Andreas Tsiartas

Thrus
[θrus]

_______ • ________

for orchestra

Full score

2020/21
Instrumentation

2 Flutes (1st doubling piccolo/ 2nd doubling alto flute)
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B♭ (2nd doubling bass clarinet in B♭)
2 Bassoons (2nd doubling contrabassoon - with extensions G¹ and A¹)
4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in B♭ (1st doubling picc. trumpet in B♭/ 2nd doubling in D)
2 Trombones (2nd doubling bass trombone)
Percussion (2)*
Harp
Piano (with additional items)
Strings (8, 8, 6, 5, 4)- Double basses 3 and 4 with five strings.

NB: Throughout the work, strings are divided in stands, unless otherwise indicated. Celli are divided as 2+2+1.

* Batt. 1: bass drum, tam-tam, marimba (A²-C⁷), chain, 1 woodblock (small block), suspended cymbal (16"+).
  Batt. 2: vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, crotales (C⁷-C⁸), 1 suspended cymbal 16"+, chimes (G⁴-C⁵ chromatic).

-See further on for additional items/ specifications required-

Full score in C
Thrus *for orchestra* (2020-21)

Thrus (Gr: Θροῦς), is one of those literary words in Greek, made up of consonants and vowels which sonically depict the meaning of the actual word: in this case, the 'rustling of leaves'. It could also be translated as a soft, yet unremitting noise, a kind of whisper or murmur. The word can be traced back in older Greek literary sources and interpreted as 'the remnants of a reverberation' - a kind of a sonic debris. In other sources, we find references to an even more ancient word, the verb throō (Θροῶ) which is used to connotate an uproar, or just a loud voice.

-Andreas Tsiartas, June 2021/
Revised June 2022

**Duration:** ca. 11 minutes
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**Additional specifications/ items required:**

**For the contrabassoon:**

- 2 extensions G¹ and A¹ for the contrabassoon (tube-shaped, b. 177 and 284).

**For the piano:**

- 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 metal chain will be placed, when not used.
- 1 wooden block (see immediately below, guidelines).
- Loose bow hair (3 sets: G#6, B♯5, F♯4) firmly bound on both edges.
- 1 regular superball.

**Piano preparation guidelines:**

- On all occasions, please press and pre-hold the sustain pedal in order to perform in the interior of the piano and to avoid any damage to the dampers’ sensitive felts.
- **Bow hair:** prepare the 3 sets in advance. To insert and remove the hair, you may use any palpable object of less than 5 mm width. 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 sets have not much hair in order to be easily inserted, but also in order to produce a more resonant, vibrant, airy sound. The use of rosin might be required in order to facilitate sound production. Please, do not use fishing net, as this will create a different sound!
- **Chain:** Use a small sized chain, firmly bound on the piano on one side. Use a cloth to place the chain upon, when requested to remove the chain in order to avoid any noise.
- **Block:** performers usually use a heavy item to generate the percussive sound required, wrapped up in felt or cashmere lining underneath to firmly dampen the strings. Dimensions (indicatively - as it varies in piano construction for the range required): 8cm width x max. 24 cm length (height flexible). In any case, the resulting sound should be **very percussive**, dry and should mingle well with the timbre of the other instruments at the specific passages requested.

**For the harp:**

- Loose bow hair (2 sets: G2, B2) firmly bound on both edges.
Harp preparation guidelines:

- Prepare the 2 sets in advance. To insert and remove the hair, you may use any palpable object of less than 5 mm width. You may attach pins to the sides of the hair (since 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 sets have not much hair to be easily inserted, but also in order to produce a more resonant, vibrant, airy sound. The use of rosin might be required in order to facilitate sound production. Please, do not use fishing net, as this will create a different sound!

