

Andy Ingamells (with Eilís O'Sullivan)

Pear Tart

For flute, live electronics performer (with fife) and backing track

Backing track is available from the following link:

<https://soundcloud.com/andyingamellsmusic/pear-tart-backing-track/s-pwVVLisYams>

Duration: 11 minutes

Setup instructions:

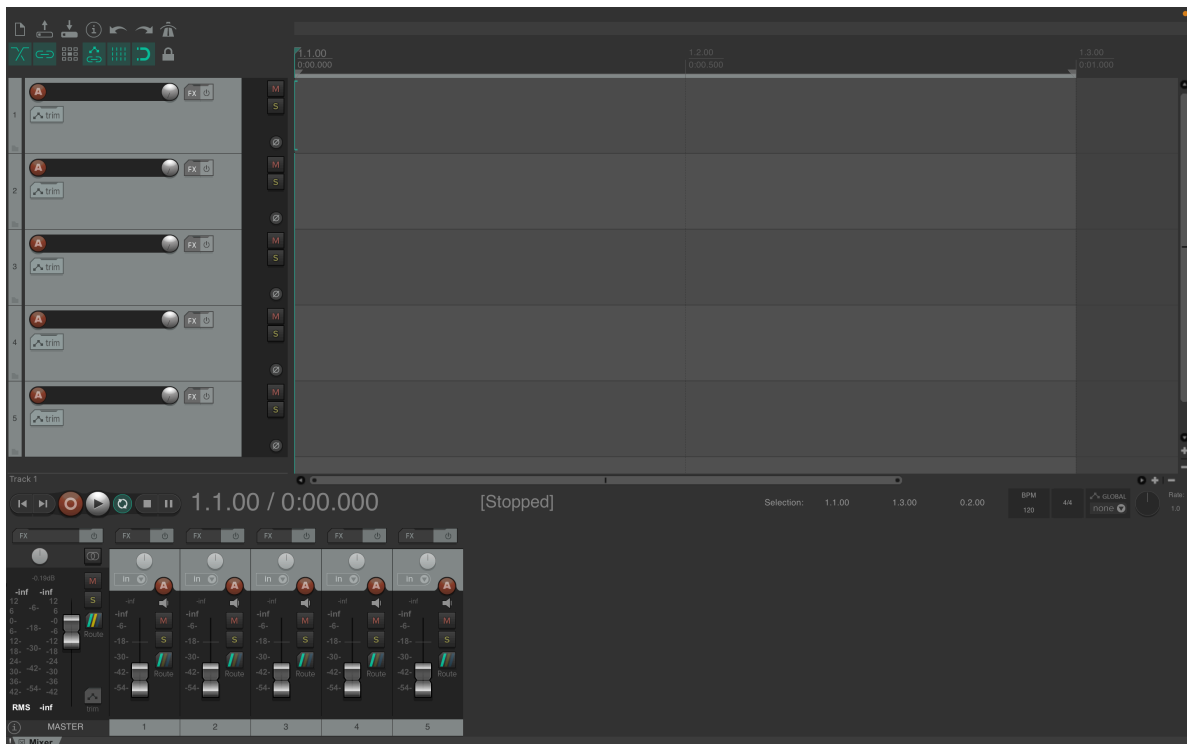
Arrange to have a microphone placed near the flute and connected to a laptop running a digital audio workstation (DAW) such as Reaper (operated by the live electronics performer). Arrange to have the audio from the laptop, as well as the backing track, come out of speakers in the space.

Performance directions for flute player:

The text in the score is a transcription of the conversation on the backing track. Play the semibreves in time with the word above which they are placed. Hold each semibreve for the length of a comfortable breath at the dynamic of the speaking voices on the backing track, or until you reach another semibreve. The live electronics performer will sustain some of your pitches using the laptop and layer them to produce chords.

Performance directions for live electronics player:

Arrange to have a fife with you during the performance. Arrange to have 5 empty tracks in the DAW and toggle a 1-second repeat (see screenshot example below).



Press play in the DAW at the beginning of the performance so that the playhead is continuously moving through the 1-second loop. Follow along with the score, and when instructed begin recording a short (2 or 3 second) loop of the flute player playing a note. Once this short loop has been recorded gradually (over approx 5 seconds) bring up the volume of the loop. Repeat this procedure to create a sustained chord. Improvise with this procedure, deleting some notes and recording more notes to make a slow chorale-like accompaniment. At certain points in the score you will be asked to fade out the loops and fade them back in. You will also be required to improvise on the fife.

It is lovely.



It's funny cos I was going back over that anecdote.



The pear tart one?



Mmm, yeah. I went and read... I think it's in, erm... It's in this book Alex Ross *The Rest Is Noise*.



