

Presence

A thesis presented to  
the faculty of  
the College of Fine Arts of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Music

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This thesis titled

Presence

by

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has been approved for

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## **Abstract**

COOK, CONNER W., M.M., April 2021, Music Composition

### Presence

Director of Thesis: Robert W. McClure

Presence is a work for Pierrot Ensemble scored for flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion consisting of drum set and marimba. The title represents an unknown entity that is slowly consuming the fictional country of Amicea.

The piece fits into a set of pieces using the Pierrot Ensemble and its subsets to tell parts of a multimedia story; other mediums include literature and visual art.

This work opens and closes with a reprise of sorts like in musical theater. The main section is a slow build of a harmonic progression that becomes serial. As this is happening, each instrument tries to voice their own unique melodies, while being interrupting by others. These melodies are pentachords transposed depending on the given chord in the harmonic progression. The violin tries to bring them all together, but everything dissolves into chaos by the end.

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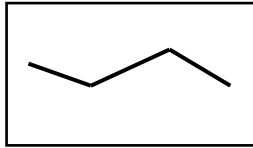
| *Presence (2021)*

*for Pierrot Ensemble*

**Conner Cook**

## Performance Notes

### Overall



Notes followed by this symbol should be bent up and down microtonally using the embouchure for winds.

Passages with molto vibrato should have very aggressive vibrato.

Multiphonics are written out in score, while fingerings can be found in individual parts.

### Flute

Flz. – Flutter Tongue; Designated by tremolo markings

Microtonal pitch bends should be executed with the embouchure

### Bass Clarinet

Flz. – Flutter Tongue

+ symbol over notes indicate that the note should be played using slap tongue

Microtonal pitch bends should be executed with the embouchure

### Strings



richochet the number of bounces within the given duration. The number of bounces is left to the discretion of the performer

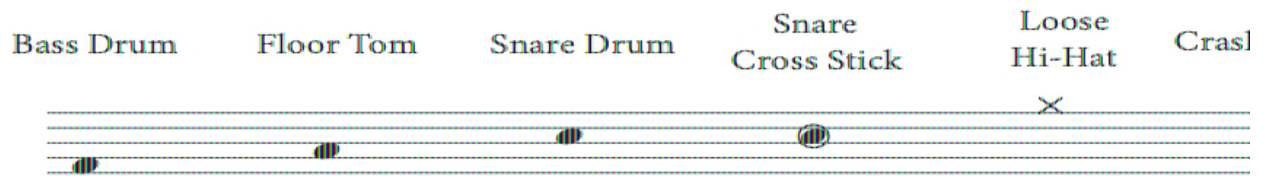
### Piano

Rhythms should be played with a 'soft focus' in the measures 23 until 108. They are semi-improvisational, while keeping dynamics, expression markings, and harmonic motion strict. The performer is welcome to slightly alter rhythms in an improvisatory manner.

### Percussion

Marimba: Mallet choice is left up to the performer. The piece has a heavy and anxious mood throughout.

## Drum set key:



## Program Notes

Field Notes #42 for entity labeled "Presence"

"Attempts to chart the contaminated areas that have succumbed to the Presence have been met with failure. Those that have been able to cross through never return; in an instant, they appear to either become transported to [REDACTED] or cease to exist entirely. Extended exposure to the area surrounding the Presence leads to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is yet to be determined, and no change in bodily composition or homeostasis has been observed.

Composition of this Presence is entirely unknown; attempts to study or collect samples have been met with critical failure. The Presence manifests as an opaque, thick mucus gas yet seems to be in a supercritical fluid state which ultimately takes the shape of floating Stygian waves of water. A consistent unknown source of [REDACTED] emanates from the Presence that disrupts radio communication, or any communication in proximity whatsoever for that matter. Prolonged exposure to this noise creates the sensation of ringing in the ears. Areas near the Presence smells sterile: like bleach or a decontamination center. This is similar to [REDACTED]. Connection to Presence is conjecture. Field Researchers have attempted communication with the entity: [REDACTED].

Personal Note: *It still speaks to me.*"

# Presence

Flute **Restless** ♩ = 60

Bass Clarinet *f*

Violin *mf*

Cello *f* sul pont. Slowly bend

Piano *f* (no pedal until indicated)

Drum Set *ff* *mf* (don't overpower ensemble)

Fl. <sup>3</sup>

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

D. S.

Flz.



Musical score for measures 6-8. The score is for a woodwind and string ensemble. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and Double Bass (D. S.). The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The time signature is 4/4. The Flute part starts with a melodic line, marked with dynamics *f* and *ff*. The Bass Clarinet part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violin and Viola parts have long, sustained notes. The Piano part has a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. The Double Bass part has a steady rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth notes.

Musical score for measures 9-11. The score is for a woodwind and string ensemble. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and Double Bass (D. S.). The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The time signature is 4/4. The Flute part starts with a melodic line, marked with dynamics *mf*. The Bass Clarinet part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violin part has a melodic line, marked with dynamics *mf*. The Viola part has long, sustained notes. The Piano part has a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. The Double Bass part has a steady rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth notes.

