You can't do that!
A journey into vocal composition through an exploration of musical genres and the subversion of norms

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Abstract

The composition of vocal parts and their relation to instrumentation poses several challenges to the composer. Linked to the issue is the question of how to deal with language. In this submission, I explore diverse vocal techniques ranging from *traditional* singing in manifold tonal or atonal contexts to the use of the human voice in modes such as speaking, screaming, shouting, whispering or whistling. This research develops ways to extend these techniques and to find an individual approach to *singing* in stage works.

I tread this path in a portfolio of ten works exploring the use of the voice in various instrumentations. Eight of these compositions are structured around an assortment of historically popular line-ups such as *Kunstlied, Orchesterlied, Ensemblelied, a capella* choir work or chamber opera. Later, I expanded the compilation and incorporated works with a less traditional setup such as a *piano concerto,* amalgamating genres by including singers in the ensemble, and a piece for solo voice and electronics. The influence of the orchestration on the use of the voice is also considered within the new works.

In each of the ten pieces, I approach the voice from a different angle and focus on a specific compositional parameter. This parametric approach allows me to change perspective and to adapt the applied vocal techniques according to the instrumentation and the characteristics of the underlying text. I aim to combine semantic immediacy and comprehensibility with the drawing of clear characters and atmospheres.

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 You can't do that!

Throughout my studies in composition in Germany and Austria I often heard statements such as 'you can't do that', 'this is out of date' or 'that is trivial'. When it came to composing for voice, these statements increased in frequency and emotionality. These views and norms continually occurred when I wrote melodies that used primarily tonal material or when a voice part was set intuitively without any underlying system. While writing for instruments is taught in various classes like organology, orchestration or instrumentation, writing for voice is often largely left out in an academic environment (Barker, 2004, p. 24). As a composition student, I was not necessarily encouraged to write for voice, and if I did there seemed to be much more risk than when writing instrumental music. Naturally, these conventions strongly provoked my resistance and urged me to find a way to prove that 'you can do that!'.

When I analysed 20th century vocal works of composers such as Arnold Schönberg, Luciano Berio, Cathy Berberian, György Ligeti and Pierre Boulez amongst others, I encountered strong positions and predetermined ideas of how to use the voice in contemporary music composition. Pieces such as Cathy Berberian's *Stripsody* (Berberian, 1966) or Berio's *Sequenza III* (Berio, 1968) explore the human voice in its various facets and broaden the spectrum of vocal techniques (also visible in the graphic notation). In works such as Pierre Boulez' *Marteau sans maître* (Boulez, 1957), the voice part is even treated like an additional instrument blending in with the rest of the ensemble. In the middle of the 20th century, compositions were deeply influenced by aesthetics such as twelve-tone technique and serialism, focusing on the musical material. The new serial laws legitimized new aesthetics and replaced the old paradigm of tonality (Zagorski, 2009). Some attitudes strongly opposing everything traditional, tonal and trivial evolved and were promoted in festivals and courses like the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse*

(Zagorski, 2009). However, while in purely instrumental music one can focus on a high degree of complexity, and solely analytical ideas and plans as a composer, these concepts form only part of a vocal piece such as a song or music theatre work. In these genres, you must deal with parameters such as emotional content, text meaning, comprehensibility and performativity.

In music theatre, the recomposition of a libretto or the selection of the underlying text run from traditional narrative stories to deconstructed or more experimental forms of language, often not following a timeline (Heile, 2006). One central issue is whether to focus on telling a story such as Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* (Turnage, 1990) or to find a more philosophical approach to the questions inherent within the drama such as in Lachenmann's *Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern* (*Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern*, 2002) or Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus* (Cross, 2009). However, in both cases the composer needs to decide whether to use natural rhythms and inflections of words, as Leoš Janáček expertly did, or to move away from these traditional settings into increasingly deconstructive techniques, as in Beat Furrer's *Narcissus* (*Narcissus*, 2016)*,* Salvatore Sciarrino's *Lohengrin* (Sciarrino, 1984) and Philip Venables' *4.48 Psychosis* (Venables, 2016). Comprehensibility is significant for almost every opera format.

Alternative formats of music theatre evolved in the 20th century, contrasting or evading traditional forms. Mauricio Kagel describes his operatic works as 'instrumental theatre', Helmut Lachenmann writes 'music with images' (*Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern*, 2002), Steve Reich uses the term 'documentary music theatre' and Robert Ashley composes 'television operas' (Till, 2003). The term *opera* is both avoided and broadened. However, it is currently challenging to find a melodic linear language that stays true to the composer's vocabulary while still conveying the meaning of the words with absolute clarity. Therefore, it is essential for me to explore and create a musical language that combines comprehensibility

with original, vocal and natural melodic lines. In this case, the term *natural* refers to melodic lines which are informed by the rhythms and inflections inherent in the spoken language. In my experience, depending on the context, an extremely complex voice part which deconstructs the accentuation of the text and does not allow emotional expression can be counterproductive for telling a story through opera.

I do not at all suggest to completely return to traditional ways of singing and text-setting but instead I propose to reconsider all positions, ideas and approaches to the use of the voice in order to find a new musical language geared towards the necessities of music theatre. Extended vocal techniques can absolutely play a decisive role within this process. In opposition to Theodor W. Adorno, I do not believe that opera is an 'eviscerated' art form that did not know that it had died (Adorno, 2016) but a vibrant genre.

1.2 Composing for voice today

The composition of vocal parts and their relation to the ensemble must be deliberate above all in my opinion. The types of vocal techniques employed by the composer are only a means of saying something specific and of serving a dramatic purpose, and what is important is how they help to communicate within the work and to the audience. In my portfolio, the techniques I applied are often strongly tied to the underlying text, either to a certain character, a text-inherent idea or a mood. However, in two pieces (*Von den flatternden Gedanken, piano concerto*) they follow a solely compositional idea or formal concept that evolved before the text and thus explore a different facet of writing for voice. In these two pieces, I liberate myself from declamatory text-setting and reverse the hierarchies.

The deconstruction of the phrases or words of the libretto or text in general, even the abandonment of any text, is a common procedure in contemporary vocal music. This can be

studied, for example, in Salvatore Sciarrino's opera *Lohengrin* (Sciarrino, 1984)*,* in vocal works such as György Ligeti's *Aventures* (Ligeti, 1964) and *Nouvelles Aventures* (Ligeti, 1966), in the works of Meredith Monk (Monk, 1983) and Pamela Z (Pamela Z, 2017) and in Dieter Schnebel's *Maulwerke* (Schnebel, 1971). In opera, singing techniques range from traditional singing in tonal or atonal contexts to the use of the human voice in modes ranging from speaking, screaming and shouting to whispering (Williams, 2006). The combination of spoken and sung text can form an appealing mixture, for instance in Unsuk Chin's *Alice in Wonderland* (Chin, 2007), Michael Obst's chamber opera *Solaris* (Obst, 2010) or in Beat Furrer's *Wüstenbuch* (*Wüstenbuch*, 2014) and *Narcissus* (*Narcissus*, 2016). The combination of spoken and sung text fascinates me, and is one of the principles to be found in my vocal compositions.

The works that impressed me most concerning their singing techniques and treatment of the voice were Philip Venables' *4.48 Psychosis*, Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence*, Hans Abrahamsen's *The Snow Queen* and Stuart MacRae's *Anthropocene*. When I saw a live performance of *4.48 Psychosis* in Paris in December 2021, I was struck not only by its immediacy and emotionality but also by its way of crossing borders between vocal and instrumental techniques. *Innocence* fascinated me with new perspectives on the use of language in opera. *The Snow Queen* thrilled me with a contemporary approach to integrating tonal singing. And a live performance of *Anthropocene* in Glasgow in January 2019 allowed me to reflect on drawing distinct characters through composition. Accordingly, I use diverse approaches to composing for voice in my portfolio. This is represented in the choice of texts as well: poems (as in *Sonnen Schwärzen, arten von seen, Then shuts the door, Nicht/s, Wonnetraum – Käfig, Von den flatternden Gedanken, The wall*), narrative texts (*Die Partie*), fragments (*Graufacetten*) or simply vowels or syllables (*piano concerto, Von den flatternden Gedanken*). In all of these works (except for the *piano concerto*), I collaborated with living authors. These collaborations add a valuable second perspective to the process and lead to stimulating creative discussions.

The instrumentations I use are primarily influenced by the commissions I received and while my intention was to compose for a broad variety of instrumentations from solo pieces to chamber opera, I had to modify this to complement my commissions. The employed instrumentations all have their own historical connotations and technical characteristics that affect the approach to the individual new work. The compositional approach is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 and summarized in 4.1 Overview.

1.3 Research Aims

The introduction above outlines how the work of other artists involves vocal techniques ranging from spoken word to melismatic singing. My research aims to explore and develop these techniques, through my portfolio, in order to address the research question: in what ways can a parametric approach to the voice connect expressively with the listener through a broad variety of contemporary vocal techniques?

Therefore, the following steps are necessary:

1. Exploring the use of the voice in various instrumentations:

   o music theatre

   o orchestral

   o chamber music

   o choir

   o solo piece with electronics

   o as part of an instrumental ensemble

2. Investigating the question of how to deal with language.

3. Finding my individual approach to composing for voice.

These objectives ultimately contribute to the question discussed throughout this commentary: how can you write for voice today? I aim to make my own contribution by finding a musical

language that combines semantic immediacy and comprehensibility through a variety of vocal techniques.

2 A parametric approach

My research contains methodology such as practice-led research as well as practice as research in terms of creative investigations within and through the compositions (Borgdorff, 2020). According to Robin Nelson 'Practice as Research involves a research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry and where, in respect of the arts, a practice (creative writing, dance, musical score/performance, theatre/performance, visual exhibition, film or other cultural practice) is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry' (Nelson, 2013).

In this submission my portfolio of compositions, as well as the corresponding performances and recordings, forms a substantial part of my research outcomes. The practice or the method is composition. For me, composition also involves preliminary research in terms of repertoire, analysis, improvisation and conversations with musicians. Thus, the newly composed works act as a research tool integrating their creative practice and compositional methods into the research design. By composing new works for voice, I evaluate and rethink my own approach to writing vocal music.

The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research defines artistic research as 'an epistemic inquiry, directed towards increasing knowledge, insight, understanding and skills'. (*Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*, 2022) As discussed in 2.2 (see also the list on pp.15-16), I employ various approaches to the use of the voice in the works of my portfolio. Each piece explores a different parameter or a set of parameters to gain new insights and skills in terms of composing for voice. Here, I am particularly interested in the diverse stages between singing and speaking (see table 1 vocal techniques), working with different sorts of texts and combining and blending

techniques like humming, whistling, whispering etc. and sung phrases. The process of exploring vocal techniques is accompanied by a critical evaluation and reflection in rehearsals, performances and recordings of the new works. With each rehearsal process, I learn from the singers involved and review my own practice. The newly generated knowledge and insights result in a deeper understanding applied in the following pieces. The combination of theoretical analysis with a practical approach promotes a comprehensive and versatile approach to my research question. Additionally, I learnt a substantial repertoire of choral music by singing in a choir and got to know a considerable amount of *Kunstlieder* (primarily Schubert and Schumann) through singing and playing in private studies. For me, a practical approach to music is always more intense, more embodied and sustainable than quietly reading the score or listening to a recording. Singing myself (solo and in choirs) is a very effective way of learning more about the singability of melodies, the various ranges and registers, and extended vocal techniques.

'Artistic Research also addresses key issues of a broader cultural, social and economic significance' (*Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*, 2020). I aim to make opera and contemporary vocal music in general more accessible for a wider audience. I believe that a new perspective on the use of the voice, as well as creating more sharply defined characters and enhancing theatrical immediacy in music theatre, is key for achieving this objective. Furthermore, I would like to reconsider existing norms, create a potential for new relations in the ensemble and include voices in new and unexpected contexts. My own compositional practice is informed by the use of topics in contemporary and unexpected contexts. I use the term topic as a rhetorical gesture or set phrase grown over a period of time that evokes extramusical associations and represents an expressive content (for more reference see also McKay, 2007). With my portfolio, I would like to contribute to reforming and modernizing contemporary vocal music and music theatre in particular.

3 Discussion of individual works

While most of the works forming my portfolio use historically popular instrumentations as mentioned above, the *piano concerto* and *The wall* for solo voice and electronics expand this theme and add a more contemporary perspective to the parameter of instrumentation.

Portfolio of Compositions

opera			
Die Partie - chamber opera for soprano, alto, baritone, actor, small choir (mezzo, alto, tenor) and chamber orchestra (2020-2021) Libretto: Anna Sophie Felser	52 min.	tba	premiere tba
songs			
Graufacetten for soprano and guitar (2019)	7 min.	Elisabeth de Roo (soprano) Manuel de Roo (guitar)	premiere tba
Von den flatternden Gedanken for soprano, flute, guitar and cello (2019)	10 min.	Gunnar Berg Ensemble Salzburg	premiered 6/19
Wonnetraum - Käfig for mezzo soprano and symphony orchestra (2019)	9 min.	Tamara Obermayr (mezzo) Symphonieorchester der Universität Mozarteum	premiere postponed
Nicht/s for countertenor, flute, violin, cello and piano (2020)	10 min.	Matthew Paine (countertenor) Red Note Ensemble	recorded 9/20
Then shuts the door for soprano and viola da gamba (2021)	11 min.	Franziska Poensgen (mezzo), Charlotte Schwenke (viola da gamba)	premiere tba
choir			
arten von seen for a cappella mixed choir (2022)	3 min.	Vokalensemble Crescendo Conductor: Volker Hagemann	premiered 11/22

Sonnen Schwärzen for a cappella mixed choir (2022)	3 min.	Kammerchor Spectrum Conductor: Gerhard Polifka	premiered 10/22
add-ons/expansion			
piano concerto for solo piano and ensemble (2021/22)	20 min.	Marianna Abrahamyan Red Note Ensemble	premiered 4/22
The wall for solo voice and electronics (2022/23)	13 min.	Stephanie Lamprea	premiere 9/23

These ten works explore various aspects of writing for voice:

Defining characters

Vocal: *Die Partie* links specific types of writing for voices to certain characters and their attributes and trajectories.

Vocal and instrumental: *Then shuts the door* introduces three roles within a duet piece and closely ties the soprano to the accompanying instrument.

Linguistic approach

Semantic: *Graufacetten* engages in experiments with the contrast between a *Recitativo* and an *Arioso* style relating to the semantics of the underlying poem fragments.

Grammatic: In *Wonnetraum – Käfig*, I subdivide words into word groups by function (e.g. nouns, verbs etc.) and attach predetermined compositional styles to them.

Layering techniques

One choir: *arten von seen* experiments with choral clusters and *glissandi*. It engages in whistling, humming and collective improvisation at the end of the piece.

Two choirs*: Sonnen Schwärzen* pursues the *glissandi* and whistling begun in *arten von seen*. However, I added another layer: the division into two choirs including spatial and echo effects.

Time waves

Von den flatternden Gedanken works with fluid text pacing ranging from melisma to extremely fast text-setting.

Simplicity and emotionality

Nicht/s works with repetitions and is restricted to very simple melodies in order to give space for strong expressive content.

Instrumental approach to the voice

In the *piano concerto,* I explore various forms of singing without a semantic text and the duality between spectral microtonality and the tempered piano.

Processing the voice

In *The wall*, I examine processing the solo voice both by a live effect device and in a pre-recording.

Table 1 vocal techniques

spoken with/without feelings	stress emotions	exaggerate emotional content	deconstruct text	*Melisma*
spoken on pitch	spoken on several pitches	imitate speech melody	*Arioso*	replace speech melody
spoken with accents	spoken with intonation	*Recitativo*	stretch and accent syllables	stress and stretch *wrong* syllables
noises like coughing, breathing, etc.	*Sprechstimme*	spoken in rhythm	imitate speech rhythm	replace speech rhythm
naturally spoken word	whisper, shout, cry, etc.	spoken fast/slow	spoken in a certain dynamic	replace natural speed and dynamic

This table acted as a starting point for mapping vocal techniques I explore in my portfolio. The table does not fully describe all aspects of the pieces and I did not use all the techniques described above in each piece. Equally, the elements that I used in my portfolio do not all appear in the table. It was a first mind map, collecting ideas and listing them between the two poles: naturally spoken word; and *melisma*.

3.1 Opera: *Die Partie*

The most extended piece in my portfolio is a chamber opera titled *Die Partie* (Engl. the party). For this project, I collaborated with Austrian author Anna Sophie Felser. After we started collecting ideas and creating the libretto (Felser, 2019a) in autumn 2019, the piece then ended up as a covid-19 lockdown project. In a way, the pandemic gave us time to concentrate on this piece and to collaborate intensely throughout the years 2020 and 2021. For some time, I have had this idea of an absurd game show in my mind and Anna Sophie immediately connected to the concept. Therefore, we created a setting including an unhinged quiz host, three candidates and a sullen jury. The premise is that Quizmaster Adam invites three (at first glance identical) candidates to his dystopian gameshow called 'Die Partie'. Each of them must answer an unanswerable question and is afterwards judged by the almighty Choriolis. It seems like there's no escaping the magnetic force of the jury, but the last candidate nevertheless finds a back door out of the system.

