SUSURRO

for large mixed choir
or electronic version

Emilio Mendoza
1977

SUSURRO

para gran coro mixto
for large mixed choir
für großen, gemischten Chor

o versión electrónica
or electronic version
oder elektronische Fassung

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SCORE

SUSURRO II

An electronic, spatial music composition
for mixed choir

Emilio Mendoza, 2008

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An electronic, spatial music composition
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Susurro II (in English: whisper), is the second work in a series of space compositions using the white noise produced by the human mouth as the sound source. It is an electronic music composition which was made for a non-electronic instrument, the mixed choir. Four whispering consonants, ss, sh, gh, and r, are altered by the mouth to give a range of three relative vertical placements, but without any production of sounds with distinct pitch. The choir is divided into source groups placed from left to right, with also a group distributed throughout the whole space of the choir as it were the "mono" sound. The work uses thematic material of spatial and timbrical significance, where musical ideas move to and from the center of the choir to the right or to the left. Many choir compositions often include this type of sound material in short introductions or codas. In this case, human whispering sounds were chosen as sound material for the entire piece as a way of prioritizing spatial structuring elements rather than relying in any involvent of pitch structures. Therefore, it is a pure spatial music composition. In sense and expression, **Susurro II** belongs to an underworld of restrained, soundless speech, of desiccated, colourless, dry flowers, to the barely noticeable presence in the dusk of the thin space between life and death. If humans feel themselves at risk of death when surrounded by the unknown in the dark, the spatial sound awareness becomes a primary sense for survival.

INDICATIONS

- Devide the choir into two groups, A and B: more or less 3/4 of the choir in "A", 1/4 in "B", or however best it can be numerically suited. Make up each group of an equally numbered amount of the different types of voices (SATB).

- Devide group A into five equal sections, each with its own corresponding number (A1 A2, A3, A4, A5). For example, a choir with 24 persons would be: A1 - A5 one SATB in each group and one SATB in Group B.

- Each group should try to breath in a way that it is not simultaneously and without an accent.

- It may be recommended to have some drinking water nearby to refresh the throat when dry.

- The very long crescendo can be also achieved by varying the number of players singing in a given group or section.

- Some indications are written in parenthesis as a reminder of a previous sign.

- The five A groups are located from left (A1) to right (A5) on the stage, A3 being in the center. The members of group B are spreaded evently from left to right. It is to the advantage of the composition to have the A groups separated as much as possible.
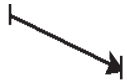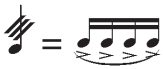
- The piece is about 9 minutes long.

- Accent

- Close lips abruptly at the end of the crescendo.

- Glissando: change gradually the apparent "pitch" (bright, to dark or dark to bright), maintaining throughout the characteristics of the consonant emplo-yed.

- Eigth-notes subdivision should be equally accented.

- For the four sounds (ss, sh, gh, r), there are hree different colour register:

Bright

Medium

Dark

- Gradual change between these three registers.

- Small change in colour for each register, A: brighter, U: darker, achieved by opening wide (A) or closing the lips near together and round (U) with a given sound and register.

- **SS**
High:Teeth near or completely closed, tongue very near to the front teeth, lips as if smiling.
Low: Mouth half-opened, tongue far back, vertically, near the roof of the mouth, lips near together and round. Blow as if to pronounce a "Hoo." When changing the pitch of the sound "SS" keep always the tongue near the roof of the mouth.
- **SH**
High: Teeth closed, tongue not so near the front teeth, lips accommodated for the "SH" and opened.
Low: Teeth closed, tongue far back, lips more together but spreaded out.
- **GH**
High: Teeth slightly apart, tongue accommodated for the "GH" near the front. Lips as if smiling.
Low: mouth opened, tongue far back, lips near and round. For the *sforzando*, pronounce a "K" at the beginning.
- **R**
High: Rebounce continually the tongue on the roof of the mouth, the mouth half-opened, lips wide opened and smiling. Keep the tongue in the middle of the mouth.
Low: Rebounce continually the tongue on the roof of the mouth although a little more to the front. Mouth half-opened, lips near and round.

