

Thomas Metcalf

# DISSOLUTION

for organ

2020

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## **Composer's Note**

DISSOLUTION is a musical exploration of the visual process of pixelation on a map of the River Thames. The pixel size of the original image, used in the first piece, is gradually increased over the course of the next 11. This is reflected in the pitch material of each piece, which uses an ‘averaging’ process similar to that of a pixelation algorithm. A tone row was generated using the River Thames as a pitch-time graph, then adjacent pitches/chords are ‘averaged’ by taking their midpoint and, in this case, rounding up if it results in a microtone.

The pixelated graphics determine many aspects of composition, and pieces become increasingly dependent upon them. By XII, there is a single pixel as an input, resulting in the relegation of certain sonic aspects to the organist to reflect the culmination of data-loss in the image.

### **Part One (I-III) | Representation**

The image is clear; it sounds its music with detail and excitement.

### **Part Two (IV-VIII) | Pixelation**

The image is pixelated; its music begins to rely on its own failed representation, and empty spaces.

### **Part Three (IX-XII) | Obfuscation**

The image no longer exists; its music becomes filled with glitches as total failure becomes inevitable.

The performer is encouraged to find the most creative approach to registration possible with their instrument with respect to the above; descriptive indications are given as prompts. A collaborative recording, made by the composer and organist, is available to demonstrate the rich possibilities:  
[www.thomasmkmetcalf.com/dissolution](http://www.thomasmkmetcalf.com/dissolution)

—

This piece was written for, and is dedicated to, Daniel Mathieson whose insights throughout were invaluable.

*Duration: c. 26'*

2

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

for Daniel Mathieson, in friendship and admiration.

3

# DISSOLUTION

## Part One | Representation

### I

Thomas Metcalf (b. 1996)

Agitato  $\text{♩} = 84$

Manual

Pedal

*fff* possibile       $\equiv$  *mp*

*f*

*pp*

*fff* possibile      *mp* dolce e espress.

*f*

*molto rit.*

*fff*      *pained*

*fff*

4

A tempo

Musical score page 4, staff 1:

- Measure 9:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Dynamics: **p** distant. Articulation: rit.
- Measure 10:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Articulation: **pp**.
- Measure 11:  $\frac{6}{4}$  time.

Musical score page 4, staff 2:

- Measure 9:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Dynamics: **p** distant.
- Measure 10:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Articulation: **pp**.
- Measure 11:  $\frac{6}{4}$  time.

Musical score page 4, staff 3:

- Measure 9:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time.
- Measure 10:  $\frac{2}{4}$  time.
- Measure 11:  $\frac{6}{4}$  time.

[1']

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

6



## II

Grazioso ♩ = 116

pp *sempre, semplice*

*mp*

*p sempre*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 18, measures 18-21. The score consists of four systems of music. The top system (string quartet) starts with a melodic line in 7/8 time, followed by a section in 5/8 time with grace notes. The middle system (cello and double bass) features sustained notes and rhythmic patterns. The bottom system (piano) provides harmonic support with sustained notes and rhythmic patterns. Measure 18 ends with a dynamic *sf*. Measure 19 begins with a dynamic *sf* and ends with a dynamic *mp*. Measure 20 begins with a dynamic *sf*. Measure 21 concludes with a dynamic *ppp*.

Meno mosso ♩ = 50

**PPP** sempre, dark

A tempo ♩ = 116

*p* uneas

Musical score for strings and piano, page 23, measures 23-25. The score includes three staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, and Cello/Piano. The tempo is  $\text{Meno mosso } \text{♩} = 50$  until measure 25, where it changes to  $\text{A tempo } \text{♩} = 116$ . Measure 23 starts with sustained notes followed by eighth-note patterns. Measure 24 continues with eighth-note patterns, including a sixteenth-note cluster in the top staff. Measure 25 begins with a dynamic ***ppp*** and instruction **semper, dark**, followed by a sixteenth-note cluster. The piano part in measure 25 includes a dynamic **p** and instruction **uneasy**.



PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## III

Lento  $\text{♩} = 40$ 

Piano score for the Lento section (measures 1-6). The music is in common time (indicated by '4'). The left hand (treble clef) starts with a dynamic *p dolce*. The right hand (bass clef) has eighth-note patterns. Measure 1: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 2: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 3: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 4: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 5: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 6: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes.

Più mosso  $\text{♩} = 60$ 

Piano score for the Più mosso section (measures 7-12). The music is in common time (indicated by '4'). The left hand (treble clef) starts with a dynamic *ff sub.* The right hand (bass clef) has eighth-note patterns. Measure 7: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 8: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 9: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 10: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 11: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes. Measure 12: Left hand rests, right hand eighth notes.

12

(♩ = 75)

*mf*

*fp*

*pp*

18

*f*

*sub. p*

*5* *ppp*

23

molto rit.

A tempo ( $\text{♩} = 75$ )

29

cresc.

fff

ffpp bright, shimmering

[2'30'']

End of Part One

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## Part Two | Pixelation

IV

Molto energico, tempo giusto  $\text{♩} = 344$ ,  $\text{♩} = 172$ 

ff brilliant

mf

\*accidentals apply to duration of beamed groups

Musical score page 16, measures 1-4. The score consists of two staves. The top staff uses a treble clef and has a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff uses a bass clef. Measure 1 starts with a rest followed by eighth-note pairs. Measure 2 begins with a dynamic *f*. Measure 3 continues with eighth-note pairs. Measure 4 ends with a dynamic *pp*.

Musical score page 16, measures 5-8. The top staff starts with a dynamic *f* and a measure of rests. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic *mp sub.* Measure 7 ends with a dynamic *pp*.

Musical score page 16, measures 9-12. The top staff starts with a dynamic *f*. Measure 10 begins with a dynamic *f*. Measure 11 ends with a dynamic *f*.

Musical score page 17, measures 1-3. The score consists of three staves. The top staff uses treble and bass clefs, the middle staff uses treble clef, and the bottom staff uses bass clef. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic *p*. Measure 2 starts with a dynamic *fff*. Measure 3 begins with a bass note followed by a measure of eighth notes.

Musical score page 17, measures 4-6. The score continues with three staves. Measures 4 and 5 show melodic lines with slurs and grace notes. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic *dim. poco a poco*.

Musical score page 17, measures 7-9. The score continues with three staves. Measures 7 and 8 feature eighth-note patterns with slurs. Measure 9 begins with a dynamic *ppp*, followed by a dynamic *ff* at the end of the page.

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC  
V

PERUSAL SC

Liberamente  $\text{d} = 30 \text{ ca}$ Solemn  $\text{d} = 42$ *pp restrained*

quasi *ppp*, malevolent

10

20



34



Meno mosso ( $\text{♩} = 66$ )