The Characters and their voices

In the following, I will introduce you to all characters involved in the plot. They are each defined by a distinct and unique use of the voice, reflecting their very own nature and attributes.

Adam: quiz host

Concerning the characters, Adam was our starting point. Anna Sophie discovered an appropriately extravagant model for our quiz host on TV (Riese, 2009) and drew a clear image of our Adam. She came up with various ideas for determining his personality and characterized him as pompous, vain and seemingly confident despite his true, uncertain nature. Behind his façade of tinsel and glitter you can only find an insecure and desolate man.

We chose to cast Adam as an actor, who guides us not only through the three quiz rounds but also through the whole opera. Therefore, it is essential to understand his text at all times. In addition, it is easier to create a genuine game show atmosphere by keeping the element of a speaking role as quiz master. This role resembles a narrator in a play or an evangelist in an oratorio, while at the same time he has the potential to exaggerate emotional content and display his attitude throughout the spoken text.

I also decided to make Adam sing at certain points. The first section of the opera I composed was the quiz show jingle with the 70's style jazz instrumentation of a Hammond organ, electric guitar and double bass. I deliberately cite this composition style to evoke the colourful atmosphere of a TV show in the audience. However, the joyful jingle is later subverted through darker underlying bass notes and chords, interrupted randomly, and finally completely distorted at the very end of the opera. Thus, I introduce a well-known style or topic with all its typical connotations, which are later completely decontextualised and upset within the musical form.

The jingle instruments can be seen as Adam's orchestral partners, who accompany him from time to time. The jingle automatically appears when the word 'die Partie' appears in Adam's text. He never speaks them but always has to sing them to the jingle like a string puppet who is determined by an invisible external force. This makes him look powerless in his own show and

underlines his fake confidence. As the role is played by an actor, the quality of his singing might not be able to keep up with the other characters represented by professionally trained singers. This weakness is intended and serves to distinguish Adam's ridiculous and absurd character.

Throughout the opera, Adam is disempowered even further as his microphone is at first distorted, and finally switched off entirely. The microphone was his biggest advantage over the other characters, and symbolizes power and predominance within the show. When he is no longer able to control the microphone he loses his superiority as host, loses control over his voice and is, in the end, completely stripped of his role as a leader. I decided to use an effect device called 'Roland voice transformer 3' to process Adam's voice and thus depict his trajectory from a leading, self-confident figure to a beaten ghost joining the anonymous jury. His voice traverses several stages, from simple amplification through various distorting pre-sets of the device to silence/no amplification. Adam's trajectory oscillates between a glittery, seemingly cheerful TV world and a dark devastation and collapse. This is symbolic of the dramaturgy of the whole opera.

Choriolis: the jury

The dark, gloomy atmosphere is mostly represented by the jury (Choriolis). They form an obscure and mysterious collective that acts as an almighty power in the background, controlling the outcome of each quiz round and the fate of all other characters. They are omnipresent on stage but mostly keep to the background. Musically, the Choriolis forms a small but constantly growing choir as they absorb the failing candidates. The jury acts as a counterpart to the three candidates. Two collectives of three singers face each other. However, the jury forms a clear unity, always singing together as a choir, whereas the candidates are called individually. They have to step up separately and sing their arias. In addition, the jury possesses a diminished pitch range (mezzo, alto, tenor) compared to the three candidates (soprano, alto, baritone). This

emphasizes their unity. Nonetheless, the Choriolis gains range by absorbing the first two candidates, expanding it with a soprano and a baritone. Through this process, they reinforce their power by obtaining pitch range and becoming a more sonorous choir.

The Choriolis singers are the first characters to sing. In the prologue they help the orchestra to *tune* and advance to the game show jingle – and to symbolically raise the curtain. They are embedded in the instrumentation with their major chord *glissandi* (m. 14ff) on the vowel 'Ah'. They also join in the jingle by presenting Adam in a background choir fashion singing his name. In the prologue and in round 1, the jury is utilized very subtly, predominantly humming or singing on 'Ah'. They are always chanting in quiet dynamics but are still very present through a reduced instrumentation.

Their vocal techniques are informed by Gregorian chants in unison (m. 1129-30) and renaissance topics like *fauxbourdon* (m. 118-19) or canons (m. 337-38). However, they also comment on the candidates' replies in a *recitativo* fashion, mostly in fifth-octave-chords (m. 388-89). They represent a traditional institution by the inclusion of ancient vocal techniques. The jury is the only group in the show that also sings *a cappella*. When they start to chant, all other characters freeze and are forced to listen. Thus, I create an atmosphere of silent, dominant and mysterious power and a strong contrast to the cheerful game show music.

Figure 1 m. 1129 Choriolis in plain chant and canon techniques

The three candidates

Throughout the show, Adam interviews three candidates. Each round contains a Recitative in the form of an introductory interview and an Aria attempting to answer the question. The first draft of the libretto was quite rigid in this structure. Later, we decided to break up this inflexible texture and let the characters interact within their rounds. The overall objective was to define their characters by a distinct use of their voices.

Merope: dance

Merope is the first candidate to be called forward. As she is the first to be interviewed, she does not really know what to expect and is intimidated by the – at this point – still confident Adam and the menacing jury. For the role of Merope, I chose a soprano to highlight her girlish and dreamy character, as well as a very light and delicate personality. Her insecurity grows in the course of her introduction and is depicted by a growing stuttering included in her singing. She randomly repeats words and pauses. I also increased her tempo of text-setting to show her raised degree of nervousness.

I titled Merope's whole round *dance* to reflect her light and airy personality. I applied a *Zwiefacher* (Bavarian folk dance with changing metre) for her introduction and a Waltz for her answer aria. I use the *Zwiefacher* with its irregular metre to depict Merope's insecurity and to underline her stuttering. The dance theme is also informed by the question 'where?' in the context of moving and searching. When Adam poses his first quiz question 'where?' she answers with a dreamlike lyrical Waltz-Aria. Here, she often sings in unison with the oboe both supporting her and interweaving her voice with the ensemble. This Waltz employs a harmonic model informed by Erik Satie's *Gymnopédie 1* (Jones, 1996). The use of this topic recalls to the listener a dreamy and melancholic character reflecting the figure of Merope. By the time

Adam interrupts her reply and tries to push her to answer more quickly, Merope gets angry and disoriented. I translated her rising temper with a rise in pitch and dynamics. She is additionally urged by the jury and a recurrent ticking noise that drives her crazy. The *Gymnopédie* topic is disrupted several times by the ticking noise in triplets, the re-emerging *Zwiefacher* (starting again in m. 448) and finally the time signal followed by the Choriolis' plain chant (m. 552). When she gets more and more lost and deranged, I chose to make her sing in grand leaps and use *sprechstimme* to increase a raw expression of emotionality.
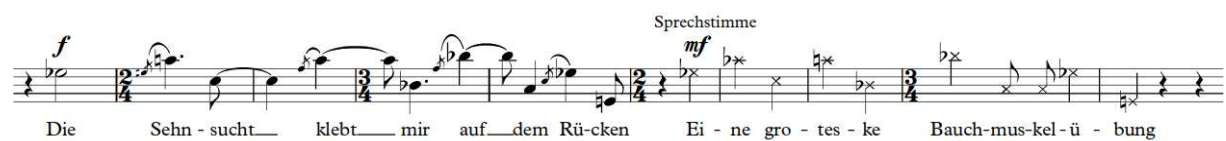

Figure 2 Merope singing in grand leaps and using sprechstimme in m. 465

When Merope reaches the verse 'Im Kopf tanzt es sich gut' (Engl. You can dance well in the head) she entirely loses her sanity and only repeats the words 'im Kopf' (Engl. in the head) from now on. This repetition is the continuation and consequence of the earlier stuttering.

Merope is destroyed as her round progresses. Her beautiful, delicate and expressive Aria is ruined by Adam, the jury and the orchestra. I illustrated her trajectory with an increasing stutter in her singing as well as with vocal techniques such as grand leaps, *sprechstimme* and repetitions rising to a very high register, drifting apart to another reality. At the end of the first round, she is absorbed by the Choriolis. This process blurs the line between individuals and a collective and therefore upsets traditional concepts of characters in stage works.

Regulus: fight

Regulus, in contrast to Merope, has a more challenging character. He is aggressive, short-tempered, loud and dominant. I chose a baritone for the role of Regulus because I needed a variety of registers both high and low, and wanted to depict him as a 'prototypical' man with a

medium-pitched voice. His round is influenced by march music and can be summed up in the word *fight*. The march music topic highlights the aggressive character of the second round and alludes slightly to battle scenes. Regulus does not rely on an instrumental partner like the other characters, which underlines his will to be strong and independent and to heroically go it alone.

In his job as a sports reporter, Regulus is perceived as a rival by Adam, which is one of the reasons why the two men get into a fight that almost escalates. I tied his singing style closely to his profession and utilized older recordings of radio sports presenters as models. Both in the recitative and in the aria, the text setting is predominantly aligned with natural speech rhythms. Nonetheless, when Regulus gets more aggressive, I elongate and stress certain words or syllables to underline his barely suppressed annoyance and his dominant personality.

Figure 3 Regulus repeating and stressing his question 'wer?' angrily in m. 823

The inflection of his melodic lines is also strongly tied to the expressive tone of an agitated radio host. There is one particular model I used from the 1954 football world championship presented by Herbert Zimmermann (Zimmermann, 1954). In Regulus' vocal techniques I copied Zimmermann's inflection with several pitch waves, his agitated, almost shouting tone and his *quasi recitativo* rhythmical style. Regulus reaches his peak with the repetition of the question 'wer?' (Engl. who?) in m. 823-24. This is the equivalent to Zimmermann's 'Tor!' (Engl. goal). By using these radio host vocal inflections, I intended to stress three aspects of Regulus' personality: his strong identification with his profession; his loud and aggressive character; and his rivalry with quiz host Adam. From a technical point of view, round 2 is closely tied to my song *Von den flatternden Gedanken*. With Regulus, I come back to a concept I tested in this song: the time waves (see also 3.2.2). His aria depicts one big wave, varying the pacing of the text-setting from calm and slow to agitated and angry, and back again.

In the course of Regulus' round, the two men clash and have a serious dispute about the right answer. Regulus is actually capable of supplying the right answer 'niemand' (Engl. nobody) but Adam ignores him and he is nevertheless absorbed by the jury, as is Merope before him. Like Merope, Regulus also changes to *sprechstimme* towards the end of his Aria but returns one last time to singing by giving his final (and correct) answer. He is also musically pressed for a quick reply, now not only by a soft ticking noise but by a more brutal repetitive gallop rhythm that even Adam cannot supervise. In this round, Adam begins to lose control over both the timing and his microphone.

Elektra: change

The third and final candidate Elektra is the most quiet and mysterious of the three. Her role is sung by an alto, emphasizing her more mature and resilient personality. She watched the first two rounds from the background and silently made her own plan to survive this absurd game show. Elektra's personality is strong, cold, clever, obscure, intractable and independent. Anna Sophie brought up the role model of Lilith, biblical Adam's first wife. She is often depicted as an evil and man-eating monster but can also be seen as an independent and strong woman that dared to leave her partner and therefore undermined the patriarchy. Elektra's round can be characterized by the word *change*.

Elektra is very reluctant to reveal any information about herself in the introduction. I let her sing very short answers in a neutral way, or let her pause entirely. You can notice a slight change of power from the beginning of the Recitative onwards. Here, Elektra steals Adam's instrumental partner, the Hammond organ. Adam symbolically loses support from the orchestra. Throughout the third round Elektra gains more and more instrumental backing: in the beginning of her Aria (starting m. 986) she sings *colla parte* with the alto flute, Hammond organ and viola with more instruments following later on. In addition the two other candidates,

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for one time only, each break away from the jury to join Elektra for a quick duet and aid her against Adam and the jury. They also support her through a reinforcing unison leading to a trio in octaves in bar 1090. It is noticeable that Merope and Regulus manage to overcome the magnetic force of the Choriolis at least for a moment. After their defeat they were absorbed by the jury and forced to join their choral chanting up to this moment. However, Elektra still has a long way to go. She increasingly begins to lose her voice and changes to vocal techniques such as *sprechstimme*, whispering, shouting etc. When she cannot continue with a melodic way of singing, more and more instruments from the orchestra replace her melodic lines and pitch material. In that way, I show that Elektra's message is still pursued: though she cannot go on with singing pitched notes, her instrumental partners step in for her.

Figure 4 Elektra's melodic lines are replaced by the Hammond organ in m. 1120

The key to winning her round is that she learns to understand the jury's chanting and therefore their way of reinforcing power. She is the first candidate to truly recognize the Choriolis and to understand its key phrase 'etiam tacere est respondere' (Engl. silence is the answer). By being silenced she wins the show. She then adapts techniques from the jury such as singing, respectively speaking *a cappella* (m. 1191), and from Adam by exclusively speaking from bar 1191 onwards. In that way, I decided to strengthen Elektra by adapting vocal techniques from the former powerful characters of Adam and Choriolis.

In the meanwhile, Adam has to switch to *sprechstimme* - the vocal technique that symbolizes lunacy and defeat throughout the opera - before his microphone is switched off entirely in bar 1206. The jury then robs Adam of his microphone and hands it to Elektra. She turns into Eva (alluding to the biblical Eve), the new quiz host. The opera concludes with a distorted version of the game show jingle now set in a big band style tutti. All characters except Eva sing her name, although she herself is nowhere to be seen. The jingle is gradually pitched upwards and sections are randomly repeated to create a chaotic end to this absurd show.

Table 2 form of Die Partie

section	content	key characters	material
Prologue m. 1-150	introduction of 3 chords		spheric chords
	gameshow jingle	Adam	
Round 1 m. 151-608	introduction round m. 151-358	Merope Müller	
	Aria m. 359-608	Question: where?	dance: folk dances
Interlude m. 609-634	rocking cradle-song		little material, calm
Round 2 m. 635-916	introduction round m. 635-672	Regulus Richter	
	Aria m. 673-916	Question: who?	fight: march music
Round 3 m. 917-1227	introduction round m. 917-984	Elektra Ehrenfeld	
	Aria m. 984-1227	Question: why?	seduction: spheric music
Epilogue m. 1228-1256	gameshow jingle tutti	Eva	exaggerated, distorted, big band sound

3.2 Songs

3.2.1 *Graufacetten*

Anna Sophie Felser's text *Graufacetten* (engl. Facets of grey) (Felser, 2018) was the first of several of her works that I set to music. *Graufacetten* was also the first piece I wrote for my portfolio. The instrumentation and the form are strongly influenced by Renaissance lute songs from composers including John Dowland (Dowland, 1921), Thomas Campion (Campion, 1929) and others. These relationships are intended and not accidental. My preliminary studies influenced the texture and setting of the piece, although I did not use any direct or stylistic citations. The form of a soloistic guitar prologue and epilogue framing several small songs also refers to Renaissance lute songs. Consequently, the vocal techniques applied are rooted in a traditional vein. The soprano always sings throughout the movements, and there are neither spoken sections nor noise-like contemporary techniques throughout. The singer mainly ranges between the two poles *recitativo* and *arioso*.

The aphoristic text predetermines the music in many ways. It does so to contrast two poles (like *recitativo* and *arioso*) as one of the principles of the poem. It speaks of black and white and all the shades of grey in between. Therefore, I created two material poles in the piece: tempered tuning and microtonal spectral chords. Effects such as the use of a bottleneck or the sound of *wrong-tuned* minor and major chords emphasize the microtonal impression. Referring to the text, the work shifts from a very clear tempered system to a scheme using a variety of grey shades in between the black and white half and whole tones. So, the guitar leaves the black and white tempered world (see *scordatura* depicted in figure 5) whereas the soprano stays within it. Thus, I increase contrast between the two parts in the course of the piece.
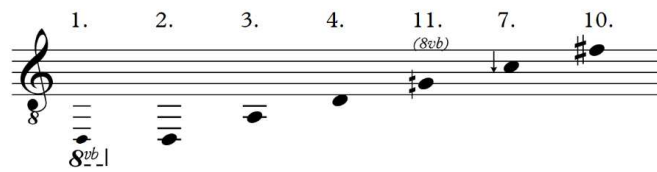
Figure 5 spectral guitar scoradtura reached in 6 schwebend

With the material of the usual open guitar strings and the detuned version I use at the end of the piece, I created a scale (in tempered form) that is often sung by the soprano. In figure 6, you can see the scale by which even the soprano explores the two worlds of *black and white* and *facets of grey*. Referencing the text, the singer employs this scale in its purest form in the movement *2 Gegensätze* (Engl. opposites).

