

AURAE NU

*for a singing bass-clarinetist,
pre-recorded gongs, voice, sine-waves,
video projection
and 2 gongs on stage*

Sara Cubarsi (2025)

Performance notes

Optional program note

In this piece I was interested in exploring the the blending of boundaries between bodies, between voices, between self and other. A melody emerges—bare, restrained, tracing a shape, a simple three-note cantus firmus. It ornaments and turns on itself but holds its ground. To create an opposing energy I chose the anagram poem by Unica Zürn's “Wir lieben den Tod” the title of which already points toward an entanglement of desire and annihilation. By the end of the piece, a chant based on this anagram takes over, sung by the clarinetist's pre-recorded doppelgänger in a prolation canon. The clarinetist plays and sings with his own doppelgänger, heard through two gongs which stand there like two spheres held up in tension. The clarinetist is caught between them—orbiting, yielding. Or perhaps it is the gongs that are drawn toward the body in between, as if gravity itself were shifting. The original title stemmed out of an anagram of the poet's name, but was then reduced to AURAE NU.

Stage position

C2 GONG CLARINETIST F#2 GONG

Projector on
Gong

Projector on
Gong

Duration

- Ca. 8'30"

Clarinet

- **Multiphonics** are indicated by an M on the stems. These also include highlighting harmonics of a fundamental. TBC after try-out !
- **Vibrato** and a **pulsating** effect are indicated mostly by a V or two Vs on the stems.
- Where a **rotation** is indicated, the clarinetist turns around. At the end, it may turn 2-3 times, depending on timing.
- The clarinetist **sings** inside the clarinet, but also normally. TBC staves after Try out !
- The voice of the clarinetist needs to be **pre-recorded** for the sound projection - for the microtones there will be in-ear tuning drones.

- Tuning

All main pitches are derived through low ratios and are notated with the HEJI accidentals. The microtonal commas indicate through which natural interval the pitch is derived (e.g. flat or natural through a cycle of fifths, an arrow through the natural third, a septimal down through the natural seventh, etc., including doublings and combinations of these). The piece however uses beatings from Equal Temperament stemming out from the main pitches of the gongs C2 and F#2, from the clarinet, and from the inharmonic nature of its multiphonics, as well as from the gong spectra. The “microtones” need to be seen as a tuning guide in an adaptive context, moving between moments of beatings and moments of stability.

In case of checking pitches against an ET tuner, here are the approximate deviations in cents, from the ordinary accidental in ET. Ideally a tuner should not be necessary during performance.

Diagram illustrating the approximate deviations in cents from the ordinary accidental in Equal Temperament (ET) for a sequence of pitches. The notation shows two staves of music with notes and their corresponding deviations in cents:

Staff	Deviation (cents)
Staff 1	+43, (-6), -70, -23, -39, -20, -8, +45, E.T., -41, -21, +43, (-6), -70, -23, -5
Staff 2	-39, -20, (-8), +45, +40, -21, +6, (-6), -70, -23, -39, -8, +45, -21, (-6), -23, -39, +45

TRANSPOSITION

Diagram illustrating the approximate deviations in cents from the ordinary accidental in Equal Temperament (ET) for a sequence of pitches, labeled as Transposition. The notation shows two staves of music with notes and their corresponding deviations in cents:

Staff	Deviation (cents)
Staff 1	+43, (-6), -70, -23, -39, -20, -8, +45, E.T., -41, -21, +43, (-6), -70, -23, -5
Staff 2	-39, -20, (-8), +45, +40, -21, +6, (-6), -70, -23, -39, -8, +45, -21, (-6), -23, -39, +45

Video

- The video may be projected with one projector on the two gongs, with the rest of the projection area masked, or with one projector on each gong, depending on the quality of the projector. If possible, the gong should be covered in a bit of chalk.
- The image projected is a painting I made, melting and turning, which looks like a colorful planet or moon.