42

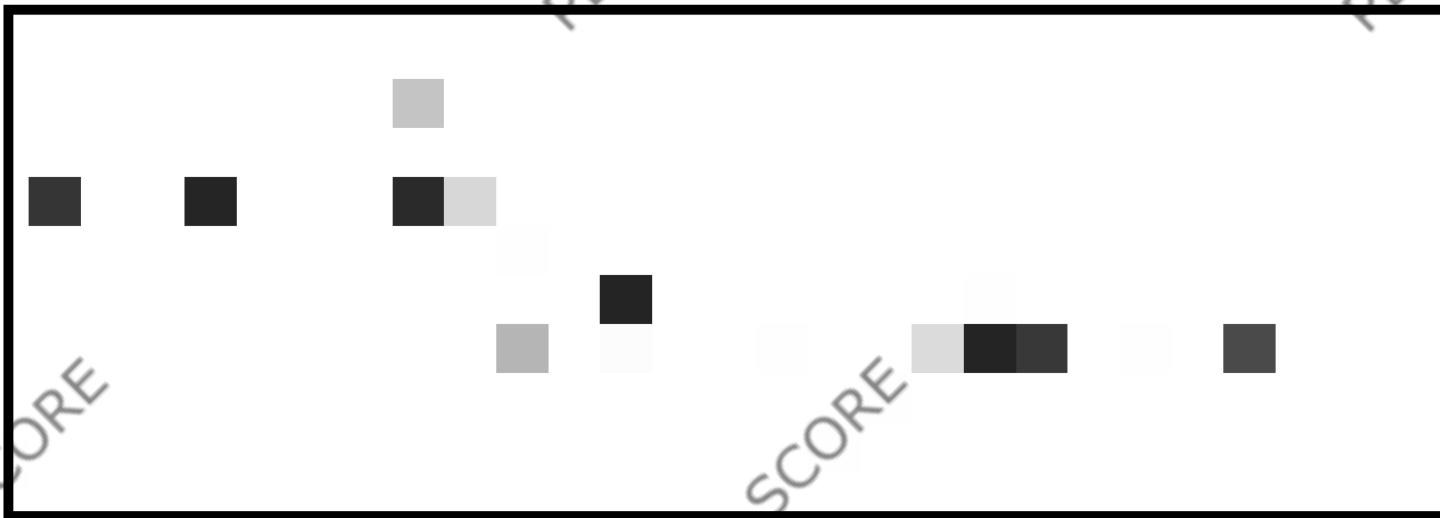
*ppp* haunting

[3'20"]

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## VI

Moderato  $\text{♩} = 96$

*f*<sup>heavy</sup>

*p* blurred, echo

Vivo, scherzo  $\text{♩} = 160$ ,  $\text{♩} = 120$

*p* cresc.

Tempo I

*mf*

PERUSAL SCORE

12

Tempo II [♩ = 160]  
legatissimo  
8va---1 8va---1 8va---1

mf

(loco)

Tempo I [♩ = 96]

p

Tempo II  
molto accel.

17

Tempo I

Frenzied (at least ♩ = 150)

f

p

pp

8va---1 8va---1

(loco) (loco)

(♩ = 200)

23

PERUSAL SC

Tempo I [♩ = 96]

8va - 1      8va - 1      8va - 1  
(loco)

fff

8va sopra

pp

molto rit.

Tempo I

28

p misterioso

ffff tutta forza

3

5

6

ff

3

molto rit.

Tempo I

28

p misterioso

mp

p

mf

p

ffff

3

5

6

ff

3

37

*pp*

*mf*

*ff*

Poco meno mosso ( $\text{♩} = 84$ )

molto rit.

41

*ff*

*pp*

[2']

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

PERUSAL SC

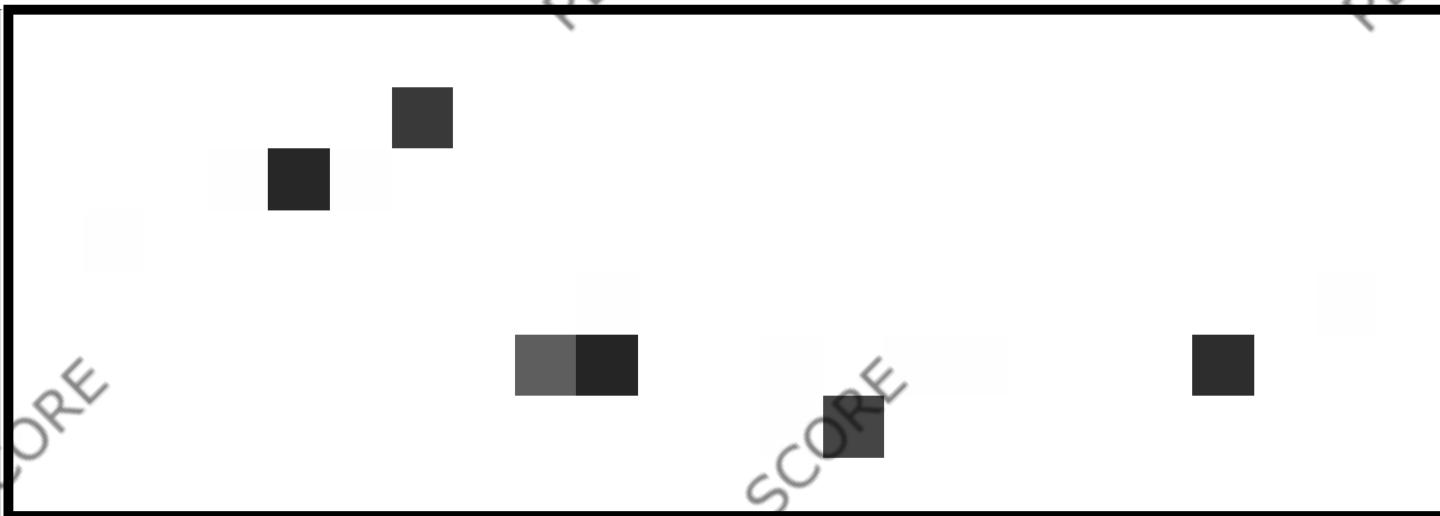
PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## VII

