

THE BOOK OF DENSITY

Ian Willcock

For Bass Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano

Duration - 7 minutes

The Book of Density

Ian Willcock 1997


Notation

General

The score is notated using the normal transposition for the bass clarinet - i.e. it sounds a ninth lower than written.


Accidentals are:- \flat \sharp \times \flat \sharp \flat \sharp


Accidentals last for one bar - although, for the sake of clarity, most alterations are notated explicitly. Grace note accidentals do not affect subsequent notes. Accidentals in one hand of the piano part do not affect the part of the other hand.

 Indicates a continuous glissando, the slide commencing at the beginning of the first note and ending at the start of the second. Unless expressly indicated, there is no separate articulation of the second note; i.e. if it is a grace note, it only shows the pitch reached at the end of the slide. Articulations within a glissando are always indicated by explicit markings - 'bare' note stems are not articulated.


An arrow connecting timbre or other performance indications implies a smooth transition from the first condition to the second within the time subtended by the arrow. All performance indications (including dynamics) remain in force until an explicit change is made.

Bass Clarinet and Bassoon


 indicates a breath note. Where a trill is so notated, it should be performed (at least initially) wholly with breath tones. Where a glissando to, or from, a breath note is written, a timbral transition is required - from note to breath (or vice versa).

 this indicates a key click (with associated additional key resonances if appropriate). Unless indicated by an 'o' above a note, they should be performed 'closed' - i.e. with the reed in the mouth.

 indicates flutter tongue.


 indicates a multiphonic whose constituent pitches are not specified. An additional pitch is usually notated which forms the basis for any specified fingering alterations.

Alterations in the position of the reed (embouchure) are notated as follows :-

 towards the tip of the reed.

 towards the base of the reed.

Lip pressure variations are indicated by:-


 slightly relaxed lip pressure.


 relaxed lip pressure.

Piano

In the piano part, exact, immediate repetitions of chords are sometimes notated as bare note stems giving only the required positioning and articulation to aid clarity.

 indicates a cluster of all notes between the top and bottom of the rectangular shape.

 indicates that the event takes place within the piano - directly upon the strings. Precise performance details are given in the score.

 indicates that some of the strings inside the piano should be damped with the flat of the hand. Full details are given in the score.

Performance

Unless expressly indicated, all playing should be absolutely without vibrato.

Glissandi should be performed so as to be as smooth and uniform as possible throughout any particular glissando. This may often require a combination of different performing techniques to achieve the best result.

The pianist should wear thin leather fingerless gloves to enable the performance of the glissandi. The precise path to be traversed within each piano glissando (i.e. 'white' notes, 'black' notes and transitions from one to the other) are indicated by stemless grace notes. A plastic plectrum (as used for an electric guitar) is also needed for passages such as that starting at Bar 82.

Grace notes should always be performed as rapidly as possible, taking into account any articulations indicated. Where a group of grace notes appears within normally notated notes (i.e. those with fully specified placements), the grace note group should be played so as to facilitate the precise performance of the first normal event after each group.

In the bass clarinet part, some attempt should be made to differentiate between passages marked as harmonics and multiphonics. Both are produced in a similar manner - but in the former case, the player should focus (as far as possible) upon the upper notated pitch, for multiphonics, a broader band of sound is required.

The Book of Density was commissioned by Trio Mobile and was first performed by them on 8th July 1997 at Das Holzbläser-Festival, Hamelner Lockruf, Hameln, Germany.