> *Gegensätze ziehen sich doch nur deshalb an, weil diese unzähligen*
>
> *Facetten aus Grau mit einer schwarz-weißen Welt erklärt werden soll.*
>
> *(English trans. Klose) Opposites only attract because these innumerable*
>
> *facets of grey shall be explained through a black-and-white world.*
>
> - *Excerpt of Graufacetten by Anna Sophie Felser* (Felser, 2018)
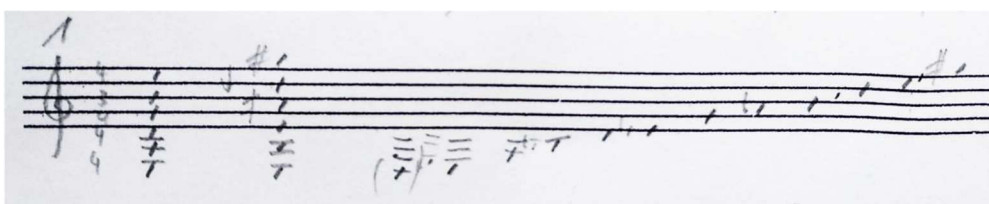
Figure 6 scale used by the singer in 2 Gegensätze

Concerning exclusively the voice, I establish a technique that is refined in my orchestral song *Wonnetraum – Käfig*: a *linguistic approach* or to set words to music according to their grammatical form or their semantics. The meaning of this text is above all transported through the illustrative nouns. They create vivid images and draw black and white word pictures. So, I highlighted and ornamented the nouns through grace notes and *melismas*. They contrast the

recitativo style of the *filler words* and can thus be sung in a more expressive *arioso* style. Hereby, the word 'Welt' (Engl. world) obtains an exceptional position. 'Welt' occurs four times throughout the movements and is always set in the same fashion: grace note b followed by a *glissando* from c to d.

Figure 7 'Welt' in m. 84 in 4 schwarz-weiße Fäden

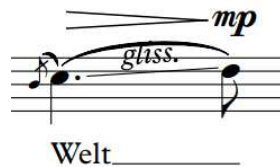I decided not to change its setting in order to create a stable haven of tranquillity that depicts the world in its entirety to me. By only using a *glissando* for 'Welt' (with one exception for the word 'kein', Engl. no), I enhance its uniqueness and originality in a musical way.

Die Welt besteht nicht aus schwarz-weißen Fäden, die man zusammenknüpfte.

The world does not consist of black and white threads that have been tied together.

The text also influences the structure of the instrumental parts, for example by applying speech rhythms to pulse-dominating accents in the guitar (*1 Welt*) and by determining the musical form (*1 Welt* and *6 schwebend*). In the chart below, figure 8, the number above the text indicates the duration from one accentuated syllable to the next. This determines the duration of a chord till the next chord change.

Was wenn die Welt viel weniger Schachbrett und viel mehr Kaleidoskop ist?

What if the world is much less a chessboard and much more a kaleidoscope?

Figure 8 sketch of speech rhythms generating form in 1 Welt

In addition, I directly transferred text-inherent meanings into a musical structure with so-called *chessboard-chords*. The third movement shifts in the duality between 'Schachbrett' (Engl. chessboard) and 'Kaleidoskop' (Engl. kaleidoscope). In the first part (Schachbrett), the guitar plays chords whose fingerings resemble chess moves, like for example a diagonal (bishop) or a 2-1-1 movement (knight).

Table 3 chessboard chord 'bishop', m. 69

Table 4 chessboard chord 'knight', m. 73

Und so schwebe ich zwischen Graufacetten in einer Welt, die schwarz und weiß sein will.

Doch wissend, dass es keine Gegensätze gibt, kein Entweder, kein Oder. Das Leben.

And thus, I float between facets of grey in a world that wants to be black-and-white.

But knowing that there are no contrasts, no either, no or. Life.

3.2.2 *Von den flatternden Gedanken*

Von den flatternden Gedanken resulted from a collaboration with the visual artist and writer Max Blaeulich in January/February 2019. The work for soprano, flute, guitar and cello consists of five parts which are formed in the shape of two *time waves*. The form is based on alternation between melismatic and syllabic singing in the soprano part. Two fast waves of text sweep in through the rather calm *vocalise*-style sections. The pitch material is influenced by three Indian *ragas* in tempered form (for practical reasons). The guitar adds some microtonal colours by using an overtone-like *scordatura* compensating for the standard-tuned scales in the other voices.

Von den flatternden Gedanken mainly explores two musical parameters: the blending of the voice and an accompanying instrument; and a varying tempo of the text-setting. These two parameters are closely connected. When the text-setting decelerates and transitions to melismatic singing the voice is treated in a more instrumental fashion and blended. I applied this technique in the introduction where the soprano adapts its instrumental style from the flute as shown in figure 8 (m. 1-27 and m. 51-86) or in the epilogue from the guitar (m. 107-135).

Figure 9 m. 9-19 blending of soprano and flute in the introduction

In this piece, the text (see Appendices) is not as central as in most other pieces in this portfolio. This fact resulted from the circumstances of the commission. The text reached me in a late stage of the creative process. Therefore, I approached the piece from a solely musical perspective at the beginning. I had some ideas in my mind that I wanted to test in a new piece like melismatic singing and the concept of *time waves*.

Since this piece was commissioned for Bloomsday 2019, I looked into James Joyce's Ulysses (Joyce, 2010). The *time waves* were inspired by his various ways of pacing the narration. All instruments play a different type of wave, thus creating four different types of waves, or respectively, four wave layers. Here I define a wave as a gradual and fluid change from one state to another and back again. For example, the soprano starts with a melisma, then sings the text in a faster and faster, almost incomprehensible syllabic text-setting (m. 38-41) and decelerates again afterwards. The cello gradually changes back and forth five times from long underlying notes to quicker movements. The flute (see figure 10) accelerates long notes to semiquavers (also as triplets and quintuplets) combined with an increasing zig-zag movement of the pitches which also intensifies the process. The guitar builds up chords of open strings by adding more and more grace notes.

Figure 10 m. 43-45 flute wave

The time between the single events is also always increasing or decreasing gradually in the form of a wave. As you may notice, the wavelength varies from instrument to instrument from three bars in the flute (such as m. 43-45) to two whole sections, respectively 50 or more bars in the soprano. A wave can include different musical parameters such as tempo, rhythm, pitch, register and text-setting. In the introduction, the soprano and the flute build a wave from measure 1-29. Whereas the flute only changes the parameter of pitch the soprano prepares the acceleration of the text-setting as well. Therefore, the singer gradually changes the tempo of the text-setting from a *melisma* to extremely fast syllabic singing and back (see figure 11). Throughout the rehearsal process, I remarked that this very fast syllabic way of singing has its

limits regarding the technical abilities of the soprano - especially if the text language is not the native language of the singer. I imagined the tempo to be even faster but it turned out that this was difficult to realize and did not have the intended effect. Thus, the piece must be re-evaluated after working with other singers for a new performance.

Figure 11 m. 86-90 change from slow to very fast text-setting

The concept of *time waves* is not directly associated to the Blaeulich text but is a musically formal concept. I used this piece as a testing ground to experiment with a flexibility in text-pacing and text-setting - almost as an *étude* in regards to my opera.

Melismatic singing is not unique to classical music and plays a major role in multiple cultures around the globe. In my preliminary studies for the piece I investigated a broad range of melismatic vocal styles ranging from Gregorian chants to Whitney Houston and from Arabic *muezzins* to Indian singing styles (*Nina Burmi*, 2020) (Sadhana, 2020). By writing this song, I only investigated a small part of the vast spectrum of melismatic music – including ornamentation and *glissandi* – and explored a new version of it in my own work. I adapted a highly ornamented style in this piece to experiment with the predominantly non-European concept of solely melodic thinking and adding complex and enriching ornamentations.

My music is usually harmony based, rather than melody based, and deeply rooted in a Bach-informed harmonic way of thinking, grounded on the bass notes. With this song, I wanted to broaden my mind and explore a (for me) new approach to the use of melodic lines.

3.2.3 *Wonnetraum Käfig*

Wonnetraum – Käfig (Engl. delightful dream – cage) was commissioned by the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg for a concert with six orchestral world premieres on the 14th of March 2020. Unfortunately, the premiere and two consecutive performances were cancelled due to the pandemic.

Editing the text

My orchestral song employs two contrasting texts (see 6 Appendices) of a German and an Austrian author, Harald Bäumler and Anna Sophie Felser. Harald Bäumler's lyrical *Wonnetraum* (Engl. delightful dream) was strongly edited in preparation for the piece. Although I left out big parts of this love poem, the expressive character of the text remains unaltered. I eliminated two out of every three words – with one exception at the very end of the piece – in order to create a text that is somehow abstract but still recognizably romantic. The intense diction emphasizes the lyrical character without forming a significant meaning. The text now lacks natural intonation, metre, rhyme and verse rhythm. Thus, I experimented with the levels of meaning and semantics both in text and music, and explored ways of composing for a more abstract text form with no inherent musicality.

This idyll is penetrated by Anna Sophie Felser's *Käfig* (Engl. cage). Her text is aphoristic, fragmentary and extremely depressive. I inserted short verses of Felser's text to put *Wonnetraum* into perspective and destroy the romance of Bäumler's poem. I kept the Felser text in its original shape due to its fragmentary character and the intense images evoked by every single word. These two contrasting texts form a dialectic base for the orchestral song which is also inherent in the composition.

Material and form

The musical material is divided into three main scales as shown in figure 12: one scale consisting of all natural harmonics, including the extended natural harmonics with the second violin *scordatura*, its complementary scale and an undertone scale referring to the harmonics scale. These scales correspond to the utilized text dimensions and their formal sections as well as their orchestration. In general, the idyll sections based on the Bäumler text are tied to the harmonics' scale with radiant orchestral colours; the darker Felser text sections use the complementary scale in combination with a more mellow instrumentation. The prologue is dominated by the undertone scale emerging from low clusters into a lighter register. Orchestral colours range from whirling spectral sound clouds to gloomy clusters in a low register.

Figure 12 scales used in Wonnetraum - Käfig, from top to bottom: harmonics scale, complementary scale, undertone scale

Formally, the piece consists of six major sections: a prologue; a first idyllic *Wonnetraum*-section; a darker interlude, including part of *Käfig*; a second idyll; an inverted explosion; and an ethereal quiet epilogue.

Table 5 formal concept

section	prologue	first idyll	interlude	second idyll	explosion	epilogue
measure	1-20	21-93	94-122	123-170	171-202	203-237

Instrumentation

The instrumentation refers to orchestral songs including large symphony orchestra settings by e.g. Gustav Mahler (Mahler, 2010) (Mahler, 2012), Richard Strauss (Strauss, 1950), Maurice Ravel (Ravel, 2007), Hector Berlioz (Berlioz, 2017) and Olivier Messiaen (Messiaen, 2007). In my preparatory studies, I examined contemporary works by my former professor Heinz Winbeck (Winbeck, 1987) and Gérard Grisey (Grisey, 1998) as well. My overall idea concerning the orchestration was to form register waves around the solo soprano. The orchestra moves from a very high to a very low range and thus leaves space for the soprano to sing in her register in between. When the orchestra crosses the soprano register a short interlude is inserted. Another instrumentational concept is the extensive use of harmonics in the strings. A *scordatura* in the second violins (tuned one semitone below) allows a broad variety of pitches and chords played as natural harmonics.
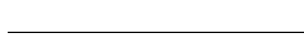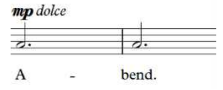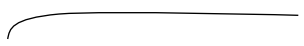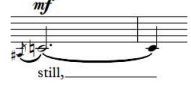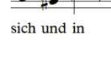
Use of the voice

In *Wonnetraum – Käfig,* the idea of creating contrast by using two disparate texts strongly affects the form of the work. These two poles are not only marked by the application of different vocal techniques (sung versus spoken) but also have an impact on the orchestration. When the darker Felser text enters the piece the orchestral register declines significantly and new instrumental techniques such as deep *glissandi* in the harp and the timpani replace sparkling runs and harmonics chords.

Concerning the voice, I applied a concept that I sketched in *Graufacetten* for the first time: the linguistic approach. In *Wonnetraum – Käfig*, I enhanced the concept and pursued and developed my former idea. Now, all melodies are determined by the word form: a noun is treated differently than a verb, a verb is treated differently than an adjective and so on. With this concept illustrated in table 5, I explore techniques of structuring the use of the voice by

linguistic parameters. The soprano modifies the setting of the words from plain notes up to highly ornamented and partly melismatic melodies.

Table 6 linguistic approach (grammar)

Type of word	Setting	Example	Translation
noun		*mp dolce* A - bend.	evening
adjective		*mf* still,	calm
verb		*gliss.* *f* flu - - - tet	floods
pronoun		*f* wir	we
gerund		*mf* *f* *gliss.* schim - - - - mernd	shimmering
other		sich und in	itself and in

I adjusted the degree of ornamentation according to the expressivity of the words. The gerunds get the highest level of expressivity because, in my opinion, they transport the mood of the poem in the most intense way. They are very descriptive and strongly characterize both the external surroundings and the internal emotions of the narrator. Some of these words, such as 'vertaumelnd' (Engl. ca. staggering), are not commonly used words but neologisms which can hardly be translated. The gerunds contribute linguistically to the 19th century romantic expression of the poem. The nouns, however, are much less essential for the atmosphere. Harald Bäumler only utilized very short nouns (by German standards) with one or two syllables.

Therefore, I set nouns and all words categorized as *other* in a plain syllabic way. I even went one step further by only using one pitch for nouns with two syllables (except for 'Seele', Engl. soul) in order to create a short impression of a reciting note.

In general, I apply this system to the sung sections of *Wonnetraum*. All Felser text fragments are spoken by the soloist. The contrasting dark and cheerless character of this text required an opposing vocal technique. Thus, I used spoken text and notated *Käfig* in speech rhythms. At the same time, I dimmed the orchestral dynamics to a *pp-p* range to help the speaking soprano to come through and to enhance the gloomy atmosphere. Nevertheless, I still applied my word categorization system in some form and let the soprano sing the most significant words. Thereby, the singer employs the techniques shown in the table above. In the course of the piece, the soprano also uses techniques like shouting and raising the voice (see figure 13) to depict the panic evoked by the text. I indicated the inflection by notating the spoken parts on various pitches according to the level of agitation.

Figure 13 m. 178-79 ‚Bombe! Frage der Zeit.' Engl. Bomb! Matter of time

The merging of two poles - referring to the two contrasting texts - plays a major role throughout this work. Contrasts occupy the formal structure, the instrumentation, the use of different registers, the material (scale versus complementary scale) and the use of the voice in multiple ways. Concerning the use of the voice, contrast has been employed in four major manners: in the different techniques of text-setting according to the word form described above; in the use of complementary scales; through employing different registers counterpointing the orchestral pitch waves; and in the duality of singing and speaking.

3.2.4 *Nicht/s*

Nicht/s (Engl. Not/hing) for countertenor, flute, violin, cello and piano was written in 2020 for Matthew Paine and Red Note Ensemble. It is based on an edited version of the text *wir/r* (Engl. we/confused) by Anna Sophie Felser which explores forms and modes of identity through wordplay. The piece uses modified repetitions to express the manifold meanings of the verses. The singer changes his state of mind from a rather pulled-back and neutral character (m. 1-48) to a more and more crazy, lost and desperate identity (m. 70-96). In this piece, I use very simple melodies in combination with strong emotional images indicated by the performance instructions. The moderate degree of technical difficulty allows the singer to fully engage in the expression.

The voice-focused parts are interrupted by mostly instrumental sections, all of which employ the same complex chord. I divided the form of the piece into seven instrumentally-focused *islands* and the alternating sung sections. The sung sections consist of a very thinned out instrumentation combined with simple melodies in the countertenor (for example in m. 1-19), and explore the sound of octaves or major/minor chords.

Text

The text contains various puns and wordplays that are extremely hard to translate into English. Anna Sophie explores different meanings of the words and illuminates their potential and perspectives. In my work, I transfer this structure into a series of varied repetitions, each highlighting a different aspect of the verse. The poem narrates the story of an individual wandering through the world not knowing who to be or where to go. Identity is the overall topic of the text. The verses of the text that occur in the piece are predominantly German except for the last spoken phrase in English. This arrangement was applied by the author. Here, I

intensified that contrast by using the spoken voice for the English verse and by stopping at this, in my opinion, very significant point of the text.

Use of the voice

The sound of a countertenor voice is something very special for me. It is linked to memories of excellent concerts with Andreas Scholl, the Hilliard Ensemble, or the Gesualdo Six. More recently, I got in touch with that specific voice type through studying George Benjamin's opera *Written on Skin* (Benjamin, 2013) in which The Boy, one of the three main characters, is portrayed by a countertenor. Matthew Paine turned out to be very open-minded, energetic and highly capable of singing whatever I had written. In our first rehearsal, he even exceeded his previous pitch range and thus the limits of this voice type by performing a superb top a.

Formally, I decided to repeat the first stanza twice in my song with one option from 'ich bin/du bist/wir sind' (Engl. I am/you are/we are) in each repetition. This allows me to explore all three meanings of the verse. The countertenor sings similar material in each stanza to highlight the repetition in the text - a triad followed by an octave. However, I also vary this repetition by raising the material by a semitone, and by employing a minor chord in the second stanza. So, the singer uses the chords Eb-major, e-minor and F-major (see figure 14). In addition, I increased the number of repetitions on the word 'wirr' (Engl. confused) to symbolize the increasingly clouded state of mind of the character. The words 'wirrwarr' (Engl. huddle) and 'wirr waren' (Engl. huddle/we were) are set using varied repetition. Thus, the major formal shape of a varied repetition throughout the stanzas can also be found on a smaller scale here.