Steady  $\text{♩} = 72$ 

*pp chiaro*

*mf* *mp* *f*

*p sluggish*

 $\text{♩} = 82$ 

*leggiero e energico*

*mf*

*leggiero e energico*

*mf*

Musical score for page 30, measures 16-21. The score consists of two staves. The top staff uses treble clef and has a key signature of one sharp. Measure 16 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern followed by a dynamic ***ff***. Measure 17 begins with a eighth-note pattern. Measure 18 shows a bassoon line with a dynamic ***p***. Measures 19-20 are in 5/8 time, featuring a melodic line with a dynamic ***mp energico***. Measure 21 concludes with a dynamic ***ff***.

Musical score for page 30, measures 22-23. The top staff continues with a melodic line. Measure 22 ends with a dynamic ***f***. Measure 23 begins with a dynamic ***mp***, followed by ***fff***, and then ***mp mischievous***.

Musical score for page 30, measures 24-25. The top staff continues with a melodic line. Measure 24 ends with a dynamic ***f***. Measure 25 begins with a dynamic ***f***.

Tempo I  $\text{♩} = 72$

30

*pp sparse*

35

*pppp*

*mp*

*pppp*

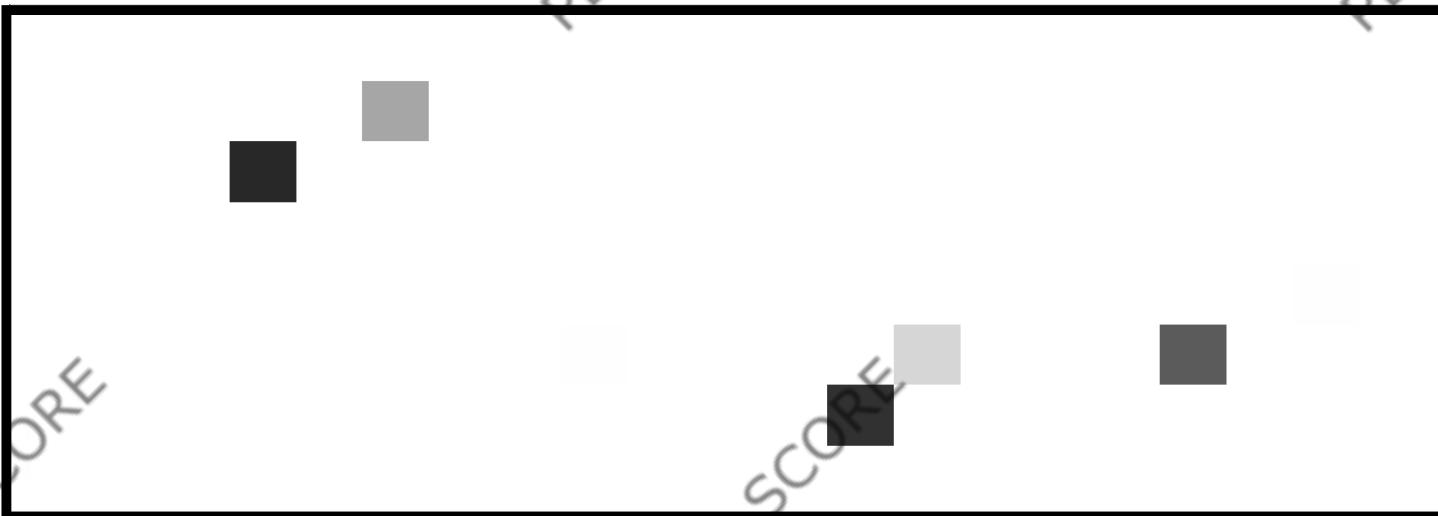
[2']

This musical score consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff begins with a sustained note. Measure 35 starts with a rest, followed by sustained notes and sixteenth-note patterns. Dynamics include *pp*, *p*, and *mp*.