The Book of Density

Ian Willcock

5/16 $\text{♩} = 96$ **3/4** **5/16** **4/4**

Bass Clarinet
1 strident, brutally manic *fff* sempre
2 restrained, reticent *ppp* subito
3
4
5 *p-pp*

Bassoon
strident, brutally manic *fff* sempre
restrained, reticent *fff ppp* (poss.)
poco *p* *p-pp*

Piano
brutal, manic *ff*
3 4:3

B. Clar.
6 3:2 *poco* *p*
7 subito senza vib. *p-pp*
8 (non vib.) *p-pp*
9 *poco*

Bass
5 *p-pp*
3 *pp*
emphasise key noise B or Bb or ? key *tr*
con vib. (poco) *pp*
(as before) *tr*
non vib. *ppp* poss. *poco* *p-pp*

Piano
smooth and resonant - almost as if bowed *pp*
3

11 *molto vib.* *p*

12 *non vib.* *p pp* *poco* *p*

13 *strident, brutally manic* *fff sub.* *poco* *p*

14 *restrained, reticent (non vib.)* *fff pp* *3:2* *pp*

15 *tr. Eb key emphasise key noise* *p* *p PPP* *p PP*

B. Clar.

Bass.

Piano

brutal, manic *fff sub.* *3* *5* *3*

strident, brutally manic *fff sub.* *5* *3* *restrained, reticent (non vib.)* *p* *p PPP* *p PP*

smooth and resonant - almost as if bowed *pp*

16 *5:4* *ppp* *poco* *p* *p pp*

17 *3* *poco* *p*

18 *emphasise key noise tr. F# key* *5:4* *pp*

19 *5:4* *poco* *p*

20 *con vib. (poco)* *poco* *p* *non vib.* *ppp* *pp*

7 *16*

B. Clar.

Bass.

Piano

con vib. (poco) *pp* *poco* *p pp*

subito senza vib. *5:4* *poco* *p* *pp* *poco* *p* *p PP*

emphasise key noise tr. E key ? *5:4* *pp*

emphasise key noise tr. C key ? *5* *pp*

3 *3* *3* *6* *3*

pp *pp* *p* *p*

7/16 4/8 3/8 7/16 3/4 3/4

B. Clar. 21 22 23 24 25

5:6 5 3 5 7:8 3

strident, brutally manic

restrained, reticent

con vib. 3 3 3 5:6 3

non vib. strident, brutally manic

restrained, reticent

p ppp poco p p mp fff pp sub. pp

Piano

3 5 3 3

brutal, manic

3 5 3 3

mp f sub.

2/4 5/8 4/8 3/8 4/4

B. Clar. 26 27 29 30

5:4 3:2 3 5 hollow 29 con vib. 30

emphasise key noise D key?

hollow

con vib.

3:2 5 5 3 con vib. 5:4 senza vib. 3 3 3 5 con vib. senza vib.

p ppp p sim. p pp p p

restrained, reticent

3 3 3 5

pp p pp p p sempre

Piano

3 3 3 5

pp p pp p p

3/4 **4/8**

B. Clar. *strident, brutally manic* *restrained, with increasingly precarious control* *fff* *mp* *mfp* *mf* *mfp* *mf* *p* *mf*

Bass. *strident, brutally manic* *restrained, with increasingly precarious control* *mp-p* *mp* *mp-p* *mp* *mp* *mf* *p* *emphasise key noise tr. c# key?*

Piano *brutal, manic* *restrained, with increasingly precarious control* *p sempre* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

3/4 **4/8** **5/8** **4/8**

B. Clar. *mf* *f* *fff* *fff* *mp* *p* *strident, brutally manic* *struggling for control - as if being overwhelmed pulsing*

Bass. *(no trill)* *mf* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *fff* *fff* *strident, brutally manic* *struggling for control - as if being overwhelmed*

Piano *slightly angular, awkward* *mf* *mf* *ff* *ff* *brutal, manic* *struggling for control - as if being overwhelmed* *pp*



B. Clar. 48 *mf* 49 *mp* *mf* *sfmp* *molto* *f* *sfmf* 50 51

pulsing 5:4 3 6 6 6 9:8

strongly pulsing

Bass. *mp* *mfmp* *mf* *sfmp* *mf* *sfmf* *f* *sfmf* *f*

Piano *mp* *mp* *mf* *mp* *Red.* *mp* *molto* *f* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*