Figure 14 m. 38-42 third stanza 'wir sind' (Engl. we are)

In the following section, the material is further varied and repeated to an absurd and unnatural level, using very little text, and short cells of material in a minimal-informed way of composing as shown in figure 15. The repetitions are combined with performance instructions indicating the condition of the narrator. In the course of the piece, large leaps on unpredictable beats complete the impression of a character losing their mind. To that effect, the piece can be seen as a preliminary study for Merope's trajectory in *Die Partie* (see also 3.1).

Figure 15 m. 78-80 repetitions 'irre' (Engl. mad/wander)

The last verse is extracted from a subsequent section of the poem and does not directly succeed the former verses in the original. This verse contrasts with everything else in the poem: it is not fragmentary, does not play on words, and switches from German to English. The phrase 'there are stars exploding and there's nothing you can do' is an allusion to a musical performance piece by Ragnar Kjartansson, which deals with the disintegration of a marriage (Kjartansson, 2015). The narrator in my piece experiences various states of mind before finally accepting his fate and speaking this quote in a dreamlike and defeated fashion.

Repetition dominates the overall musical form of the piece. I used the text-inherent forward slashes to form the piece into several sections characterized by varied repetitions in the style of

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a varied strophic song. The violin, cello and flute entwine around the countertenor, pursue his melodies and interlink them. In addition to linking and creating contrast between the more complex instrumental islands, in a manner of speaking, the instrumental parts add a new perspective or identity to the voice of the singer.

3.2.5 *Then shuts the door*

Then shuts the door was the piece succeeding the opera *Die Partie.* At the time, I was still very influenced by two issues: my own experience during the lockdowns; and the concept of creating characters. Thus, the technique of defining characters is a central concept in this song. Similarly to *Wonnetraum – Käfig,* I decided to combine two contrasting poems. They both originate from pandemic episodes in history to create a timeless record: *A litany in time of plague* (Nashe, 1592) by Thomas Nashe and *The soul selects her social distance* (Ackerman, 2020) by Felicia Nimue Ackerman (see Appendices). Both poems strongly resonated with my experience of the pandemic. Aesthetically, they contrast with each other due to their date of origin and their formal aspects. Therefore, I created a formal structure in which I could also contrast the two texts and distinguish between their characters.

Accordingly, I created three characters in my composition: the Sick; Death; and the Soul. The soprano represents the Sick, the viola symbolizes Death (both playing and speaking) and the alto viola da gamba, at the very end of the piece, depicts the Soul. This division of characters in a song was informed by Schubert's *Der Tod und das Mädchen* (Engl. Death and the Maiden) (Schubert, 1923). Here, Schubert creates a dialogue between two characters sung by one singer. I extended this concept with a third character, the Soul.

The Sick always draws its text from Thomas Nashe's poem. This character's trajectory evolves from a fair queen to a sick and dying plague victim bereft of all vitality and joy. Therefore, her vocal techniques are transformed from flowery and beautifully ornamented melodies (verse 1)

to a sad and depressed mood (verse 2) and a final dramatic collapse (verse 3). In addition, single words from the still flowery melody are gradually replaced by hummed notes or actual rests, to illustrate the sick's weakness and her breaking voice. In general, the silencing of the soprano occurs in four forms: humming instead of singing; not singing; speaking; and being replaced by the instrumentalist's spoken voice.

Each verse is followed by a refrain wherein the Sick acknowledges her unavoidable death. The *pizzicato* chords in the viola da gamba separate the tone of the refrain from the other sections. The *pizzicato* technique ties the refrains' tone even more strongly to the Renaissance lute song. It contrasts with the rather extended techniques (by viola da gamba standards) such as harmonics and harmonics *tremolandi*. This process of re-contextualising existing tropes into a contemporary environment corresponds to the varied vocal techniques I employ in the soprano part throughout this piece. I decided to use a reciting note in a low soprano register d to show her resignation - only changing pitch at the word 'Lord'. She pleads with God in a more intense way, raising her voice above her low d. This pitch varies throughout the coming refrains whereas everything else remains unchanged – 'unmoved' in Ackerman's words.

Death, however, occupies the interludes. After the first refrain, Death comes in with the spoken words of Ackerman's poem. The viola da gamba player acts as a soloist in this interlude by rhythmically speaking the lines accompanied by *arco* harmonics in the same speech rhythm. Death speaks to contrast with the Sick's singing. It doesn't matter if the instrumentalist has a male or female voice. The speaking voice should only be lower than the sections sung by the soprano referring to Schubert's song. Hence, I created a blending of two colours that merge to depict Death: ethereal harmonics; and the spoken voice. The spoken words are always framed by *tremolandi* to give some time to change the atmosphere. In the third and last interlude (see figure 16), the soprano joins in a dialogue with Death, depicting her transition to the underworld. Her voice should now emerge from Death as represented by the violist's voice:

Figure 16 m. 101-103 beginning of the third interlude

While the soprano remains speaking alone, the viola da gamba switches role and takes up the character of the Soul. The instrumentalist not only changes instrument from bass to alto, but also literally stands up and changes position to a second seat standing farther apart. I inserted this scenic element to illustrate the death of the Sick on the one hand, and the solitude and social distance on the other. Now, the soprano's ornamented melodies of the first verse are exactly repeated by Death's voice in the same register. I only changed one note, elevating the e♭ on the word 'Lord' one octave to intensify the pleading effect. The alto viola da gamba symbolizes the Soul of the Sick and combines the two former characters; the Sick's melodies are played on Death's instrument. Thus, the last verse is identical with the melody sung by the soprano but now in a quasi-celestial instrumental version as if chanted from heaven.

Form

section	measure	text	character	instrumentation
prologue	1-32		Death	bass viola da gamba
verse 1	33-42	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *arpeggio*
refrain 1	43-54	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *pizzicato*
interlude 1	55-59	Ackerman	Death	spoken, harmonics
verse 2	60-66	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *arpeggio*
refrain 2	67-78	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *pizzicato*
interlude 2	79-82	Ackerman	Death	spoken, harmonics
verse 3	83-88	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *arpeggio*
refrain 3	89-100	Nashe	the Sick	soprano, bass *pizzicato*
interlude 3	101-112	Ackerman	Death	spoken, harmonics
verse 4	113-133		the Soul	alto viola da gamba

3.3 Choir

3.3.1 *arten von seen*

I received the commission for *arten von seen* during my residency time at the *Cité international des Arts* in Paris. The *Cité* is a place where international artists from all art forms meet. Therefore I sought out a writer to collaborate with, and met German author Felix Reinhuber. We discussed potential subjects and motives for a new text, and discovered a place that inspired us equally: the Port de l'Arsenal at the Canal Saint Martin near the Bastille. This port, with its pretty house boats, half clear, half foggy water full of green algae and reflections, is a hidden treasure in hectic Paris. Felix was so excited that he wrote a full cycle of poems titled *fraktalfragmente* (Engl. fractal fragments) (Reinhuber, 2022) about this special spot. He also

engaged with musical ideas about spectralism in his text. My commission was limited to a duration of three minutes for the choir piece, so I chose the poem from the cycle that resonated most with me.

V

deutsch	*English (trans. Klose)*
in gewellten/verlangsamten farnen:	in corrugated/retarded ferns
schicht um schicht farbe ohne	layer for layer colour without
schwere: in parallelisierten fassaden/	severity: in parallelized facades/
paletten vor 1900 zwischen	palettes before 1900 between
konkretion/abstraktion sich endlich	concretion/abstraction eventually
teilen in gestreckter zeit, teil	dividing in elongated time, par
-ton von sonnen, kieseln, seen, see	-tial of suns, pebbles, lakes, being water
-rosen sein, infinitesimal in, in	lilies, infinitesimal in, in

Use of the voice

What I find most inspiring about the Port de l'Arsenal – and about this poem – are the water reflections and the various shades between fog, cloud and clarity. The underwater world, with its ferns and its vagueness, seems to follow different rules to the concrete and parallelized facades above. So, in this piece, I created two sound worlds: one clear, tangible, *real* overwater world and one misty, vague, ambiguous underwater world. Therefore, my first approach was to sketch the harmonies for these two soundscapes.

Table 7 form arten von seen

section	measure	content
mist	1-22	Overlapping A♭ and D major chords in the middle register, melody in sopranos and basses
spectralism	22-33	wide-range spectral chords, melody in altos
epilogue	[:34-35:]	fifth a♭-e♭ + improvised whistling on A♭ overtone scale

The piece is divided into two major sections, the first of which (m. 1-21) is based on two overlapping chords depicted in figure 17: A♭ major and D major. These overlapping chords form a cluster symbolizing the foggy underwater imagery. The lower female voices (soprano 2, alto 1 and alto 2) sing an A♭ major sixth chord, the upper male voices (tenors 1 and 2, bass 1) sing a D major six-four chord in the same register. All voices begin together before one of the major chords or the middle cluster c-d-e♭ remains. The chords are based on the text 'in' respectively 'i-n'. Thus the second part of each chord is hummed, enhancing the vagueness and creating a special muted sound. The gradual vowel changes evolve from the chord structure of the first section and also change the timbre of the remaining chords. Therefore, I divided the word 'in' that occurs several times in the poem into its two letters (and timbres) 'i' and 'n'. The pattern of succeeding clusters and major chords illustrates the various levels of mist floating by in the basin.

Figure 17 m. 1-4 overlapping chords 'in'

This accompanying pattern is framed by melodies in the outer parts, soprano 1 and bass 2. The melodies are harmonically embedded in the chords, and add extra harmonics or bass notes. From measure 9 onwards, *glissandi* start to evolve between the chord progressions, adding an extra layer of blur and microtonality. The *glissandi* culminate in one substantial octave *glissando* – again on A♭ major in the high female voices. The ascending *glissandi* illustrate an emergence from the underwater world and a rising above the water's surface, into the sun. Afterwards, the A♭ major chord slowly drops and slides down with a *diminuendo* and *glissando* to the low female voice register – figuratively landing on the water's surface, depicted by a pitch axis around the middle d.

Within this work, I explored three main voice techniques: *glissandi*; gradual vowel changes; and the combination of whistling and singing. The *glissandi* form a way to explore microtonality in a very basic and easily feasible fashion. They also have a close connection to the underlying text. The *glissandi* symbolize the blurred reflections on the water surface and the decelerated world below. The second part of the piece (m. 22-33) comprises of spectral

chords, consisting of fundamental overtones for the men and higher partials for the sopranos. The spectral tonality is closely linked to the text which speaks of the sun. The spectral chords here are much brighter than the gloomy clusters at the beginning of the piece. The altos engage in the progression of the melody based on the text 'Teilton von Sonnen, Kieseln und Seen' (Engl. partial of suns, pebbles and lakes). The material of this melody is also primarily spectral over d. Here, the structure of chords in the middle register, with framing melodic lines, is inverted with the altos singing the melody in the middle register surrounded by spectral chords in the other voices. This inversion of the structure represents the idea of reflecting water.

The vowel 'i' is gradually varied in combination with the *glissandi* and linked to the vowels appearing in the text of the melodic lines. The vowel 'a' that I use from measure 23 onwards in the sopranos illustrated in figure 18 enhances the clarity of the text in the high register. It also forms a connection between the words 'Zeit' ('ei' begins with an 'a' in German) and 'Sonnen'. In addition, it anticipates the succession of the words 'Sonnen, Seen, Seerosen'. Towards the end, vowels change to the quieter tone of 'u' and 'm'.

Figure 18 m. 27-30 spectral clusters in the sopranos

The work ends with a fifth a♭-e♭ swapping between the two altos. This depicts a still water surface touched by a skipping pebble. The residual choir whistles and improvises on an A♭ overtone scale, forming higher partials to the underlying hummed fifth as shown in figure 19 below. The last two bars (epilogue) add an improvised element to the score: the singers can

whistle single notes, motives or small melodies from the given overtone scale excerpt. Here, the hummed underlying fifth with the higher whistling creates an atmospheric spectral conclusion. The whistling adds a new sound quality and register to the piece, and creates a peaceful evening mood on the basin, including chirping seabirds. There's no direct allusion to these images in the text, but the poem, combined with its model Port de l'Arsenal, suggests this atmosphere to me.

Figure 19 m. 34-35, Engl. top: repeat several times and fade out, below boxes: whistle with this pitch material, come in gradually

3.3.2 Sonnen Schwärzen

This piece was written for *Kammerchor Spectrum's* concert programme titled 'Aus der Tiefe ins Licht' (Engl. From Depth into Light). I was immediately fascinated by the theme and eager to contribute a matching premiere. Anna Sophie Felser agreed to write a new poem dealing with

the opposing subjects of darkness and light; the poem is thus divided into two columns representing darkness and light respectively. It was clear to me that I had to represent this duality in my composition as well, so I decided to implement a double choir structure where the choir is divided into two four-part groups (SATB1 and SATB2).

In my preliminary research, I listened to many works with a similar structure. For example those by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Johann Sebastian Bach, Robert Schumann and Max Reger. I am particularly fascinated by Mendelssohn's incredibly skilled writing for eight voices. This can be studied in choir works like *Warum toben die Heiden op. 78* (Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, 1877) or also in the early *string octet* (Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, 2009). He often employs an antiphonal structure creating a spatial effect and uses the two choirs to distinguish between different moods and characters. The utilization of solo voices thereby especially highlights a particular mood and adds a new colour or timbre. *Sonnen Schwärzen* is divided into the following sections:

section	**bar**	**choir 1**	**choir 2**
introduction	1-8	melody - echo	echo - melody
choir duality	9-17	minor chords, homophonic text setting	major chords, homophonic text setting
solo duality	17-21	soli	underlying E-major chord + soli
glissando climax	22-32	unisono, *glissando*, homophonic minor chords, whistle *glissando*	unisono, *glissando*, homophonic major chords
unisono	33-38	unison	unison
glissando circling	39-52	*glissandi*+solo	*glissandi*+solo

Use of the voice

I started by reflecting on which harmonic material could represent the two poles: darkness and light. For the light part, the use of a whole tone-cluster and the key of E major immediately came to my mind. The whole tone chords create a bright, open sound and are also related to spectral chords (partials 8-11) which radiate in my ears. The characteristics of the E major key are often associated with a 'brilliant, pompous [and] noble' sound as described by Hector Berlioz in his *treatise on instrumentation* (Berlioz, 1882) or by E.T.A. Hoffmann as 'the burning ray that has penetrated my breast' and 'flames that have consumed me' (Schafer, 1975). Thus, I used this topic in order to create a combination of radiance, burning and terrible beauty that matches Anna Sophie's poem and my idea for the piece. Whole tone and E major can be found in the introduction which is the first section I composed. The female voices of Choir 1 build up a whole tone chord over d with their melody. Choir 2 elongates the melody notes with a *bocca chiusa* timbre and forms an underlying echo soundscape. The whole tone chord is expanded downwards with a fifth chord shifting to an E major 7th in bar 6. Now, the sopranos and altos of Choir 2 take the lead and sing the words of the poem's right column. Throughout the piece, Choir 1 always sings the left column of the text. It can be seen as the *light choir*. Choir 2 sticks to the right column, the darker side. Both choirs act as echoes, and elongate the chords of the opposite group.

In the following section (m. 9-13), I applied an almost homophonic text setting - except for soprano 1 echoing the other voices of Choir 1 (see figure 20). Thus, I contrast the structure of the introduction with its nebulous *glissandi*, hummed chords and echoes. Now, all voices sing on text. Harmonically, the minor chords (plus one added note) switch to major chords (plus one added note) with the word 'Sonnen' (Engl. suns) in order to create contrast between the verses

including 'moon' and 'sun'. This duality is deepened and spatialised by the alternation of the two choirs.

Figure 20 m. 9-13 homophonic setting, Choir 1

On the word 'Licht' (Engl. light) in measure17, choir 2 freezes in an E major chord (light = E major) while solo singers from both choirs descend with the subsequent words of the poem. The solo voices add a new colour and highlight the spatial effect of the antiphonal structure.

The next climactic section (m. 22-32) intensifies the use of *glissandi* in both groups. Here, I initially use *glissandi* both as a strong upwards gesture and to add a slightly microtonal element. Again, Choir 2 freezes on a chord – now A♭ major gliding downwards from measure 27 onwards. The descending *glissandi* relate to the verse 'Ikarus und Phönix umarmen sich im Fall' (Engl. Icarus and Phoenix embrace each other while falling). Afterwards, Choir 1 continues with homophonic minor chords plus one added note. The process is inverted in bars 29/30: now Choir 1 stops on a chord and Choir 2 continues with homophonic major chords plus one added note. Here, I use a whistled *glissando* chord (C# minor) in Choir 1 to augment the sung chords with a higher register and a new whistled timbre. The whistled *glissando* chord in measure 29-30 symbolizes the airy element and height of the characters of Icarus and Phoenix.

In measure 33-38, tenors and basses, from both choirs, echo the female voices in octaves first on d, then on f. I needed a harmonically simple structure to separate the complex chords with added *glissandi* surrounding this unison. The concluding section depicted in figure 21 (m. 39-52) returns to the *glissandi* but now in a circling fashion instead of a climactic one. The two choirs circle around the chords E minor + a# and Ab major + d. This can be seen as a combination of A major (or minor) chord and a quasi-spectral whole tone structure as discussed above. The *glissandi* always go up an octave and down again to illustrate the circling (Ger. 'kreisen'). The word 'kreisen' in the text is gradually replaced by the vowels of this word: 'a' and 'ä', later closed and softened to 'u' to dissolve and fade out.