Susurro
Emilio Mendoza, 1977

Susurro II (in English: whisper), is a space composition using the white noise produced by the human mouth as the sound source. It is an electronic music composition which was made for a non-electronic instrument, the mixed choir. Four whispering consonants, ss, sh, gh, and r, are altered by the mouth to give a range of three relative vertical placements, but without any production of sounds with distinct pitch. The choir is divided into source groups placed from left to right, with also a group distributed throughout the whole space of the choir as it were the "mono" sound. The work uses thematic material of spatial and timbrical significance, where musical ideas move to and from the center of the choir to the right or to the left. Many choir compositions often include this type of sound material in short introductions or codas. In this case, human whispering sounds were chosen as sound material for the entire piece as a way of prioritizing spatial structuring elements rather than relying in any involvent of pitch structures. Therefore, it is a pure spatial music composition. In sense and expression, *Susurro* belongs to an underworld of restrained, soundless speech, of desiccated, colourless, dry flowers, to the barely noticeable presence in the dusk of the thin space between life and death. If humans feel themselves at risk of death when surrounded by the unknown in the dark, the spatial sound awareness becomes a primary sense for survival.

Each chosen sound should have the following possibilities:
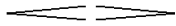
Gradual chance of dynamics as well as different stationary land intensities.
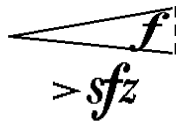
Crescendo with an abrupt end.

Sadden accent.

Regular accentuation (Tremolo) of speed between 4 and 6 accents per seconds

Three different colour register: Bright, Medium, Dark.
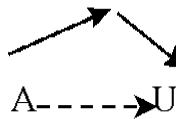
Gradual chance between these three registers.

Small change in colour for each register, A: bright, a: Darker.

(Choir version)

Devide the choir into two groups, A and B: 2/3 (or 3/4) of the choir in "A", 1/3 (or 1/4) in "B". Make up each group of an equally numbered amount of the different types of voices (sopr, tenor, etc).

Devide group A into five equal sections, each with its own corresponding number (A_1 A_2 Etc.).

Try to breath as less frequent as possible, not simultaneously, and fast but without an accent. The piece will need a lot of breathing which in any case will give it a vibrations characterisc that is desired, in a moderate way.
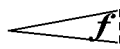
If this piece is very tiring to play because of breathing, include a number of members to relay in the middle of the piece or when ever necessary.
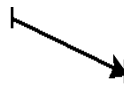
It may be recommended to have glass of water nearby to refresh the throat when dry.
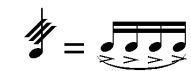
The very long crescendo can be also achieved by varying the number of players singing in a given group or section.

Some indications are written in parenthesis as a reminder of a previous sign.

Accent.

Close lips abruptly at the end of the crescendo.

Glissando: change gradually the apparent "pitch" (bright, to dark or dark to bright), maintaining throughout the characteristics of the consonant employed.

Of equal accentuation. It can also be a little faster, if it is so wished, for exampled with quintuplets.

Indications

The tempo can be varied during the piece, not exceeding the limit of 58 -66.

Distribution:

Group B

Groups A1-5

A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
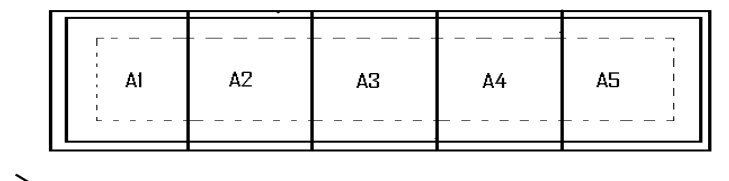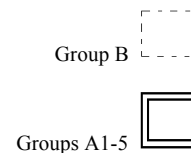
Audience

Place the members of group A in their corresponding section, Nº 1 far left and Nº 5 far right, without any marked separation in between the sections nor any kind of rows.

Mix in the members of group B evenly with group A approximately inside the rectangle of broken lines.

In the rehearsals, the width of each section can be varied so as to obtain the best results. Eg: A_3 narrower and A_1 , A_5 wider:

A_1	A_2	A_3	A_4	A_5
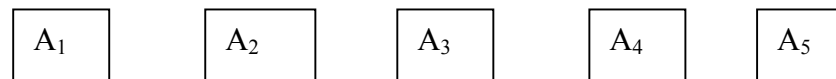
But always with he same amount of people in each section.

Sounds used, all consonants:
(Choir version)

SS — High. Teeth near or completely closed, tongue very near to the front teeth, lips as if smiling.

Low. Mouth half opened, tongue far back, vertically, near the roof of the mouth, lips near together and round. Blow as if to pronounce a "Hoo". (When changing the pitch of the sounds "SS" keep always the tongue near the roof of the mouth).

SH — High. Teeth closed, tongue not so near the front teeth, lips accommodated for the "SH" and opened.

