

Vocal Crisis

For Flute with Live Electronics

by Joshua Hahn

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“‘Vocal Crisis’ means a crisis in the voice, but it also means articulate crisis, crisis given voice. Hardly an interruption of diva art, vocal crisis is the diva’s self-lacerating announcement that interruption has been, all along, her subject and method” (Wayne Koestenbaum, *The Queen’s Throat* pp.128-9). The possession of a voice is inseparable from narratives of crisis. The voice may undergo an untimely interruption, faltering without warning, betraying a self that is alien, incapable of meeting societal expectations. But crisis also has a voice of its own, one that forces a state of inner trauma into the public realm. In *Vocal Crisis* (2012) the computer is a temperamental mouthpiece for the flute, at times speaking for the flute, and at other times distorting the flute by responding in a discontinuous, unpredictable manner. The flute’s gradual separation from the computer is not merely a crisis of voice, but an unveiling of the inner workings of a vocal instrument.

Duration: 8'

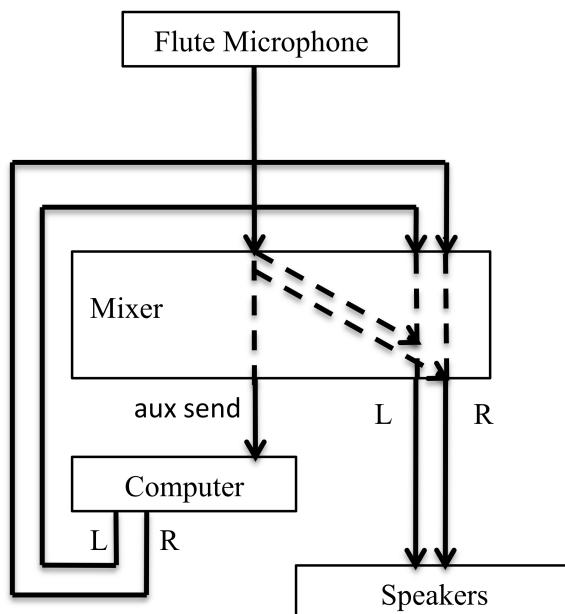
Technical Requirements:

- 1) One microphone
- 2) A computer that runs Max 6 or Max 6 runtime, a free read-only version of Max 6 available from cycling74.com
- 3) Stereo loudspeaker system

Optional:

- 4) A mixing board (allowing for the unprocessed sound of the flute to be mixed and carefully balanced with the electronic sounds)

When a mixing board is used, the following diagram may be used as a model for an effective setup:



Description of the electronic component:

The main electronic component is a dynamic buzzing sound that plays in unison with flute and serves to modulate its timbre. Buzzing sounds displaced by an octave in either direction and "chords" of buzzing sounds are also added to the flute's sound in separate parts of the piece. Recordings of processed flute sounds are also used.

This piece is designed to be executed by a performer without an assistant. Events are triggered either by particular pitches or by the rests between individual phrases.

A pedal may be used in place of or in conjunction with the computer score following.

The player should tune before beginning the piece to lessen the chance of computer error.

Vocal Crisis

for flute with live electronics

Joshua Hahn

misterioso

Flute

Electronics

Cue 1: dynamic buzzing in unison

Fl.

Ele.

violent, physical

Fl.

Ele.

dolce

Fl.

Ele.

mp *mf* *< mp* *< mf* *< p* *mp* *mf* *p* *< mf* *> mp*

Fl.

Ele.

mp *< mf* *p* *> pp* *mp* *> mf* *> mp* *< mf* *f* *p* *<*

Fl.

Ele.

mf *p* *< pp* *f*

Fl.

Ele.

violent, physical

Fl.

Ele.

24

Fl.

Ele.

Vocal Crisis

5

Fl. Ele.

27

Fl. Ele.

30

Fl. Ele.

33

Fl. Ele.

36

Fl. Ele.

