
Staring at Walls

for flute and electronics

Jon Fielder

Program Notes

Staring at Walls is a composition inspired by ruminations on the topic of isolation, agency, and identity. Like many compositions of 2020 it was inspired primarily by the forced, yet necessary, isolation from the COVID-19 pandemic. My own experience with quarantine led to a number of revelations related to how I view my own agency, how that influences my concept of personal identity - as well as my identity in the greater framework of social interaction - and how the monotony of repetition played a strong role in all of that. My hope is that any performance of this piece will also take these ideas into consideration and, ideally, would incorporate the performer's own experiences with isolation, repetition, and identity.

Performance Notes

Sequence of events: the score is presented in 3 pages: A, B and C. There are 6 events on Page A, 6 events on Page B and a Page C as a stand-alone section

Order of Events

The order of events are to be chosen by the performer. This can be done at random, or with specific intention - though a combination of both is strongly encouraged. The ordering should be one A event, followed by a B event, then a new A event, a new B event, and so on. For example: A1 → B4 → A3 → B1 → A6 → B2 → A2 → B5 → A4 → B3 → A5 → B6. Page C may be inserted anywhere within this framework, and again is left to the performer's discretion as to where to place it.

Performance of A and B Events

The events on pages A and B (with the exception of B6) have repeats. These events may be repeated just as you would with any standard repeated section (A1, then A1 again). If the performer chooses to repeat a section it must be presented with slight variations such as playing faster or slower overall, playing some sections with different inflection, adding or removing vibrato, altering articulation, any combination of these, or whatever the performer may choose to do. These sections can be repeated as many times as the performer chooses, or may not be repeated at all.

Placement of Page C

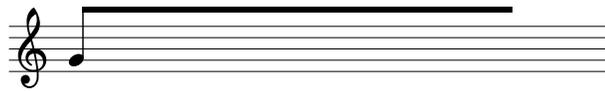
This page may be inserted at any point during the piece. It is made up of fragmented portions of the 12 events on Pages A and B, so placing it too early in the performance is not suggested, though again it is at the performer's discretion as to where to place it for the narrative intent to unfold.

Ending the Performance

The piece should end with a return to the A event that started the piece, as a sort of bookend. The appearance at the end should also be different from the way the event was presented at the start of the performance.

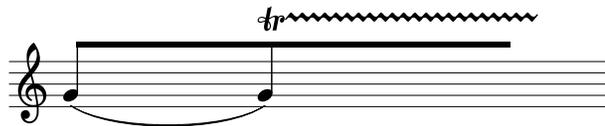
Notation Key

The score uses the following notation conventions. Any additional score markings have descriptions detailed in the context of the score.



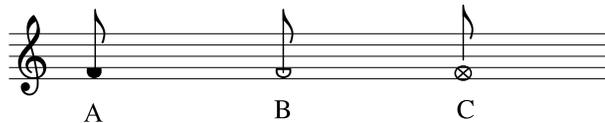
Sustain note for unspecified duration

Sustain note for unspecified duration



Begin trill without rearticulation

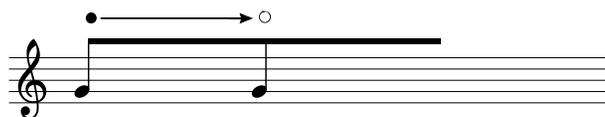
Begin trill without



A = breathe in (without embouchre)
B = breathe out (no embouchre)
C = vocalize through flute (vocalization specified in each passage)



Rapidly re-articulate note. Breathe as necessary, sound does not continue from cluster of articulations to the next (allow for some space)



Gradual transition from pure tone (filled circle) to air tone (open circle). The air tone should be produced with embouchre still in place; differentiate from "breathe out"

Page A

A1 Musical staff A1 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics are marked as mp, mf, p, mf, fp, and f. There are hairpins for crescendo and decrescendo.

A2 Musical staff A2 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics include p, mf, p, sfz, sfz, f, pp, mf, mp, and p. There are hairpins and a fermata over the final note.

A3 Musical staff A3 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics include mf, p, mf, mp, f, sfz, and mp. There are hairpins and a fermata over the final note.

A4 Musical staff A4 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics include p, f, mp, mf, sfz, mf, p, mf, and p sub. There are hairpins and a fermata over the final note.

A5 Musical staff A5 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics include mp - mf (ad. lib range of dyn. during stutter), sfz, mp, mf, p, mf, mf sub., and p. There are hairpins and a fermata over the final note.

