

Richard Barrett

dying words (II)

2013
solo female vocalist with flute

performing score

dying words (II)

(2013) for solo female vocalist with flute

text: *Heike-monogatari* (13th century CE)

duration: approximately 9 minutes

Trills should be rapid but always more or less irregular in speed. Flute trills are normally shown in terms of fingering since the resulting sound is usually altered more in timbre (and often stability) than in pitch. (L1) indicates that the left-hand first finger executes the trill, (R123) that the first three fingers of the right hand are used together, and so on. A pitch given in brackets indicates a fingering whose pitch might not (always) be heard as such, for example when the embouchure is closed by the lips.

Notes and rests are often given traditional time-values, but these should be taken to indicate approximate relationships rather than implying any rhythmical precision. A sense of tempo or rhythmical regularity should be absent throughout, except in bars 43 and 45.

Material in “boxes” is intended to interrupt whatever continuous sound/process is taking place in a bar, and to be repeated irregularly as often as necessary (usually for reasons of breath-duration). Their varying widths are intended to suggest that their durations (and the durations between them) should be freely varied, but are *not* proportionally-sized or -spaced relative to the horizontal extent of the bar.

The Japanese text is given in transliteration, and should be performed with as much attention as possible to the pronunciation of Japanese, which applies especially to the letters “r” and “u” (“r” is pronounced almost as in English, and “u” almost as “ü”), and also to giving each phoneme - many of which last more than 20 seconds, an individual “colour”. Sometimes a vowel is given in brackets, for example *sh(i)* in bar 8, where the “sh” phoneme sounds throughout but the “i” (and therefore the notated pitch) is added only intermittently, or in bars 2 and 3 where the vowel should have only just enough presence for the vocal pitch to be perceptible. Plosives at the beginning of bars should generally be heavily accented, to the point of giving an overblown transient to the flute sound depending on dynamic.

The performer of *dying words (II)* will be principally a vocalist, with an alto range and some ability on the flute. (A closed-hole instrument is sufficient.) Amplification (and, in dry spaces, reverberation) will be necessary in order to give intimacy and presence to the fine gradations of timbre and expression in the music.

An **imaginative and improvisatory** approach should be taken to the notated material, which gives a duration and a starting point in terms of flute fingering and vocal pitch and phoneme for each bar, together with some suggestions as to how it unfolds. The durations should be taken as indicating approximate and relative values rather than precise indications - there is no need to use a stop-watch! - and the suggestions shouldn't be taken as defining the **limits** of what could happen during the bar but the **centre**. In particular, each bar should *explore* a new relationship between its constituent elements:

flute fingering -> overblowing and/or multiphonic possibilities, pitch and timbre alterations by subtle changes in fingering and/or embouchure position
vocal pitch -> micro-alterations in intervallic relationship to flute, including beats within almost-unison pitches
vocal phoneme -> micro-alterations in vowel-shape and colour
flute and voice dynamics -> explore variations in balance between the two, including more rapid changes in dynamic either synchronised or unsynchronised between voice and flute, and the effect they have on the composite timbre and texture

In general, inhalation within a bar is either as short as possible or with a continuation of the vocal sound. Thus the overall impression of the composition should be of an occasionally broken *continuity* as opposed to the broken *silence* which characterises *dying words (I)*.

All of the above should be thought of as the “default” situation when performing this composition, *before* it is varied, extended or replaced by further instructions given for each bar (which themselves may be expanded or augmented as desired).

dying words (II) is the second in a series of three compositions which itself forms part of a larger work entitled *dying words (resistance & vision part 2)* for voice, flute, piano and electronics.

Thanks to Ute Wassermann, and to Andrew Botros (*The Virtual Flute*, <http://www.phys.unsw.edu.au/music/flute/virtual/main.html>), Robert Dick (*The Other Flute*, New York: Multiple Breath Music Company 1989) and John Fonville (*Microtonal Fingerings for Flute*, San Diego: JonFon Music 1987)

遠山にかかる白雲は
散りにし花の形見なり

青葉に見ゆる梢には
春の名残りぞ惜しまるる

On far away mountains white clouds rest.
The memento of a flower, which died off.

The green leaves on top of the trees
show the farewell of spring.

dying words (II)

Richard Barrett
2013

12" irregular alternation, sometimes as fast as a trill (continues while inhaling)

1" 3" (open B₁) + rapid random activity of R1, 2, 3
legato!

fff poss. (non dim.) inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound

fff *f* *mp*

tō y(a) m(a)

16" + intermittent bursts of rapid random activity of R1, 2, 3 (explore multiphonics during these)

6" explore effect of gradually or suddenly opening/closing L1

8" + intermittent very brief bursts of rapid random activity of R1, 2, 3

mf non dim. etc. (each pitch subtly different, within a range of up to a semitone higher or lower)

ffmp *p* *ffp* *pp*

ni i i i i i k(a)

22" (explore multiphonics)

aperture closed open sim. sim. sim. etc. (always varying the durations of inhaling and exhaling)

inhale exhale

fff *ppp*

u u u u u

(+ rolled "R" phoneme for fluttertongue)

28" irregular alternation exploring multiphonics (like bar 1)

etc. (always varying the durations of inhaling and exhaling, like bar 7)

inhale exhale

sf *f* *mf*

sh(i) sh i ra

("sh" throughout; "i" formed in mouth and intermittently added)

