
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

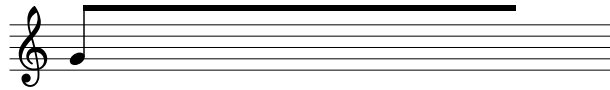
This page may be inserted at any point during the piece. It is made up of fragmented portions of the 12 events on Pages A and B, so placing it too early in the performance is not suggested, though again it is at the performer's discretion as to where to place it for the narrative intent to unfold.

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.

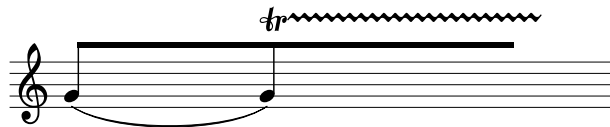
Notation Key

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



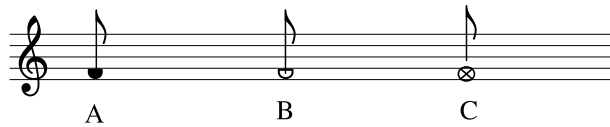
Sustain note for unspecified duration

Sustain note for unspecified duration



Begin trill without rearticulation

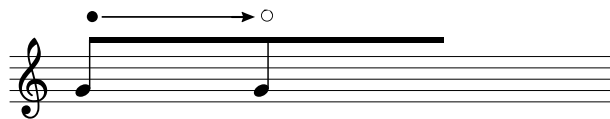
Begin trill without



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

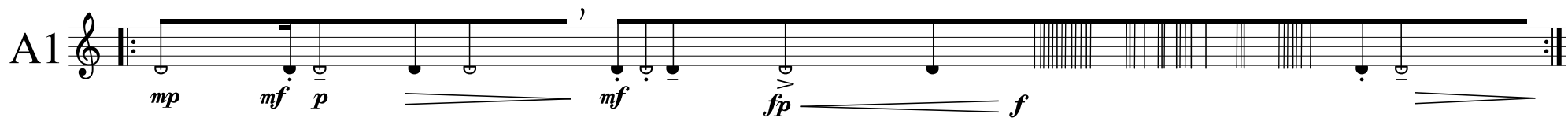


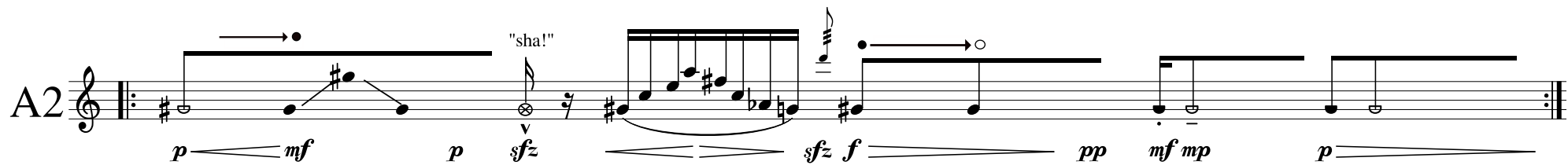
Rapidly re-articulate note. Breathe as necessary, sound does not continue from cluster of articulations to the next (allow for some space)

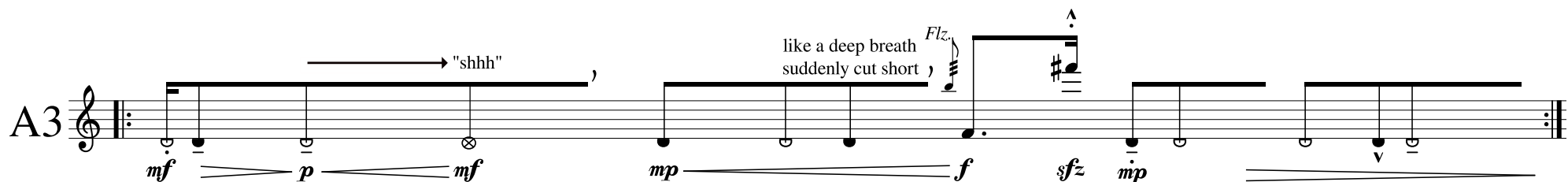


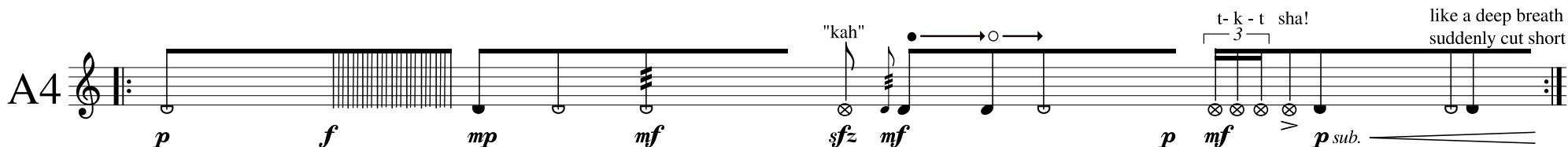
Gradual transition from pure tone (filled circle) to air tone (open circle). The air tone should be produced with embouchre still in place; differentiate from "breathe out"

