

**WILLIAM KLEINSASSER**

# ***Triptych***

(2001-2008)

***I. EPANÊKÔS : Returned***

for flute (a. fl), oboe,  
clarinet (b. clar),  
horn, and bassoon

***II. Innocent Proteins***

for two solo pianos,  
two vibraphones,  
two marimbas,  
and two electronic pianos

***III. Repose – Release***

for flute (a. fl), clarinet (b. clar),  
vibraphone, marimba,  
piano, violin, and cello

Duration: ca. 60 minutes

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

### The Triptych

This piece contains three movements that can either be performed independently or in conjunction with the other two movements (either alone or as a group of three). The larger set of three pieces presents an expanded musical design based on the musical expression of *beginning*, *continuation*, and *ending*. Each of the three pieces presents music based on one of these three qualities as an underlying metaphor that guides its composition. The musical design of each movement is based on a play of literary configurations reflecting classic rhetorical models that hearken back to the composer's earliest composition studies with Monte Tubb at the University of Oregon. These constructs control the interplay of repetition, variation, and contrast on many levels in each piece and between the three pieces. Within this rhetorical framework, which acts as a kind of connective multi-leveled rhyme scheme, the musical details, surface counterpoint, and texture emerge from intertwining, complex threads presenting a musical sense that is intended to be fluid, elastic, well-made, and open.

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**I. EPANĒKŌS : Returned**, for flute (a. fl), oboe, clarinet (b. clar), horn, and bassoon, was composed for David Lavorgna and the Capital Hill Chamber Players. This piece is composed from fragments of music taken from the composer's previously-written works with the idea of treating those fragments as seeds for new development in ways that run tangential to the musical development of the original pieces. In this way, *EPANĒKŌS : Returned* can be viewed as a further expansion upon the fragmentary ideas presented anew in a compositional dimension beyond their original use, thus creating a higher-level musical development relating the new piece to the original compositions. As a member of the *Triptych*, *EPANĒKŌS : Returned* builds on the idea of *beginning* presenting ideas as the seed of growth and development.

The literary models used in this movement include *anaphora* (repetition of beginnings: ab ac ad), *diacope* (use of varied repetition: aa<sup>1</sup>a<sup>2</sup> bb<sup>1</sup>b<sup>2</sup>), hybrids of these two, *gradatio* (repetition of an end at the next beginning in a chain-like progression: abc cde efg), and a larger scale *accumulatio* (a series of constructions which each say essentially the same thing in different words: a b c 1 2 3 i ii iii).

In the domain of metaphor as well as design, *EPANĒKŌS : Returned* engages the paradoxical ideas of origins out of reuse and an ecological play of new futures for pre-existing ideas.

Repetition, return, development and surprise each play a role in presenting a fluid, musical present tense that reverberates and echoes with memory and promise while serving as the opening of the larger multi-movement *Triptych*.

The composition of *EPANĒKŌS : Returned* was made possible, in part, by a sabbatical leave supported by Towson University during the spring of 2001.

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**II. Innocent Proteins**, for two solo pianos, vibraphones, marimbas, and electronic pianos, was composed between 2001-2003 for *duo runedako*, a piano duo of Ruth Neville, and Daniel Koppelman. *Innocent Proteins* is the second of three pieces that make up the *Triptych* which presents an expanded musical expression of beginning, continuation, and ending. *Innocent Proteins* presents 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)). *Innocent Proteins* is composed as a presentation of repeating phrases following classic rhetorical models that control repetition and presentation of new ideas.

The configurations used in this movement 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).

The two piano soloists have differing musical roles in the piece. Pianist 2 performs the work from determined musical notation throughout and represents a traditional virtuoso solo presentation. Pianist 1 integrates traditional deterministic performance with two extended free improvisations. The first of the improvisations occurs with no accompanying music while the second freely overlays accompanying music played quietly by the ensemble as a secondary, decoupled, independently simultaneous layer of sound. The free improvisations are intended to open the work to 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 are to allow for continual integration of yet unforeseen musical intentions and ideas.

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**III. Repose - Release**, for flute (a. fl), clarinet (b. clar), vibraphone, marimba, piano, violin, and cello, was composed between 2005-2007 for the *RUCKUS* Ensemble of Baltimore. *Repose - Release* is the third of three pieces that make up the *Triptych* which presents an expanded musical expression of beginning, continuation, and ending. *Repose - Release* presents musical ending as an underlying metaphor. This metaphor is also expressed in the musical rethinking and redevelopment of several musical ideas first presented in the earlier two movements.

*Repose - Release* is designed, like the other two movements, as a presentation of sectional constructs following classic rhetorical models that control repetition and presentation of new ideas. The configurations used in this movement include hybrids of combined *symploche* (repetition of beginnings and endings: abc adc aec) with *enjambment* (a continuation of an idea through or across an expected point of segmentation: abc def gehi), *anapest* (repetition of beginnings: ab ac ad...) with *diacope* (use of varied repetition: aa<sup>1</sup>a<sup>2</sup> bb<sup>1</sup>b<sup>2</sup>), *epistrophe* (repetition of endings: ab cb db) with *diacope*, *epizeuxsis* (use of immediate repetition: aaa bcd), and *gradatio* (phrase-level repetition of endings as beginnings: abc cde efg). 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 and large-scale, second-order *epistrophe* representing cycles and progressions in balance.

