



Aqua Ignis

for clarinet, cello and piano opus 107

ROBERT CASTEELS

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Aqua Ignis

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Duration:

5'30"

Performance instructions:

- use three old mechanical metronomes with pendulum with their slight irregularities, rather than digital metronomes, as swinging pendula visually reinforce the idea of time;
- notation of clusters: see example of a white-key cluster in the right hand of bar 19, example of a black-key cluster in the left hand of bar 19, example of a chromatic cluster in the third chord of the right hand in bar 27;
- the arrow next to a cluster symbol indicates that this symbol is valid for the whole bar (example bar 52: whole bar of white-key clusters in the right hand and black-key clusters in the left hand);
- diamond-shaped notes in the piano part indicate keys that are depressed silently (first example in bar 33);
- all players always play in an identical tempo, double bar lines indicating a change of tempo;
- the players do not need to be exactly synchronized with the metronomes, as the ominous percussive ticking of the metronomes has a symbolic meaning (see below).

Programme notes:

Since 2003, I have written a number of music compositions, first in response to the beauty of nature, then in response to ecological disasters caused by humans. In 2009 for instance, I wrote a composition that incorporated genuine bird calls of species threatened with extinction. In 2015, I wrote a follow-up composition, this time incorporating species that have become extinct in particular parts of the world.

Aqua Ignis refers to the Latin words meaning water and fire. This composition for clarinet, cello, piano and three metronomes is inspired by the devastating forest fires caused by human overexploitation of our planet's natural resources.

The musical material of *Aqua Ignis* consists of one mode (mi, fa#, sol, la, la#, do, do# and re#), one chord (11 intervals decreasing from low to high successively by one semi tone), one focal pitch (si b), one retrogradable rhythmic cell and clusters.

Aqua Ignis consists in a triple metaphor:

- dense clusters for fire,
- emerging harmonics for water and
- the ominous ticking of the metronomes for the urgency of time running out.

The stepwise increase of the speed of the metronomes and the performance tempo represents the cumulative and accelerating negative effects of climat change.

Aqua Ignis

(piano part/ score in C)

1

All players play in **tempo @ 55**

Clarinet in B \flat

Violoncello

Piano

The pianist sets a metronome in motion in tempo @ 55
(the audience should be able to see this metronome)

Metronome 3

pizz. (pluck the string)

pizz. (pluck the string)

One sostenuto pedal until bar 18

5

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Metr. 3 (@55)

ppp arco pp

ppp pp pp

10

Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Metr. 3 (@55)

pp normal, non vib. p vib. mp

p mp mp mf

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

14

Cl. trem., ponticello f ff fff

Vc. trem., normal

Pno.

Metr. (@55) 2/4 *3/4

ff

bar 17 and 18: accelerando
martellando all down bows

All players play in **tempo @ 75**

19

Cl. A

Vc. ff

Metr. (@75) 2/4 3/4

The cellist sets a metronome in motion in tempo @ 75
(independently from the pianist's metronome)
(the audience should be able to see this metronome)

Pno. One sost. pedal until bar 38

Metr. (@55) 3/4

White-key cluster: d, e, f, g, a, b and c

Black-key cluster: c#, d#, f#, g# and a#

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

24

Cl.

Vc.

Metr. 2

(@75)

Pno.

Metr. 3

(@55)

29

Cl.

Vc.

Metr. 2

(@75)

Pno.

Metr. 3

(@55)

(stop with the piano)

(stop with the piano)

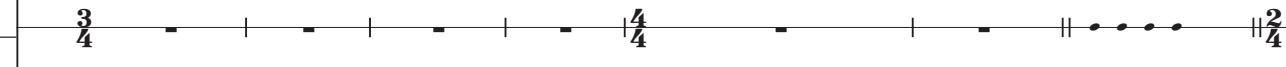
sounding like a fierce glissando:
with a rapid mouvement of the wrist,
using first the side of the hand,
then the side of the small fingers

f *ff* *f* *ff*

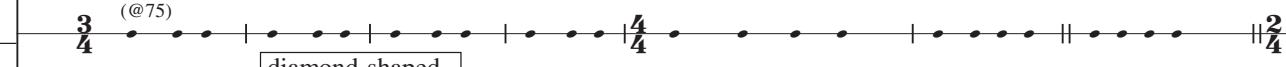
Aqua Ignis (piano part)

32 All players play in **tempo @ 55**

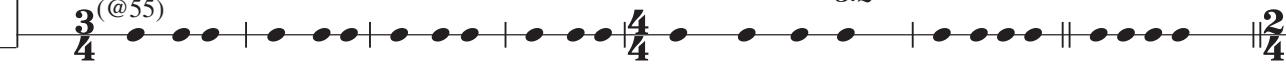
Cl. 

