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THE COMPOSER-PERFORMER PARADIGM IN GIACINTO SCELSI'S SOLO WORKS

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William Colangelo

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Introduction

In a commonly-held view of tradition of Western Art Music, a performer is obliged to treat a composer's score as a contract. If the composer specified a metronome marking for tempo, the performer is duty bound to try to maintain that tempo. If none is marked, then the performer may use his or her judgment. Similarly, if specific dynamics are marked, they must be played as written. According to this paradigm, the basis for all interpretative judgment by the performer should come from the score.

In a recently released recording of Giacinto Scelsi's *Maknongan*, contrabassist Joelle Leandre accompanies each triple fortissimo note with a vocal howl, although no such indication exists in the score. Liner notes for the compact disk written by close associates of the composer approvingly call attention to this interpretative innovation by the performer. Was this interpretation simply an abnormality, or does it represent another aesthetic paradigm informing those involved in performing Scelsi's music?

This study undertook to answer the question, "What did the score mean to Scelsi, and what does it mean to performers interpreting his music today?" Guiding the entire research was a heuristic approach which strove for uncovering what beliefs, attitudes, unconscious biases, inspired foresights and mistaken notions cause the performers of today to interpret Scelsi's music the way they do. In this study, the score was not forced to take a back seat, but it certainly was de-throned

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as the sole, legitimate authority, and instead shared authority with the performer's own views and their recorded performances.

In Scelsi's music, the score could not claim sole legitimate authority for many reasons, the first and most important being that the scores of the period studied weren't actually written by Giacinto Scelsi but by transcriber-orchestrators such as Vieri Tosatti and at least seven others. Scelsi composed with an electronic organ or piano and a tape recorder, improvising complete, short works while in a trance state and then selecting from among his recorded creations for further development and instrumentation. Transcribers such as Tosatti were then hired to create a written score, which Scelsi reviewed and reworked, often after long consultative sessions with performers. It was Scelsi's recorded music, the personal interaction and the performers playing that were as important as the score. The score as such reflected this non-written, oral-aural creative process, sometimes accurately, and sometimes, such as in the case of *Maknongan*'s scream, inaccurately.

A composer's use of transcribers or orchestrators to notate the scores would not be considered so unusual by itself, especially with the growth of today's computer technology software such as *Finale* and *Studio Vision*, which are notating composer's keyboard playing without requiring that the composer know musical notation. In Scelsi's case, though, the propriety of such as practice erupted into a giant controversy after his death when Vieri Tosatti asserted in an interview that he was the composer of Scelsi's music (Cremonese 84). Although others came forward to refute Tosatti and he withdrew from the polemic, any thorough study of

Scelsi's music is forced to question the score to some degree and look for broader sources.

The broader sources for this study became the performers who had the benefit of working directly with the composer in developing his works. The recorded performances by these same performers were used to compare and evaluate their stated views on the music. The score, unlike in traditional musical analysis, was analyzed in terms of its interconnection to the music-as-played and the views of the people who played it. With this change in emphasis, the issues of underlying musical structure, which are usually of primary importance in analysis, did not hold the same significance.

Ironically, the key to investigating the non-written, oral-aural creative process, made possible by the technology of the tape recorder for Scelsi, was the further use of technology. Musical analysis of the use of sound color and its connections to pitch and dynamics was made possible through technological breakthroughs in computer, some less than two years old. Further, through the use of interactive computer presentations, the findings of the musical analysis and qualitative analysis of the performer interviews were able to be directly combined with the recorded music itself.

The study revealed that the degree of creative input on the part of the performers varied greatly. Some performers, such as vocalist Michiko Hirayama could justly declare herself to be "performer and creator at the same time" in the set of vocal works she developed, the *Canti del Capricorno*. For other performers, such as pianists who encountered a score of a work that Scelsi originally created on a piano, matters of interpretation fell within more traditional bounds.

In interviewing performers who worked closely with Scelsi, several themes emerged regarding his approach to composition and performance. These themes included a rejection of the traditional role of the composer in Western classical music, the use of improvisational music practice to develop works, the presence of an altered state of consciousness in creation of music, a goal of re-creation in performance of the state of consciousness Scelsi experienced, and a special interest in the spectral composition of sound. The performers voiced a belief that their identification with Scelsi's music was motivated by a criticism of the stress in Western music on structure based on pitch alone, while disregarding the close interconnection between pitch, timbre, rhythm, dynamics and articulation. There was further an assertion that his works show the influence of Eastern music, particularly in the use of the element of drone. For performers who didn't work with Scelsi directly, evidence of many of these same views could be found, but in a much more limited and circumscribed way.

By looking at the performer-composer relationship in the admittedly non-traditional setting of Giacinto Scelsi's music, the hope of this research was to shed some light not only on performance issues concerning Scelsi's music, but on the traditional performer-composer relationship where the written score remains on a socially constructed throne.

Significance of Study

In speaking of the importance of Scelsi's music, John Cage said in 1991:

> The most interesting thing to me about Scelsi's music is the concentration on a single tone or a very limited pitch situation. So that it resembles the

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'white writing' of Mark Tobey in art. It's a situation where the attention is so concentrated that the minute differences become, in the case of Tobey, visible, and in the case of Scelsi, audible. This is of course an activity at an extreme that is not greatly populated, not many people do what Scelsi did. I don't know of anyone. But it's by going to such extremes that a really important work is accomplished. (*i suoni, le onde no. 2* 11)

Despite the unique and vital character of Scelsi's compositions, performances of his music in the United States have been rare, and recordings and scores are difficult to obtain. A critical understanding of Scelsi's works is virtually nonexistent, with only a handful of articles and brief references in books available in the English language. Scelsi's scores present many unique technical and aesthetic challenges to the solo performer, and, as Cage points out, require concentrated attention from both listeners and performers. By focusing on the evolution of selected solo pieces, this study attempts to open all the music of Giacinto Scelsi to a wider understanding and acceptance by performers and audiences.

Stance of the Researcher

Based on many aspects of personal experience, the researcher has a strong predisposition on many of the questions raised in this study regarding Scelsi's music. The researcher has performed two of the three works analyzed, *Maknongan* and *Tre Pezzi*. Among the six performers interviewed, the researcher personally knew two performers, Corrado Canonici and Johnny Reinhard, prior to the study.

On several broader questions around which this study revolved, the researcher had long-held beliefs prior to the study. Chief among these was a belief in the validity of improvisation as a means of musical creation. The researcher is an

improvising musician who has utilized improvisation in many different performance settings over a period of 25 years. As was the case with Scelsi, improvisation and group collaboration have been key elements in the researcher's own composing practice and are seen as a deliberate means of breaking down distinctions between performer and composer. The researcher views these distinctions as artificial barriers to creativity and expression in music. The researcher is the author of "The Borderline between Improvisation and Composition" published in Volume 2 of the inter-disciplinary journal *Critical Issues*, an article which argues that improvisation and composition are closely related, but that the long history of improvisation in Western music has been disregarded and even surpressed because of a bias against creativity outside of the realm of writing.

In addition, the researcher has a deeply felt interest and awareness of Eastern cultures, as shown by study of Japanese martial arts, Zen meditation, Indian Yoga and Chinese Chi-Gong. This interest has been reflected in musical choices, resulting in recordings which combined the Chinese two-string traditional violin with jazz improvisation.

Aware of these strongly held views, the researcher nevertheless strove to approach the issues inherent in a study of Scelsi's music with an open mind. As a result, many of the pre-conceived notions regarding Scelsi's music were found to be far more qualified and complex than originally thought, and some views were validated while others were found to have simply been in error.

The Problem and Subproblems

The research objective of the study was to answer the primary question, "What did the score mean to Scelsi, and what does it mean to performers interpreting his music today?" The research was specifically aimed:

1. To investigate Scelsi's creative process in relation to the questions of trance, improvisation, and composer-performer collaboration with a view towards how it affects performance of his works;

2. To analyze recorded interpretations of the solo works;

3. On the basis of knowledge gained, to draw conclusions concerning Scelsi's compositional techniques and to present a discussion of performance practices in an interactive presentation.

CHAPTER II
RELATED LITERATURE

In addition to works directly about Giacinto Scelsi, several strands of intellectual thought proved helpful in understanding his music. Guiding this inquiry overall was the interpretative philosophy of hermeneutic phenomenology as defined by Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Theodor Adorno. Such a philosophical approach made it possible to understand Scelsi's music as it is interpreted and transformed from improvised performance to written notation and back to sound again. In addition, because Scelsi was affected by Eastern thought and created his music while in a trance, this researcher examined the notion of trance as well as the musical influences of non-Western cultures. To understand the role of musical creation in altered states of consciousness, it was also necessary to review works pertaining to music and cognition in general.

Although these subjects are interrelated and interwoven, they were organized as follows:

1. Giacinto Scelsi, his music, his creative process, his ideas and life

2. Philosophical basis for the inquiry

3. Trance, altered states of consciousness, and their relation to music creation

A theme that recurs within each of these topics is the role of musical improvisation. It is the thread that ties all of these subjects together, and the thread that ties the experience of this researcher to that of Scelsi's music.

Giacinto Scelsi, his Music, his Creative Process, his Ideas and Life

A thorough computer search has indicated that few published works exist on Scelsi's music in the English language. One of the few books that is in print in the world at the present time is Adriano Cremonese's *Giacinto Scelsi* (available in Italian and German). Cremonese looks at the origins of Scelsi's compositional practice by examining his early works, the influences of Scriabin and Berg, and the reasons for the composer's later rejection of serial techniques. The book includes a short biography and catalog of the published works by Scelsi.

According to Cremonese, Giacinto Scelsi, who was born in 1905 in La Spezia, studied composition with Giacinto Sallustio in Rome, the Scriabin system with Egon Koehler in Geneva, and dodecafonic composition with Walter Klein, a student of Schoenberg's, in Vienna. As a young man he lived outside Italy for long periods, primarily in France and Switzerland, and made many trips to Africa and the East. Sparked by his dissatisfaction with the constrictions of the 12-tone system, Scelsi plunged into a ten-year "grave and long spiritual crisis which he emerged from at age 50 with a renovated consciousness about life and music." (77) This new consciousness made him reject being called a composer, and instead Scelsi declared himself to be only a messenger from a transcendental realm. During the '60s and '70s, Scelsi created many works, such as *Quartetto No. 4* for strings (1964), *Canti del Capricorno* for female voice (1962-1972), *Anahit* for violin and 18 instruments (1965) and *Okanagon* (1968) and *Pranam* (1972) for ensembles. He was little known in Italy and slightly known in Europe, particularly in France, during this period. It was in 1982, at the Ferienkursen für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, that interest in Scelsi's music exploded. This interest culminated in an

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international festival, held in Cologne in 1987, that was dedicated to Scelsi. In addition to his music, Scelsi left aesthetic essays on music and four volumes of poetry (in French) when he died on August 9, 1988.

Another important source of biographical information is a series of interviews Scelsi gave to French journalist Franck Mallet. The interviews appear under the title *Il Suono Lontano* in an Italian-language anthology on Scelsi entitled *Viaggio al Centro del Suono*. In *Il Suono Lontano*, Scelsi describes his early improvisations and trances, his mental illness and his theraputic use of sound, his views on music and spirituality, and many entertaining anecdotes of his travels and adventures in his own and previous lifetimes. The interviews, a year before Scelsi died, provide the most insight into how the composer viewed his music.

Contrasting sharply with the Mallet interview are Scelsi's views on music as a young man. Two essays, *Evolution of Harmony* and *Evolution of Rhythm*, were published by a Swiss journal in the early 1940s and are re-published by the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi (in French and Italian). As seen by the opening of *Evolution of Harmony*, Scelsi had a didactic bent as a young man:

> Without further examination of harmonic evolution, we can consider Wagner the originator of a determined technical progress; a progress that, from that moment on, continued at an accelerated pace. From a technical point of view his harmony derived from an employment of chromaticism and the eleventh chord. Although this chord can be seen as an outgrowth of traditional harmony, the addition of a third interval to the ninth interval exhibits an aspect of bi-tonality, since it can be viewed as an aggregation of two chords of different tonalities. Thus he established the first departure from tonality in this chord.
>
> We are not able to examine the ideas, the artistic conceptions and the philosophies of Wagner here. His own works and writing provide abundant evidence of the critical roles the cult of race, ancestral blood, and his own particular mysticism played in these conceptions. These impulses appear to

be subordinate to the intellectual element in Wagner's music, and instead are realized within his possesed lyricism and grandiose architecture.

The *Evolution of Rhythm* reveals Scelsi's early interest in the use of rhythms in other cultures' music, particularly in African music. Both essays portray the young composer as intellectually attracted to innovation in music, and they refute later charges that Scelsi had no formal musical training or knowledge.

The mystical and spontaneous side of the later Scelsi is revealed in the transcript of a trance experience that Scelsi tape recorded, entitled *Il Sogno 101, Il Parte, Il Ritorno*, also published by the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi. In *Il Sogno 101*, Scelsi describes regressing into a previous life in ancient Phoenicia, dying and coming back to life in another form. The following excerpt,(a fuller excerpt is provided in Appendix B), translated from Italian, provides a sense of the intensity of Scelsi's trance experiences:

This house is full of paintings, but are they paintings? The images are moving. Here we' re on the sea in the midst of ships with square sails like the Egyptians or Phoenicians had. I remember. But how am I able to remember if I don't have a brain. They're simple ships with many oars and on deck are fighters with shields and weapons. But there's also other ships, that are similar but not the same, with different kind of sails, and they're moving. It all appears to be a battle.

Yes, it is a battle. Here's one ship that collides into two others. Several fighters fall, drowning in the water, other shoot arrows at them. One ship seems to have capsized in the middle of the other two. The fighters almost all seem to fall, one is wounded. He has an arrow in his back, he falls into the water. He pulls out the arrow, losing blood. But that was me! I know. How can I know this from this painting that moves?

Further sources of information about Scelsi's music include the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi's journal, *I Suoni, Le Onde*. An important article which directly addresses the problems of performance of Scelsi's music is an interview pianist

Marianne Schroader gave to journal editor Luciano Martines in the 1993 edition. In this interview (the researcher's translation of the entire text is included in Appendix A), Schroader states:

> Even though Scelsi's scores are perfect, nothing's missing. there's a big difference. Scelsi's music is revealed only when it is played. I was never able to study one of his scores, while with the scores of other composers they can be studied without even playing them, but with Scelsi this would never work...I was having a lot of difficulty with interpretation.

> Then, one day, I sat myself down at the piano and for five minutes...I improvised, without paying attention to the score, a "Scelsiano" movement. This helped me to understand that music was improvised, that it all came from the piano, that it was not theoretical; my task was now to devote myself to this process, to rediscover the relationship between theory and music, between myself and the piano. This had never happened to me before.

Several key issues pertaining to performance are raised by Schroader, among which are the unique character of Scelsi's scores, their link to improvisation and meditation, and a sense of challenging a musical status quo about performers' obligations to the score.

Schroader is not alone in her views on the unique challenges presented by Scelsi's scores. These views are reflected in the writings of Scelsi himself, writings about Scelsi, and in interviews with the small community of performers who worked closely with him. For example, an article that was highly influential in introducing Scelsi's music in Germany is "Das Unbekannte in der Musik" (The Unknown in Music) by Heinz-Klaus Metzger, published in 1983 in the journal *Musik-Konzept*. Metzger was a collaborator with Cage, Berio, Stockhausen and others in Darmstadt in the 1950s and 1960s and played an important role in the development of contemporary music. To Metzger, Scelsi's music represents a

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transcendental quest into the mysteries of sound, and, by implication, of existence. Scelsi's use of the drone challenges Western listeners to reevaluate music itself, to gain, as John Cage would say, "new ears." While other modern composers sought ever more complex pitch structures, Scelsi revealed the great complexity inherent within a single tone. Although pitch centers do change in Scelsi's music, Metzger asserts that they are irrelevant, and that all his music is based on a single pitch.

A similar theme is present in Rudolf Zeller's *Das Ensemble der Soli*, which focuses on Scelsi's works for solo performers. Just as many tones and structures are present within a single drone, whole ensembles are present in solo music, Zeller asserts. The inspiration of meditation and Tibetan and other Eastern spiritualism in Scelsi's music is examined in the Zeller article.

Philosophical basis for the inquiry

The philosophical underpinnings of the research are hermeneutic in origin and, more specifically, are guided by the traditions of Heidegger and Gadamer and the thinking of current analysts who have generally drawn on the works of Theodor Adorno without embracing all of his views. Edward Said and John Sheperd in particular provide insight into the social dynamics of performance and composition in present-day Western music.

In the traditional Western composer-performer paradigm, timeless masterpieces are performed by virtuosos, whose perfect interpretations are guided by objective analysis of the composition's structure. Underlying this paradigm is an essentialist philosophy, which posits that scientific method can reveal the essence of all phenomenon. In this view, all things are knowable.

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In an interview by Franck Mallet, published under the title, *Il Suono Lontano*, Scelsi said, "My music is neither this or that, it isn't dodecafonic, it's not pointillist, it's not minimalist. What is it then? It's not knowable." (18)

Rather than close off any further intellect inquiry, Scelsi's declaration that his music is "unknowable" ironically places him within a definite intellectual realm. The works of Heidegger, Gadamer, and Adorno all shed light on Scelsi's view of his music as "unknowable." Scelsi's meditative quest into the nature of being, although derived from Eastern spirituality, bears close resemblance to Heidegger's definition of all arts. To Scelsi, discovering the "unknown in music" can never be completely realized. This is similar to Heidegger's view expressed in his essay, "On the Origin of a Work of Art," in which he refers to art works as "things" which embody the strife between the "earth" and the "world." "Strife" refers to the concept of concealment and unconcealment, and unconcealment raises the thing's nature out of its everyday context in the "world." Heidegger uses "world" to refer to the social and cultural world, the relation of the thing to society. "Earth" refers to raw nature, which in its context as the basic elements is also concealed. An art work unconceals the presence of the "earth" in the "world," and by so doing, reveals to us how the earth is concealed so often in our "world." Thus, in Heidegger's view, no thing can ever be completely knowable, since all things embody concealment and unconcealment together. (143-188)

Both Scelsi and Heidegger were rooted in the intellectual and aesthetic tradition of the West, but grew from this base to draw from the traditions of the East. Scelsi states this in characteristically enigmatic language in his essay, "Ohne Titel," (meaning "Without Title" in German). In this essay, Scelsi states, "Rome is

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the dividing line between East and West. North of Rome is the West, South of Rome is the East. My house stands right on the dividing line. This is how you can understand me and my music." (Musik Konzept 105) Although it is not widely known, Heidegger was also influenced by Eastern thought. For example, Otto Poggeler in an essay, "West-East Dialogue," in the anthology, *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, states, "There has been a great deal of evidence that Heidegger gladly acknowledged to visitors the closeness of his thinking to the Taoist tradition and to Zen Buddhism." (Parkes 49)

Gadamer in *Truth and Method* also focuses on the ontological (Heidegger's concept of the cultural "world") dependency of a work of art. "The experience of art acknowledges that it cannot present the perfect truth of what it experiences in terms of final knowledge," he writes. "Here there is no absolute progress and no final exhaustion of what lies in a work of art." (Gadamer 89)

In the battle against religious dogma, the thinkers of the Enlightenment discredited prejudice in principle, tying all understanding to a scientific concept of objectivity. Gadamer argues that no understanding is possible without prejudice, which is the result of judgment of previous experiences. He states,

> At the beginning of all historical hermeneutics, then, the abstract antithesis between tradition and historical research, between history and knowledge, must be discarded. The effect of a living tradition and the effect of historical study must constitute a unity. (251)

Theodor Adorno takes the concept of historical hermeneutics in art one step further by insisting that art must not only be understood in terms of its ontology, but it must also intervene and transform that ontology. In *Philosophy of Aesthetics*, Adorno asserts that true art challenges its own essence. Rather than disregard the

reality in which it originated or offer solace, art should challenge and oppose reality to aid and shape the world. While refuting the idea of "art for art's sake," Adorno qualifies his views by saying that although art is inseparable from the real world, art also has a life of its own. A work of art speaks in ways that nature and humankind cannot, Adorno states. "The art work's opposition to the real world takes the form of a sedimentation of content, which resembles social dialogue without consciously imitating it." (18)

Adorno was sharply critical of the direction that musical composition took, beginning with Beethoven's late period and culminating in the dodecafonic system, because of its dislocation and alienation from society. "Modern music sees absolute oblivion as its goal. It is the surviving message of despair from the shipwrecked," Adorno wrote in *Philosophy of Modern Music.* (133)

It was the use of the dodecafonic system that Scelsi claims caused his mental breakdown and changed his approach to music. "I thought too much," Scelsi said of his 12-tone works, "Now when I make music I never think at all." (Mallet 19) The view that Scelsi's music represents a break from the general direction of Western music is evident, both in the statements of Scelsi himself and in those of the performers interviewed in the study. While the views among the performers and Scelsi vary, a consistent theme is a desire to re-establish a link between music and feeling, a link they feel was missing in much of contemporary music.

In his essay, *Performance as an Extreme Occasion*, literary theorist Edward Said takes Adorno's criticism of the state of Western music and uses it to look specifically at musical performance. Said notes that while most of the great

composers of the past such as Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt were also famous and popular performers, today performers and composers tend to be completely separate. Extreme specialization is expected of the public performer. Audiences are passive participants in the performance, which is meant to hold them in awe by virtuoso playing that no one else could aspire to. Works that were meant as etudes for amateur pianists, such as Chopin's *Etudes*, have been turned into virtuosic exercises. Transcriptions of large works for amateur playing, once a large part of the musical repertoire, is largely abandoned. As Said says, "Performances of Western Classical Music are therefore highly concentrated, rarefied, and extreme occasions." (7)

The sharp distinction between performer and composer is consciously broken down in the Scelsi paradigm. Firstly, Scelsi's compositions arose out of his own daily improvised performances. Secondly, he left many of the orchestration and interpretation decisions to his performer collaborators, whom he often directed to "do what you like" with his works.

John Shepherd, in his book *Music as Social Text*, uses the approach of Adorno to address the way musical analysis is used to re-enforce the alienation of music from its connections with society. Shepherd's book criticizes traditional musical analysis for excluding discussion of the cultural and social meaning of a musical work and provides examples of analyses that show the interconnections between musical elements and their perceived, transient meanings in society. A particular focus of Shepherd's work that further makes it valuable in an inquiry into Scelsi's music is Shepherd's stress on the use of tone color as an expressive element.

Sheperd notes that the very demand that music be analyzed in terms of written language reveals the dominance of literate-written culture over what he calls pre-literate oral-aural culture. Although sound is temporal and has no lasting spatial presence, musical analysis artificially gives it one so that music can be defined in terms of linear space and structure. Sheperd criticizes Meyer's "psychological constants" and Langer's "psychological laws of rightness" as elitist theories that assert underlying essentialist truths about music. By so doing, he claims that Meyer and Langer, among others, in effect deny the validity of different cultural sub-groups to construct their own meaning to music based on their own criterion.

Trance, altered states of consciousness, and music

In his interview with Franck Mallet, Scelsi said:

> I began to improvise on the piano at the age of three-and-a-half. It was from there that it started (at that time it wasn't possible to record.) I would descend on the piano whichever way there was and beat it with punches and kicks. No one ever said to me, 'What are you doing, destroying the piano?' All who saw me were surprised at the blows I was able to deliver to the piano. "I was outside myself, in a state of terrible shock. I was in a trance, not knowing what I did. (18)

Even at this early age, Scelsi's improvisations were created in an altered state of consciousness.

In *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, trance is defined as "a condition of disassociation, characterized by the lack of voluntary movement and frequently by automatisms in act and thought, illustrated by hypnotic and mediumistic conditions." (Eliade Vol. 14, 12) In this altered state of consciousness, the subject experiences a detachment from the structured frames of reference that usually support his or her interpretation of the world.

A more specific definition of trance is found in Gilbert Rouget's *Music and Trance*. Rouget makes a distinction between a state of trance, which he defines as an altered state of consciousness characterized by movement, crisis, sensory over stimulation, amnesia and no hallucinations, and ecstasy, which is characterized by immobility, silence, hallucinations, and full recollection. The author readily admits that the distinction between the two states is difficult to make in practice and says that they should be seen as opposite poles on a continuum which are linked by numerous possible intermediary states. Rouget compares numerous cases spanning societies across the globe and from ancient times to the present. He finds that the interrelationship between music and trance is highly varied among societies and can only be explained in terms of their cultures. Rouget denies the existence of "some mysterious neurophysical action" specific to an instrument such as a drum which alone can explain the trance state. Rather trance and related altered states are culturally learned and defined behavior.

To understand altered states of consciousness in relation to musical creation, a brief overview of the literature pertaining to consciousness in general in relation to music is necessary. In reviewing the available literature on cognition and musical creation, attempts to keep improvisation a distinct and separate topic from composition prove futile. Similarly, the hard and fast categories "conscious" and "unconscious" become blurred and intertwined in current thinking.

Many sources point to the spontaneous creation of music as the origin of composition, giving improvisation and composition a far more interconnected and complex relationship than the previously thought. Mildred Chase, for example, says that "improvisation could be described as the imagination guiding an action in

an unplanned way, allowing a multitude of split second adjustments." (Chase 3)

Jeff Pressing's work is important because it offers a clear, cognitive distinction between the performance of written composition and improvisation. Taking the process of creating music to the level of the mechanics of cognition, Pressing describes a process of seven steps that is valid for both improvisation and written composition performance. The seven cognitive steps are:

1. Complex electrochemical signals are passed between parts of the nervous system and on to endocrine and muscle system;

2. muscles, bones, and connective tissue execute a complex sequence of actions;

3. rapid visual, tactile, and proprioceptive monitoring of actions takes place;

4. music is produced by the instrument or voice;

5. self-produced sounds, and other auditory input are sensed.

6. sensed sounds are set into cognitive representations and evaluated as music

7. further cognitive processing in the central nervous system generates the design of the next action sequence and triggers it. (131)

Pressing further notes, "It seems apparent that the most starkly drawn distinctions between improvisation and fixed performance lie in steps (6) and (7), with possibly important differences in step (3)." (131)

It is the monitoring of performance and response to the players' own actions and the environment around them that distinguishes improvisation from planned performance, Pressing explains. All improvisation has some plan behind it, and all performance of written material has spontaneous adjustments to the demands of the moment. Improvisation makes the response to the moment primary, while

performance of written composition makes the carrying out of the plan primary. (130-136)

John Sloboda comes to conclusions similar to those of Pressing in exploring the nature of musical composition and improvisation. On the question of composition, Sloboda questions the critical role of the composer's deliberate design in the creation of the finished product, asserting that the work may be the result of an unexpected discovery while pursuing an unrelated strategy. Composers' predefined goals and their actual results are not the same thing; in fact, the composers' plans are often "rather provisional" and changed in the process. (Sloboda 139)

Sloboda's questioning of the role of deliberate plans in the compositional process challenges the dichotomy between the conscious and unconscious mind. He writes, "It is worth noting that in an effective theory of composition, the conscious-unconscious distinction is irrelevant". (139)

This closer interconnection between the conscious and unconscious mind is further supported by Daniel Dennett, who characterizes all mental activity as "parallel, multitrack processes of interpretation and elaboration of sensory inputs." (111) Under Dennett's "Multiple Drafts" model, consciousness is a mode of action rather than a separate subsystem of the brain. Several mental activities can be going in and out of different levels of "consciousness" at once, rather than a central command post controlling all consciousness. (253-286)

A similar approach to Dennett's "Multiple Drafts" view of consciousness is presented in Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind*. He insists that intelligences should be thought of as autonomous entities that operate according to their own

rules.(8) He further asserts that what we call intelligence is just a convenient label for a phenomenon which may or may not exist. Gardner states that composers begin as child performers who begin "experimenting with pieces that they are performing, rewriting them, changing them, turning them into something other than they were- in a word decomposing them." (114) In other words, composers begin as improvisers!

The distinction between music and language appears as a common theme throughout Gardner's discussion of music. In citing composers, Gardner points to a consensus among them that the act of composing follows its own inherent rules, rules in which language plays little or no part. Later, in discussing the development of musical prodigies, he says the application of language-based rules to intuitive musical processes often creates a crisis. As Gardner states:

> At a certain point, however, it becomes important for them to supplement their intuitive understanding with a more systematic knowledge of music lore and law. This bringing-to-consciousness of what was previously assumed (or ignored) can be unsettling for the youngsters, particularly for ones who have depended simply on their intuition, and who may have a resistance to propositional (linguistic or mathematical) characterizations of musical events. The so-called mid-life crisis occurs in the lives of prodigies. . . .If this crisis is not successfully negotiated, it may prompt the child to cease altogether participating in musical life. (115)

The effects of the imposition of conscious, language-based rules on music is also evident in the development of children's musical abilities. Very young children invent spontaneous songs that are difficult to notate, but, "by the age of three or four, the melodies of the dominant culture have won out, and the production of spontaneous songs and of exploratory sound play generally wanes." (116)

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Scelsi experienced the "mid-life" crisis described by Gardner as a young composer. In *Il suono lontano* Scelsi told Franck Mallet that the study of the 12-tone system of composition resulted in his mental illness. After he recovered, Scelsi said he "stopped thinking, all my music and poetry was born without thinking." (Mallet 19)

The imposition of language-based rules over intuitive musical creation, which is the heart of improvisation, is again a theme of Derek Bailey, in his book *Improvisation, Its Nature and Practice in Music*. Bailey discusses the constraining effect of strict classical music training on musicians' ability to improvise:

> The biggest handicap inflicted by that training is the instilling of a deeply reverential attitude towards the creation of music, an attitude which unquestionable accepts the physical and hierarchical separation of playing and creating. (66)

Gardner concurs with Bailey. Although he doesn't speak directly to the question of improvisation, he does have something to say about Western culture's sharp division between performer and composer. He states:

> Indeed, the line between composing and performing does not exist in many cultures. Performers are the interpreters and composers; they constantly make small changes in the works they perform, so that they ultimately build up an oeuvre; but they do not consciously set themselves off from others as "composers". (115)

Scelsi himself repeatedly asserted that he did not want to be considered a "composer". The origins of his music from an improvisational performing practice rather than from a writing process show a remarkable link to Gardner's and Bailey's observations on the role of performers and composers in non-Western cultures.