Figure 21 m. 41-45 'kreisen' Engl. circling, Choir 2

This underlying structure is completed by descending soli from both groups. The chords – which up to this point have always been overlapping – resolve in an Ab major + d in the last bar, to conclude with a *light chord*.

3.4 Other contexts

3.4.1 *piano concerto*

The original commission comprised a piano concerto for solo piano and ensemble. Since I experimented a lot with vocal techniques throughout the last couple of years, I was eager to integrate one or two singers in the ensemble. These singers should not act as additional soloists but as part of the ensemble (similar to Steve Reich's use of the voice in *music for 18 musicians*) (Reich, 1976). Thus, the newly created setup not only allows me to explore new timbres in an already polychrome ensemble but also challenges the hierarchical norms of a traditional piano concerto. The integration of the singers as part of the ensemble develops a potential for new relations within the genre which challenges the term piano concerto in its classical understanding. It also allows for further interrogation of the potential to use the voice in contemporary instrumental music. The overall instrumentation is:

Flute	Percussion (1 Player)
Clarinet in Bb	Solo Piano
Saxophone (Alto, Baritone)	Violin
Soprano	Cello
Baritone	Double Bass

Form

Throughout summer 2021, I collected many ideas, material and musical snippets for the new work. Usually, I compose an extensive work in a mostly chronological fashion. However, this time the more diverse material required a new, non-linear approach to composition. It was challenging to integrate all or at least most of my ideas into one piece. I decided to divide the work into three contrasting movements contradicting the typical classical succession in my work, with the form slow-fast-slow. The movements are called:

I Ciaccona

II Pairs – Falling Stars

III The Angel Sleeps

The first movement explores delicate sounds in the ensemble's highest register before perpetually descending through a repetitive bassline. The faster middle movement begins with a rhythmical pattern of the singers. The word 'pairs' in the title refers to an instrumentational idea applied: to use the instruments or singers always coupled. The last movement is based on a simple lullaby melody and engages with deep major chords that form the foundation for spectral sounds. Overall, the piece ranges between the tempered keys of the piano and microtonality in the ensemble. The form can be described through the following chart:

movement	section	measure	content
I Ciaccona	introduction	1-34	experimental noises, very high pitches, harmonics
	lamento	35-68	*lamento* bass, suspensions in the high register
	piano glitter	69-94	deconstructed *lamento*, descending, high overtones, whistling
II Pairs – Falling Stars	pairs	95-189	smaller clusters, rhythmical patterns, paired instruments
	clusters	190-289	clusters with ensemble echoes, pairs, descending chords
	falling stars	290-333	descending fifth *arpeggi*, duality microtonality-tempered tuning, chords with ensemble echoes
III The Angel Sleeps	*unisono*	334-374	unison lullaby melody, piano accompanying bitonal *arpeggi*
	eternity	375-409	deep major chords, microtonal overtones, shuttlecock effect
	lullaby	410-439	lullaby solo piano accompanied by high *glissandi* over piano strings

Use of the voice

I chose to add one female and one male voice that are employed in a rather instrumental fashion. There is no underlying semantic text, only single vowels, consonants and syllables. For me, it was a new challenge to write for voice without having a pre-existing text. I had to create my own fantasy language in order to transfer my musical ideas. The missing text allowed me to use the two voices in new, instrumental contexts and liberated me from the formal constraints of a standard text. In the previous pieces of my portfolio, I gained high flexibility in my vocal writing that enabled me to apply vocal techniques in unanticipated ways. Luckily, I had two excellent mentors in my singers who are both very experienced in contemporary music: Stephanie Lamprea and Rylan Gleave. Stephanie advised me to use the signs of the international phonetic alphabet (IPA) in the score to indicate the exact sounds I would like to use. This was my first use of IPA and it allowed me to distinguish between a broad variety of consonants and vowels not bound by any particular language.

The singers are employed in versatile manners in the three movements: in the first movement, they produce breathy sounds, they whistle and they sing a downwards *lamento* bass with cyclically changing vowels (see figure 22). The topic of a *lamento* bass is employed also in a very high register gradually descending later. It emerges from the pedal point on a6, also in a very high register. In this case, the term 'bass' is misleading and subverted. I used changing vowels to create a polychrome melodic line with multiple sound colours per pitch. The variation of timbre is a principle used as early as the introduction, which is an *étude* on colours on the pitch a6 combined with various high-pitched sounds and noises. A multicoloured structure can also be heard following letter B: here, flute and violin share a descending line akin to Schönberg's *Klangfarbenmelodie* (Engl. tone colour melody). The singers engage both in the

a6-*étude* (by whistling) and in the noise-like layer (by rhythmically speaking sibilants like 's',
'ʃ' and 'f').
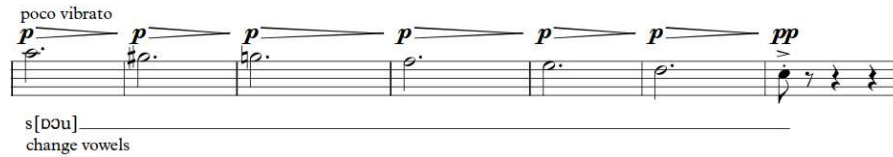
Figure 22 I Ciaccona m. 56-62, soprano

The second movement begins with a rhythmical pattern of the singers as shown in figure 23
below. This pattern sung on 'tu', 'to' or 'ta' forms the core of the extensive first part of the fast
movement. It contrasts with the slow and calm character of *I Ciacconna*. Referring to the title,
instruments or singers are always employed coupled: the singers form an instrumental pair, and
the solo piano can itself be seen as a pairing of right and left hand. There is no difference in the
use of the voice and the instruments in this movement. By applying syllables like 'tu', 'to' or
'ta' and the use of staccato, I tried to imitate a mallet instrument with a sharp attack and a short
decay. The vowels are changed according to the register to optimize singability and increase
comprehensibility.
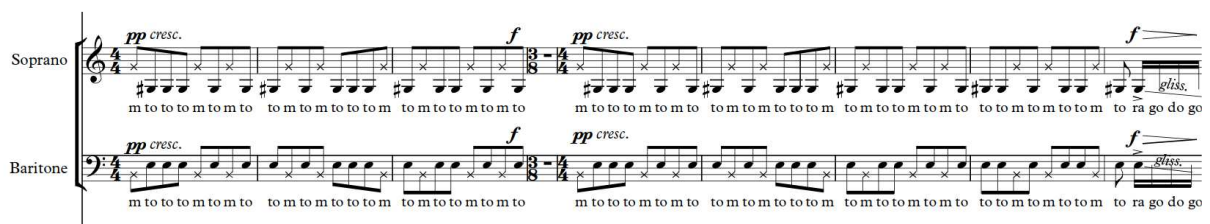
Figure 23 II Pairs - Falling Stars, m. 95-103

The rhythmical and dance-like structure is at times penetrated by a solo 'tststs' or 'tʃtʃtʃtʃ' of
the two singers. These insertions formally structure the movement while instrumentally they
are related to gently beating a cymbal (see letter M). In the second part of this movement titled
'falling stars' (starting at letter R) the singers recede, apart from some wide-range *glissandi* in

the soprano, again gradually changing the vowel (see figure 24). The vowel changes follow the rising sung register opening up from 'u' to 'a' while ascending. The *glissandi* are paired with climbing (spectral) runs in the clarinet and the piano. The soprano blurs these runs and thus adds an indistinct element.
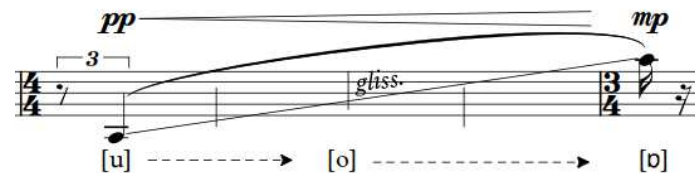
Figure 24 II Pairs – Falling Stars, m. 313-14 soprano glissando

The third movement starts with a simple and lyrical unison melody wandering through various instruments. Here, the *Klangfarbenmelodie* concept is enhanced. The soprano sings the *dolce* lullaby melody and is blended with different instruments. Baritone, alto saxophone, cello and double bass form a deeper bass register accompaniment. The second section of this movement (following letter X, m. 375) introduces deep major chords in the solo piano. The ensemble adds overtones in just temperament to the deep chords. I preferred the use of non-tempered, microtonal partials.
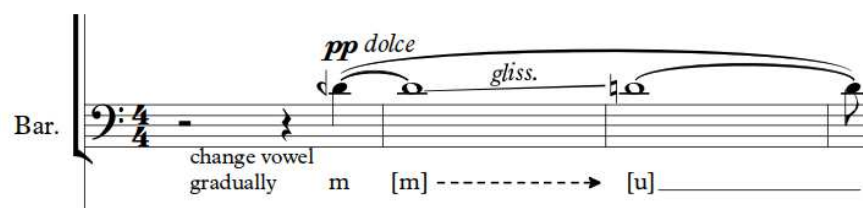
Figure 25 III The Angel Sleeps, m. 375-77

They shift in slow, small *glissandi* to the next partial in the next deep chord as depicted above in figure 25. Thus, I create a deep, calm soundscape with hummed partials intensifying an eternally quiet space. The singers always begin on a hummed 'm' and gradually change to a vowel like 'u', 'ɔ', 'ɒ' or 'ɑ', doubled by clarinet and alto saxophone. The idea of opening the

sound makes its way into the instrumental writing, too. Here, *crescendi* lead to the target notes. The vocal parts blend into the ensemble as well as into the overtones of the deep piano chords. The piece ends with a solo piano lullaby, again inspired by the harmonic pattern of Satie's *Gymnopédie 1* (Jones, 1996). This dreamlike epilogue leaves the audience in an ambiguous dusk world and re-contextualises the melody from the beginning of the third movement. Thus, the two major principles employed in the piano concerto are exploring the duality between just intonation in the ensemble and tempered tuning in the piano, as well as integrating and blending the voices of the two singers with the instrumental ensemble.

3.4.2 *The wall*

> *What is the motor for moving? What makes us move? And why do we continue to move?*
>
> *Excerpt of The wall by Marie Samrotzki* (Samrotzki, 2022)

Stephanie Lamprea is a singer of modern classical and avant-garde music. She commissioned me to write a solo piece for her which will be premiered at Glasgow Cathedral Festival 2023. As an expert in extended vocal techniques she advised me on the composition of the vocal parts in my *piano concerto*. Since we both thrived on our previous creative collaboration, we were eager to intensify our mutual projects and work on a piece for solo soprano and electronics tailored to Stephanie's outstanding abilities as a singer. This commission provided me with the opportunity to research the use of the voice in a way that wasn't available before this collaboration. I could focus on one specific voice in the frame of a solo work with added layers of processed voice.

In my preliminary studies, I looked into the rich tradition of 20th and 21st century works for solo voice (and electronics). I started with avantgarde classics like Luciano Berio's *Sequenza III* (Berio, 1968) and Cathy Berberian's *Stripsody* (Berberian, 1966) and quickly got carried away to works like Pamela Z's *Suite for voice and electronics* (Pamela Z, 2017), Meredith Monk's

Turtle Dreams (Monk, 1983) as well as the albums *Medúlla* by Björk (Björk, 2004), *Loopspool* by Ammer&Console (Ammer&Console, 1999), and *The Book Of Traps And Lessons* by Kae Tempest (Tempest, 2019). The combination of sung and spoken text in these pieces particularly fascinated me, not least because the overwhelming majority of sounds in these works is voice-produced.

How do we move as human beings within environments and systems of social structures?

The new work is based on a text by German visual artist and writer Marie Samrotzki whom I met during my residency in Paris in 2021/22. The English text is titled *The wall* (Samrotzki, 2022) and is linked to a performance of literally pushing a wall. *The wall* explores systems and boundaries of our very existence. It engages in existential human feelings like solitude, depression and hope describing the state of 'pushing against something which is never ending, futile'. Within the piece, I explored our very own 'motor for moving' (Samrotzki, 2022), our reactions to crisis, our boundaries. I am aware that these very existential and essential issues won't be solved in a single piece of music. However, I would like to make my own attempt to document my reaction to these fundamental subjects.

The image of stagnancy within movement is contrary, yet omnipresent.

Concerning the electronics, I integrated a fixed media element and the use of a *Roland voice transformer 3* in my composition. I bought this voice effect device for use in my opera and wanted to experiment more with its various technical abilities within the frame of a new work. The device is used only in the live part. I chose to create a pre-recording over the option of using live electronics for reasons of practicality. Since the electronics already consist of two different layers, I decided to keep these as technically simple and accident-proof as possible. In addition, I wanted to give the singer the ability to focus on experimenting with the *Roland voice*

transformer 3 by not having to operate any other devices. The tape option also provides the opportunity of not involving a second person in the setup. The use of electronics influenced my writing for voice in two major ways: I could experiment with one specific voice – live and processed at the same time; and I had the chance to manipulate the timing of all the voice-based pre-recordings.

In the creative process, I asked Stephanie to record different versions of the spoken text as well as some sounds like breathing, quickly repeated consonants, sustained pitched notes and page-turning. From these samples, I composed a pre-recording mostly structured by the spoken text. I created a layer that is entirely based on voice-produced sounds – except for the recorded page turns. Here, the voice is used in many different modes: from traditional singing on pitched notes to quickly spoken invented language, or sole consonants to breathing and plopping noises. I created a multi-faceted soundscape shaped by the numerous vocal sounds that Stephanie can produce. The live sung layer consists of spoken words processed by the effect device, of stuttering and shouting and of rather tonal material derived from Edvard Grieg's *Åse's Death* (Grieg, 19--?). All the pitched material relates to scales used in Grieg's piece. Therefore, the more experimental material is contrasted with scales derived from tonal work. To Grieg's melodic material, I composed a simple counterpoint consisting mainly of falling minor sixths. The minor sixth is a topic commonly used for lament. I added the syllable 'Ach' (Engl. Oh or Alas, starting at m. 83) to emphasize the sighing gesture.

> *The wall gives hold. It doesn't move. […]*
> *It divides.*
> *It encloses. […]*
> *It protects and endangers.*
> *It guides and restricts.*
> *It hurts.*

Marie Samrotzki's text comes in the format of a *zine* – a small self-published leaflet. It resembles a little magazine and contains many page turns and empty pages. I decided to implement this format in my composition both by using the noise of page-turning combined with breathy noises to divide the single sections. By letting the *zine* structure my piece on a formal basis: all empty pages are transformed into improvised *islands* in the manner discussed above (see 3.2.4 *Nicht/s*). The singer is given different sets of material – which can be pitch-related, an array of effects, a dynamical curve etc. – that she can improvise on for a fixed amount of time. Since Stephanie is a skilful improviser, I wanted to give her the freedom to add her own ideas and to reflect on the material. Consequently, it was necessary to involve some aspects of graphic notation in my score as shown in figure 26 below.

Figure 26 m.8 improvised island, the wavy line indicates the approximate pitch progression

4 Conclusions

In this submission, I explore the use of the voice in various ways. I employ the voice in manifold instrumentations, apply techniques ranging from speaking to melismatic singing, and use specific vocal techniques to differentiate between characters. I write for voice with or without a semantic text, and record and process the spoken and sung voice. The versatile approach taken (semantic-linguistic and grammatic-linguistic, instrumental, defining characters, time waves,

simplicity and emotionality, layering, processing) has resulted in ten pieces demonstrating the vast potential of writing for voice today and a deeper understanding of this most embodied of instruments. With every piece I wrote, and with every bit of underlying research into the field, I extended my knowledge and broadened my palette of vocal techniques. I dealt with language in the form of narrative texts, poems, fragments, non-semantic texts or single syllables and vowels. I explored and developed extended vocal techniques and combined pre-recorded and processed text with live-sung and spoken material.

This research enables me to employ the voice deliberately to communicate my ideas, whether solely musical or serving a dramatic purpose. Through the process of composing the new works I progressively developed several languages rather than a single one, each relating to a form of communicating my thoughts and addressing the central aim of establishing an expressive connection with the listener.

Through the parametric approach I developed subversive ways of using the voice within and beyond existing tropes and forms. I highlighted the voice from new angles and embedded it in the ensemble in uncommon ways. Furthermore, I gained new insights and approaches to composition by liberating myself from given texts. The subversion of formal and textual hierarchies is a result of the processes I traversed in this research.

The submission can be seen as a catalogue consisting of a broad variety of vocal techniques, which can serve as an inspiration to current and future composers, and which has the potential to be extended by others. All the techniques, and the structural and aesthetic approaches employed can be modified and re-contextualised in future works. Through this portfolio and commentary, I offer a platform for new and re-evaluated approaches to the use of the voice in the context of contemporary music.