Metr. 1 

Vc. 

Metr. 2 

Pno. 

Metr. 3 

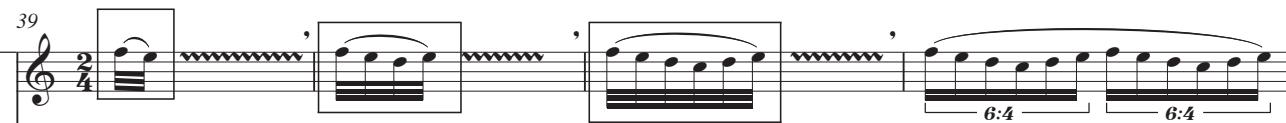
The clarinetist sets a metronome in motion in tempo @ 95 (independently of the cellist's and the pianist's metronomes). The fermata simply gives the clarinettist a reasonable amount of time to quickly change the tempo.

diamond-shaped notes are depressed silently

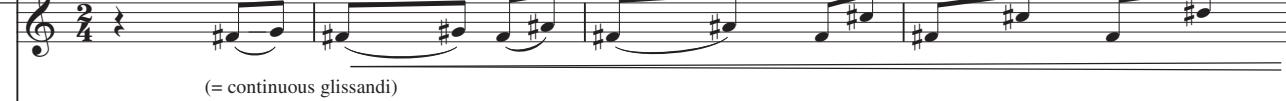
pizz. (pluck the string)

All players play in **tempo @ 75**

B

39 Cl. 

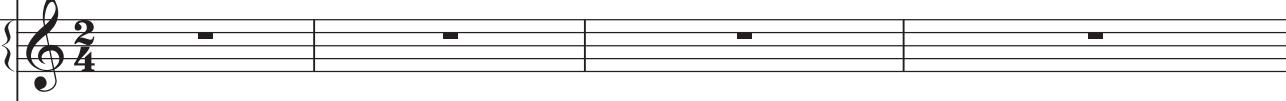
Metr. 1 

Vc. 

(= continuous glissandi)

Metr. 2 

B

Pno. 

Metr. 3 

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

43

Cl.

Metr. 1 (@95) | . . | . . | 10:8 | 10:8 | 3

Vc. gliss.

Metr. 2 (@75) | . . | . . | 3

Pno. | . . | . . | 3 | ff | f | One sostenuto pedal until bar 63 | with whole of left forearm and left hand | 3

Metr. 3 (@55) | . . | . . | 3 | 3

All players play in tempo @ 55

46

Cl. | . . | . . | # | o | o | 3

Metr. 1 (@95) | . . | . . | . . | . . | . . | 3

Vc. | . . | . . | o | o | o | 3

Metr. 2 (@75) | . . | . . | . . | . . | . . | 3

Pno. | . . | . . | . . | 3:2 | 3:2 | 3:2 | 3:2 | 3

Metr. 3 (@55) | . . | . . | . . | 3

ppp

ppp

pizz. (pluck the string)

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

52 (All players play in tempo @ 75)

Metr. 1
Metr. 2
Metr. 3

Pno.

All players play in tempo @ 75

53 (All players play in tempo @ 55)

Metr. 1
Metr. 2
Metr. 3

Vc.
Pno.

(@95)
(@75)
(@55)

ppp

diamond-shaped notes are depressed silently

57

Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

3:2
3:2
3:2
3:2

ppp

Metr. 1
Metr. 2
Metr. 3

(@95)
(@75)
(@55)

59 (All players play in tempo @ 75)

Metr. 1
Metr. 2
Metr. 3

Pno.

(@95)
(@75)
(@55)

fff

3:4
3:4
3:4
3:4

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

60 [All players play in tempo @ 55]

Cl.

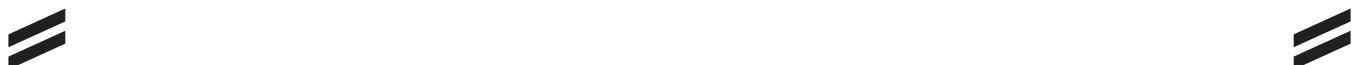
Metr. 1
3/4 (@95) 4/4 ppp (ossia in harmonics)

Vc.

Metr. 2
3/4 (@75) 4/4 ppp legato

Pno.

