven as we for give our sin(s)
everyone who has sinned a gain(s) us(s) may gain(s) us(s)
and gain(s) us(s) who have sinned a gain(s) us(s)
for - give us(s) our sin(s) as we for - give those who have sinned a gain(s) us(s)
And lead us not into tem-
but de-
who has sinned a gain(s) us(s)
and gain(s) us(s) who have sinned a gain(s) us(s)
for - give us(s) our sin(s) as we for - give those who have sinned a gain(s) us(s)
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And lead us not into tem-
but de-
who has sinned a gain(s) us(s)
w(i) and lead us not in-to-tem-pa-tion but de-li-ver us from e-vil

A. (spoken)

(b) (c) (d) (e) (f) but de-li-ver us from e-vil For the long-samp

A. (whispered)

as from e-vil For the long-samp

T. de-li-ver us from e-vil lead us not in-to-tem-pa-tion but de-li-ver us from e-vil

T. sin(s) as we for-give those who have sinned a-gain(1st s(i)) lead us not in-to-tem-pa-tion but de-li-ver us from e-vil

B. de-li-ver us from e-vil

B. de-li-ver us from e-vil

Bass Drum

Simple Block

superball mallet

center

edg
the power and the glory are Yours now and forever A-men

poco rit.  A-men  A-men
May the peace of God which passes all understanding...
Keep your hearts and minds
Go in peace

Go in peace

It is finished

It is finished
...
Go in peace
A -
R -

per-ca - ta

A -
R -

per-ca - ta

It is

and in His Son
Je -sus Christ our Lord

do - na no - bi - pa - cem

per-ca - ta

per-ca - ta

fin-is hed

don - na no - bi pa -

V.
very lightly

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and the blessings of God Almighty

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

and the blessings of God Almighty