Detriment

a pocket music theatre
for soprano, flute, and piano

on a text by Yvonne Georgiadou

2019
**Instrumentation**

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**Piano**

additional items for the pianist:
- 1 metal chain (small size), a small piece of rope (to tie it firmly on the one side of the chain) and a piece of cloth upon which the chain will be placed, when not in use
- Loose bow hair (3 sets: D⁵, E⁵, D⁶) firmly bound on both edges
- 1 heavy (wooden) block (see notes below)
- 2 screws/bolts (G⁵ and F#⁴)-if not applicable or allowed, leave out/
  - 2 finger picks/plectra (preferably plastic)
    - 1 mandolin plectrum
    - 1 medium hard mallet

**Soprano**

additional items for the singer:
- 2 bow-hair sets (E⁵ and G⁶) prepared in the piano interior in advance
  For staging:
  - 1 clay bowl
  - Sand (preferable dry granulated clay)
    - 1 glass pitcher/water

**Stage setup**

- 1 medium size table/1 chair
  - 1 discreet surface underneath, to protect floor from water and clay

**Lighting**

- A light mechanism hanging above the table, as a spotlight
  - Individual yet discreet lighting for the music stands
- General stage lighting (it would be advisable to have a light technician, to assist with the cues given in the score - indicated in detail, on the Mise en scène stave).
**Detriment** *a pocket music theatre for soprano, flute, and piano (2018/19)*

**Text:** Yvonne Georgiadou

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*Detriment* is a pocket music theatre in 2 scenes. It is entirely based on and created out of a poem of the same title (2015) by Yvonne Georgiadou.

*Detriment* takes place in a non-temporal backdrop, where the central character is faced with the aftermath of her lifecycles on Earth. A space in the interim, where time exists spherically rather than linearly; where time is fractured into memories – scattered yet occurring simultaneously. On a psychoanalytical level, this condition might as well reflect the character’s own inner space, a magnification of her consciousness, guilt, and redemption as well as the process of self-evaluation about the magnitude she could have reached, if she had ever conquered her weaknesses. The poem alludes to a ‘Behenian summit’, evidently referring to the fifteen Behenian fixed stars which, during the Persian and Hellenistic times, were considered powerful for their ritual / supernatural qualities. Thus, from a spiritual point of view, this condition might as well signify the ‘chamber of judgment’, which according to various traditions, we, humans, are being called into at the time of our carnal demise; the point where our righteousness and the integrity of our actions are being evaluated before we assume an assignment for a new journey: a space of oblivion and reconstruction of identities and memories, prior to a new journey on earth. Within this chamber, the ‘sound voices’ of the three characters (the narrator / witness, the human and her consciousness) multiply and resonate musically giving the impression of an assembly of presences attending and attesting to this summit. Each and every one of us could be and potentially is present to this occasion.

- *Andreas Tsiartas, 23 August 2019*

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**Duration:** ca. 14 min.

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Detriment

by Yvonne Georgiadou

‘Sed fugit interea, fugit inreparabile tempus’

-Virgil, Georgica, Book3, Ln. 284

[Scene 1]

On the Behenian summit,
Day 13,
The verdict was finally delivered:

“Driven by fallacy,
you failed
the trial of immortality.

You stumbled towards
Fractures
from an ancient lifecycle you have not managed
to fulfil.

[Entr’ acte]

Upon arriving on Earth
your magnitude has atrophied.
You strived to meld
your higher being with earthly joys
your past and present lives.

You’ve made yourself a slave of the moment.

[Scene 2]

Drifting aimlessly,
Fading into your glorious past,
You have eradicated your existence
into a stillborn future.
You have collected all the tears
from the facets of the world."

[Finale]

In this land of duality,
above the realms of death
beneath the vault of heavens,
Flesh is mortal, pain is inescapable and
life is constantly ill-timed.
To the detriment of all your bequests to me,
Still,
I had to choose life.
Glossary (general)

Mise en scène

- Apart from individual lights on music stands (for legibility reasons in darkness), consider a central light installation, preferably a spotlight. This spotlight installation will be hanging from above and will also be able to swing as a pendulum in the second act towards the finale. By the end, while the singer stands again on her feet it will shine upon her face in such a way that it will create shadows (position in minimum height from the performer’s head). ‘Black’ on the score, indicates a black-out (i.e. all lights off).

Symbol used to indicate lighting:

Dramaturgy

- A stave for dramaturgy has been created to specifically direct the performer’s stage presentation and movement. It is an indispensable part of her performance. All dramaturgical indications are explained in detail in the score.

