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**AUSSEN IV: quotidien, quotidienne | OUTSIDE IV: quotidien, quotidienne
for string quintet and piano (2016)**

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Explanations, Commentary, Additions

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General information:

AUSSEN I / OUTSIDE IV is the fourth part of a series of works that first started in 2015. The pieces within the series share a common effort to find and realize a different relationship of "art" and "world". However, different the specific goals and the means applied in each piece, all works in the OUTSIDE-series deal with a similar attempt to step outside of the closed space of music as such and - at the very least - bring forth the question about an outside, a counterpart or a different form of presence. In OUTSIDE IV this question appears on the one hand in the parallel use of improvisational or not fully controllable sounds and structures and the given necessity to control "normal" instrumental playing beyond standard requirements. On the other hand, it lies in a loose, somewhat "accidental" formation of sounds similar to everyday life and a certain openness and looseness regarding time-structuring and aspects such as dramaturgy, imagery and, to an extent, approach. While the first condition is taken to extremes and reflected in a parallelism of different systems of notation as well as pitch divisions in the strings, the second aspect remains at more or less the same level of openness while being well-structured at all times. Some musical events in OUTSIDE IV can occur at different instants (somewhat unspecified or with a "range"), while others need to happen on cues or in reaction to other actions. Everything that happens, however, is carefully weighed out and based on carefully trying to listen to an imagined situation. Thus, most importantly in playing this piece is playing together, listening closely and love for even uncommon sounds (see below) - generally, the willingness to engage as a musician in this adventure of momentariness of music and to give everything for an even finer, even more sensitive shaping of each moment. No less than a musical practice par force is asked for: a simultaneity of very high levels of virtuosity of instrumental playing and more spontaneous, direct techniques on objects which can often only be played in analogy to what is written, but still need to be played with precision and a certain degree of sophistication.

The five pages of the score all need to be performed, however, their order is free. As a point of reference, there is a symbolic notation in the upper left corner of each page (not a number, though). It might be worth noticing that the page with a complex sign of horizontal and vertical lines could well be played as the last page - which is not a guideline as such but results rather logically from the wrapping of piano or vl. II (variants A and B) (as the instruments would afterwards be much harder to play).

In addition to the free arrangement of the score pages, there also is an "inner variability" within the piece - in various places, there are more or less significant choices to be made. This could mean only having to choose between different lines of a structure (notated as [I], [II], [III]) etc.), but also more meaningful formal steps [notated as [A], [B], [C]. See also the Annotations of each page)

Preparations

The Doublebass is in **scordatura**,
not E - A - D - G but C#- F#- D - G (the lower strings each tuned down a minor third)

In addition to the instruments, the following things are required:

heavy mutes (sourdine lourde / metal) for Vl. I, II, Vla., Vc.

standard mutes for Vl. I, II, Vla., Vc. Cbs.

an **e-bow**

(0) 1-5 radio receivers (depending on the choice [A] or [B])

Several **pencils** (piano, Vl. I, II, Vla.) and **rubbers/erasers**

some **pages of paper**

an empty **pickle glass**

two identical coffee cups with different drinking glasses:



① (moves more flexible) ② (heavier)



① (more flexible) ② (heavier)

a piece of sandpaper (degree 220 or less), folded multiple times



three different lids of metal pots



four yoghurt cups with rubber rings around them four forks (2x2, for this:)



At least three **toggle switches** (as sound sources, not in order to start/stop something)
Some **wads of adhesive tape** (Tixo)

A lot of **clingfilm** (wrapping film, plastic wrap) and
a small object made from metal (not too heavy)

The instruments should ideally be positioned in a circle, with a considerable amount of space inside the circle. The idea is to transmit less the image of a "concert situation" but rather an open stage.

The score pages, originally A2 (420 x 594mm) should be printed quite large - both in regard to the requirements of playing as well as in terms of a dramaturgical gesture (however, do not increase the size above the original size, lest printing quality will suffer). Each change of a page should be done purposefully, not in an exaggerated or theatrical way, but certainly not hidden. The changes are part of the performance. It is however important to note that the pages are not "separate pieces" but rather moments in a longer stretch of time i.e. the piece.

Playing techniques of the gesturally notated sounds are intended to guide the performers to and through the necessary movements. Usually, they are much easier shown than explained, however there are three possibilities of working with these techniques:

- 1a)** let yourself be led by the object, its qualities and possible sounds that come out of it when playing around. Then take a look at the notation and
- 1b)** try to fit the results of your experimentation onto it. Usually, there is a necessity to adopt oneself to the techniques (or, the techniques to oneself), and this can be reached through such experimentation.
- 2)** generally, there are, if slight, remarks on how to play (with) the object on the spot.
- 3)** if all else fails, you are always welcome to contact me directly and I will then demonstrate the intended way of playing

Regarding Notation

In AUSSEN IV | OUTSIDE IV, there are four types of notation.

