



Brian Ferneyhough

Superscriptio (1981)

Solo Piccolo

Duration: 5 minutes

First Performance: September 1982, Venice Biennale, Roberto Fabbriciani

The sound of any extremely high or low instrument tends, at least for me, to evoke associations with borders, boundaries and with whatever lies beyond. Thus, in this little one-movement composition dating from 1981, I attempted to reflect these sensations in such a way as to suggest the fleeting, sketching in of that brittle outline, that trace with no dimensions, representing some ultimate 'inside of the outside', itself never to be captured in sound.

Formally, *Superscriptio*, (as the most highly 'automatized' work in [the *Carceri d'Invenzione*] cycle) is constructed upon a dense network of metric and proportional relationships, wherein variations of texture and momentum are achieved by means of distortions in the pattern created by the mobile juxtaposition of diverse bar lengths, as well as by the gradual de-synchronization of gestural shaping, dynamic intensity and rhythmic density – elements which, at the outset, are all heard to be changing simultaneously.

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(from the Collected Writings: ed Boros and Toop)