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DIE PARTIE
THE PARTY

KAMMEROPER IN DREI RUNDEN
CHAMBER OPERA IN THREE ROUNDS

(BILD: https://theclassyissue.com/post/58998552985)

LIBRETTO: ANNA SOPHIE FELSER
MUSIK: KATRIN KLOSE

PROLOG
PROLOGUE

(Zur Musik öffnet sich der Vorhang und der Choriolis tritt auf und verteilt sich auf der Bühne, marionettenartig, mit dem Rücken zum Publikum. Der Chor bleibt während der Begebenheiten stets präsent und anwesend, stellt sich aber nie in den Mittelpunkt. Er ist das Beobachtungsorgan: kommentiert, unterbricht, handelt aber nicht aktiv. Die Macht des Choriolis fungiert nicht über deren Worte, sondern ihr Wesen. Sie sind durchgängig auf der Bühne präsent, ziehen sich aber auch zurück und kommen dann wieder in den Vordergrund. Obwohl sie als gemeinsame Masse auftreten, verteilen sie sich auch einzeln im Raum.

Der Choriolis summt zur Musik, bleibt aber mit dem Rücken zum Publikum stehen.

Der Moderator Adam tritt übertrieben gestikulierend in das Zentrum des Geschehens, die Scheinwerfer und Blicke auf sich ziehend. In jeder Hinsicht ist er das Gegenteil des Choriolis: übertrieben fröhlich, den Mittelpunkt suchend, allein agierend und absolut nicht mysteriös, sondern sehr durchschaubar und aufblühend im Showmaster-Sein. Im Gegensatz zu allen anderen auftretenden Figuren, spricht er immer in sein Mikrofon und singt nur, wenn es markiert ist.)

The curtain rises with the music and the Choriolis emerges and enters the stage, like string puppets, facing downstage with backs towards the audience. The choir stays present throughout the play but is never the centre of attention. It is a monitoring institution: commenting, interrupting but never proactive. The power of the Choriolis is not expressed by their words but by their character. They are always present on stage but pull back at times in order to emerge again. Although they act as one being they also move individually in the space.

The Choriolis hums to the music but stays facing backwards. Quiz host Adam enters the centre of attention, gesturing excessively. He attracts all the spotlight and looks around. He is in every way the opposite of the Choriolis: overly cheerful, seeking attention, acting alone, absolutely not mysterious but very predictable and enjoying his role as a show master. Contrasting the other characters, he always speaks into his microphone and only sings when marked in the score.

CHORIOLIS *(kanonisch, düster)* *(canonical, sullen)*

Adam. / Adam. / Adam.

ADAM *(singt, im Eröffnungsstil, offensichtlich choreographiert, die Bühne einnehmend)* (sings in grand-opening style, obviously choreographed, taking the stage)

Die Partie! The Party!

Die Partie! The Party!

(stets im Unterhaltungston sprechend, mit breitem Grinsen)

(always in a nonchalant style, grinning broadly)

Herzlich darf ich Sie hier und heute begrüßen, verehrtes Publikum!

Hochachtungsvoll darf ich mich präsentieren, ich übernehme Ihre Moderation, darf Sie durch den Abend führen, darf Sie durch diese verspielte Partie begleiten, ich! Ihr ergebenster: Adam!

I'm happy to welcome you here today, Ladies and Gentlemen!

If I may introduce myself to you respectfully, I will take care of your

presentation, so I may guide you through the evening, may accompany

you through this playful party, I! Yours faithfully: Adam!

(erneut singend) *(singing again)*

Die Partie! The Party!

(sprechend) *(speaking)*

Kandidierende werden heute versuchen meine Fragen zu beantworten,

dabei etwas erwidern und entgegnen.

Im besten Falle eine Antwort
(lacht, grinst charmant und fügt dann im kalten Ton hinzu)
und zwar die richtige, fachgemäße, fehlerfreie.
(erneut grinsend und im warmen Tonfall)
Und Sie – verehrtes Publikum! – werden den spannenden Verlauf, den
gespannten Bogen des Spiels verfolgen. Den Bogen

Candidates will try to answer my questions tonight,

therefore reply something and retort.

In the best case an answer,

(laughs, smiles charmingly and then adds in a chilly tone)

In fact, the right, competent, flawless answer.

(smiling again in a warmer tone)

And you – Ladies and Gentlemen! – will witness the exciting progress,

The thrilling arch of the game. The arch of

(singend) (singing)

der Partie! The Party!

(sprechend) (speaking)

Auf die Bühne bitten und hier im Studio begrüßen, darf ich nun auch unsere Kandidierenden.

Ein tobender Applaus!
(Handzeichen, jemand aus dem Orchester klatscht halbherzig)
Jetzt!

I will now welcome our candidates on stage.

Raging applause!

(hand signal, somebody in the orchestra applauds lukewarm)

Now!

(Drei identisch wirkende Kandidierende (K 1 / K 2 / K 3) treten auf.)

(Three seemingly identical candidates (K1 / K2 / K3) appear on stage.)

K 1	Da bin ich. Here I am.
K 2	Ich wäre auch hier. I'd be here as well.
K 3	Anwesend. Present.

KANDIDERENDE Wir sind bereit. We are ready.

(Adam klatscht, breit grinsend und schüttelt allen ausgiebig und etwas zu lange die Hand. Danach beginnt Choriolis „Etiam tacere est respondere" zu summen. Alle anderen frieren ein, bewegungslos.)

(Adam claps, grinning broadly, and excessively shakes hands with everybody. Afterwards, the Choriolis begins to hum "Etiam tacere est respondere". Everybody else freezes, motionless.)

CHORIOLIS   Wir sind We are

(Die Erstarrung endet und die Kandidierenden singen den Satz zu Ende.)

(The freezing stops and the candidates end the phrase.)

KANDIDERENDE bereit! ready!

ADAM Wunderbar, wunderbar, wunderbar – dann lasset uns das Spiel beginnen: Die Partie!

Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful – then let the game begin:

The Party!

(Jingle, der auf das Stichwort immer ertönt, unterbricht ihn. Alle müssen warten, bis der Jingle wieder vorbei ist, Adam muss jedes Mal bei der Stelle „Die Partie" singen und seinen choreographischen Ablauf auf der Bühne vom Beginn wiederholen.)

(The Jingle that always rings out on the cue interrupts him. Everybody has to wait until the jingle is over again. Adam has to sing "the Party" each time and repeat his choreography from the beginning.)

Bevor es losgeht darf ich Sie, geschätztes Publikum, noch darauf aufmerksam machen, dass wir Sie nun bitten, den Raum nicht mehr zu verlassen. Kein Grund zur Sorge, keinesfalls. Es ist zu Ihrer eigenen Sicherheit.
(breites Grinsen, Pause, bedrohlich und schnell)
Mobiltelefone und andere Aufzeichnungsmittel sind nicht erwünscht, nicht gestattet und müssen Ihnen bei widergesetzlichem Gebrauch sofort entzogen werden.
(auslandende Handbewegung, die Bühne freigebend, Pause, wieder langsamer)
Verehrtes Publikum! Ab diesem, jenem, jetzigem Augenblick schreibt sich die Geschichte!

Before we start, may I point out to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, that we now ask you not to leave the room anymore. No reason to worry, not at all. It's for your own safety.

(Broad smile, a pause, then menacing and quick)

Mobile phones and other recording devices are not welcome, not allowed and have to be withdrawn at once when used unlawfully.

(A wide hand gesture releasing the stage's tension, a pause, back to a broad smile and slower movements again)

Ladies and Gentlemen! From now and this moment on, history is written!

// 1. Runde //
1st Round

(Adam bleibt stehen und der Choriolis formiert sich um den Moderator. Die Atmosphäre ist bedrohlich und angespannt.)

(Adam stops and the Choriolis forms up around him. The atmosphere is menacing and tense.)

ADAM Wir werden nun eine der drei Personen zur ersten Fragerunde locken.

Now, we will allure one of the three persons to the first question session.

(Die Kandidierenden treten in die Mitte, sich gegenseitig anblickend, zusammengehörend.)

(The candidates step into the middle, looking at each other, belonging together.)

CHORIOLIS Friert eure Hirne ein und setzt sie neu auf.

Freeze your brains and reboot them.

(Wenn der Choriolis singt, erstarrt der Rest, wie eingefroren. Beim letzten Ton bewegen sie sich alle wieder, als wäre nichts passiert. Als hätten sie nichts gehört.

Es entsteht eine Pause. Adam grinst ins Publikum, die Kandidierenden sind verunsichert.)

(When the Choriolis sings all others freeze. With the last note, they all move again, as if nothing happened. As if they didn't hear anything.

There's a break. Adam grins towards the audience, the candidates are bewildered.)

KANDIDIERENDE Schweigende Stille! Hushed silence!

(Der Choriolis nähert sich die Kandidierenden, umkreist sie, beginnt zu flüstern undeutlich „Etiam tacere est respondere". Er fokussiert sich immer mehr auf K 1, nimmt sie an der Hand und lässt sie in die Mitte kommen, hervortreten, in den Fokus der Aufmerksamkeit kommen. K 2 und K 3 treten zurück und drehen sich mit dem Rücken zum Publikum)

(The Choriolis approaches the candidates, circles them, begins to whisper indistinctly "Etiam tacere est respondere". It more and more focuses on Candidate 1, takes her by the hand and lets her come into the middle, stepping forward into the centre of attention. Candidates 2 and 3 step back and turn their backs to the audience.

ADAM So, Gratulation an unsere erste Auserwählte! Verraten Sie uns Ihren Namen?

So, congratulations to our first chosen one! Would you give us your name?

K 1 *(nervös, zurückhaltend)* *(nervous, withdrawn)*

Merope Müller. Merope Müller.

ADAM   Wunderbar, Merope! Und wie alt dürfen Sie sich zählen?

              Wonderful, Merope! And how old can you count yourself?

MEROPE   35 Jahre. 35 years.

ADAM   35 Jahre dürfen wir uns also schon über Sie glücklich schätzen! Wie
              wunderbar, wie wunderbar. Und Merope, womit verdienen Sie sich Ihr
              wohlverdientes Geld?

              So, we are happy to have you for already 35 years! How wonderful, how
              wonderful. And Merope, how do you earn your well-earnt money?

MEROPE   Ich arbeite als Apothekerin. I work as a pharmacist.

ADAM   Fabelhaft, Merope. Herzlich willkommen! Excellent, Merope. Welcome!
              *(auslandende Handbewegung zu Merope, initiierend, dass sie noch mehr
              erzählen soll)*

              (big hand gesture towards Merope, inviting her to tell some more)

MEROPE   Dankeschön. Thank you.

              *(Mimik bleibt höflich: sie lächelt, aber ihre Körperhaltung verrät großes
              Unbehagen.)*

              *(She feigns politeness, smiling, but her body language reveals great
              discomfort.)*

ADAM   *(lacht herzhaft, schaut Merope auffordernd an, eine Gesprächspause entsteht,
              die Adam sofort auflöst mit einem aufgesetzten Lachen und einem Zwinkern
              ins Publikum.)*

              *(laughs heartily, looks promptly at Merope, a break in conversation emerges
              but Adam dissolves it quickly with a fake smile and a wink towards the public.)*

              Und was, meine beste Merope!, was wollen Sie uns noch über sich erzählen?

              And what-my dearest Merope!-what else would you like to tell us about
              yourself?

MEROPE   *(sichtlich irritiert von dieser Frage, erzählt schnell, aufregt und atemlos)*

(visibly irritated by this question, speaks fast, nervous and without breath)

Von, von meinen Hunden könnte ich noch erzählen? Zwei Dalmatiner.

I could tell you of, of my dogs? Two Dalmatians.

ADAM   Jaaa, schön! Theia und Gaia, richtig? Yeees, lovely! Theia and Gaia, right?

MEROPE   *(in absoluter Irritation, woher Adam diese Information hat, erneut)*

(In absolute bewilderment, where Adam got this information, again)

Ja, richtig. Beide sind sie, beide sind aus einem Wurf. Geschwister, also. Sie sind Geschwister. Sie… sie waren ganz unglaublich entzückend - als Welpen. Zwei Welpen aus einem Wurf. Fast unvorstellbar entzückend, und… und jetzt warten sie hoffentlich brav, bis ich, bis ich wieder bei ihnen, bis ich wieder bei ihnen zuhause bin.

Yes, right. Both are, both are littermates, so siblings. They are siblings. They… they were unbelievably delightful – as puppies. Two puppies of one litter. Almost unimaginably delightful, and… and now hopefully they are good girls and wait until I, until I am back with them, until I am back home with them.

ADAM   *(lacht herzhaft und ermutigend, zwinkert erneut)*

(laughs heartily and encouragingly, winks again)

Natürlich, natürlich. Sie warten zuhause.

Of course, of course. They wait at home.

(wendet sich von Merope ab)

(turns away from Merope)

Nun gut. Genug geplaudert!

Verehrtes Publikum, begrüßen Sie mit mir, herzlich und innig, Merope Müller zur

– Partie!

All right. Enough small talk!

Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome with me, cordially and dearly, Merope Müller to

(Adam gibt Orchester ein Zeichen, der Jingle ertönt erneut, Adam drängt Merope sanft zur Seite, damit er erneut im Mittelpunkt steht, und im Refrain singt Adam erneut)

(Adam gives the orchestra a cue, the jingle appears again, Adam gently pushes Merope aside in order to take centre stage again and in the refrain, Adam sings again.)

Die Partie! The Party!

(sprechend) *(speaking)*
Die erste Frage! The first question!

(öffnet mit ausladenden Bewegungen ein Kuvert, das ihm von einem Choriolis-Mitglied unauffällig übergeben wird. Er liest zuerst leise für sich, grinst dann ins Publikum, räuspert sich und spricht im überdramatisierten Tonfall)
(opens an envelope with big gestures that was given to him by a Choriolis-member without attracting attention. At first, he reads quietly to himself, then he grins towards the audience, clears his throat and speaks in an overly dramatic tone)
Wohin? Where?

CHORIOLIS   *(verteilt sich während des Singens erneut vereinzelt im Raum)*
             (scatters   individually   on   stage   again   while   singing)
             wohin / wohin / wohin
             where / where / where

MEROPE   Wohin? Where?
             (nachdenkend, ans Publikum gerichtet, Tonfall des Singens startet verträumt und transformiert sich immer wieder über die Arie hinweg. Adam grinst währenddessen unentwegt ins Publikum, K 2 und K 3 stehen immer noch mit dem Rücken zum Publikum, Choriolis blickt zu Boden, bewegungslos.)
             (thinking, facing the public, her tone of singing starts dreamily and is transformed several times throughout the aria. Meanwhile, Adam is constantly grinning to the audience, C2 and C3 still stand backwards to the public, Choriolis stares at the floor, motionless.)

             Wohin Whereto
             immer dazwischen always in between
             im Dort zählt das Da in the There, the Here counts
             und im Da, das Dort and in the Here, the There

             woher where from

immer dazwischen always in between
im Da zählt das Dort in the There, the Here counts
und im Dort, das Da and in the Here, the There

der Mond hält den Regen nicht auf the moon won't stop the rain
es liegt eine Nacht zwischen uns there's a night between us
es strahlen Winde winds radiate
es weht die Sonne the sun blows
halbversteckt lügen, half-hidden lying
lugen wir von unseren Masken hervor peeping from under our masks
eingeschlossen im Bunker der hoffnungsfrohen locked in our bunker of
Zweisamkeit hopeful togetherness

CHORIOLIS   *(blicken auf, bleiben aber bewegungslos.)* *(look up but stay motionless)*

Plappernder bequemer Blödsinn. Babbling convenient rubbish.

MEROPE   weit und tief wide and deep

sehne ich mich, nur I am longing, but

wohin where

Sehnsucht und Ungeduld wechseln die Plätze longing and impatience swap

lebensgierig greedy for life

herzbebenswillig willing for heart tremble

aufwachen soll man wollen we should want to wake up

süchtig sehnen longing addictively

Tatendrang überschlägt sich selbst thirst for action flips over

fällt hin falls

ADAM   Wunderbar, Merope, famos, ganz toll. Aber die Antwort!

Wonderful, Merope, fabulous, really great. But the answer!

MEROPE   *(blickt Adam verträumt an und singt dann wütender werdend weiter)*

(looks dreamily at Adam and sings on becoming more and more angry)

Taten zerscheppern vor meinen Augen Actions clash in front of my eyes

beginnen zu brennen, fackeln, zischen start to burn, torch, fizzle

Träume dampfen, leuchten, funkeln dreams steam, glow, sparkle

hoffnungsvoll blicken wir uns hopeful, we look

durch die Finger through our fingers

(ruhiger, wieder verträumter) *(more quiet, again dreamier)*

wir vertragen uns we make up
nur – wohin but - whereto

CHORIOLIS   Vertragen, weit weg tragen. Make up, carry far away.

MEROPE   Die Sehnsucht klebt mir auf dem Rücken. Longing sticks to my back.
              (spricht) *(speaks)*
              Eine groteske Bauchmuskelübung. A grotesque abdomen exercise.

              Mein Hirn bringt die Disposition! My brain provides the disposition!

K 2/K 3   *(schauen sich verunsichert an)* *(looking insecurely at each other)*
              Das Hirn bringt die Disposition? The brain provides the disposition?

CHORIOLIS   *(beginnen sich im Raum zu bewegen, der Blick liegt auf Merope gerichtet)*
              (begin to move through the space, gazing at Merope)

              Gerade Verstrickungen spinnen unverhoffte Fäden.
              Straight entanglements spin unexpected threads.

ADAM   *(beunruhigt von der Dynamik)* *(alarmed by the dynamics unfolding)*
              Wohin! Die Zeit läuft, vor allem bald ab!
              Where! Time is running out soon above all.
              Eine Antwort! A reply!
              Merope! Merope!

