

Mariabrice Sapphocatherin

**O Mensch, beweine dein künstliche
Schwindsucht groß
(O man, bewail thy artificial consumption so great)**

**for organist and assistant
duration: 5 minutes**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ORGANIST

Concept

Our piece is based on the melody *O Mensch, Bewein* (used in Bach's BWV 622).



Performance

Play it in 4 minutes on as many simultaneous octaves as you can depending on the size of your hands, using freely the manuals and pedals to do so.

Play them with over-exaggerated legato, overlapping the start of a new pitch with the release of the previous one. Each octave/finger/foot does this varyingly. Do you change the order of the releases? Do you sometimes release many at once? How long does the overlapping last compared to the pure octaves? We tried to create a visual representation of these instructions on the stave below.

We also kindly ask you to sing the melody together with the organ. Unlike the organ — who's blower is being processed by the assistant — remain as much in tune as you can. Breathe whenever you need to. Sing on the syllable "la", *poco forte* but somehow — obviously — softly compared to the organ. Of course, no one will hear you when the organ is fortissimo. But people will hear you on the first attack, then a tiny bit and intermittently when the assistant plays around with the registrations, and eventually more and more towards the end. Keep a very steady sound and dynamic, contrarily to the permanently changing organ.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ASSISTANT

Concept

This piece is inspired by Ligeti's *Etude 1, Harmonies*. Our piece, though, requires an air pressure decrescendo to zero. This means that you need to come up with a solution to have a fairly regular decrease of air pressure over the 3 to 3 and a half minutes the organist is playing the melody until it reaches total silence. Some organs (with a big wind chest) will do this process naturally in this amount of time. If not, figure out a solution. Ligeti's score provides some options.

Performance

Before the organist starts playing, turn all the registrations on. (The blower is off.)

Switch on the blower after the organist has placed the first notes.

After 30 seconds to 1 minute (depending on the system you figured out for the air pressure decrescendo), start the decrescendo process. It's notated as "OFF" on the score below, assuming the simplest solution is to turn off the blower.

During these 3 to 3 and half minutes of decrescendo, change the registrations independently from the organist. The general shape is going from most registrations on, to most registrations off. During the process, you may change very frequently and hectically, or, on the contrary, very smoothly. Don't overthink it. Don't prepare a sequence. Think more in terms of a choreography of stops. Let chance lead you. We notated these two options with the two different black lines on the score.

After the organ is silent and the organist is done playing the melody, leave anything mechanical and noisy running on for 30 seconds. For example, it can be the mechanics of the tremulant. If there is no mechanical sound, find a way to make some: manipulate the stops, switch back on the blower, etc. Stop the noise abruptly after 30 seconds.