B. Clar. 51 *fff* 52 *fff* *mf* *mfmp* *molto* *f* 53 *mp* *f*

strident, triumphantly brutal

struggling for control - as if being overwhelmed

fast trill

Bass. *fff* *p* *mf* *mfmp* *f* *sfmf*

strident, triumphantly brutal

struggling for control - as if being overwhelmed

Piano *ff* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *molto* *f*

(E.G. No tied)

7
16

B. Clar. *mf* *ff* *fff* *fffmp* *f* *f*

Bass. *f* *f* *ff* *fff* *mp sub.* *molto* *f* *f* *ff*

Piano *ff* *mf sub.* *ff* (no pedal)

strident, triumphantly brutal

fast trill

all fast trills

5
16

7
16

B. Clar. *fff* *fff* *mf* *molto* *ff* *sf* *ff* *fff*

Bass. *sf* *sf* *fff* *mf sub.* *f* *ff* *ff* *fff*

Piano *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *ff*

strident, triumphantly brutal

add harmonics

7/16 **bleak and harrowing** **ff** sempre

62 63 64 65

6/16 **ff** sempre

63 64 65

play as a multiphonic - other pitches may be present

7/16

Piano

precise, heavy and unyielding, utterly remorseless

the ensemble balance here should slightly favour the wind instruments

(B-D, E-F) (B-D, D-F) (B-D#, F#)

7/16 **ff**

5:8 67 68 69 70

3/4 **as if abandoned** **ppp** *pos.* *poca* **pp**

3/4 **ffmp** *pos.* **sempre**

4/8 **rich multiphonics**



5/16 **fff** *sub.*

remove reed

Piano

ff

mp

5/16   **4/8** tightly controlled keyed/ embouchure gliss. **3/4** **3/4** **3/4**

B. Clar. 71 72 73 74 75 *pp* sempre poss. *pp*

Bass. *mf* sempre

Piano *p* *mp* *p*
 smooth and resonant - almost as if bowed
 fleeting, very short
 straining - a grotesque parody of expressivity
 expressive, nostalgic
 fleeting, very short

4/8 **3/4** **5/8** **4/8**

B. Clar. 76 77 78 79 *ff* sub. *pp* poss. *ff* sempre *tr* multiphonic

Bass. *ff* *pp* *ff* *tr* replace reed

Piano *sub.* *tr.* *Reed*
 expressive, nostalgic
 fleeting, very short

B. Clar. *ff* *tr* *+Eb key* *ff* *sf* *fff*

Bass. *p* *fff*

Piano *take plectrum inside piano* *dry, separated* *p sempre*

16 *mp* *keening, intimate*

Bass. *mp*

Piano

During notes, scrape the plectrum very slowly along the sounding strings. The effect should be an almost continuous, aperiodic rasping interrupted by moments of harmonic resonance - which can be dwelt on.

B. Clar. 7
16

Bass

Piano

87 88 89 90 91

p *poco mp* *p* *mf* *pp* *fff* *ff sempre*

3/4 3/4 3/4 3/4 4/8 7/16

L.H. - middle finger

add harmonics

208 (breathless only at start)

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7/16 \triangle \square \square \square 5/16 \triangle \square \square 3/8 \square 5/16 \triangle \square \square 7/16 \square \triangle \square \square 5/16

92 bleak and harrowing

B. Clar.

bleak and harrowing

Bass.

precise, heavy and unyielding, utterly remorseless

Piano

(A, B, D-F) (A-C, E)

(C, D, F-A)

the ensemble balance here should slightly favour the wind instruments

5/16 \square \triangle 7/16 \triangle \square \square \square \square \triangle \square \square 5/8

97

98 strident, triumphantly brutal

B. Clar.

strident, triumphantly brutal

Bass.

strident, triumphantly brutal

Piano

(G-Bb, Db, Eb)

inside piano take plectrum

single rapid stroke

ppp poss. < pp < mp

B. Clar.

102 *mp*

103 *ppp poss.*

104 *mp*

105 *p*

106 *mf (poss.) sf p*

ff

play as a harmonic

harmonic glissando

L.H. - middle finger

Breath pressure should be increased to the point leading up to where the harmonic (multiphonic) sounds - and then relaxed.

