

Hannes **Dufek**

notes on extinction (2022)

for acoustic guitar solo

duration: 10-12'

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for guitar solo

I. signals in the night I

II. shattered lamento

III. survival fits

IV. decay

V. signals in the night II

Duration: about 10-12'
(depening on various choices of the performer)

*The piece was written as a commission by the IGMN / ISCM Austria
for the concert series Junge Musik, also in the framework of **Wien modern 2022**,
and receives its premiere on November 20th, 2022, at the MUMOK
(Museum of modern and contemporary art Vienna) in Wien modern's "Matinée petite" concert.*

*I am very thankful for this opportunity to **IGNM** and **Sonja Leipold**, **Cordula Bösze**, **Lukas Thöni** and
Wien modern and **Benhard Günther**. I look forward immensely to the project and the young performer's
approach to what I have written.*

For more information on me or my music, please visit www.hannesdufek.com or contact me directly
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About the piece

Notes on extinction is an attempt to write music bearing animals in mind.

This is due to the motto of the concert in which this piece had its premiere, which was, well: animals.

For some reason, the fact of extinction of species, a sad fact about our current life, came to my mind almost immediately, as it was clear to me that I did not want to write any illustrative or pictorial music.

I did not see myself writing, as it were, "program music".

I was looking for something more abstract, and so the idea of writing about extinction - a sort of paradoxical approach to the given topic - formed itself in my mind.

But with this, another problem arose, namely how to put this procedure, or the specific moment in which the last exponent of the species then becoming extinct draws its last breath happens into music?

Not wishing, again, to write program music in that sense, I decided to set down some contextual metaphors, leaving, probably, the topic as a void in their (imaginary) center.

In movements I and V, *signals in the night I & II*, we hear a series of pings. These pings might be each individual of a species, the very lifelines of each animal, or maybe the heartbeat of the species at large. We follow them a while, and at some point, they become lost. Movement II, *shattered lamento* gives a distorted and fragmented mourning song, whereas in the third movement, *survival fits* we take a brief look at the immeasurably dire and challenging aspects of the fight for survival: the often frantic and desperate activity directed only towards sustaining oneself. The fourth movement, *decay* is rather self-explanatory and can be seen as a meditation on things disappearing, decaying. The second instantiation of *signals in the night* closes the ark of the piece.

Guidelines and symbol explanation

The music in this piece is mostly notated in a very open way, especially in terms of time and rhythm.

This is done so on purpose and is intended to give the performer more interpretative freedom while at the same time making the music more legible. Tempo indications are important, but point more to a general character and need to be taken with some levity.

Strings are notated in **Arabic numerals in boxes** (1 2 3 4 . .) while **frets** are written in **Roman numerals** (such as (V), (VII), (IX)).

In some cases, only the strings, not the frets are given, as I believed the situation to be sufficiently self-explanatory and the space on the page permitted no easy solution to indicating everything.

The piece is in scordatura and makes quite extensive use of the tuning, so it should be undertaken carefully. The precision of quartertones is not as important, though, as are the resulting beating frequencies / interferences (Schwebungen).

The initial scordatura is as follows:



In the last movement, a bit of **retuning** is required (see Mvmt. V for details)

Most symbols are either self-explanatory or explained on the spot. Other symbols and their explanations are as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| | (mosso) immeasurably cut the duration of a break or note-value |
| | overpressure, to the point of breaking the actual pitch completely |
| | dampen abruptly / cut the sound |

Movements III and IV require **different hand positions**. These are also explained on the spot, but it might be useful to try and explain it some more here.

For Mvmt. III, the right hand mostly is positioned on the fingerboard, dampening (barré-ing) it with the full palm. The hand is in this position aligned with the fingerboard, they are in the same axis. The fingers are then used to hammer on the frets which are, so to speak, on the opposite side of the normal playing position. The left hand is placed normally, but used only for hammering-on. The remaining space of the fingerboard is divided, frets I-V or so are "reserved" for the left hand, frets V-VII are played by the right hand. For the third model in this piece, the hand positions are reversed again, with the left hand dampening the fingerboard almost in the same place as the right hand before, and the right hand crossed over. The left hand then skids and slides its palm in a sort of pressurized tremolo over the higher frets of the fingerboard, while the right hand is used as a claw, with the nails used for a more harsh and distorted tremolo sound.

In **Movement IV**, only the lowest string is used, and the left hand very, very gradually slides down on string, activating mostly the spun-metal sound of the string and only very little residual pitch. The right hand is placed extremely near the bridge, and plucks the string with the nail or a very rigid finger, amplifying either noises or, at times, overtones (if the left hand hovers above a frequency node at the specific moment.)

notes on extinction

I. signals in the night I

Hannes Dufek

all open strings - see preface for scordatura / tuning

material = = = =

Guitar

structure

(at times, only [3] (or [4]))

Lento, ♩ = ca. 48-54

legato / portato naturale vary playing position a little throughout (without overdoing it, though)

(strc.)

mf *mf* *mp*

(*mosso*)

* all repeats are at performer's discretion.
play up to 3x each, but don't play all repeats.
bars in [] brackets are extra-optional.

(strc.)

f *mp* *pp*

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mp*

(*mosso*)

(strc.)

mf

mf

mp

mf

(*mosso*)

(strc.)