For percussion:

- **Coin**: with which to rub the surface around the rim of the bass drum.
- **Bows**: 2+2 double bass bows (□) for each batteria. At least one bow for each batteria should be very well rosined to sustain the passage at “M”.
- **Chain**: with an adjacent hard surface, upon which to strike the chain.
- **Mallets**:

  Batteria 1
  - 2 hard (xylophone) mallets
  - 1 bass drum mallet
  - 4 softest marimba mallets
  - 1 superball (SB) mallet (regular)

  Batteria 2:
  - 1 cluster mallet for the vibraphone (covering its entire range)
  - 2 hard (xylophone) mallets
  - 2 drum sticks
  - 2 rawhide mallets (for chimes)

Percussion guidelines:

- For the bowed cymbals solo at letter M: For batteria 2, ideally on a large Wuhan cymbal - if not available, use the 16”+ suspended cymbal. Choose one that can create the effect of a rich/ homogenous/ voluminous yet smooth and dense multiphonic sound, which can be sustained long and give the impression of the after-resonance of the orchestra’s texture at M (to be performed, as if a ‘cadenza’).
- Bowed pitches (harmonics)-Batt.1/ b. 59 and b. 115: Please mark and prepare (e.g., with stickers) the positions on the tam-tam, in advance.
For violins I, II and violas (for each player):

- 1 metallic practice mute (**sordina da studio**), which will create the desired timbre for the passages required.

**General notes:**

- All extended techniques/ notational symbols used in the work are given their detailed explanation further on, unless indicated in the score.
- Rests: the smallest rest in the piece is the single caesura ✓ (like a breathing rest).
- Accidentals apply for a single bar.
- Trills throughout the piece **as fast as possible.**
- Dynamics: for letters D, G, K, bring dynamics to the forefront to enliven the static spectral chords.
- Two kinds of slurs: regular and dashed slurs. The dashed slurs imply binding the indicated phrases musically but also as ‘Bartók slurs’, when for example in trill-passages.

**Desired orchestral layout on stage:**

The work has been composed with the following orchestral layout in mind (from left to right): Violins I, II, Violas, Celli and Double basses.

**Behind Violins I/II (from left to right):** Harp and Piano, Woodwinds, Horns.

**Behind Woodwinds and Horns (from left to right):** Trumpets, Trombones.

**Behind Trumpets and Trombones:** Percussion 1 and 2 (in antiphonal position across stage).
General notation glossary:

Treble clef with an 'octave-higher' marking: octave higher than written.

Where applicable, some instruments may alternate between two kinds of staves: one for the regular five-line stave and the other one a single line for non-pitched passages (air or noise textures).

Note stem used for non-metric tremolo (i.e. of short duration).

Smaller size note-heads (usually in brackets) indicate the desired pitch to be heard, or the resulting pitch (either from harmonics, or other techniques). For clarinets only this is reversed: the resulting sound as diamond-shaped note-heads.

Note-head pointing upwards: indicating highest pitch (range).

Feathered figures indicate a relative number of pulsating beats and are not to be taken literally. The culmination of feathered figures combined, usually lies in the centre and it matches with a respective dynamic marking. This kind of pulsation should be performed vividly and in a fast speed, independently from the passage's tempo.
Acute sforzando and subito piano (quasi pp) with gradual crescendo up to the next acute sforzando/ piano, etc. (NB: sfz accentuations, always in relation to the respective context of the dynamics).

\[\text{sfp} \rightarrow \text{sfp}\]

**Acute sforzando and subito piano**

\[(\text{senza}) \rightarrow \text{SP} \rightarrow \text{MSP} \rightarrow \text{XSP}\]

From *ordinario* (senza pont.) to *poco ponticello* (SP), towards *medium pont.* (MSP), to extreme ponticello (XSP).

\[\text{MFL} \rightarrow \text{XFL (XST)}\]

From *medium flautando / sul tasto* (MFL), to extreme *flautando / sul tasto* (XFL).

\[\text{senza vibr.} \rightarrow \text{Vibr} \rightarrow \text{XVibr}\]