CHAPTER III
METHOD

<u>Introduction</u>

The original intent of this study was to hermeneutically trace the transformation of several solo musical works from the composer's original recording and score to the recordings of various interpretations by various performers in order to examine the belief systems guiding the performances. As the research progressed, it became apparent that the continuing controversy over Scelsi's compositional methods prevented access to his original recordings. The archive, which is under the control of the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi, is not open to the public. The researcher received much individual help from two people involved in the work of the foundation, Luciano Martines and Frances-Marie Uitti, but neither of these people could arrange access to the archives themselves. Even access to the original published scores became an issue in the case of Michiko Hirayama and the *Canti del Capricorno* works. In these works, Hirayama's role had expanded from performer to co-composer, and she has declared her intention to publish her own version of the score. Hirayama's recording and score were available for the study, while the original score, withheld by the publisher Editions Salabert and rejected and condemned by Hirayama, could not be obtained.

In contrast to the difficulties encountered in researching primary sources about Scelsi's compositional process, performers of Scelsi's music were cooperative and sympathetic to this study. In keeping with the principle of openness to data that characterizes a qualitative study, the emphasis of the study shifted decisively into a study of performance of Scelsi's solo music. The primary source

of information came from a qualitative interview study with performers, three of whom worked directly with the composer on their interpretations, and three of whom had never met Scelsi and had only the scores and the recordings of others as a reference to guide their interpretations.

To analyze the views of the composer, close associates of the composer, and the selected performers, the qualitative research methods of Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin was followed based on their work, *Basics of Qualitative Research*. The coding process of extracting thematic elements from text was also applied to the findings of the musical analyses.

A secondary source of information came from musical analysis of the selected performers' recordings of Scelsi's solo works. The musical analysis was based on the recorded music, which was then compared to both the score and the views expressed in the performer's interview.

Placing the performer's recorded performance in the central place of importance required rethinking much of the process of musical analysis. The score is usually the primary source—and often the solitary source—in musical analysis. By contrast, the role of the score in Scelsi's music cannot be assumed to have exclusive authority for many reasons. Among these reasons is the fact that the actual scores from the period on which this study focuses were not written by Scelsi himself, but rather by several transcribers-orchestrators such as Vieri Tosatti, Roman Vlad, Sergio Cafarro, students of Tosatti and Frances-Marie Uitti.

The authority of the scores is further undermined by a polemic launched by Tosatti in an article entitled *Scelsi, C'est Moi* (Il Giornale della Musica, Torino, January 1989) in which, according to Frances Marie Uitti and Aldo Brizzi, Tosatti

claimed that he was more than a transcriber or orchestrator, but rather was the actual composer of Scelsi's scores. (He later withdrew from that polemic.) In response to Tosatti's original claim of being the composer of the scores, many other transcribers came forward to refute him, stating that Scelsi was indeed the composer, but one that used the tape recorder as his creative medium and relied on others to write the score under his direction. Out of this controversy, we have both Scelsi's detractors and his defenders agreeing that the Scelsi scores do not have the same meaning as traditional scores. The scores are meant to represent music that was not created by a writing process, but rather was created by an improvisational practice that developed over many years.

The basis for Tosatti's claim was that if the music weren't written (notated with pen and paper) by Scelsi, the music was not valid. The view that culture only derives validity through writing reflects a prejudice which is explained by Shepard's *Music as Social Text*. Scelsi's defenders, such as Aldo Brizzi (the author of the first *Giornale* article and many of the subsequent pieces on Scelsi), countered that Scelsi's musical creation followed an oral tradition such as is common in Eastern music, and that the written notation was just one part of the music. The music-as-played came first; the score came second. The writing of the score was not the end of the creative process as it often is in traditional composing. Scelsi worked with performers in coaching sessions that sometimes extended over years to guide the interpretation of his compositions. According to the performers who worked with him, Scelsi strived for very specific elements in performance that they felt could not be conveyed by existing musical notation. In light of these factors, the basis for this analysis is the relationship between composer and performer in Scelsi's music, with

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the score as one of several sources.

In order to investigate the assertions of Scelsi's defenders that his creative process reflects an oral tradition, a very open-ended approach to musical analysis was needed. The views of the performers, expressed in their interviews, became the starting point of the research. The recorded performances by these same performers became supporting data to be used to compare and evaluate their stated views on the music. The score was analyzed in terms of its interconnection to the music-as-played and the views of the people who played it. Issues of underlying musical structure, which are usually of primary importance in analysis, did not hold the same significance.

To analyze both the notated and recorded music in terms of the musical elements alone, the researcher adapted a method from *Sonic Design* by Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot. The *Sonic Design* approach was sufficiently broad enough to address the idiosyncratic nature of Scelsi's music in terms of its restricted use of pitch, entrophic use of rhythm, and limited use of form. Tone color, including timbre, dynamics and articulation, is a primary element of Scelsi's music, and the *Sonic Design* approach is unique in trying to address this critical musical component. Another approach to analysis of timbre in music, that of Wayne Slawson in his book *Sound Color,* was reviewed but rejected. Slawson's attempt to precisely categorize all the complexities of sound had as its ultimate goal a way of creating an equivalent to serial composition in sound color. The rigidity and schematization of Slawson's method were found to be obscuring, rather than revealing, in the case of Scelsi's spontaneously created music.

The accessibility of digital sound tools as analysis aids opened new,

unprecedented possibilities that earlier methods such as that of Cogan and Escot could only hint at. Cogan and Escot themselves were well aware that the attempts to analyze sound color had been very limited despite its importance in music. In their book *Sonic Design*, authors Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot offered a very open-ended analytical way of approaching the elements of tone color in a musical work. "Tone color is perhaps the most paradoxical of music's parameters. The paradox lies in the contrast between its direct communicative power and the historic inability to grasp it critically or analytically." (Cogan-Escot 327). The *Sonic Design* approach provides a way to uncover the use of elements of pitch, rhythm, range (sonic space), and sound color in music without mandating too many predefined assumptions.

Using *Sonic Design* and a later accompanying workbook as a general guide, I experimented with using the various features of *SoundDesign16* to investigate musical dimensions in the recordings. These efforts are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, and examples of computer screen images of how the two and three dimensional spectral graphs are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

The pieces and performances were chosen to show the range of levels of creative input by the performer. On one extreme is *Canti del Capricorno*, where the performer, Michiko Hirayama, calls herself a "composer and performer at the same time" and says she is publishing her version of the score. On the other extreme is the performance of *Tre Pezzi* by saxophonist Claude Delangle who explains he feels duty bound to follow the published score, a score which outwardly appears to fall within traditional bounds. In the middle is the score of *Maknongan*, where the score itself encompasses a non-traditional demand on performers to creatively

adapt their instrument or voice to achieve vaguely defined color changes.

Interviews

An interview study was conducted focusing on the interpretative issues arising in Scelsi's music and how they were and are being dealt with by performers with first-hand knowledge of the music and the composer. An approach to interview techniques was adapted from *Guide to Research in Music Education* by Phelps, Ferrara, and Goolsby. In chapter five of the book, the authors provide a comprehensive review of the use of the interview as a tool in qualitative research.

Selection criteria

Three " Key informants" which are defined by Phelps and Ferrara as those who had a first hand knowledge of the composer's creative process or experience in performing his music, and three secondary informants, who perform Scelsi's music but didn't work with t he composer directly, were chosen. Agreement on aesthetic issues of interpretation regarding Scelsi's music or broader music issues was not a criterion for selection. The consultants were chosen to provide a sample that reflects the divergent views of the community of performers of Scelsi's work rather than a homogenous grouping.

Procedure

Due to the international character of the pool of possible consultants, procedural flexibility was needed. Candidates for the interview were in diverse locations and have many cultural and linguistic differences. An openness and

sensitivity to these differences guided the interview procedure. Based on their preferences, two primary informants, Frances-Marie Uitti and Joelle Leandre, were interviewed in person, while the third, Michiko Hirayama, was interviewed over the telephone. Although their primary languages were not English, all three key informants had strong English language skills. Translation was not an issue with either Hirayama or Uitti. In the case of Leandre, who expressed concerns about her English, she was invited to speak her first language, French, whenever she felt it necessary to express herself freely. During the interview, she spoke French at times to emphasize points, only to immediate translate each statement into English, so again translation was not an issue.

All three secondary informants chose to respond in writing. Corrado Canonici, although Italian, responded in English, as did Johnny Reinhard, the sole American. Claude Delangle responded in French, and a transcript of an English language translation was sent to him for his review.

Initial telephone discussions were held with all six informants to determine their experience with regard to the selection criteria and their interest in participating in the study. The initial interview was unstructured, and notes were kept which provided important background information that helped guide the interaction between the researcher and informant during the formal interview.

Questionnaire

Informants chosen for interview were sent the following questionnaire in the mail:

<div align="center">Questionnaire for Interview Study</div>

For Performers

<div align="center">3 0</div>

Question 1. Can you give us a brief portrait of yourself as a musician?

Question 2. To what extent if at all do you see yourself as a musical creator? Do you compose? Do you improvise?

Question 3. If you see yourself as a musical creator, how does your role as a musical creator affect your role as a performer?

Question 4. What do you believe is the role of the performer in Scelsi's music? What part is played by the score in this role?

Question 5. What would you like to say about the selected recording? What special problems did this piece present, and how did you deal with them?

Question 6. Is there anything else you'd like to say?

For Close Associates of Scelsi

Question 7. What can you tell us about Scelsi's compositional process?

Question 8. What did he think about the role of the performer? How did he interact with performers? Is this interaction reflected in the score?

The degree of usefulness of the questionnaire appeared to be largely shaped by the form of the response and the background of the performer. The two in-person interviews were the most open-ended in which the original interview questions played a minor role. In the phone interview of Michiko Hirayama, the questions provided a starting point, which she used to plan a structured response, which was then modified by the interaction with the researcher. The secondary informants confined themselves to concise answers to the interview questions, reflecting the limitations of a written exchange in such a study, as well as their more limited personal experiences with the music.

<u>Coding of Interview Text</u>

Text from the interview study was analyzed and interpreted based on the Grounded Theory Procedures described by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin in their book *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Strauss and Corbin define a grounded theory as one "which is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents" (22). The method is comprised of the following elements:

1. Open Coding, which identifies phenomenon in terms of categories and their associated properties and dimensional locations

2. Axial Coding, which regroups categories based on interconnections. A paradigm model is created which relates casual conditions, context, intervening conditions, action-interaction strategies and consequences. The paradigm is then verified against the actual data.

3. Selective Coding, which creates a core category around which the other categories are organized.

All of the coding process was characterized by a sense of openness. A theme that arose in Open Coding of one interview was allowed to affect the way a theme in another interview was presented in Axial Coding. The cross categories of Selective Coding, such as spirituality or the limitations of music notation, were always under consideration while the paradigms of Axial Coding were being created.

A fundamental openness to the data also allowed the outcome of the interviews to redirect the original research plan. An example was the case of Frances-Marie Uitti, whose recording of *Ko-Tha* on an altered cello was meant to be the central focus of her interview. Instead of following the research plan of one

performer, one performance, in Uitti's case I followed her desire to discuss her current work in creating the Scelsi archive. Her interview provided invaluable information about Scelsi's entire creative life, his creative process, the controversy over the transcriber Tosatti, the way Scelsi thought and the way he worked with performers. In exchange for this Uitti meta-view on Scelsi, an in-depth look at the specific performance issues relating to the piece *Ko-Tha* had to be put aside for future study.

Music Analysis of Recorded Performances

Analysis of both the music as written and the music as played was guided by Chapter Four, "The Color of Sound," of Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot's book, *Sonic Design*. Analysis of musical elements of timbre, dynamics, and articulation that arose in the recorded interpretations was assisted using the digital sound software tool *SoundEdit 16*. Using these computer tools, a quantified documentation of the interrelationships between different musical elements of the recorded music was presented .

Two years ago, the first experiments for this study were done on a Macintosh Centris in a special lab environment to transfer a recording to a Digital Sound File, isolate the area desired to study, and produce a 3-dimensional graph of a spectral analysis. At that time the software package *SoundDesigner* was used. Due to the simple lack of computer horse-power, only short sections of the piece could be analyzed, typically consisting of about 3 seconds of sound. The entire

process was cumbersome, and broad assumptions had to be made on the basis of little data.

In this study, working on a Power Macintosh 7100, I was able to create far clearer 2 and 3-dimensional representations of the entire recordings, (lasting up to 6 minutes) with little preparation or waiting. Multiple windows could be left open in order to compare one recording's spectrum with another, one section's dynamics with another, etc. The images of the graphs were captured quickly using simple screen snap-shots. The entire process became a true free-flowing investigation, rather than a pre-planned exercise.

The recorded performances, from CDs and cassettes, were transferred through an analog medium to digital sound files on the Power Macintosh 7100/80. Each file was kept as an AIFF file, with a sound format of mono, 16 bits, 44.1KHZ sampling rate. Irregularities from the transfer process, such as too great a signal causing digital clipping and distortion, or too low levels being unhearable, were corrected, and upper-end white noise that originated from the cassette tapes was eliminated. The goal in the transfer process was to keep the recording as true to the original as possible.

The AIFF files were then analyzed using the software package *SoundEdit 16*. The amplitude range of the entire recording was studied and compared with other performance. Specific areas of interest of each piece, such as the climax of *Maknongan*, were isolated and transferred to separate files for spectral analysis and comparison of wave forms. To illustrate relative adherence to score markings, a click track of a metronome at the marked tempo was lined-up with the perceived tempo of the recording. To provide a pitch reference, a pure Sine Wave at

the opening pitch called for in the score was generated which contrasted with the more complex timbres in the performance.

To show the spectral compositions and changes in the recorded excerpts, a three-dimensional chart was used with the consistent specifications shown in Figure 1. All the spectral graphs used the same settings, except for variations in Gain level and frequency range depending on the composition of the excerpt.

Figure 1

Spectral Graph Settings
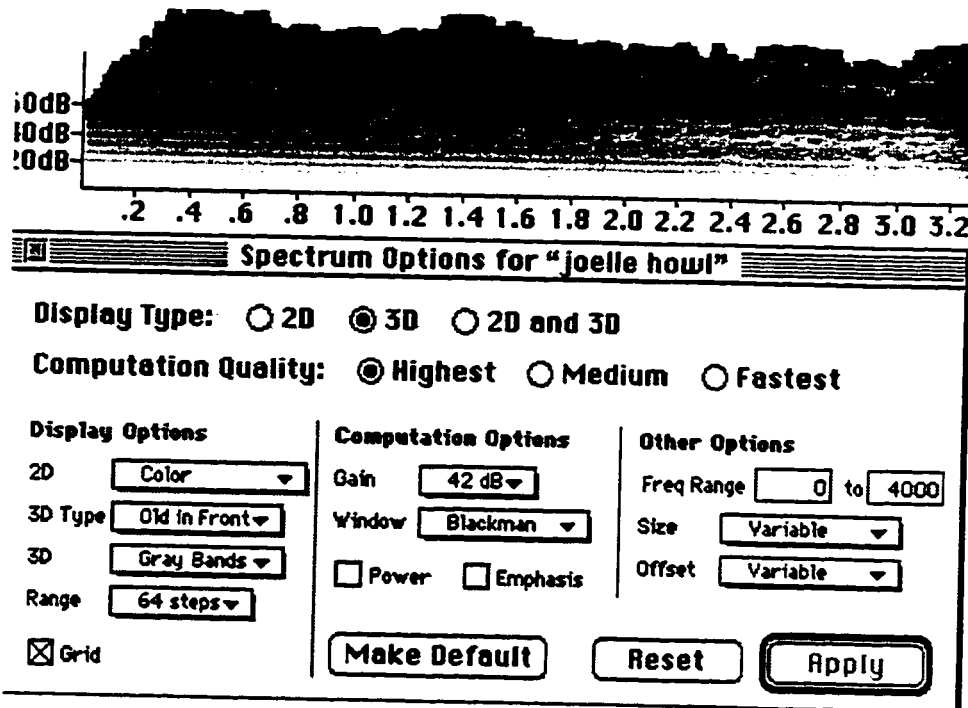
Figure 1 is an actual screen image created in *SoundDesign 16*, showing the parameters used in generating 3-dimensional graphs of spectral data in an isolated area of a sound file. In this example, Joelle Leandre's climax of *Maknongan* was analyzed, with the Highest Quality of graphing, oldest data in front, a gain of 42db to bring out the presence of upper partials, showing all partials present (Power and Emphasis unchecked) and a broad frequency range of 0 to 4000 Hz. In 2-dimensional graphs, the Display Option was Black Lines, Vertical, with other parameters remaining the same.

Interconnection between Interviews and Musical Analysis

The Corbin Strauss Method of Qualitative Analysis was applied to the text of the completed musical analysis. Open, Axial and Selective coding were used to compare and restructure paradigm relationships and to test the validity of the paradigms against the findings from the actual music and interviews. The musical

analyses were compared to one another for similarities and differences, and to the interviews separately. Out of this broader analysis, a new overall paradigm was synthesized to address the new perspectives that arose from both the musical and textual analysis.

Figure 2

Diagram of Interconnections Between Analytical Methods
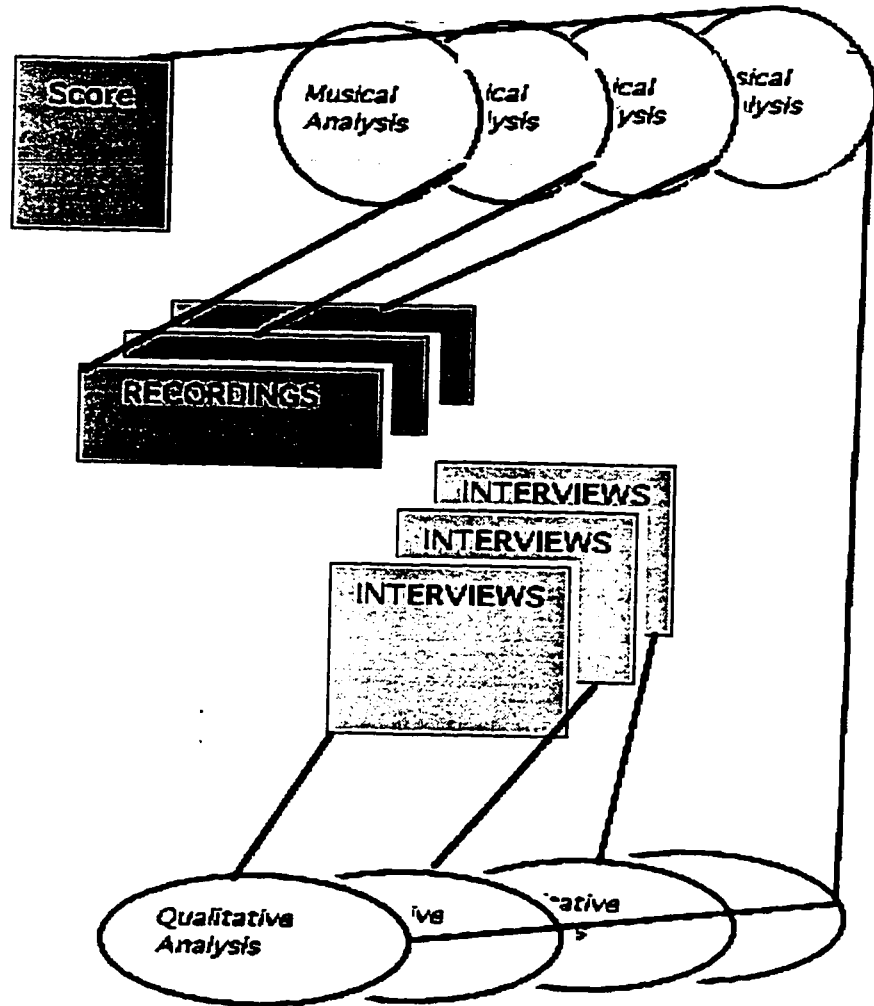
Figure 2 shows Musical analyses and Qualitative Analyses being interrelated by means of higher level Qualitative Analyses.

Interactive Presentation

The research's recurrent stress on the "oral-aural tradition" and away from
the musical score as the sole authority required the use of new, multimedia
technology to integrate the musical itself directly with the research. The musical
excerpts that provided the source for the spectral analysis needed to be heard along
with viewing the graphs that further describe them. Graphs, score excerpts,
musical excerpts and text can be viewed in an open-ended structure rather than
presented in the strict sequential fashion of a textual document.

To respond to these needs, the findings are presented in the form of a Web
Page interactive computer presentation. To directly link recorded music examples,
the score, analytical charts and graphs together with text, a multi-media presentation
was created using the Macintosh Computer and a writeable CD-ROM. The
presentation is in the form of Web application, presented by the Web Browser
Netscape and a set of "helper applications" for sound listening, graphical viewing
and video-viewing. Contained in the presentation are the full text of this study, the
additional text of translations of articles by and about Scelsi, the musical recordings,
graphical images of the scores, photos of the performers, and excerpts from the
recorded interviews.

Different sections of text, pictures and music are connected by means of
hyperlinks, a generic term for the use of a string of text or picture as a button to
open another file on a related subject. In Netscape, hyperlinks are indicated by a
brighter color such bright blue, or in the case of a picture, a border of bright blue.
Viewers can also navigate between the component parts of a presentation by means
of buttons (Forward, Back), by means of a pop-up menu above which retains the

titles of all the "pages" the viewer has seen thus far, or by means of "bookmarks" which permanently record a page of interest for the viewer.

Figure 3. shows the first page of the presentation. Each significant word of the title: "Composer," "Performer," "Paradigm." "Giacinto Scelsi," "Solo Works" are hyperlinks to other areas of the presentation. All areas of the presentation have further links to deeper levels of detail or other subjects. For example, "Performer" leads to the Performer page shown in Figure 4, which serves as a graphical index to the performers backgrounds, interviews, performances and musical analysis of those performances. Figure 5 shows the continuation of a link from Figure 4. "Giacinto Scelsi" leads to biographical information about Scelsi, "Paradigm" leads to philosophical issues concerning the study and higher level analysis. All the areas are interlinked with cross-categories, allowing the user to interact with sources on their own terms.

Figure 3.

Giacinto Scelsi Home Page
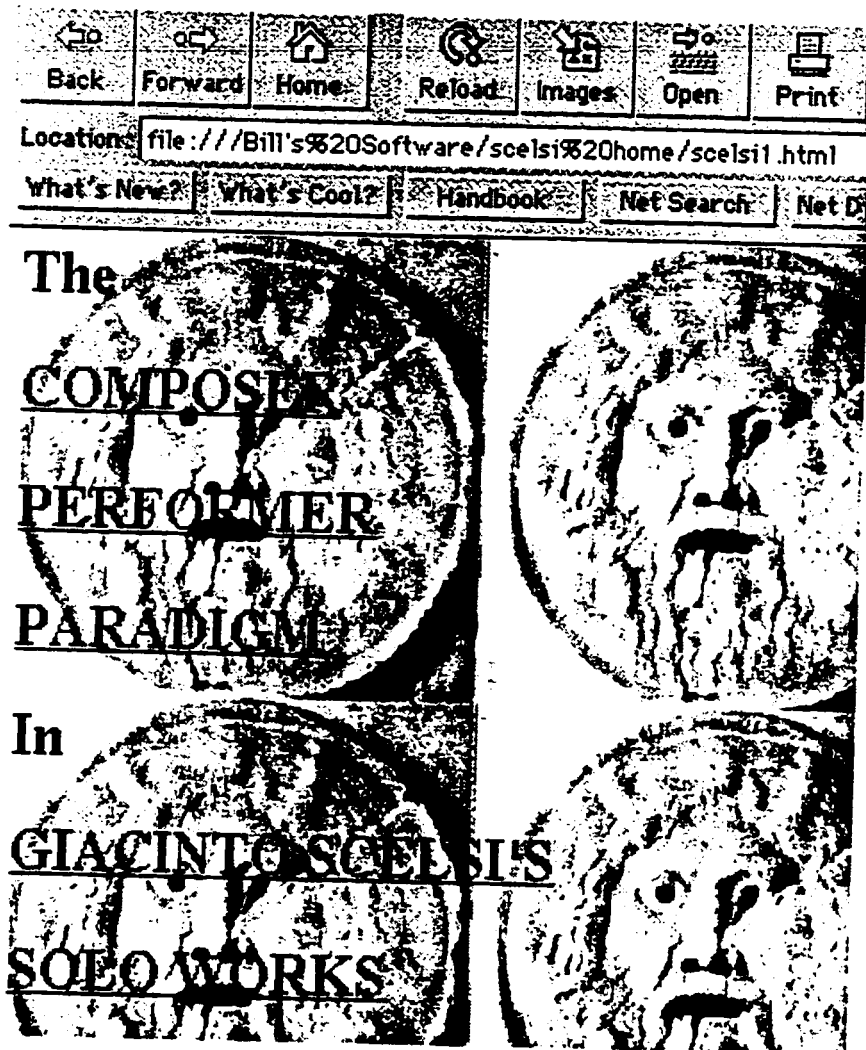
Each underlined word is a hyperlink which brings the viewer to that subject

Figure 4.

Scelsi Performer Page

Picture of performers or their name brings the viewer to a general page about the performer. Topics to the side bring the viewer to the more specific level of detail

Figure 5.

Michiko Hirayama Page

Michiko Hirayama

CANTI 16

Brief Portrait

Of the performers interviewed, lyric soprano Michik‹
acquaintance of Scelsi. She settled in Rome in the earl‹
studies at Tokyo University of the Arts, the Chigiana.
Cecilia of Rome, and the Mozarteum of Salzburg. She
leading role of Madame Butterfly more than 100 time
Rome, but her primary interest and effort has been in
repertoire for the voice utilizing unique extended tect
realizing Scelsi's vocal music was seen as part of her ‹
and personal means of musical creation. Already an a‹

This page includes themes from her interview, lead to her performance of
Canti del Capricorno 16, her score of Canti, an analysis of Canti, and
recorded excerpts from her interview

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF THE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

In the search for an understanding of Scelsi's creative process and its implications for the performance of his music, a total of six performers of Scelsi's music were interviewed about their belief systems regarding their performances of this music. Three were performers who knew Scelsi to varying degrees, were coached by him in their performances, and directly collaborated with him in some way. The other three performers had no such direct coaching and were left to rely on the score itself, other recordings, and indirect discussions of Scelsi's intentions to guide their interpretations.

The primary informants who had the benefit of direct experience with the composer provided valuable insights into how Scelsi worked with performers and transcribers in the process of realizing his music. The three secondary sources provided important evidence of how the belief-systems (of composer, performers, transcribers) at work in the original creation of the music evolved in their hermeneutic transfer to other performers. Musical analysis of the recorded performances by all the performers showed what correlations could be found between the performers' stated beliefs and their actual practice.

Michiko Hirayama

Brief Portrait

Of the performers interviewed, lyric soprano Michiko Hirayama was the earliest acquaintance of Scelsi. She settled in Rome in the early 1960s after

completing her studies at Tokyo University of the Arts, the Chigiana Academy of Siena, Santa Cecilia of Rome, and the Mozarteum of Salzburg. She said she performed the leading role of Madame Butterfly more than 100 times "in order to survive" in Rome, but her primary interest and effort has been in the development of new repertoire for the voice utilizing unique extended techniques. Her involvement in realizing Scelsi's vocal music was seen as part of her own search for an innovative and personal means of musical creation. Already an accomplished opera singer, Hirayama rejected further training and a performing contract in Austria, feeling that it was impossible to put sincere expression into an alien culture. "I decided not to sing foreign, already created culture," she explained, "but I would do something creative which I can do by myself as Japanese and as a singer." The search for a personal means of musical creation led her to collaborate with Scelsi in the realization of the set of short vocal works, *Canti del Capricorno*.

Hirayama spoke of Scelsi's creative process and her own collaboration with him and with transcriber-orchestrator Vieri Tosatti in the development of the *Canti del Capricorno*. Her work on *Canti del Capricorno* continues to this day, as she is preparing a new score for the 20 works to be published by Universal Editions. In her interview, Hirayama gave a detailed look at the collaborative process, reasons for problems, and a personal portrait of herself as a musical creator and improviser. In discussing her own improvising, she spoke of her study of Gregorian chants which she asserts were themselves improvised based on exploring overtones.

Musical creator

Hirayama's decision to reject further study of Western classical singing, "already created culture" as she termed it, in favor of "something creative which I

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can do by myself as Japanese and as a singer," led her to settle in Rome in the early 1960s to begin a lifetime of musical creation and innovation.

