

Niki Zohdi

reliquiae, löschen

2022-23

for solo voice

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Duration: c.6 minutes

reliquiae, löschen explores multiple relationships and references to the Totentanz or Danse Macabre or Death of Dance. These references appear in various different ways in the piece and hold different levels of visibility, with some references being highly obscured whilst some are somewhat visible.

The piece depicts the seven skeleton tableaux in Bernt Notke's 15th century painting *Surmatants* which portrays a Totentanz. These tableaux are replicated by the performer throughout before falling towards an inevitable dissolution at the end of the piece.

The text is derived from the first stanza of Goethe's *Totentanz* (1815) as well as from the final text in the Llibre Vermell de Montserrat called *Ad mortem festinamus* (a 1399 manuscript from Catalonia). The vowels and consonants of each text are combined to create a partial erasure of both texts, leaving only the imprints of a combined text in the piece.

The musical material is derived from five phrases in August Nörmiger's *Totentanz* (1598). The musical fragments start as quotations at the beginning of each section of the 5-section piece and gradually dissolve into material which is far related to the original material, portraying multiple pushes towards dissolution and erasure before it is finalised at the very end of the piece.

This piece was written between 2022 and 2023 for Stephanie Lamprea.

Performance directions:

There are two types of stave in this piece:

5 line works as a conventional stave in terms of pitch

3 line works as a semi-indeterminate stave in the order as follows:

Top line: any pitch in extreme high register

Space: any pitch in high register

Middle line: any pitch in middle register

Space: any pitch in low register

Bottom line: any pitch in extreme low register

The text contain both standard German and standard Latin IPA.

The **vowels** in the **5 line stave** sections contain standard German IPA

The **consonants** in the **5 line stave** sections contain standard Latin IPA

The **vowels** in the **3 line stave** sections contain standard Latin IPA

The **consonants** in the **3 line stave** sections contain standard German IPA

All **arrows** signify a change of states, e.g:

Gradual change of vowel shape between notes

Gradual accel. or rit. between metronome marks

Gradual change between vocal sounds (shown through note heads)

Gradual change between movements


Green vertical arrows signify the time to use a '**G**' tuning fork (if needed) to realise the starting pitch of the succeeding section

Notehead types:

3

- (square) scream/shout
- ◆ (diamond) breath tone (minimal pitch)
- × (crossed) unpitched vowel
- ▲ (triangle) spoken, *sprechtgesang*
- (misc.) growl, from throat (minimal pitch)


Glissandi & lines:

 (contour glissandi) glissando follows the contour of the line

Diagonal lines between consonants and vowels signify an elision straight from the consonant to the vowel

Other:

 Goat/'Monteverdi' trill

 Vibrato (no vibrato otherwise)
If this symbol follows an 'r' = 'rolled r'

Movements:

Movements in this piece follow the seven skeletons in Bernt Notke's *Surmatants* (15th century):



In the piece, a cut segment from the artwork above appears above the staves. This position is to be replicated by the vocalist and held until stated otherwise.

The red arrows signify a gradual move (whilst performing) to the next position.

The goal is to move to the next position following the arrows and the 'hold' instructions'. Note that the 'hold' instructions are stops in the gradual movement and do not signify that the vocalist is to be at the next position.

The dotted red vertical lines signify when the movement/hold should begin or end.

The movements occur in the 3 line stave sections and depict the changing of state of the skeletons in the artwork above.

This can either be performed by the vocalist or an additional dancer or omitted completely

All other relevant directions are noted on the score

*Accidentals only valid for the note they precede,
unless that note is immediately repeated*

To Stephanie Lamprea

reliquiae, löschen

Goethe & Llibre Vermell de Montserrat

Niki Zohdi

Movements



hold position until arrow

♪ = 90

p *f* *fff* *mp* *f* *fff* *mp* 10:7

3

7 16 7 7 6

ε v t bry: ε s ε au

Voice

mp *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *fff* *mp* *p*

3

3

5:4

4

6:7

r u n I f m u a: r s e

Voice

mf *f* *p* *f*

9:5

$\text{♩} = 52$

5

a l t a v k i: i:

Voice

14

$\frac{4}{16}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{9}{16}$ $\frac{5}{16}$

mp *pp* *ff*

5:4 3 6:7 5:4

ε o i: t ts i: m

Voice

17

$\frac{5}{16}$ $\frac{9}{16}$

ppp

9:5 3

t i: n i: d r n ε



hold position until arrow

$\text{♩} = 180$ ($\text{♩} = 90$)