12

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

D. S.

15

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

D. S.

18

Fl. *pp* *p*

B. Cl. *p*

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

D. S.

22

Fl. *pp*

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *f* (Played in soft focus; see prefatory note)

D. S. To Marimba

26

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Ped.

30

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Multiphonic fingerings in part

*mf*

33 3x

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Become slightly more aggressive with each repeat

*f*

*mf*

37

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Bend with embouchure

(ord.)

*mf*

41 4x

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

1 - in time  
2-3 - slowly drift out of tempo

*f*

*mp*

3

43 1, 2, 3. 4.

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

In time  
Flz.

*f > p f > p f > p f > p*

*ff*

3

47

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*f*

*mf*

*p*

3

3

3

Alternate between given notes using random rhythm until beat 3

51

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*ff*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

3

3

3

R.H. Strike randomly and emphatically

54

Bend using embouchure

Fl. *mf*

B. Cl. *p*

Vln.

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

57

On first repetition, play rhythm as written  
On 2nd and 3rd repetition, attempt to match piano's rhythm. The attempt is more important than perfection

Fl. *f* *mf* *p*

B. Cl. *3*

Vln.

Vc. *mp* *mf* *3* *ord.*

Pno. *f* *3* *mp*

Ped.

Randomly articulate while adding upper notes

Overpressure



61

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Strain for it

mf

3

ff

3

mf

Overpressure (max pressure)

ord.

f

8 \* Cleft Change

64

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Let it Squeak

mp

fff

mf

Lots of Air

Multiphonic fingerings in part

f

Overpressure

68

Fl. *mp* *tr* (b $\flat$ )

B. Cl. *pp*

Vln.

Vc. (max pressure) *ord.* *p sub.*

Pno. 8 *R.H. Randomly Articulate* beat 2 3

72

Fl. *ff*

B. Cl. *mf* *mf > p* *mf > p*

Vln.

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *R.H. randomly articulate either note* *Roll Slowly* *pp*

Mrb. *f* *Independent Roll*

76

Fl. *mp* repeat w/ gradual accel. 3

B. Cl. continue to microtonally bend until ord.

Vln.

Vc. continue to microtonally bend until ord.

Pno. *p*

Mrb. 3 3 3 3

80

Fl. *fff*

B. Cl.

Vln. *ppp* *fff* ord. sul D *p sub.* *ff*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *tr*

Mrb. Ped.

Let any breaking of pitch happen

84

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

sul pont.

ord.

3

fff

mf

slightly faster

87

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

molto vibrato

pp

molto vibrato

p

molto vibrato

mf

molto vibrato

f

8

mf

f

p

91

Fl. *ff*

B. Cl.

Vln. *ff*

Vc.

Pno. *f*

Mrb. *mf*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 91 to 93. The Flute part begins with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic, playing a melodic line with slurs and a triplet in measure 93. The Bass Clarinet part has a few notes in measure 91. The Violin part features a melodic line with a triplet in measure 93 and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The Viola part has a few notes in measure 91. The Piano part has a complex texture with slurs and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic. The Maracas part has a melodic line with a triplet in measure 93 and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.

94

Fl. *pp*

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc. *mp* *ff*

Pno. *mf*

Mrb.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 94 to 97. The Flute part starts with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic, playing a melodic line with slurs. The Bass Clarinet part has a few notes in measure 94. The Violin part has a melodic line with a triplet in measure 95. The Viola part has a melodic line with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic in measure 96 and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic in measure 97. The Piano part has a complex texture with slurs and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Maracas part has a melodic line with a triplet in measure 95.

98

Fl. *mp*

B. Cl. *mf*

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mp* *ff* Scratch

Pno. *8va*

Mrb.

102

Fl. *f* *p sub.*

B. Cl. *ff* *mp* *mf*

Vln. *ff*

Vc. *ord.* *mf*

Pno. *mp*

Mrb. *f*

poco rit. ----- ♩ = 60

Musical score for measures 105-110. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and Mallets (Mrb.). The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' with a metronome marking of ♩ = 60. The music is in a key with one flat and a 2/4 time signature. Dynamics range from *mf* to *fff*. The Mallets part includes a 'Strict Rhythm' section and a 'To Drum Set' instruction. A dashed line labeled '8va' indicates an octave shift for the Piano part.

Musical score for measures 110-115. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and Double Bass (D. S.). The music is in a key with one flat and a 2/4 time signature. Dynamics range from *mf* to *fff*. The Piano part includes a 'Strict Rhythm' section and a 'To Drum Set' instruction. A dashed line labeled '8va' indicates an octave shift for the Piano part.

114

Fl. *ff* Fight for Sound

B. Cl. *ff* Fight for Sound

Vln. *fff* Ricochet repeatedly Fight for Sound

Vc. *ff* Ricochet repeatedly Fight for Sound

Pno. *ff*

D. S. *f* *mf*

117

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc. Ricochet repeatedly

Pno.

D. S.



119

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

D. S.

121

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

D. S.



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