

**THE KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
IN KRAKOW**

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**Facets of sonoristics in music for solo guitar of the late 20th
and early 21st century. Pisati – Vasks – Malinowski – Berio**

**in proceedings for the award of a doctorate in the field of arts,
in the artistic discipline: musical arts**

Thesis Supervisor: Prof. Michał Nagy, PhD

Krakow 2024

ARTISTIC WORK

Program

Maurizio Pisati (1959)

Sette studi

Studio no. 1

Studio no. 2

Studio no. 3

Studio no. 4

Studio no. 5

Studio no. 6

Studio no. 7

Pēteris Vasks (1946)

Vientulības sonāte

I. *Pensieroso*

II. *Risoluto*

III. *Con dolore*

Paweł Malinowski (1994)

untitled [largo]

Luciano Berio (1925–2003)

Sequenza XI

Performer:

Radosław Wiczorek – classical guitar

Recording engineer:

Dariusz Kubiński

Recorded on March 23–24 and July 6–7, 2024 in the Concert Hall of the Wojciech
Kilar State Music Schol Complex in Katowice, Poland

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Preface

The urge of 20th century composers to search for new sounds is intriguingly intertwined with the idiom of the guitar – Its color and articulation possibilities, which were recognized by artists as early as the turn of the 18th century. The willingness to experiment, combined with the characteristics of the instrument, resulted in sonoristic works in which the expressive possibilities of the solo classical guitar were explored to an unprecedented degree. New horizons could be reached through innovative instrumental techniques, and these uncovered overlooked challenges that required performance solutions. In this context, it is important to include a sonoristic aspect in the study of guitar compositions of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and to reflect on the performance and compositional perspectives that such an approach can offer.

This description concerns an artistic work in the form of an audio recording of Maurizio Pisati's *Sette studi*, Pēteris Vasks' *Vientulības sonāte*, Paweł Malinowski's *untitled [largo]* and Luciano Berio's *Sequenza XI*. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of sonoristics in compositions for solo guitar from the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, using the example of the works recorded on the album. They present a wide spectrum of the use of sonoristic means, which will allow a more complete description of the issue.

The main thesis is that consideration of the sonoristic aspect plays a key role in the faithful interpretation of compositions that use unconventional performance means. The research goal is to discuss performance issues related to the effective achievement of innovative sounds, the impact of sonoristics on expression, and, as a consequence, to present a convincing and coherent interpretation. It seems that a spectrum of sonoristics can be created and each of the mentioned works can be placed on it, depending on the degree of use of sonoristic means. The research question is how, and for what purpose, sonoristic effects were, and are, used by composers, and how the performer should execute them.

This topic has not been sufficiently addressed by other researchers. Concepts related to sonorism and sonoristics are among the interests of Polish theorists¹, but these

¹ See K. Droba, *Sonoryzm polski*, [in:] *Kompozytorzy polscy 1918–2000*, t. 1: *Eseje*, ed. M. Podhajski, Akademia Muzyczna im. Fryderyka Chopina w Warszawie, Akademia Muzyczna im. Stanisława Moniuszki w Gdańsku, Gdańsk–Warszawa 2005, s. 277–281; H. Kostrzewska, *Sonorystyka*, Ars Nova, Poznań 1994; I. Lindstedt, *Sonorystyka w twórczości kompozytorów polskich XX wieku*, Wydawnictwa

perspectives hardly discuss performance issues. In particular, guitar literature is not part of the mainstream of theoretical thought. Guitarists who have successfully described innovative techniques have tended to focus on cataloguing them rather than on the practical aspects of performance, basically not addressing their importance in terms of expression and coherent interpretation². While performance and analytical issues have been addressed in relation to Luciano Berio's *Sequenza XI*³, there has been little focus on Pēteris Vasks' *Vientulības sonāte*⁴. A reflection on Maurizio Pisati's *Sette studi*⁵ has only been undertaken by the author of this article and the composer himself, together with Elena Càsoli; Jessica Kaiser⁶ has written about the duos based on this cycle of etudes. Paweł Malinowski's *untitled [largo]* is a new composition and has therefore not yet been discussed by other researchers. The composer is a young artist whose works have not yet been thoroughly analyzed.

Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010; W. Malinowski, *Problem sonorystyki w „Mitach” Karola Szymanowskiego*, “Muzyka” 1957, no 4; A. Poszowski, *Zagadnienia sonorystycznej techniki harmoniczej*, “Zeszyty Naukowe PWSM w Sopocie”, PWSM, Sopot 1967, s. 163–166; A. Prosnak, *Zagadnienie sonorystyki na przykładzie etiud Chopina*, “Muzyka” 1958, no 1–2, s. 14–32; B. Schaeffer, *Sonorystyka współczesna*, n.d., n.p.; W. Szalonek, *Krajobraz dźwiękowy muzyki Chopina*, “Opcje. Kwartalnik Kulturalny” 1993, s. 58–59 [in:] L.M. Moll, *Witold Szalonek. Katalog tematyczny dzieł. Teksty o muzyce*, Śląskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne, Katowice 2002, s. 239–242; K. Szwałgier, *Sonorystyka i sonorystyka*, “Ruch Muzyczny” 2009, no 10, s. 6–10.

² See S.L.N. Fernandes, *Percussive Resources of the classical guitar*, doctoral thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte 2020; S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*, Bärenreiter, Kassel 2014; J. Schneider, *The Contemporary Guitar*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1985; R.L. Torres, *A New Chemistry of Sound: The Technique of Multiphonics as a Compositional Element for Guitar and Amplified Guitar*, doctoral thesis, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon 2015; R.A. Lunn, *Extended Techniques for the Classical Guitar: A Guide for Composers*, doctoral thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus 2010; M.L. Vishnick, *A Survey of Extended Techniques on the Classical Six-String Guitar with Appended Studies in New Morphological Notation*, doctoral thesis, City, University of London, London 2014.

³ See M.D. Porcaro, *A Polyphonic Mode of Listening: Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI for Guitar*, master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2003; M. Schullman, *Rethinking Patterns: Associative Formal Analysis and Luciano Berio's Sequenzas*, doctoral thesis, Yale University, 2016; G. Wuestemann, *Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI per Chitarra Solo: A Performer's Practical Analysis with Performance Edited Score*, doctoral thesis, The University of Arizona, 1998; A. Vianello, *La Sequenza XI per chitarra sola di Luciano Berio*, „Il Fronimo” 1994, n. 87, s. 43–47.

⁴ See I.M. Collado, *Vientulības sonāte, P. Vasks: Música y espiritualidad. Acercamiento a la estética de la música del siglo XX para guitarra clásica*, unpublished master's thesis, Conservatori Superior de Música de les Illes Balears, Palma 2023; J. Szeja, *Zagadnienia wykonawcze i interpretacyjne Vientulības sonāte Pēterisa Vaska*, niepublikowana praca magisterska, Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego w Katowicach, Katowice 2015.

⁵ See E. Càsoli, M. Pisati, *Largo teso: The Seven Studies for guitar by Maurizio Pisati*, “Proceedings of The 21st Century Guitar Conference 2019 & 2021” 2023, s. 18–21; *Guitar Sonoristics in Sette studi by Maurizio Pisati*, “Edukacja Muzyczna” 2022, no 17, pp. 211–227.

⁶ See J. Kaiser, *Exploring Musical Togetherness: An embodied approach to relational interpretation in Maurizio Pisati's Sette Duo*, “Music & Practice” 2023, no 10

The lack of research is even more obvious in Poland. However, it is worth mentioning Jerzy Koenig's popular science article⁷ on the color possibilities of the guitar, or Franciszek Wiczorek's doctoral dissertation⁸, in which he deals with the performance problems of homogeneous guitar ensembles using contemporary guitar music as an example. Marek Nosal⁹ devoted his publication to composers from the second half of the 20th century, and Wojciech Gurgul¹⁰ is also mainly interested in music for guitar by Polish composers from the 20th and 21st centuries. Andrzej Olewiński¹¹, on the other hand, focuses his research on the sonic possibilities of the electric guitar.

It should also be noted that the works presented and described here – with the exception of *Vientulības sonāte* – have not been performed by other Polish guitarists, nor have they been given a Polish premiere or recorded in Poland. The *untitled [largo]*, on the other hand, was composed by Paweł Malinowski in the course of preparing this dissertation and is an original example of a sonoristic use of the guitar by a composer of the younger generation. The author of the dissertation gave the first performance of this piece and made the first recording of it.

The most important sources of research were the scores of the compositions recorded on the album¹². Publications by Iwona Lindstedt¹³, Krzysztof Sz wajgier¹⁴ and Hanna Kostrzewska¹⁵ – in the field of sonoristics, Angelo Gilardino¹⁶ – in the field of guitar literature review, Seth Josel and Ming Tsao¹⁷ – in the field of contemporary

⁷ See J. Koenig, *Kolorystyka gry (1)*, “Świat Gitary” 2004, no 2, s. 36–39; J. Koenig, *Kolorystyka gry (2)*, “Świat Gitary” 2004, no 3, s. 34–36.

⁸ See F. Wiczorek, *Zagadnienia kameralnej sztuki wykonawczej w okolicy gitarowym*, niepublikowana rozprawa doktorska, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, 2011.

⁹ See M. Nosal, *Twórczość kompozytorów polskich na gitarę solo po 1945 roku. Zagadnienia artystyczno-wykonawcze na wybranych przykładach*, Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego w Katowicach, Katowice 2013.

¹⁰ Wojciech Gurgul is currently preparing a dissertation entitled *Development of Polish guitar literature in the 20th and early 21st centuries*.

¹¹ A. Olewiński, *Możliwości sonorystyczne wynikające z zastosowania gitary elektrycznej we współczesnej literaturze gitarowej*, lecture given as part of the Second Warsaw Guitarists' Scientific and Artistic Conference at the UMFC, 28.04.2024.

¹² Roch Modrzejewski worked on *Sequenza XI* while studying under Prof. Pablo Márquez at the Musik-Akademie der Stadt Basel in Switzerland from 2007 to 2009, but did not perform the piece at an official concert.

¹³ See M. Pisati, *Sette studi*, Ricordi, Milano 1991; P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte*, Schott, Mainz 1992, P. Malinowski, *bez tytułu [largo]*, Modran, Orzesze 2022; L. Berio, *Sequenza XI per chitarra sola*, Universal Edition, Wien 1988.

¹⁴ See I. Lindstedt, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ See K. Sz wajgier, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ See H. Kostrzewska, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ See A. Gilardino, *Manuale di storia della chitarra*, Vol. 2, Bèrben, 1988.

guitar techniques – proved valuable. Mieczyslaw Tomaszewski's research¹⁸ proved valuable in preparing and describing a coherent interpretation of the works.

The research method is based on the analysis of publications on guitar literature of the twentieth century, especially those that take into account extended techniques. A comparative analysis is carried out in order to formulate precise notions of sonoristics. Mieczysław Tomaszewski's concept of integral interpretation is applied to the study of the expression of selected works. Selected representative compositions have been recorded. In the description of the works, the problems of their performance are presented together with suggestions for their solution.