Low. Teeth closed, tongue far back, lips more together but spreaded out.

GH — High. Teeth slightly apart, tongue accommodated for the "GH" near the front. Lips as if smiling.

Low mouth opened, tongue far back, lips near and round.
 (For the sforzando, pronounce a "K" at the beginning).

R — Rebounce continually the tongue on the roof of the mouth, the mouth half opened lips wide opened and smiling. Keep the tongue in the middle of the mouth.

Rebounce continually the tongue on the roof of the mouth although a little more to the front. Mouth half opened, lips near ground.

Intermediate position between the two extremes indicated for each consonant.

A ⊢ - - - → U

U ⊢ - - - → A

With any of the above mentioned sounds, open or close only the lips. In "A" they are wide opened, in "U" they are near together and round.
Do not pronounce the vocals

SUSURRO

**Für großen, gemischten Chor
oder elektronische Fassung**

Emilio Mendoza, 1977

Die Komposition SUSURRO kann von einem Chor interpretiert werden, sowie es ursprünglich gedacht war (siehe "Erklärungen") oder mit elektronischen Mitteln, die den Grundanforderungen des Stücks entsprechen, da es mit dieser Denkweise gewachsen ist. Es kann in einer Live-Aufführung mit elektronischer Anlage, als festgelegte Fassung auf Tonband (mit konkreten oder synthetischen Klängen) oder auf irgendeine Art und Weise gespielt werden, mit der sich die kompositorische Arbeit an dem Stück darstellen läßt: Man benötigt vier verschieden Klänge, die den Lauten, die für die Chorfassung gewählt wurden, nicht unbedingt ähnlich sein müssen. Es wird empfohlen, daß die Klänge eine Beziehung zueinander haben, die von geringer bis zu größter Komplexität reicht; der letzte sollte eine Art schnelles Tremolo haben (ähnlich dem "R"; siehe "Benützte Laute..."). Alle diese Klänge sollten von jeder der sechs Klangquellen erzeugt werden können, die, ähnlich der sechs, in der Chorfassung verwendeten Gruppen, im Raum verteilt sind; das heißt von links nach rechts A1-A5, und B als allgemeine Quelle in diesem Raum.

Jeder gewählte Klang sollte folgende Möglichkeiten haben:
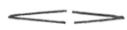
 All mähliche Veränderung der Dynamik, ebenso verschiedene feststehende Lautstärken

 Crescendo mit abruptem Ende

 Plötzliche Betonung

 Regelmäßige Betonung mit einer Geschwindigkeit zwischen 4 und 6 Akzenten pro Sekunde.

 Drei verschiedene Farbregister: hell, mittel, dunkel.
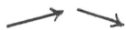
 Allmählich Veränderung zwischen diesen drei Registern
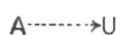
 Kleine Farbveränderung für jedes Register, A: heller, U: dunkler

Erklärungen (Chorfassung)

Der Chor wird in zwei Gruppen A und B geteilt: 2/3 (oder _) des Chors in "A", 1/3 (oder _) in "B". Jede Gruppe soll sich aus der gleichen Anzahl der verschiedenen Stimmlagen (Sopran, Tenor, usw.) zusammensetzen. Die Gruppe "A" wird in fünf gleichstarke Untergruppen aufgeteilt, jede mit entsprechender Nummer (A1, A2, usw.).

Versuchen, so selten wie möglich zu atmen, keines falls gleichzeitig, aber schnell und ohne Akzente einatmen. Das Stück beansprucht sehr viel Atmen, aber Schwierigkeiten des Atems in dem Stück entsteht, ist gewollt, sollte aber gemäßigt sein.

Wenn das Stück durch das Atem sehr ermüdend ist, kann man Sänger als Reserve miteinbeziehen, die in der Mitte des Stücks, oder wenn es nötig ist, einspringen. Es ist empfehlenswert, ein Glas Wasser griffbereit zu haben, um die Kehle zu erfrischen.

Sehr lange Crescendi können auch durch Veränderung der Anzahl von Sängern in einer bestimmten Gruppe oder Untergruppe erreicht werden.

Einige Angaben sind zur Erinnerung an die vorausgehenden Zeichen in Klammern geschrieben.

> Akzent

Die Lippen nach dem Crescendo abrupt schließen.

