

Mesa a 3

for female voice, clarinet in B-flat, violin, electronics
and a prepared cooking pot

Sara Cubarsi
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Optional program note

A text generated by AI is sung in Latin and features an invented prayer before a meal and a benediction of the table, as well as an invitation to enjoy the delicious feast. This is set on stage in an almost theatrical way, with the singer having a prepared cooking pot on a table. Through the singer's performance there is a play between the vulgar and the sacred, and only inadvertently touching on the blasphemous - as the verb "coeo" ("coimus" in the lyrics) can also have sexual connotations.

I am interested in finding a path into new melodies in extended just intonation, but which also accommodates speed and drama in the music. The music is developed from three precisely tuned tones, evolving to a larger net of pitch relationships, with first simple lines that the instruments pass on to each other, echoing plainchant, later becoming ornamented and transgressed. The musical tension in this piece resides in the fact that one musical aspect - tuning - requires maximum clarity, attention and time, while the other theatrical elements represent a threat to the focus of tuning.

Performance notes

Tuning

- The whole piece is notated using the Helmholtz Ellis II notation
<https://masa.plainsound.org/pdfs/notation.pdf>

Scenography

- The violinist stands on the left (from the audience), the singer in the center, and the clarinetist on the right.
- The singer in the middle has a table with a red table-cloth, where a large cooking pot (a normal soup pot) is placed.
- There should be some lighting from behind to accentuate the profile of the smoke that will come out from the cooking pot.
- The lighting in general can be quite dim, in a chiaroscuro style.
- All performers should wear black.

Voice

- "**Dal niente**" hairpins always imply: to/from *as quiet as possible*.
- The pitch **range** is wide: find a timbre/technique that suits each range.
- The **tuning** will almost always be obvious from context, pay attention to who has reference pitches.
- **Overtone singing**: diamond note heads indicate overtone singing. Play with different vowels (as suggestions on the score), bringing the tongue from back to front, etc. Watch Anna Maria Hefele's Youtube Channel for an introduction:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vC9Qh709gas>
- Notated **boxes** indicate that this moment includes opening and/or closing the pot.

Clarinet in B-flat

- **Ossia**: 2nd Line - Page 4, in case it is too high, apply ossia.
- **Box** indicates that this will take a longer time, repeat *ad libitum*.
- The clarinet plays the following **tones**. The first row of numbers are the frequency Herz, and the second row the cent deviation from equal temperament. Sound files available from the composer.

A=443Hz

- 1) Frequencies to the nearest Herz
- 2) Tuning meter read-out (cents from ET)

Sound

1)	443	492	541	554	591	613	656	665	689	738	812	886
2)	0	-17.6	+47.4	-13.7	-2	-39	-19.6	+2	-35.1	-15.6	+49.4	0

Play

919	984	997	1083	1181	1225	1313	1329	1378	1477	1575	1624	1969
-37	-17.6	+3.9	+47.4	-2	-39	-19.6	+2	-35.1	-15.6	-3.9	+49.4	-17.6

Violin

- Scordatura: The E-string is tuned to the seventh of G, a low F. The other strings remain tuned in perfect fifths.
- Where indicated, the violinist triggers the electronics with a pedal.
- **Box** indicates that this will take a longer time, repeat *ad libitum*.

Electronics

- There are 8 sound files which are triggered by the violinist as exactly indicated.
- The pitches of these eight tracks are written in the score. The timing is within flexible.
- When the pot opens, the electronics will be heard by the audience.

Pot

- The pot contains a **bowl with dry ice** and water and a **bluetooth speaker** - water makes dry ice evaporate (please be careful - inform yourself before buying dry ice, it needs to be handled with special gloves or a tool).
- The **bluetooth speaker** plays the files on **QLab** which are triggered by the violinist
- The pot has a **pot-cover** which fits. The singer will be opening and closing the cover as indicated.

Sounding_pitch score

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for female singer, clarinet in B-flat, violin, electronics and a prepared cooking pot

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Jan 2025

♩=ca.72

The musical score is for a piece titled "We Invoke and Bless the Hand of the Mother of God over our Table" by David Lang. It is in 14/4 time and consists of two systems of music. The instruments and voices are: clarinet in Bb, violin, soprano, and cooking pot/electronics. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, mp, pp), articulations (accents, staccato), and performance instructions (scordatura, arco, pizz). The lyrics are in Latin and English. The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system continues the piece.

clarinet in Bb

violin

soprano

cooking pot/
electronics

Manum Matris Dei super mensam nostram invocamus et benedicimus
We invoke and bless the hand of the Mother of God over our table

num (m) Ma - n um

cl. *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp*

vln. pizz *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *forward*

sopr. Ma tri - s Dei (o-u-i*) m Ma - num *p* *mp* *mf* *pp*

cp. *pp*

* Singer: diamond heads indicate overtone singing.
Sing freely between two or more vowels, activating different
partials. When in brackets, vowels are *ad libitum*

cl. *mp* *mf* *mp*

vln. *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

sopr. *mf* *mp*

cp. *mf* *mp*

Ma tris Dei

Su - per men - sam

The musical score for 'The Kitchen' by David Lang is presented in a multi-staff format. The staves are labeled as follows:

- cl.** (Clarinet): Features a timbral trill (rhythmic) marked *tr* and *mp*.
- vln.** (Violin): Includes a section marked *f* and *mf*.
- sopr.** (Soprano): The vocal line, starting with *f* (iong) and *mp*. The lyrics are: "Manum Matris Dei, super Mensam, benedicimus". A box labeled "Long" and "Open and close cooking pot very slowly" is placed over the vocal line. The score also includes a "vocal shake (like a fast timbral trill)" marked *tr* and *mf*.
- cp.** (Cymbal): Features a section marked *pp* and *f*.

The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*f*, *mp*, *mf*, *pp*), articulation (*tr*), and performance instructions like "ad libitum" and "Open and close cooking pot very slowly". The piece is in 2/4 time and G major.

cl. *mp* *mf* *f* *unisono* *mf* III

vln. *mp* *mf* *f* 0 3 *meno* *simile* 3 *f*

sopr. *f* *mf* *f* *tr* 5 5 5 3 3 3 *Open pot* *am* *f*

cp. *(pp)* *f*

Ma - nu m Ma tri tri tri - tris Dei Su-per men-sam nos-tra am

cl. *f* *mp* *p* *f* *tr** *bisb.* *tr** *bisb.* *tr** *bisb.* 3

vln. 5 *p* *mp* *sf* *sf* *sf*

sopr. ...and close
be-ne - di - ci-mus Ma - tris Ma - tris Ma - tris Ma - tris
mf *mp* *sfz* *mf*

cp. 3 *pp*

cl. 5 *mf* *mp* Pure major sixth *p*

vln. *fp* *rubato* *calm* *p* *mp* *p*

sopr. in vo ca mu s! m m
f *p* *p*

cp. *p*

cl. Repeat as needed *p* *f*

vln. *f*

sopr. open/close pot, accelerando → "open-close" tremolo (pot stays open from the next bar)
(a) *mp*

cp. 4 *pp* *f p f p f p f p f 4p 4f 4p ... 4f*

4

cl.

f *tr* *fp* *f* *3* *bisb.*

vln.

mf (supporting the voice) *f* *3* *mf*

Ad mensam Dei coimus ut convivium animae fruamur
We gather at the table of God to enjoy the banquet of the soul

sopr.

mf Ad men - sam Dei De i co - i - mus ut con - vi - vi - vum a - ni - mae
(Pot stays open) *mf* (banquet/feast)

cp.

[illegible]

cl. *poco diminuendo* *mp* *mf* *rit.* *8va*

vln. *mp* *mf* *mp*

sopr. *mf* *mp* *rit.* *Close pot* *mf*

cp. *f* *pp* (silent track)

A tempo

Yawn,
bringing hand
a bit close to
the mouth

cl. *mp* 3 *tr** *bisb.* 6 6 6 5

vln. *mp* *flautando* 3 *pp* 6

sopr. *Hand on mouth (hand vibrato)* 3 *musical yawning* 3 5 6 6 *mp*

cp.

cl. *tr** *bisb.* (tuned to C major, as possible) OR tongued *mp* *p* 6 6 6 6 *mp* *p* 6 6 6

vln. *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

sopr. *very articulated* (strong vibrato) 5 3
ff Ad_ men - sam De i co - i - mus ut con-vi - vi - vum

cp. 6

cl. 6 *simile* 6 6 6 6 6 6

vln. *p* *free arp* *mf*

sopr. 3 (smile) *dolce* 3
a - ni - mae_ fru - a - mur. Gau de a mus!

cp.

6

cl.

vln.

sopr.

cp.

mf

mp

mf

very articulated

(arp)

free arp

Ma-num Ma - tris De i co-i - mus su-per men - sam

[illegible]

cl. *simile* 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 7

vln. 6

sopr. (smile) 3 hiccup
um De - li - ci - o - sus m oh m

cp. *mf*

cl. 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

vln. *f* 3 6 3

sopr. oh m oh m

cp.

cl. transition to multiphonic around the 11° 12° 6 6 6

vln. *f* 6 *mp pp* 6 *p*

sopr. oh m , III "mor" (English) *p* Open and close pot slowly

cp. 7

8

cl. *f* *pp* *ord* *poco pont* *6*

vln. *p* *mf*

sopr. *p* *mf* "mor" (English) Open and don't close pot

cp. *f* *pp*

ca. 5 sec
8°* or other multihonic centred around G6

sul pont *p* *mp* *6*

sopr. *p* *mf* "more" (English) burp! Pot stays open close pot coordinated with end of clarinet

cp. *f* 8 (silent track) ca. 6 Min.