Symbols used:

for sand (dry granulated clay)
Voice

General Remarks:
- There are two different text layers for the voice, *spoken text 1* and *spoken text 2*. Text 1 (for the Latin text) should be performed in a more introverted way, as if talking or whispering to one’s self - yet audible, especially when accompanied by the piano. Dynamic contrasts for text 1 should be less expressive. Text 2 (the libretto text) should be performed lyrically in a rather extroverted way. For both cases, text 1 and 2, the following notation should be applied: Note heads on the line are the reference point; upwards and downwards there are two additional levels of pitch shift of the spoken voice, as shown below:

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\hspace{1cm}
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In general, the notation for both ‘spoken text 1’ and ‘spoken text 2’ is a literal transcription of the poem’s recitation in rhythm / voice fluctuations and should be performed, as if spoken naturally - yet within the margins set by time signature and tempo indications. NB: ‘Spoken text 2’ should be approached as a transition from one level to another (‘double persona’)
- The singer shares 4 staves in total: the first for dramaturgy (see above), the second and fourth for the two different texts (and later on singing), and the third one for additional actions (e.g. bow-hair set).
- Avoid the use of unnatural or exaggerated vibrato.

Theatrical eye contact between two performers).

for water (glass pitcher).
Piano

General Remarks:
- The pianist undertakes the role of the singer’s alter-ego. The piano part’s rapid figures literally represent the recited rhythm in pitch material. Despite the accuracy of the transcription of these passages, all of them should be performed as if doubling the singer’s part in a natural manner: think of this as a second person being present echoing the text, in pitch. The pianist is also being called upon speaking parts of the text but only those sections, which are within the boxes indicated on the respective layer for the piano. The text actions are written on a separate stave likewise indicated as ‘spoken text’ above the piano part.

Flute

General Remarks:
- The flutist also speaks out parts / words of the text, in a complementary way to the pianist, perhaps as a third persona (Scene 2 onwards). Overall, all three performers and their layers (text, sound) should comprise a complex ‘counterpoint’, which is used to enhance them by doubling (in some cases such as the singer’s tripling) their entity. Fragments of both the Latin text and the libretto are indicated in regular (density) inscription for the Latin text and in bold for the libretto fragments. Similar to the soprano, the Latin text for the flute, should be performed in a more introverted way, muffled in the flute sound, whereas the libretto text in a more extroverted and well-articulated way (again responding to her line).

Notation (general)

\[ x^* \]

Time duration in seconds (distinct from the regular time signature notation).
Repeat the figure within the repetition bars, as long as suggested by the horizontal curve (i.e. within the time/bars given).

Transitions/ Continuation of layers.

Notation (specific)

Soprano

Breathe in (inhale)/ breathe out (exhale).

Intensifying vibrato.
This effect can be achieved by closing lightly the mouth with the curved palm of your hand and then, where the feathered indication occurs, create a vibration of the sound by opening and closing the palm rapidly.

From high C: transition towards scream (exclamation), climaxing to a natural outcry, leading to a relief by the end of the passage.
Breathe in (inhale)/ breathe out (exhale).

From air sound to full pitch (ord.)-with an intermediate stage.

Jet whistle
Whistle tones (on C as a fundamental), reaching the high partials as indicated. Fragile and trembling, containing parts of the neighbouring pitches (hence the zigzag line).

Consider changing to piccolo for this effect, if applicable.

Piano

The interior of the piano is to be divided roughly in three major range parts, indicated where applicable, as 1, 2, 3, from lowest to highest range.

Place a block to dampen the strings, creating the dry/percussive sound required (see notes below).

The crossed sign: remove the block.

Position 2: for the exact range see ‘Notes’ further on.
X-shaped notes are within the dampened range and will sound very dry/percussive, as opposed to the other regular keys/notes. Placing the solid block within the area requested, will dampen the range from F3 to C5.

Lifting up the right pedal gradually, allowing the sound to gradually die out, and at the same time, the overtone E4 should prevail. Upon grasping this overtone, hold and sustain the pedal, merging the overtone with the bowed E string in the interior. For the latter part of this action, the pianist should stand up, while still holding the pedal as above. Gradually lift off the pedal and keep on with the bowed string.

Cluster on position ① - similar to the above pedal action,
sustaining this time, not a single overtone but the cluster of overtones, gradually releasing as indicated).

Bowed string (see guidelines below):
Velocity of bowing: slow and steady, not accelerating, nor reducing speed by means of the dynamic markings.