(1) Normal / standard-notation

Especially for the Piano. The high strings, because of the difference in tone-system (see below) use a less standardized, however familiar, variation of the standard-notation. Generally, though, everything is quite common here - rhythms, pitches, sometimes even bars appear.

(2) Notation of high strings

Mostly, the high strings (meaning VI. I & II, Vla, as well as Vc. sometimes) use an especially devised system of several boxes. There's always only one string notated (referenced at the beginning of each segment), the limits of the system point to the range currently at work. Please note the following:

VI. I, VI. II:	29,8 tones / octave or	4, 96 tones / whole step
Vla:	31,3 tones / octave or	5, 22 tones / whole-step
Vc.	34,08 tones / octave or	5, 68 tones / whole-step

Thus, there's no octave purity - the division is about 25-40% smaller than quarter-tonality. Shown as a scale, it looks more or less like that:

The image displays three systems of handwritten musical notation, each representing a different string instrument's scale. Each system consists of a staff with notes and a corresponding number line below it. The first system is for VI. I & II, with a circled label 'VI. I & II' and text '29,8 T. / Oktav ≈ 4,96 T. / Ganzton'. It is labeled 'z.B.: II (G)' and has a box 'Schematische Darstellung'. The second system is for Vla, with a circled label 'Vla.' and text '31,3 T. / Oktav ≈ 5,22 T. / Ganzton'. It is labeled 'z.B.: I (D)' and has a box 'Schematische Darstellung'. The third system is for Vc, with a circled label 'Vc.' and text '34,08 T. / Oktav ≈ 5,68 T. / Ganzton'. It is labeled 'z.B.: III (C)' and has a box 'Schematische Darstellung'. Each system shows a scale of notes with accidentals and a number line below it, with numbers in brackets indicating specific points or ranges.

(The Doublebass is in quarter-tonality).

There are some parts, however, where the higher strings are written in standard notation, too (double stops). In such cases, the numbers in brackets below the notehead point to the exact spot (or range) where to play.

There is no doubt that this different system of division is very challenging. However, such a system only makes sense when applied and performed accordingly, meaning to say that this notation is under no circumstances a "more complicated way of writing an E", for example - once again, it is necessary to really adopt this system.

For the rhythmical placement of notes, the first guideline is the proportionality between similar systems (when several instruments are playing in this notation). Secondly, the spatial comparison between this system and the other instruments, i.e. the spatial relations on the page, need to be considered. This of course means a lot of freedom as well as a lot of responsibility. As always, find a beautiful and convincing interpretation.

(3) Rhythmical notation of sounds

Usually in just one line, with the sound intended given at the very beginning. Only rhythmical values are notated, rarely additional remarks, dynamics, etc.

(4) Gestural notation / Notation of movements / Notation for playing objects

More or less a variation of the rhythmical notation of sounds - some playing techniques and manners of bringing forth sounds are hard to describe even verbally. In such cases (e.g. yoghurt cups, sand paper, etc.) I chose gestural forms of notation in which the graphic appearance and design hints towards the intended form of movement or way to produce the sound. Please note that such notation can never be precise but always only an approximation - following this notation means improvising. It is helpful to understand what the notation points to, it also connects oneself to the specific musical moment and prevents being indifferent, however the actual goal of the notation is to reference the actual, free and improvisational play of sound objects. To perform it "correctly" means to improvise wholeheartedly and with love to sonic detail.

Regarding the structuring of time

There are a couple of special rhythmical signs in AUSSEN IV | OUTSIDE IV.

The upside-down eighth/sixteenth pauses (which look a bit like noses) with the wavy line are uncounted, felt pauses - with shorter (upside-down sixteenth-) or slightly longer duration (upside-down eighth pause).

Some rhythms are generally underlined with a wavy line, this points to the impossibility of playing this specific rhythm with this sound in a precise way. The wavy line thus means: "analogous", "approximately"

There are three types of fermatas,

the acute one (∧) is the shortest, round (⤴) is a standard fermata, the square one (▮) the longest.

In addition to that, there sometimes are stop marks. Fermatas without a sustained note or pause signify a felt stop, depending largely on context an musical density.