The work is divided into an introduction, two chapters, concluding reflections, and a bibliography. The first chapter is devoted to the clarification of terminology, concerning the concepts of “sonoristics”, “sonorism” or “timbre”. The characterization of the timbral possibilities of the classical guitar is approximated on the basis of sources that deal with this subject in a multifaceted manner. A panorama of sonoristic guitar compositions from the 1960s to the present is also outlined, with special attention to the expressive spectrum of such works. The second chapter briefly discusses the composers' biographies and the characteristics of their musical language, and above all, describes the interpretation and performance issues of selected works in the context of sonoristics. The compositions described are compared through a sonoristic prism and then analyzed in terms of expression within the concept of integral interpretation. The conclusions drawn from this work are synthesized in the concluding reflections.

I hope this work will inspire both performers and composers to explore the sonic richness of the classical guitar

¹⁸ See S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *op. cit.*

1 The guitar in a sonoristic perspective

1.1 In the circle of sonoristics. Terminological considerations¹

When examining the role of sonoristics in guitar music, it is important to consider how to properly define it, what “sonorism” and “sonoristics” are, and to determine the meaning of words that remain in its orbit, such as “sonority”, “timbre” and “color”. “What does sonoristic mean?” - Boguslaw Schaeffer wondered. “Sonorous - of course. Music sounds good, poor [...] - of course it sounds, so why the hell emphasize this fact? [...] Sonoristics doesn't mean anything conceptually either².”

One of the fundamental terminological problems is the unstated relationship between “sonorism” and “sonoristics”. One researcher who postulates the separation of “sonorism” from other trends in 20th-century music is Krzysztof Sz wajgier. According to this author, “sonorism”:

is an artistic direction (trend, movement, formation, genre, phenomenon, idea, attitude) with its own style, aesthetics, technique, influence, expression, characteristics, body of works. It was established by Polish composers at the beginning of the sixties and at the end of the decade it left the orbit of actuality together with the whole modernist formation [...] Sonorism is the music of sounds with blurred recognition in traditional instrumental, vocal, instrumental-vocal, orchestral, chamber or solo ensembles and ensembles modified, for example, by the inclusion of percussion³.

Thus, this trend was an original Polish contribution to the history of music, and the canon of this direction was established by Krzysztof Penderecki in a series of works written in the 1960s. Among them were *Threnody*, *Anaklasis* and *String Quartet No. 1*. In doing so, the composer “defined - in a practical yet clear way - the idea, scope and method of the sonorism technique”⁴. It applies only to music intended for traditional instrumentation; it does not include concrete music, electronic music or instrument preparations. It therefore does not include the works of Edgar Varese, Henry Cowell,

¹ I marked the problem related to the concepts of sonoristics in the article: R. Wieczorek, *Guitar Sonoristics in Sette studi by Maurizio Pisati*, “Edukacja Muzyczna” 2022, no 17, pp. 211–227.

² B. Schaeffer, *Sonorystyka współczesna*, n.p., n.d., p. 1.

³ K. Sz wajgier, *Sonoryzm i sonorystyka*, “Ruch Muzyczny” 2009, no 10, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

or Iannis Xenakis. Sz wajgier notes that “sonorism” is being replaced by the term “sonoristics”, which stands both for the name of this direction and for color, color impression. The reasons for this, according to the researcher, are the lack of a manifesto, critical support, an event, a debate, a conference that would allow the crystallization of views, the unclear place of “sonorism” in the formula of sonoristics, or the individualism of composers⁵.

Iwona Lindstedt debates with Sz wajgier and agrees with the meaning of “sonorism” as used by Adrian Thomas, “who proposes to move away from its [sonorism's] stylistic and chronological limitations towards the use of the term 'sonoristics', which is more inclusive and open”⁶. The author argues that few works would then belong to the “sonorism” in its pure form that Sz wajgier writes about, and “the complete rejection of the term 'sonoristics' in favor of 'sonorism' would, paradoxically, contribute not so much to illuminating as to obscuring the overall picture of the phenomena typical of the workshops of Polish composers in the 1960s”⁷. It seems, however, that Sz wajgier did not postulate the “dismissal” of sonorism”, but rather opted for its “separation” from “sonorism” in order to maintain awareness of this autonomous direction in music history.

In view of this, how can “sonoristics” be defined? In this context, it is worth recalling the definitions of Antoni Poszowski and Wojciech Malinowski, who accurately describe the sense in which “sonoristics” is used in this work. According to Poszowski

Sonoristics:

(a) is synonymous with the timbral characteristics of a work and the technique called purely sonoristic,

b) includes issues of timbre and the totality of phenomena affecting its realization in the work

c) is an overriding factor in the construction of a work, in which tonal values are the source of technical and tectonic principles⁸.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 6–9.

⁶ I. Lindstedt, *Sonorystyka w twórczości kompozytorów polskich XX wieku*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010, p. 20.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

⁸ A. Poszowski, *Zagadnienia sonorystycznej techniki harmoniczej*, “Zeszyty Naukowe PWSM w Sopocie”, PWSM, Sopot 1967, pp. 163–166, quoted in I. Lindstedt, *op. cit.*, s. 20.

The above understanding is complemented by the definition of Wojciech Malinowski, who treats sonority as a complex element of a musical work consisting of three types of measures:

1. selection of consonant sounds
2. instrumental timbre
3. the manner of realization of consonance:
 - (a) the texture of the sound plane,
 - b) performance and articulation measures⁹.

This explanation is not only accurate, but also implies a starting point for the analysis of the works described in the following chapters.

Researchers note the tendency to use the adjective “sonoristic” interchangeably with “coloristic”, “colorful”. It is worth noting that this adjective sounds the same whether it is derived from the noun “sonorism” or “sonoristics”. On the one hand, as mentioned above, “sonoristics” is a rather open term, and on the other hand, it is difficult to develop its meaning precisely. “Color” and “timbre” are components of “sonoristics” but should not be equated with it. The timbre of a sound is understood as a set of its physical properties, and thus depends on the number and intensity of the individual tones in the harmonic spectrum¹⁰. They affect perception, which allows us to distinguish between tones of the same pitch but with different timbres.

Colorism, on the other hand, as Malinowski wrote

emerged to define those musical interactions that have as their basis the operation of sound color, whose source therefore lies in the physical properties of the musical material. The achievement of these interactions takes place through the use of various instrumental and vocal timbres (...)¹¹.

For the sake of clarity, the terms “timbre” and “color” will be used only when they appear in their original – physical – meaning. On the other hand, “color qualities”, “color impression”, “color treatment” of a given factor can be used to describe a specific idea of the composer concerning a given musical element that is not physically related to color, but imitates it in the strict sense.

⁹ W. Malinowski, *Problem sonorystyki w „Mitach” Karola Szymanowskiego*, “Muzyka” 1957, no 4, p. 34.

¹⁰ See E. Ozimek, *Dźwięk i jego percepcja: aspekty fizyczne i psychoakustyczne*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN SA, Warszawa 2018, p. 363–365.

¹¹ W. Malinowski, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Hanna Kostrzewska has considered how timbral qualities are obtained. Her considerations concern the works of Polish composers up to the 1980s, but these observations are quite applicable to the guitar literature of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. According to the researcher, these qualities are obtained through “the appropriately directed action of the co-creative [sonoristic] elements [of a musical work]”¹². The author points out that the main factor is usually timbre, although rhythm, harmony, dynamics can also create sonoristic structures. In the context of guitar music, it is worth distinguishing the following mentioned by Kostrzewska

(a) in terms of timbre - the expansion of the instrumentation and the preparation of the instruments;

(b) in terms of rhythm: the percussive treatment of the instrument, motoricity and rhythmic underdetermination;

(c) in terms of harmony: the use of clusters, afunctional chords, chains of sounds, and the quarter-tone scale;

(d) in terms of dynamics: the presence of dynamic effects and planes;

(e) in terms of color: unusual combinations of sounds¹³.

According to her concept, the starting point for the analysis of sonoristic musical structures is the identification of the sound source, which in the compositional stage is usually expressed by the search for new timbral qualities, for example through instrumentation (and in the case of solo guitar, of course, to a considerable extent through articulation or the use of the instrument's possibilities in an unconventional way)¹⁴.

It should be noted that the presence of sonoristic factors in a work is subject to gradation. Antoni Poszowski distinguished between quantitative and qualitative states of sonoristic values, which indicate the role they play in a given work. In the case of the quantitative state, “the technical principles of the work are determined by the polyphonic or harmonic means of the major-minor tonal system [...]. In this case, we speak of sonoristic manifestations in harmony, polyphony, or in the work in general¹⁵”. They are therefore a subordinate factor. In the case of a qualitative state, “if [...] the norms of compositional technique are determined by the sonoristic properties

¹² H. Kostrzewska, *Sonorystyka*, Ars Nova, Poznań 1994, p. 20.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 20–21.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

¹⁵ A. Poszowski, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

of the sound material, and the musical elements become their coefficients, then they exhibit a state of new quality”¹⁶. They are then an overriding factor.

Iwona Lindstedt notes a very interesting distinction that originated in Russian music theory:

‘Sonorics’, or in the broadest sense, all manifestations of timbrality in music from the original tendencies in the 19th century to its full development in the middle of the 20th century, includes three types of sound material related to its historical development: ‘coloristics’ (coloristika) – tonal music with tonal elements, ‘sonorics’ (sonorika) in the narrow sense – timbre with elements of tonality, and ‘sonoristics’ (sonoristika) – timbre without elements of tonality¹⁷.

The degree of presence of sonoristic manifestations is therefore also related to historical development. Krzysztof Szwajgier wrote that “sonorism” was surrounded by a preceding phase - sensitivity to the aspect of sound, and was followed by a phase of “color-creativity”¹⁸, although both do not belong to it. According to Kostrzewska, the twentieth century in music - despite the many different currents - was characterized by a tendency to seek new sound effects. As a result, thinking in terms of color and changes in the hierarchy of elements in a musical work led to the emergence of a new aesthetic, an overarching idea that shapes the work¹⁹.

In the quote from Lindstedt above, sonoristics is mentioned in the context of 19th century music. In fact, some scholars have considered the possibility of analyzing works in sonoristic terms not only in the case of 20th-century music, but also in the case of 19th-century music. Such a view is held, among others, by Antoni Prosnak, who analyzes Fryderyk Chopin's etudes from this point of view and calls “sonoristics” “an aspect of musical structure freely developed in the vertical and horizontal planes, formed on the basis of the totality of phenomena concerning the so-called ‘timbre of sound’²⁰” Witold Szalonek was also sensitized to this timbral quality of the piano – in relation to Chopin's music. He considered it a coherent element that Chopin deliberately emphasized through texture, meticulous pedaling, and the interplay of harmony and melody. Szalonek poses the question: “Is the sonority, the sonorism of Chopin's piano only an insignificant

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ See T. Kiuregian, *Сонорика*, [in]: *Теория современной композиции*, W. Cenowa (ed.), Moscow “Music” Muzyka 2005, s. 383–393, quoted in I. Lindstedt, *op.cit.*, s. 24.