According to Hirayama, Rome at that time was a center of artistic experimentation as Italians sought to develop a new, dynamic culture of their own after the decades of fascism and war. "This generation wanted to make a new Italian, new European art, and I joined them," she said. From the first, Hirayama involved herself in this creative environment in the context of collaboration. These collaborative efforts included creating an electronic music studio with composers Franco Evangelisti and Dominico Guacchero, performing works by modern Japanese composers together with Japanese folk music, and working with Giacinto Scelsi on his vocal music.

When asked whether she composes or improvises, Hirayama said nothing about engaging in conventional composition, but she did say she improvised. She explained that her improvisation is individual, in which she sings on harmonics and accompanies herself with the tamboura, an Indian drone instrument. Concerning her longtime study of medieval Gregorian chant, which was prompted by her interest in the natural harmonics of the voice, she pointed out:

> Gregorian chant was improvised singing, sung or spoken in sounds in one note in a Roman huge hall which makes such rich harmonics. After five minutes of one note reciting psalms of David comes out such rich harmonics. The leader of the chorus improvises on these harmonics, and this is the birth of Gregorian chant around 500.

Hirayama's study of Gregorian chant convinced her that "real" vocal music should only be sung without instrumental accompaniment. She added this study gave her "my capacity to improvise, so my form of improvisation is different," from improvisers like jazz musicians.

Scelsi's Creative Process

Giacinto Scelsi came to Hirayama's Rome concert of Japanese folk and contemporary music, and it was there that they met. Hirayama described him then as "alone and doing his own work by aim of healing his nerve sickness by listening to one tone, one note." Scelsi's nervous breakdown, she asserts, followed the completion of a gigantic 12-tone work, *Naissance du Verb*, for three orchestras and two choruses. She described his 5-year-long healing process in a clinic.

> He met 300 doctors and healers, and nobody could do anything better for him in that state. But one day he found the old piano in the corner of the clinic, and began to touch one key and listen to it, its vibration and all day long this note and listening into the vibration and he noticed this listening to one note was healing him. He was a kind of schizophrenic and the listening had the effect of coordinating his nerves. From that he came to be better and better. He used to play one note for a long time, and then came out his kind of improvisation.

Scelsi's "kind of improvisation," according to Hirayama, consisted of nightly solo sessions lasting four or five hours on an early electronic organ that allowed dynamic and tonal control.

Commonalty with Scelsi

Hirayama explained the common points that brought her to work with Scelsi:

> One sound, it's useless to tell you, has all the resonances, all the frequencies. From one frequency result incredibly rich notes above, and I feel it and I believe it. First of all this is the common point with Scelsi which I feel on sound . Then my nature has somehow a common quality which he adores, I don't want to say Oriental, but native music and this is common second point. And the score. It's not possible to write how Scelsi wants to hear or how he improvises. In a pentagram there's too many limits to express the sound which he feels inside of him. And after many times I heard his improvisation. ...That's why I felt this was good music for me to collaborate, to realize in sound.

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Hirayama's first contact with Scelsi's music was through a score, for the piece *Ho*, which she said had "no interest" for her. It was only through sitting outside Scelsi's door during his nightly improvisation sessions that Hirayama heard what Scelsi's music was ("He didn't know I heard his improvisation, for about 10 hours"). From eavesdropping on his played music rather than reading his score, she decided to help realize his works for the voice.

Hirayama's preference for directly experiencing Scelsi's music-making rather than studying the notated work reveals another point of commonalty she believed she had with Scelsi. This point was a stress on the intuitive, direct experience in sound rather than its structural organization. "I don't feel a fascination to make structure of the thing, it's a quality of the female, I think," she stated after describing her way of experimenting with his score until she felt "something live inside of me." Sincere personal expression appeared to be the priority in working with Scelsi, taking precedent over the written score or verbal instructions. As Hirayama stressed, "We never talked, he never explained what he mentioned with this music, but I felt it, so it was not necessary to explain with words."

<u>Collaboration</u>

Hirayama described the process of creation of *Canti del Capricorno*, a process in which she is still involved. This work was the result of a three-way collaboration, including Scelsi, a transcriber, and Hirayama. The score, in Hirayama's view, was a work in progress instead of a finished product. Speaking of the score, she said:

I change always. And naturally in agreement with him. We worked

together, 'I wish to sing this note this way or I wish to sing this note changing to that note,' and always he would say, 'If you feel it inside, it's OK.' Always he would give me OK.

An important dimension of the collaboration with Scelsi was the transition from Scelsi's original taped improvisation from his electronic organ to the voice. Scelsi knew nothing about the voice, Hirayama asserted, and therefore sweeping decisions had to be made to adapt the original work for voice. Hirayama explained, "I had to transpose some piece but by transposing, it loses the feeling of the original tonality. I said I have to change some notes because it was not good sometimes for my soprano voice." Transcriber-orchestrator Vieri Tosatti reworked the scores to add syllables, and again Hirayama made changes to the score in order to perform the works.

Scelsi's use of transcribers and the freedom of performers to have input into his musical work led to controversy and conflict over his music. Hirayama gave her view on the disputes that arose between Scelsi and his transcribers-orchestrators such as Vieri Tosatti, disputes that Hirayama partially attributed to Scelsi and his upbringing:

> Unfortunately, he was a spoiled child of a noble family. Italian noble families treat the male child in a very bad way, and he became a spoiled child and he didn't know how to treat people, how to thank the collaborators. All these good musicians left.

Hirayama added that she was never paid for her singing, so she "was never paid by making records for him so I can imagine how he treated these musicians." Among the early musicians who transcribed Scelsi's scores were Roman Blood, Sergio Cafarro, and Vieri Tosatti, men Hirayama stressed were master musicians who went on to become top figures in the Italian music establishment. Hirayama

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called herself the one musician who understood Scelsi and stayed to continue working with him. He grew tired of the *Capricorno* project, she said, finishing 16 pieces with Hirayama, but gave her authority to finish the project herself. She is now working with Universal Editions to publish 20 *Capricorno* pieces.

Frances-Marie Uitti

Brief Portrait

Cellist Frances-Marie Uitti is both an accomplished performer in the traditional sense and a musical creator. She has toured extensively as a soloist throughout Europe, the U.S. and Canada, Korea and Japan. Her repertoire ranges from pre-Bach Ricercari to contemporary works, which include pieces by Scelsi, Nono, Kurtag, Bussotti, Globokar and Harvey that were dedicated to her. Uitti's musical creation revolves around a multi-dimensional solo improvised music using a double-bow technique she developed for cello playing. This technique allows her to create two, three, and even four part polyphony playing by using two bows in one hand.

Uitti's knowledge of Scelsi and his work came from close collaboration with the composer on his compositions for cello, from organizing his papers for the publisher Salabert while Scelsi was alive, and from creating an archive for the Isabella Scelsi Foundation after Scelsi's death. In her interview, she focused on Scelsi's compositional method, her own personal experiences transforming his creations into works for the cello, the archiving effort, the different periods of Scelsi's music, and the controversial relationship between Scelsi and his chief

transcriber and orchestrator, Vieri Tosatti. Uitti lives in Amsterdam and makes several trips a year to Rome to work on the archives.

Musical creator

In discussing her role as a musical creator, Uitti emphasized her solo improvisational music. "I improvise and I have since I was a child. My improvisations in the past 15 years have been devoted to the double bow technique for the cello which I created, " she stated. "That's my concern; finding my own voice and my own path," Uitti added.

Her search for her "own voice and my own path" didn't immediately coincide with her work with Scelsi. Uitti explained:

> When I was first working on it, I thought, "It's not fair." That was a bit my feeling, that's it not fair, it' s much too hard because I had a cello and he had ten fingers on a organ to make that piece. And I thought , "Wait a minute. I'm supposed to be his brain, in a way, and the pieces are very complex and very fast. But I soon forgot that, because the score is there and there is a place for the person and there is a place for yourself. Otherwise I think I probably would have refused to play it.

Scelsi's Creative Process
According to Uitti, Scelsi, "believed in automatic writing and all kinds of ways of getting rid of one's self, of getting to the creativity source, or receiving the creative source." His original recordings "were done in a state of ecstasy and all kinds of meditative states" and "later upon listening and sorting through the material that it came to him" how to he wanted to hear the work orchestrated.

"For Giacinto he had this mystical feeling that these things were given to him. He would always say that 'I'm not the composer, I'm just the one or receives them, I'm the channel,'" Uitti asserted.

In her archiving work, Uitti has listened to over 300 hours of taped improvisational works. "What is predominant is a sense of the Chinese painter who sits down and what comes out is a complete work with no hesitation," she said. When asked to describe the character of the works, she identified different periods. The first period was characterized by his study of serial composing:

> For example, his early piano pieces, the ones from the 30s, I don't think they were improvised, they sound very composed, a bit like Alban Berg, quite, he goes from a free chromaticism and then into a Bergian style, almost dodecafonic, and he did do some dodecafonic studies.

His first experimentations with taped improvisations marked a distinct new style, which included elaborate embellishments:

> Then you get the period in Switzerland when he started really improvising with the tape recorder. And those improvisations, they appear in the late 40s early 50s they're quite tempestuous, there's a lot of movement a lot of embellishment, amazing virtuosity, the beginning of the use of quarter tones, but he would use them in blocks, he wouldn't disperse them like he did in the later period. There was a fascination with a music that sounded almost Arabic, that would be so wildly embellished that you would be reminded of that kind of character. There were simple pieces as well, almost like Gregorian chants, extremely simple built on 4ths, 5ths, octaves.

A meditative mood and a sense of drone or tone center characterized his last period:

> there are those pieces of the last period which are amazing, based around one note or one moving tone center, one cluster of one note, when I say a cluster of one note how could I say that. It's basically one note with quarter-tone ramifications around it or 2nds or 3rds but almost that obsession around that core. Those were long meditative pieces, sometimes for orchestra, and you can hear that on tape, you can hear the massive quality of sound

Collaboration

The process of transfer from the original tape, to the score, to performance on a new instrument (such as the cello), was a major theme of Uitti's interview. She believed Scelsi wanted to hear how the pieces "would come over from the score" but that he was "absolutely unconcerned" about the technical limitations of the instrument. When Scelsi coached Uitti, "we would work more on the feeling and the sound world than we would on technical problems."

Speaking of the Scelsi's coaching process in regards to the score, Uitti said:

> They are ecstatic pieces, and sometimes Giacinto was almost as happy if you went off a bit, off the score and you got that feeling I think that was more important to him than actually being absolutely precise at the risk of losing the sound world and the impetus and all of that. And also with the Trilogy, in the Igor it almost became, not another improvisation, but the relationships would change. We'd do it three or four times in a row and he'd provoke one to go out further and further to get a certain feeling or a certain kind of meditative quality. You found yourself stretching the rhythms until they almost became something different than what was written just to get a color and take time and terrific rubati and all that kind of stuff. And if you got it I remember at times he'd be very, very moved.

When asked whether the efforts to "go further and further to get a certain feeling or a certain meditative quality," caused Scelsi's original musical work to evolve into a new creation, Uitti answered:

> In a way, in a way, yes, cause we worked for years and the pieces did transform, and we made changes in the scores, before they were printed. So yes they did transform, and he accepted that. Certainly in the case of Michiko, who was extremely inventive with what was on the page, and with the vocal solutions. She had a great input into the real making of the music. I think in terms of the piano music, for example, because he originally improvised it on the piano, I don't think they had the possibility of

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the creative process nearly as much as when there was a large transfer. I think the larger the transfer the larger the sound difference the more creativity the performer had. Especially the first performers , the first on every instrument he worked with was in a way kind of defining.

In further defining the limits of the performer's freedom to alter the original Scelsi composition, Uitti was asked if there was a long give and take process in which the composer altered the score based on the performance of others. To this Uitti answered, "Never. Just correct the score. He would never go back to the improvisation because something new would come out." She reiterated the view of Scelsi that the original recorded works were given to him by "a mystical force," which he was just "the channel" for.

To play the work *Ko-Tha,* which Scelsi originally recorded with an electric guitar, Uitti transcribed the work and modified a cello so that she could perform it with corresponding timbres:

I made a cello with six strings with a flat bridge and flat nut on the fingerboard so you could have a situation where you could be equidistant without having a curved bridge. Then I miked the cello very closely because the sound box is so much larger and then I padded my hands very well because I have to hit so much harder.

Uitti described the process of transcription, in which she herself played a part. Standing by the fundamental validity of Scelsi work, she pointed out:

A lot of us transcribed things, and I say us because I did it too. I did, and a student of Tosatti, and Tosatti, and of course Tosatti got the best, all the big ones because he was the best, and strangely enough it all sounds like Scelsi. You see there's one core person there and I think that's very interesting for this terrific polemic that came up that Scelsi's not a composer and that Tosatti wrote his pieces.

The origin of the "terrific polemic that came up that Scelsi's not a composer and that Tosatti wrote his pieces" came from Tosatti himself, Uitti said, recalling interviews Tosatti gave after Scelsi's death in which he asserted that he wrote

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Scelsi's music for him. Uitti praised Tosatti's ability as a transcriber and orchestrator, but strongly denied his allegations. She explained:

> When one looks at Vieri Tosatti's pieces they don't look anything like Scelsi's pieces and in fact he didn't even like Scelsi's music, he doesn't respect it. Which in a way shows what a pro he was in those transcriptions which are just simply amazing that he took his time, I mean his real love of material even in a music he didn't respect, he respects working with the orchestra so much and had such a genius for color and instrumentation.

Tosatti's own style of music was tonal, Uitti contended, and at the urging of Scelsi's enemies he launched an attack he now regrets. "I think he's very sorry for all this fiasco now. He doesn't want to talk about Scelsi with anyone," adding that the music world came to Scelsi's defense, not to Vieri Tosatti's defense, so he feels he's been maligned undeservedly.

Performance Issues

Achieving a "a certain feeling or a certain meditative quality" was a goal of Scelsi's, according to Uitti, in performing his works. She stated that in coaching he would push her to "stretch rhythms," employ "terrific rubati" to get a "certain kind of color." She gave the following advice for performers.

> In a way, when you're recreating it, you've got to give yourself the liberty to almost forget the score. It has to feel that free, you have to give the public the impression that it's almost improvised music, that it's happening that it's being created at that moment.

Joelle Leandre

Brief Portrait

Just as Hirayama devoted herself to developing new music for the voice, Joelle Leandre devoted herself to developing new repertoire for her instrument, the contrabass. She described herself in political terms as, "a between, and against woman." She elaborated:

> I'm between two chairs, I'm between two walls, I'm between two concepts, I'm between two languages - composition and improvisation. And I'm against. I think I'm a bit of an anarchist person. I don't like to be sure. I hate that.

Leandre's roles in music include that of a performer, improviser, and traditional composer, for which she has received grants and commissions for a wide range of works. As a performer she is known for her performances of Scelsi's compositions as well as for her work with the late American composer John Cage. She is currently living in Berlin, saying she left her home in Paris because her native French culture of today is "too clean" and bureaucratized. Leandre performs several works of Scelsi, including one, *Mantram*, that was dedicated to her and given to her by the composer as a present. Scelsi told her to do what she liked with the piece. Leandre transposed *Mantram* and is now working with Editions Salabert to publish it. Another Scelsi work for which Leandre is well know for is her interpretation of *Maknongan* in which Scelsi coached her to emit a scream "from another universe." In her interview she discussed the evolution of the scream and the absence of mention of it in the published score of *Maknongan*.

Musical Creator

Leandre described herself as a musical creator in three ways: as a performer of composed music, as a composer of written music, and as an improviser.

As a performer, she said, she plays "creative music," "New Music" for the bass, and added that she has a special interest in developing the bass repertoire. Although her training is "very classical," she emphasized, "When you are a bass player you cannot be blind about jazz."

As a composer, Leandre said that she received many grants and commissions for works that included poetry, theater and dance. As an improviser, Leandre stated, "If you ask me now, as language, composition or improvisation for me is the same."

On the topic of her role as an improviser, she said:

> I am a musician, first a performer, but this music (improvisation) is so healthy. It's the future. It's so important. That's why I am so close to jazz people. The jazz people have the simplicity, the humility. But in Europe you have the science, the research. I don't know if you listen to the new music in Europe but sometimes these young composers, I would prefer to hear some free, some spontaneity, verite, error. I love error! I love fault. You learn a lot.

The connections between composition and improvisation became a major focus of Leandre's discussion. Implicit throughout the discussion was her strong belief in improvisation as a creative form, and a criticism of the cultural establishment for emphasizing composition to the exclusion of improvisation. "I am a politicized person. I can't talk of music without talking politics, the cultural situation, the situation of the artist. I can't. It's impossible," Leandre stated. She pointed out that the European emphasis on written music is rare in the world, saying:

> We could also talk about the Occident , the music, why in the world, we only have maybe only 30 peoples for composed music, and 70 peoples for

oral music, like Arabian music Indian music, Chinese music, Japanese music, some South musics, American South music. And why in terms it's so powerful, only here in Europe gives text a lot of power because it was composed music.

Improvisation and composition are closely linked in Leandre's view, but in the present cultural environment improvisation is kept in a subordinate status. She stated:

> I think improvisation is spontaneous composition or Mnemonic composition, by memory.... And composition is not far, it's close, but in this politic, structure, industry, what is more important is the composed music. Composition and improvisation are two Gemini sisters for me. They are attracted, but at the same time they are against. It's a situation of the cultural power. I don't know in the United States, but in France or in Italia or in Germany it's the composers who have the power. And jazz or improvisation or other things are superficial, are not important. Here at home in France it's the composers who have the control of the direction of culture, of the radio, of Sasem, of the direction of the festivals, grant commissions; it's the composers who decide in the grant commission giving, this is important to say that.

The different use of time that divides improvisation from composition, Leandre reflected:

> The only thing when you improvise you don't have, or you've lost a certain way, the duration. In composition you have, the duration ,the time, only that. In composition I don't know if it was Stravinsky who said it's only put in form... and when you compose you have time to put in form, because you have a pencil and some things. In improvisation you have, I could say, spontaneity, love, body, because composed music is too often this trilogy and this top on the top (pointing to head) and they forget this other I mean the soul, the head, and down, the body, the sex and everything.

Commonalty with Scelsi

It was not the intellectual, written, structured approach to music but rather the "spontaneity, love, body," in music that drew Leandre to Scelsi. As she explained:

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I play a lot of new music, I play some long long years, I play kilos of
sounds and I keep in my memory some states, some moments of
pleasures. Then suddenly some person touches you. Scelsi music touches
you deeply, deeply, deeply! That's all because first he was an improviser,
pianist, and probably, because I was not there, not born, but he talked with
me. He had this pleasure to make sounds, to play music, on his piano for
example. And I know because I heard the tape the piano, the old revox on
the piano in Roma, I talk about Scelsi and he sent me this tape when certain
evenings, certain nights, alone, like we do, we instrumentalists, we take the
instrument and we play, with love.

The emotional aspect of Scelsi's music, Leandre said, "could be feminine,"

adding, "that's why he had quite regularly only women to play his music. This is

very interesting."

Collaboration

Sincerity was Scelsi's goal for performers above accuracy of the score,

Leandre asserted. "He asks you to be real. To demand to be true. You cannot lie.

Even if you made a fault, it's not important," she said.

She illustrated the collaborative process with Scelsi by recounting the

evolution of the "scream from another universe" that Leandre emits in *Maknongan*.

Leandre and Scelsi worked together in Rome for 10 days, searching for the right

scream. During the interview she acted out the meeker sounds that preceded the

powerful scream she now performs in *Maknongan*.

I was, "ah AHHH."
        "No, no Joelle."
        "Ah AWWW."
        "No no. You have to find a scream from another universe." The
moment I found it he was like insane, trembling and he said, "Yes, you
have it!"

Two years later Scelsi heard Leandre perform *Maknongan* at a concert on

the island of Ischia in southern Italy. She said:

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He came to me, never I saw Scelsi like that, when you cry, you have tears. But not crying, but turned inside, and he took me, I was so touched, he crossed the room and he said, "yes, you have it, c'est ca" and he touched deeply far away and it was not a concept.

In the published score of *Maknongan*, at the point Leandre emits a scream the score calls for an octave jump and triple forte, but no markings exist calling for any vocalizing or color change. Leandre was asked if she worked with an earlier score before the published version, but she insisted she used the published version. When asked about the absence of notation of her scream, she asserted," This is from Scelsi." She explained,

No no no, he wants triple forte and noise. Amazing. I know the version with tuba, I know the version with bassoon. and the bassoon he had a mute and this moment when he ahh AHHHH!!!! aahh AHHHH!! and stuff like that, and I listen with the version with tuba and he put some plastic cuvette and you have BRRRR!!! and he wanted that! He wanted that, if the people don't do that then he doesn't play well. It's not only octaves and triple fortes. But maybe the score forget to be precise, Salabert, that's possible.

After reviewing the published score of *Maknongan* for herself, Leandre added:

So here you have the improvisation, a bit from thinking, a bit from the composer. But, he told me, "Do what you want." For example with *Mantram* he told, "Do what you want." and Et maintenant, the duo, in the title you have the freedom to be you, and this is very Zen, because he had all that philosophy, I could say, he was close to this thinking, Indian. You find a part of this way to be you.

Performance Issues

"When you play this music it calls you to become sound," Leandre said of performing Scelsi's works. She went on:

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When you play, for example, *Maknongan* is just one string, the beginning to the end, you take like in a meditative term, a respiration, a breath. I don't that, but if I had to analyze this piece. it's not so long piece, but it's exactly the same sound. Even the dynamic, even the scream you have inside you, one string, one breath.

After learning the score and internalizing the line of the piece, Leandre further said:

I don't think it's so important to play in time. you have to understand how to move within the piece, the body. (she sings). You have to understand. In a moment you have to understand before you play. This piece is physical piece, especially *Maknongan*.

Corrado Canonici

<u>Brief Portrait</u>

Corrado Canonici is an Italian double-bass player who specializes in a solo repertoire of contemporary music. After completing his studies at the conservatory in Pesaro, Canonici went on to win the "Iannis Xenakis" prize for interpretation of contemporary music in Paris in 1992, the International Darmstadt Prize (1992) and the ANMC Award in New York in 1993. He has performed throughout Eastern and Western Europe, the United States, and Egypt, and is the Artistic Director of the MUSICA2000 Festival in Ancona, Italy. He sees himself as a musical creator through his role as a performer. Although he composes, he calls improvisation "a third way between composing and performing, thus I feel myself more 'authorized' to improvise."

Canonici never met Scelsi, but rather learned about the music from the score itself, from other's recordings and performances, and from interaction with

other Italian new music performers. For the solo bass work *Maknongan*, Canonici's interpretation combines double-bass playing in unison with singing. Through singing, Canonici's version is able to bring out the timbral change indications that are called for in the score. The performer felt he was invited to make this unique interpretation because "Scelsi's love to the Eastern culture means to be opened to real co-operation with the performer."

Performance Issues

The idea for Canonici's version of *Maknongan* came from expanding upon the scream, or "inhuman shout" that Joelle Leandre's version is known for. Canonici explains:

> The original version for the doublebass (Joelle Leandre plays it often) needs an 'inhuman' shout in the climax-note of the piece (an A, in the middle of *Maknongan*, but on the published score it's not written). From this Scelsi's idea, I thought to sing the whole piece in unison with the instrument; the effect is amazing, and it fully respects - I think - Scelsi's trend. Moreover, the piece may be also sung by a bass voice!
> The performer said he felt he was invited to make this unique interpretation

because "Scelsi's love of Eastern culture means to be opened to real cooperation with the performer." By uniting the voice, the composition, and the instrument, Canonici believes that he has achieved what Scelsi meant, "even if I've never met him."

Claude Delangle

Brief Portrait

Claude Delangle is a saxophone soloist who has devoted himself to advancing contemporary music for his instrument, as a performer, scholar, and consultant and collaborator with composers in the use of the saxophone. He states

that 70% of his repertoire is of current-day composers, many of which were written specifically for him, while the other 30% is classic saxophone repertoire of the 20th century. He has performed as soloist with many renown ensembles, included being chosen by Pierre Boulez for the Ensemble InterContemporain, the Orchestre National de France, the Radio France Orchestra, and the Berlin Philharmonic.

Musical creator

Delangle asserts that he does improvise but does not compose. As far as his role as a musical creator, he strongly stressed his role as a performer. "For me, the act of interpretation is a creative act, since without it, the musical work doesn't exist." Further explaining the role of creativity within the confines of the demands of the score, Delangle said:

> The objective part of interpretation is great, since there must be an absolute fidelity to the musical text. Subjectivity stimulates all personal expression in sound, and where the creative sound role will reveal a greater profundity that will approach the spirit and intent of the composer.

Performance Issues

Delangle's discussion of Scelsi's music focused on the "questions and paradoxes" posed by the precise notation and the implicit demand within the music for the performer to "push the limits of their expressive possibilities" to achieve a "great apparent liberty."

He further explained:

> The work upon sound, upon the color, the timbre, is not able to be limited to a simple aspect of nuances. The interpreter is thus able to invest their instrument, pushing the limits of their expressive possibilities. For this concern the rhythmic treatment, if the interpretation is allowed to become too much of a personal fantasy, the risk is to drown the sublties proposed by Scelsi in its simplicity. Upon the stage, the interpretation is rediscovered, then on my road between an impossible absolute objectivity and the

subjectivity of energy which makes this music able to communicate. The precarious equilibrium injects an extraordinary life, fruit of the co-creation between the composer and the interpreter.

Johnny Reinhard
Brief Portrait

Bassoonist Johnny Reinhard's interest in Scelsi's music grew out of Reinhard's intense interest in microtonal music. He originated and has directed the American Festival of Microtonal Music since its inception and has researched the use of microtonality in Western music from early Baroque music to the present. Reinhard has broadened extended techniques for the bassoon, bringing a new meaning to virtuosity on the instrument. In his pioneering work in microtonal music, Reinhard has been responsible for the first performances of Scelsi's music in the U.S.

Musical creator

In his role as creator, Reinhard both composes and improvises. His composed music often calls for extensive improvisation. "Improvisation for me is an extended technique, " Reinhard asserts. In his role as a performer, Reinhard sees a dialectic between the demands of improvisation and that of performing written works. "I still gain pleasure from playing written works of other composers, but I don't play these works over and over, " he posits, adding that his improvisatory skills enhances his performance of written music.

Scelsi's Creative Process

Speaking on the controversy over Scelsi's use of transcribers to score his music, Reinhard issued a strong rebuttal to those who doubt the validity of Scelsi work. "They are obviously original works and while vastly different from each

other, contain the consistent thread of being from a single mind," he said.

<center>Performance Issues</center>

In Reinhard's view, Scelsi brings surprising elements into his compositional world that create the semblance of improvisation. "For instance, when playing differences in the color of a tone, or when utilizing a quartertonal interval for the first time, a performer is justifiably improvising on his or her extant skills," Reinhard asserts.

In *Maknongan*, Reinhard transposed the work "to the richest tessitura on the bassoon, centering it on Low G, as befitting the composer's hopes." The work demanded great stamina, and "circular breathing was but one of the possibilities" of maintaining the long drone tones. "Electric amplification proved vital to emphasizing what would often be subtle monophonic differences, and certainly enhanced dynamic differences for an instrument that has a relatively narrow dynamic range," Reinhard said of his experience in performing the work. He concluded that *Maknongan* required careful programming in relation to other pieces due to its short length, so that it can stand out "like a gem in a crown."

CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Hirayama's Performance Paradigm: "Performer and Creator at the Same Time"

Michiko Hirayama's interview and performance were chosen as the basis for drawing together a performance paradigm that will be compared for validity against that of other informants. Hirayama's experience was chosen because, of the three primary sources, she was the first to work with Scelsi and appears to have had the most creative input into both the score and interpretation of a selected Scelsi composition. In Hirayama's view, she played the role of "performer and creator at the same time" in the collaboration process.

In keeping with Strauss and Corbin's *Grounded Theory*, the paradigm links the categories that emerged in open coding into a set of interrelationships showing elements such as dimensions, causal conditions, phenomena, context, intervening conditions, action strategies and consequences. The source for this model comes from Hirayama's own words.

The collaboration phenomenon that resulted in the recording of *Canti del Capricorno, No. 16* is the focal point of the performance paradigm. This collaboration existed primarily between the performer, Michiko Hirayama, the composer, Giacinto Scelsi, and to a lesser extent, the transcriber, Vieri Tosatti. Personal interaction and trial and error experimentation led to performances which

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culminated in the Wergo recording. Scelsi's original recorded improvisation and different versions of the score were used as references during the collaboration process while the piece was "developed."

Michiko's Hirayama's desire to do "something creative" was the chief causal condition from her standpoint that led her to collaborate with Scelsi. Dimensions of this causal condition included her desire to do something "as a Japanese and as a singer," her previous experience collaborating with other Italian experimental composers, her ability to improvise, and her special interest in the harmonic composition of sound in general and the voice in particular. Hirayama was also convinced that she had gained a special understanding of Scelsi's music through listening to his improvisational playing. This understanding included a belief that the conventional score of Western musical notation had "too many limits to express the sound which he feels inside of him." These were the reasons that Hirayama said, "I felt this was good music for me to collaborate, to realize in sound."

Hirayama placed her collaboration with Scelsi in the context of the "incredibly creative, full of energy," environment in the early 1960s. "This generation wanted to make a new Italian, new European art, and I joined them," she stated. Scelsi was not directly part of this environment, Hirayama noted, but rather the composer "was alone doing his own work" with the aim of healing his "nerve problem." Hirayama explained that Scelsi's style of composition during this period came from nightly improvisations that had begun in a clinic as healing meditation sessions which focused on "one note."