Annotations for each page

Vier Quadrate | Four Squares

Playing techniques:

VI. I, VI. II:

bowing on the tailpiece	Each a free note (not low, though), VI. I reacting to VI. II	Play with partially muted strings and each 2 forks. The violin lies on the knees.
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Vla.:

two sheets of paper between the hands, different movements	cont.	cont., change to instrument, play between tailpiece and braided string/on a braided string (coloured noise)
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Vc.:

Wads of adhesive tape (Tixo), knead freely, then change to instrument, fully mute the strings, wipe the bow up and down rhythmically	Follow with your fingers the sounds from the "piano"	Bow on the rib of the instrument, hissing noise
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Cbs.:

Put down Doublebass, go to the piano (take the bow with you), play pickle glass there	cont., then pick up the pot lids and...	bow them, beat on them, etc. various techniques
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Pno.:

"ord." - play the fragments in free order and with long silences in between (3-7")	Intermezzo on pot lids, various techniques	"ord." - play the fragments in free order and with long silences in between (3-7")
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Remarks:

Above a somewhat noisy base structure of the strings, we hear the piano fragments. Two things are very important - on the one hand, there should not any holes in the base structure, on the other hand however, the piano should not play without taking notice of the other instruments and their sounds. In case the written material of the higher strings should appear too short (which could happen easily if the pauses in the piano become very long), either repeat with variation or "continue freely in the same way", thus avoiding to leave the piano alone at the end of a part.

The Doublebass player needs to do his action quite naturally, without any theatricality, but certainly with consciousness towards the moment. It is also important here to stay mindful on the sound and its quality.

Schwarzer Kreis / Black Circle

Playing techniques:

VI. I, VI. II, Vla., Vc.:

tacent,
VI. II drops something
small at some point

① VI. I, II, Vla. dense
hissing sound (noise),
most likely to be played on
the instruments's ribs

② VI. II somewhere in
the middle: two notes
Vc. bowing on the tailpiece

③ VI. I und II:
three very high pizz.

VI. I, VI. II.:

ord. playing (with heavy
mute) cont. ("draining off")

Vla.:

ord. playing (with heavy
mute) yoghurt cup & rubber
(different techniques)

Vc.:

ord. playing (with heavy
mute) on the tailpiece

Cbs.:

"tamper with the
instrument"

cont.

sand paper, rub in
different ways

cont,
then ord. Db. playing
(arco)

Pno.:

Pencil, different
techniques on the body of
the instrument

Pencil cont. (various
techniques), ord. piano
playing, pickle glass

ord. piano playing
pickle glass

pickle glass
pencil as before

Remarks:

From the very cautious sounds from the piano (which can be very diverse and fine, but are almost always very silent), something unfolds, becomes a musical moment. It is a very diverse, very multi-faceted sound-world, but absolutely non-dramatic - it, so to speak, should not make its own existence too distinctly notable, everything needs to be rather demure. In the forth "part", there's something like a "coda".

Nothing too loud here. The piano can, whenever it has to play normal notes, be clear enough, not too indirect (however soft). The yoghurt cup needs to come into the sound world almost "prominently", but has to withdraw after that a bit.

Weißer Kreis / White Circle

Playing techniques:

VI. I

yoghurt cup / rubber cont. cont. cont. (cresc.),
then crumple yoghurt
cup

VI. I, VI. II.:

3 different boxes,
play in parallel (very
proximate entries,
play together)

VI. II

yoghurt cup / rubber cont. cont. (with a short
Solo), then
ord.-playing

Vla.

yoghurt cup / rubber cont. some snapping /
creaking / groaning
sounds on the C or G-
string (excess pressure) ord.-playing

Vc.

Just one time: mute the ord.-playing double stop, a ord.-playing
strings, play a
downward arpeggio
with a lot of contact /
pressure on the strings.
Afterwards free finger-
tapping (the strings still
muted) on the fingering
board.

Vla., Vc.

free finger-tapping
(dampened strings)
or finger-tapping on
the body of the
instrument

Cbs.

various hissing sounds cont. play with Vc., enter ord.-playing
on the bridge, different
angles and bow
pressure somewhat later -
double stop, then short
hissing sound as before

hissing sound as
before, three
variations

Pno.

pot lids, various cont. ord.-playing, depress ord.-Spiel,
techniques, left hand keys silently, then also Voice (lines in
Sostenuto-pedal create resonance free order) e-bow on e (overtone
on the octave)

Remarks:

Differentiating even more towards noise. All elements are equally important. It is important that the Doublebass plays his hissing sounds carefully, without stepping into the foreground. The notes from the piano are additions, not the main thing of the page. Just as the textual level should be only partially understandable, can and should be mumbled, however the player should not hide behind language as such but rather use it as a means of sound-production and formation.