¹⁸ K. Szwajgier, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁹ H. Kostrzewska, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²⁰ A. Prosnak, *Zagadnienie sonorystyki na przykładzie etiid Chopina*, “Muzyka” 1958, no 1–2, pp. 14–52.

addition, or does it form, together with harmony, melody and rhythm, an integrated unity of musical expression created by him with the highest flight of the spirit?”²¹. The analysis of sonoristic aspects, therefore, makes it possible to look more fully at a work that does not represent pure “sonorism”.

When writing about the dimensions of sonoristics in guitar music, this area should be separated from what Szwajgier calls “sonorism”, since works for solo guitar in the above-mentioned musical direction played a marginal role. Nevertheless, I will focus on the elements that are also characteristic of it, such as “unusual narrative expressivity [...] thanks to which the sounds acquire a musically purposeful (and not just impressionistic) sense”²². Works that belong to the category of “color creativity”, located on the border between Russian “sonoristics” and “sonoristics”, are the subject of the present study. It will be concerned with the analysis of the state of sonoristic values, which are used in the works to different degrees and in different ways, so that each work is located in a different register of the sonoristic spectrum. Synthetic definitions of “sonoristics” provided by Malinowski and Poszowski seem to be sufficient to examine the issue contained in the work. The mere search for new sounds is not enough to constitute artistic value, as discussed by Boguslaw Schaeffer, who shunned the category of “sonoristics”.

If the sound itself is to be new, it must not contain a one-time portion of effects (which, incidentally, age the fastest), but rather a complete, masterful knowledge of new categories of sound, and not place them in the music as an addition to what is easily written and easily forgotten (time is an inexorable judge here). [...] there is an enormous scope for artists who realize that it is not enough to “write music”, that music has opened up wonderful new horizons, the qualities of which they must taste not under the deceptive banner of the new sonoristics, but in their compositional, prominent practice²³.

Thus, “sonoristics”, to which I will refer, is not only the search for and identification of interesting, feasible sounds for the guitar, but also the description of the role they play within the expressive framework of a given piece.

1.2 Characteristics of the guitar's sonic capabilities – a review of the literature

²¹ W. Szalonek, *Krajobraz dźwiękowy muzyki Chopina*, “Opcje. Kwartalnik Kulturalny”, 1993, p. 58–59, [in:] L.M. Moll, *Witold Szalonek. Katalog tematyczny dzieł. Teksty o muzyce*, Śląskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne, Katowice 2002, p. 242.

²² K. Szwajgier, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–9.

²³ B. Schaeffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 2–4.

The purpose of this paper is not to create an inventory of contemporary performance techniques, but to reflect on the role of sonoristics and discuss related issues of interpretation and performance in works that are bound together by sonoristics. All the more so because this concept includes more elements than just interesting sound effects, as mentioned in the previous chapter. On the other hand, it is worth knowing the sources in which researchers have described such performance measures.

John Schneider in 1985 undertook to describe the issues surrounding the modern guitar. In his publication he outlines the development of the instrument from 1800 to the present. He discusses the structure of the guitar, the acoustic parameters affecting the timbre, describes the guitar techniques used in 20th century works, and touches on various methods of notation. Interestingly, he also devotes attention to experiments in instrument construction, the electric guitar, and the use of electronics¹.

An in-depth study at the intersection of instrumental science, acoustics, philosophy, and phonetics on timbre in the context of the classical guitar was conducted by Caroline Traube. Her work draws on and develops the conclusions presented by Schneider - including the presentation of spectrograms and models of the behavior of a string struck *tirando* or *apoyando* with a fingernail, flesh, or plectrum, taking into account the register and position on the neck where the sound was produced. It also examines guitarists' perceptions of timbre differences and the vocabulary they use to refer to the timbre realm².

A valuable resource is a publication created in collaboration between guitarist Seth Josel and composer Ming Tsao. It is a comprehensive guide written in a clear manner for both guitarists who want to explore modern playing techniques and composers who want to learn more about the idiom of the classical guitar. The authors cover guitar construction, different temperaments (including microtonal), the basics of notation, and a range of performance techniques, each illustrated with examples from the guitar repertoire. The book is accompanied by a CD with dozens of musical examples demonstrating selected techniques³.

Other similar publications have been produced that can serve as a kind of guide

¹ See J. Schneider, *The Contemporary Guitar*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1985. A new, expanded edition of this book was published in 2015, see J. Schneider, *The Contemporary Guitar*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham 2015.

² See C. Traube, *An Interdisciplinary Study of the Timbre of the Classical Guitar*, doctoral thesis, McGill University, Montreal 2004.

³ See S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*, Bärenreiter, Kassel 2014.

for composers interested in writing for the guitar. For example, Angela Lehner-Wietersik's work on the problems of notation and timbral possibilities of the classical guitar⁴ or Robert Allan Lunn's dissertation, in which he describes extended techniques for playing the classical guitar in a rather concise manner⁵. A much more comprehensive description of the subject is provided by Martin Lawrence Vishnick. In addition to a detailed characterization of the traditional and innovative performance techniques used, the author offers an original theoretical perspective and introduces the concept of “morphology”, which refers to “sound objects that generate a spectral continuum”⁶. In addition, the researcher has included a CD with more than 100 sound examples and 10 video examples.

It is worth mentioning works related to the specific field of sonoristic means. Rita Torres' research deals with the possibilities of executing multiphonics from the guitar and their use in compositional practice. Although Torres' most interesting field is multiphonics induced on an amplified instrument, her work is also a valuable resource in the field of sounds realized entirely acoustically⁷.

Stanley Levi Nazareno Fernandes has comprehensively described the percussive face of the guitar. He defines what this treatment of the instrument consists of and applies it to both the contemporary classical repertoire and the fingerstyle genre. The researcher considers the role of percussive effects in the creative process, characterizes them, and also pays attention to the performance aspect. He analyzes excerpts from selected works from this perspective. He also takes into account technical issues related to the percussion treatment of the guitar - the position at the instrument, the care of the instrument, as well as one's own body, which – unsuited to such playing - can be prone to injury⁸.

An interesting guide to the possibilities of guitar preparation is the work of Peter Yates and Matthew Elgart. Such a process can use screws, clamps, safety pins, clothespins, fishing line, aluminum foil, caps, cables, corks, masking tape, pieces of bamboo, plastic, fabric, foam rubber, wax, and many other materials⁹.

⁴ See A. Lehner-Wietersik, *Neue Notationsformen, Klangmöglichkeiten und Spieltechniken der klassischen Gitarre*, Döbner, Wien 2002.

⁵ See R.A. Lunn, *Extended Techniques for the Classical Guitar: A Guide for Composers*, doctoral thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus 2010.

⁶ M.L. Vishnick, *A Survey of Extended Techniques on the Classical Six-String Guitar with Appended Studies in New Morphological Notation*, doctoral thesis, City, University of London, London 2014, p. 2.

⁷ See R.L. Torres, *A New Chemistry of Sound: The Technique of Multiphonics as a Compositional Element for Guitar and Amplified Guitar*, doctoral thesis, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon 2015.

⁸ See S.L.N. Fernandes, *Percussive Resources of the classical guitar*, doctoral thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte 2020.

⁹ See M. Elgart, P. Yates, *Prepared Guitar Techniques*, California Guitar Archives, Los Angeles 2020.

While sonoristic guitar techniques are a relatively well-described topic, the works mentioned generally lack reflection on the effective implementation of individual techniques¹⁰. Furthermore, the authors do not consider the role and performance of sonoristic means in the context of a coherent interpretation of a given composition. These issues will be discussed in this dissertation.

1.3 An overview of guitar music from the 1960s to the present day

The panorama of guitar music of the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, presented from a sonoristic perspective, helps to better understand the context in which the compositions recorded on the album constituting the described artistic work were created. It also allows one to perceive the fields of interest of the artists active at that time and the artistic goals made possible by innovative techniques. Thus, my aim is not to compile a catalogue of guitar works whose characteristic feature is their timbrality, but to outline their expressive possibilities by means of representative examples. The subject described here concerns music intended for unamplified classical guitar solo.

Although the exploration of sonoristic effects is primarily associated with the second half of the 20th century, the instrument's timbral possibilities and unusual performance techniques interested composers (and guitarists) much earlier. Dionisio Aguado (1784-1849) compared the guitar to a small orchestra: “Who would think that of all those [instruments] used today it is [the guitar] perhaps the most suitable for producing the effect of an orchestra in miniature? [...] is is easy to practise it and examine its nature in order to seek unusual effects”¹. In his manual, Aguado hinted at the possibilities of imitating drums, trumpet and harp², and similar suggestions for imitating the French horn, oboe, flute or bassoon also appeared in texts by Fernando Sor³ or Fernando Ferandiere⁴. An interesting example of an unusual

¹⁰ Regarding the percussive possibilities of the guitar, the issue was addressed in the aforementioned work by Stanley Levi Nazareno Fernandes, see S.L.N. Fernandes, *op. cit.* In another article, Rita Torres and Paulo Ferreira-Lopes address the practical aspect of executing multiphonics, see P. Ferreira-Lopes, R. Torres, *The sound world of guitar multiphonics*, [in:] M. Doğantan-Dack, J. Dack (eds.), *Music and sonic art: Theories and practices*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne 2018, pp. 78-94.

¹ D. Aguado, *New Guitar Method*, B. Jeffrey (ed.), transl. Louise Bigwood, Tecla Editions, London 2004, p. 3.

² *Ibidem*, p. 59.

³ F. Sor, *Method for the Spanish Guitar*, transl.. A. Merrick, Tecla Editions, London 2003, p. 16.

⁴ F. Ferandiere, *Arte de tocar la guitarra española*, transl. Brian Jeffrey, Tecla Editions, London 2013, pp. 4-5.

technique can be found in Fernando Sor's *Fantaisie villageoise*, Op. 52 (1832), in which multiphonics mined on the ⑤ and ⑥ strings above the 6th fret artfully imitate the sound of bells (see example 1).