The score served as a kind of football to be kicked back and forth in the

Hirayama-Scelsi collaborative relationship as action-interaction strategies evolved. Hirayama rejected the first piece Scelsi asked her to perform, because the score of the work, *Ho,* had "no interest" for her. She instead arranged to be able to listen directly to Scelsi's nightly improvisations, and from hearing his playing she decided to work with him.

After taping these nightly improvisation sessions, Scelsi would choose works to be transcribed, such as the set of short pieces that became *Canti del Capricorno.* The transcriber Tosatti created a score, with which Hirayama experimented many times in sessions with Scelsi, trying to achieve what she believed was the same feeling Scelsi had. Hirayama described the evolution of the score in the following passage:

I change always, and naturally in agreement with him. We worked together- "I wish to sing this note this way or I wish to sing this note changing to that note"— and always he would say if you feel it inside, it's ok. Always he would give me ok.

A "big change" in the development of the score, according to Hirayama, was an attempt by Tosatti to add syllabic notation to the score to provide for vocal color changes. These additions again met with a desire for revision on the part of Hirayama.

Around the 60s there was Vieri Tosatti besides of him and these two men try to put the syllables on the notes. I was there, and this note is not adapted for this range or this type of movement of voice. So we worked in three. And when I performed still I wanted to change more.

Hirayama re-asserted her right to change the score to suit her needs, pointing out, "Scelsi gave me the authorization as I feel better. So I'm the only musician who's authorized to change his score. I was performer and creator at the

same time, but basically the idea came from Scelsi." Her role as "performer and creator at the same time" in the collaboration process included the following dimensions:

1.) Scelsi had "no knowledge of voice"

2.) Different colors of voice were not represented in the score

3.) The score had "too many limits to express the sound" that Hirayama believed Scelsi wanted

4.) Scelsi authorized Hirayama to make any changes "if she felt it"

5.) relationships with transcriber-orchestrators broke down because of Scelsi's treatment of them

Scelsi tired of the *Capricorno* project, leaving Hirayama to finish on her own. This became an important intervening condition, shifting Hirayama's creative role to one of unusual significance for a performer. Consequently, the *Capricorno* pieces strongly reflect Hirayama's role as "performer and creator at the same time."

A Comparison of Uitti's Experience with Hirayama's "Performer and Creator" Paradigm

If Frances-Marie Uitti's experience collaborating with Scelsi on *Ko-Tha* is compared with Hirayama's *Canti del Capricorno* collaboration, certain incongruities emerge that both add to the validity of the "Performer and Creator" model and define its limitations.

Responding to an open-ended question about her own role as a musical

creator, Hirayama chose to speak of her commonality with Scelsi and define her music creation in the context of collaboration with the composer. In responding to the same question, Uitti defined her musical creation as "finding my own voice and my own path" in her own solo improvised music. Uitti opened her discussion of collaboration with Scelsi by expressing initial reservations and difficulties with the problems of adapting Scelsi's original improvised works for cello. She overcame these problems "because the score is there, and there is a place for the person and there is a place for yourself. Otherwise I think I probably would have refused to play it."

In Hirayama and Uitti's interviews, both women acknowledged that their experiences were different to some extent. Hirayama emphasized the uniqueness of the voice in entering "Scelsi's ideal world," because "technique requires so much for cello or piano." Technique was indeed a major topic of discussion by Uitti, who noted that Scelsi was "absolutely unconcerned" with the technical limitations of the instrument and left such matters to the performer to solve.

In speaking on the extent of creativity enjoyed by the performer in collaborating with Scelsi, Uitti singled out Hirayama as having had an unusual degree of input into "the real making of the music." Uitti saw a varying degree of creative input from the performers who worked with Scelsi. This variation depended on the degree of timbral difference between Scelsi's original keyboard improvisation and the instrument chosen for the scored version. Pianists generally had the least degree of freedom, in Uitti's view, while the voice had the most.

Hirayama delimited her own experience in *Canti del Capricorno* by saying, "The way I did was only convenience for me, and I don't care if other people do it a

different way; it's not my problem."

By contrast, Uitti's perspective in the interviews was shaped by her archival work as well as her performance collaboration. In this context, Uitti took a broader approach that looked at Scelsi's compositional process and works as a whole. She spoke of her own collaboration experiences in terms of typifying the experience of other performers.

As a result of Uitti's different perspective, a better fit for an overall paradigm is found by moving away from the performance of a specific work by a specific performer and toward a more general model of Scelsi's entire creative process and how it impacted on performance.

Uitti's Performance Paradigm: "A Certain Kind of Meditative Quality"

The entire creative process that culminated in the performance of a Scelsi composition is the phenomenon at the center of this paradigm. The creative process includes three interconnected phenomena: Scelsi's original recorded improvising, the transcribing and orchestration of the score, and the coaching of performers and interaction between performers and Scelsi that led to performance.

According to Uitti, Scelsi believed that his compositions "were given to him" by a mystical force. This belief served as the chief causal condition for his creative process. Scelsi even rejected being called a composer, saying, "I'm not the composer, I'm just the one who receives them, I'm the channel."

Of the original improvisation phenomenon, Uitti said that Scelsi believed in "all kinds of ways of getting rid of oneself, of getting to the creativity source." According to Uitti, the improvisations were created "in a state of ecstasy and all

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kinds of meditative states."

Scelsi's improvisations were primarily done on an Ondeola electric organ, which Uitti describes as having:

> three or I think four octaves, and there were buttons and valves and I think a knee lever that you could get more than the four octaves on the keyboard. You could get varied *vibrati*, varying of speed and width, and you could also get *glissandi*. And so there was a great variety. And of course in the *glissandi* were the quarter-tones, because you could move the pitch anywhere you wanted with the dial. So those were just part of the grammar of the music.

Although Uitti remembers Scelsi as hating electronic music and viewing all machines as the enemy, Scelsi on occasion used tape recorders in his improvisations for accompaniment and other experiments. Uitti discovered this while listening to the tape archives. She further observed ironically that although Scelsi claimed he hated machines, he was completely dependent on the tape recorder for his composing. His work with tape recorders also included speaking his memoirs. "He would lay on his back and the words would just flow out," Uitti recalled, adding, "All the forms of work were done in a state of free flow." Another "tremendous influence" on Scelsi's creation was "chant and ethnic music from the East."

Based on her review of over 300 hours of Scelsi's recorded improvisations, Uitti identified the following dimensions:

1.) a complete work with no hesitation

2.) mostly short works of between five and seven minutes

The transcription-orchestration phenomenon began with Scelsi reviewing his recorded improvisations and selecting ones to be scored. Uitti said that Scelsi felt his improvised creations were the work of a force outside himself. Of these

works, he felt "he received things of great importance as well as things that should never go out into the public." Many of his creations, he decided, "shouldn't be transcribed because he thought some of them were too dark, there was another force in them that he didn't want to pass on." The improvisations by Scelsi were created "in a state of ecstasy and all kinds of meditative states" without a specific instrument in mind, Uitti believed. "I'm sure that it was much later, upon listening and sorting through the material that it came to him what instrument it was part of, or to put two or three things together," she added. Although decisions were made on sound color and grouping short works together, Scelsi meant to keep the content of the original improvisation as unchanged as possible in the score. "He would never go back to the improvisation because something new would come out," she noted.

Keeping faithful to the original recording required great orchestration and transcription skills and creativity, attributes Uitti says Scelsi was fortunate to find in Vieri Tosatti. "The work he did is of such high quality I can't imagine it being done by any one else," she commented. "He invented ways of retuning the violin so that it was possible to play all on one string; otherwise the extensions of the left hand would not be possible. So he was very creative in the work." Uitti also praised Tosatti's work on Scelsi's large-scale orchestra pieces, saying Tosatti, "had such a genius for color and instrumentation."

Speaking of Scelsi's causal conditions that led to the phenomenon of performer interaction, Uitti stated, "I think he wanted to hear the pieces on the instruments transcribed. He knew what his tapes were, he knew the power of the tapes, and they're very powerful, but he wanted to hear how they would come over

from the score."

In interaction strategies that evolved with performers, Uitti divulged, "We would work more on the feeling and the sound world than we would on technical problems. He was absolutely unconcerned about limitation of the hand or this or that or just technical difficulties."

In coaching performers, Scelsi put a priority on getting "a certain feeling or a certain kind of meditative quality" over keeping precision to the score. Uitti describes being provoked to "go further and further" until she found herself "stretching the rhythms until they almost became something different than what was written just to get a color." Scelsi had a definite effect in mind "and if you got it I remember at times he'd be very, very moved." The impact of this interaction between Scelsi and the performer did cause the works to evolve to some degree from the original creation. "We worked for years and the pieces did transform, and we made changes in the scores, before they were printed," Uitti said.

Tosatti's accusations against Scelsi's validity as a composer constituted a major intervening condition in the performance of Scelsi's music after his death. According to Uitti, Tosatti claimed that he alone was responsible for Scelsi's scores, such as the big orchestra pieces that had so much success. Uitti discounted Tosatti's claim, pointing that many people transcribed Scelsi's tapes, including Uitti herself, and still all the works have Scelsi's distinctive characteristics. Tosatti composed in a tonal style and despised all New Music, Uitti asserted, adding that his own compositions bear no resemblance at all to the works he scored for Scelsi. In explaining Tosatti's motivation for denouncing Scelsi, Uitti said:

He was coaxed by some of the Scelsi enemies, because there were a lot of them, and they probably provoked him. Yeah, in one of the interviews he said, "Scelsi, c'est moi," it's me. So he took credit in a way that was over the boundary, and that's a shame.

Tosatti withdrew from the polemic as other figures in the Italian music world came to Scelsi's defense.

I think he's very sorrow for all this fiasco now. He doesn't want to talk about Scelsi with anyone; he's very embittered. Near the end of his life, he went blind so he can't compose his own music, having spent after all these years, and it's an enormous work that he did for Scelsi. Now he sits here blind, and the music world came to Scelsi's defense, not to Vieri Tosatti's defense, so he feels he's been maligned undeservedly.

Despite her strong defense of the validity of Scelsi's scores, Uitti, in a seeming paradox, advises performers, "You have to give yourself the liberty to almost forget the score" in recreating his music. Consequently, in Uitti's view, the goal in performing Scelsi's music is to rediscover the composer's "certain meditative feeling," to make the audience feel "that it's almost improvised music, that it's happening, that it's being created at that moment."

Joelle Leandre's Comparison with Hirayama Performance Paradigm

Joelle Leandre's experience performing the bass solo work *Maknongan* can effectively be used as a central phenomena to interrelate the themes that emerged in her interview, just as the *Canti del Capricorno No. 16* was used in Hirayama's "performer and creator at the same time" paradigm. If the "performer and creator" overall theme is applied to Leandre, much of Leandre's experience is left behind in the search for equivalent experience to Hirayama. Leandre's role as a musical creator is highly diverse as compared with Hirayama: she creates in the context of performing, improvising, and conventional composing. Her views on the interrelationships between her different forms of musical creations and society constituted the main thrust of her discussion, while similar views were only implied by Hirayama.

While formulating her views on the differences and similarities between improvisation and composition, Leandre suddenly interjected, "I am a politicized person. I can't talk about music without talking about politics, the cultural situation, the situation of artist. I can't. It's impossible."

To give appropriate emphasis to Leandre's presentation of herself as a "politicized person," her experiences in performing the work *Maknongan* have been put in the context of her broader views on the cultural meaning of Scelsi's music as contrasted to the general state of New Music in Europe.

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<u>Leandre's Performance Paradigm: "We Take the Instrument, and We Play with
Love"</u>

The collaboration phenomenon that resulted in Leandre's Hat Art recording
of *Maknongan* is the focal point of the performance paradigm. The collaboration
occurred in coaching sessions between Scelsi and Leandre in Rome and in personal
interaction between the performer and composer over an extended period.

The casual condition that drew Leandre to collaborate with Scelsi was her
belief that Scelsi's music contains "the essence of the joy, the pleasure" to play
music, an essence that she believes "a lot of composers in Europe forget." Scelsi's
music is "from the gut" while too much of New Music focuses only on structure
and form to the exclusion of a sense of body, emotion and spontaneity.

Leandre placed this view of Scelsi's music in the context of a criticism of
the European cultural establishment. This criticism took on an overall dimension of
rejection of the establishment's stress on written structure over oral spontaneous
expression. Specific dimensions of this criticism included:

1.) European music is in a minority in the world in stressing written music
over oral tradition.

2.) Human beings are a "trilogy" but stress is always placed on the mind
and they "forget this other I mean the soul, the head, and down, the body the sex
and everything."

3.) "Improvisation is spontaneous composition," but the cultural
establishment treats improvisation as superficial and holds it in a secondary status.

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4.) Much of New Music is "egotist," while improvisers such as jazz people show "humility."

5.) Scelsi was independent of the cultural establishment. "A lot of people didn't like him because he was free, and I could say because it's such strong music."

6.) Scelsi's music demonstrates feminine qualities such as a sense of birth and death, and the composer often chose only women as performers.

Sincerity of expression was again the basis for Scelsi's interaction with performers. "He asks you to be real," Leandre asserted, adding, "Even if you made a fault, it's not important." She attributed Scelsi's approach to performance of his works to Eastern philosophies, mentioning Zen and Indian thinking. "You find a part of this way to be you," she stated, referring to Scelsi's instructions to "do what you want" in his pieces.

Speaking of *Maknongan*, Leandre said, "When you play this music it calls you to become sound. When you play, for example, *Maknongan* is just one string, the beginning to the end, you take like in a meditative term, a respiration, a breath." She called the work a "physical piece" and stated that it's not important to play the work precisely in time. "We cannot play this music as pitch after pitch and bars blah blah blah; it's impossible," she asserted.

As a consequence of this stress on emotion, Leandre states that after years of playing kilos of New Music, Scelsi's music touches her "deeply, deeply, deeply." The aim in public performances is to re-create, "when.certain nights, alone, like we do, we instrumentalists, we take the instrument and we play, with love."

Comparison of Hirayama, Uitti, and Leandre Paradigms with Secondary Sources

Although the three primary sources share many key beliefs, three distinctive perspectives emerged from their discussion of the experiences in performing Scelsi's music. According to Hirayama's "performer and creator at the same time," the *Canti del Capricorno* works are very much the result of a collaboration that qualitatively departs from the traditional interpretative role of the performer. This qualitative departure is not present in Uitti's "A Certain Kind of Meditative Quality," paradigm, which stressed the validity of the scores and turned to special interpretative problems of recreating Scelsi's music. Leandre's "We Take the Instrument and We Play, With Love" took on a distinct focus which contrasted the emotional, intuitive aspect of Scelsi's music with the intellectual, structural aspect of the majority of New Music.

Despite their lack of direct experience with the composer, the three secondary sources; Canonici, Delangle, and Reinhard, expressed many similar views to those of the primary sources, although in a consistently more qualified manner.

For example, the kind of direct collaboration with Scelsi that formed the basis for Hirayama's "performer and creator" paradigm was impossible for the secondary sources, yet Canonici expressed views similar to Hirayama's for his *Maknongan* interpretation. Based on the open-ended choice of instrument in the score and the call for distinct timbre changes without specific instructions on how to achieve them, Canonici developed his version of *Maknongan* in which he sings in unison with his contrabass playing. While not as extreme a qualitative departure from the traditional interpretative role as Hirayama, (who outright wrote a new

score), Canonici's choice of two bass voices in unison instead of one represents a similar qualitative departure to Hirayama's. In explaining his reason for his innovative interpretation, he voiced similar views to those of Hirayama. Just as Hirayama asserted that Scelsi told her "if you feel it inside, it's ok" when she asked to change the work, Canonici said that he felt he could make his interpretation because, "Scelsi's love of Eastern culture means to be opened to real cooperation with the performer."

Claude Delangle's discussion of the "questions and paradoxes" posed by Scelsi's scores led him to express views resembling those of Uitti's description of her sessions being coached by Scelsi himself. Delangle noted the contradiction in Scelsi's score between the precise notation and the implicit demand to achieve a "great apparent liberty." Delangle's "great apparent liberty" echoes Uitti's statement that the performer needs to make the audience feel "that it's almost improvised music."

Delangle clearly places the interpretative task within the confines of the score, as is more consistent with the Western traditional role of the performer. For Delangle, the tension between an "impossible absolute objectivity" and the call on the performer to "push the limits of their expressive possibilities" injects an "extraordinary life" into Scelsi's music. He placed this view within the context of his belief in the Western tradition that the performer is duty bound to fidelity to the score, with the creativity of the performer adding to search for the intent of the composer.

For Uitti, who had the benefit of direct experience with Scelsi, the "paradox" Delangle discovered in the scores is put in more extreme terms.

Although Uitti repeatedly stands behind the validity of Scelsi's scores, she describes "stretching the rhythms until they almost became something different that what was written just to get a color." Rather than fidelity to the score, Uitti said in playing Scelsi's music, "You have to give yourself the liberty to almost forget the score. It has to feel that free."

Uitti's call to "almost forget the score" in performing Scelsi's works presses against the bounds of the Western performer tradition. Hirayama outright exceeds those bounds with her assertion that Western notation, "the pentagram," is incapable of expressing what Scelsi intended. Joelle Leandre was openly critical of the bounds of the Western performer tradition and distinguished Scelsi's music from the overemphasis on written as opposed oral culture. She insisted that the scream is an important part of *Maknongan*, regardless of whether it is present in the Salabert score.

With regard to the score, all three primary sources expressed views that clearly challenge the Western performer tradition to varying degrees. This challenge to the performer tradition is echoed in the views of all three secondary sources, ranging from Canonici clearly expressing views similar to the primary sources, to Reinhard's very qualified statement that Scelsi creates the impression of improvisation by bringing surprising elements into his scores.

What's missing from the score, in the view of the primary sources, is the meditative experience that they believed Scelsi wanted from performers in recreating his music.

CHAPTER IV

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Scelsi's *Maknongan*

Overview of the Score

Giacinto Scelsi's *Maknongan* , published in 1988, is a very short work (running about four minutes) which revolves around a moveable drone tone which remains present throughout the piece. A distinctive element of the work is the fact that the score doesn't call for a specific instrument, rather only that the instrument or voice which performs *Maknongan* be in the bass range. The score suggests, "pour 1 instrument grave (tuba, contrabassoon, saxophone basse ou contrebasse, flûte octobasse, contrebasse á cordes, etc...) ou voix de basse". Right from the start the performer is called on to make an orchestration decision that usually is the exclusive realm of the composer.

The score further calls on the performer to make broader decisions regarding the use of timbre in calling for color changes of "cupo" (muted), "chiaro" (clear) and "normale" (normal). The score explains that in the case of a tuba, the "cupo" notes should be achieved by means of a mechanical mute that the performer should invent. For other instruments the performer is instructed to find a way to make the differences clear between "cupo","chiaro" and "normale". The performer is further urged to transpose the score to any note that makes the timbral differences between the notes clear. Alternate fingerings are offered for bassoonists as a suggestion.

Figure 6.

Example of Sound Color Notation

In this score excerpt, from Phrase 6, the performer is instructed to change the timbre of a sustained G from cupo ("muted"), chiaro ("clear" often interpreted as stronger upper partials), normale ("normal") and back to chiaro.

The work is essentially a drone study, with the pitch center being a moveable tone. Pitch movement begins on G#2 and goes to G2 to A2 and back to G# and G. The most significant aspect of pitch movement are sudden violent octave jumps which occur in Section Two and Three. The upper octaves are always sharply distinguished from their lower "equivalent" by dramatic dynamic changes.

Figure 7.

Overall Movement of Pitch Center in *Maknongan*

Although Figure 7. represents the overall movement of pitch in *Maknongan*, it obscures the high level of ornamental detail which characterizes the work.

Any sense of a regular meter is smashed apart by irregular length measures with accents and emphases that move constantly. A sense of a pulse is present

throughout the work, but not in the usual sense of a time signature. In Example 2, also showing Phrase 6, we see a variety of pulse groups in groups of 3. Each group is defined by accents with a long drone. Although each one of the groups are similar, none are the same in terms of length or configuration of stressed pulses, and so are reminiscent of a traditional sense of meter but not the same.

Figure 8.

Example of Pulse Patterns Resembling Meter
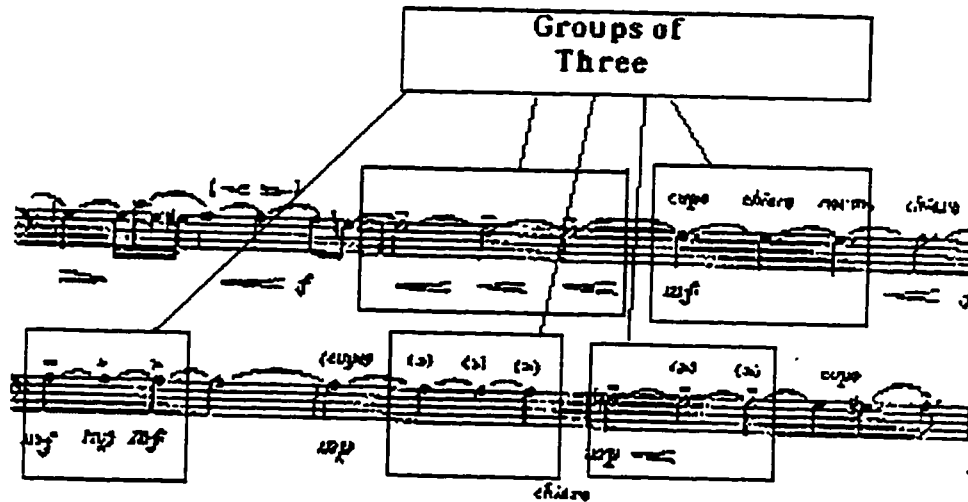
Although the sense of interconnected drone is always present, distinct

Phrases can be identified and the Phrases can be grouped into three main sections.

Section One is characterized by extreme instability. The drone tones are never static;

rather they are constantly altering in dynamic changes and differing articulation of

beginnings, endings, and breath accents, creating a feeling of movement. For

example, if we look at the opening two measures, we can see the close

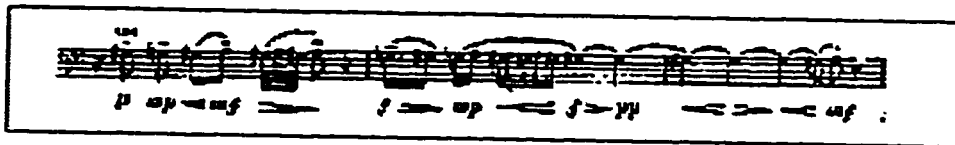interconnection between shifts in pitch, dynamics, pulse, articulation.

Figure 9

Maknongan Section One

PHRASE 1

PHRASE 2

PHRASE 3

Section One is characterized by extreme instability, with quickly changing dynamics, constantly moving pitch center, and enthropic ornamentation

In Phrase One, the first measure calls for a pianissimo opening, a grace note quarter tone dip to a breath accented G#, a quarter-tone flat G with a vibrato tremolo, a crescending G# ending on an accent and a half note rest. On the level of pitch we have only an ornamented G#, on the level of dynamics we have moved to four different levels in 5 beats presented in a variety of articulations. In measure 2 G and A are used with G# and we change between 6 different dynamic levels in 8 beats.

The extreme instability of Section One quickly erupts in Section Two into violent dynamic changes. The drone tones jumps an octave at levels of double and triple forte. Crescendos and decrescendos occur rapidly and dramatically. Demanding a bass instrument to play in it's highest range at it's highest dynamic level demonstrates the composer's implied intent for a noticeable sound color change together with changes in dynamics. The call for sound color changes are also made explicitly in this section with the instructions for *cupo, chiaro* and *normale* .

Figure 10.

Maknongan Section Two

PHRASE 4
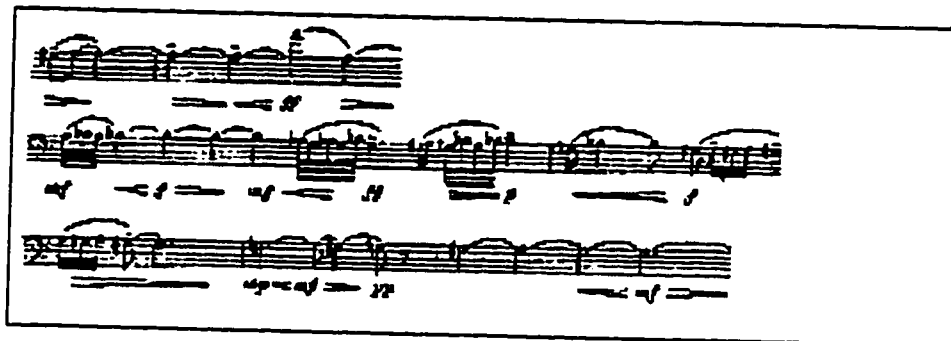
PHRASE 5

Section Two is characterized by violent octave jumps at triple forte, and sound color changes of cupo and chiaro

The sudden violence of Section Two slowly subsides in Section Three. Distinct pulses are heard in long drones. Dynamic changes occur over longer periods and in more predictable shapes than the irregularities that mark Section One. The color changes and octave jumps of Section Two occur again, but less suddenly and less frequently.

Through the use digital sound tools in looking at actual recorded performances, we see that the sharp changes in dynamics and articulation carry timbral implications that are an integral part of the piece. These implicit timbral changes, the explicit call for timbral changes through the notation of *cupo* and *chiaro*, and the score's open-ended orchestration (bass instrument) combine to allow very personal interpretations of the work. In Figures 9 and 10, we see how these aspects of the score allow for the sweeping difference in terms of dynamics and sound color. Leandre and Canonici perform the work with contrabass assisted by their voices (but in very different manners) Delangle performs on a baritone saxophone, and Reinhard performs on an amplified bassoon.
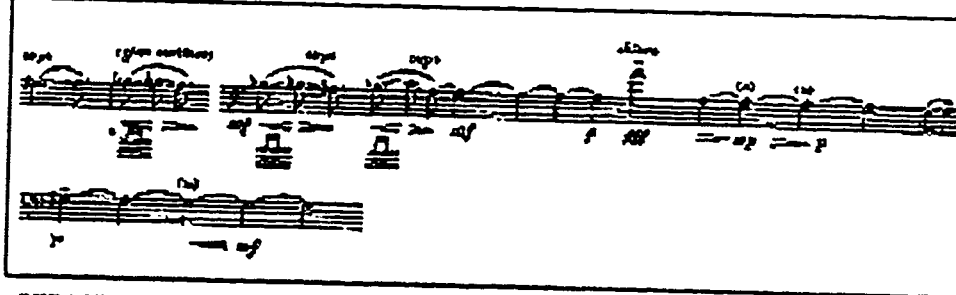
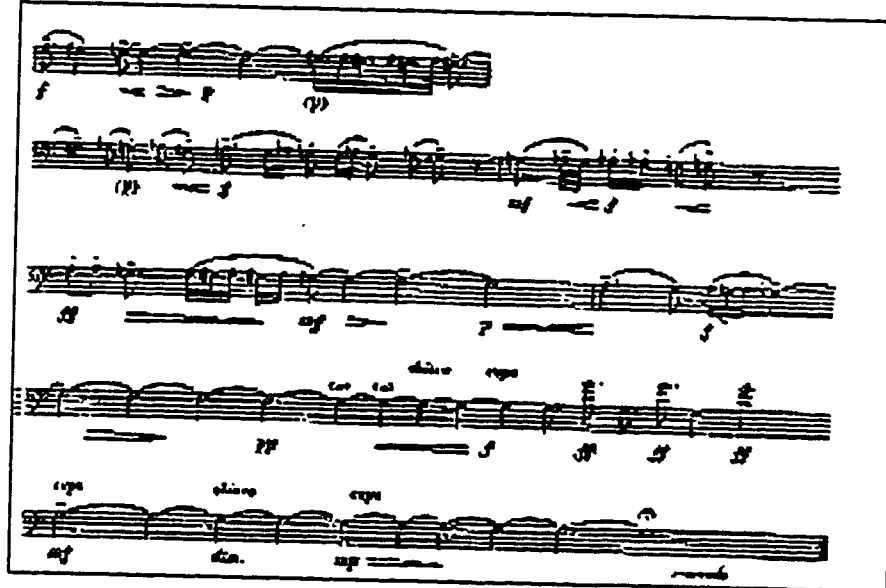## Figure 11.