A6 Musical staff A6 in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a double bar line and repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Dynamics include pp, sfz, p sub., sfz, f, pp, mp, and p. There are hairpins and a fermata over the final note.

Page B

B1 *senza vib.* *heavy irregular vibrato* *ad lib embouchure pitch bending*

mp *sfz* *mf* *f* *mp sub.*

Detailed description: Musical staff B1 in treble clef. It begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note F4, and a half note E4. A slur covers the first two notes with the instruction "senza vib.". A bracket above the first two notes is labeled "heavy irregular vibrato". The notes are followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. A slur covers the last three notes with the instruction "ad lib embouchure pitch bending". Dynamics are marked as mp, sfz, mf, f, and mp sub. A five-finger fingering (5) is indicated above the first note of the final group.

B2 3-5 second pause between fermatas

pp - mf *ad lib. dynamics on each note unless dynamic is specified* *fp*

Detailed description: Musical staff B2 in treble clef. It contains a series of notes: a half note G4, a half note F4, a half note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2. There are fermatas above the first three notes and the last three notes. A 3-5 second pause is indicated between the first and second fermatas. A trill is marked above the quarter note D4. Dynamics are marked as pp - mf and fp.

B3 *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *mp*

"shh" "t-k-sh-k-t..." t - k - shh ahh

Detailed description: Musical staff B3 in treble clef. It starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. A slur covers the first three notes with a trill above the first note. This is followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note D4 with a circled X below it, a quarter note C4 with a circled X below it, and a quarter note B3 with a circled X below it. A slur covers the last three notes with the instruction "t - k - shh". A 3-5 second pause is indicated between the first and second groups. Dynamics are marked as mf, p, mf, f, and mp. A trill is marked above the quarter note D4. A five-finger fingering (5) is indicated above the first note of the final group. The instruction "ahh" is written above the final group.

B4 *as if heard from afar*

pp - mp

Detailed description: Musical staff B4 in treble clef. It contains a series of notes: a half note G4, a half note F4, a half note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2. A slur covers the first three notes with the instruction "as if heard from afar". A trill is marked above the quarter note D4. Dynamics are marked as pp - mp.

B5 *senza vib.* *irregular vib. pulsing*

mp *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp*

Detailed description: Musical staff B5 in treble clef. It contains a series of notes: a half note G4, a half note F4, a half note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2. A slur covers the first three notes with the instruction "senza vib.". A five-finger fingering (5) is indicated above the quarter note D4. A slur covers the last three notes with the instruction "irregular vib. pulsing". Dynamics are marked as mp, p, mf, p, mp, and pp.

B6 *Flz.* *violently frustrated* *sha! 3-5 sec.*

mf *ff* *sfz*

Detailed description: Musical staff B6 in treble clef. It contains a series of notes: a half note G4, a half note F4, a half note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2. A slur covers the first three notes. A five-finger fingering (5) is indicated above the quarter note D4. A slur covers the last three notes with the instruction "Flz.". A trill is marked above the quarter note D4. A 3-5 second pause is indicated between the first and second groups. Dynamics are marked as mf, ff, and sfz. The instruction "violently frustrated" is written above the trill. The instruction "sha! 3-5 sec." is written above the final group.

Page C

The musical score consists of six staves of music, each with various dynamics, articulations, and performance instructions. The dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *ff* (fortissimo). The score includes several trills, including a "timbre trill" and a "rhythmic vibrato". There are also slurs, accents, and specific performance markings such as "sha!", "TP", and "secco".

Staff 1: *mp* (10-note slur), *fp* (timbre trill), *mp*, *f* (Flz.), *sfz*, *mf* (5-note slur), *pp* (trill).

Staff 2: *mp*, *f* (sha!), *p sub.*, *sfz* (TP), *mp*, *sfz*, *p*, *mf*.

Staff 3: *f* (7-note slur), *sfz*, *mf* (3-note slur), *f*, *mf*, rhythmic vibrato (5-note slur), *pp* (3-note slur), *mp*.

Staff 4: *fp* (trill), *mf*, *fp*, *sfz* (sha!), *mp*, *sfz*, *mf* (3-note slur), *pp* (trill).

Staff 5: *f* (secco), *fp*, *sfz*, *p*, *mf*, *ff* (6-note slur).

Staff 6: *sfz* (5-note slur), *f* (3-note slur), *fp* (5-note slur), *ff* (7-note slur), *mp*, *p*, *sfz* (TP).