Example 1. F. Sor, *Fantaisie villageoise*, op. 52, Tecla Editions, p. 8, stave no. 7–8

One of the earliest works to focus on the search for and precise notation of extended techniques is *Las seis cuerdas* (1963) by Alvaro Company (1931). This guitarist and composer (a graduate of the Luigi Cherubini Conservatory in Florence, where he studied with Carlo Prospero and Luigi Dallapiccola, among others) was influenced by the Darmstadt School and was active in the Italian avant-garde milieu (which included the above-mentioned Dallapiccola and Bruno Maderna). In *Las seis cuerdas*, all the notations are written with extreme precision, and the piece is preceded by a four-page description of the symbols used in the work. These include three types of fermatas, four types of vibrato (as well as their possible combinations), damping with a specific finger (when playing harmonics, *étouffé*, *pizzicato*). The composer specifies the speed of the executed *arpeggios* and *rasgueados*, as well as their exact form (the fingering used and the direction of stroke). The position of the finger striking the string (the angle of the fingernail in relation to the string, possibly indicated by its absence) is graphically marked, as well as the position of the string extraction on the *sul ponticello* – *sul tasto* range. There are symbols for sounds produced only by the fingers of the left hand (*pizzicato*, *legato*), as well as several types of portamento, percussion sounds (in the form of *tamburo* and *tambora*), striking the soundboard (with a precise indication of the part of the finger as well as the place on the body of the guitar), or rubbing the strings. Due to the variety of techniques used, the composer decided to write the piece in such a way that each of the six staves is assigned to one of the strings of the guitar (see example 2). The composition is an attempt to take into account and record

all the performance elements in a very precise way, although this is only one of many ways of encoding sonoristic effects.

Dedico questa nuova edizione all'amico Angelo Gilardino

LAS SEIS CUERDAS

per chitarra

«La guitarra / Hace llorar a los sueños...»
(Federico García Lorca)

Alvaro Company

$\text{♩} = 40$

mp

mp

mp

poco meno

p

mp

pp

intenso

pp

mp

Example 2. A. Company, *Las seis cuerdas*, Bèrben, p. 10, stave no. 1–2

A completely different approach was taken by Leo Brouwer (1939). In his search for new sonorities, he left much more freedom to the performer. The Cuban's work of the late 1960s and early 1970s was inspired by the achievements of the Polish school of composition. In 1961, he participated in the Warsaw Autumn Festival, which made a profound impression on him. At the festival he met Krzysztof Penderecki, Tadeusz Baird and Sylvano Bussotti, among others; he also attended the premiere of Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960)⁵. Clusters, aleatoric and sonoristic elements dominate the works *Canticum* (1968), *Parabola* (1973–1974), *Tarantos* (1973–1974), although they are most prominent in *La Espiral Eterna* (1970). The composition is based on rapid repetitions of certain figures that form clusters, and the performer decides when to change the structure. The dynamics are given, but it is up to the guitarist to change the timbre if necessary. Brouwer uses Bartok's pizzicato and muted notes in the high register - the shape of this line is merely outlined by the composer. An interesting effect is created by an aleatoric segment, in which sounds are realized by shortening the strings with fast and irregular strokes of the fingers of both hands (see example 3).

C Rapido - Fast - Schnell
Irregolare - irregular - ungleichmäßig

45^{ff}

m. der. right hand rechte Hand
 m. izq. left hand linke Hand

1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 (sim.)

(mp) p mf

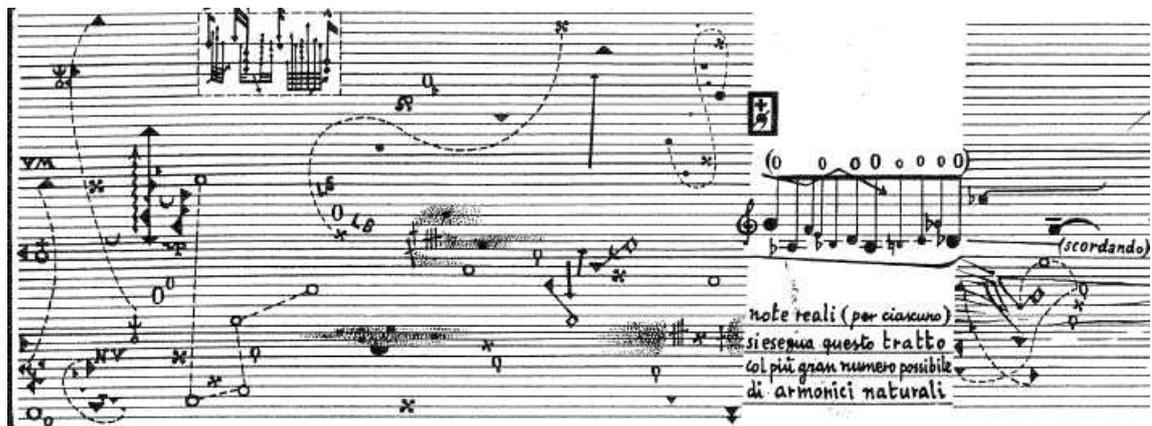
Usar de la m. izq. dedos: 1, 2, 3., mano derecha i. m. a.
 To use left hand fingers: 1, 2, and 3. Right hand: i. m. a.
 Mit dem 1., 2. und 3. Finger der linken Hand. Rechte Hand: i. m. a.

Example 3. L. Brouwer, *La Espiral Eterna*, Schott, p. 8, staff no. 1

Even more freedom was given to the performer by Sylvano Bussotti (1931–2021), an Italian composer, painter, stage and costume designer. His *Rara (eco sierologico)* (1964–1967) is a cycle of five pieces that form a single work for chamber ensemble and solo instruments: violin, viola, cello, double bass, and guitar. Bussotti's original intention was for the composition to be performed as part of a series of concerts - each evening a different instrument would perform a part. On the sixth day, all the players were to

⁵ C. McKenna, Constance, *An Interview with Leo Brouwer*, "Guitar Review", 1988b, No. 75, pp. 10-16.

perform the piece together, each in a different order, as indicated by the composer. In the third section there is an improvisational passage in which the individual symbols are defined (in terms of timbre, articulation, harmonics, theatrical breaths), but the pitch of the notes, their duration and even their order are not specified (see example 4).



Example 4. S. Bussotti, *Rara (eco sierologico)*, Ricordi, segment no. 3

An interesting example of a sonoristic piece is *Toccatacapriccio* [sic!] (1969) by the Swedish composer Sven-Eric Johanson (1919–1997). The composition is rich not only in the rasp of muted strings, percussion effects played all over the guitar body, arpeggios behind the nut or above the stand (where the strings are tied). At certain moments, Johanson indicates that after striking the open strings of the guitar, the instrument should be grabbed by the headstock and moved like a pendulum. In a live performance, this creates a surprising theatrical element, while in a studio recording, it creates an unruly, spatial acoustic effect (see example 5)⁶.

⁶ See M. Falk, *Toccatacapriccio*, dB Productions, 2021.



Example 5. S. Johanson, *Toccatacapriccio*, manuscript, p. 6, stave no. 6–7

Sonoristic techniques were used in a revealing way by Tristan Murail (1947) in his unique spectral⁷ piece *Tellur* (1977). The composer's creative challenge was to preserve the qualities of his music – long sounds and slow changes over the course of the piece – on an instrument characterised by a short sustain. The answer turned out to be techniques more typical of Latin American or flamenco music – primarily various types of rasgueada and tremolo. Murail was inspired by the ethnic roots of the guitar – the opposite of the approach cultivated by Segovia⁸. Rapid repetitions, the use of a wide range of colours, combined with varying degrees of muting, result in an abundance of induced overtones and a fluid narrative (see example 6).

⁷ Spectralism - a direction initiated in the 1970s in which the acoustic spectrum formed the basis of compositional material. See J. Anderson, *Spectral music*, [in:] Grove Music Online [https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.50982, accessed 05.09.2024].

⁸ T. Murail (in conversation with Rafael Andia), *An Interview with Tristan MURAIL* [https://www.rafaelandia.com/en/tellur.html, accessed 15.09.2024].

2

TELLUR

pour guitare

Tristan MURAIL
1977

Example 6. T. Murail, *Tellur*, Editions Musicales Transatlantiques, p. 2, stave no. 1–4

Some composers sought new sound effects by adding accessories. In the late 1960s, Timothy Walker asked David Bedford (1937–2011) to write a piece for him. The composer agreed and soon sent the guitarist *You Asked for It* (1969), a humorous treatment of the instrument and its unusual ways of being played. The composition features percussion effects, bending of single notes as well as chords, preparation using a piece of paper under the strings or a metal spoon, and even theatrical polishing of the instrument⁹. Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928–2016) used preparation (in the form of a metal accessory, such as a teaspoon) more coherently in *Serenading a Pair of Giggly Nymphs (Drunk at Night)* from his *Serenades of the Unicorn* (1977). The resulting background features a melody played with the fingers of the left hand alone. Elements of preparation appear in the compositions of Maurizio Pisati, Michael Edward Edgerton, Ming Tsao, and others, but it seems that this direction has not proved particularly interesting to composers writing for solo guitar. It is difficult to find examples as daring as John Cage's

⁹ T. Walker, *David Bedford* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMmPT-ApDSo, accessed 15.09.2024].

preparation of the piano. In my opinion, the lack of need to explore this area to such an extent is due to the wide sonoristic possibilities offered by the unprepared classical guitar. On the other hand, some compositions for guitar duet are extremely interesting and rich in applied preparation, such as Helmut Lachenmann's *Salut für Caudwell* (1977) (1935) or works by Peter Yates and Matthew Elgart, who form the Elgart & Yates Guitar Duo¹⁰, are extremely interesting and rich in applied preparation.

It is worth mentioning a group of works in which the sonic effects used are illustrative in nature. The first, a youthful piece by Nikita Koshkin (1956), is *The Prince's Toys Suite* (1980), in which the performer imitates the titular toys of each movement: *The Doll with Blinking Eyes*, *The Mechanical Monkey* or *Playing Soldiers*. In *Sighs* (1969) by Brazilian composer Jorge Antunes (1942), the guitarist not only performs the title sigh, but also imitates the sound of the berimbau, an instrument used in the Brazilian martial art of capoeira. The specific sound is achieved through repetition combined with gradual scordatura¹¹.

For many composers, this feature of the classical guitar - the ease of scordatura – is extremely fascinating. It was used in an interesting way in *Kurze Schatten II* (1983–1989) by Brian Ferneyhough, a leading exponent of the New Complexity movement. The tuning used (① string lowered by a quarter tone, ② – lowered by a half tone, ③ – no change, ④ – no change, ⑤ – raised by a quarter tone, ⑥ – raised by a quarter tone) further diversifies the articulatory, timbral, dynamic, rhythmic, expressive and sonoristic richness of this piece. The intricate score seems to present an unsurpassed idea of composition (see example 7).

¹⁰ See M. Elgart, P. Yates, *Prepared Guitar*; n.p., 2004.

¹¹ See J. Antunes, R. Corrêa, L. Dos Reis A. Henrique, M. Ferrer, D. Queiroz, *Jorge Antunes - Cordas Dedilhadas*, Selo Sesc, 2020.

a specific scordatura. Compared to the classical guitar tuning, ① of the string is lowered by an augmented quarter, ② – by a major third and $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tone, ③ – by a minor third and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a tone, ④ – by a pure quarter of 31 cents¹², ⑤ – by a minor third and $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tone, ⑥ – by a whole tone; An interval of 14 cents also appears in the piece.