As in the second movement of the *Triptych*, *Repose - Release* combines sections of fully-deterministic composition notated traditionally, sections of semi-free music notated with non-metrical proportional rhythm, and three extended free ensemble improvisations. The first two of the improvisations occur with only general accompanying musical instruction while the final improvisation closes the movement as well as the entire work. The last improvisation begins with consideration of several suggested elements as a start to what can become a completely free ending improvisation. Thus, the emphasis on ending is connected with an emphasis on choice beyond the control and forethought of the composer. The free improvisations are intended to create spaces within the piece for other musical perspectives and to allow for continual on-going integration of yet unforeseen musical intentions and ideas as an expression of the shared responsibility and mystery contained in the endings of things.

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

### Instrumentation

#### *I. EPANÉKÔS : Returned*

flute (a. fl), oboe, clarinet (b. clar), horn, and  
bassoon

#### *II. Innocent Proteins*

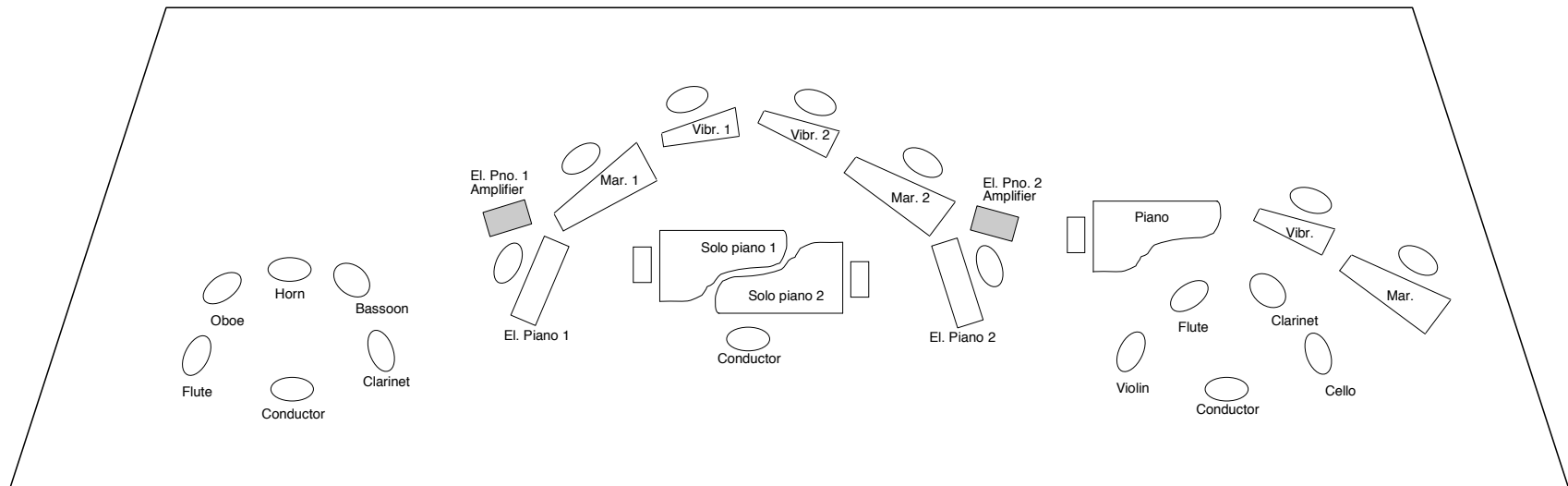
two solo pianos, two vibraphones, two marimbas,  
and two electronic pianos

#### *III. Repose - Release*

flute (a. fl), clarinet (b. clar), vibraphone, marimba,  
piano, violin, and cello

While it is possible to perform the three pieces  
together with one conductor and performers  
playing parts in more than one of the pieces, the  
pianos and percussion instruments must not be  
shared between pieces so that the entire work is  
represented on the stage in three sections  
throughout the performance without set changes.

### Stage Setup



## Notation Details

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


All glisses begin immediately and last the entire duration of the initiating note.


All grace-notes are to be played immediately prior to the beat (or subdivision) of their associated note.


Play beamed grace-note group as fast as possible


Percussion tones should ring freely (undamped) unless otherwise indicated.


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

 For strings, this indicates a natural harmonic.  
For winds indicates an alternate fingering which should be chosen for subtle pitch and timbral variation from normally-fingered tones.

 For strings and piano this indicates unmeasured tremolo, for percussion this indicates unmeasured roll, for winds this indicates flutter tongue

 Indicates alternate fingerings to produce a timbral trill.

 Indicates ad libitum, non-metric proportionally-timed measure.

 Indicates a gradual change from one mode of playing to another, eg. trill to non trill.

## 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:



Four musical staves illustrating conventional metric/rhythmic notation. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with stems and beams. The second staff shows a similar sequence with a fermata over the final note. The third staff shows a sequence of notes with stems and beams, including a dynamic marking 'ppp' and a tempo marking 'rit'. The fourth staff shows a sequence of notes with stems and beams, including a dynamic marking 'pp' and a tempo marking 'rit'.

## Proportional Rhythmic Notation

Much of the score is notated using proportional notation<sup>1</sup> (below) in which complex rhythmic events are notated across an un-metered 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 but is intended to keep pace measure to measure:



Two musical staves illustrating proportional rhythmic notation. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with stems and beams, including a dynamic marking 'mf' and a tempo marking 'rit'. The second staff shows a sequence of notes with stems and beams, including a dynamic marking 'mf' and a tempo marking 'rit'.

<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)).