Maknongan Section Three

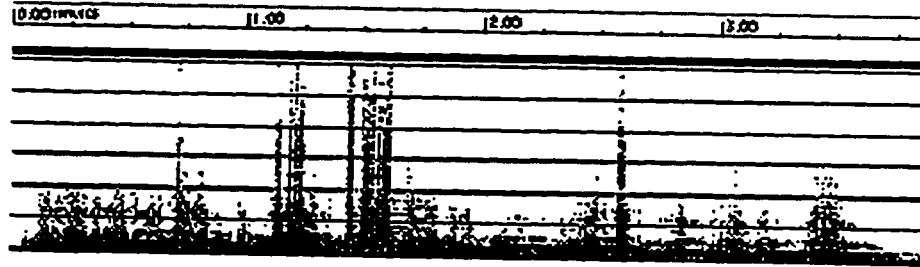**PHRASE 6**
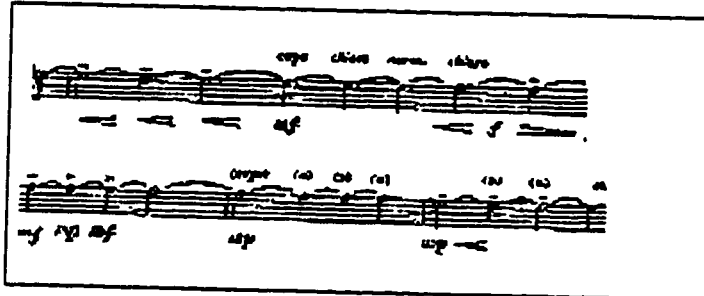
PHRASE 7

PHRASE 8

Section Three repeats many elements of Section Two, but over a longer time frame
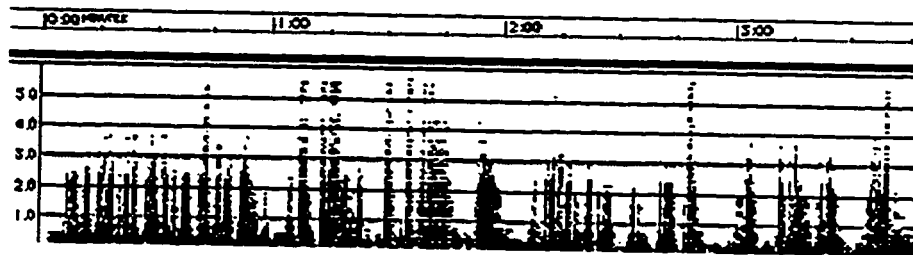
Figure 12

Sonic Space of Different Interpretations of Maknongan
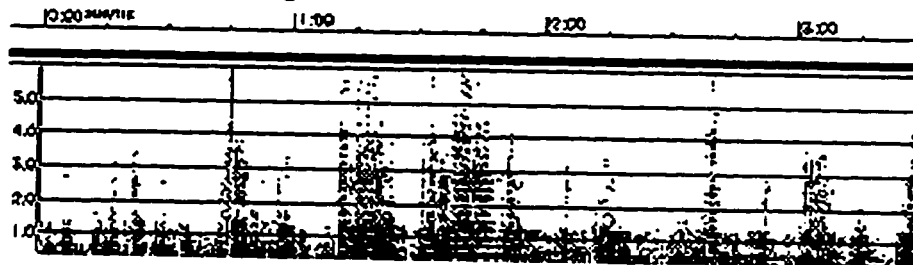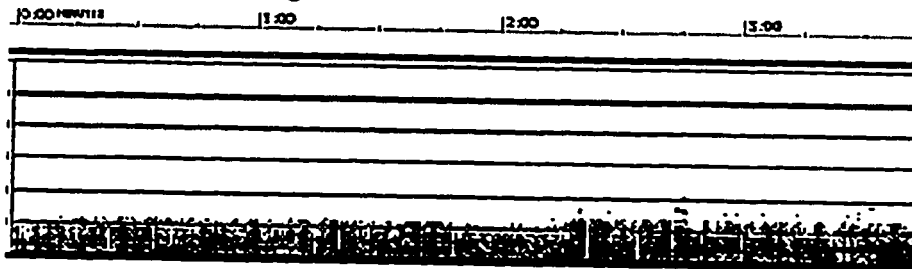
Leandre's Maknongan

Delangle's Maknongan

Canonici's Maknongan

Reinhard's Maknongan

These are 2-dimensional graphs of the entire recordings, showing frequencies from 0-6000 Hz. The differences are discussed in detail in each separate analysis

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Figure 13

Overall Dynamics of Different Interpretations of *Maknongan*

Leandre's Maknongan

Delangle's Maknongan

Canonici's Maknongan

Reinhard's Maknongan
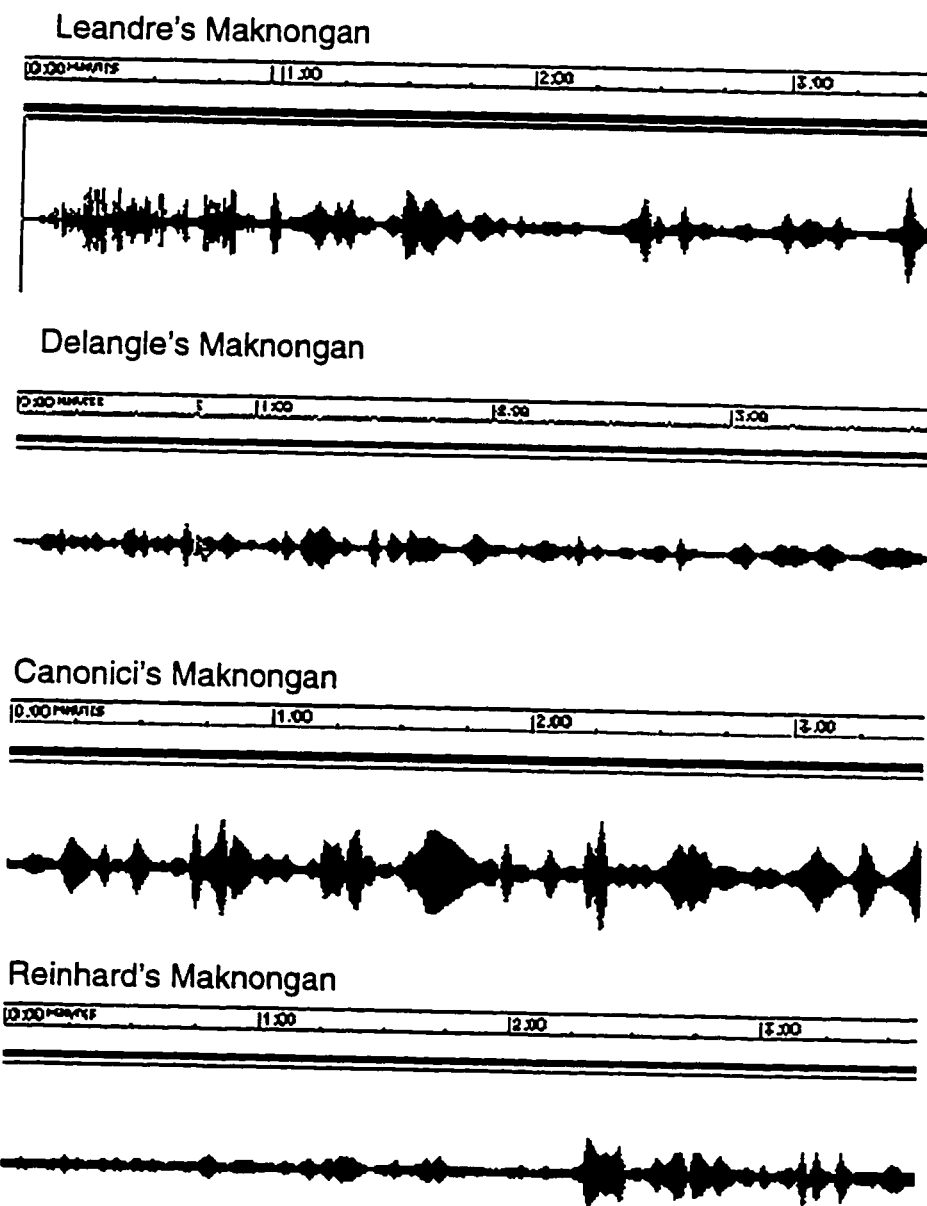
Overall differences in dynamics are effected by many factors, including limitations of instrument and recording conditions such as acoustics.
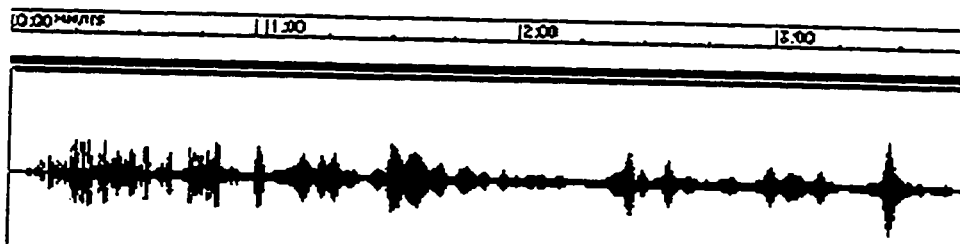
<u>Joelle Leandre's *Maknongan*</u>

If we at the sweep look at Joelle's Leandre's recording of *Maknongan* just

in terms of dynamics, we see within that she has created the overall unstable

dynamic contours that are called for in the score.

Figure 14.

Amplitude of Leandre's *Maknongan*

Leandre's "dry" and "present" studio recording brings out her extreme dynamic
contrasts, challenging the abilities of most speaker systems

The wide and constant fluctuations in dynamics are shown to be even more

dramatic if we look at the following two-dimensional graph which shows the

spectral composition of Leandre's bass playing and vocal sounds. This graph is

revealing in showing the real sonic space that Leandre has created in the piece.

Although the score is in the bass range, the graph shows from 0-6000 Hz, which

includes the entire range of the piano. Figure 15 shows that Leandre's use of

frequencies literally explodes in Section Two with her howls and triple fortes.

Figure 15.

Sonic Space of Leandre's Manongan
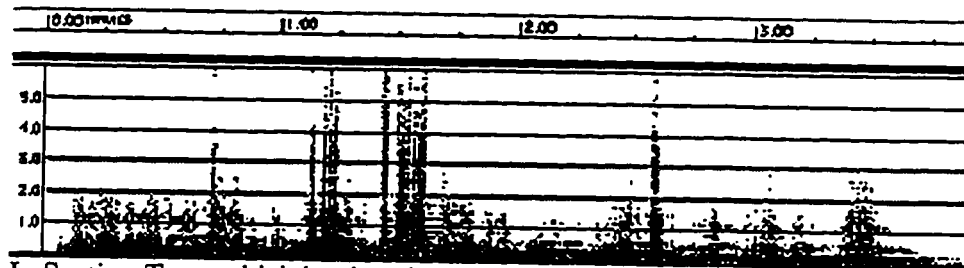
In Section Two, which begins shortly after 1 minute and ends shortly before 2 minutes, the mix of frequencies literally explode in a pitchless howl.

Leandre uses extreme rubati to build the unstable feeling of Section One which foreshadows the coming violence of Section Two. This rubati follows the spirit of the score but makes impossible any precise alignment of tempo, length of notes or rhythmic groupings.

Figure 16.
Links Between Tempo, Performance and Score
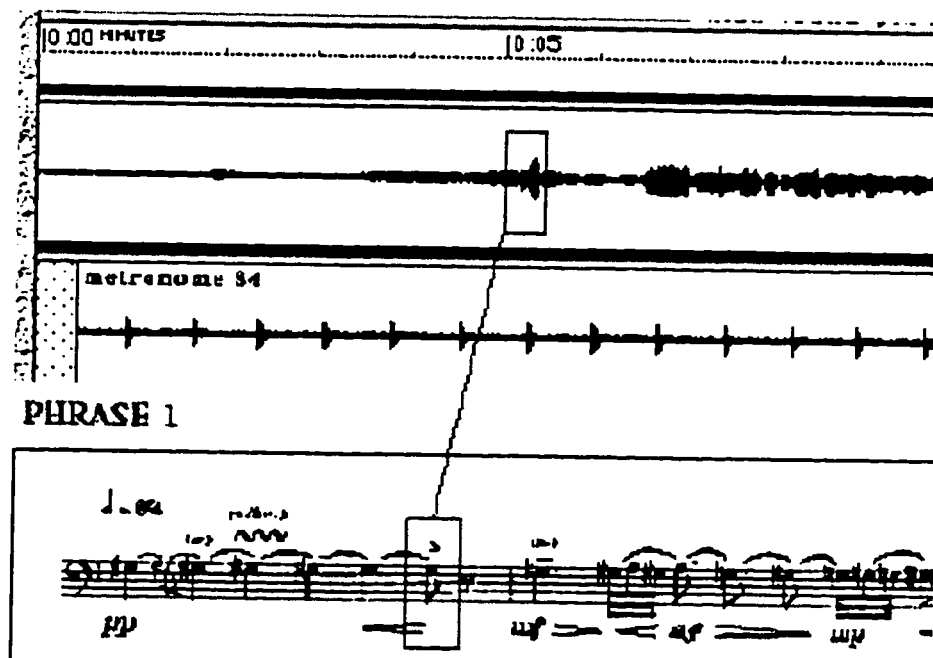
An additional track of a metronome ticking at the tempo marked in the score was

added to the monophonic file of Leandre's recording and aligned as closely as possible to any perceived tempo in the performer's playing.

The next spectral graph, taken of the first note of the second measure, G, for one second, gives a spectral profile of Leandre's contrabass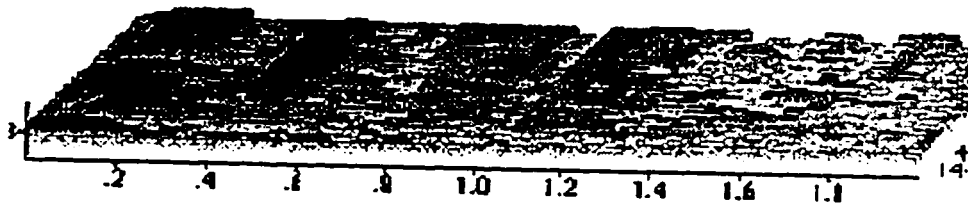 sound. A small tenuto swell within the note shows some change it the composition of the upper partials from the attack but basically the spectral composition stays consistent throughout.

Figure 17.

Spectrum of Leandre Playing G2

The diagram is a Blackman FFT, showing an elapsed time of 1 second, a frequency range of 0 to 2000 hertz, the oldest samples in front, newest in back, and a gain of 42 dB. The strongest frequencies are solidly within the bass range, with a strong overtone in the soprano range.

In Section Two, Leandre achieves the triple forte that the score calls for in the jump to A3 but doubling with her voice. She augments the rough color change that would occur by forcing a triple forte by making her voice emit a howl. The following spectral graph shows Leandre playing the selection below from Phrase 5.

Figure 18.

Leandre Spectrum at Triple Forte with Voice
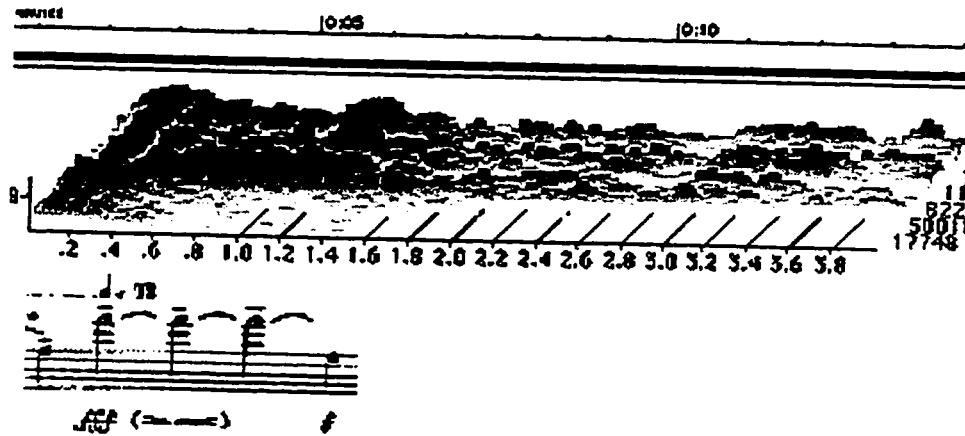
The time selected is 5 seconds with the oldest in front and newest in back, the frequency range shown is from 0 to 4000 hertz, and a gain of 42DB. Wide clusters of strong frequencies are seen from the bass through the soprano range and far above. Only in the bass range are the partials in any ordered pattern. The score excerpt is added as a reference.

In contrast to fairly ordered overtone pattern in her mezzo forte in Figure 17, the strong presence of a wide range of clusters of frequencies in Figure 18 is closer to noise than to pitched sound. It's as if another instrument has suddenly entered into this solo piece.

Evidence of the more subtle color change *cupo-chiaro* is only apparent at the very ending, where Leandre alters her bowing to bring out and then suppress upper partials as she makes a long diminuendo to morendo. First, to contrast Leandre's playing on the same pitch, G2, on a simple decrescendo at roughly the same dynamic level, we see a 1 second sample from Phrase 8 in Figure 19.

Figure 19.

Spectrum of Descrescendo
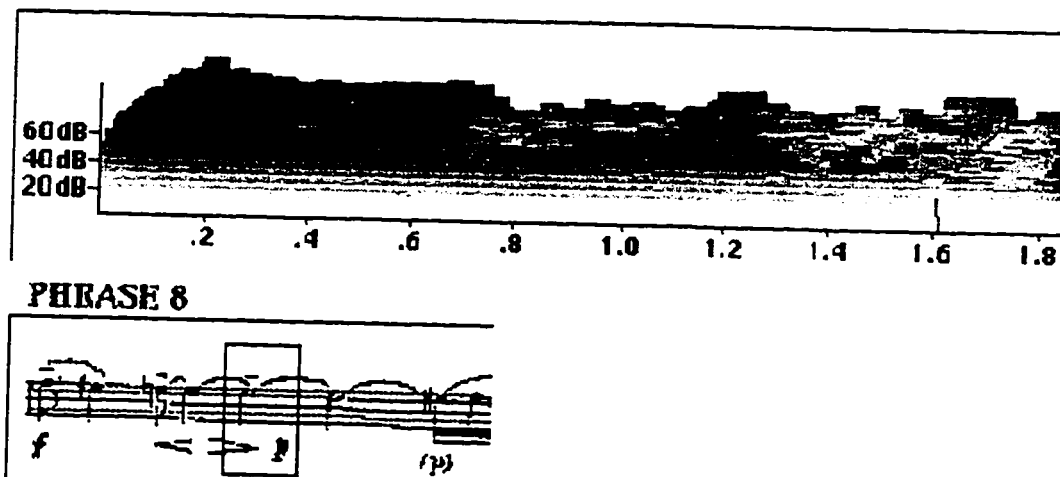
The descrescendo is evidently in the lowering of fundamental and lower partials in the bass range, while very high partials stay fairly 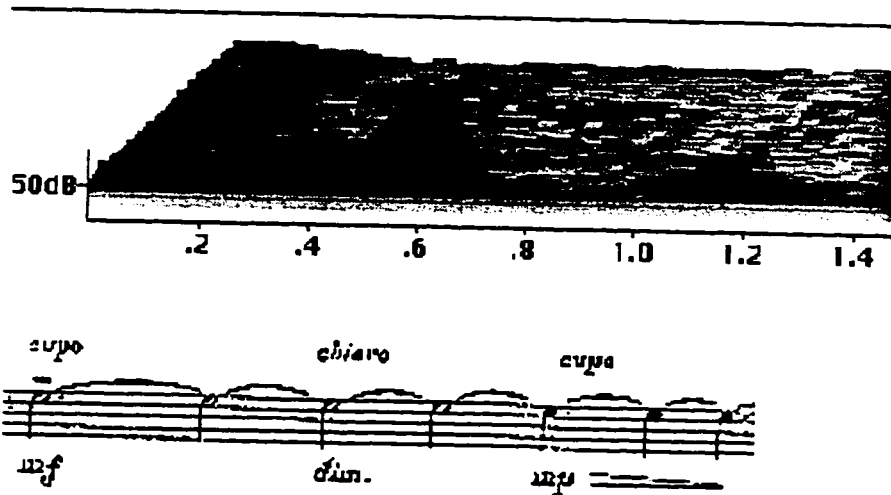steady.The spectral graph shows a 15 second sequence shown on the score excerpt below. Then opening pitch and dynamic level are both the same as in Figure 14, but we see the mix of upper partials in more pronounced and more clearly drops away.

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Figure 20

Leandre Cupo-Chiaro Through Multiphonic Bowing

Unlike the simple decrescendo, where the energy decrease occurred in near the fundamental while the mix of upper partials stayed relatively static, in this figure the upper partials drop away almost completely while the lower partials drop gradually.

Other areas in the score where cupo-chiaro-normale changes are called for Leandre makes no discernible attempt to implement. In another color change in Phrase 7 which calls for rhythmic key clicks in addition to playing a gliss figure, the score notes *Pour bassoon: "key clicks"* and so a contrabassist is left on their own to interpret.

In general, Leandre's performance on *Maknongan* is a vibrant, violently dramatic one, in which she has taken many liberties with the specifics of the score while carrying out the spirit and intent of the score to the letter.

Claude Delangle's *Maknongan*

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Claude Delangle's recording of *Maknongan* is performed on a baritone saxophone. Although the baritone saxophone has a far greater dynamic range that the acoustic contrabass, and has a very complex timbral structure, a comparison of Delangle's overall amplitude and sonic space of his recording show a generally more even distribution of dynamics and spectrum.

Figure 21.

Overall Dynamics of Delangle's *Maknongan*
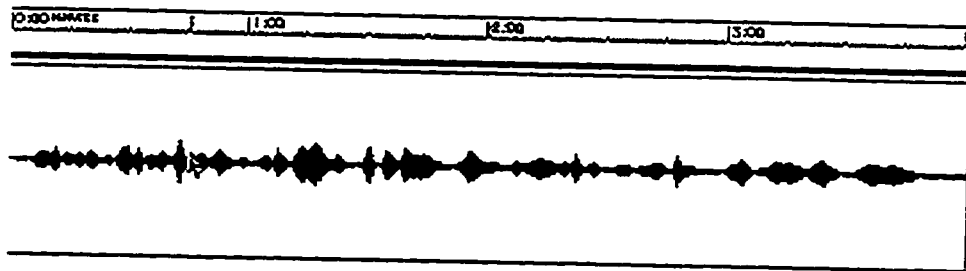
Delangle's "wet" recording environment in a large church and his style choices keep the wide dynamic range of the saxophone relatively even

Figure 22.

Sonic Space of Delangle's *Maknongan*
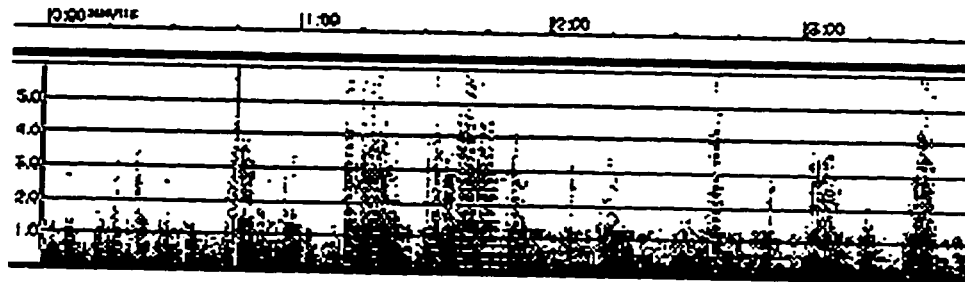
The rich mix of the saxophone's upper partials is apparent in this figure, particularly during the climax in Section Two, (between 1 and 2 minutes)

From the beginning his playing follows the score closely, so much so that a metronome track at the 84 tempo marking can successfully be super-imposed over his recording of Phrase One (see figure 23). The jagged dynamic ebbs and flows of Phrase One are also very apparent in the amplitude wave diagram, although Delangle's amplitude changes overall tend to be more gradual than Leandre's. This may be due to individual playing style, but are more likely attributable to the church in which Delangle recorded, giving his recording a very "wet" sound (more of a reverb effect), whereas Leandre's recording was in a studio and had a very present, "dry" overall sound.

Figure 23.

Delangle Links Between Tempo and Score
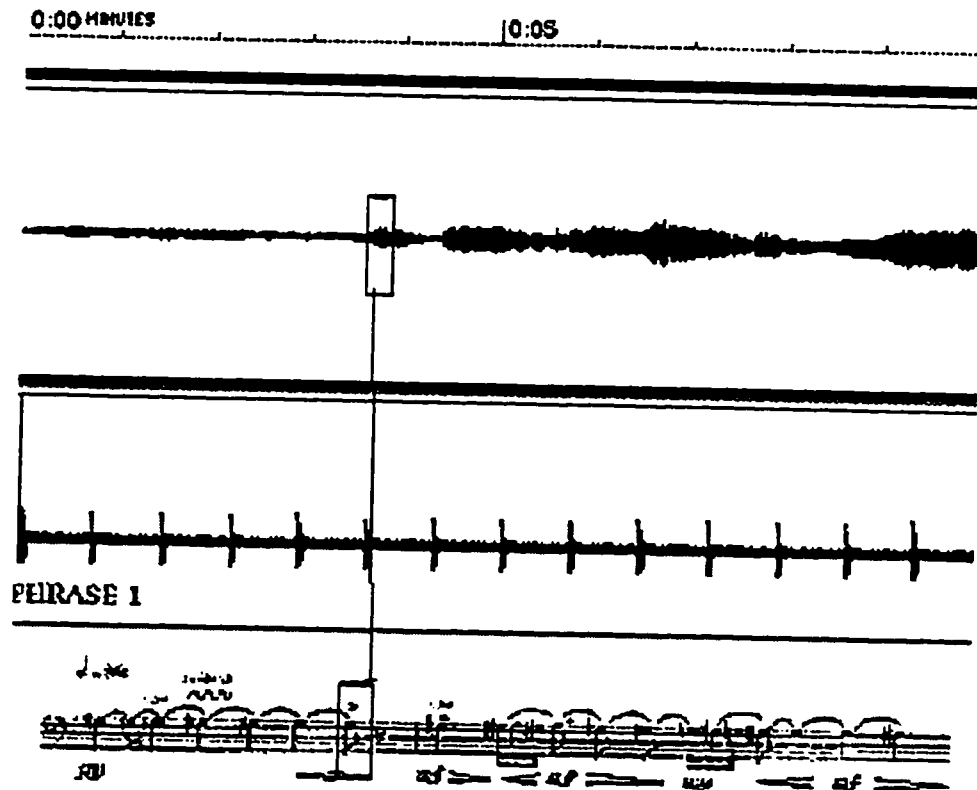
The imposition of a recording of a metronome shows that Delangle followed the score's tempo precisely.

To get a timbral profile of Delangle's baritone saxophone going through modest dynamic changes, we again look at the first note of the second measure. The score, (shown below in Figure 24) calls for a G to be played with a tenuto attack and an accent. Delangle executes this by giving a very rounded crescendo-decrescendo effect over the 1 second duration of the note. A strong presence of upper partials is seen from immediately after the attack to the crest of mezzo-forte level, and it's these partials which disappear to lower the overall dynamic level in

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the decrescendo. This indicates that a substantial timbre change occurs in Delangle's

basic saxophone tone within modest dynamic changes such as this.

Figure 24.

Delangle Plays G in Tenuto Attack with Decrescendo
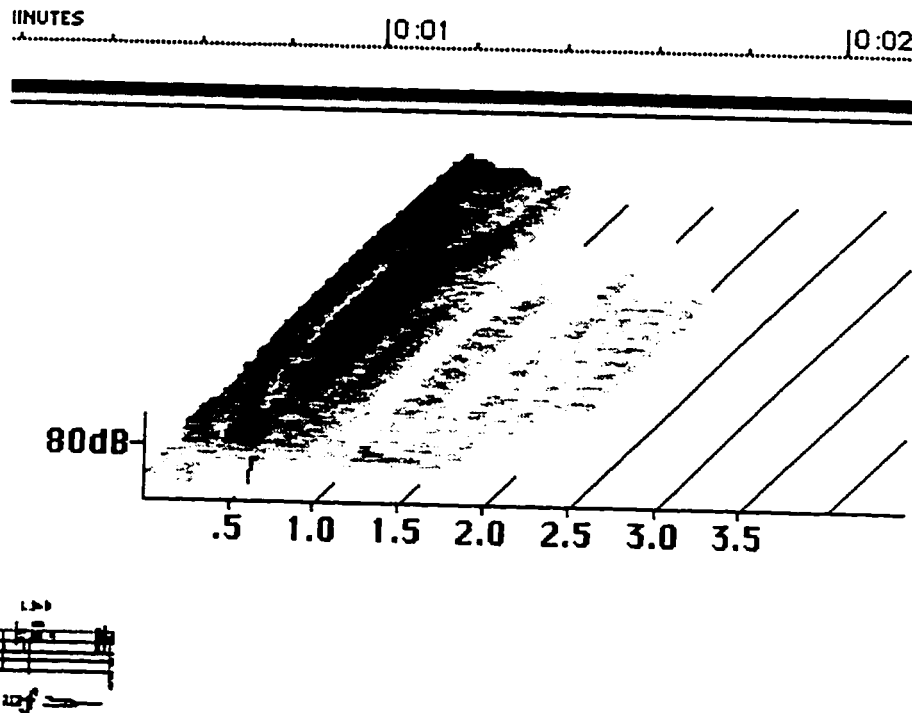
A strong presence of upper partials is after the attack to the crest of mezzo-forte level, upper partials disappear to lower the overall dynamic level in the decrescendo. This indicates that a substantial timbre change occurs in Delangle's basic saxophone tone within modest dynamic changes such as this.

The timbral composition of the saxophone sound changes dramatically in the triple forte at an octave above in Phrase 5. Delangle sticks to the basic sound of his instrument , but sacrifices tonal evenness in favor of achieving the dramatic dynamic change. He still keeps strictly to the score, making the decrescendo-crescendo in the section even though three tenuto breath emphases are called for

and the middle emphasis is easily lost in the sudden drop in dynamics. The FFT chart shows a wide range of strong partials, but the partials are still neatly stratified in a recognizable pitched sound.