Changes in guitar tuning have not always been dictated by a desire to experiment or expand expressive boundaries. Nuccio D'Angelo (1955) drew on tradition in *Due Canzoni Lidie* (1984). He based the diptych on the Lydian scale, which he says¹³, is represented by characteristic intervals (a-e-flat or d-e-flat). The scale is heavily chromaticised, and the piece uses a scordatura of ② and ⑥ strings half tone down – on B-flat and E-flat. This made it possible to achieve interesting consonances using open strings and natural flageolets, resulting in a characteristic aura of sound throughout the piece. A similar example is Carlo Domeniconi's *Koyunbaba* op. 19 (1985) (1947), a suite inspired by Turkish music, in which the colour is built up through the tuning used (the open strings form a D minor chord). It allows the realisation of surprising consonances and the achievement of a peculiar sounding resonance of the instrument. An interesting synthesis of the two approaches can be found in *Abreuana* (1971) by Angelo Gilardino (1941–2021), in which he manages to combine melodic (lyrical) elements with the scordatura ① of the strings through a quarter-tone interval, as well as with single sonoristic techniques.

The sonoristic possibilities of the guitar have inspired some artists to express content related to the mystical area. An exceptional example of such music is *Ko-Tha* (Three Dances of Shiva) for guitar treated as a percussion instrument (1967) by Giacinto Scelsi (1905–1988). The composer suffered a mental breakdown in the 1950s and became fascinated by Eastern spirituality, which explains the inspiration of Hinduism. A characteristic element of his work was his interest in the gradual transformation of colour, anticipating the achievements of the spectralists¹⁴. *Ko-Tha* is based almost entirely on percussion effects, and although traditional sounds also appear, they play a rhythmic role. Both guitarists and percussionists have the composition in their repertoire. During the performance, the guitar should be placed on a table or on the lap

¹² Cent – a measure equal to one hundredth of a semitone. See M. Pilch, *Tworzenie i przekształcanie interwałów*, [in:] M. Toporowski (ed.), *Dawne temperacje. Podstawy akustyczne i praktyczne wykorzystanie*, Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego w Katowicach, Katowice 2014, p. 27.

¹³ N. D'Angelo, *Some composer's comments about "Due canzoni lidie"* [<http://www.nucciodangelo.it/#pubblicazioni>, accessed 16.09.2024].

¹⁴ C. Fox, D. Osmond-Smith, *Scelsi, Giacinto*, [in:] Grove Music Online [<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.24720> accessed 16.09.2024].

of the guitarist. The theatrical aspect, combined with Scelsi's metaphysical inspirations, gives the composition a ritualistic feel. The entire piece is notated in a two-stave system (see example 8).

KO-THA I, II, III per gitarra

Lento ($\text{♩} = 50$)

The musical score is written for guitar and consists of eight staves. The tempo is marked as *Lento* ($\text{♩} = 50$). The score includes various dynamics such as *mp*, *mf*, *quasi f*, *f*, *ppp*, *pp*, and *f non troppo*. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Key tempo and performance markings include *Più lento* ($\text{♩} = 42$), *a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 42$ *ben sostenendo*), *poco movendo*, and *più sostenendo*. Measure numbers 10, 20, and 25 are indicated in boxes. The score concludes with a final tempo marking *appena movendo al tempo 7^o* ($\text{♩} = 50$).

Example 8. G. Scelsi, *Ko-Tha*, Éditions Salabert, p. 1, stave no. 1-8

The percussive possibilities of the guitar are skilfully combined with traditional performance techniques by Arthur Kampela (1960), a Brazilian guitarist and composer who has written for the New York Philharmonic, the Kusewicks Foundation and the Collegium Novum Zurich, among others¹⁵. In his cycle of Percussive Studies etudes (the first of which, dedicated to Pablo Márquez, was written in 1989–1990), the performer must demonstrate both right and left hand control (e.g. in repetitions or guitar *legato*), rhythmic precision and good synchronisation in the execution of percussion and conventional guitar layers.

It seems that the sonoristic treatment of the guitar was the domain of artists active around the seventh decade of the 20th century. Nevertheless, there are many interesting, more recent examples of such music. Simon Steen-Andersen (1976), a distinguished Danish composer and director, currently associate professor at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus and Aalborg, was guided by the following idea when he wrote *in-side-out-side-in...* (2001): “The transformation into the 'opposite' and then into the opposite of the opposite – bringing the interior to the surface – also in a poetic sense¹⁶”, which explains the desire to use innovative means of expression. In addition to scordatura, microtonality, or varied articulation, he uses the “guero” effect (evoking the sound of this Latin American instrument), which involves making a series of percussion sounds using a fingernail that moves along the neck and strikes the frets. The piece also features sounds produced on the left side of the neck.

Steen-Andersen explored this idea even further in *Beloved Brother* (2008), which is an arrangement of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Capriccio* in B-flat Major BWV 992 for the “backside guitar”¹⁷. The performer completely mutes the strings at the stand (with a cloth, for example) and performs the whole thing with guitar *legato* and tapping. As a result, the strings resonate not over the hole but over the neck, creating a surprising sonoristic effect that evokes associations with the timbre of the clavichord¹⁸.

In the context of 20th-century sonoristic guitar works, one can mention Wieland Hoban's *Knokler* (2009), mentioned above, as well as the work of the Spanish composer and guitarist Agustín Castilla-Ávila (1974), current president of the International Ekmelic

¹⁵ Arthur Kampela [https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/artist/ab1d351e-ae57-4022-9196-3ff3bf55e272/Arthur-Kampela, accessed 16.09.2024].

¹⁶ S. Steen-Andersen, *in-side-out-side-in...*, editorial commentary, Edition-S, Copenhagen 2011.

¹⁷ See S. Steen-Andersen, *Beloved Brother*, Edition-S, Copenhagen 2011.

¹⁸ F. Palmieri, *Simon Steen-Andersen: Beloved Brother (two movements from J.S. Bach's Capriccio in Bb)* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwtXFOW0XWo, accessed 16.09.2024].

Music Society, an association dedicated to the promotion of microtonal music. His compositions are characterized by a clear texture, a repetitiveness reminiscent of minimalism, and a dominant tonal center that can be identified throughout entire works (or segments thereof). Castilla-Ávila thus makes use of sonoristic performance techniques, although his musical language is rooted in tradition. Examples of such compositions are *The Golden Sunbird* (2015), *Perseiden* (2019), and *El Silencio que mata* (2021).

1.3.1 Polish context

Given the importance of Polish sonorism in the 1960s, the question arises to what extent sonorists were interested in the classical guitar and how sonoristic elements manifested themselves in the works of domestic composers in the previous decades. Although the guitar appears in individual orchestral works by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Krzysztof Penderecki, Włodzimierz Kotoński, Bogusław Schaeffer, it occupied these artists only to a small extent as a solo instrument. It is worth mentioning, however, Schaeffer's *Five Fragments* (1970) (the cycle includes sounds in the high register of indeterminate pitch, Bartok pizzicato, tremolo and rasgueado, and the composer also included the aspect of timbre)¹⁹ or Kotoński's *Cadenze e arie* for solo guitar (1988), which, however, makes little use of sonoristic techniques (several muffled sounds of indeterminate pitch). Witold Szalonek's compositions for solo guitar fall into a period of his career when he was more willing to draw on tradition. Thus, in *Canzonetta* (1968), *Pavane on the Death and Resurrection of Certain Illusions* (1997), and *Three Obereks* (1998), extended means of performance were used to a small extent²⁰.

In the context of sonoristic guitar music, attention should be drawn to *Hexachord I* (1973) by Roman Haubestock-Ramati (1919 – 1994), a work of interest not only for its variabilic form²¹. The composition is remarkable for its chessboard-like plan. Horizontal

¹⁹ Schaeffer also composed *Saitenblick* (1988) for solo guitar. To my knowledge, the score is not available, moreover, there is no information regarding the premiere of the piece.

²⁰ See . R. Wiczorek, *Wpływ folkloru polskiego na twórczość Aleksandra Tansmana i Witolda Szaloneka, na przykładzie Suity in modo polonico oraz Trzech oberków na gitarę*, unpublished master's thesis, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2020.

²¹ See M. Nosal, *Creativity of Polish composers for solo guitar after 1945. Zagadnienia artystyczno-wykonawcze na wybranych przykładach*, Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, Katowice 2013, pp. 77- 98.

and vertical diagrams indicate specific arrangements on the fretboard. On each square there is a specific figure, and the order of execution of each cell was strictly planned by the composer. At the same time, the score leaves a certain amount of freedom to the performer (for example, the rhythm is not always specified), and sonoristic means have also been used in the piece, for example, in the form of sudden glissandos of indefinite sounds, Bartok's pizzicato, various types of tremolando, or arpeggios.

Also worth mentioning is Jan Edmund Jurkowski's (1933–1989) most avant-garde work, the *Olympic Suite*, dating to the second half of the 1970s²². In it, the composer used lateral vibrato, aleatoric elements, percussion effects, three types of arpeggios, varied articulation, and also took into account the resonance of the instrument and timbre.

Sonoristic elements also characterize the work for solo guitar by Aleksander Nowak (1979), himself a graduate of the guitar class of a primary and secondary music school. The composition *Things Passed* (2007) was commissioned by the Silesian Guitar Autumn Festival and was one of the potential obligatory pieces in the Jan Edmund Jurkowski International Guitar Competition. The techniques used in it include rubbing the strings with one's fingers, varying degrees of sound damping, and percussion effects.

Nowak's *Eludium et Fungus* (2016) was composed for Łukasz Kuropaczewski. It is a one-movement piece with a flowing narrative that lacks a definite pulse. It is based on rather freely realized repetitions of indicated sound structures. Among other things, Nowak distinguishes several types of arpeggios, fermatas and vibrato, a harmonics glissando (consisting of a smooth finger movement between indicated pitches), as well as various flageolets, including microtonic harmonics (created by pulling the finger slightly below the 6th fret).

Sonoristic techniques can enrich compositions rooted in seemingly completely different styles. Grzegorz Jurczyk (1991), in *Fogbound Mountains* (2014), which grew out of minimalism, used sounds extracted with the left hand alone, pizzicata, as well as a glissando on the ① string combined with muted, repeated notes.

As the above examples illustrate, sonoristics can manifest itself in very different ways, both in terms of the degree and nature of its use, as well as its intended artistic goals. It ranges from the uncompromising exploration of innovative techniques

²² W. Gurgul, *Jan Edmund Jurkowski as a composer in comparison with other composing guitarists in Poland after 1944*, "Music Education" 2022, no. 17, pp. 71-72.

and sounds in the form of *in-side-out-side-in...* Steen-Andresen, as well as scordatura in compositions rooted in tradition, such as Domeniconi's *Koyunbaba* op. 19. The sonoristics can emphasize the Bedford's postmodern joke *You Asked for It* as well as touch the mystical realm in Scelsi's *Ko-Tha*. They mesh with the idiom of the instrument—both in the case of composing guitarists or composers trying to understand the nature of the guitar, and in the case of artists trying to escape the obvious uses of the guitar. The compositions of Maurizio Pisati, Pēteris Vasks, Paweł Malinowski and Luciano Berio, which will be presented in the next chapter, illustrate in detail the multifaceted role of the sonoristic aspect in the guitar literature of the 20th and 21st centuries.