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## VIII

Flowing ♩ = 56

3/4

6 6 6

*pp* *sempre legatissimo*

5

*ff*

*sf*

*p*

*mf cantabile*

10

mp

**f** melancholic, wandering

15

mp

5

p

pp echo

20

(p)

(mf)

24

ff

mp

mf

ff

28

Chaotic (♩ = 56)

*ffff cacophonous*

5

5

5

33

Flowing (♩ = 56)

*ppp sempre*

5

[c. 10"]

*ffff*

[2'15"]

End of Part Two

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SCORE

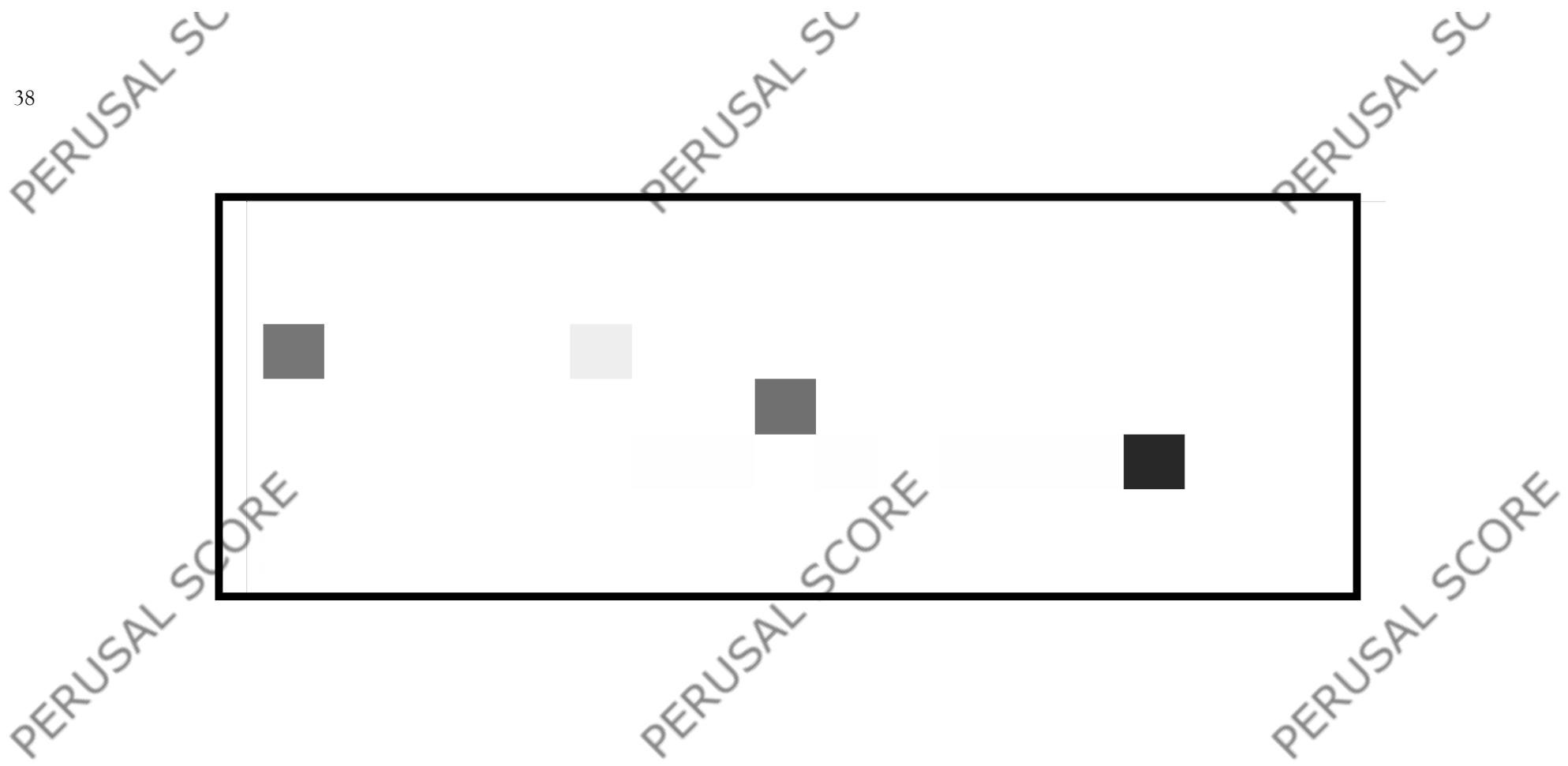
PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