Figure 25.

Delangle Spectrum at Triple Forte
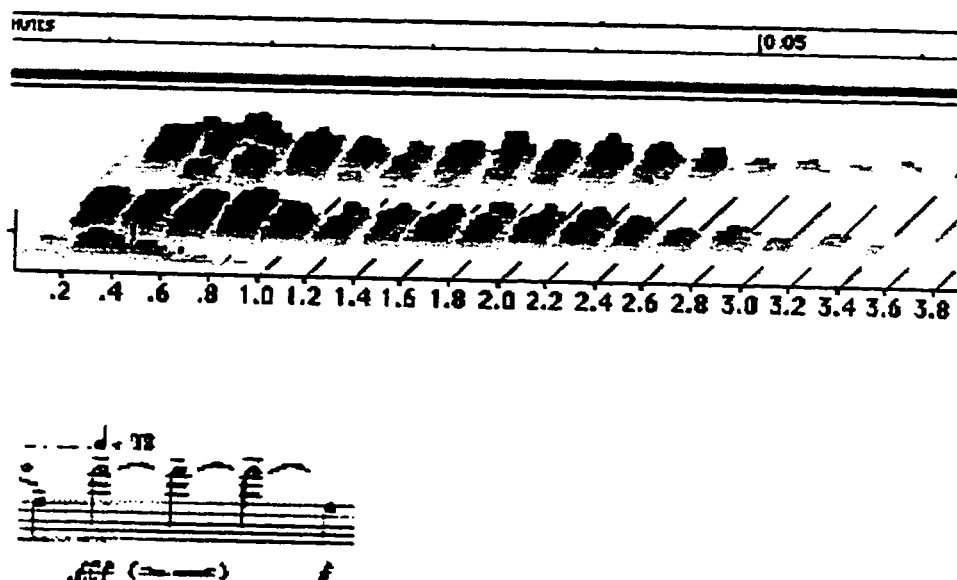
Timbral composition of the saxophone sound changes dramatically in the triple forte at an octave in Phrase 5. The 3-dimensional graph shows a wide range of strong partials, but the partials are still neatly stratified in a recognizable pitched sound.

Through a combination of alternate fingerings and embouchure changes Delangle uses the timbral flexibility of the saxophone to create the CUPO-CHIARO color changes the score calls for. In the three second sample shown in Figure 26, upper partials are suppressed, introduced in a wide range, and brought back to a "normal" range all within a similar dynamic level. The suppression of upper partials is more extreme and effective as part of a long decrescendo in the ending phrase, (Figure 27), where Delangle shifts to a sub-tone blowing together with a drop in dynamics.

Although the saxophone could create the rhythmic "key clicks" in Phrase 7,

Delangle, like Leandre, ignored them.

Figure 26

Delangle Cupo-Chiaro Multiphonic
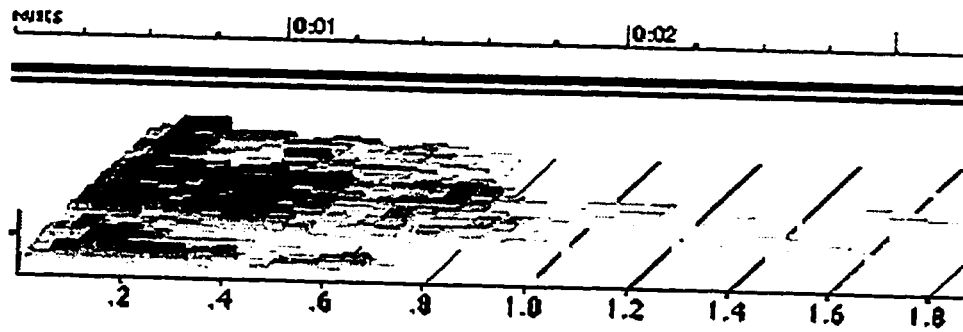
PHRASE 6
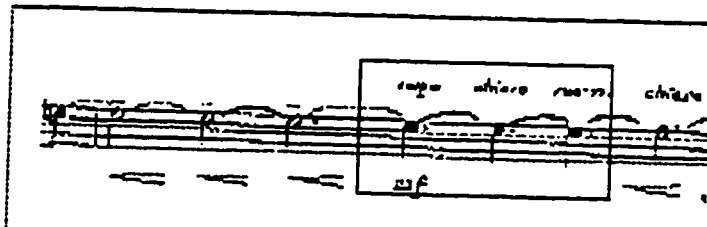
In the three second sample shown, upper partials are suppressed, introduced in a wide range, and brought back to a "normal" range all within a similar dynamic level

Figure 27.

Delangle Cupo-Chiaro Change at Ending
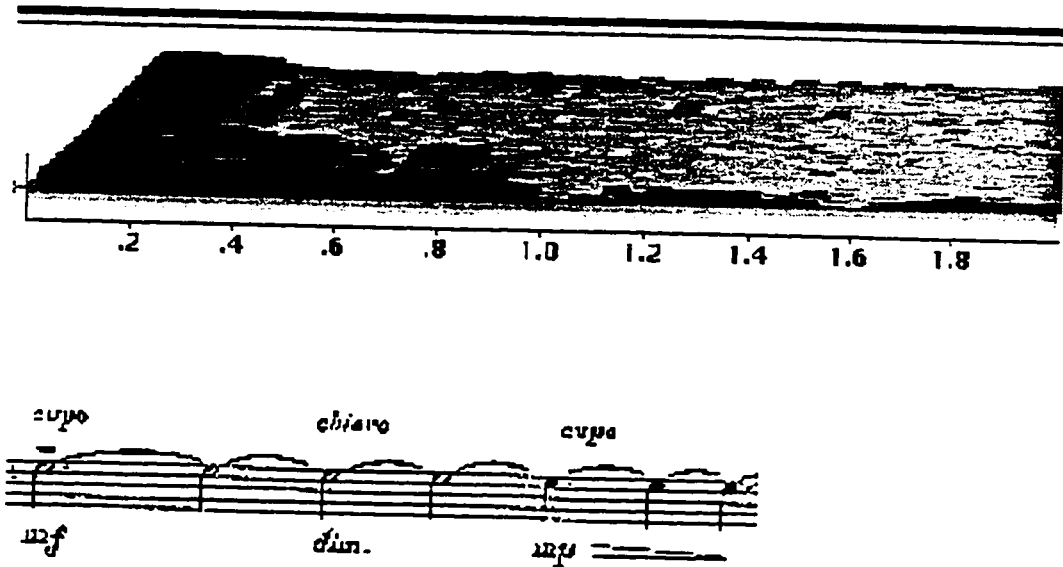
The suppression of upper partials is more extreme and effective as part of a long decrescendo in the ending phrase where Delangle shifts to a sub-tone blowing together with a drop in dynamics. Shown is a 10 second segment.

Overall Delangle made use of the saxophone's large dynamic range and timbral flexibility to render a vital yet concise execution of the *Maknongan* score. Surprisingly, although the dynamic range of the baritone saxophone is far greater than the unamplified contrabass, the dynamic range of Leandre's *Maknongan* recording is twice as wide as Delangle's. This is due to recording choices based on aesthetics preferences, and Leandre's vocalizing. Delangle captures the dynamic changes but keeps within more standard limits, while Leandre's dynamics variations within the recording test the abilities of most speaker systems to bring a

more extreme performance through the recorded medium.

Corrado Canonici's *Maknongan*

Contrabassist Corrado Canonici chose to perform *Maknongan* in unison with his voice. While the combination of voice and contrabass doubles his dynamic range and opens a wide range of color change possibilities, Canonici opted to use these possibilities sparingly. His voice and bass are distinct, but throughout the piece he strives to keep them in close balance.

Figure 28

Canonici's *Maknongan* Overall Dynamics
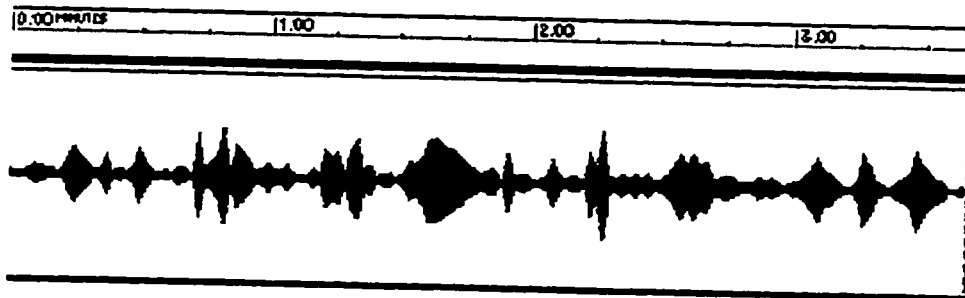
The combination of voice and contrabass doubles his dynamic range, as is shown by the sharp dynamic contrasts.

Figure 29

Canonici's *Maknongan* Overall Sonic Space
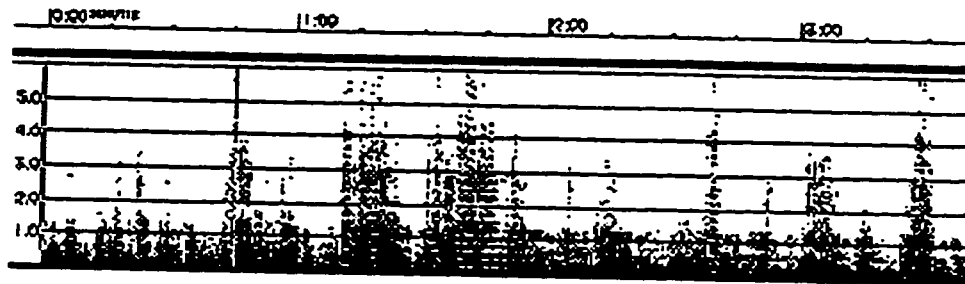
Canonici uses his voice and bass in close unison, keeping his voice in a closed-mouth hum while in the lower range and a wide-mouthed "ahh" shape in the upper range, creating the collection of upper partials beginning at .75 minutes.

The use of his voice in unison with the contrabass allows for a wide range of spectrum, particularly in Section Two. The color changes are more dramatic than Delangle's, but still less extreme than Leandre's.

His mouth shape for most of the piece is a closed-mouthed hum, which only opens in a wide Ahh sound in the triple forte octave jumps.

Figure 30

Canonici at Triple Forte
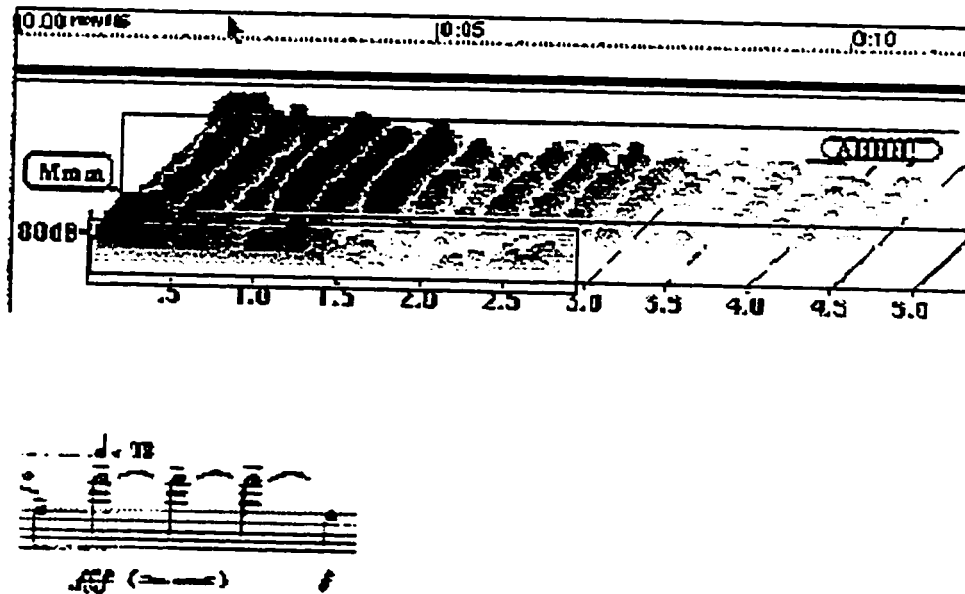
The change in mouth shape is apparent at the climax, were Canonici sings in a clearly pitched "Ahh" mouth shape. The pitched character of the sound is shown by the clear partials groupings, in contrast to Leandre's howl at this section.

The score is closely followed for the most part, and even a rough relation to the tempo of 84 to the quarter note can be discerned, with allowances for endings of phrases.

Figure 31

Canonici Relation to Tempo
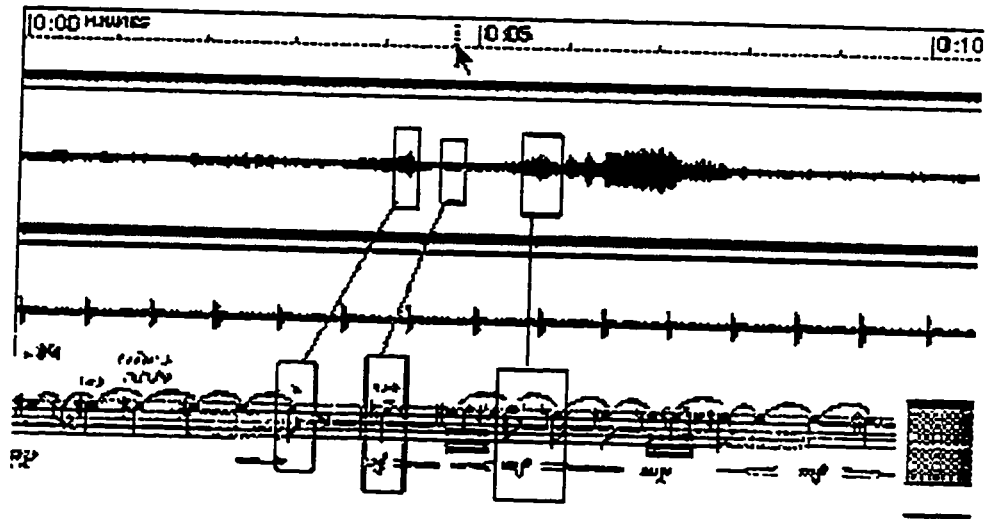
The imposition of a metronome track shows a close relationship to the score.

In interpreting the Cupo-Chiaro color change, Canonici does not repeat his syllabic change to bring out a different color with his voice, but instead makes a strong multiphonic through a bowing change.

Figure 32

Canonici Multiphonic Bowing for Cupo-Chiaro
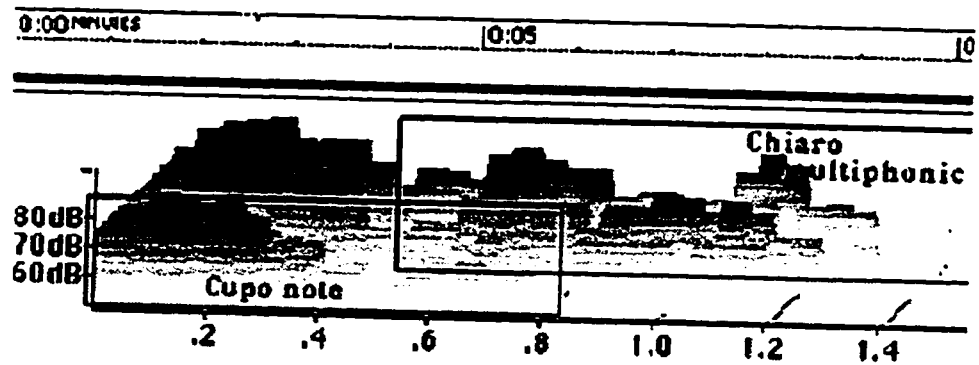
PHRASE 6
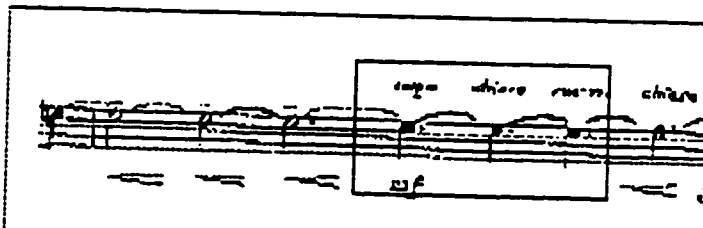
Rather than use his voice, Canonici changes his bowing technique to create a clear multiphonic

This interpretation of Chiaro is repeated in the closing phrase, where a clear 12th above the fundamental rings out while the voice , using the Mmm shape, dies away.

Figure 33

Canonici Multiphonic Bowing for at Ending
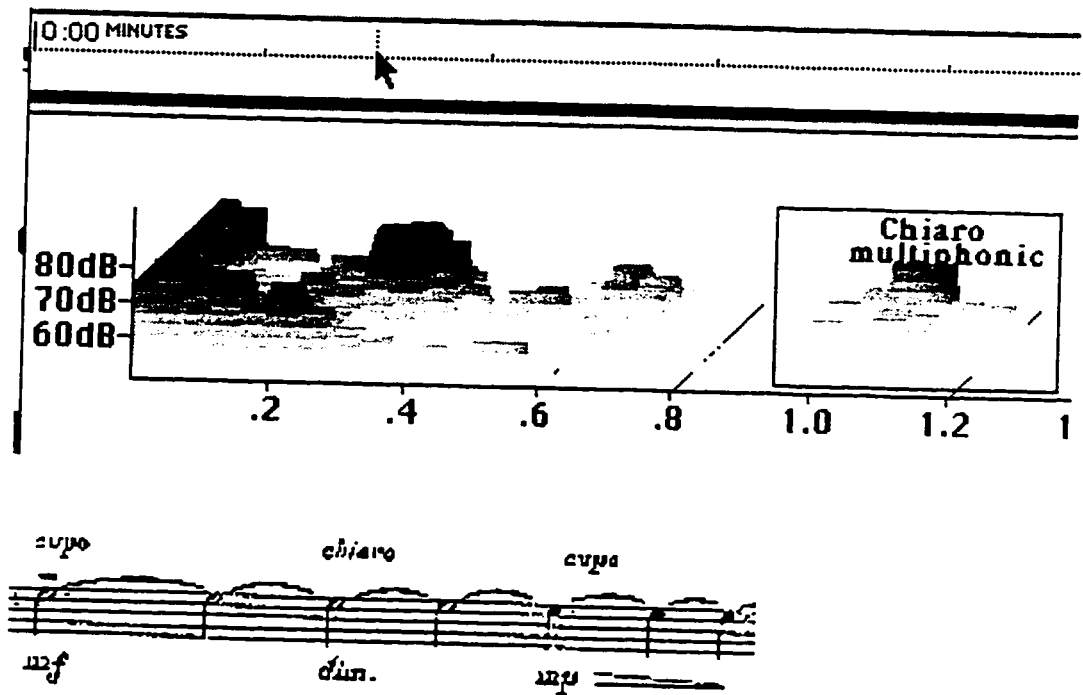
Altered bowing to create a multiphonic is again Canonici's interpretation of "chiaro"

Canonici use of his voice and his very controlled multiphonics succeeded in making distinct use of the color changes called for in *Maknongan*. Whenever the score goes into the upper octave, he uses the wide open rough Ahh sound which creates the sharply different timbre shown in figure 33. The same is true in his use of Chiaro with his multiphonics. Canonici has also broken ground by taking a personal challenge to use his voice without being previously being a performing singer, using a bass technique that was used in jazz but never in classical performance context. In so doing Canonici is using the piece to open new

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possibilities for himself and his instrument.

Johnny Reinhard's *Maknongan*

Reinhard's *Maknongan* recording comes from a live performance, in which he performs on an amplified bassoon. The amplification creates a trade-off; the bassoon's timbre is altered overall to some degree, while both dynamic range and variations in sound color are brought out. Reinhard further transposed the piece, (as is suggested in the score) so that he could play in a lower range of the instrument.

The amplification seems to have given the bassoon's dynamic range a boost for the louder passages, but leveled-off many of the subtleties of the very soft passages.

Figure 34

Reinhard's *Maknongan* Overall Dynamics
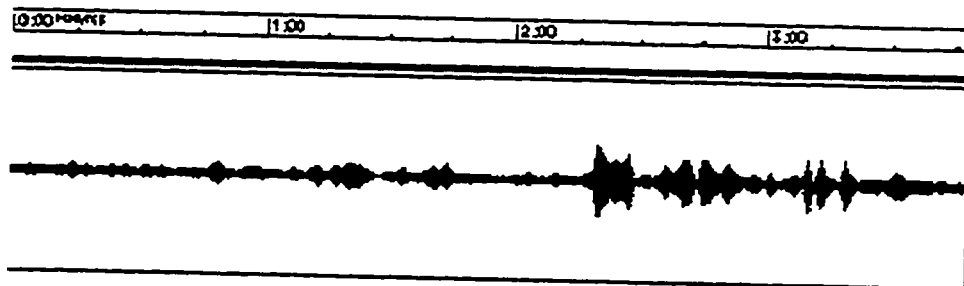
Amplification and recording conditions at the live performance are more responsible for the large level changes at 2:30 than any playing changes.

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Figure 35

Reinhard's *Maknongan* Overall Sonic Space
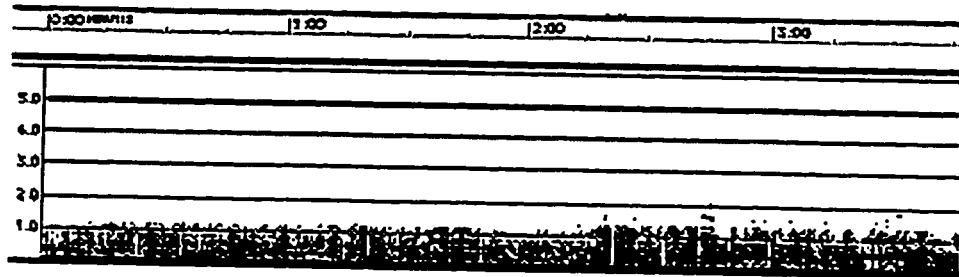
The bassoon's rich timbre was kept very steady by the effect of amplification

Figure 36

Tempo in Reinhard's *Maknongan*
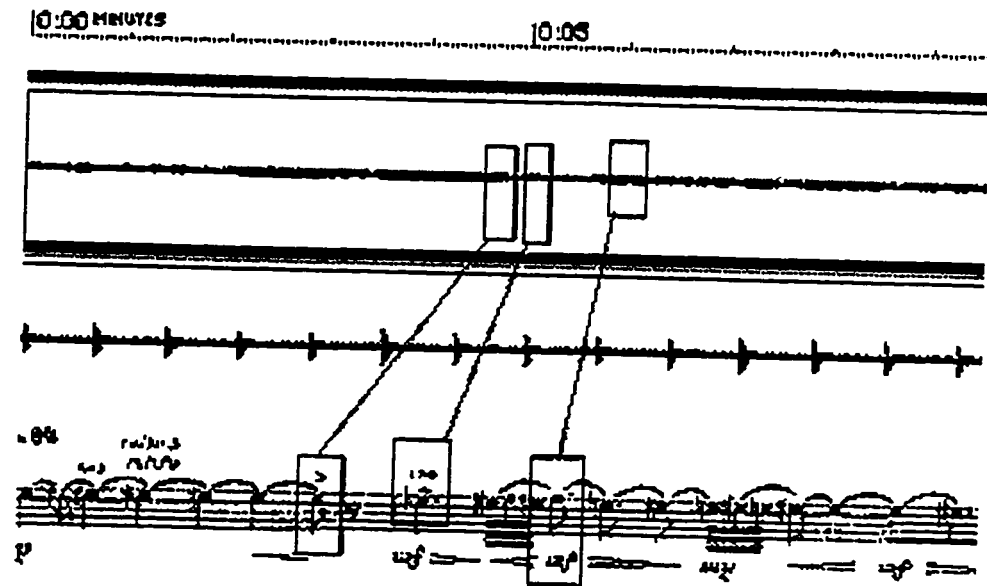
The leveling off effect of amplification on the recording makes a clear sense of tempo difficult to perceive in the opening section.

If we look at Reinhard's amplified bassoon playing the first note in the second measure, (because of transposition he plays an E2 rather than a G2), we see a very broad presence of partials even at a medium dynamic (Figure 37). When the dynamic range and octave is increased, in Figure 38, the very full overtone composition becomes more pronounced, but doesn't fundamentally change.

Figure 37.

Reinhard's Bassoon's Basic Spectral Composition
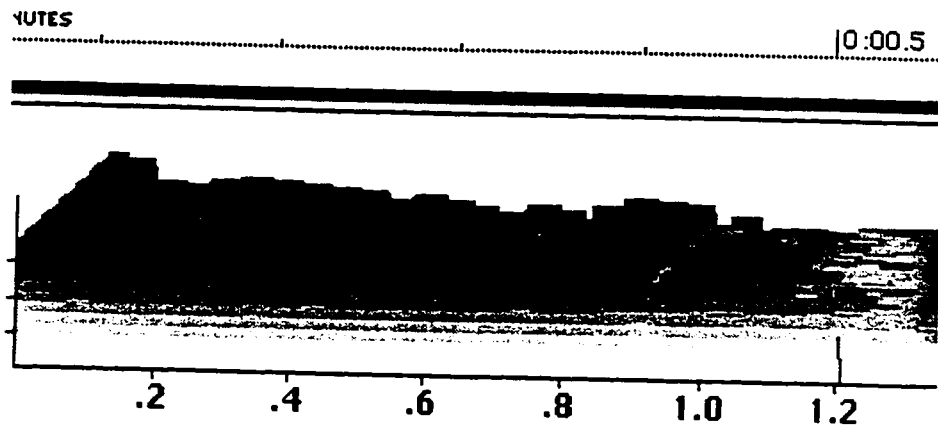
Reinhard plays E2, rather than a G2 because of transposition. We see a very broad presence of upper partials even at a medium dynamic.

Figure 38.

Reinhard at Triple Forte
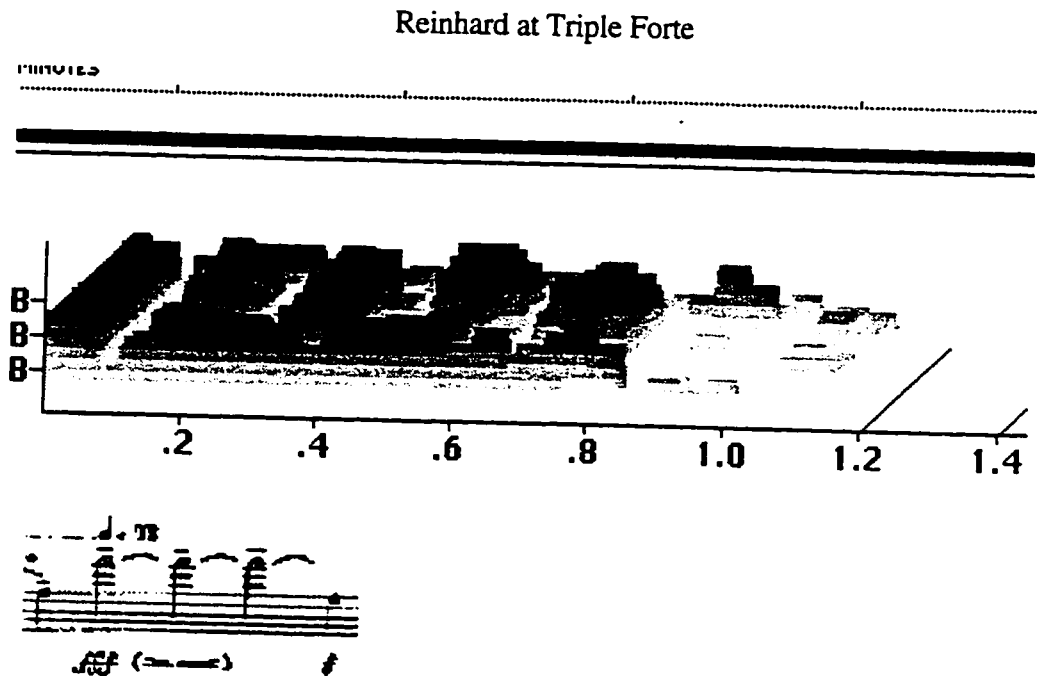
When the dynamic range and octave is increased the very full overtone composition becomes more pronounced, but doesn't fundamentally change.

Reinhard dramatically varies his use of vibrato to add to the changes in the upper register. As a general pattern, he uses no vibrato in the lower register, while in the upper register he ends each note with a wide, distinct vibrato. Reinhard alters his tone to accentuate the upper partials in order to bring out the Chiaro change. This is particularly evident at the ending phrase, where he outright creates a multiphonic (Figure 39). More subtle versions of tonal color changes are evident throughout the piece, as he uses the amplification to accentuate changes in embouchure. Reinhard's attention to the timbral elements in the piece is also evident in his execution of the key clicks in Phrase 7.

Figure 39.