Glissando: Die scheinbare "Tonlage" stetig verändern (von heller zu dunkler oder umgekehrt), während die charakteristischen Merkmale des verwendeten Konsonanten beibehalten werden.
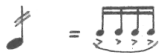
Gleiche Betonung. Es kann auch etwas schneller sein, falls es so gewünscht wird, z.B. mit Quintolen.

Aufteilung:

Gruppe A ▭
Gruppe B ⌐¬

ZUHORER
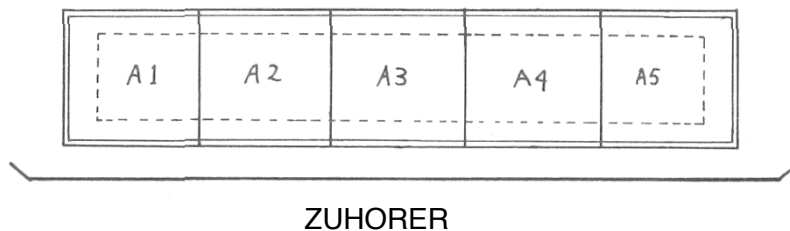
Die Mitwirkenden von Gruppe A werden entsprechend ihren Untergruppen aufgestellt, N° 1 links außen, N° 5 rechts außen, aber ohne die Aufteilung in Untergruppen irgendwie zu markieren, auch nicht in Reihen. Die Mitwirkenden von Gruppen B mischen sich unter die Gruppe A, ungefähr im Bereich des gestrichelten Rechtecks.

Bei den Proben kann die Breite der Untergruppen verändert werden, um das beste Ergebnis zu erhalten, z.B. A3 schmaler und A1, A5 breiter, aber immer mit gleichbleibender Anzahl von Mitwirkenden in den verschiedenen Untergruppen:
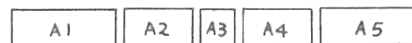
Das Tempo kann während des Stücks verändert werden, aber nicht über die Grenzen von Viertel = 58 - 66.

Das Stück wurde am 8 April, 1979 innerhalbs der 33° Hauptarbeitstagung des Instituts für Neue Musik und Musikerziehung, Darmstadt, durch einen Chor von Freunde des Uniklinikstudentenwohnheims, Strümpellstraße, Düsseldorf, aufgeführt worden, Michael Feller, Tonleiter, Alfredo Rugeles, Dirigent.

Aufnahme: Studio des Robert Schumann Instituts, Düsseldorf, 1978. Neue Musik Ensemble, Alfredo Rugeles, Dirigent.

Susurro dauert 9:09 min.

Benützte Laute, alle Konsonanten (Chorfassung):

SS

Hoch. Zähne fast oder ganz geschlossen, Zunge sehr nahe an den Vorderzähnen, Lippen wie beim Lächeln gedehnt.

Tief. Mund halb geöffnet, Zunge weit zurück, senkrecht zum Gaumen, Lippen nahe aneinander und rund. Blasen als wäre "hu" auszusprechen. (Beim Wechseln der Tonlage des Lautes "ss", Zunge immer nahe am Gaumen halten).

SH

(Wie im Deutschen "sch")

Hoch. Zähne geschlossen, Zunge etwas von den Zähnen entfernt, Lippenhaltung wie für die Aussprache von "sch" und offen.

Tief. Zähne geschlossen, Zunge weit zurück, Lippen etwas näher aneinander, aber gedehnt.

GH

(Wie im Deutschen "g" (ch), gutturaler Gaumenlaut)

Hoch. Zähne leicht geöffnet, Zungehaltung wie für die Aussprache von "gh" an die Zähne gelegt, Lippen wie beim Lächeln gedehnt.

Tief. Mund geöffnet, Zunge weit zurück, Lippen nahe aneinander und rund.

(Wie für Sforzando, am Anfang "K" aussprechen).

R

Hoch. Das "R" kontinuierlich rollen. Zunge vorne am Gaumen, Mund halb, Lippen weit geöffnet, wie beim Lächeln. Zunge in der Mitte des Mundes halten.

Tief. Das "R" kontinuierlich rollen. Zunge am Gaumen, aber etwas weiter vorne, Mund halb geöffnet, Lippen nahe aneinander und rund.

Bei allen Konsonanten, Mitteposition zwischen den beiden genannten Extremen.

A·····→U
U·····→A

Verbunden mit einem der oben erwähnten laute: Lippen nur öffnen und schließen. Bei "A" sind sie weit geöffnet, bei "U" sind sie nahe aneinander und rund. Die Vokale sollten nicht ausgesprochen werden.

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