

William Kleinsasser

## **PROTEAN PROFILE**

for two solo pianos, computer,  
and interactive sampling instrument

(2005)

Duration: c. 18 minutes

*Composed for **duo runedako** (Daniel Koppelman and Ruth Neville)*

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

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About this piece the composer writes: *Protean Profile* for two solo pianos, computer and interactive sampling instrument, was composed in 2005 for Ruth Neville, and Daniel Koppelman. The composition is derived from a second path through the design of *Innocent Proteins* composed in 2001-03.

### The Larger Triptych

The composition, and its relative work, *Innocent Proteins*, are part of a larger set of three pieces and can either be performed independently or together with the other pieces. The larger set of three pieces presents an expanded design based on the musical expression of beginning, continuation, and ending. *Protean Profile* presents one of two paths through the second of the three compositions and thus expressing musical continuation as an underlying metaphor. This metaphor is also expressed in the musical rethinking and redevelopment of several previous works composed for Daniel Koppelman and Ruth Neville over the past fifteen years (*Spiral* (1986), *Free Shadows* (1994), and *Available Instruments* (1998)).

### The Musical Design

*Protean Profile* is designed as a presentation of repeating phrases following classic rhetorical models that control repetition and presentation of new ideas. These models, which harken back to my earliest composition studies with Monte Tubb at the University of Oregon, include *epizeuxsis* (use of immediate repetition: aaa bcd...), a hybrid of *symploche* (repetition of beginnings and endings: abc adc aec...), and *enjambment* (a continuation of an idea through or across an expected point of segmentation: abc def gehi...). These smaller parts, designed to control balanced conservation and invention, combine to create the larger-scale structure of the whole piece that is a kind of modified *gradatio* (repetition of an end in the next beginning forming chain-like progression: abc cde efg ghi...). Within this rhetorical framework (which acts almost as a rhyme scheme), the surface lyricism and texture of the music emerge from intertwining, complex threads intended to present flowing, non-metrical music of complex and organic gestures and patterns.

### The Pianists' Roles

The two piano soloists have differing musical roles in the piece. Pianist 2 performs the work from notation that emphasizes strictly determined events and represents a traditional virtuosic solo presentation. Pianist 1 integrates traditional deterministic performance with two extended free improvisations involving sampling of the performance, manipulation of the samples, and playback of those recordings during the improvisation. The first of the improvisations occurs with no accompanying music while the second freely overlays accompanying music played quietly by the computer as a secondary, independently simultaneous layer of sound. The free improvisations are intended to create space within the piece for another musical perspective, akin to a piece of architecture supporting free experiences within its design. These improvisations are to be open to musical exploration, made within a context of respect for the overall work and its ideas, and allowing for continual integration of yet unforeseen musical intentions and ideas.

# PERFORMANCE NOTES

## Instrumentation / Equipment

2 pianos (concerto soloists)

1 Powerbook or other laptop computer (minimum 1.5 GHz processor) running software developed by the composer in Max/MSP v. 4.5 or later and STEIM's LiSa live sampling interactive software

1 24-bit ADC/DAC i/o converter with microphone preamplification for 2-4 microphones

1 minimum 25 key MIDI keyboard controller with control switch foot pedal

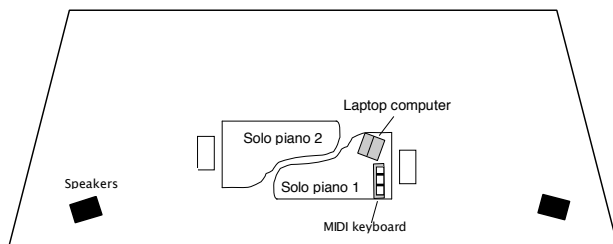
1 MIDI interface for keyboard controller

2-4 microphones (1-2 on each piano) for live recording into Laptop computer

1 small mixer for 2-4 mics and stereo return from computer (computer inputs fed by two pre-fader sends)

Concert sound system with minimum of stereo speakers and amplifiers fed from mixer

## Stage Setup



## Notation Details

Accidentals apply to all notes of that pitch class regardless of octave and are cancelled by bar lines.

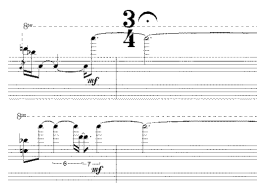
Grace-notes should be played immediately prior to the metrical timing of the note that they ornament.

Following a fermata, the tempo should immediately revert to the last indicated unless a new tempo is indicated.

## Conventional Rhythmic Notation

Rhythm in this composition is notated in two different ways.

Conventional metric/rhythmic notation is used in sections where rhythmic synchronization between parts is called for:



## Proportional Rhythmic Notation

Much of the score is notated using proportional notation<sup>1</sup> (above) in which complex rhythmic events are notated across a graphic measure without specific rhythmic notation symbols. This form of notation is used to give each performer a simpler representation of complex, non-metrical timings within a conducted measure. This notation is intended to give a certain degree of rhythmic freedom to each performer in order to support a simpler representation of complex timings. These events are to be played while maintaining relative but somewhat flexible beat-to-beat synchronization with the others via the conductor's beat (indicated by brackets above the measure). In these proportionally-notated measures, the player is not expected to tightly synchronize rhythmic figures with the other players within beats:



<sup>1</sup> In order to simplify the production of this form of notation, the composer commissioned Tobias Giesen to create a Finale software Plug-in that converted complex rhythmic patterns into simplified, proportional, beamed notation. This plug-in is now part of the TG Tools plug-ins for Finale software available from Tobias Giesen ([www.tgtools.de](http://www.tgtools.de)).