From *senza vibrato* (ord.) to *some vibrato* (Vibr), towards *extreme vibrato* (XVibr).

\[\text{slow} \rightarrow \text{fast speed}\]

Intensifying vibrato wave: Speed **and** amplitude given in respective passages.

\[\text{Microtonal accidentals used in the piece:}\]

quarter flat/ sharp, 1/8 higher and lower.

\[\text{Figures crossed diagonally with a line: to be performed rapidly, despite tempo indications for the specific passage.}\]

‘Micro-dynamics’: minimal cresc./ decresc. fluctuations upon the given starting and finishing dynamics. For strings, with the bow/ For winds and brass with breathing. It should create an overall tapestry of micro-fluctuations. Individual speed of these fluctuations is given for each instrument involved.

\[\text{Micro-dynamics:}\]

‘Slur-like’ symbols above arrows, indicate the beginning and ending of a non-metrical passage. The crossed sign cancels the previous one, returning thus, to time signature as indicated. **Note:** The non-metrical quality refers to the textures in the passages (e.g., individual tempo acceleration of the figures), and as such, the overall pace and time signatures **should be taken in mind.**
Instrument-specific glossary:

Woodwinds (general remarks first and then individual)

From pure sound to full pitch (i.e., ord.):
There are four stages (marked in the score as ①/②/③/④): a white circle is pure air (①), black circle is reg. pitch (④). Two intermediate stages, one with more air and some pitch (②), applied for delicate whistle tones (WT), as well as with passages with a minimum of pitch (explained further below as aeolian sound A) and the other one, with more pitch and some air (③), which is used for the aeolian sound B used in the piece.

Aeolian Sound A:
- Applied within marking number ②;
- Note-head used to indicate a minimum amount of pitch within air, yet NOT quite a whistle tone, nor an aeolian tone, rather something in-between.

Aeolian Sound B:
- Applied within marking number ③;
- Air with some pitch, more audible than the one above.
- Soft and delicate – created with a slightly curved direction of the air in the embouchure, resulting in sounding two octaves higher (quasi harmonics).

Note head used for passages containing textures of harmonics.

Piccolo

Fragile, trembling, containing small parts of neighbouring pitches (hence the curved zigzag line).
C flute and Alto Flute (shared examples)

A very fast harmonic sweep though the indicated pitch range; The effect is more important than the pitches sounding in-between (like a wind blow).

A very fast harmonic sweep though the indicated pitch range, this time on the sound *sh*. The effect is more important than the pitches sounding in-between (like a wind blow).

Percussive and palatal t/k fast descending scale (closed embouchure).

**Aeolian Sound B:**
Applied within marking number ③; Air with some audible pitch. Soft and delicate – created with a slightly curved direction of the air in the embouchure, resulting in sounding two octaves higher (quasi harmonics); In this case with added key-click sounds.
Bright towards a dark palatal approximant ‘chi’ air sound transition (closed embouchure).

In addition to performing the passage, speak softly the words in the mouthpiece (in-between spoken and whispered, clear but introverted, not evocative).

Inhale/ exhale in the mouthpiece: arrow indications upwards and downwards respectively.

Pure -t- palatal sound (without air).

Alto Flute only:

(+ Key-click sound with some air (on these fingerings).
Oboe:

Given the multiphonic fingering, gradually vary air speed and create (naturally occurring) vibrations. Further on, gradually vary the tuning of the multiphonic in quartertones (again through air). While climaxing towards $f$, lift the bell of the instrument up so that the sound travels more distinctly amid the orchestra setting. Both oboes perform this sound idea in different timings (given in score). This should create intense interference, which is the main scope of this sound idea. Ideally (and if possible) start with the given pitch before gradually fingering the complete multiphonic (given here with a small circle above - a D6/ eighth of a tone higher, at the beginning).