Oh right, yeah yeah yeah!

It's in there and, erm... I can't remember... I should remember because I've just read it. But erm...



It's one of Messiaen's students I think, and erm, he'd been pushed to think of something



scandalous to say about Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod, and the only thing he could think of was...



Eating the pear tart!

That was it!



And do we know where or when they ate this pear tart all in one go?



He'd obviously just seen them one day when he'd been 'round at their house.



Oh so they didn't offer him any pear tart?



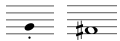
I presume not cos yeah they devour... they... the words were "they devoured it all in one go", so

erm...



They must've been hungry Andy.

Exactly.



I just can't imagine him watching them eating a full pear tart.



Mmm, yeah.



It's like he was on the outside looking in the window or something. And he wasn't offered any.

Yeah. I'm trying to remember who it was now.

Laughter on backing track for 10 seconds – flute player remove head joint and laptop player take plastic fife head joint. Both improvise gestures that mimic the laughter on the backing track using the head joints.



Laptop player begin sustaining pitches to create chords from this point onwards



Why was it *Le Merle Noir* that you picked?



Oh this is a funny one. Why I picked *Le Merle Noir*. I wasn't... I never learned it in college and I



don't quite exactly remember how I chose it. But I remembered I had started one of my first



teaching jobs and I came across the score in the library,

Oh yeah?



and I took the score home and I started fiddling with it...

Oh wow, what do you mean?



And thinking... just trying it out in practice cos I just wanted to play something new and play

something different. And you know, nobody had sort of particularly recommended it and I was



experimenting with it and I opened the score and I just thought "how am I going to play this



piece!?". "How do you even start it!?". "How do you approach learning!?". "How do you play it in



time!?", and "how could you possibly play this with a piano player, together!?".



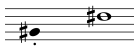
What's it look like, the score like?



Oh! It's all these rhythms that to me made no sense. I remember thinking that the first time and thinking "how would I count this?". But that's our problem as classical musicians



Oh yeah...



we want to get everything right. And we want to be precise and we want to do it exactly right,



exactly together, exactly in time and this was a serious issue for me. But I thought "this is a



challenge", and I thought "yeah I'm gonna learn this".

Yeah



But I had nothing to prepare it for. Erm there was you know I wasn't programmed for anything or



anything like that. So I thought you know this is going to be something new for me to learn and



it's a good challenge and it'll be good for me to practice it. And I was at that stage where I was



just out of college just started doing a little bit of work and doing a lot of dep work and all this sort



of thing, and I used to in those days practice in the morning time

Oh right yeah



Mmm early. I'm not as good at playing in the morning any more. Erm but I used to practice in the



morning, and I'd be getting up, erm... I used to practise in our kitchen at home which was a big,

big space. And I liked the kitchen cos it had a good sound. Flute sounds good in the kitchen.



Oh yeah, people talk about that... like the resonance of a practice space...

It's very important yeah. Very important for me. I think for flute players... and, it had this lovely



sound so you never felt bad. Which was probably the wrong thing to do because then you don't



develop your sound but I loved to practise in the kitchen but the unfortunate thing about that was



two of my brothers used to sleep in the bedroom directly above the kitchen so you know I'd start



with my tone exercises: dah, dah, have you ever heard those ones? Dah, dah, these are a flute



players life. Dah, dah, it goes on like that. And it takes quite a while to get from B down to low C,



and then you might do it the register above. So this was my start in the morning, and I just heard



my brother saying "god could you think of anything more dreary to play first thing in the day!?"



and they're still in bed. I never had pity on them but when I think about it I'd be going mad if I had



that going on downstairs now. So I really was quite an evil sister. And that would be my start, and



my father would be kinda getting up around the same time as me. And you know he... he



probably, by the time he'd be going out or something, I know he heard me trying out bits of *Le*



Merle Noir. He heard me trying it out and... He'd actually be going out the milk cows so my dad is



a farmer and he'd be going up... and the house... the farm... the house is a good... you know it's



a laneway walk up to the farmyard. So dada would go out, he'd put on his jackets and he'd go on



up the yard and he'd be going up... it's a sort of laneway, lots of big trees and everything. And I



remembered him saying to me one day, cos I'd been doing this for you know a little while,

Oh yeah



and he said, erm "I hear the birds singing what you're playing".

Oh wow, really?



And my father isn't a musician you know, he's never had musical training. Erm... he... you know



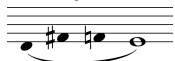
that... he doesn't have experience, only from putting up with me and playing in the kitchen when



he's trying to have his supper and trying to get up in the morning and everything. So I don't know



how I got away with that for so long playing in the kitchen. But whatever it was, that *Le Merle*



Noir, he obviously heard the snippets that I was badly trying out and somehow managed to hear



that the birds were imitating that as he went up the yard.