## Part Three | Obfuscation

## IX

Still, calm  $\text{♩} = 52$

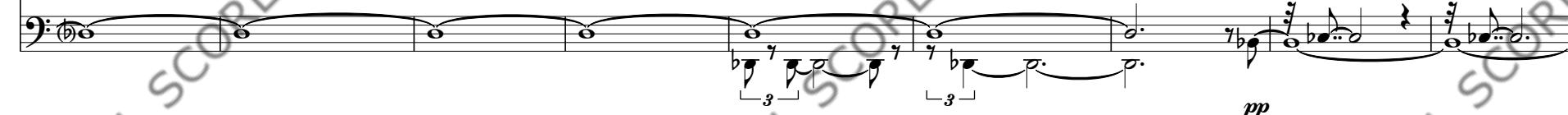
12

$p$  desolate       $ppp$        $f$        $pp$        $mp$

$f$  languorous       $pp$

$fff$  thunderous       $pp$        $mp$

40



34

*pp semplice*

*f*

3

3

3

41

$\leftarrow \downarrow = \downarrow \rightarrow$

3

attacca  
[2'45"]

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE



PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

X

Unstable ♩ = 96

fp bright

ff fierce

f

p

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

timid

mf

ff

44

14

*p*

*f*      *ff*

*v*

molto rit.

[♩ = c.72]

19

*b*

*mp*

*f sub.*

23

*pp* ethereal

*pp*

*pp*

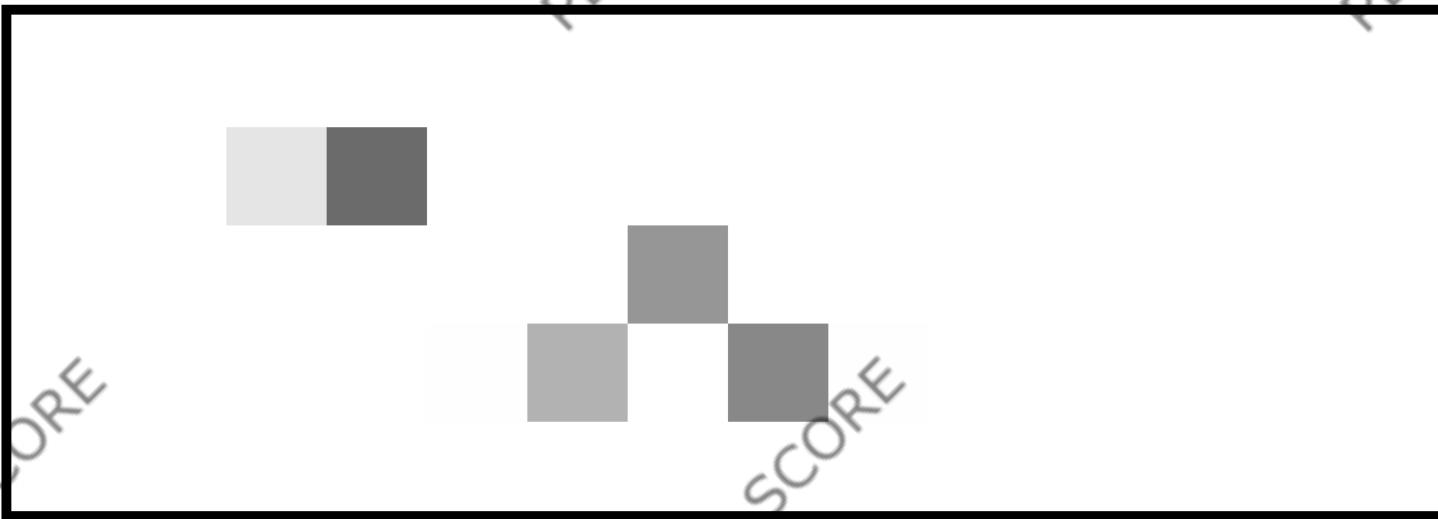
*pppp*

attacca  
[1'10"]