(mf)

mf

(*mosso*)

ord. 3:2 s.p.

ord. (with the nail)

6:4

behind the upper tailpiece / near the tuning pegs

(strc.)

fpp

mf

mf

p

fp

(strc.)

mf

(*mosso*)

up to x5

and decresc. with each repeat

notes on extinction

II. shattered lamento

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Pick some fragments (my suggestion would be 5-7, but you can choose to play less or more, even play all the fragments), play them in your desired order: **not by any means necessarily in the order on the page!**
Leave some breathing space between the fragments, create a sombre, melancholy piece.
Playing positions (s.t. / ord. / s.p., extremely near the bridge) and expressive techniques (i.e. nail pluck, playing directly on the fingerboard etc.) can be applied at the performer's discretion but should not be changed too often, so as to not disturb the intended character

Adagio quasi grave, ♩ = ca. 52-63

rubato: tempo can vary quite a bit at performer's discretion

generally *p-mp (mf)*, somewhat evenly, but not without emphasis or expression

guitar

2 (IV) 1 (V)
3 (0) 3 (VII)
5 (IV)
2 (0) 1 (VII)

3 (IV) 3 (V) 3 (VI) 1 (VII) 1 (VIII)
4 (0) 2 (0) 3 (VII)
2 (0)

2 (IV) 2 (V) 2 (V)
3 (0) 3 (VII) 3 (VII)
4 (IV) 1 (VII)
2 (0)

(git.)

1 (0) 2 (VI) 3 (VIII)
3 (IV) 2 (V) 3 (VI) 1 (VII)
4 (0)

barré

1 (II) 2 (IV) 2 (V)
2 (0) 3 (VII) 3 (VII)
4 (0)

2 (V) 1 (0) 1 (0)
3 (VII) 2 (V) 2 (VII)
5 (0) 4 (0) 3 (VII)

(git.)

1 (0) 2 (VI) 3 (VIII)
3 (IV) 2 (V) 3 (VI) 1 (VII)
4 (0)

natural harmonics

4 (0) 3 (VII) 1 (VII) 2 (VIII) 2 (IX) 4 (IX)
5 (0) 2 (VIII) 4 (VII) 2 (0) 3 (VII)
6 (VI) 3 (VII) 5 (0) 3 (VII)

2 (0) 2 (V) 2 (V)
3 (II) 3 (VI) 3 (VII)
4 (0) 1 (0) 4 (IX)
5 (0) 6 (VI) 3 (VII)

(git.)

1 (IX) 2 (0)
2 (V) 1 (0) 3 (IX)
3 (VII) 2 (V) 5 (VIII)
4 (IX) 3 (VII) 4 (0)

4 (0) 1 (X) 5 (0) 2 (VIII) 4 (VII) 2 (0) 3 (VII)
6 (VI) 3 (VII) 5 (0) 3 (VII)

C

4 (VII) 6 (X) 5 (VII) 4 (0) up to x5
(last time:)

notes on extinction

III. survival fits

Hannes Dufek

A noise improvisation.

Play for roughly 1'30" or 2' using the given models.
Create jittery, frantic intermezzo: the fits of survival.

Mosso - frenzied, wild. ♩ = ca. 72 (as a main tempo, but with lots of deviations in both slower and faster directions)

hand palm barré on XI / XII (place hand on fingerboard)

any fret from VI (even V) to VIII

hammer-on (parallel to fingerboard)

model I

right hand

guitar

left hand

(normal playing position)
any fret from I to IV (V)
hammer-on

(the rhythms and shapes given here are meant as visual guidelines or suggestions for an improvisation - not so much an actual notation (though it would be possible to integrate this exactly))

etc., simile
go on **or**
go to model II / III

* = may be played with the fingertip or (at times) with the backside of the nail.
If so chosen, play less dense movement before so as to change hand position comfortably

(simile / unchanged technique)

model II

(r.h.)

git.

(l.h.)

(simile / unchanged technique)

etc., simile
go on **or**
go to model I / III

behind the upper tailpiece /
near the tuning pegs

cross over hands (left under, right upper)

hammer-on parallel to fingerboard **or** light finger-tap (both also: with nail)

any fret from I to VI (VII)

model III

(r.h.)

git.

(l.h.)

place hand squarely on fingerboard, covering VIII-XIII or so
full hand tremolo / squeaky tremolo

claw / nail tremolo - noisy, with pressure

up to $x5^{1/2}$

etc., simile
go on **or**
go to model I / II **or**
go to final bar

(dampen abruptly /
cut sound)

(dampen abruptly /
cut sound)

(it is possible to jump back to bar 1 of model III
or even go back to model I or II at any time)

notes on extinction

IV. decay

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Austero ♩ = 60

6
tremolo with the nail
play with the spun-metal sound and residual pitch
downward glissando as indicated

left hand
nail tremolo
guitar
right hand
extr. s.p. plucks

(XII)
pp
pmp
(mostly $\frac{3}{4}$)
(sfz)
(sfz)
simile

(dynamics might be achieved with less and more pressure / less and more direct contact with the string)

quite crisp (with nail or very rigid finger), almost directly on the bridge
always similar attacks, independent from the dynamics in the tremolo
whenever a natural harmonic / vibration node is reached, a repeat (in addition to the written ones) is possible.
vary the means of attack a little bit then: nail, fingertip, something in between?

(l.h. nail tr.)
git.
(r.h. plucks)

pp cresc.
(un poco più mosso)
(VII)
mpmf
x2-4 A Tempo
(V)
3

(l.h. nail tr.)
git.
(r.h. plucks)

p
(un poco più mosso)
x3 A Tempo
(III / II)
--- al niente

V. signals in the night II

Lento,  = ca. 80

* (silently) re-tune the string before this piece.
(the tuning does not have to be perfect and can be corrected a bit
between bars throughout)

2. (molto) ritenuto
2. vibr.

→ s.p.

[illegible]

(un poco ritenuto)

(molto) s.t. → ord. / poco s.p.
(vibr.)

(git.)

(6/8)

x2-4 (5/8)

(3)

(1/2)

(5/8)

(3)

(2/3)

(1/2)

(6/8)

mp (*mf*)

mp

mp

and decresc. with each repeat

[illegible]