2 Interpretation and performance issues of selected works for solo guitar

2.1 Maurizio Pisati – *Sette studi*¹

2.1.1 Biography of the composer

Maurizio Pisati (1959) is an Italian composer and guitarist, a graduate of the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. He honed his compositional craft under the tutelage of Adriano Guarnieri and Giacomo Manzoni, as well as, in master classes in Città di Castello, with Salvatore Sciarrino; he also participated in the International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt. He has been awarded several times in international composition competitions, and his works are published by Ricordi. He collaborates with prominent guitarists specializing in contemporary music performance, including Elena Càsoli, Magnus Andersson, Arturo Tallini². He is a professor at the Giovanni Battista Martini Conservatory in Bologna. He has given courses, lectures and master classes at academic centers in Tokyo, Reykjavik, Vaxjö and Melbourne³.

Pisati studied guitar with Paolo Cherici and Claudio Conti at the Milan Conservatory. Between 1983 and 1989, he founded the Laboratorio Trio, in which he played as guitarist. He is also the originator of *ZONE*⁴, a collective, a creative group centered around the music of this Italian composer; in the group he himself plays MIDI guitar and live electronics. The initiative involves not only dozens of musicians, but also sound engineers, video artists, actors or painters. Maurizio Pisati, along with Elena Càsoli, also runs LArecords, an authorial publishing house dedicated to music and ventures at the intersection of music and literature.

In his work, he combines compositional craftsmanship and openness to sound experimentation with an excellent knowledge of the guitar, resulting in innovative and

¹ In the subsection I expand on the issues I presented in the article: R. Wieczorek, *Outline of guitar sonoristics on the example of Maurizio Pisati's Sette studi*, "Music Education" 2022, no. 17, pp. 193-209.

² Source
[www.mauriziopisati.com/mauriziopisati/wpcontent/uploads/2014/12/mpCatalogueBioDisc2009.pdf, accessed 24.11.2022].

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

idiomatic use of the instrument. He has dedicated several of his compositions to solo classical guitar: including the sonoristic *Sette studi* (1990); *Ghiribizzi* (1996), which can serve as an introduction to contemporary music for younger guitarists due to its lower performance requirements and more sparingly explored timbral aspect; *Caprichos de simios y burros* (2003), in which the rhythmic aspect dominates. There were also several compositions for classical guitar and tape, including *Spiriti sospesi, teatro spiritoso su sei corde* (2020), or *Chahack* (2009) and *Poema della Luce* (2002) with optional use of tape.

Pisati has composed more than a dozen works for other solo instruments, but the majority of his oeuvre is chamber music, often using multimedia (the aforementioned audio or audio-video tape), as well as stage works. He refers to theater in his compositions (as well as his statements)⁵, and the work that binds together many of his inspirations – experiments in timbre, chamber music, multimedia and various art forms – is *Theater of Dawn* for voice, recorder, saxophone, bass clarinet, guitar, viola, percussion, piano, double bass and audio-visual tape. Also included in the aforementioned work are some earlier chamber compositions: *7, Sette Duo, Night, Dawn*, as well as Max Bertolai's films *Manoscritto* and *For a Theater of Dawn*, inspired by the paintings of Ferruccio Bigi and the manuscripts of Maurizio Pisati. In the *Sette Duo* cycle, as well as the entire *Theater of Dawn*, the filmmaker draws inspiration from Alpine legends about the mountain spirits of the Italian borderlands, and the individual movements are titled with the names of specific characters (*ALP* - for guitar and upright bass flute, *EYDE NET* - for guitar and percussion, *HABERGEISS* - for guitar and bass clarinet, *SAMBLANA* - for guitar and tenor saxophone, *YEMELES* - for guitar and voice, *ODOLGHES* - for guitar and double bass, *DERSCIALET* - for guitar and viola)⁶. In these duets, the composer treats both instruments sonorically, timbre is the dominant aspect, as well as elements of instrumental theater, as noted by Jessica Kaiser⁷. It is worth noting that the guitar part is based on the

⁵ This is how Pisati described the movement aspect of *Studio no. 5*: “Here the movement itself is part of the score, it is *on the stage*. The guitar is a theatrical *stage*: the dance of the hands creates the music”, [in:] M. Pisati, E. Càsoli, *Largo teso: The Seven Studies for guitar by Maurizio Pisati*, “Proceedings of The 21st Century Guitar Conference 2019 & 2021”, 2023, s. 20.

⁶ Pisati took this inspiration from the work of writer Brunamaria dal Lago Veneri. As the composer points out Samblana is the name of the queen, and Yemèles are her daughters, twins, rescuing the lost among the rocks. The other characters are evil or malevolent spirits. See R.M. Santorsa, M. Delprat, J.C. Pacheco, H. Queirós, K. Juillerat, C. Wasmer, L. Mendoza, A. Dottrens, *MAURIZIO PISATI: Set7*, editorial commentary, KAIROS, 2018, pp. 10-11.

⁷ See J. Kaiser, *Exploring Musical Togetherness: An embodied approach to relational interpretation in Maurizio Pisati's Sette Duo*, “Music & Practice” 2023, no. 10.

previously composed *Sette studi*, in which the sonoristic aspect also prevails, which – retrospectively – outlines the context and inspiration of the described etudes.

2.1.2 Background of composition

The *Sette studi* cycle was composed for Italian guitarist – privately the wife of the composer – Elena Càsola, who premiered it at the 35th International Summer Courses of New Music in Darmstadt in 1990. Maurizio Pisati indicates that the inspiration for the etudes came not only from a desire to explore innovative performance techniques and modes of articulation, but also to develop the instrument's timbral richness and create an alternative micro-world in which sounds perceived as traditional are the exception against a dense texture⁸. The composer views the phenomenon of sound in an original way, noting that: “[the] 'conventional' and 'unconventional' are only classifications: a stopeed sound is not a pitch produced 'differently', but melery a sound with that particular timbre and pitch”⁹. Thus, the work is dominated by those elements of a musical work that are most directly related to sonoristics – articulation, color and dynamics.

In the etudes, the composer also addresses the issue of the guitar's relatively low dynamic volume. He sees it not as a disadvantage, but as a feature of each sound produced. The score abounds in contrasting dynamic markings – Pisati thus encourages the performer to explore the perceptual boundaries in both *fortissimo* and *pianissimo possibile* dynamics. It is acceptable to use optional amplification not to increase volume, but to emphasize dynamic differences.

Pisati's understanding of the guitar idiom manifests itself not only in his knowledge of the guitar's sonorous characteristics, his full use of dynamic possibilities, but also his use of a wide range of techniques. Interestingly, the composer uses sonoristic means to a selected extent - he does not use scordatura, percussion effects or preparation at all. However, he breaks with the traditional convention in which each etude explores a single, distinct technical problem. Although different elements can be singled out to bind the links together, some of the techniques – such as different types of *tremolo* – run through most of the movements. The awareness and purposefulness of the means used is confirmed by the words of the composer, who also points out that

⁸ M. Pisati, *Sette studi*, foreword, Ricordi, Milano 1991.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

the indicated fingerings “are not only a suggestions but should be considered essential to the faithful interpretation of the *Seven Studies*”¹⁰. Nevertheless, in selected cases I will suggest alternative performance solutions that benefit the expression of the works.

2.1.3 Interpretation and performance issues

The main challenge for a performer encountering *Sette studi* for the first time is to analyze the score and thus form an idea of the piece. The etudes are essentially without time signatures and bar lines,¹¹ and their notation at first contact seems very complicated – complex rhythmic structures are combined with puzzling notation of various techniques, contrasting dynamics and numerous and very exhaustive performance indications. The whole thing evokes associations with the graphic scores of such composers as Roman Haubenstock-Ramati and George Crumb. Pisati approximated the process of capturing a musical idea as follows: “When I composed the Seven Studies, my sheet of paper was like a theater: a certain movement or fingering is just what I needed to reach a musical result, and then it became a technique, and then it needed its particular drafting and writing¹²”. Awareness of this process and the fact that the composer was inspired by his own improvisations help the performer to better understand the nature of this music¹³. An important role is therefore played by phrasal bows and other elements that communicate the expression of the piece on a graphic level.

It is crucial to assimilate the three-page description explaining the techniques used and the methods of articulation. The composer used various ways of producing *tremolo*, *rasgueado*, *glissando*, muffled sounds, harmonics, tapping or produced by rubbing fingernails along the strings. Knowing the musical vocabulary – that is, the means of expression – that Pisati uses allows one to explore the successive layers of the piece.

Studio no. 1

Studio no. 1 is given a performance marking – *Largo, teso*. “Wide” expression can be achieved by focusing on the continuity of the phrase, built up through *tremolo*, and the tension is heightened by the expressive realization of the dynamics noted in detail.

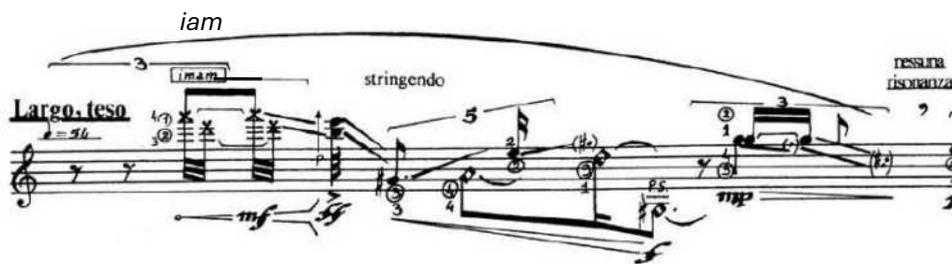
¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ Except for a few fragments: *Studio no. 5* and *no. 6*, and recent systems *Studio no. 4*.

¹² M. Pisati, E. Càsoli, *op. cit.* p. 19.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

Elena Càsoli emphasizes that key techniques for the entire cycle are introduced in the etude¹⁴. It is based on a combination of different types: *tremolo*, *glissando* and harmonics, which is marked in the first phrase of the piece. It opens with a tremolo *dal niente* combined with muffled e^2 and a^2 notes¹⁵, followed by a gradual *glissando* and *sforzato* on the b^1 e^2 notes made with the *p* finger, and then a sudden *glissando*, followed by more *glissandos* – this time upward – leading to dynamically rising harmonics, and the whole thing closes with a double-note glissando and a pause with the note *nessuna risonanza* indicating a muffled resonance (see example 1).



