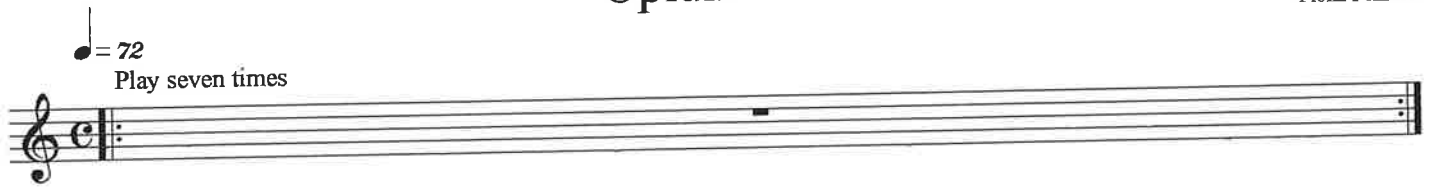


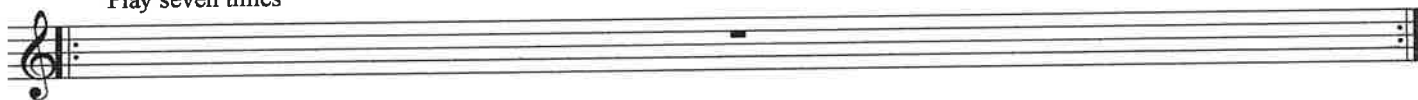
Opium

Fiona Pennisi

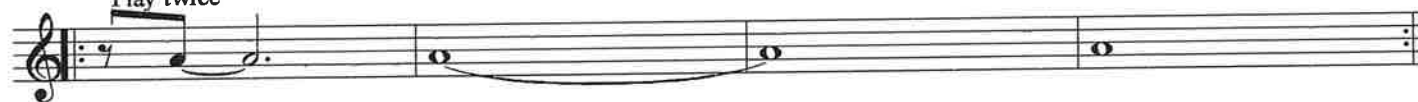


- * Begin either f or p, and alternate between these for every repetition.
- * Cells may be played in any order.
- * Every cell must be played once, and once only.
- * This page must be completed before immediately moving to page 2.

Play seven times



Play twice



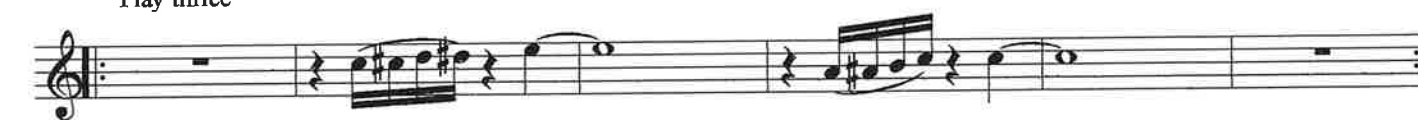
Play thrice



Play twice



Play thrice



Play twice



* Begin ppp and gradually increase volume to mf after approximately three cells have been completed.

* Increase volume to fff at the conclusion of the piece.

* Be aware of every instrument's volume to ensure that all performers increase dynamics together.

OPIUM

The title for this piece is derived from a mispronunciation of ip 1, which is the integral interval used throughout the work. Opium induces a trance-like state, and this piece imitates that sensation through repetitive rhythms and melodic patterns to create a hypnotically aural counterpart.

After composing many works with an emphasis on the pitch parameter, the composer desired to do something different from what she had been working on, and this piece is a reflection of that. It is a piece of limited stochasticism and is for a variable instrumental ensemble. Unlike the stochastic work composed in 2000 ("La Musica Delle Sfere E L'ordine Naturale Dell Universe"), the performers in "Opium" are to be in strict time with each other in order to create a unifying pulse.

Each player is given two sets (pages) of six cells. Each cell is a certain length and is repeated the number of times indicated. The performers must play every cell (one 'cell' including the fragment's repetitions) once only, no more and no less, but are allowed to play these cells in any order they choose.

Players are given two sheets of music, each having four minutes worth of cells (six cells) on them. While the performers are free to play the cells on a given page in any order, page one must be completed before moving on to page two. This produces a binary form piece, which allows each section to be contrasting.

The cells are uneven in length to create flow and supply unnoticeable changes between repetitions of fragments and transition between cells. The sound produced should be ever changing, but subtly, so that one is aware of the change but unable to pinpoint it. The only change of mood that is deliberate occurs when moving from page one to two as every instrument moves simultaneously.

This piece will require concentration on behalf of the performers in order to synchronise with each other, count how many repetitions they have completed and remember which cells they have and have not played (and therefore when to move and when to finish). Page one is quite low in each instrument's register, contains syncopation and is angular and staccato, while page two has more variation of register in the instruments, and is legato and slurred to create a wash of sound.

The dynamics do not appertain to each individual cell, but to each page or each repetition of a fragment. Page one instructs the performers to "Begin at f or p and alternate between them for each repetition", while page two directs them to "Begin ppp and increase to mf by approximately the middle of the page, then increase to fff by the conclusion of the piece". This instruction was decided upon in order to give the performers more control (page two) and to continue with the theme of 'chance'. Each performer needs to be aware of every instrument's dynamic level and to increase volume together (during the final page), not increasing too quickly and reaching the ending dynamic prematurely. These dynamic directions, therefore, are only a rough guideline for the performers to build upon.

If players find that they are playing the same as someone else at any moment in the piece (as is very possible) this will help strengthen a sense of unity, and most likely will not last for any great duration of time.