Voice

19

$\frac{9}{16}$

mp *f* *p* *f* *p*

$9:8$ 3

e: ε n I a ε m ε

Voice

21

ppp *mf* *ppp* *f* *mp* *ppp* *mp* *f* *ppp*

$5:3$ $5:7$ 3 $6:5$ $5:4$

v ε r a t t a ε m n I

23

Voice

mp *f* *mp* *ppp* *mf* *p*

ε r s e: ε p ε l a s



26

Voice

(♩ = 45)

p *p* *ff* *ff*

ε i ε e: gr u o b n l g

hold

$\text{♩} = 52$

p *ff*

29

Voice

i: a o ε d

$\text{♩} = 60$ ($\text{♩} = 120$)

ff

9:5 9:6 6:5

32

Voice

i: r ε m ε t d r ε I ht ε u l s ns i: h



♩ = 52

Voice

p *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

35

7:4 3

I ε l g b ε u xt ε

Detailed description: This musical score for voice is in 4/4 time. It begins at measure 35. The first phrase consists of a half note 'I', followed by a dotted quarter note 'ε', and then a triplet of eighth notes 'l', 'g', and 'b'. The second phrase consists of a half note 'ε', followed by a dotted quarter note 'u', and then a triplet of eighth notes 'x', 't', and 'x'. The third phrase consists of a half note 'ε'. Dynamics range from piano (*p*) to fortissimo (*ff*). There are hairpins for crescendo and decrescendo. A red arrow points from the start of the first phrase to a painting of a skeleton. A green arrow points to the end of the third phrase.

hold

♩ = 90

Voice

fff *mp* *fff* *mp* *fff* *mp* *fff*

38

11:6 7:4 3

ε n i: k o ε v r s i: f t p a ε kt

Detailed description: This musical score for voice is in 6/8 time. It begins at measure 38. The first phrase consists of a dotted quarter note 'ε', followed by a dotted quarter note 'n', and then a dotted quarter note 'i:'. The second phrase consists of a dotted quarter note 'k', followed by a dotted quarter note 'o', and then a dotted quarter note 'ε'. The third phrase consists of a dotted quarter note 'v', followed by a dotted quarter note 'r', and then a dotted quarter note 's i:'. The fourth phrase consists of a dotted quarter note 'f', followed by a dotted quarter note 't', and then a dotted quarter note 'p a'. The fifth phrase consists of a dotted quarter note 'ε', followed by a dotted quarter note 'k', and then a dotted quarter note 't'. Dynamics range from fortissimo (*fff*) to mezzo-piano (*mp*). There are hairpins for crescendo and decrescendo. There are markings for 'G. tr' (grace notes) under the 'i:' and 's i:' notes. A red dashed line labeled 'hold' is above the first measure.

hold

mp *ppp* *mp* *f* *mp* *ppp* *p* *mp*

44

Voice

a e: t i v at m

f *sf* *sf* *sf* *f* *fff* *mp* *p* *ppp* *p*

46

Voice

r a e e a s a l: n

48

Voice

mf *f* *f* *p* *f* *f* *sf* *sf* *sf* *f*

3 5:3 4 7:5 5:3

nt o o o o ε p o: n ε ε ε d

50

Voice

ppp *p* *sf* *sf* *f* *fff*

3 6:5

p *f*

5:4

p = 68

ar a b ar ar a d r gt z n

Voice

52

mp

f

hold

l gt v m k ε

Voice

55

pp

mp

7:6

5:4

pp

i: t g n k v r o: u

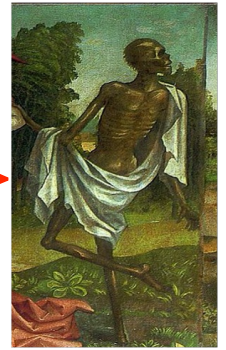
f *p* *f*

5:3

58

Voice

s f t p kt d k x



hold

f *mp* *mp* *p* *ppp*

9:5

3 3

60

Voice

k x k b a i: gt n gt m e: I

♩ = 90

p *fff* *f* *p* *pp* *p* *mf* *p*

62

Voice

I d d d d ai m ai r

p *p* *f* *p* *mp* *f* *fff* *mp* *f* *p* *p*

64

Voice

ε t ε f f ε s t υ υ n

66

Voice

f 5:3 *p* *f* *f* *fff* *mp* *f* *p*

ε ε: s s s e: p I k k k k ε

(♩ = 45)

67

Voice

ppp *f*

m r m f st



70

Voice

ppp

ppp

a o ε I a u ε s

8 5 4

Detailed description: This musical score for voice starts at measure 70. It features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of a series of notes with a dynamic marking of *ppp* (pianissimo) above the staff. Vertical lines connect the notes to a series of vowel characters: 'a', 'o', 'ε', 'I', 'a', 'u', 'ε', and 's'. A red arrow points from the beginning of the staff to a small painting of a skeleton in a landscape. The score includes time signature changes from 8/8 to 5/8 and finally to 4/4.

73

Voice

mp (breathe when needed)

ppp

lie flat on front

rit.

(hold until out of breath)

(♩ = 30)

a ε e: a u

4 4 6 4

Detailed description: This musical score for voice starts at measure 73. It features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of a series of notes with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) above the staff, followed by *ppp* (pianissimo). A red arrow points from the beginning of the staff to the text 'lie flat on front'. A blue arrow labeled 'rit.' (ritardando) points to the end of the staff, with a tempo marking '(♩ = 30)'. A dashed line indicates a breath mark with the instruction '(breathe when needed)'. Another dashed line indicates a breath mark with the instruction '(hold until out of breath)'. The score includes time signature changes from 4/4 to 6/4 and finally to 4/4. Below the staff, a series of vowel characters are written: 'a', 'ε', 'e:', 'a', and 'u'.