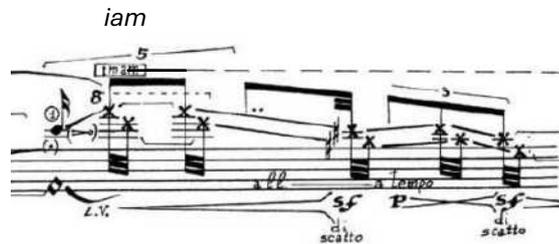
Example 1. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 2, staff no. 1

Tremolo is a technique that runs through all parts of the cycle. Its characteristic variation is the *circular tremolo* which consists of continuously striking two (and sometimes three) adjacent strings very fast - in the composer's original intention – with a combination of *i-m-a-m* fingers. The result of this technique is an uninterrupted stream of sound, the dynamics of which can be freely modulated. Etudes can provide an opportunity for the development of right hand technique, so their selected passages are worth practicing with this fingering. Nevertheless, I suggest using *the i-a-m* combination, which allows for a more precise realization of artistic objectives, and differentiation of this technique over the course of the composition. The *i-a-m* combination allows for faster and smoother repetitions, and consequently a free execution of a sonoristic, continuous band of sounds. What's more, this solution helps structure the rhythmic layer of the piece – *Studio no. 1* oscillates around a tempo of $\text{♩} \approx 60$. In this case, one *i-a-m* group on every sixteenth note falls out, which becomes a rhythmic reference point, and also stabilizes the internal pulse of the piece. This *tremolo* approach works well in all etudes.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

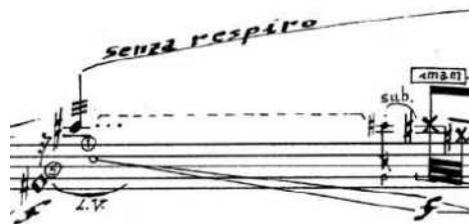
¹⁵ In this work, chords will always be noted from the lowest to the highest sound, unless otherwise indicated.

It also facilitates the precise realization of variable and contrasting dynamics – in the example below, it is useful to plan the execution of *sforzati* with the *i-finger*, which helps sharpen their character (see example 2).



Example 2. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 2, staff no. 1

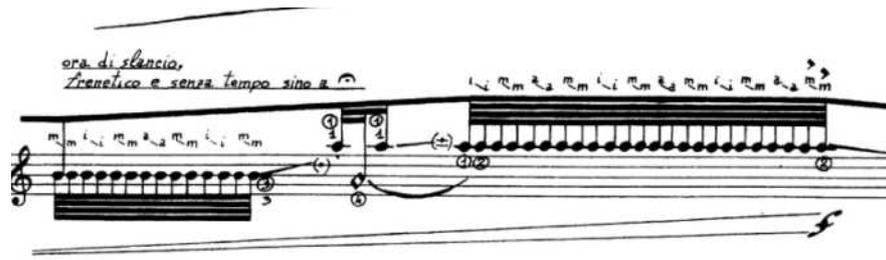
Tremolo can also be a repetition of one sound on one string. In the example below, it causes a smooth build-up of dynamics (see example 3).



Example 3. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 2, staff no. 2

The repetitions presented below in practice appear to be no different from a circular tremolo. Pisati points out¹⁶, that the values so notated should be more rhythmic. In this case, I propose to keep the fingering indicated by the author - the sounds can be additionally performed with the *apoyando* technique, which allows to obtain a selective, dense and increasing series of sounds (see example 4).

¹⁶ M. Pisati, *Sette studi*, executive guidance, Ricordi, Milano 1991.

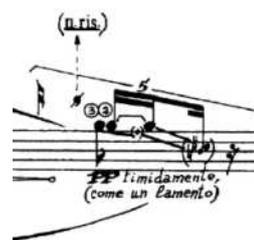


Example 4: M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 3, staff no. 4

The *glissando* technique is worth giving a diverse character. *Glissando* can be abrupt and short, combined with *sforzato* (see example 5), timid, whiny¹⁷ (see example 6), or nervous, in the form of a build-up of multiple *glissandos* on several strings (see example 7). In the case of glissandos marked with an accent, I suggest making them *apoyando*, which will help distinguish them with dynamics and timbre.



Example 5. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 2, staff no. 1



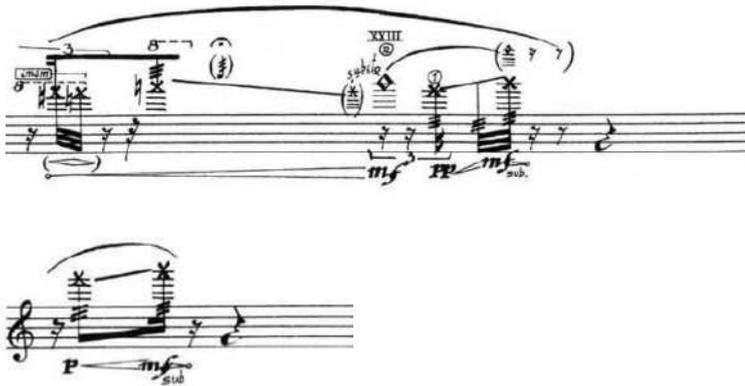
Example 6. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 3, staff no. 1

¹⁷ *Timidamente (come un lamento)* (Italian) - timidly (imitating a moan).



Example 7. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 3, staff no. 1

The degree of attenuation of individual sounds can also be varied (although this element is explored to the greatest extent in *Studio No. 4*). In the example below, a tremolo and glissando lead to harmonic b^2 , another *glissando* to a muffled but still resonant harmonic, and by the third time the sound b^2 should be fully muffled (see example 8).



Example 8. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, Ricordi, p. 4, stave no. 3–4

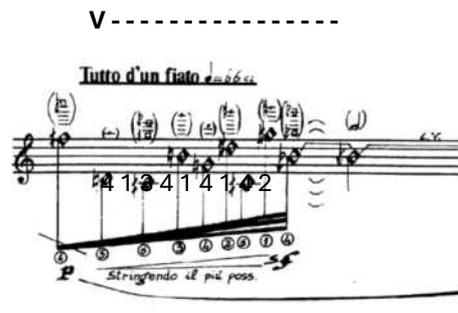
The techniques described above are combined by Pisati, which makes it possible to shape the sound or timbral streams over a longer span, following the example of wind or string instruments. The composition closes with a series of *glissandos* and *tremolos*. In order to preserve the fluidity of the phrase and the written rhythmic relationships, careful thought must be given to the fingering. I suggest designing six repetitions for each eighth-note triplet, and four repetitions for each sixteenth-note quintuplet. This way, the fingers of the right hand do not cross, and one can freely control the nature of the phrase (see example 9).



Example 9. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 1*, p. 4, staff no. 4

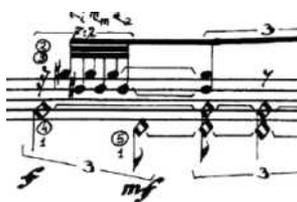
Studio no. 2

Studio no. 2 is at tempo $\text{♩} = 66$ ca., as the composer indicates it should be performed *tutto d'un fiato*, that is, in one breath. In fact, it is the shortest of the movements – it lasts less than a minute. Bows play an important role in this piece, organizing the material into several phrases, the longest of which - also the most demanding – is spread over the last three staves. The dominant techniques are *tremolo* and - used more frequently than in the previous movement – harmonics; Pisati also experiments with multiphonics. The piece opens with an unleashing sequence of harmonics and multiphonics with increasing dynamics. The composer has noted the approximate positions of the individual notes on the neck. In order to achieve clear-sounding tones, it should be performed *sul ponticello*. The passage is quite fast, and to improve its performance, it is worth taking advantage of the guitar's feature of being able to produce a particular harmonic at two different positions on the same string. The harmonic on the (4) string in the $f^{\#1}$ sound position can also be performed around the 8th and 9th frets, the b^2 at the 4th fret on the (3) string can be performed at the 9th fret, and the $g^{\#}$ harmonic on the (1) string can be realized at the 9th fret. The following example illustrates my proposed fingering, and V position should be considered the starting position (see example 10).



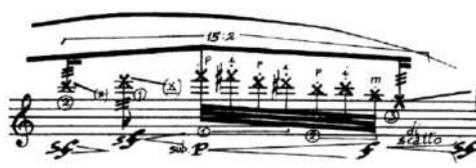
Example 8. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 2*, Ricordi, p. 5, staff no. 1

In this etude, the tremolo also plays a harmonic role and complements the resounding harmonics. Therefore, the focus should be on a slightly slower and selective performance of this figure (see example 11)



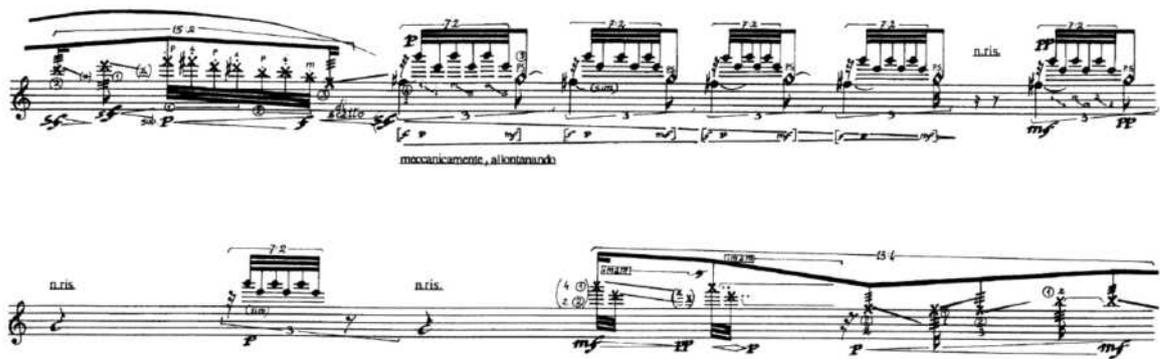
Example 9. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 2*, p. 5, staff no. 1

For the first time, the tremolo on one string is juxtaposed with a passage of notes dampened by the fingers of the left hand. It is worthwhile to play them with a bit of *tenuto* to distinguish them from the often used tremolo in combination with *glissando* (see Example 12).



Example 10. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 2*, Ricordi, p. 5, staff no. 2

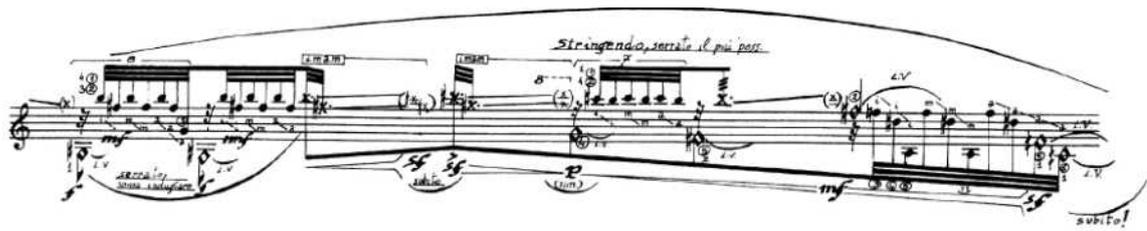
In the 2nd and 3rd stave, the narration stops and the *tremolo* in combination with the sounding second *fis¹-g¹* should be performed *meccanicamente, allontanando*¹⁸. In maintaining rhythmic precision, it helps to focus on the lower voice, which sets the pulse; it is also important to remember to execute the pauses accurately. It is useful to position the right hand perpendicular to the strings, aiming for a bright sound made with *tremolo*, which corresponds to the mechanical character. A return to the “in one breath” narrative prepares a segment based on circular tremolo - it begins with the previously repeated *e² h²* notes, but this time the strings are muffled, and the short phrase gradually lengthens (see Example 13).



