

Joseph Klein

Die Mannsprächtige

(The Man-splendid Woman)

character study after Elias Canetti

for solo harp

(2023)

- for Jaymee Haefner -

duration: c. 7'

Performance Notes



accelerando/ritardando (number of beams indicates relative speed)



durational continuum (shortest to longest)



continue material in brackets *ad libitum* for the duration of the wavy line.



senza misura



muffle all strings



fermata continuum (shortest to longest)



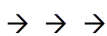
dampen string(s) indicated



rest/break continuum (shortest to longest)



half pedal (buzzing effect)



gradual change from one mode of play to another



pedal glissando



gradual and continuous alternation between modes of play



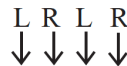
play with the backs of the fingernails



fluctuate around given dynamic (*ad libitum*)



quarter-tone high/low



rapid downward glissandi, alternating hands

Accidentals apply only to the notes they immediately precede, with the exception of repeated pitches.

The following strings are to be de-tuned prior to performance:

B3 (4th-octave B): quarter-tone flat

D5 (3rd-octave D): quarter-tone flat

F4 (3rd-octave F): quarter-tone flat

G5 (2nd-octave G): quarter-tone sharp

In the Restless section, the harpist should subtly and continuously move the pedal between positions, freely exploring and shaping the resultant buzzing sound (“quasi sitar”). Allow sufficient time for the buzzing sound to crest before resuming. The resulting sound should be free and unpredictable, though not overpowering; the right-hand harmonics should be clearly heard, though they will not be as prominent as the pedal sounds.

Unless otherwise indicated, each system of music in the *senza misura* sections should be approximately 10-12 seconds in duration.

In the Elegant sections, the harpist is to make an exaggerated gesture, with each arm moving in a flowing, circular motion upward and away from the instrument, then completing the arc and returning to playing position. The motion should be slow and continuous—clockwise with the right arm and counter-clockwise with the left.

Program Note

Die Mannsprächtige (*The Man-splendid Woman*) is the twenty-second in a series of short works for solo instrument based upon characters from *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere* (*Earwitness: Fifty Characters*), written in 1974 by the Bulgarian-born British-Austrian novelist Elias Canetti (1905-1994). Canetti's distinctive studies incorporate poetic imagery, singular insights, and unabashed wordplay to create fifty ironic paradigms of human behavior. This collection of works, begun in 1997, was inspired by the vividly surreal depictions of Canetti's characters and includes works for contrabass, violin, bass flute, ocarina, contrabassoon, glass harmonica, alto saxophone, trumpet, percussion, bass saxophone, guitar, piccolo, organ, basset horn, and violoncello, among others. In Canetti's depiction of this character, the man-splendid woman "likes to stand... slowly lifting her arm aloft, and holding it aloft with a carefully studied gesture. When all the onlookers close their dazzled eyes, she drops her arm.... She does not say a word, what could she say anyway to heighten her splendor, she holds her tongue, and her silence speaks volumes.... Perfection belongs to no one and requires distance, that, and that alone, is why she stares into the distance."

Die Mannsprächtige was composed in May-June 2023 for harpist Jaymee Haefner.

Die Mannsprächtige

(The Man-splendid Woman)

The man-splendid woman is a curve-blossom, and likes to stand up. There she stands, slowly lifting her arm aloft, and holding it aloft with a carefully studied gesture. When all the onlookers close their dazzled eyes, she drops her arm, somewhat more swiftly. Then she gazes into the distance as if no one were present, turns around 180 degrees, lifts her other arm even more slowly, and, lost in thought, she fingers her hairdo, which is no less *soigné* than her shoulders.

She does not say a word, what could she say anyway to heighten her splendor, she holds her tongue, and her silence speaks volumes. Privately, her name is Mrs. Shouldershine, what name was ever more appropriate. No matter where she is, among people or at home, she never tires of standing there (what a figure!), and lifting now her left and now her right arm. It must be emphasized that she does the same thing at home, alone at her mirror.

She does it for herself, she has said, her only recorded sentence, it takes a good deal of presumptuousness to describe her as the man-splendid woman. During the day, she is calm, she can stand and incessantly delight in her lifted arms. At night, it is harder, she does not always dream about herself and she does not like to forget herself. So she sleeps fitfully, she sleeps with the light on. From time to time, she awakes, she glides from her bed—she already sees herself, she already lifts her arm, her shoulder already shines, she already gazes into the distance. Then, halfway calm again, she goes back to bed. If that is not enough for her, the other arm takes its turn.

Can anybody be surprised that many men are after her shoulders? She, however, notices none of them; she is immune, can she help it if men misinterpret her splendor? Something that exists for its own sake is seen by them as existing for them, is it the fault of the man-splendid woman that she is built like that? She has to watch out for her complexion, and love is not good for it. Perfection belongs to no one and requires distance, that, and that alone, is why she stares into the distance.

