

Augenmusik VI: Asch

for
piano and player-piano

Augenmusik VI: Asch is about embracing the differences in timing between human and machine.

The piece consists of 10 phrases, each one in a gradually increasing tempo, and each one separated by a metronome-style count-in given by the player-piano.

In each phrase, the absolute duration of the chords is exactly the same as the previous phrase, but notated differently.

The score is designed to be played by the pianist and the player-piano simultaneously.

Before each phrase, the player-piano will give a count-in in its upper-register, represented in the score by quarter-notes with cross-noteheads (these should not be played by the live pianist).

After the count-in has been given, the pianist and the player-piano perform the same phrase simultaneously.

Due to the sparseness of the chords and the differences in the way in which humans and machines count, it is expected that the playing of the same chord by human and machine will not be synchronous. This is intentional.

Although the differences in timing form the main feature of the piece, the live pianist should not exaggerate them and, instead, allow them to arise naturally through attempting to count and play as rhythmically accurately as possible.

David Pocknee
2015-11-05

n.b. for the composer:

Each phrase consists of 8 chords, the relationships between durations of each consecutive chord lie in the ratios:
5: 3 / 5: 4 / 3 : 4 / 4 : 3 / 3 : 5 / 4 : 5 / 4 : 4

These are all possible ratios involving the integers 3, 4, and 5.

Their order was selected by algorithmically combing through all 15559 permutations of possible orders to find the one which would provide the least amount of notational difficulty.

These same ratios were used to determine the tempi.

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Piano $\text{♩} = 36$

3

9 $\text{♩} = 45$

11

18 $\text{♩} = 48$

20

26 $\text{♩} = 60$

28

35 $\text{♩} = 75$

37

Musical staff 37: Bass clef, complex chordal texture with various accidentals and rhythmic patterns.

46 $\text{♩} = 80$

Musical staff 46: Bass clef, rhythmic notation with 'x' marks on the staff.

48

Musical staff 48: Treble clef, complex chordal texture with 3:2 and 15:16r ratios.

58 $\text{♩} = 90$

Musical staff 58: Treble clef, rhythmic notation with 'x' marks on the staff.

60

Musical staff 60: Treble clef, complex chordal texture with 5:4 ratios.

71 $\text{♩} = 100$

Musical staff 71: Treble clef, rhythmic notation with 'x' marks on the staff.

73

Musical staff 73: Treble clef, complex chordal texture with 3:2 ratios.

85 $\text{♩} = 120$

Musical staff 85: Treble clef, rhythmic notation with 'x' marks on the staff.

87

Musical staff 87: Treble clef, complex chordal texture with 5:3 and 5:4 ratios.

99 ⁸ ♩ = 150

15

101 ¹⁵