Multiphonics for the oboe:

(1)

(2)

(3)

NB: The fingerings (and numbers of multiphonics) shown here are credited to Veale, Mahnkopf, *The Techniques of Oboe Playing*, Baerenreiter, 2002. Many thanks to the oboist Christos Tsogias-Razakof for his valuable practical help on these.
Clarinet in Bb

Harmonic: top pitch is the desired sounding one (fundamental not audible)

Timbral trill (bisb.).

Bisb. on the given harmonic.

Harmonic bisb.:
Bisb. with 2 different harmonics, resulting in the same pitch in pulsation - as indicated.
Starting from *dal niente* upon the given fundamental of the multiphonic, build up the desired multiphonic gradually (multiphonic in details further down as $M_1$).

**Multiphonics for the $B^b$ clarinet:**

1. 

   

   On a German system clarinet, the fingering is shown here (credits: G. Krassnitzer, *Multiphonics für Klarinette mit deutschem System*, Germany: Ebenos, 2003, No. 407). If your clarinet is on a French system, then create a multiphonic based on the fundamental shown here, $C_4$ (sounding) within *f* dynamic, that has a rich high partials sound. Try one that blends well with the rest of the instruments.

2. 

   

   On a German system clarinet, the fingering is shown here (credits: G. Krassnitzer, No. 710). If your clarinet is on a French system, then create a multiphonic based on the fundamental shown here, $F#_4$ (sounding) within $ff$ dynamic, that has a rich high partials sound. Try one that blends well with the rest of the instruments.

**Bassoon**

(+ Key-click sound only (on given fingering range). Dynamics apply for key-click force.)
Percussion (general notation):

- Indication to perform in the centre / at the rim, respectively.
- Indication for circular motion.

Bass Drum

Roll circularly the superball (SB) mallet around the rim, in a slow/medium pace and varied pressure (eventually it will jump up irregularly, as if *ricochet*). Use two SB’s (left and right hand), if preferable.

Rub the surface around the rim with a coin, in a slow/medium pace.

Tam-tam/ Cymbals

Find/ prepare and ‘mark’ a spot on the Tam-tam (and on cymbal bat.2/ b. 110) where a high G♯ and later on a high B♭ partial resound, when bowed. **Important:** Use a double bass bow/
Cymbals only

Start by bowing the cymbal as accustomed vertically. Then gradually vary bow change/velocity/position/pressure ad lib. General tendency: create volume - a rich multiphonic sonority. Later on in the passage, when reaching max./dense volume, abruptly slower bow velocity, while sustaining the volume. This abrupt change should assimilate to a distorted strumming on an electric guitar. Then crescendo/vary bow pressure/speed anew until further indicated.

Vibraphone

Cluster mallet upon the entire range of the vibraphone.

Harmonic on vibraphone: using your fingernail, press the middle of the specific pitch/key, while bowing with the other hand. This will produce a sounding partial two octaves higher (some harmonics are too fragile, but it is desired so). Pulsation: either as a natural interference with the other instruments, OR artificially with the palm (see below as in crotales), OR, use the motor for as long as the pedal to create the vibration as imperceptibly as possible.

Crotales

Bow the indicated pitches and then, when lifting the bow attempt creating a vibration on the sound, with the palm of your hand (as intense, as possible).
Marimba

Perform this passage with 4 soft marimba mallets (2 x 2), in the lowest range, as given. The sound should be dark and haunting. You may also use bass drum mallets (it makes the sound even darker and more resonant). Repeat the figure within the repetition bars for as long as indicated.

Harp:

Repeat the figure within the repetition bars for as long as suggested by the horizontal curve (within the time and tempo given).

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

‘Thunder effect’:
strumming the lowest octave that causes the wire strings to strike each other.

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.
Cluster marking: Range indicated.