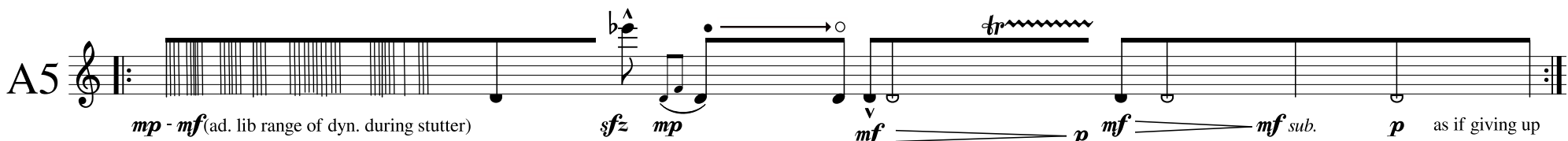
Page A

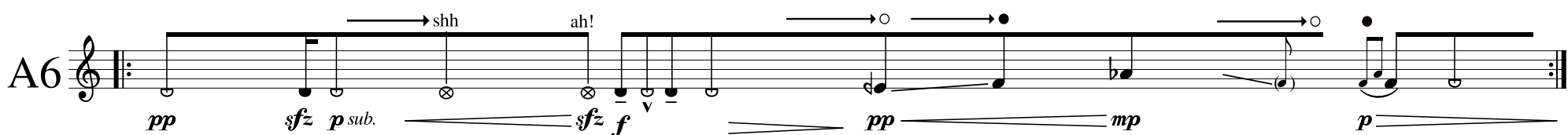
A1 

A2 

A3 

A4 

A5 

A6 

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 then 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 marked with dynamics *mp*, *sfz*, *mf*, *f*, and *mp sub.* respectively. The final note E4 has a fermata and is marked "ad lib embouchure pitch bending".

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 six notes: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. Each note has a fermata. The first two notes have a "3-5 second pause between fermatas". The notes are marked with dynamics *pp - mf* and *fp*. There is a trill-like flourish above the D4 note.

B3 "shh" "t-k-sh-k-t..." t - k - shh ahh

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

Detailed description: Musical staff B3 in treble clef. It starts with a half note G4 marked *mf*. This is followed by a half note F4 marked *p*. Then a half note E4 marked *mf*. A slur covers the next two notes, D4 and C4, marked *f*. This is followed by a slur covering the next two notes, B3 and A3, marked *mp*. The notes B3 and A3 have a trill-like flourish above them. The notes are marked with dynamics *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, and *mp*. There are also vocal-like markings: "shh" above the first note, "t-k-sh-k-t..." above the second note, "t - k - shh" above the fifth note, and "ahh" above the sixth note.

B4 *as if heard from afar*

pp - mp

Detailed description: Musical staff B4 in treble clef. It contains four notes: G4, F4, E4, and D4. The first two notes are marked *pp - mp*. The notes are marked with dynamics *pp - mp*. There is a trill-like flourish above the E4 note.

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

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

Detailed description: Musical staff B5 in treble clef. It contains six notes: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The first two notes are marked *mp*. The next two notes are marked *p*. The next two notes are marked *mf*. The notes are marked with dynamics *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, and *pp*. There is a trill-like flourish above the E4 note. The notes are marked with dynamics *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, and *pp*. There are also markings: "senza vib." above the first note and "irregular vib. pulsing" above the fifth note.

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

mf *ff* *sfz*

Detailed description: Musical staff B6 in treble clef. It contains six notes: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The first two notes are marked *mf*. The next two notes are marked *ff*. The notes are marked with dynamics *mf*, *ff*, and *sfz*. There is a trill-like flourish above the E4 note. The notes are marked with dynamics *mf*, *ff*, and *sfz*. There are also markings: "Flz." above the fifth note, "violently frustrated" above the sixth note, and "sha! 3-5 sec." above the final note.

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).