Wellenlinie / Wavy Line

Playing techniques:

VI. I

"Melody" - ord.-playing, together with Vla. Broken, often with pauses, with a lot of freedom in the arrangement

VI. II

key ring
wads of adhesive tape

Vla.

"Melody" - ord.-playing, together with VI I. Broken, often with pauses, with a lot of freedom in the arrangement

Vc.

yoghurt cup / rubber
wads of adhesive tape

Cbs.

sand paper
Text / Voice in free order and with free presentation

Pno.

ord.-playing in fragments,
alternating with playing cups & glasses (various techniques)

Three variations:

[A]

Pno. gives a sign with the toggle switch cueing VI. I, II, Vla. Vc. with the chord (be careful about the numbers, double stops!) followed by the Db. somewhat later on the tailpiece.

The piano "switches them off again", the mutes need to be put on in a coordinated way (again).

[B]

Pno. e-bow on g (overtone on the octave), simultaneously play with the pencil (cf. Black Circle)

VI. I, II, Vla.: move the stand, write something down, erase something, in the order given, x2

[C]

Duo of Vc. and Dbs., played somewhat fragile sometimes

Pno. play freely in the highest register, follow the notation,
VI. II picks up a note once

Remarks:

Initially, VI. I, Vla. and the piano are tied together - basically, the piano could follow the (approximate) notes of the melody in the strings in its fragments in the correct order (note the "Main voice"-sign in the piano), but does not have to. The other instruments create something of a background to these happenings, however there is no clear sonic hierarchy intended - all the elements are - more or less- equally important.

Out of this follows one of the three variations, each representing a fairly different possibility to cast light or (depending on the order of the pages) or raise expectations, either on previously heard music or the piece as a whole. They are either breaks or references on earlier material (or anticipations on things to come) - this decision remains with the ensemble.

Vertikale und horizontale Linien / Vertical and horizontal lines

Playing techniques:

VI. I	then three variations:		
Play with partially muted strings and each 2 forks. The violin lies on the knees.	[A] Str.:	[B] VI. I, Vla.:	[C] VI. I, VI. II, Vla., Vc.:
VI. II Yoghurt cup / rubber	UKW 1-5 ON (Static / Hissing sound, various frequencies, different mixtures of static and interference sounds)	free pizzicati of the left and right hand (resonant and (half) dampened), before and behind the contact point of the hand	heavy mute, after some time (wait for Pno.-attack or the hissing sound of the Dbs.) play 7 different chords (repeated gesture) with the notes in the given ranges, be careful about the dynamics and articulation.
Vla. Toggle switch, with Vc. and Pno.	Put down instruments, then go to piano and wrap it in clingfilm together	VI. II: free, very dense and swiftly changing playing with the given elements	Cbs.: hissing sounds as before, cont., respectively, with variation.
Vc. Toggle switch, with Vla. and Pno.	Pno.:	VI. II: free, very dense and swiftly changing playing with the given elements	Cbs.: hissing sounds as before, cont., respectively, with variation.
Cbs. various hissing sounds on the bridge, different angles and bow pressure	e-bow cont. simultaneously free play with the given notes (see chord on the side), choose different lines.	Vc., Cbs.-Duo, repeat 3 times! Pno.: e-bow cont.	Pno.: sostenuto-pedal alone (attack) somewhat later, but still in the resonance pick up some newspaper, read/study with interest, etc. (as written)
Pno. Toggle switch, with Vla. and Vc. then also e-bow on F (overtone on the octave) and ord.-playing in low register.	Towards the end (with the wrapping continuing) play less and less.	UKW 6 ON Wait a long time, somewhen (while the Vc. and Dbs. are still playing) go to VI. II and wrap the instrument in clingfilm	e-bow OFF Close the piano lid Simultaneously wads of adhesive tape, knead
<i>Vla. Vc. Pno.:</i> note the repeat!			

Remarks:

Possibly the last page to be played. The toggle switches refer to an activation of "something", however, what this "something" could be, will show only in one variation. Whether the piano or the VI. II needs to be wrapped, whether the arrangement dissolves in this or that way, remains the ensemble's choice. It seems to be important to emphasize that the performative actions are not meant as jokes or something like that, but add aspects to the imagery of the piece - the search for an Outside in or of the Musical. On the other hand, they should not be done ceremonially. The intention behind this lies somewhere in the middle - in the naturalness and humanity: just as the people performing the piece would be doing it, just as it correlates to their being, without having to become actors, should be just it.

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