MEROPE   *(tief in Gedanken versunken, mit starrem Blick)*
              (deep in thought, gazing)

              Der Takt klopft sich durch Geschichten, im Kopf
              The metre beats through stories, in the head
              tanzt es sich gut. you can dance well.
              im Kopf, im Kopf, im Kopf in the head, in the head, in the head
              (tanzt, in kleinen Bewegungen, verloren, nicht nur in Gedanken.)
              (dances, in small movements, lost, not only in thoughts.)

K 2/K 3   *(beunruhigt, Dynamik entsteht, Impulse von Merope werden aufgegriffen)*
              (concerned, dynamics arise, impulses from Merope are mirrored)
              Im Kopf tanzt es sich gut? You can dance well in the head?

Wenn man träumt, bleibt man nicht When you dream, you don't
auf der Stelle stehen stay then and there
bewegt sich fort und ist you move and you stay
gleichzeitig, wo man war --- where you were, at the same time ---

ADAM   *(beunruhigt und schroff, K 2 und K 3 unterbrechend, die Musik signalisiert*
              das Ende der Zeit)
              (alarmed and rude, interrupting C2 and C3, the music signals that time is up)
              Abgelaufen! Expired!
              (Choriolis blickt starr ins Publikum.) *(Choriolis gazes into the audience.)*
              Die Zeit ist um, die Antwort blieb aus. Time is up, the answer is missing.

(Choriolis beginnt „Etiam tacere est respondere." zu summen, dann zu singen.)
(Choriolis begins to hum „Etiam tacere es respondere", then sings the phrase.)

ADAM   *(erneut im Showmaster-Duktus mit breitem Lächeln.)*
              (again in his quiz host mode with a wide smile.)

              Die Ausscheidung wird vollzogen. Alles Liebe, Merope! Danke für Deinen
              Einsatz, danke fürs Mitmachen!
              The elimination will be performed. All the best, Merope! Thanks for your
              commitment. Thanks for taking part!
              (klatscht herzhaft, aber sehr kurz, Merope versucht von der Bühne zu gehen.
              Choriolis aber dreht den Blick zu ihr und sie bleibt dadurch stehen.)
              (claps heartily but very shortly, Merope tries to go off stage. But Choriolis
              turns and faces her. So, she stops.)

CHORIOLIS   Wir schneiden schizophrene Grimassen und konnotieren dabei Tränen um.

              We make schizophrenic faces and therefore connote tears.

              (bewegt sich langsam, unheimlich, auf Merope zu und sie werden eins.)

              (moves slowly, scary towards Merope and they become one.)

ADAM   *(tritt in die Mitte, breitet die Arme aus, hat die Vereinnahmung Meropes nicht*
              gesehen und verführt, als wäre sie selbstständig und freiwillig abgetreten.)
              (takes centre, opens his arms, did not see the collection of Merope and acts
              as if she left stage freely and independently.)
              Verehrtes Publikum! Ladies and Gentlemen!
              Es knistert, spüren Sie es auch? It's crackling, can you feel it, too?
              Die Spannung ist kaum auszuhalten! Die Kandidatur 1 ist offiziell beendet.
              The tension is hard to bear! Candidacy 1 is now officially closed.
              Die richtige Antwort wird nun für Sie eingeblendet.
              The right answer will now be faded in for you.
              (Es wird das TV-Testbild eingeblendet.)
              (A TV screen is faded in.)

CHORIOLIS   *(verteilen sich wieder im Raum, blicken sich einander an.)*

(scatter again in the space, facing each other.)

Wir sind die schweigende Mehrheit.

We are the silent majority.

// 2. RUNDE //

2ND ROUND

(Alle bewegen sich zielstrebig und in schnellen Bewegungen und positionieren sich dabei neu. Wie ein Uhrwerk.)
(Everybody moves determined and quickly and finds a new position. Like a clockwork.)

ADAM   Und ganz ohne Umschweife schreiten wir weiter, schreiten wir voran zur nächsten Frage.

Outright, we move on, we move forward to the next question.
(Öffnet Kuvert, das ihm erneut vom Choriolis zugesteckt wurde.)
(Opens an envelope that he was given again by the Choriolis.)
Sie steht weiß auf schwarz hier vor mir.
It is written white on black here in front of me.

CHORIOLIS   *(kichern)* *(giggle)*
Der Zustand ist zebrafarben.
The state is zebra-coloured.

ADAM   Die Kandidierenden werden sich nun wieder uns zu kehren.
Now, the candidates will turn towards us again.
(K 2 und K 3 drehen sich um und treten vor, blicken ins Publikum, starr.)
(C2 and C3 turn around and step forward, gaze into the audience, rigid.)
Die Frage, verehrtes Publikum, verehrte Alle, wird in dieser Runde an beide gleichzeitig gestellt.
The question, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear all, will be asked for both simultaneously in this round.
(Mit ausladender Handbewegung und theatralem Tonfall)
(With a grand hand movement and theatrical tone)
Und die Frage, die ich hier in Händen halte, die ich Ihnen hier und jetzt präsentieren darf, die Frage – Sie sind bereit! Die Frage lautet –
Wer?

And the question that I am holding here in my hands, that I may present to you here and now, the question – you are ready! The question is –
Who?

CHORIOLIS *(Nehmen wieder gemeinsame Position ein und blicken unentwegt auf K 2 und K 3.)*
(Take their common position and constantly stare at C2 and C3.)
wer / wer / wer
who / who / who

K 2/K 3 *(sich gegenseitig musternd, verzweifelt.)*
(examining each other, desperate.)
Wer? Who?

CHORIOLIS Mühsam, mürrisch, murmelnd. Grinding, grumpy, murmuring.

K 2 *(blickt K 3 vielsagend an, nickt ihr zu und beginnt zu singen)*
(glances meaningful at C3, nods towards her and begins to sing)
Gewitterwolken Thunderclouds
ziehen nicht über mich hinweg do not pass over me
sie haben sich eingenistet, sind they nested, are
in mir drin inside me
schlitternd slithering
gefangen locked

ADAM *(gibt dem Orchester Zeichen, dass sie zu spielen aufhören sollen, lacht gehäßig, unterbricht K 2)*
(gives the orchestra a cue to stop playing, laughs viciously, interrupts C2)

Nun gut, gut, gut – eins nach dem anderen! Stellen Sie sich zuerst vor!
Well, well, well – one after the other! Introduce yourself first!

K 2 Richter. Regulus Richter, hallo. Richter. Regulus Richter, hello.

ADAM Gut, gut, gut. Regulus. Ein vorschneller Charakter zeichnet Sie wohl aus. Üblicher Weise stellen wir uns vor, bevor wir antworten. Das sind die Grundregeln der Partie.
Well, well, well. Regulus. You seem to stand out due to a hasty character. Usually, we introduce ourselves first before we answer. These are the basic rules at the Party.
(Der Jingle ertönt erneut und Adam singt fröhlich seinen Refrain. Und schaut danach Regulus erwartungsvoll an.)
(The jingle plays again and Adam cheerfully sings his refrain. And looks at Regulus full of expectation.)

K 3 *(direkt zu Adam sprechend) (addressing Adam directly)*
Wir dachten, weil die Frage schon gestellt wurde –

We thought, because you already asked the question –

ADAM *(grinst breit zuerst Regulus und schließlich das Publikum und dann wieder Regulus an, K 3 dabei ganz ignorierend)*
(grins broadly first at Regulus and then finally at the audience and again at Regulus, totally ignoring C3)
Jaaa, das dachten Sie wohl. Yeeees, that's what you thought apparently.
Nun, erzählen Sie uns doch etwas von sich. Well, why don't you tell us something about yourself?

REGULUS *(kühl)* *(cool)*
Gerne. Was wollen Sie wissen? Sure. What would you like to know?

ADAM *(übertrieben freundlich)* *(overly friendly)*
Nun… was man so erzählt. Well… what people use to tell.

REGULUS *(noch kühler)* *(even cooler)*
Ich bin Sportreporter von Beruf. I work as a sports reporter.

ADAM *(lacht)* *(laughs)*
Und darf man auch fragen, wie alt Sie sind?
And may we also ask your age?

K 3 Ohne zu wissen, warum das eine Rolle spielen sollte –
Without knowing, why this should play a role –

REGULUS *(hastig K3 unterbrechend)* *(hastily interrupting C3)*
Ich bin 42 Jahre alt. I am 42 years old.

ADAM *(mit seiner Machtposition spielend, übertrieben freundlich)*
(playing with his position of power. Excessively friendly)
Und warum wollen Sie uns nicht mehr erzählen? Warum erzählen Sie nicht, dass Sie auch gerne in Ihrer Freizeit Sport betreiben?
And why don't you want to tell us some more? Why don't you tell us that you like to do sports in your leisure time as well?

REGULUS *(erhitzt, boshaft werdend)* *(heated, getting angry)*
Nun – wie Sie richtig… erraten haben – ich bin auch überzeugter Freizeitsportler.
Well – as you righteously… guessed – I am also a committed leisure sportsman.

ADAM Na also! Warum nicht gleich? Here we go! Why not before?

REGULUS Darf ich nun fortfahren? May I proceed?
Also – antworten? So – reply?

ADAM   *(hebt die Augenbrauen und macht ihm mit einer Handbewegung die Bühne*
                frei, [gibt eventuell dem Orchester wieder ein Zeichen])
                (raises his eyebrows and presents him the stage with a hand gesture, [maybe
                gives the orchestra a cue again])
                Ich bitte darum. I should be glad.

REGULUS   Donnergrollen, Blitzstrahlen und Hagelschläge Rolling thunder, flashes of
                lightning and hailstorms
                prasseln auf meine Hirnhäute ein patter on my meninges
                brechen sie auf break them up
                spleißen sie splice them
                spaltköpfig crack-headed
                stehe ich nun now I stand
                wie Janus vorm Spiegel like Janus facing the mirror
                und sehe: and see:

                Niemand. Nobody.

CHORIOLIS   Schau mich an und mein Außen wird dein Innen.
                Look at me and my outside will be your inside.

REGULUS   Das Außen ist zu laut The outside is too loud
                meine innere Leere wird zum Resonanzraum my inner void becomes a
                für alles resonator for everything
                was impulsartig hereinspaziert that waltzes in pulsedly
                und schlendert und schleudert and strolls and skids
                alles um und lässt everything and allows
                nichts anderes mehr zu nothing else anymore

ADAM   *(drängend, gestikulierend) (urging, gesturing)*
                Es gibt keine Zusatzpunkte, Regulus. Ihre Antwort, bitte. Einsilbig.

                There are no bonus points, Regulus. Your answer, please. Monosyllabically.

REGULUS   *(Adam herausfordernd, auf ihn zugehend)*
                (challenging Adam, approaching him)

                Alles Außen ist plötzlich mein Innen. All outside is suddenly my inside
                All das, was mein Innen war, verschwindet All that was my inside vanishes
                dumpf und unauffällig dull and inconspicious
                Nichts war je da Nothing was ever there
                Niemand ist stets da Nobody is ever there

                wer who
                wer who
                wer who

wer kann sich nicht mehr halten who cannot abide anymore
fällt ständig hin falls constantly
stolpert unentwegt davon stumbles unswervingly away
meinen Schritt nicht mehr beachtend remarking my steps no more

wie soll man die Antwort wissen how can you know the answer
woher soll das Wissen kommen where can you find knowledge

ADAM   *(jetzt genervt, aus der Showmaster-Rolle fallend, wild fuchtelnd)*
                (now angry, falling out of the quiz host role, fidgeting wildly)

                Ganz genau. Die Antwort möchte ich, möchten wir! Das Wissen von Ihnen.
                Jetzt, bitteschön.
                Exactly. I would like the answer, we need it! The knowledge of you.
                Now, please.
                *(Regulus geht herausfordernd auf ihn zu. Aber als der Choriolis erneut zum
                Singen beginnt, müssen alle wie immer erneut erstarren. Regulus bleibt also
                kurz vor Adam stehen.)*
                *(Regulus approaches him defiantly. But when the Choriolis starts to sing
                again everybody has to freeze again as always. So, Regulus stops close to
                Adam.)*

CHORIOLIS   Verpuppt, vernetzt, eingesperrt in der gehirnernen Höhle.
                Du musst dich mit der Wahrheit vertragen, sie wegtragen.
                Die Augen müssen sehend werden.
                Pupated, netted, locked in the brainy caves.
                You have to make peace with the truth, carry it away.
                The eyes must become seeing.

REGULUS   *(selbstbewusst)* (confident)
                Ich bin – Niemand! I am – Nobody!

ADAM   Die Zeit ist aus. Die Antwort! Time is up. The answer!
                *(Adam merkt, dass das musikalische Zeit-Signal nicht ertönte, das Ticken
                weitergeht und ist irritiert. Ungeduldig klopft er auf das Mikrofon, um die
                Kontrolle wieder zu erlangen. Nach mehrmaligen Versuchen ertönt das
                gewünschte Signal.)*
                *(Adam notices that the musical time signal did not appear, the ticking
                continues. He is bewildered. Impatiently, he knocks on the microphone to
                regain control. After several attempts, the expected signal plays.)*

REGULUS   *(selbstbewusst)* (confident)
                Es ist – Niemand! It is – Nobody!

CHORIOLIS   Schau mich an und mein Außen wird dein Innen.
                Look at me and my outside becomes your inside.

REGULUS	Niemand! Nobody!
CHORIOLIS	Etiam tacere est respondere. Etiam tacere est respondere.
	(bewegt sich unverzüglich auf Regulus zu, er versucht sich zu wehren, kommt aber nicht gegen das Kollektiv an und so werden sie im Kampf eins.)
	(moves unhesitatingly towards Regulus, he tries to fight but cannot withstand the collective and so they become one through struggle.)
ADAM	Die Kandidatur 2 – *(Seine Stimme ist durch das Mikrofon verzerrt, irritiert versucht er die Fassung zu behalten.)* Die Kandidatur 2 wurde offiziell beendet. Candidacy 2 – *(his voice is distorted by the microphone, irritated, he tries to keep his contenaince.)* Candidacy 2 is officially closed.
	Die Antwort wäre Niemand gewesen. The answer would have been Nobody. *(Die Antwort wird eingeblendet.)* *(The answer fades in.)*
CHORIOLIS	Wir sind die Schweigenden. We are the silent ones.

// 3. RUNDE //
3RD ROUND

(Gestresst und immer noch um seine Fassung bemüht, leitet Adam gewollt legere die nächste Runde ein. Sein Mikrofon verzerrt weiterhin seine Stimme.)
(Stressed and still trying to retain his composure, Adam determinedly, with a cool air, initiates the next round. His microphone still distorts his voice.)

ADAM	Meine nächste und meine letzte Frage kommt nun auf uns zu! My next and my last question approaches us now.
K 3	Auf mich zu. Approaches me.
ADAM	Jaaa, Verehrteste! Als die letzte Kandidatin darf ich Sie nun schlussendlich, aber nicht minder herzlich begrüßen! Yeees, My lady! I am honoured to welcome you as our last candidate, finally but not less warmly. *(beginnt wieder mit einem breiten Grinsen zu klatschen, K 3 schaut ihn kühl und unverändert an.)* *(He starts to clap again grinning broadly, C3 gazes at him coolly and unaltered.)* Ihr Name? Your name?
K 3	Elektra Ehrenfeld. Elektra Ehrenfeld.

ADAM	Wundervoll, Elektra! Und weiter? Wonderful, Elektra! And next?
ELEKTRA	-
ADAM	Wollen Sie uns nicht noch mehr verraten? Don't you want to reveal more?
ELEKTRA	Ich glaube nicht, dass das nötig wäre. I don't think this would be necessary.
ADAM	Nein? Glauben Sie das nicht? Nun, ja, es irrt der Mensch, solang' er strebt, nicht wahr! No, you don't think so? Well, man errs as long as he strives, right? *(eine Pause entsteht, Elektra erwidert nichts. Darauf reagiert Adam schließlich, übernimmt die Vorstellung. Räuspert sich und grinst ins Publikum)* *(There's a break, Elektra does not reply. Eventually, Adam reacts, takes over the introduction. He clears his throat and grins at the audience.)* Meine Damen, meine Herren, hier vor Ihnen steht Elektra Ehrenfeld. Sie ist 38 Jahre alt und arbeitet als Floristin – wäre aber eigentlich gerne etwas anderes geworden, nicht wahr, Elektra? Sie wären doch gerne – Ladies and Gentlemen, here you can see Elektra Ehrenfeld. She is 38 years old and works as a florist – but in fact she would have liked to become something else, right, Elektra? You would have liked to –
ELEKTRA	Ich glaube nicht, dass das für die Beantwortung der Frage wichtig sein wird. Tatsächlich glaube ich, dass die Antwort das ist, was am wenigsten wichtig zu sein scheint. I don't think this will be significant for answering the question. Actually, I think that the reply seems to be least important.
ADAM	*(lacht herzhaft) (laughs heartily)* Ach, köstlich! Ja, wenn Sie sich da so sicher sind. Oh, exquisite! Well, if you are so certain about it.
ELEKTRA	Das bin ich. I am.
ADAM	*(nun auch kühl geworden und sich nicht mehr über sein Showmaster-Sein kümmernd)* *(now also chilly and not caring about being the showmaster)* Nun gut. Bereit für die Frage? All right. Ready for the question?
CHORIOLIS	Instruktion ist Konstruktion. Instruction is construction. *(und der Choriolis übergibt Adam das Kuvert, nicht mehr unauffällig)* *(and the Choriolis passes Adam the envelope without seeking attention)*

ADAM   *(das Kuvert erneut mit großen Gesten öffnend, zuerst für sich und dann laut und ausladend lesend)*
                  (again opening the envelope with big gestures, reading at first for himself and then loudly and dramatically)
                  Warum? Why?