Reinhard's Cupo-Chiaro Multiphonic
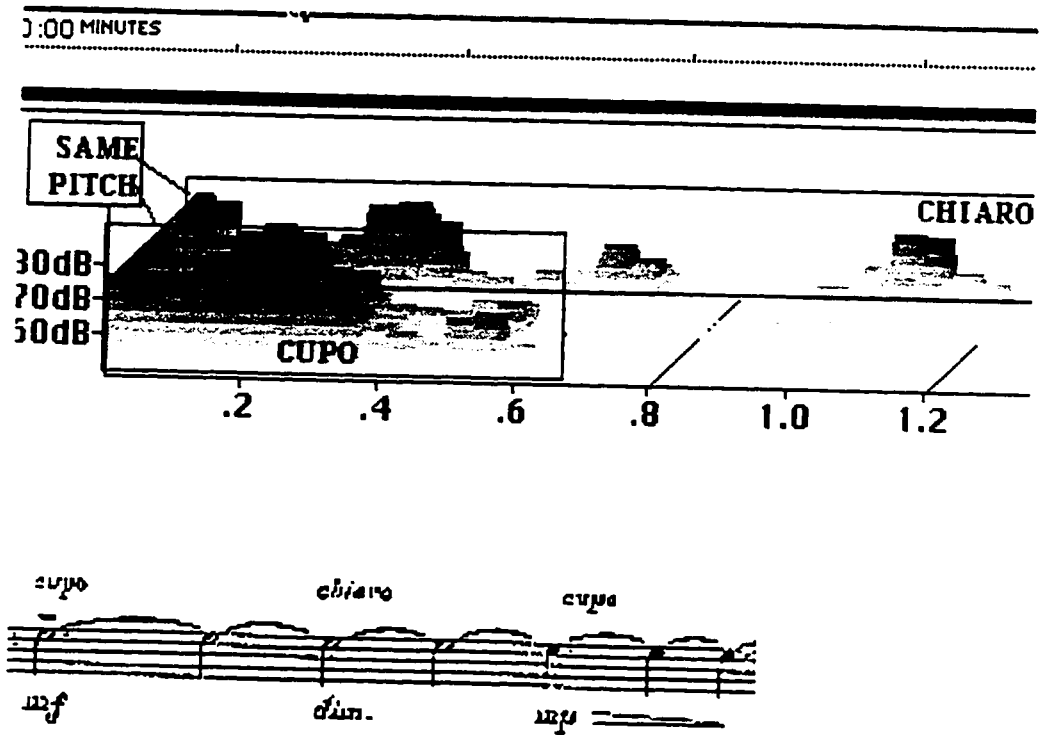
A change in embouchure creates a distinct multiphonic as Reinhard's interpretation of "chiaro"

Michiko Hirayama's Canti del Capricorno No. 16

Scelsi wrote the 20 Canti del Capricorno between 1962 and 1972. The Wergo recording of Hirayama's performance comes from a 1969 private collection of Hirayama's, that was selected and reissued in 1985. Out of the 19 short vocal works on the recording, Hirayama singled *Canti 16* out as a performance she's particularly proud of.

Although only 2.44 minutes long, *Canti 16* is tremendously complex in terms of vocal techniques and deceptively simple in terms of pitch. If we speak only in terms of fundamental pitch, the "notes" that would appear on a score without taking into account microtonal changes and spectral changes, then the entire piece can be summed up as a drone on E above middle C. If we look at the entire spectrum of the piece, we see the use of the entire range of the piano and beyond in combinations that resemble one another, but never exactly repeat.

Figure 40.

Canti 16 Overview of Sonic Space within Soprano Voice Range
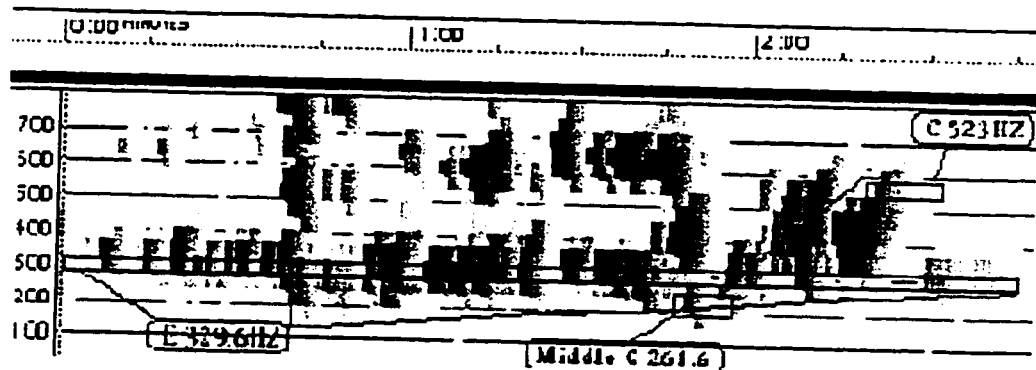
This graph is a 3-dimensional representation of spectral data but on a vertical plane, showing frequencies from 100 to 1000hz. Time show is the entire piece, 2.75 minutes. The pitch center, 329.6hz (E above middle C), is highlighted beginning to end, as well as the lowest and highest pitches in terms of fundamentals.

The first graph kept the frequency range closer to the limits of the soprano voice and emphasized the strongest frequencies to focus on the overall movement of the fundamental . Still a fundamental pitch is almost unrecognizable from the graph. If we step back and look at a wider range, 0 -4000 HZ, we see the dimensions of complexity in Hirayama's use of her voice.

Figure 41

Sonic Space Within Range of a Piano
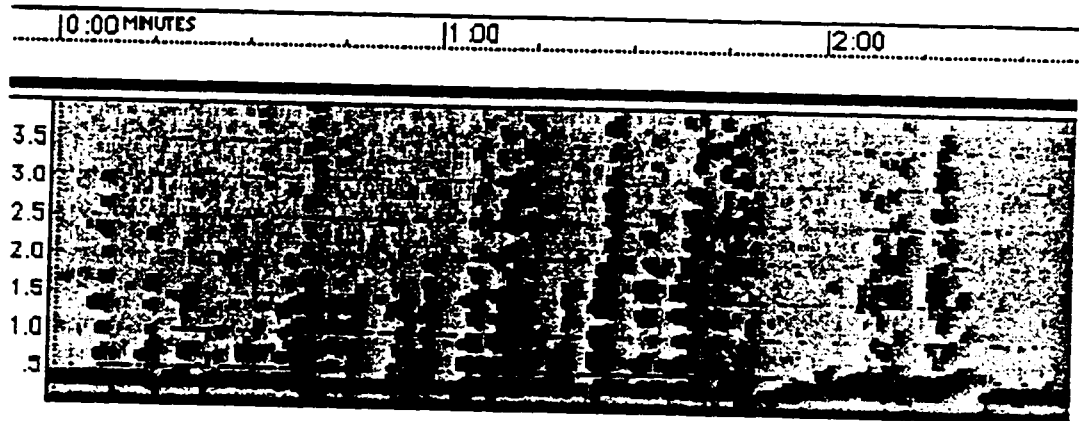
This figure is a 3-dimensional graph on a vertical plane showing 0-4000hz frequencies over the entire piece. The movement of the fundamental pitch is still discernible (below 500hz) as well as wide bands of strong upper partials such as at 1.25minutes

If we look at one second of detail from the first section we see the way Hirayama evolves different shapes and colors while staying with the same "pitch". Here we see a series of short, accented notes, which she starts out closed-mouth (mmm sounds) and ends in changing open-mouthed syllables. Shown is the same 0-4000 HZ frequency range.

Figure 42.

Spectrum of Changing Syllables
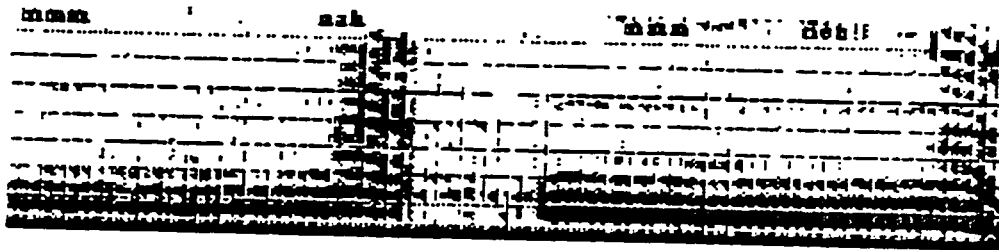
Within 1 second, Hirayama voices two similar open to closed mouthed
combinations, mmm-nah, mmm-neh!, the last syllable causing a downward gliss
in upper partials.

These subtle changes typify the progression of the piece, where within the
context of seeming repetition nothing is ever identical . Even the ending, where
Hirayama returns from a relatively open-mouthed, operatic sound gliss to the
opening, closed-mouth E, she immediately varies the opening by cracking her
voice into a multiphonic and dies away.

Shown at the bottom of each graph is a 2-dimensional graph of spectrum,
showing frequencies from 0-4000 Hz. Immediately above is a wave chart of
dynamic changes. Time is shown in seconds. To show the sweep of the entire
piece, even in such a short piece as this, much of the detail such as is shown in
Figure 42 is not revealed in Figure 43.

In comparing this level of detail in another type of view, an excerpt from
Michiko Hirayama's score for the piece is shown in Figure 43 that corresponds to
the first 30 seconds shown in Figure 42.

In Figure 43 we see a close connection between micro-tonal pitch changes, dynamic changes, and syllabic changes. The pianissimo opening calls for beginning the envelope with a "v" attack followed by a "ü" sound with no vibrato, (from German and French, lips shaped like the oo sound in English while the tongue is shaped like the ee), then alternating with a " ö" sound with a slight vibrato, (lips shaped like English "o" sound while tongue shaped like "e" as in "they"). The note ends with a pitch move to up a half-step with a crescendo. A staccato ending cuts the phrase short (and creates a "T" sound which is only implied by the staccato but not noted in the syllabic notation). This pattern is repeated at a faster rate, (and with a slightly different set of pitch movements, including a quarter-tone flat drop and a break in the long tone).

Comparison between the score's specific pitch markings and Hirayama's performance show very exact and deliberate pitch references within microtonal range. Microtonal markings are reached exactly in glisses. The opening pitch is exactly a concert "E", and this pitch is returned to at the end despite the 2:40 minutes of glisses and syllabic changes that go on in between. A definite sense of tempo is also always present, despite constant tempo changes such as patterns of accelarando.

Figure 43.

Canti 16 Amplitude, Spectrum and Description

attack
Opened-mouth
ending

Closed-
Open-
Closed-
Open

Series of short
attacks, gradu-
ally more
opened

Closed,
flare
open,closed
flare open

Generated pitch,
"E". 329.6hz at 80dB

long Accelerando of similar sound

Section of glisses, gradually moving higher in
pitch. Begins with fixed-mouth, mostly
closed, gradually opens subtly, long moder-
ate crescendo

Climax ends with
lowest pitch

Closed-mouth, resembles
beginning but voice cracks into
multiphonic at lower pitch

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Figure 44

Excerpt from Hirayama Score

Hirayama's score is still a working document, as seen by the numerous corrections. For each line she has dynamic and articulation markings above (vibrato or tremolo), conventional note markings on the staff, and syllabic markings below. The one Japanese character at the second phrase indicates a small decelerando.

Despite the infinite permutations of the elements of pitch, dynamics, timbre and tempo, the work has an overall sense of unity because of the gradual way the changes are introduced. The musical elements are bound by the process of change, rather than a static definition created by some degree of repetition. Hirayama's

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performance is virtuosic within the confines of a vocal genre she invented. Although her attempt at a score is highly detailed for such a short work, it still doesn't account for aspects of her vocal techniques such as the breathy sounds or cracked-voice multiphonics. This may account for the fact that performances of these works by other singers are virtually nonexistent, and the work may remain a personal creation of Hirayama both as "composition" and "performance."

Scelsi's Tre Pezzi for Soprano or Tenor Saxophone

The Score

In Piece One of *Tre Pezzi*, a very restrictive set of five pitches is used, with most activity revolving around bi-polar tonal centers. Any sense of a regular meter is smashed apart by measures of irregular length with accents and emphases that move constantly. A high degree of entropy in all music elements is combined with permutations of similar elements, creating an overall effect of ever-changing sameness.

Both an Eastern-style sense of drone and Western-style breath-like phrases are elements present in this piece. Breath-like phrases are bridged together with drone-like long tones. For example, in Phrase III, a lyrical phrase ends with no sense of resolution with a Bb that continues for 12 beats with a variety of sinking and swelling dynamics.

The drone tones are never static; rather they are constantly altering in dynamic changes and differing articulation of beginnings, endings, and breath accents, creating a feeling of movement. On the other hand, the breath-like phrases,

although they have lyrical qualities, so consistently avoid exact repetition that they create an aspect of a drone-like effect.

The overall use of pitches is very simple. The piece begins and ends on a D3 (the highest D on the saxophone within the normal range), and this same note is interjected throughout the piece, implying it's presence as a drone. This is a piercing note, and stands alone in it's specific octave without referring to any other D. It is also the highest note in the piece; the entire rest of the work descends from the opening and ascends to end. This itself violates a common practice of tonal music, in which a tonic opens and closes a piece and all pitch movement tends to rise from the tonic and closure is achieved by a descent and return to the tonic.

The sonic space of the piece, F#1 to D3, is presented in M1. Both the high and low point of the pitch range are heard throughout the piece, but the center of gravity, the drone tone, is the focus of pitch movement. The first figure in M1 comes to rest on C2, and so introduces the first tonal center. This movable drone tone passes from C2, Bb2 to A1. From M10 to M17 the pitches settle into a modal setting of F#1, G#1,A1,Bb2, while the drone A1, Bb2, and C2 still given passing reference.

The sharp restriction of pitch makes the occasional use of other pitches very dramatic, even though they mark no continued presence. For example, in M17 a grace note B acts in a triplet figure as an inconsequential appogiatura to the Bb2 that is heard throughout, but is emphasized 8 beats later by repetition. In M18, this B natural opens the phrase that will end the piece, the alien pitch further calling attention to itself with a pp entrance. Similarly in M6 and M10 a lone Eb2 bridges the gap between the drone centers and D3, the only times the space between C2 and

D3 is used in the work.

Figure 45.

Overall Pitch Movement

M1   M4-6   M9 M11   M17   M19
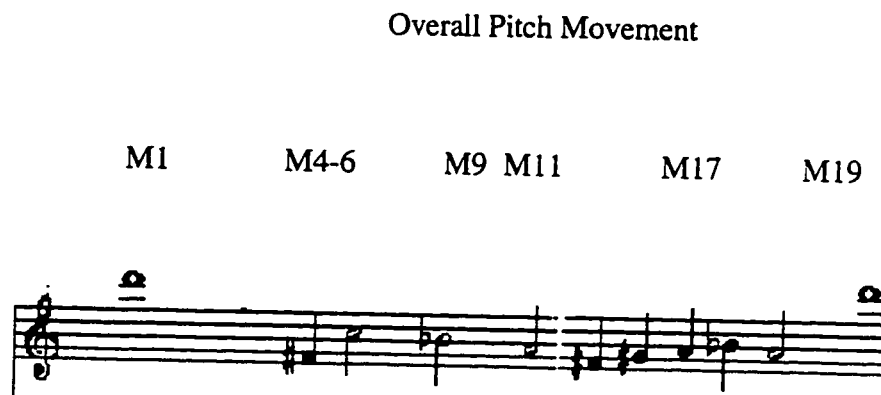
Although there are no time signatures, measures of irregular length do exist in the work. The measures assist in grouping phrases, although even this simple pattern is often overridden by interlocking drone tones which carry over beyond the measure. Only four measures out of 19 have the same length with another measure.

The concept of ever-changing sameness is most apparent in rhythmic grouping, where similar patterns emerge but exact repetition is avoided.

As rhythmic changes unfold and pitches sequences are basically static, dramatic changes occur in dynamics. These dynamic changes can be shown to further cause distinct changes in tone color.

Claude Delangle's *Tre Pezzi One* for Soprano Saxophone

Claude Delangle uses a soprano saxophone to perform Tre Pezzi. Despite the instrument's reputation to difficulty in dynamic control, Delangle shows mastery in executing the constant dynamic changes called for in the score.

Figure 46

Overall Dynamics in Delangle Tre Pezzi One
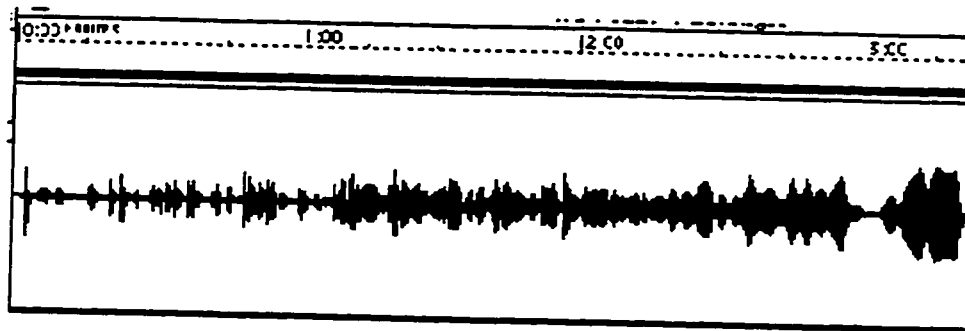
Figure 47.

Overall Sonic Space in Tre Pezzi One
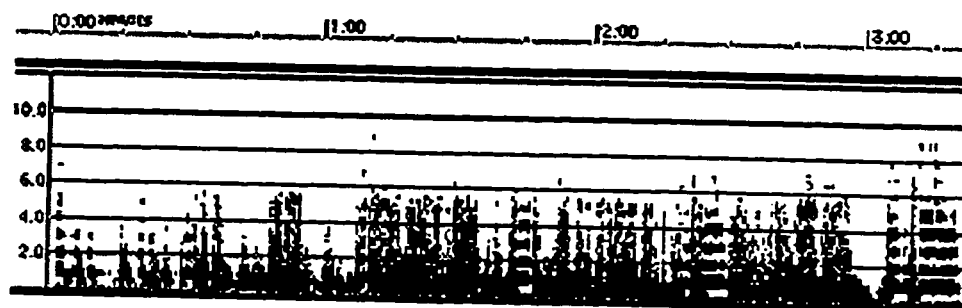
Dynamic changes appear to be directly linked to spectral changes in this recording, with dynamic peaks accompanied by wide bands of upper partials

In Figure 48 we see two-dimensional representation of the spectrum of the opening and closing pitch. The graph contrasts a generated sine wave at 1024.5hz with Delangle's opening D in descrescendo, the D opening Measure Two in crescendo, and the closing D in a steady forte. Although they are all the "same" note, we see that the spectral composition is directly related to the dynamic level.

Figure 48.

Contrasting Spectrum of High D at Different Dynamics
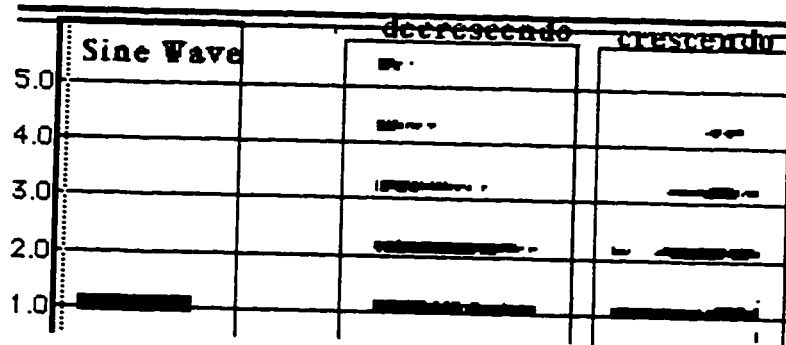
Measures 1 and 2

From Final Measure
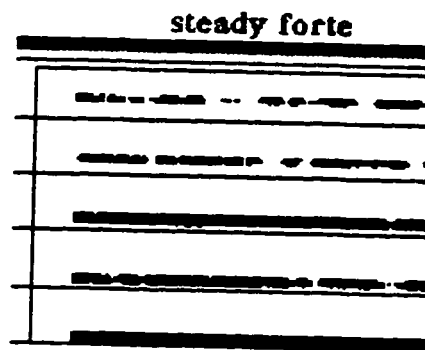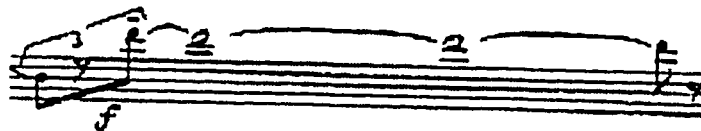
These selections show a direct correlation between increased dynamics and a strong spectral change, with increased dynamics coming from added higher partials

The connection between a changing spectral composition and dynamics is again evident in looking at a sustained Bb from the soprano saxophone's middle range. Shown below in Figure 49 is 7 seconds long Bb (concert Ab) from Measures 6 and 7. Again it appears that an increase in dynamics is synonymous with an increase in high upper partials, creating a distinct sound color change.

Figure 49.

Delangle's Middle Bb at Different Dynamics
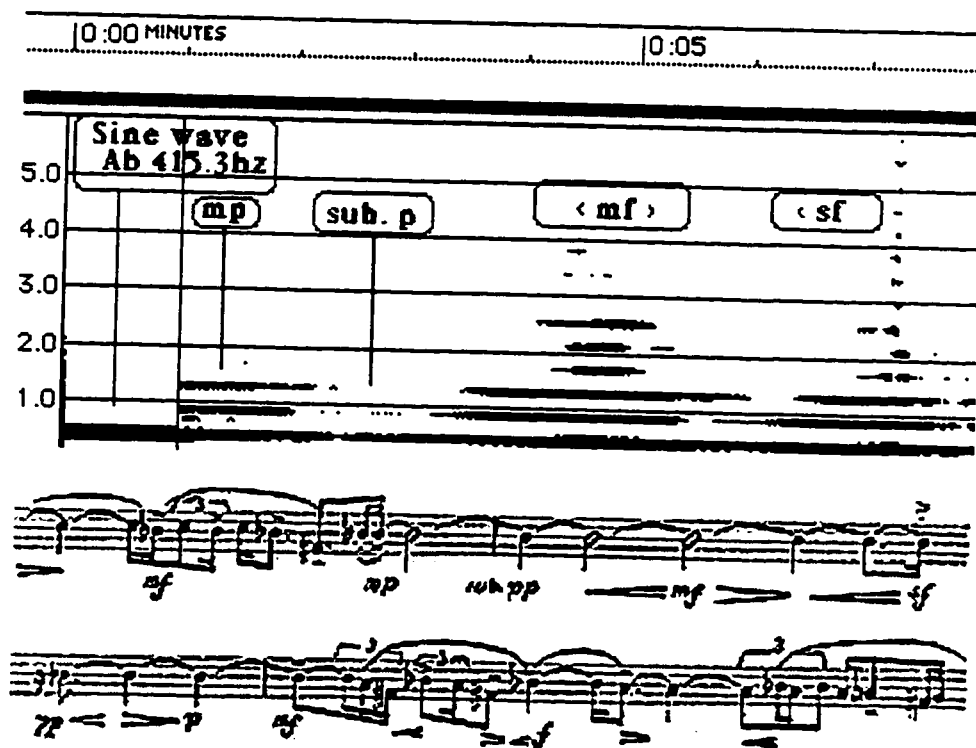
Changes in dynamics in the middle range again are directly attributable to an increase in upper partials. Shown is a 7 second interval corresponding to the held Bb in the second measure of the score excerpt.

The saxophone family in general has a very rich mix of partials making up it's timbre and a great flexibility in altering that timbre, and the soprano saxophone is the most extreme example of this flexibility. Part of tonal training techniques, such as that of the master classical saxophonist Sigurd Rascher, called for teaching students to control and isolate different partials occurring naturally within a saxophone into separate notes in order to create a steady, controlled tone in normal playing. In the jazz genre the deliberate use of color changes, for example from "sub-tone" where upper partials are suppressed to a full tone, are a key element of the saxophone sound. In classical saxophone playing the tradition is the opposite, where a consistent, even tone is the goal.

In Delangle's recording of Tre Pezzi, he kept within the classical saxophone tradition and used his mastery of the soprano to keep the extreme timbral differences shown in the spectral analysis suppressed. This strive for evenness was achieved through control of embouchure, instrument and mouthpiece setup, and recording environment. His resulting interpretation places a stress on the lyric and mysterious qualities of the piece and away from rougher, more violent color changes that are implicit in the sharp dynamic changes.

Surprisingly, while using setup , embouchure techniques and a "wet" recording sound to even sound color changes, Delangle used little or no vibrato throughout the piece, a deliberate choice which contrasts to his usual playing. Perhaps the absence of vibrato was meant to keep to an even closer rendition of the score, which twice makes reference to a tremolo sound but doesn't specifically call for vibrato.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

Although each separate musical analysis centered on what individual traits could be discerned from the recorded performances, some overriding commonalties must first be discussed to place Scelsi's solo works in context. A common theme that emerged from the spectral analysis of the recordings is that sound color is a critical, in fact defining, element in works studied. To varying degrees, all of the recordings showed that on these acoustic instruments and voice, sound color can change significantly from changes in range, changes in dynamics, changes in articulation, and from deliberate changes in sound production such as mouth shape in singing, bowing techniques in strings, embouchure or fingering alterations in wind instruments.

Sharp, unusual and constant changes in dynamics were a feature of all the Scelsi works studied. Included with these distinctive dynamic changes were very exact and unusual use of articulations, such as accents within held notes, staccato endings, attacks with tenuto and attack marks. These unusual and distinctive dynamic and articulation markings were present in the published scores of Piece One of *Tre Pezzi* published in 1956, the score of *Maknongan* published in 1976, and Michiko Hirayama's recording of *Canti 16* from 1969 and in her version of the score which is yet to be published. The three different scores, created over a time span of almost four decades and notated by at least two different transcribers, all bear this characteristically distinctive style of dynamics and articulation.

These constant dynamic and articulation changes carry implicit timbral consequences, as shown by the spectral analysis. In addition, we have several signs of explicit calls for timbral changes in the notated scores. In *Maknongan*, we have the call for cupo-chiaro-normale along with a vague explanation that demonstrates that Scelsi felt it was the performer's responsibility to find a way with their instrument or voice to create such distinct timbres in their performance. In the score of *Canti 16*, Hirayama devoted three staves for her one voice: one for dynamic markings, one for conventional pitch and rhythm, and one for syllabic markings to convey mouth shape-tongue-lips configuration.

The significance of timbral changes varied from the role of predominant importance in Hirayama's *Canti 16* to implicit subtlety in Delangle's *Tre Pezzi*, yet in all the six performances studied sound color changes proved to be as important, if not more important, than pitch as a compositional element.

If we return to the views of the performers who worked directly with Scelsi, we see that these few references in the scores reveal only a small part of much larger dimensions of Scelsi's conscious and deliberate use of sound color. From the following quote from Michiko Hirayama, we see that she viewed sound color in Scelsi's music as a critical element with broad implications:

> One sound, it's useless to tell you, has all the resonances, all the frequencies, from one frequencies result incredibly rich notes above and I feel it and I believe it. First of all this is the common point with Scelsi which I feel on sound and then my nature is somehow a common quality which he adores, I don't want to say oriental, but native music and this is common second point. And the score, it's not possible to write how Scelsi wants to hear or how he improvises. In pentagram there's too much limit to express sound which he feels inside of him.

Hirayama is saying that both she and Scelsi shared a special interest in sound color and they saw this aspect of music as being linked to non-Western music in some way. This approach to music could not be adequately represented by Western music notation, which Hirayama calls the "pentagram." In her interview, she describes the collaborative process that culminated in the recording of *Canti 16*. The score went through many changes in this process. ("I change always," Hirayama said, particularly when describing Tosatti's attempt to create syllabic markings that she felt were unsuited for her voice.)

Part of Scelsi's concept, in the view of Hirayama and the other performers who collaborated with him, was to move the performer to share in the creative process in order to achieve the same meditative or spiritual experience of the original improvisation. So great was Hirayama's degree of creative input in *Canti del Capricorno* that she declared herself to be "performer and creator at the same time," although she made the qualification that "basically the idea came from Scelsi." The dimensions of this individual creativity was in the realm of sound color. She describes adapting Scelsi's taped improvisation from an early electronic organ into a vocal work:

> So from electronic sound pass to live voice this is another work and with voice I can make different color and by reading his score I read until I feel something live inside of me which I feel corresponds to Scelsi's music and I make my voice, different color of voice or different use of voice which Scelsi felt good. We never talked, he never explained what he mentioned with this music, but I felt it, so it was not necessary with explanation with words.

From Hirayama's description of the collaborative process that culminated in *Canti 16*, we get a sense of a musical work that came into being and definition through personal interaction and that is only partially represented by the score. A

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critical part of this extra-score dimension of the work, and part that was created and communicated through inter-personal means, was the use of sound color. Through the vast palette of timbre that the human voice is capable of, Hirayama turned *Canti 16* into a tremendously complex work in terms of sound color while appearing simple in terms of pitch. While anchored to a drone on E above middle C, the spectrum of the piece uses the entire range of the piano and beyond in combinations that resemble one another, but never exactly repeat. The musical analysis demonstrated that infinite permutations of the elements of pitch, dynamics, timbre and tempo, created an overall sense of unity because the musical elements were bound by the process of change, rather than a static definition created by some degree of repetition. This life of the musical work outside the score is evident again in the case of *Maknongan* , which, according to Joelle Leandre, is supposed to have a scream or noise of some kind in the triple forte sections no matter what the published score says.

No no no, he wants triple forte and noise. Amazing. I know the version with tuba, I know the version with faggot. And the faggot he had a mute and this moment when he ahh AHHHH!!!! aahh AHHHH!! and stuff like that, and I listen with the version with tuba and he put some plastic cuvette and you have BRRRR!!! And he wanted that! He wanted that, and if the people don't do that he doesn't play well. It's not only octaves and triples. But maybe the score forget to be precise, Salabert, that's possible.