What so it'd be, like, something like this? Like...



That bit...

pizz. / slap tongue



Is this, is this part of the birdsong now that we're listening to or is this like a... sort of filler material

that's like based on it?



Well nobody knows do they really? Really and truly. But a lot of people think that's a, a whole



cacophony of birds. A lot of people talk about that bit, cos that's the end section and they talk



about that being the cacophony of birds. But I think the bit that I would have been practising



probably at the time was those opening cadenzas you know that's just the flute on its own.

Laptop player, quickly fade out all the flute tracks.
Flute player, play the following music in time with the laughter on the backing track.

$\text{♩} = 134$ ($\text{♩} = 67$)

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 134$ ($\text{♩} = 67$) and a 3:2 time signature. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*. The second staff has dynamics *p*, *p*, *mf*, and *f*. The third staff has dynamics *f*, *f*, and *mp*. The fourth staff has dynamics *p*, *f*, *p*, *pp*, and *sub.f*. The fifth staff has dynamics *f* and *f*. The sixth staff has dynamics *f*, *p*, *p*, and *f*. The seventh staff has dynamics *p*, *f*, *mf*, and *mf*. The eighth staff has dynamics *mf*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, *mf*, and *f*. The ninth staff has dynamics *mf*, *p*, *ff*, *f*, *mp*, *f*, and *sub.p*. The tenth staff has dynamics *f*, *mp*, *f*, and *ff*. Time signatures include 3:2, 5:4, and 6:4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic hairpins.

That's like the dictated birdsong that Messiaen would've probably taken down. They're probably French blackbirds.

So they speak different?

I'd say they have a different accent.

And then I make the blackbird sound like an Irish blackbird.

Laptop player begin sustaining pitches to create chords from this point onwards



How, how would it... How would it be different? It's funny cos it's like...



I think as a flute player, which would be a lot more...



They always claim that, people from different countries as a flute player, because you know a lot



of your flute sound is kind of interior, and it's to do with shape and to do with resonance. And also



articulation and pronunciation. And the way the French talk and pronounce and articulate is quite



different to the way we do, and it would probably impact our articulation. But I... I suspect that



probably a shape in peoples mouths as well, and that of course affects the quality of the sound.



So there is a different resonance, probably

Yeah



I just think that our way of talking and pronouncing probably has some effect on our sound quality



and just how we sound and the quality of sound. I mean there's definitely a difference between



the sound a French flute player makes and an English flute player makes and an American flute

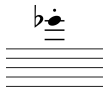


player makes. Even though it's kind of more of a, a one style of flute playing there is a different



quality in the sound you know.

Yeah definitely.

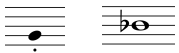


I mean, does an Irish blackbird sound like a French blackbird?



Do you ever think about Messiaen's use of colour? It's an alien thought then.

Yeah

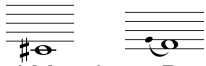


I mean I think cos I've... A friend of mine who is a musician who has it. But apparently it's a very



very different experience for everybody. And, and it would affect them very very differently. I, I

can't even remember now exactly how it affects her but it's very different to how it would have



affected Messiaen. But I just think it's fascinating to imagine what colours... I always think there's



a colour chord bit in this, and I always find it'd be really fascinating to know what colours he saw

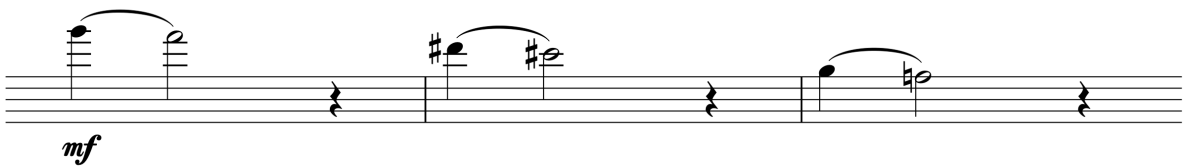
Oh yeah



for those colour chords. Here, listen to this. Now, these are the bits I often wonder about the

colours.

Flute player, play the following music in time with the extract on the backing track



And there's another bit here.



Now I think that there should be different instruments playing it because I feel as a flute you can't



get enough of the colours. But I think there's a lot of different colour possibilities in that. But I

don't have synesthesia, I don't know. And, and, and I didn't experience whatever he experienced.



But I think he literally, when a particular chord was played he saw a particular colour and he was

fascinated by stained glass windows which are absolutely beautiful. Erm, it's worse for me.

That's actually quite a beautiful ending cos it came to the end and you were like "it's worse for

me". That's quite nice. We should end it there.

Laptop player fade out the flute tracks one-by-one.