Electronics

- The electronic tracks are **amplified** ideally through transducers attached at the back of the gongs. The gongs are the resonators, amplifiers. Alternatively, a speaker can be directly attached to the hanger at the back of the Gong. The sound should get as loud as needed to balance with the dynamics played by the clarinet.
- The many electronic tracks are **triggered by a musician following the clarinetist**. Anything with an “arrow down” is the triggering of a track, and needs to be synchronized with the clarinetist. Once the track is triggered in the right moment, the clarinetist must not be totally synchronized. So it is moving between synchronized points and a kind of *ad libitum* flow. The Tracks may overlap.
- Anything that is not the clarinetist's playing or voice is **pre-recorded**: these are the sounds of the two same gongs on stage, the same clarinetist's voice, and the sine-wavy sound of a retuned keyboard. The pre-recorded is distributed between left, right mono, and stereo, so sometimes the voice is sounding on one side, while the C gong is resonating on the other side. The gongs always sound from their respective sides.

Text

The sung and spoken text is an anagram poem by Unica Zürn, “Wir lieben den Tod”. This piece is free from copyright fees for the première and a possible live stream on June 27th 2025, thanks to the copyright owners *Verlag Brinkmann & Bose*. Further performances need communication with them.

*Rot winde den Leib,
Brot wende in Leid,
ende Not, Beil wird
Leben. Wir, dein Tod,
weben dein Lot dir
in Erde. Wildboten,
wir lieben den Tod*

(Berlin 1953-54)

AURAE NU

Lied für Carl & Benni

Text von Unica Zürn

Sara Cubarsi (2025)

1 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 42$

Multiphonic focus pitch(es) transposed

Bass Clarinet in B $\flat$ transposed

sempre poco rubato

sing inside cl. **ppp** **pp**

molto vib. (pulsating)

vib. **ppp** **pp**

ca. 1-tone slide

3 **pp**

4 **ppp**

sk1 **m.48.7-28**

molto vib. on multiphonics = 1/8th note "pulsation"

accidentals apply to every small bar

Transducers on Gongs sounding pitch

Blue: right gong (large)
Red: left Gong (smaller)
Black: stereo, both Gongs
Purple: triggering of new track

Track 1

Leib **pp** **ppp**

in **pp**

Sine wave **mp** **ppp**

Thai Gong (resonance) **pp**

Track 2

Leid **pp** **ppp**

Rot **pp**

2 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 46$

sk1 **m.48.7-28**

sk2 **F m.50.8-27**

M

B. Cl.

sing

Brot **mp**

7 **p**

3 **pp**

7 **p**

3 **pp**

7 **mf**

rit. **pp**

forward **mp**

3 **p**

7 **p**

rit. **pp**

7 **p**

rit. **pp**

7 **p**

7 **mp**

Trns. o. G.

5 **p**

6 **pp** **ppp**

7 **p**

7 **mp**

Dir_ in Er - de. Wild bo - ten

m.50.1-23

optional ROTATION:
repeat multiphonic while
turning 1x slowly
m. 53 6-u

5 M

B. Cl.

15 16 17 18

ff *f* *p* *ff* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* as poss

plain

Trns. o. G.

15 16 17 18

ff *mp* *mp* *slow speech:*

whispers + echoes: Rot win-de den Leid,
Brot wende in Leid,
ende Not, Beil wird leben.

poco ad libitum transition to speaking

ritardando ...

... Wir,
dein Tod,
weben dein
Lot dir
in Erde.

whisper:
Wildboten...

C2 Gong pattern,
till ★

8^{vb}

6 M

B. Cl.

19 20 21

pp *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

forward

follow electronics

20 beatings

Trns. o. G.

19 20 21

p *mp* *mf*

+ echo effect

win de__den Le-ib, wen - de in Le - id

en - de Not, Beil wird le-ben, Leib, Leid, Be - il en-de Not,

m. 50.1-23 R.fk.

m. 51.5-21 E

7 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 56$

M follow gongs

B. Cl. *mf* 5 *forward* *mp* *f* 23 *f* 24 *ff* 25

Trns. o. G. *mf* 22 *mf* 23 *f* 24 *f* 25

Wir, Dein Tod Rot wen-de den Leib wende in Leid Beil wird...

Beil wird le-ben "poco rubato" 5 *f* gong, perc. "ad lib." 24 gong, perc. "ad lib."