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC

PERUSAL SC



PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE

PERUSAL SCORE



ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

ISAL SCORE

## XI

Timid  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 72$ 

Musical score for section XI, first system. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, 3/4 time, and the bottom staff is in bass clef, 3/4 time. The key signature changes between F major (two sharps), C major (one sharp), and B-flat major (one flat). The tempo is marked as Timid  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 72$ . Dynamics include *ppp*, *rit.*, *f*, *p*, and *ff obnoxious*. The score features various rhythmic patterns and grace notes.

Continuation of the musical score for section XI, first system. The staves remain the same, showing the continuation of the melodic line and harmonic progression.

Tempo giusto [ $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 72$ ]

Musical score for section XI, second system. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, 3/4 time, and the bottom staff is in bass clef, 3/4 time. The key signature changes between B-flat major (one flat) and A major (no sharps or flats). The tempo is marked as *Tempo giusto* [ $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 72$ ]. Dynamics include *mp*, *p*, *ff violent*, and *5*. The score features eighth-note patterns and grace notes.

Continuation of the musical score for section XI, second system. The staves remain the same, showing the continuation of the melodic line and harmonic progression.

*p sempre*

13

5 5 5 5

17

*ppp* fragile      *ff* brash      *pp*

20

mp f

*p*

3 3

3

3

5

5

pppp

23

50

Musical score for page 50, measures 25-27. The score consists of two staves: treble and bass. Measure 25 starts with a dynamic ***pppp*** and a performance instruction "almost inaudible". The music features eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Measure 26 begins with a dynamic ***ff*** and a performance instruction "wailing". Measure 27 continues the eighth-note patterns with grace notes.

***pppp*** almost inaudible***ff*** wailing

Musical score for page 50, measure 28. The score continues from the previous measures. The dynamic changes to ***molto rit.*** (molto rit.)

Musical score for page 50, measures 28-30. The score consists of three staves: bass, tenor, and soprano. Measure 28 starts with a dynamic ***mf***. Measure 29 continues with a dynamic ***fff*** and a performance instruction "apocalyptic". Measure 30 concludes with an **attacca** instruction and a bracket indicating a duration of [2'].

***molto rit.******fff*** apocalyptic

attacca

[2']



#### Performance instructions

The hand must be replaced by weights, which maintain the cluster for the entirety of the piece.

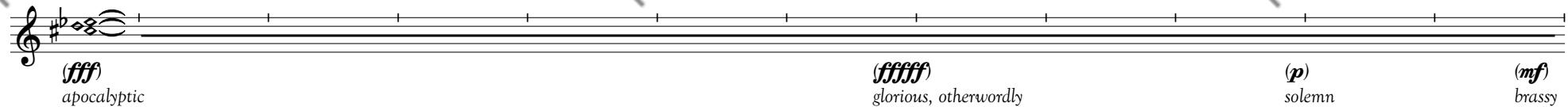
The dynamic and timbre of the instrument should be adjusted according to the graphic below the stave. Referential expression markings have been provided to allow for a general structure using the graphic, and to assist the performer in their own interpretation.

The minimum suggested performance time is 2', which gives each 'bar' a duration of around 5 seconds. Liberties can be taken to reflect the specifics of the acoustic and the instrument, but the upper durational limit should be no more than 3'.

The focus of this piece is to explore the sonic possibilities of the organ whilst reflecting the instructions of the graphic. The performer is encouraged to be creative with registration, and to exploit unusual sound combinations (e.g. pulling stops halfway).

Pitch

Replace hand with two weights  
without any break in the sound.



Dynamics | Timbre