35" irregular alternation exploring multiphonics

(L1) (Dtr) (L1) (Dtr) (L1) (Dtr)

(alternate between single and double trills each time)

etc. (always varying the durations) and each *crescendo* slightly smaller than the previous one...

sfp non cresc. *mp* *pp* non cresc.

ku (u) u (u) i

13

1" 2" 21"

(L3) (overblow)

pp *mp* *non cresc.* *ffmp* *mf* *pp* *mp*

(slow irregular microtonal glissandi)

mo—w(a) ch(i) sh(i)

etc. (always varying the durations)

14

12" 14"

(L3) (D trill key) (open L1 briefly & irregularly)

ffmp *pp* *f sempre*

inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound

intermittent (narrow) vibrato, independent of flute

ri ni

16

19" 5"

random independent activity of both RH trill keys, exploring unstable sounds

mp *ppp* - irregular dynamic movements between these limits, independently in voice and flute

inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound

embouchure-gliss. as far as possible

let F# gradually emerge from "sh" sound...

sh(i) i ha

18

7" 11" 3" 1"

irregular alternation, somewhat slower than in bar 17, exploring multiphonics

embouchure-gliss. as far as possible

mf *pp* *mf* *ppp* *p* *ppp*

inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound

sim.

na no ka ta

22

16" 9"

irregular melodic movements between these fingerings, while independently adding and removing G# key

p *ppp*

irregularly and independently add and remove L2 and R1 sometimes as fast as a trill

(p) (in one breath!) *ppp*

mi na

voice: microtonal melodies using similar but not identical pitches to those in the flute (always in the same range)

17" irregular alternation, quasi gliss.

24 F *pp* embouchure-gliss. inhale exhale etc. (always varying the duration between inhalations) *ppp*

V *ri* very gradual glissando repeatedly interrupted by inhalations (i)

1" 2" 4" rapidly back and forth between these fingerings

embouchure (open)---closed embouchure-gliss. as far as possible

f *mf* *p*

a--->0 ba

11" 13" embouchure in same position as at end of bar 27, then gliss. upwards

28 F *mf* *sempre* (normal position) *mf* sometimes introduce microtonal glissandi from the notated pitches, using the voice or flute embouchure or both *pp*

V *poco ritardando...* *accel. molto...*

ni i i i i i mi i i i

24" +rapid random activity of both trill keys stop activity of trill keys! start again

30 F *p dim* *mp* etc. (always varying the durations) and each *crescendo* beginning at a point further along the overall *diminuendo*...

V wide ("Korean") vibrato each time widening the vocal vibrato

yu u

20" 6" irregular random movements of D#tr, D#, C# and C keys, sometimes as fast as a trill

31 F *pp* *sempre* closed open etc. (always varying the durations but otherwise unchanging)

V *vibr.* *inhale senza vibr.* *exhale vibr.*

ru u u

closed (L123) *mp* *ppp*

"vocal fry" ko

28" (open) intermittent rapid and random behaviour using all fingers and/or overblowing inhale briefly as necessary, continuing vocal sound

33 F *p* *pp* etc. (always varying the durations of and between rapid events) *mp*

V intermittent rapid and random behaviour (including "jodeln") - each return to B may be microtonally different... (no break - legato!) e

17" 8"

explore multiphonic possibilities (also occasionally without the trill key)

35 (embouchure glissandi) *pp* *sempre*

(slow irregular microtonal glissandi) *sfpp*

etc. (always varying the durations between accentuated sounds)

pp (don't move!)

ni i wa

9" 13"

(for this "glissando", fingers go down in the order L1, Lthumb, L2, L3, R1, R2 each time)

37 *mf* (don't move!)

ppp *mp* *ppp* *mp* etc. (always varying the durations, and each *crescendo* slightly smaller)

(no accentuation)

ru u u

7" 5" 1" 12"

etc. sim. (raising and lowering fingers in a different order each time)

39 *mp* *p*

(gradually overblow)

mfz *pp* (mp)

inhale quickly once or twice

na go

13" 11"

(G# key) sim... (R3)

42 *mp* *ppp* *p* *non dim.*

inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound (microtonal "ornamentation" similar to flute)

(11)

exh inh exh inh etc. sim.

ri zo o o o o o o o o

12" 14"

irregular alternation exploring multiphonics

44 *mp non dim.*

inhale as necessary, continuing vocal sound (splitting of pitch using tongue, in blurred alternation with flute embouchure)

aperture closed!

close R1 and R2 briefly at irregular intervals

ppp *sempre*

high grace-note to low E each time

sh(i) sh(i) sh(i) sh(i) sh(i) sh(i)

10" 14"

(L23)
(R123)

46
F
irregular double trill (hands independent)
exploring multiphonic possibilities
p → *ppp*

V

ma

explore different pitches and multiphonics
available with this fingering but mostly A₃

pp ← *mf*
(each sound with a different dynamic within this range)
(each descending glissando dies quickly away to a different pitch)

ru u u u u u u u u u

14"

48
F
ppp sempre

V

ru u u u u u u u u u

(inh.)

etc. (always varying the durations)

when voice is alone, alternate between exhaling and inhaling, but all the different single and combined sounds should have exactly the same dynamic level