

William Kleinsasser

INNOCENT PROTEINS

A chamber concerto for two solo pianos,
two vibraphones, two marimbas,
and two electronic pianos

(2003)

Duration: c. 18 minutes

*Composed for **duo runedako** (Ruth Neville and Daniel Koppelman)*

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Program Note

Innocent Proteins, for two solo pianos, vibraphones, marimbas, and electronic pianos, was composed between 2001-2003 for Ruth Neville, and Daniel Koppelman. The composition is part of a larger set of three pieces and can either be performed independently or together with the other pieces. The larger set of three pieces presents an expanded design based on the musical expression of beginning, continuation, and ending. *Innocent Proteins* is the second of the three pieces and thus presents musical continuation as an underlying metaphor. This metaphor is also expressed in the musical rethinking and redevelopment of several previous works composed for Daniel Koppelman and Ruth Neville over the past fifteen years (*Spiral* (1986), *Free Shadows* (1994), and *Available Instruments* (1998)). *Innocent Proteins* is designed as a presentation of repeating phrases following classic rhetorical models that control repetition and presentation of new ideas. These models, which hearken back to my earliest composition studies with Monte Tubb at the University of Oregon, include *epizeuxsis* (use of immediate repetition: aaa bcd...), a hybrid of *symploche* (repetition of beginnings and endings: abc adc aec...), and *enjambment* (a continuation of an idea through or across an expected point of segmentation: abc def ghi...). These smaller parts, designed to control balanced conservation and invention, combine to create the larger-scale structure of the whole piece that is a kind of modified *gradatio* (repetition of an end in the next beginning forming chain-like progression: abc cde efg ghi...). Within this rhetorical framework (which acts

almost as a rhyme scheme), the surface lyricism and texture of the music emerge from intertwining, complex threads intended to present flowing, non-metrical music of complex and organic gestures and patterns. The two piano soloists have differing musical roles in the piece. Pianist 2 performs the work from notation that emphasizes strictly determined events and represents a traditional virtuosic solo presentation. Pianist 1 integrates traditional deterministic performance with two extended free improvisations. The first of the improvisations occurs with no accompanying music while the second freely overlays accompanying music played quietly by the ensemble as a secondary, independently simultaneous layer of sound. The free improvisations are intended to create space within the piece for another musical perspective, akin to a piece of architecture supporting free experiences within its design. These improvisations are to be open to musical exploration, made within a context of respect for the overall work and its ideas, and allowing for continual integration of yet unforeseen musical intentions and ideas.

The Larger Triptych

This piece is part of a larger set of three pieces and can either be performed independently or in conjunction with the other two pieces. The larger set of three pieces is presents an expanded musical design based on the musical expression of beginning, continuation, and ending. *Innocent Proteins* is the second of the three pieces and thus presents musical continuation as an underlying metaphor.

The Soloists' Roles

The two piano soloists have differing musical roles in the piece. Pianist 2 performs the work from determined musical notation throughout and represents a traditional virtuosic solo presentation. Pianist 1 integrates traditional deterministic performance with two extended free improvisations. The first of the improvisations occurs with no accompanying music while the second freely overlays accompanying music by the ensemble. The free improvisations are intended to open the work to another musical perspective, akin to a piece of architecture supporting free experiences within its design. These improvisations are to be open to musical exploration but made within a context of respect for the overall work.

Visual Improvisational Catalyst

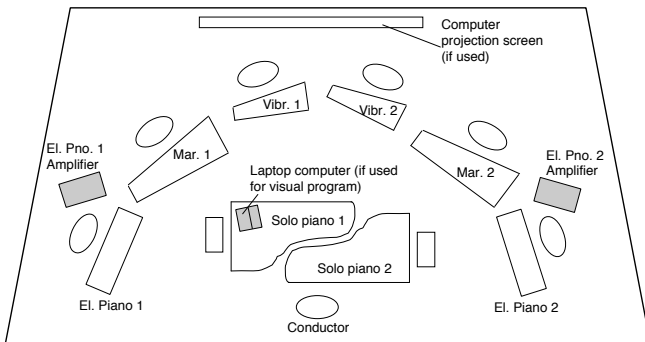
One available option for the improvisations is the use of a laptop computer which presents, to the soloist, dissolving excerpts of the notation of events in the rest of the piece. If this dissolving, suggestive "mobile notation" used as a catalyst for improvisation, the images should also be projected onto a screen that is visible to the audience during performance. Software for this visual presentation is available from the composer and runs on Max/MSP/Jitter software.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Instrumentation

- 2 pianos (concerto soloists)
- 2 vibraphones
- 2 marimbas
- 2 electronic pianos
(two distinct timbres similar to Fender Rhodes)

Stage Setup



Notation Details

Accidentals apply to all notes of that pitch class regardless of octave and are cancelled by bar lines.

Grace-notes should be played immediately prior to the metrical timing of the note that they ornament.

Percussion tones should ring freely (undampened) unless otherwise indicated.

Following a fermata, the tempo should immediately revert to the last indicated unless a new tempo is indicated.

Conventional Rhythmic Notation

Rhythm in this composition is notated in two different ways.

Conventional metric/rhythmic notation is used in sections where rhythmic synchronization between parts is called for:



Proportional Rhythmic Notation

Much of the score is notated using proportional notation¹ (above) in which complex rhythmic events are notated across a graphic measure without specific rhythmic notation symbols. This form of notation is used to give each performer a simpler representation of complex, non-metrical timings within a conducted measure. This notation is intended to give a certain degree of rhythmic freedom to each performer in order to support a simpler representation of complex timings. These events are to be played while maintaining relative but somewhat flexible beat-to-beat synchronization with the others via the conductor's beat (indicated by brackets above the measure). In these proportionally-notated measures, the player is not expected to tightly synchronize rhythmic figures with the other players within beats:



¹ In order to simplify the production of this form of notation, the composer commissioned Tobias Giesen to create a Finale software Plug-in that converted complex rhythmic patterns into simplified, proportional, beamed notation. This plug-in is now part of the TG Tools plug-ins for Finale software available from Tobias Giesen (www.tgtools.de).