Slap the interior strings of the piano with the palm on the range area indicated (Position: ①; see above for the range areas)
This area of the piano (lowest octaves) should have already been prepared with a chain, firmly attached to the side of the piano, laying on the strings of the lowest octave.

Use finger picks to perform plucked pitches, on the specific pitch in the piano interior.
Choose plastic picks that resist pressure. Resulting sound: like a qanun.

Use a plectrum to perform a non-regular tremolo on the specific pitch in the piano interior. Choose a medium hard plectrum to be easily controlled. Resulting sound: like a mandolin.

Use hand fingernails (your own), to perform non-regular, very rapid accentuations on the highest part of the piano interior (③).
Use a medium hard mallet to perform the pitch in the interior.

Notes

• Rests: the smallest rest in the piece is the single caesura (like a breathing rest), following a small fermata, which is 2” to 3” and finally, the long fermata , ca. 5”. A longer fermata is ca. 7”, unless otherwise indicated in the score. Large symbol of a caesura is a structural breathing rest (phrasing).
• Accidentals apply for a single bar.
• For the singer: Learning parts by heart is recommended, in order to facilitate the dramaturgy of the work especially in parts where movement is required.
• For the pianist: dashed slurs imply binding the indicated pitches musically (phrasing), even when another pitch intervening in-between. Regular slurs as accustomed.

Piano Preparation Guidelines

• On all occasions, please press and pre-hold the right pedal in order to perform in the interior of the piano and to avoid any damage to the dampers’ sensitive felts.
• Consider the use of small, coloured stickers to distinguish pitches in the interior, BUT ONLY within the space between the tuning pin and the agraffes (above the red felt) and certainly not on the dampers.
• To perform the passages with the bow hair: **prepare the sets in advance**. To insert and remove the hair, you may attach pins to the sides of the hair (the hair must be firmly bound on both sides) to make it easier. For performing the passage, ideally the string should be bowed in a 90-degree angle (as held by both hands). Make sure the set has not much hair in order to be easily inserted and removed, but also in order to produce a better sound. The use of rosin might be required in order to facilitate sound production. Set both sets on E4 and make sure both are within reach for the pianist and the singer in the final passage. Please, **do not use fishing net**, as this will create a different sound.
• To perform the passage with the block (**prepare the block in advance**): Although performers usually use a heavy item wrapped up in felt to generate the percussive sound required, it is recommended to use a solid wooden block (preferably -maple- wood) that is completely covered with a felt or cashmere lining underneath to dampen firmly the strings. Dimensions (indicatively - as it varies in piano construction for the range required): 8cm width x max. 24 cm length (height flexible). The resulting sound should be **very percussive**, dry and should mingle well with the timbre of the other instruments at the specific passages requested.
• Chain (**prepare the chain in advance**): Use a small sized chain, firmly bound on the piano on one side (with a piece of rope). It should be used on the lowest octave of the piano. Use a cloth to place the chain upon, when requested to remove the chain in order to avoid any noise.

**Stage Setup (full version)**
- **NB**: approximate distances and layout at the beginning of the piece
Semi-staged version

It is highly recommended to perform the piece in its original dramaturgical and staged version. However, a second semi-staged version is created because the original version might involve some technical difficulties for the performers, such as a specific venue’s guidelines or stage that exclude staged performances. Below are the guidelines for the second version:

- **Flute**: as in the original version.
- **Piano**: retains its part and actions as in the original version except for:
  - Preparing the chain in advance on the lowest octave of the piano interior, thus when reaching **H (b. 221)- Scene II**, the mallet stroke on the lowest octave will create a rattling sound (instead of the breaking clay, as in the original version). Adjust dynamics accordingly in order for the other parts to be audible, e.g. not **ff**, rather **mf**. **Remove the chain** (along with fingernails) at b. 235.
- **Stage setting layout**: as in the original version (adjust according to the space available).
- **Lighting**: incorporate only the black outs (presumably retaining the individual stand lights).
- **For the singer**:
  - **G (b. 170) - Entr’acte**: Replace sand (granulated clay) with an hourglass: lower and raise hourglass as given for falling sand. Trembling hand by the end of the passage, as given, proceed with intense inhaling and exhaling. Position hourglass nearby safely.
  - **L (b. 308)**: Instead of a pitcher, have a bowl of water prepared ahead at position -C-, and pour water with hands on your head, as if in baptising. Allow water to mix up with the makeup you will be wearing, thus melting and daubing your eye and lip makeup onto your face. At b.336, intentionally mess up the water on your face with your hands so that it is smudged and proceed as written. Hence, no need to mix clay and water (as there will be no clay, mentioned above).
SCENE I.