Slap the interior strings of the piano with the hand palm on the range area indicated:
Numbers correspond to the division of the piano area as mentioned above, lowest range (①) to the middle range (②).
Arrows indicate the higher and lower part of these ranges, e.g. ①↑, the higher parts of the low bass range etc.
(ranges approximate depending on the piano model).

Indications of whether performing, inside the interior of the instrument, or at the keyboard.

Gradually lifting up the right pedal allowing the sound and its overtones to die out gradually.

Place a block (see ‘preparation guides’ above) to dampen the strings, creating the dry/percussive sound required.
The crossed sign: remove the block.

X-shaped note-heads are within the dampened range and will sound very dry/percussive, as opposed to the other regular keys/notes.
Placing the solid block (as above) will dampen the range from approximately F3 to C5. Passages/figures such as these, are pianistically conceived as open-palm reach fingering.
Bowed string 
(See guidelines above)
Velocity of bowing: slow and steady, not accelerating, nor reducing speed by means of the dynamic markings.

Repeat the figure within the repetition bars for as long as suggested by the horizontal curve (within the time and tempo given).

Gliss. across the iron frame of the lowest range (indicated in score as range ①), with the superball (SB) mallet, ending up into the lower strings; then gliss. on the strings until reaching indicated pitch. It should create a counter effect to the glockenspiel sound at these passages and it should be performed as if within a single gesture.

Respectively: place chain across the lowest bass octave of the piano strings/ let chain rattle until it dies out (or according to the pedalling of the passage)/ remove chain.
Strings (general remarks):

The string parts are structured with the following layers of notation (from bottom - above the stave-top): articulation indications; vibrato indications (with speed indications - often leading to trills); bow pressure indications (see below); ponticello and / or sul tasto indications; tempo indications (not shown here).

Bow pressure (increase/ sustain max. pressure/ decrease).

Circular bowing:

**VIOLINS ONLY:** Dampen (sufficiently) the strings with left hand: high position. Bow circularly and softly, with a slow to medium pace on all 4 strings. For sff: bow near the left-hand fingers/ on the higher part of the bow.

**NB:** Dynamics in this passage suggest noise intensity and NOT velocity of bowing.

**CELLI ONLY:** position the left palm towards/ close to the bridge, dampening all the strings (sufficiently). Bow (as much circularly as possible) within this space between palm and bridge; this produces a better sound for the desired effect, on cello. Slow to medium pace!

A harmonic gliss. on the open string indicated (gliss. on the first harmonics until you reach higher partials, and then gliss. within the highest possible partials, in a free order upwards and downwards - slow/ medium pace).

**Violins/ Violas**
Practise mute on/off

\textit{presto possibile (individual tempo with \textit{Vln II})}

Repeat the figure within the repetition bars for as long as suggested by the curve (within the time and tempo given).

From the last regular note-head given (e.g. \textit{D$^6$}), start a rapid gliss. towards the highest range of the instrument (unless range specifically indicated). Within this highest range perform small, non-metric, yet rapid glissandi (with the left hand, NOT the bow). Use two fingers (left hand) to achieve glissando “tremolando”, when in the high position. Use the bow only for the non-metric tremolo (\textit{z}).

\textbf{Violoncelli/ Double basses}

‘Scratching sound’: starting on the pitch indicated, gradually apply pressure to more than two strings with left palm, while applying \textbf{extreme} pressure on the bow in rapid non-metric tremoli; glissando until the end, upon the indicated dynamics; \textit{Pitch (in brackets) during the gliss.} is an indication of position.
L’istesso mosso come sopra
As soon as you remove the chain:

\( \text{sfzpp} \geq X \) br

Double bass bow (well rosined)

\( \text{sfzpp} \geq \text{œ} \)

\( \text{œ} \)-

\( \text{œ} \)-

\( \text{œ} \)-

\( \text{sfzp} \geq \ X \) sp

As before, attain a high 4 partial and sustain.

\( \text{œ} \)-

\( \text{œ} \)-

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As above, with the same intonation.