Although a trained classical musician, in Scelsi's music Leandre places her personal interaction with the composer ahead of the markings on a score. "You have to find a scream from another universe," Leandre quotes Scelsi as saying about the climax section of *Maknongan,* and she relates in her interview that Scelsi was satisfied with her scream. Again a critical element of the work was personal

expression through the creative use of sound color.

In her performance, Leandre took great liberties that followed the spirit of the score but made impossible any precise alignment of tempo, length of notes or rhythmic groupings. In comparing the spectrum of her mezzo forte sound to the strong presence of a wide range of clusters of frequencies in her howl, the analysis demonstrated that the pitchless noise appeared as if another instrument had suddenly entered the piece.

Speaking of *Maknongan*, Leandre said, "*Maknongan* is just one string, the beginning to the end, you take like in a meditative term, a respiration, a breath." She called the work a "physical piece" and stated that it's not important to play the work precisely in time. "We cannot play this music as pitch after pitch and bars, blah, blah, blah, it's impossible," she asserted. The goal in his music was sincerity of expression, she said. "He asks you to be real," Leandre asserted, adding, "Even if you made a fault, it's not important." She attributed Scelsi's approach to performance of his works to Eastern philosophies, mentioning Zen and Indian thinking. "You find a part of this way to be you," she stated.

It was familiarity with Leandre's performance of *Maknongan*, not the score of *Maknongan*, which inspired Corrado Canonici to create his unique interpretation. Again the element that made his interpretation distinctive was his extension of sound color Based on the open-ended choice of instrument in the score and the call for distinct timbre changes without specific instructions on how to achieve them, Canonici developed his version of *Maknongan* in which he sings in unison with his contrabass playing. In explaining his reason for his innovative interpretation, he reiterated the views of both Hirayama and Leandre with regard to personal

expression in Scelsi's music. Canonici stated in his interview that he felt he could make his interpretation because "Scelsi's love of Eastern culture means to be opened to real cooperation with the performer."

In his performance, Canonici opted to use the possibilities of doubling the bass with his voice sparingly. His voice and bass are distinct, but throughout the piece he strives to keep them in close balance. Canonici's use of his voice and his very controlled multiphonics succeeded in making distinct use of the color changes called for in *Maknongan*. Whenever the score goes into the upper octave, he uses the wide open rough Ahh sound to bring out a sharply different timbre. Another distinct timbre is used for Chiaro with his multiphonics bowing. Canonici's interpretation represents a personal challenge to use his voice without being previously being a performing singer, using a bass technique that was used in jazz but never in classical performance context. In so doing Canonici is using the piece to open new possibilities for himself and, as Leandre said, use *Maknongan* to "find a way to be you."

An interesting difference between Leandre and Canonici's *Maknongan* performance is in their adherence to the score. Leandre took great liberties and declared her right to take great liberties with the specifics of the score ("We cannot play this music as pitch after pitch and bars, blah, blah, blah, it's impossible"). This irreverence for the score was also found in the views of Hirayama, who declared the score to be incapable of expressing the sound that Scelsi felt. Canonici, who was affected by hearing Leandre's performance but didn't have the benefit of direct experience with Scelsi, made an innovative choice in instrumentation but kept strictly within the bounds defined by the Salabert score. His playing followed the

score closely in dynamics, tempo and pitch, and he didn't scream or make noise at the triple forte sections.

A definite pattern emerged in terms of adherence to the score, with performers who worked directly with Scelsi believing in a greater degree of performer freedom, while performers who learned of Scelsi's music through the scores taking a more traditional approach in interpretation. Pianist Marianne Schroader, who was coached by Scelsi, spoke in her interview with Luciano Martines of the need to forget the score and improvise in Scelsi's style in order to learn how to play his music. Cellist Frances-Marie Uitti describes being coached by Scelsi to "go further and further" until she found herself "stretching the rhythms until they almost became something different than what was written just to get a color."

In contrast to these views is the approach of saxophonist Claude Delangle, who clearly places the interpretative task within the confines of the score, as is more consistent with the Western traditional role of the performer. Both Delangle's playing and stated views show an awareness of a broader dimension to Scelsi's music than what is shown in the score while still depending on the score as the sole factor in interpretative decisions. Delangle speaks of a tension between an "impossible absolute objectivity" and the call on the performer to "push the limits of their expressive possibilities" which injects an "extraordinary life" into Scelsi's music. He placed this view within the context of his belief in the Western tradition that the performer is duty bound to fidelity to the score, with the creativity of the performer adding to search for the intent of the composer.

Claude Delangle's recording of *Maknongan* is performed on a baritone

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saxophone. From the beginning, his playing follows the score closely. Delangle made use of the saxophone's large dynamic range and timbral flexibility to render a vital yet concise execution of the *Maknongan* score but kept his aesthetic choices within more standard limits, in comparison to Leandre's more extreme performance. In Delangle's performance of Piece One of *Tre Pezzi*, only the implicit sound color aspects of dynamic changes are evident. Other musical dimensions above and beyond the score are only hinted at by the use of limited pitch, enthropic rhythms, jagged dynamics and unusual articulation.

The saxophone has a great flexibility in altering timbre, and the soprano is the most extreme example of this flexibility. In Delangle's recording of *Tre Pezzi*, he kept within the classical saxophone tradition and used his mastery of the soprano to keep the extreme timbral differences shown suppressed. His resulting interpretation places a stress on the lyric and mysterious qualities of the piece and away from rougher, more violent color changes that are implicit in the sharp dynamic changes.

Unlike Delangle who offered very exact interpretations of *Tre Pezzi* and *Maknongan*, Johnny Reinhard added his own elements of color changes and nuances to his rendition of *Maknongan*. Reinhard performs *Maknongan* on an amplified bassoon, creating a trade-off in which the bassoon's timbre is altered overall to some degree, while both dynamic range and variations in sound color are accentuated. Reinhard dramatically varies his use of vibrato to add to the changes in the upper register. As a general pattern, he uses no vibrato in the lower register, while in the upper register he ends each note with a wide, distinct vibrato. More subtle versions of tonal color changes are evident throughout the piece, as he uses

the amplification to bring out these differences.

Despite the distinct stylistic contributions in his performance, Reinhard also keeps his performance strictly within the confines of the score of *Maknongan*. Only a vestige of a belief that the work contains musical dimensions beyond the score is seen by Reinhard's statement that Scelsi creates the impression of improvisation by bringing surprising elements into his scores.

While clearly describing a degree of performer freedom, the direct collaborators with Scelsi—Hirayama, Uitti, Leandre and Schroader—all place very definite limits on the extent of that freedom. We repeatedly heard references to Scelsi's instructions to Leandre to "do what you want" with his music, or Hirayama being told, "If you feel it, it's ok" to change what she liked. Scelsi created his works through improvising. Marianne Schroader said it took improvising in Scelsi's style for her to understand how to play his scores. Joelle Leandre is an improviser and passionately defends improvisation as an equal to composition. Frances-Marie Uitti is an improviser who creates her own distinctive style of music with a double-bow technique on her cello. From all this, can we infer that performers are encouraged to improvise in Scelsi's music?

From both their statements in interviews and the analysis of their performances, the answer from the close collaborators is no. Hirayama saw all her creative contributions only as a way to realize Scelsi's concept in the *Canti* with her voice. When asked if other performers preparing to sing the *Canti* should follow her example and change whatever they felt to adapt the work to their needs, Hirayama answered, "The way I did was only convenience for me, and I don't care if other people do it a different way, it's not my problem." Leandre found the

"scream from another universe" in *Maknongan* because Scelsi told her to find it. She has an orally transmitted concept of what *Maknongan* was to be and disregards the score if it doesn't follow that concept.

It was Frances-Marie Uitti who was the most specific about the meaning of the score in Scelsi's music. When asked if a more open-ended score that allowed for some improvisation would have better suited Scelsi's compositions, Uitti responded that this would be fine for some other composers, but not for Scelsi, who had definite concept about what the works were. In Scelsi's belief, he was a messenger from another mystical force, and he was only relaying the compositions rather than creating them. The works contained elements of sound color that are poorly represented in Western notation, and aspects of emotions and spirituality which are not represented by musical notation, and these added dimensions were what were transmitted through personal interaction with the performers.

Improvisation training appears to be an important factor, in being able to create the "meditative feeling" described by Uitti as what Scelsi strove for in performance, but this was different from actually improvising. Uitti explained,

> So in a way, when you're recreating it, you gave to give yourself the liberty to almost forget the score. It has to feel that free, you have to give the public the impression that it's almost improvised music, that it's happening, that it's being created at that moment.

Based on the qualitative analysis of both the interviews of the six performers and the comparisons with the findings of musical analysis of six recorded performances, an overall paradigm concerning the relationship between performer and composer in Scelsi solo works can be synthesized which can

strongly tie back to the experiences of the primary sources and are still reflected in the experiences of the secondary sources. This overall paradigm can be described as follows:

In his role as composer, Giacinto Scelsi:

1.) Viewed his role as distinct from the traditional role of a composer in Western music

2.) Was influenced by Eastern aesthetics in an eclectic way

3.) Derived his works from a life-long improvisational practice

4.) Viewed his works as definite identities that contained specific elements of sound color, effect, and emotional or meditative states

5.) Used pitch and rhythm as compositional elements which were integrated with and inseparable from sound color, dynamics and articulation

6.) Worked with performers to realize the specific implementation of his works in regards to instrumentation and use of sound color

7.) Encouraged performers to make innovative use of sound color changes and take any liberties necessary to achieve a state of sincere emotion in performance

In their role as performers, the subjects studied:

1.) Viewed Scelsi's music as distinct from traditional Western compositions

2.) Were creative musicians and performers

3.) Were drawn to Scelsi's works because they provided a means of greater creative input and personal expression in performance

4.) Were experienced improvisers and identified with the works because of

their improvisational origin

5.) Believed in working in a more collaborative environment where they as performers were able to have input and not be bound solely to the demands of a written score

6.) Recognized that a certain degree of interpretative freedom is valid in regards to the score, but this does not imply an invitation to improvise.

CHAPTER VIII

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The study of the performers and performances of Giacinto Scelsi's solo music raised many broader issues that were unfortunately beyond the scope of this specific study. Chief amongst these was the original intent of the research: to hermeneutically trace the evolution of Scelsi's work from his original taped improvisation through the transcription process, collaboration process with performers, and on to the actual performance. The inaccessibility of the Scelsi archives forced the present study to be narrowed in scope to focus on the performer's views and performances, with any understanding of Scelsi's creative process coming via the views of the performers and compared with their performance, rather than on Scelsi's compositional process directly through original sources.

Since the intent of the present study was to direct attention to the issues of performance, the availability of the Scelsi archives was not of critical importance. Nevertheless, in addressing issues of composition, the importance of the archives becomes vital. Many aspects of Scelsi's compositional method are unique and demand further study. His use of a tape recorder to capture his trance-induced improvisations, his later selection of these tapes, his use of transcribers, and his work with performers all are unusual and controversial practices . This compositional process opens many subsidiary topics that require further research, beginning with a biography of Scelsi and examination of the entire Scelsi-Tosatti polemic which continues to cloud a broader understanding of Scelsi's work in the

U.S. and Europe. Aside from the polemical articles, little has been written about Scelsi in any language, and a full biography has not yet been written.

The Scelsi-Tosatti polemic (which Scelsi didn't personally participate in) raises many broad aesthetic and philosophic issues. Scelsi's practices are non-typical for a composer in Western culture and violate some fundamental beliefs revolving around ownership of intellectual property, the predominance of written culture over oral culture, and bias against collaborative creativity. While many of these concerns have been discussed with regard to literature and culture generally, they have not been addressed adequately with regard to music. Musical research has been slow to tackle the sweeping conceptual changes that have deeply affected the study of written text such as reader response theories, deconstruction, cultural hegemony, and social issues of race, class and gender. A study of Scelsi as a non-typical model of a composer provides the kind of opportunity that Qualitative Research opens: to use the non-typical response to gain a new perspective of what really constitutes a "typical" response.

The continuing collaborative effort to constitute Scelsi's music also merits further study. Together with the archiving effort, the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi is discussing projects for publishing additional works from the tapes, and possibly releasing some of the tapes as recordings. Such posthumous publishing is almost unprecedented, but in keeping with the non-typical aspect of Scelsi's work. The issuing of Scelsi's original improvisations as recordings would also be highly controversial, especially among Scelsi aficionados since the composer has never expressed a desire to use his own playing as final creations.

Scelsi's ensemble works merit further research, particularly with regard to the theme of collaboration. The orchestral scores were cited by Frances-Marie Uitti in her interview in this study as an especially creative and innovative orchestration by Vieri Tosatti. Together with the efforts of conductor Jurgen Wittenbach, the recording of these works constitutes ground-breaking efforts in orchestral repertoire. Seen in the context of the later "Scelsi, C'est Moi" article and the attack by Tosatti, the creation of the orchestral works require further investigation. These large-scale ensemble works were also the center of much of the attention Scelsi's work received in Germany in the late 1980s.

The entire issue of musical analysis of works such as Scelsi's in which pitch is not the central focus especially needs further treatment. The accessibility of digital sound tools as analysis aids raises tremendous new possibilities that earlier methods such as that of Cogan and Escot could only hint at. Cogan and Escot themselves were well aware that the attempts to analyze sound color had been very limited despite its importance in understanding music. In their book, *Sonic Design*, authors Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot offered a very open-ended analytical way of approaching the elements of tone color in a musical work: "Tone color is perhaps the most paradoxical of music's parameters. The paradox lies in the contrast between its direct communicative power and the historic inability to grasp it critically or analytically." (Cogan-Escot 327). The *Sonic Design* approach provides a way to uncover the use of elements of pitch, rhythm, range (sonic space), and sound color in music without mandating too many predefined assumptions.

In contrast to the open-ended approach of Cogan and Escot, Wayne Slawson in his book *Sound Color* tries to precisely define a Sound Color Theory with the intent of creating a means of defining compositional structures of Sound Color. In order to categorize the bundle of characteristics that make up sound color, Slawson includes extensive discussion of the acoustical properties of sound, theories that derived from speech synthesis, and the limited findings of psychoacoustic studies. A similar attempt to precisely define sound color and provide a training mechanism to teach students to identify and categorize different timbres was Pierre Schaeffer's *Traité des Objets Musicaux.*.

The problem with both of these methods is that they assume a far greater understanding on the part of musicians (let alone a general audience) about the component elements of sound. Before any such method could be used effectively to explain musical processes, education about sound color is needed. Again the accessibility of today's multi-media provides an opportunity to explain and experience sound phenomenon in ways that text alone could never do. An explosion of eclectic offerings of CD-Roms on musical subjects has excited the imagination. More focused attempts hopefully will address needs such as the explanation of the components of sound color, along with a hands-on way for students to aurally experience the altering of a sound's characteristics.

Beginning with the musique concrete of the 1950s and 1960s, the growth of sampling technology today has made the wide use of timbre readily available to a wide variety of musical creators including very young children. Music theory has greatly lagged behind in explaining these elements of music, focusing instead on elements that relate only to issues of written notation. Knowledge of musical

notation itself has been greatly affected by the new technology, which can allow creators to play freely on a midi keyboard and then create standard notation for them, after-the-fact. The gap between theory and practice has never been so great. An expanded concept of music theory is needed that brings in broader aspects of musical creation made possible by technological advances.

A broader understanding and a common terminology for sound color phenomenom will ease the kind of analysis that this study undertook with the help of *SoundEdit16*. There were no excepted guidelines for normalizing different sound files so that they could be accurately contrasted with one another. Along with the ability to analyze recordings comes the ability to alter, and some norms must be developed to clarify when analysis ends and creativity begins. Perhaps software is needed that is specifically designed only for the purpose of music analysis.

Touched upon by this study but never directly addressed was the broad area of musical improvisation, the means by which Scelsi created his compositions. Although improvisational skills played a role in giving the performers an understanding of the feeling needed for performing Scelsi's works, improvisation itself was not used by the performers in these works. The broad issues related to musical creation and the similarities and differences between improvisation and composition need far more study than is shown by the existing literature. The importance of improvisation in the history Western music is a broad area that needs further elucidation.. The close connection between improvisation and composition, which was a topic of special interest to Joelle Leandre, merits direct attention and further study. The implications of a trance or meditative state on

creativity, which Frances-Marie Uitti described in her interview on Scelsi's creative process, also demands further study.

Giacinto Scelsi and his close friend John Cage strove to push listeners to re-evaluate the way they perceive all sound, to listen with "new ears." It was in this spirit that this study was undertaken. Aided by new technologies and conceptual approaches, we can gain "new ears" to deepen our understanding of music in our changing culture.

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Translation of Interview with Marianne Schroader

From the Journal of Isabella Scelsi Foundation, 1993. Marianne Schroader, Pianist, Interviewed by Luciano Martinis.

Scelsi always had a strange rapport with pianists; the piano being the instrument with which he composed, or better, improvised his works, he was particularly demanding, not only with respect to the fidelity of the interpretation, but also in the manner of the execution.

L.M: When you went to Scelsi for the first time were you aware how exact you had to be for the proper execution?

M.S: I didn't have any idea; for around seven years I had been familiar with his music, I attended a concert in Basil that made a big impression on me. On that occasion I told myself "I would also like to be able to play this music, I don't know how it will come out, but I would like to very much." Two years later I played with the violinist Paul Zukofsky, who knew Scelsi and had already played Anahit, and told me "You have to play Scelsi's music, you have to play it;" I couldn't say that I was yet ready to dare. Four years later I was at Darmstadt, where I met Feldman and Fernando Grillo.

I don't know what came over me, but all of a sudden I began to ask everyone "Do you have scores of Scelsi? Where can I find his music? I must play

it right away." Finally the singer, Brenda Mitchell told me that she was in touch with him, and then she told me that she had some scores; quickly they sent me the Suite Ka and the Seconda sonata: I decided to learn Suite Ka.. Then Fernando Grillo called me and told me that he had spoken with Scelsi, who wanted to meet me. He phoned me unwelcomly in the morning (which I did not yet know was his habit), and told me: "Ah, you are a pianist, good, how old are you?" I answered him and he said, "Good, what do you play, classical music?" I told him that I play contemporary music, which made him happy, and he asked, "when are you coming?" I told him that first I had to study the piece, and we agreed to meet each other three weeks later.

After various phone calls and postponements, finally, in August of 1985, I arrived in Rome with the Suite #10, Ka. Our first meeting was very natural, Scelsi took me by the hand and showed me the terrace, after five we went back into the house, where I started to play. From the beginning he was not fully satisfied and made me repeat it several times, then all of a sudden, while playing in that room full of things, with that piano which was slightly out of tune that was giving me trouble, I began to understand. It continued like this for the next few days, and the piano kept getting better.

L.M: Scelsi had the habit of giving pianists a test which consisted of playing the same note in as many different sonorities as possible to determine whether or not they possessed enough sensitivity to interpret his music. How did he behave with you?

M.S: After a few days he told me, "Usually I give a test to pianists, I would like to do it with you, but I don't think its necessary. It didn't work. We began to laugh.

L.M: After you came often to Rome; one time you returned from Honolulu and for Scelsi it was amusing to think that you played his music amidst the palm trees, just like the one that grows in front of his window. In that house it was normal to mix times, spaces, various situations. But one thing that still impresses me is that he almost never listened to music.

M.S.: I must say, it was very difficult to play at his place. We used to sit on the terrace, have tea, take walks. It was important to find the right moment to play, the right atmosphere. We weren't under pressure to play. "Now we are in the Hymn, we see a temple, we hear the bells, the monks are singing," he used to tell me affectionately, "and now begin again once more." I used to play with his words in my ears and the images of Tibet, at the end everything came out better. To do this, we used to take all the time we needed.

L.M.: Do you find differences in execution between Scelsi's music and other contemporary composers?

M.S.: Eventhough Scelsi's scores are perfect, nothing's missing. there's a big difference. Scelsi's music is revealed only when it is played. I was never able to study one of his scores, while with the scores of other composers they can be studied without even playing them, but with Scelsi this would never work. At the beginning I was not yet able, so I played very simply. Especially with the Sonatas, their styles were not as definite as the Suites, I was having a lot of difficulty with interpretation.

Then, one day, I sat my self down at the piano and for five minutes, (more or less the duration of the first movement of one sonata) I improvised, without paying attention to the score, a "Scelsiano" movement. This helped me to

understand that music was improvised, that it all came from the piano, that it was not theoretical; my task was now to devote myself to this process, to rediscover the relationship between theory and music, between myself and the piano. This had never happened to me before.

L.M.: This changed the way you thought about music?

M.S.: Exactly, from that moment on I improvised more and more. I do it on a daily basis now and it is almost a part of my personal technique.

L.M.: Is this useful for playing other composers.

M.S.: Of course. I would like to also add something to your last question, about the Suite. They are certainly have a more fixed style and present less problems. I have to reach an animated state like osmosis with the composer. This gives you a feeling of freedom. The music can liberate you in an incredible way.

L.M.: Do you use any methods to reach this particular state?

M.S.: Now I do a lot of meditation, which helps a lot. Before, I used to just set myself at the piano and I would try to reach a state of complete calm.

L.M.: Scelsi often asserted that he was only a messenger, a vehicle through which the music of this kind materialized. This idea, similar to his spiritual beliefs, has been given to many different interpretation by different tendencies, what do you think?

M.S.: In principle I couldn't understand what he meant, but now I'm impressed with his modesty. This is very different from the usual way of saying, I am the composer, I decide things, I construct the music.

Before we met, he asked me if I did Yoga. This practice presupposes a common central point that links the individual to the entire cosmos. By Scelsi's

instigation, I was brought closer to this. His practice wasn't a "boutade," but it was a profound affirmation.

L.M.: The rapport that Scelsi had with all different kinds of people was always surprising. His way of being was so profoundly different for other people's way of seeing.

M.S.: You are right. He had the great ability to understand himself and others, especially with respect to looking within himself. This gave him extraordinary intuition regarding who dealt with.

L.M: What can you tell me about his way of "giving answer" indirectly after many years, sometimes mysterious, sometimes hermetic, to leave keys of understanding suspended, that invariably became solved when you least expected it?

M.S.: I had the same experience, even now I'm beginning to understand things that at one moment were indecipherable, and I find answers to problems that I previously faced. He was really a person with immense potential, a great Yogi.

L.M.: "Un adieu."

M.S.: He gave me this piece about a year before he passed away, telling me, "I'm not able to dedicate a piece called "un adieu," because it could seem like we wouldn't see one another again." I hesitated to play it in public, but later in Honolulu I put it into the program. It was right before the death of my mother. Scelsi got emotional everytime I played it for him, one day he told me, "When I die you will have to play this piece at the organ." When this happened I was at Darmstadt and a concert was planned at the Duomo di Speyer where there was a huge, manual organ. Maybe it was a coincidence, maybe not.

Il Sogno 101

Il Parte. Il Ritorno

(Excerpt translated by William Colangelo)

I chiacchieroni se ne sono andati. Non rispondono più.

ORA SEI SOLO CON TE STESSO E CON DIO

The babblers are gone. They don't respond anymore.

Now you are alone with yourself and with GOD

Ora? Non c'è più Ora. Se non c'è più Ora. E' sempre Ora. Quindi il tempo è senza tempo. Com'è che il corpo può essere senza tempo?

Now? There isn't anymore now. Now itself isn't. There is always Now. Thus, the time is timeless. How is it that the body still exists without time?

Ma è veramente ora il mio corpo oppure penso che ho il corpo?
Allora forse lo credo che penso. Ma se credo che penso. Qualcosa c'è che non è il corpo che pensa.

But, it is truly now and my body still thinks I have a body. Then I have to believe that I think, because what thinks that doesn't have a body.

E Ciò che pensa non è nel tempo allora forse non penso e non c'è il corpo.

And the thing that thinks it isn't in time has to not think and not be a body.

Ma Qualcosa c'è e non è nel tempo. Giá non sono nel tempo. Ora lo so.

But which thing is and is not in time. Already I am not in time. Now I know.

Oppure non conosco questo tempo che non è il mio del corpo nè della mente. Giá mi muovo senza peso. Però i movimenti sono nel tempo. Ma neanche perché i movimenti li vedo fuori non dentro di me.

I never knew a time when I was bodyless and thoughtless. Already I move myself without weight. But the movements are in time. But at the same time they aren't because I see the movements from outside instead of inside of me.

Non li controllo come prima dipendono da attrazione di fuori. Sono tirati da me non provengono da me. Ora questa mano si muove lentissima e quest'altra veloce. No, è una sola mano sembravano due. Forse è una riflessa

I don't control them as at first they depend on an attraction from outside of me. They are pulled from me but they are not caused by me. Now this hand moves itself slowly, and this other one moves quickly. No, it's one solitary hand that appears as two. It has to be a reflection.

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Ora c'è la luce dietro che avanza. Era quella che vidi davanti. No, è la stessa. Sono voltato vediamo se mi posso girare. Non così presto! Già non ho peso. Ora la luce è davanti. No, è anche davanti. Già non c'è avanti o dietro. E io faccio mi muovo avanti o indietro? E' vero non c'è il tempo. Allora neanche lo spazio. Però c'è perchè vedo la luce fuori di me però in più punti. Ora le vedo anche ai lati e si avvicinano tutte. O sono io che me avvicino? Ma da quale parte? Da tutte le parti contemporaneamente.

Now the light before me advances forward. It's the light I've seen before. No, it's the same one. I've turned so that we see I have the power to spin around. Not so fast! Already I'm weightless. Now the light is behind. No, it's also in front and behind of me. Already it's not in front or behind of me. And am I moving myself forward or back? It's true there isn't time. Then there also isn't any space. But it is because I see the light outside of me but in great detail. No, I see it also to the sides and it draws itself around everything. Or is it me that surrounds everything? But from what side? From all sides simultaneously.

Questa casa piena di quadri

ma sono quadri? Le immagini si muovono. Qui c'è il mare e delle navi hanno delle vele quadrate come avevano gli Egizi o i Fenici. Mi ricordo. Ma come mi posso ricordare non ho il cervello. Sono semplici navi con molti remi e sopra ci sono guerrieri con scudi e archi

ma anche altre navi simili, ma non uguali con altre vele e si muovono tutte sembra una battaglia.

Si, è una battaglia. C'è una nave con due navi vicino che si azzuffano. si scontrano. Alcuni guerrieri cadono in acqua affogano altri tirano frecce. Una nave semebra capovolegersi quella in mezzo alle altre due.

I guerrieri cadono quasi tutti, uno è ferito. Ha uan freccia nella schiena cade in acqua si toglie la freccia perde sangue.

Ma quello ero io!

Lo so.

Come posso saperlo da questo quadro che si muove?

This house is full of paintings, but are they paintings? The images are moving. Here we' re on the sea in the midst of ships with square sails like the Egyptians or Phoenicians had. I remember. But how am I able to remember if I don't have a brain. They're simple ships with many oars and on deck are fighters with shields and weapons. But there's also other ships, that are similar but not the same, with different kind of sails, and they're moving. It all appears to be a battle.

Yes, it is a battle. Here's one ship that collides intotwo others. Several fighters fall, drowning in the water, other shoot arrows at them. One ship seems to have capsized in the middle of the other two.

The fighters almost all seem to fall, one is wounded. He has an arrow in his back, he falls into the water. He pulls out the arrow, losing blood.

But that was me! I know. How can I know this from this painting that moves?

Eppure lo so. Ora sento un dolore qui all schiena. Mi ero voltato verso l'altra nave e una freccia mi ha colpito. Come posso sentire il dolore però no ho il corpo. Eppure

lo sento. E' caduto in acqua má non affoga ha perso le forze. Il quadro è diventato grande non voglio guadare ma mi sta davanti è terribile! Va soto ancora torna la nave non c'è più le onde sono grosse non può resistere è impossibile resistere. C'è un remo ora io mi aggrappo non sento la ferita forse l'acqua fredda ma ho una gamba che non si muove forse paralizzata. Ma perchè soffro? Io sono qui non li e sono un triangolo. Non ho corpo. Ma ero lui. Lo so , e sto affogando sento il sapore dell'acqua di mare in bocca.

Ma com'è Non ho il corpo ma la sento. Vedo una spiaggia forse potrá arrivare ma è sfinito va sotto. É terribile! Sento un'angoscia! Come è possibile sono un triangolo non posso avere angoscia. Ma quello ero io e sto morendo lo sento.

Still I know. Now I feel the pain in my back. I turned myself away from the other ship and an archer wounds me. How am I able to feel the pain, because I don't have a body. Still I know. I've fallen in the water but haven't drown, he's losing strength. The picture is getting bigger, I don't want to see it but I have to stay in front of it, it's terrible! He goes down, still turning, the ship isn't there anymore, the waves are big, he's not able to resist, it's impossible to resist.

Now there's an oar, I pull it to myself, I don't feel the wound because of the cold of the water, but one of my legs can't move because it's paralyzed. But why suffer? I'm here, not there, and I'm a triangle. I don't have a body. But I was him. I know, and I'm still drowning, feeling the taste of the seawater in my mouth. But how, I don't have a body but I feel it. I see a beach but don't have the strength to get there but it's finished. He goes under. It's terrible. I feel anguish. How is it possible, I'm a triangle not able to have anguish. But that was me, and I'm dying and I feel it.

PLEASE NOTE

The CD is not included in this material.
It is, however, available for consultation at
this author's graduate school library.

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