40

Fl. Ele.

43

dolce [Finger low F]

[Cue 2: no electronics] [Cue 3: dynamic buzzing in unison]

violent, physical

p

dolce [Finger high F]

f harm. gliss. *p* *mp* *f* harm. gliss. *p*

Cue 4: no electronics

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6

48 *alla marcia*

Fl. Ele.

[Finger low Bb]

Cue 5: dynamic buzzing in unison

53

Fl. Ele.

57 *morendo* - - - - - *molto rubato*

Fl. Ele.

Cue 6: processed whistle tones

pp

63

Fl. Ele.

70 (whistle tones) - - - - -

This musical score for 'Vocal Crisis' consists of six staves, each representing a different instrument or sound source. The instruments are Flute (Fl.) and Electronic (Ele.). The score is divided into three systems by vertical bar lines. The first system starts at measure 48 with a dynamic marking of *alla marcia*. The Flute part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *ff*, *mf*, *mp*, and *mf*. The Electronic part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff*, *mf*, *p*, *ff*, *mp*, and *mf*. A bracket labeled '[Finger low Bb]' points to a specific note on the Flute staff. A box labeled 'Cue 5: dynamic buzzing in unison' covers the first two staves. The second system begins at measure 53. The Flute part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *f*³, *p*, *f*³, and *mf*. The Electronic part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff*, *mf*, *p*, *ff*, *mp*, *f*³, and *mf*. The third system begins at measure 57, starting with a dynamic *morendo* followed by a dash and a *molto rubato* instruction. The Flute part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *f*³, *p*, *f*³, *f*, *p*, *f*, *p*, and *pp*. The Electronic part has a sustained note followed by a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff*, *mf*, *p*, *ff*, *mp*, *f*³, and *mf*. A box labeled 'Cue 6: processed whistle tones' covers the first two staves. The score continues with System 2 at measure 63 and System 3 at measure 70, where the Flute part has sustained notes and eighth-note patterns with dynamics *pp* and *#o*, and the Electronic part has sustained notes and eighth-note patterns with dynamics *pp* and *#o*. A bracket labeled '(whistle tones)' covers the first two staves of System 3.

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7

Fl.

Ele.

78 (Wait until whistle tones stop)

Cue 7: dynamic buzzing in unison

Fl.

Ele.

84 [Finger low A]

Cue 8: no electronics

Cue 9: duet (in time) = 60

Fl.

Ele.

90

Fl.

Ele.

95

Vocal Crisis

8

violent,
physical

Fl. 99 *mp* < > *f p* < *f*

Ele. Cue 10: buzzing "chord"

Fl. 104 3 3 3 *ff* 3 *f*

Fl. 106 *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Fl. 108 *p* 3 3 *mf* rit. 3 *pp mf* *a tempo*

Fl. III < *ff* *mf* < *ff* 3 *mf*

Fl. 113 < *ff* frenzied $\text{♩} = 112$

Ele. Cue 11: dynamic buzzing in unison

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9

Musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Electronics (Ele.)

The score consists of six staves, each starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is common time.

Staff 1 (Measure 116): Flute plays eighth-note patterns with grace notes. A measure repeat sign is shown. A bracket indicates a three-measure group. Electronics provide a sustained, wavy sound.

Staff 2 (Measure 120): Flute continues eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Electronics provide a sustained, wavy sound.

Staff 3 (Measure 123): Flute continues eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Electronics provide a sustained, wavy sound.

Staff 4 (Measure 126): Flute continues eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Electronics provide a sustained, wavy sound. A dynamic marking ***ff*** is indicated with a crescendo line.

Staff 5 (Measure 129): Flute begins a descending scale. Dynamics ***f*** and ***ff*** are marked. Electronics provide a sustained, wavy sound. A dynamic marking ***f*** is marked. A dynamic marking ***ff*** is marked. A performance instruction "harm. gliss." is shown with a wavy line and ovals.