Metr. 3
3/4 (@55) 4/4 *



64 C [All players play in tempo @ 95]

Cl.

Metr. 1
64 (@95) 5/4 b7 7/4 b9 pp dolce non cresc.

Metr. 2
64 (@75) 5/4 7/4 9/4

Vc.

Cello: legato continuous glissando until bar 72
gliss.

Metr. 2
64 (@75) 5/4 7/4 9/4

Pno.

At C, the pianist changes the metronome tempo to 115 (independently of the other metronomes). The fermata simply gives the pianist a reasonable amount of time to quickly make the change.

pizz. (pluck the string) una corda

Pno.

Metr. 3
68 5/4 b7 7/4 b9 pp p mp pp

One sostenuto pedal until bar 96

Metr. 3
68 5/4 7/4 9/4

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

68

Cl. (pp) (@95) (pp)

Metr. 1 9/4 11/4 13/4

Vc. gliss.

Metr. 2 9/4 (@75) 11/4 13/4

Pno. tre corde (@115)

Metr. 3 9/4 p mp mf f pp 13/4

70

Cl. (pp) (@95) 5:4

Metr. 1 13/4 gliss. 6/4

Vc. 13/4 6/4

Metr. 2 13/4 6/4

Pno. 13/4 p mp mf f 6/4

Metr. 3 13/4 (@115) 6/4

accel.

71

Cl. 6/4 3/4 4/4

Metr. 1 6/4 (@95) gliss. 3/4 4/4

Vc. 6/4 3/4 4/4

Metr. 2 6/4 (@75) accel. 3/4 4/4

Pno. 6/4 b p ff 3/4 fff 4/4

Metr. 3 6/4 (@115) 4/4

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

D All players play in **tempo @ 115**

73

Cl. *sffz*

Metr. 1 (95) *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

Vc. *sffz* The cellist changes the tempo to 135 (the fermata on the 1st beat simply means that the cellist can take a reasonable amount of time to quickly make the change, whilst the rest of the music proceeds without interruption)

Metr. 2 *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

Pno. *fff*

Metr. 3 (115) *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

All players play in **tempo @ 115**

78

Cl. *sffz* (@95)

Metr. 1 bartok pizz.

Vc. *sffz* (@135)

Metr. 2 *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

Pno. *ff*

Metr. 3 (115) *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

All players play in **tempo @ 95**

Cl. 79 $\text{r } \underline{\text{3:2}} \text{ r } \underline{\text{3:2}} \text{ r } \underline{\text{3:2}}$
 Metr. 1 (@95) ppp

Vc. arco
 Metr. 2 (@135)
 Pno.
 Metr. 3 (@115)

All players play in **tempo @ 115**

sfz
 bartok pizz.
 sfz
 →
 →



All players play in **tempo @ 95**

Cl. 85 $\text{r } \underline{\text{3:2}} \text{ r } \underline{\text{3:2}} \text{ r } \underline{\text{3:2}}$
 Metr. 1 (@95) ppp

Vc. arco
 Metr. 2 (@135)
 Pno.
 Metr. 3 (@115)

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

89

Metr. 1 3 (@95) [All players play **intempo** @ 115]
Metr. 2 3 (@135)
Metr. 3 (= chromatic clusters by both hands)

Pno.

Metr. 1 3 (@115)

Metr. 2

Metr. 3

90

Metr. 1 4 (@95)
Metr. 2 4 (@135)

Pno.

Metr. 3 4 (@115)

fff

91

Cl.

Metr. 1 2 (@95)

Vc.

Metr. 2 2 (@135)

Pno.

Metr. 3 2 (@115)

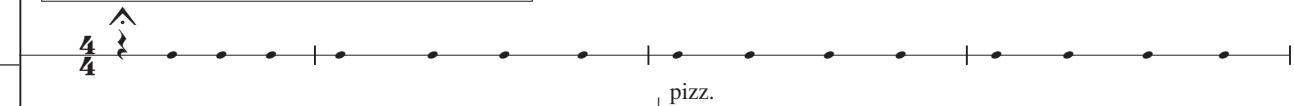
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Aqua Ignis (piano part)

97 **E** All players play intempo @ 115

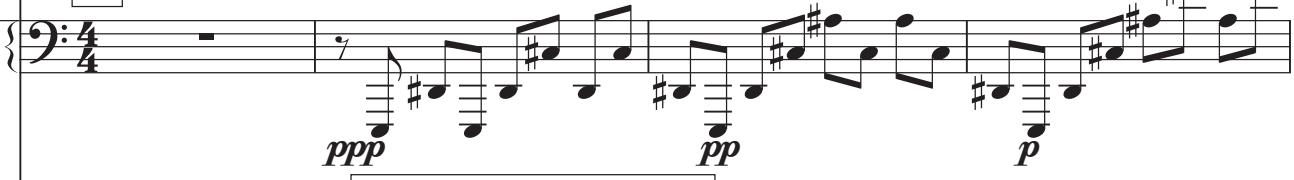
Cl. 