8

M

B. Cl. *pp* 5 *mf* *p* calm *pp* *mp* 27 *legato poss.* 28

Trns. o. G. *subito p* 26 *ppp* 27 *ff* 28

G# D m. 52-3u mt. 48 T

Sprachgesang (a shade of Figure 9, next section):
Brot wende in Leid,
Rot winde den Leib,
ende Not, Beil wird Leben.

Tod *p* *ff*

Henceforth, the low-septimal quarter-high C_b is represented by a B-natural to simplify notation.

[illegible]

11 M

sk1 m.48.7-28

B. Cl.

subito *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp*

Trns. o. G.

Trns. o. G.

Gong pattern continues until Figure 16

Brot wen - de in ___ Leid, en - de Not, Beil wird le - ben. Wir, dein Tod, we - ben dein Lot dir ___ in Er - de. Wild - bo - ten, wir lie - ben den Tod.

we - ben dein ___ Lot dir in Er - de. Wild - bo - ten, ten, wir ___ lie - ben den Tod.

12

36 (Rot)

orientation: gong cue

B. Cl.

expressivo, poco ad lib.

f wir lie - ben den Tod

36 Rot win - de den Leib, Brot wen - de in Leid, en - de Not, Beil wird le - ben. Wir, dein Tod, we - ben dein Lot dir ___ in Er - de. Wild - bot - ten,

Rot win - de den Leib, Brot wen - de in Leid, en - de Not, Beil wird

Trns. o. G.

Trns. o. G.

mf *mp*

p *mf*

13

B. Cl. wir lie - ben den Tod, wir lie - - ben den Tod wir lie - ben den Tod

Trns. o. G. wir lie-ben den Tod. Rot win - de den Leib, Brot wen-de in Leid, en-de Not, Beil wird le-ben. Wir, dein Tod, we-ben dein Lot dir

Trns. o. G. le - ben. Wir, dein, Tod, we-ben dein Lot dir in Er - de. Wild - bo - ten,

14

B. Cl. Lie - be wird Brot! *f*

Trns. o. G. in Er - de. Wild - bo - ten, wir lie - ben den Tod win - de den Leib, Brot wen - de in Leid, en-de Not!, Beil wird le -

Trns. o. G. wir lie - ben den Tod. Rot win - de den Leib, Brot wen - de in

Trns. o. G. wir lie - ben den Tod wir lie - ben den Tod, wir lie - ben den

H: activate harmonics aggressively at the end of cresc. gestures

(Tod) forward

mf *sf* *f* *ff*

m. 51.5-21

till Figure 16

Tempo: ♩=60

Key Signature: One sharp (F#)

Time Signature: 4/4

Instrumentation: B. Cl., Trns. o. G., Piano

Measure 16: B. Cl. starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The piano accompaniment includes a 'Previous track fade out: 10 seconds till *' instruction.

Measure 37: B. Cl. features a 'sustained, intense sound' with a 'sempré poco a poco rit.' instruction. The piano accompaniment includes a 'chord: tiny gliss., beatings' section.

Measure 38: B. Cl. features a 'wait until gong resonance is gone ca. 4" before the beat' instruction. The piano accompaniment includes a 'chord: beatings slowly disappear - stable ♯1 - F Chord' section.

17

(sostenuto, poco a poco rit.)

B. Cl.

Trns.
o. G.Trns.
o. G.

18

(sostenuto, poco a poco rit.)

B. Cl.

Trns.
o. G.

19

(sostenuto, poco a poco rit.)

B. Cl.

Trns.
o. G.

41

39

39

40

40

41

ff**ff** as poss**f** $\triangleright$ **mf** $\triangleright$ **p**subito **pp****ff****p**C3
mp**ppp**(sine wave track
overlap / fade)**mp** *descrec.*

(sostenuto, poco a poco rit.)

21

B. Cl.

Trns. o. G.

p D2

harmonics alone *pp*

3

3

extra slow pulsation

Fade Out Cue

ppp

♩ = ca. 42

22

B. Cl.

Trns. o. G.

pp

42

3

pp

pp

43

Fade Out Cue

ppp

23

B. Cl.

Trns. o. G.

C3

beatings

45

p

pp

D2

ppp

p

C2

ppp < *pp* > *ppp*

3

tr bisb 3

ppp < *pp* > *ppp*

beatings

Fade Out Cue

Fade Out Cue

Fade Out Cue