**Mise-en-scène**
Lights on the pianist and singer: conventional singer/pianist setting

**Flute**

**Dramaturgy**
Position at A, singer standing within a conventional distance to the pianist. Introverted, as if talking to herself. Use a naturally spoken voice; small fluctuations of dynamics.

**Spoken text**

**Voice**

**Additional instruments**

**Singing**

**Spoken text**

**Pianist**

**Piano**

On keyboard

Senza Ped.

* Choose a feasible tempo
If nevertheless too fast, consider an overall slow-down of the tempi.
While accelerating, keep repeating the words in a rather natural manner, ending up using only the consonants, F-g t-mp. Gradually softening the voice and quasi whispering, stressing the consonants.
Straight after the 3 seconds fermata, the two performers nod to each other, as if agreeing to proceed. The singer exclaims the word ON! and this should be used as an indication to the pianist to proceed with his/her passage. All of the above occur within less than a second.

Dynamics for this part as before.

Piano figures are rhythmical representations of the Latin text, in a similar manner dialectically, to the voice's part. Perform in a 'spoken manner'.
Spk.Txt
in re para ble fug ine in te re a fug it in te re a in re para ble

Spk. Txt. 2
final ly

Pno.

 asserted:
Singing:

"Driven by fallacy, you failed the trial of immor tali ty."

C Molto meno mosso \( \approx 70 \)

Interior

C Molto meno mosso \( \approx 70 \)
Straight after the fermata, the two performers look at each other, as if approving going further on (proceeding). The singer articulates the word YOU, and this should be used as an indication to the pianist to immediately proceed with his/her passage. All of the above occur rapidly.
sed tempus sed fugit intera tempus fugit intera inrepraible sed inrepraible inrepraible tempus fugit
in - ter - a in - re - pa ra - bi - le fu - git fu - git in - te - re - a

you stumbled to - wards

to - wards

fu - git in - te - re - a te - mpus in - te - re - a

fu - git in - te - re - a te - mpus in - re - pa
Sed fugit sed tempus sed

you stumbled towards fractures

Cold and distant
Soprano freezes: motionless and distant
Singer heading closer to the piano (close to the side, where the hairset has been prepared); secure hairset, and get ready to perform with it.

Assertive:

\( f \rightarrow ff \)

chest voice (performing towards the interior of the piano)

from an ancient life, cycle you have not managed to fulfil...
Additional instruments

Singing

Pno.

Bowhair:

Gradually allow the pianist to continue the effect.
Smoothly, imperceptibly; overlapping.
When completed, start heading towards position B.
Singing

Lights: sudden BLACK (OUT)

At B, facing backstage until lights off. When lights on face the public. Prepare to use the bowl with sand (prepared ahead) / sitting at table.

Prepare finger picks
Lights: sudden spotlight on the singer at the middle of stage

At B:
Grab sand from the clay bowl

Let sand fall (sufficient sand for each phrase)

Lower hand

Grab sand

Let sand fall (sufficient sand for each phrase)

Upon arriving

Upon arriving

Upon arriving

Upon arriving

Upon arriving

Upon arriving

Earth

Perform as if on a qanun

* both hands octave up

*
your magnitude has magnified your magnitude has magnified

You strived to meld

raise hand
lower hand

let sand fall

orthophied

to meld
your higher to meld your higher being with earthly

your earthly joys your past and present lives you

get your plectrum
Gradually, hand trembling; also voice in anguish

have you made your self - you have made your self - a slave a slave of a slave of the moment

Take mallet
Scene II.

Light on flute/ Dim out for piano and soprano.
Soprano heading towards flute, as if searching for the light.

Merge with voice- anguish, hunted.

Abruptly standing up, smashing the clay pot in anxiety with the other hand, while still pouring sand, this time on the ground, with a trembling hand. Breathe in, in anguish, deep (yet not drying completely the throat) as indicated on score. Stare at the sand, obsessively/ possessed. Then start following the light that shines upon the flutist. Start moving in anguished circles around the flutist.

Light on flute/
Dim out for piano and soprano.
Soprano heading towards flute, as if searching for the light.
Speak inside the tube (two different layers of text): Latin text whispering in anguish, and poem text spoken as a response. Try to differentiate these layers as much as possible.