CHORIOLIS   warum / warum / warum why / why / why

(Elektra steigt in den Choriolis mit ein. Dann Elektra alleine.)
(Elektra joins the Choriolis. Then alone.)

ELEKTRA   Von den Umfeldern erschüttert Shaken by the surroundings
                  mein Inneres: ein Minenfeld my inside: a minefield

                  gefangen als das ewig Andere trapped as the eternal other
                  wird man auch sich selbst ganz fremd you become a stranger to yourself

                  Fatalität des eigenen Seins fatality of your own being
                  überfällt einen von hinten captures you from behind
                  klebt unter den Sohlen sticks under your soles
                  lässt dich nicht mehr weg will not let you go
                  kommt nicht mehr davon cannot leave you
                  Platzangsteffekt claustrophobia effect

                  schrille Nebelschwaden ersticken jeden shrill wafts of mist stifle all
                  anderen Gedanken other thoughts
                  Verbindungen abgekappt, abgebrochen, abgesägt links cancelled, broken
                  Das Ende ist die Verweigerung The end is the refusal
                  der Partizipation. of participation.

CHORIOLIS   Jedes Wort ein Hieb, ein endloses Donnergrollen.

                  Every word a blow, an endless roll of thunder.

ELEKTRA   innen alles zu eng inside everything too tight
                  und im Außen wird die Weite zur Enge. and outside the width becomes
                  narrowness.

                  es frisst mich von innen auf it devours me from inside
                  zerfleischt mich mauls me
                  zersetzt mein Sein dissolves my being
                  ausgelöscht erased

                  Trümmertriebe treiben mich debris bits chase me
                  ich räume sie vor meine Mauern I put them in front of my walls
                  im Kopf rumpelt es in the head, it rumbles
                  Lawinengefahr danger of avalanches

Verstecken uns hinter unseren verfallenen Mauern hide behind our decaying walls
Träume der Nacht, zerschmettert sie! Dreams of the night, shatter them!
rutschen aus auf den eigenen Steinen slide on the proper stones
alles rollt everything rolling
verrückt sich displaces itself
Trümmerhaufen treiben davon piles of debris float apart

ADAM   *(versucht das Orchester abzuwinken, will unterbrechen und herausfordern. Das Orchester hört nicht auf ihn, spielt unbeirrt weiter und Elektra fällt ihm ins Wort.)*
(tries to wave aside the orchestra, wants to interrupt and challenge. The orchestra does not listen to him but keeps in playing and Elektra halts him.)
Gütig und selbstzerstörerisch ist manchmal dasselbe –
Kind and self-destructive sometimes is the same –

ELEKTRA   Verstummt. Silenced.

(Adam beschwert sich mit großen Gesten beim Orchester, dass sie nicht auf sein Zeichen reagieren.)
(Adam complains with big gestures to the orchestra that they do not react to his signals.)

Meine Kompassnadel ist einem unbekannten Magnetfeld verfallen, unverlässlich und nicht mehr mir entsprechend, schwirrt sie nun herum. Alles möchte ich wissen wollen und weiß dabei, dass man nichts wissen kann. Immer werden wir weniger wissen als die Sehnsucht des Wissens verlangt.
Verstummt bin ich.
Die Stimme habe ich verloren.
My compass needle is seduced by an unknown magnetic field, unreliable and no longer according to myself, it flutters around. I want to know everything although I know that you cannot know anything. We will always know less than the longing for knowledge demands.
I am silenced.
I lost the voice.

(sie wendet sich ab, der Choriolis tritt in den Vordergrund)
(she turns away, the Choriolis steps forward)

CHORIOLIS   *(kanonisch)*   *(canonical)*
Etiam tacere est respondere! Etiam tacere es respondere!
Etiam tacere est respondere! Etiam tacere es respondere!

Etiam tacere est respondere! Etiam tacere es respondere!

(gemeinsam) *(together)*

Starren auf die brennende Flut. Staring at the burning flood.

Die Dunkelheit saugt die Resonanz aus dem Schluchzen, dem Heulen.

The darkness sucks the resonance out of the sobbing, the crying.

Das Lodern hallt in den Köpfen wider. The blaze reverberates in the heads.

Die Vorhallen unserer Seelen verkrampfen sich.

The porches of our souls cramp.

Kristalline Kälte. Crystalline cold.

Die Romantik verstummt. The romance is silenced.

ELEKTRA   *(dreht sich fragend zum Choriolis und sieht ihn an – zum ersten Mal sieht den Choriolis jemand an, bemerkt seine Sichtbarkeit)*

(turns questioningly to the Choriolis and looks at it – for the first time somebody sees the Choriolis, remarks its visibility)

Etiam tacere est respondere. Etiam tacere est respondere.

(Tosender Applaus vom Orchester.) (Loud applause from the orchestra.)

ADAM   *(besserwisserisch, Irritation erschaffen wollend und sich in den Mittelpunkt drängend, seine Stimme wird noch verzerrter)*
(smart-alecky, wanting to create irritation, seeking attention, his voice is altered even more)
Das Narrativ der Köpfe baut die Zäune um die Gedanken!
The narrative of the heads builds the fences around the thoughts!

ELEKTRA   *(gedankenverloren, etwas erkennend) (lost in thought, realizing something)*

Die Angst schleicht heran. Fear creeps up.
Oder schreitet sie? Or does it stride?
Sie schlendert selbstgefällig. It strolls smugly.
Meine Höhle wird meine Hölle. My hole becomes my hell.

(sprechend, ohne Musik, in die Stille hinein)

(speaking, without music, into stillness)
Der Wert widerwärtiger Sinnkrisen kreist in Schlüssen um mich herum.
In Schlüssen schießen sie, schließen ein und aus. Hinaus in die Welt, aus allen Welten fallend. Die Schwermut kichert, verhöhnt mich. Man schwebt, fliegt, verliert den Boden unter den Füßen, Gespenster klopfen an den Gedankentüren, fragen nach dem Weiter, ich durchbohre mit meinem Dolch mein Hirn, rühre um. Rühre um. Das Herz schaudert, weiß: es ist als nächstes an der Reihe.

The value of abominable crisis circles around me in conclusions. In conclusions, they close, close in and out. Out into the world, falling out of all worlds. Melancholia giggles, mocks me. You float, fly, loose touch to the ground with your feet, ghosts knock on the thought doors, ask for the "next", I stab my brain with my dagger, stir. Stir. The heart shudders, knows: it's its turn next.

(wendet sich mit dem Rücken zum Publikum)

(turns her back to the audience)

ADAM   Das Spiel ist aus! The game is over!

(erneut kommt kein musikalisches Signal nach der Verkündung, selbstsicher wiederholt Adam das Klopfen auf das Mikrofon, doch kein Signal kommt.)

Again there's no musical signal after the announcement, Adam confidently repeats hitting the microphone but no signal appears.)

Die Antwort müsste jetzt gegeben worden sein.

The answer would have had to be given now.

(Das Mikrofon geht aus, während er diesen Satz spricht: nach „Die Antwort".)

(The microphone turns off while he speaks this phrase: after "the answer".)

ELEKTRA   *(gelassen)* *(calmly)*

Die Möglichkeit ist immer auch eine Unmöglichkeit.

The option is always an non-option, too.

(Zeit-Signal ertönt.) *(time signal sounds.)*

(Elektra geht auf den Choriolis zu, bereit eingenommen zu werden. Der Choriolis bewegt sich auf Adam zu, nimmt ihm das Mikrofon aus der Hand und nimmt ihn ein. Sie werden eins.

(Elektra approaches the Choriolis, ready to be captured. The Choriolis moves towards Adam, takes his microphone and captures him. They become one.)

(Das Mikrofon übergibt der Choriolis nun Elektra.

Metamorphose zu Eva.

Eva ab.)

(The microphone is now handed to Elektra by the Choriolis.

Metamorphoses into Eva.

Eva leaves.)

(Die Anfangsmusik ertönt erneut und der Choriolis (nun um drei Personen größer) stellt sich wieder auf die Anfangspositionen, marionettenartig, mit dem Rücken zum Publikum. Der Choriolis summt zur Musik.)

(The start jingle plays again and the Choriolis (now increased by three persons) is drawn towards their initial positions like string puppets, backs facing the public. The Choriolis hums to the music.)

CHORIOLIS   *(kanonisch, düster)* *(canonic, gloomy)*

Eva. / Eva. / Eva. Eva. / Eva. / Eva.

(Elektra, jetzt Eva, erneut auf. Ihr Auftreten ist nicht aufgesetzt wie Adams. Aber sie spielt mit den Regeln.)

(Elektra, now Eva, enters again. Her acting is not artificial like Adam's before. But she plays along with the rules.)

Von den flatternden Gedanken

Text 1 (Blaeulich, 2016b)

deutsch

English (trans. Klose)

What shall I say?

Was soll ich sagen

It's a long way to the blackberries

Der Weg zu den Brombeeren ist weit

While the one word

Während das eine Wort

The daunting comes closer and closer

Das drohende immer näher kommt

The weather lightens above me

Über mir lichtert das Wetter

The light leads quickly

Schnell verbleit das Licht

First flashes hurry along

Erste Blitze treiben zur Eile an

And I haven't even reached half

Und ich bin noch nicht einmal bei der Hälfte

of my *demons*

meiner *Dämonen* angelangt.

Text 2 (Blaeulich, 2016a)

Es flattern die Fledermäuse aus ihren Höhlen	The bats flutter from their caves
Zacken durch die angebrochene Dämmerung	Spikes through the breaking dawn
Blitzschnell	Fast as lightning
Gerade zu der Zeit	Just at the time
Als ich mir diese wichtige Idee notieren will	When I want to note this crucial idea
Statt dessen lasse ich mich verführen	Instead, I allow myself to get seduced
Von den flatternden Gedanken	By thoughts that flutter
Die Fledermäuse gleiten durch winzige Löcher	The bats slip through tiny wholes
Im Gemäuer der Nacht	In the ruins of night
Ins Freie	Into freedom
Was unsereins nicht kann	What we cannot
Sie übertölpeln die fahrigen Schatten	They dupe the nervous shadows
Spielen mit ihnen fangen	Play hide-and-seek with them
Und verstauben	And get dusty
Das letzte Licht	The last light
Das Holde zur Schlafenszeit.	The graceful at bedtime

Wonnetraum (Bäumler, 2007) – *Käfig* (Felser, 2018)

Harald Bäumler	*Anna-Sophie Felser*
Deutsch	*English (trans. Klose)*
O voll flutet schimmernd	Oh full floods shimmering
Ach warm	Alas warm
Wehn uns Flehn	Blowing us begging
Und still	And calm
des vertaumelnd unsre Gefühl schwebend	The staggering our feeling floating
Abend	Evening
Und wir schweigen, obwohl wir etwas	*And we remain silent although we have*
zu sagen haben.	*something to say*
Leib sich und in	Body itself and in
Umfangend	Surrounding
Lebens Leid	Life's misery
wir Umranket wir	We entwines we
zärtlich unsrer Streich umflechtend	Tenderly our stroke braiding
glücklich wallt Seelen	Joyful undulates souls
Die Bombe. Alles nur eine Frage der Zeit.	*The bomb. Everything a matter of time.*
O auf Glut flackern	Oh on blaze flicker
Ach preßt trunknem Mund	Alas press drunken mouth
Zerfällt sie. Zerbricht. Verstaubt.	*It decays. Shatters. Gets dusty.*
Was überbleibt sind wir. Eingeschlossen. Nichts	*What remains is us. Enclosed. Not*
ahnend, aber gefangen.	*sensing but captured.*
- und es ruht.	- and it rests.

Nicht/s

wir/r – Anna Sophie Felser (Felser, 2019b)

deutsch	*English (trans. Klose)*
wirr	confused
wirrwarr	huddle
wirr warren	huddles / we were
ich bin/du bist/wir sind	I am/you are/we are
-nicht/s	-not/hing
wir waren	we were
sind nicht mehr	are no more
waren nie	were never
sind nicht	are not
w/irre durch die Welt	confused / wander through the world
wünsche zu wissen	wish to know
was ich wollen soll/sollen will	what I should want / must shall
bin bin bin bin	am am am am
und war es doch nie	and yet never was
there are stars	there are stars
exploding	exploding
and there's nothing	and there's nothing
you can do	you can do

The shuts the door

Thomas Nashe – A Litany in Time of Plague (Nashe, 1592)

Felicia Nimue Ackerman – The soul selects her social distance (Ackerman, 2020)

Beauty is but a flower

Which wrinkles will devour;

Brightness falls from the air;

Queens have died young and fair;

Dust hath closed Helen's eye.

I am sick, I must die.

   Lord, have mercy on us!

The soul selects her own society,

Then shuts the door.

Adieu, farewell, earth's bliss;

This world uncertain is;

Fond are life's lustful joys;

Death proves them all but toys;

None from his darts can fly;

I am sick, I must die.

   Lord, have mercy on us!

She keeps her social distance of

Six feet or more.

Wit with his wantonness

Tasteth death's bitterness;

Hell's executioner

Hath no ears for to hear

What vain art can reply.

I am sick, I must die.

   Lord, have mercy on us!

 Unmoved, she notes the careless crowd

Outside her gate;

Unmoved, she notes the feckless folk

Still tempting fate.

I've known her from those foolish people

Choose none

Then turn her mind to friends she's meeting

By phone.

Haste, therefore, each degree,

To welcome destiny;

Heaven is our heritage,

Earth but a player's stage;

Mount we unto the sky.

I am sick, I must die.

   Lord, have mercy on us!

Sonnen Schwärzen (Felser, 2022)

Engel sind leere
Versprechen des
Himmels.

    bezaubernd,
    berauschend

Währenddessen geht
der Mondschein
schlafen,

    Sonnen schwärzen
    die Sicht.
    ohne Schatten,
    kein Licht.

Brennende Planeten,

    kreisende
    Feuerbälle
leuchten,   dunkeln,
verbrennen an sich
selbst.
Der Lauf der Dinge:
Federkleider
schmelzen und
verbrennen

    Ikarus und Phönix
    umarmen sich im
    Fall
    Und die schwarzen
    Sonnen
    kreisen
    sanft
    immer weiter
    immer fort;

Blacken suns (English trans. Klose)

Angels are empty
promises of
heaven.

    enchanting,
    exhilarating

Meanwhile, the
moonlight goes to
sleep,

    Suns blacken
    the sight.
    without shadow,
    no light.

Burning planets,

    circling fireballs
glow,   darken,
burn themselves.

The tide of
events:
featherings melt
and burn

    Ikarus and Phoenix
    embrace each other
    while falling
    and the black
    suns
    circle
    gently
    forever
    on and on;

The wall
text by Marie Samrotzki

There is an absurd and senseless, almost poetic struggle to push against something, which is never ending, futile.

The Sound of Exhaustion.

Exhaustion is the thing.

The Sound.

Exhaustion from life, from fight, from love, from running.

Exhasution from resignation.

There is a certain complacency in the exhaustion.

Infinity.
Absurdity.
Body. Machine.
Boundaries.
Exhasution.
To make empty.
Escapism.
Synaesthesia.
Finding a calm in overstimulated overload.
Taking drugs.

A person crawls and creeps.

Between play and disorientation.

A person runs in a circle.

Making the circles bigger and bigger, smaller and smaller.

Ducks down. Stops. Begins running again. Like in a game show with a dog.

Between play and delusion.

There is this indifference in the exhaustion.

Body machine. Human.

Body machine. System.

A person is leaning against a wall.

Half able to stand, half able to walk.

The person is swaying in its own beat, the head against the wall.

Between ecstasy and powerlessness.

Three people push a wall with their hands.

As to move it.

The only thing moving is their bodies.

The feet slide away.

With the power of their bodies.

Against the wall.

In the try to move the wall they only move themselves.

Two people push each other.

Like the wall, now the human opposite.

The place where they meet, the hands, nothing is moving.

The feet, the legs in movement.

They walk, against each other, with each other.

They hold each other.

Without pressure no hold.

Without uniform steps an imbalance.

Forehead against a wall.

The view turned downwards.

Quiet walking against the wall.

The wall gives hold.

It doesn't move.

The wall marks.

It divides.

It encloses.

Determining inside and outside. Private and public.

It protects and endangers.

It guides and restricts.

It hurts.

What is the motor for moving?

What makes us move?

And why do we continue to move?

Much body much violence.

Loop.

The image of stagnancy within movement is contrary, yet, omnipresent.

Exploring rules in relation to crisis.

How do we move as human beings within environments and systems of social structures?

The feet and the body keep sliding off. We are trapped in a loop, like a locked groove.

The wall, one instance.

It remains unchanged.