Bass.

mp

ff mp poss.

mf

keening, intimate

emphatic noise

remove reed

alla tromba
(in this section, pitches only serve to indicate the fingerings to be used)

Piano

p sempre

dry, separated

During notes, scrape the plectrum very slowly along the sounding strings. The effect should be an almost continuous, aperiodic rasping interrupted by moments of harmonic resonance - which can be dwelt on.

The right hand should be pressed flat on the strings, covering all pitches in each chord. The effect should be of a violent, constricted attack without any resonance.

keyed/ embouchure gliss.

107 108 109 110 111

B. Clar. *mp sub.* *ff sub.* *p sub.* *ff sub.* *ff sub.*

Bass

Piano

to keyboard

fleeting, very short

expressive, nostalgic

3/4 7/16 4/8 5/16 8/8

keyed/ embouchure gliss.

112 114 115 116

B. Clar. *mf* *fp*

Bass

Piano

replace reed

normal

keening, intimate

dry, very short

inside piano take plectrum

tolling, expectant

p cresc. poco a poco

mf (*re-c. D*)

sf

dry, separated

hand flat on strings

ff *molto* *f sempre*

ff sub. *p* *ff poss.*

L.H. - middle finger

The dynamic should be slightly too quiet to allow the multiphonic to speak consistently - giving a highly unstable effect.

8/16 **bleak and harrowing** 122 **7/16** 124 **9/16** 125 **7/16** 126

B. Clar. *bleak and harrowing*

Bass. *bleak and harrowing*

Piano *precise, heavy and unyielding, utterly remorseless*
 (E-D, E, F) (Bb, D-F) (B-Ob, F#)






the ensemble balance here should slightly favour the wind instruments

127 **10/16** 128 **5/16** 129 **3/8** *strident, triumphantly brutal* 130 **4/8** **5/16**

B. Clar. *strident, triumphantly brutal*

Bass. *strident, triumphantly brutal*

Piano *strident, triumphantly brutal*
 (A, B, D-F) (A-C#, E) (G-Bb, Db, Eb)

B. Clar. 5/16  4/8  7/16  3/8  7/16 

132 6 3 3 133 3 3 134 *fff* 135 *ff* *ffmp* *ffsub.* *ffmf* *fmp (poss.)*

harmonic glissando

Bass

5 6 3 3 3

5:6 3

p *fff*

Piano

5:6 3

fff *poss.*

red.

inside piano

The right hand should be pressed flat on the strings, covering all pitches in each chord. The effect should be of a violent, constricted attack without any resonance.

B. Clar. 137 138 139 140 141

Bass. 137 138 139 140 141

Piano 137 138 139 140 141

B. Clar. 142 143 144 145

Bass. 142 143 144 145

Piano 142 143 144 145

3/8

B. Clar. 151 *sf* 152 *sf* 153 *sf* 154 *sf* 155 *sf* 156 *sf*

Bass *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Piano (B-D, E, F) (Bb, D-F) (B-Df, F#)

6/16 9/16 7/16 10/16 5/16 7/16

B. Clar. 157 *sf* 158 *sf* 159 *sf* 160 *sf* 161 *sf* 162 *sf* 163 *sf*

Bass *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Piano (A, B, D-F) (A-C#, E) (G-Bb, D#, Eb) (B-D, E, F) (Bb, D-F) (B-Df, F#)

(C#, D#, F#-A)

5/16

163

3 164

165

3

multiphonic

keyed/ embouchure gliss.

8/16

167

7/16

168

5:6 3 6

strident, triumphantly brutal

B. Clar.

Bass.

Piano

(C#, D#, F#-A)

(A, B, D-F)

(A-C#, B) (G-Bb, Db, Eb)

strident, triumphantly brutal

strident, triumphantly brutal

4/8

169

5 3

170

3 3

171

3 3:2

172

3 3

173

3:2 3:2

B. Clar.

Bass.

Piano