Keep on inhaling intensely and audibly.
drifting aimlessly

Take finger picks off; leave mallet aside

Singing

fading into your

inreparabile fugit

inreparabile fugit

inreparabile

ff

ff
come sopra
(whispering in anguish)

fad - ing in-to my

glo - ri-ous
glo - ri-ous past

sed tem-pus

past

sed tem-pus

tem - pus

have
you have eradicated

existence

you have eradicated

existence
Stop where you are to perform the sotto voce effect / make sure you are positioned facing the public at that moment.

Hold mouth shut (both hands) staring in fright to the public; motionless.
Mouth shut (both hands), still in fright, try to articulate as clearly as possible with hands covering the mouth.

Senza Ped.
Gradually opening up the mouth

Spk. Text: I have collected all the tears.
intimate yet broadening sighing (in and out respectively),
gradually intensifying respiration

Hands off - mouth open

the tears

all the
While performing, start heading towards the piano

Spk. Text

all the tears from the face-tes

Singing

pp

Pno.
Spk. Txt

You!

Singing

from the face-tes

I have

Spk. Txt

You!

Pno.
Gradually building up an outcry leading to scream

Start heading towards position -C-

I have collected

all the tears

Dram.

Spk. Text.

Singing

Pno.
Singing

OSSIA (last two bars ONLY):
Finale

\[ \text{K}\quad \text{e}=100 \quad \text{'istesso tempo} \quad \text{rall.} \]

Light: black out; flute's light on the stand, still on.

At -C-

Fall on the ground, broken and in extreme outcry, kneeling on the floor, head (and hair) down/ Gradually (indicated arrow) outcry released and in temper until serenity. Outcry (clamore), independent from the flute's rhythmic sequence.

Scream ← Clamore

Scream:

keyboard:

At -C-

Outcry (clamore), independent from the flute's rhythmic sequence.

Scream ← Clamore

Scream:

keyboard:
While still sobbing, crawl towards the broken clay pot pieces, with scattered sand. Search for the water bowl, at the table at -B-
Above her head the lighting should move like a pendulum.

Grab the glass pitcher and start pouring water on the scattered clay, mixing water and clay, creating gradually 'mud'. Brings everything to -C-

In this land of du-al-i-ty

assertive yet intimate
(audible enough for the public)
-NB: do NOT look at the public, yet:

let sound almost die out

let water fall, creating sound (sufficient water in pitcher, for each phrase)

raise pitcher

let sound almost die out
lower pitcher (and position safely)

above the realms of death,

grab pitcher

let water fall

lower

mix some clay with water

raise

beneath the vault of heavens,

grab pitcher

let water fall

sffz

sffz

sffz

l.r.

l.r.

sim.

sffz

sffz

sffz

l.r.

meno forza

mix some clay with water

grab pitcher

let water fall

lower

raise
Take created clay and slowly start covering theatrically your face with this./ Alternatively, have some dark face clay prepared aside.

mix some clay with water

flesh is mortal

Take created clay and slowly start covering theatrically your face with this./ Alternatively, have some dark face clay prepared aside.

pain is inescapable and life is
Light by now in stable position

Whistle tones*  
PPP to achieve this sound effect more effectively

imperceptible breath

Stand up, perform next passage in the interior; let pedal resonate; it should merge well with the flute passages’ timbre above.

Stand up, perform next passage in the interior; let pedal resonate; it should merge well with the flute passages’ timbre above.

Light by now in stable position

Whistle tones*

PPP to achieve this sound effect more effectively

imperceptible breath

Stand up, perform next passage in the interior; let pedal resonate; it should merge well with the flute passages’ timbre above.

Slowly standing up, staring at the public.

con-stantly ill-timed

to the de-tri-ment of all your be-quests to me

Stand up, perform next passage in the interior; let pedal resonate; it should merge well with the flute passages’ timbre above.
Head towards the piano’s interior, ultimately performing near the interior in order to resonate as much as poss.

Head towards the piano’s interior (reaching bowhair set) - towards -A-.

Take bowhair set: prepare

still I had to choose
Gradually dim out light on the piano and light on singer, when leaving towards backstage.

rall. ..........................................................

interior

, 

bisb. 

sim. 

p

mf

p

f

At ~A-:

Leave the piano, heading towards backstage -D-, while singing 'life'. While heading backstage, take off your outer outfit and remain 'naked' (wearing a skin-coloured undervest).

Leaves

The piano, heading towards backstage ~D-, while singing 'life'. While heading backstage, take off your outer outfit and remain 'naked' (wearing a skin-coloured undervest).

OSSIA: octave lower

life

life

rall. ..........................................................

l.r. 

l.r.

\( \sum \)
MeS.

Fl

Dram.

Singing

Pno.

Light fading out

At backstage - D -

ca 14'

York, UK
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