The clarinetist changes the metronome to tempo @ 155
(the fermata on the 1st beat simply means that the clarinetist takes reasonable time to quickly change the tempo, whilst the rest of the music proceeds without interruption)

Metr. 1 

Vc. 

Metr. 2 

Pno. 

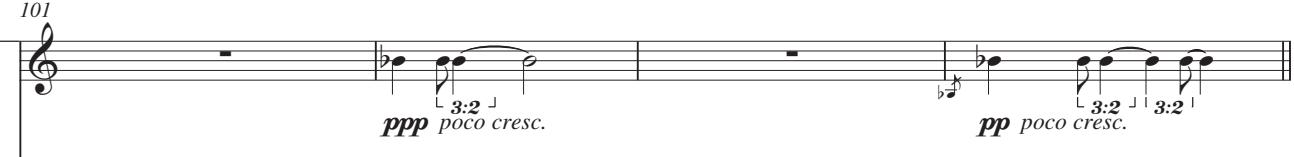
Metr. 3 

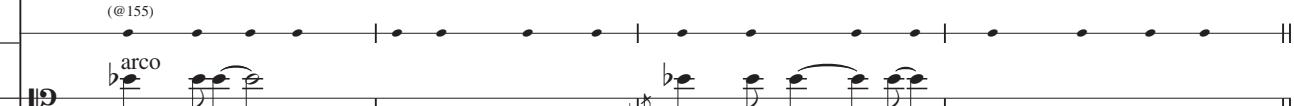
E

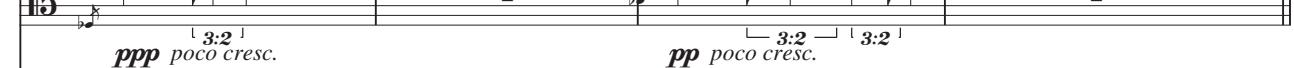
One sostenuto pedal until the end



101

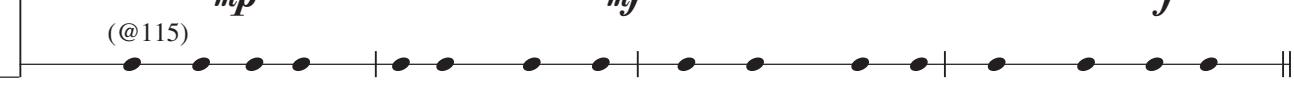
Cl. 

Metr. 1 

Vc. 

Metr. 2 

Pno. 

Metr. 3 

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

F

105 **Più mosso**

All players play intempo @ 135

Cl. (G clef) Metr. 1: *pp* poco cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2

Metr. 2: 3:2 3:2 3:2 (@135) *pp* poco cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2

Metr. 3: (@115) *ff*

G **Più mosso**

108 Cl. (G clef) Metr. 1: *p* cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2

Metr. 2: 3:2 3:2 3:2 (@135) *p* cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2

Metr. 3: (@115) *p*

G All players play in tempo @ 155

H **Più mosso**

111 Cl. (G clef) Metr. 1: *mp* cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2

Metr. 2: 3:2 3:2 3:2 (@135) *mp* cresc. 3:2 3:2 3:2 *mf* molto cresc.

Metr. 3: (@115) *f*

Più mosso

Aqua Ignis (piano part)

114

Prestissimo

Cl. (mf molto cresc.) (@155) 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 | 2 4 4

Metr. 1 2 4 4

Vc. (b) (@135) 2 4 4

Metr. 2 2 4 4

Pno. (fff) (@115) 2 4 4

Metr. 3 2 4 4



116

stage lights go off

Cl. (f) 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 | :| ^ :| - |

Metr. 1 (@155) repeat this bar ad libitum stop metronome at the same time

Vc. (f) 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 | :| ^ :| - |

Metr. 2 (@135) repeat this bar ad libitum stop metronome at the same time

Pno. (fff) 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 | :| ^ :| - |

Metr. 3 (@115) * repeat this bar ad libitum stop metronome at the same time



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