Mrs. Shouldershine lives alone, and will not have a lapdog or a cat; after all, they would not grasp who she is; a child would be inconceivable, she would have to bend over for it. Even if she lifted it up, it couldn't see her, and what would it understand about her stunning parts? She is doomed to live alone, she takes her fate courageously upon herself, and no one, no one, has ever heard a complaint from her lips.

— Elias Canetti, *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere*
(translated by Joachim Neugroschel)

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Tuning:

Elegant

RH - pincé ord. *f* *mp* *poco* *pp* *poco* *n*

LH - *mp* *slow and graceful counter-clockwise motion with left arm...*

c.5" *bisb.* *(l.v.)*

D \flat C \flat B \sharp
E \sharp F \flat G \sharp A \flat

Gliding

3 *slow and graceful clockwise motion with right arm...* *c.5"*

RH - pincé ord. *f* *mp* *poco* *pp* *poco* *n* *pdl* *gliss.* *mf*

LH - *mp* *fz* *mp* *(l.v.)*

E \flat D \sharp A \sharp D \sharp C \sharp B \sharp
E \flat F \sharp G \sharp A \sharp

Flowing (poco meno, rubato)

5b pincé pdlt pincé *fz* *mf* *gliss.* *fz* pdlt *mf* pincé ord. *mp* *mf*

E \sharp G \sharp C \sharp E \flat C \sharp

6b *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

D \flat G \sharp A \sharp B \flat E \sharp

Hypnotic

(♩ = 288; ♪ = 144; ♩ = 96)

6c

mf *mp* *mf* *fz* *mf* *poco*

pdlt *gliss.* pincé ord.

Cb F# D# C# B# E# F# G# A# Eb Fb

10/16 *mp (sempre)*

9

12/16 9/16 12/16

F# D# E# C#

14

12/16 10/16

B# A#

Tranquil

18

5-7" (l.v.)

bisb. 6/16

mp *mf* *mp* *pp*

LH - - - - - J

D# C# B# Cb

E# F# G# A#

slow and graceful counter-clockwise motion with left arm...

Fitful (♩ = 120)

20

2 3 4 R L R L R L R (sim.)

6/16 *ff (l.v. sempre)* 7/16 6/16 5/16 7/16

A# Eb Ab Gb Fb

25

7/16 9/16 5/16 9/16

D# F# D# E#

29

G#m F#m A#m D#m F#m C#m/B#m

34

Restless c. 12"

Fitful (♩ = 120)

D# C# B#
E♭ F# G# A#

D#♯: ord. ↔ *quasi sitar*
ad lib. sempre

36

B#m F#m C#m E#m

40

B♭m F#m B#m E♭m C#m B#m/G♭m

45

Restless c. 18"

F#♯: ord. ↔ *quasi sitar*
ad lib. sempre

46

Tranquil

slow and graceful clockwise motion with right arm...

5-7"

B#m A#m

LH

Gliding

48 pldt *gliss.* pincé ord. *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* pldt *gliss.* *mf*

D \flat C \sharp B \flat B \flat \rightarrow b C \sharp \rightarrow \flat E \sharp F \sharp G \flat A \flat E \flat

50b pincé ord. pincé ord. pldt $\rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow$ ord. *f* *mp* *mf* *fz* *mf* *mp* *p* *molto* *E \flat*

E \flat \rightarrow \flat D \flat C \flat \rightarrow b

53 pincé ord. *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* **10** **16**

56 **Hypnotic** (♩ = 288: ♩ = 144; ♩ = 96) *mp* (sempre) **10** **16**

D \flat C \flat B \flat E \flat F \sharp G \flat A \flat

61

66 **12** **16**

70

9/16

B#

74

9/16

A \flat F \flat E# D#

79

C# G \flat A# G#

84

F# B# C#

89

12/16

D# E# F#

93

10/16

97

102

CODA: Gliding

106b

pdlt → → → ord.

gliss.

(RH) pincé ord.

p *molto* *fz* *mf* *mp*

D \sharp C \flat B \flat A \sharp → E \flat F \sharp G \sharp A \sharp A \sharp → D \flat B \sharp

110 pincé ord.

pdlt (LH) pincé ord.

mf *gliss.* *fz* *mp* *f* *mf*

f *mf* *mp*

(F \sharp) → \sharp D \sharp C \sharp B \flat

112

mp *poco* *mf* *fz* *mp* *n.*

5-7" (l.v.)

bisb.

slow and graceful circular motion with both arms (right arm clockwise, left arm counter-clockwise)...

G \sharp A \flat