Example 11. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 2*, Ricordi, p. 5, stave no. 2–3

In order to maintain the long phrase, the clear realization of harmonics and multiphonics, which form the framework of the piece, is especially crucial. As in *Studio no. 1*, these sounds stand out for their conventionality against a sonoristic background composed of circular tremolos. The raised harmonics, as well as the consonance of natural sounds, should resonate freely, which contributes greatly to linking the motives into a larger unity (see Example 14

¹⁸ *Meccanicamente, allontanando* (Italian) – mechanically, moving away.



Example 12. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 2*, Ricordi, p. 5, staff no. 4

Studio no. 3

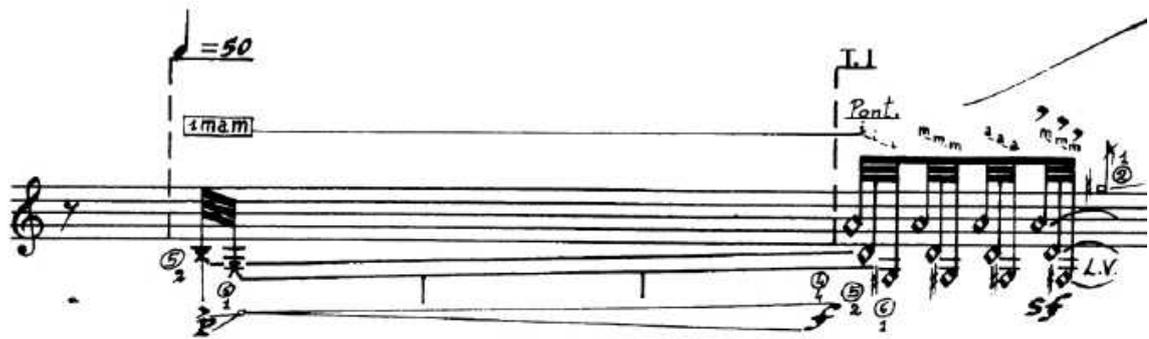
Studio no. 3 is described with the character *fluido*, meaning fluid. The pulse is variable - once an eighth note, once a quarter note, but the tempo still oscillates around $\text{♩} \approx 60$. The piece begins at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 112$, and after a half-note pause a new technique emerges - a kind of sonoristic background, formed by a series of *glissandos*, a rapid and steady movement in quintuplets of the interval of the major second up and down by a second only with the help of the left hand. From this layer emerge single, traditionally produced sounds, realized in irregular rhythm with the right hand, which creates an interesting, restless aura. To perform this technique effectively, attention should be paid to relaxing the left hand; it is helpful to keep an inner pulse - it is worth practicing each group separately, accenting and stopping at the first interval in the group (see Example 15).



Example 13. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 3*, Ricordi, p. 7, staff no. 1

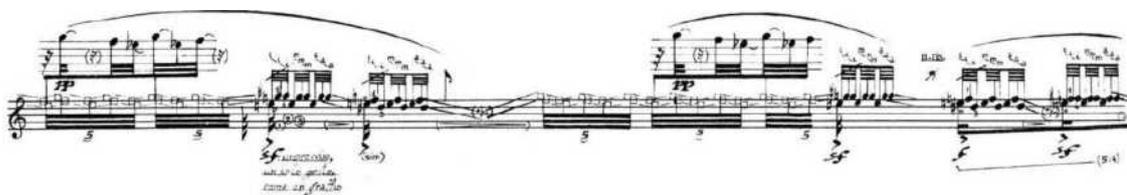
The contrast is the segment marked with tempo $\text{♩} = 50$. The circular tremolo returns, and there are four repetitions of the *i-a-m* combination for each quarter note. The technique described this time is quasi-spectral. Muffled tones are gradually transformed into harmonics and multiphonics by gradually moving the fingers of the left hand from I to IV position. The clarity of the induced overtones can be controlled

by metering the pressure of the fingers of the left hand and the degree of attenuation of the sounds, as well as by moving the right hand to *the sul ponticello* register (see Example 16).



Example 14. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 3*, Ricordi, p. 7, staff no. 4

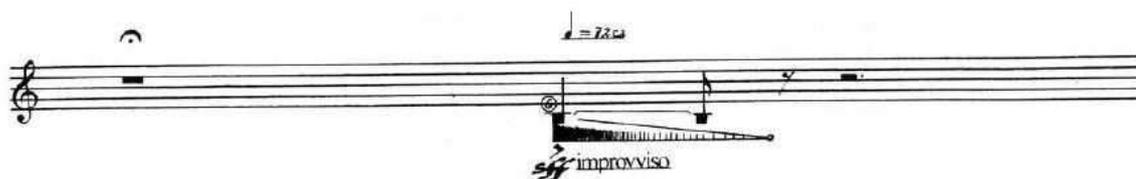
Exciting expression is created by the dynamic layer, so the execution of pauses or breaths marked with *nessuna risonanza* is crucial. The sonoristic, quintuplet background in quiet dynamics contrasts with accented *glissandos* performed *sforzato*. The greatest contrast is the *tremolo*, in a passage marked *improvviso, un solo gesto, come un griaffaio*. The energetic glissando combined with the accent introduces considerable tension. It can be further emphasized by playing *sul ponticello*, perpendicular to the strings and according to the performance cue – “scratching” the strings (see example 17).



Example 15. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 3*, Ricordi, p. 10, staff no. 2

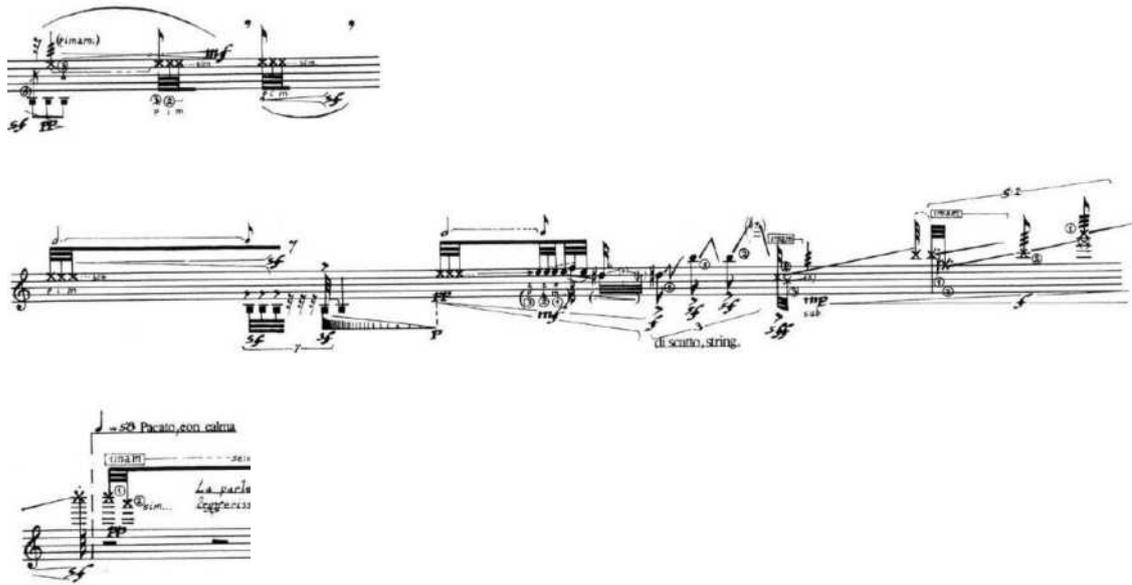
Studio no. 4

Studio no. 4 Pisati based it on a circular tremolo, which makes it possible to operate a long, uninterrupted phrase. *Piano* dynamics dominate, and sudden *sforzati* or *crescendi* in short passages abruptly heighten the tension. The beginning of the piece is kept at a tempo of $\text{♩}=72$, and begins with a whole note rest with a fermata, which is unexpectedly interrupted by a new technique – a variation of the guitar *legato*, which involves repeatedly (and increasingly slowly) striking the b sound on the (6) string with the finger of the left hand (see example 18).



Example 16. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 12, staff no. 1

From A tremolo, which is a repetition of the muffled e^1 sound, emerges from between successive beats in *pianissimo* dynamics. It is suggested that it be performed from the beginning with a combination of *p-and-m* fingers on (2) and (3) strings, so that one can smoothly transition to an unmuffled-sounding tremolo oscillating around the e^1 sound. The *sforzati* at the end of the repetition can be emphasized by accenting the *p* finger, and attention should also be paid to the noted breaths that interrupt the narration. I suggest that accented *glissandos* (*di scatto*, *stringendo*) be further strengthened by bringing them out in bright tones and using the *apoyando* technique. A brief climax leads into the next, slightly calmer section of *Pacato*, *con calma* (see Example 19).



Example 17. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 12, stave 1–3

This etude allows experimentation in modulating the sound with the left hand. Suppressing the strings with the fingertips highlights the undefined pitch, while shortening them with the fingernails of this hand helps to expose the marked pitches and achieve a different expression. *Pacato, con calma* is kept at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 58$. As the composer points out, the upper voice should sound *pianissimo*, very light and shimmering¹⁹, the lower voice – like a lament and should be clearly marked the lower – like a lament and should be clearly marked²⁰. Touching the e¹ and b strings with the fingertips creates a sonoristic background of indeterminate pitch, on which a semitone (and microtone) downward march of the lower voice is drawn, emphasized by pressing the g string with the thumb nail of the left hand (see Example 20).

¹⁹ *La parte superiore pianissimo leggerissima e scintillante* (Italian) - upper voice *pianissimo*, very light and shimmering.

²⁰ *A parte inferiore come un lamento e ben risalto* (Italian) - lower voice like a lament, clearly marked.

Example 18 is a musical score for two staves. The top staff begins with the tempo marking $\text{♩} = 50$ and the instruction "Piacato, con calma". It features a melodic line with lyrics: "La parole supprime se / appressissima e sciolta / La parole emerge / come un farosella / e ben in risalto". The bottom staff contains a complex rhythmic accompaniment with dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, and *pp*. A specific instruction reads: "più serrato possibile (impedire cioè il cambio ES)".

Example 18. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 12, stave 3–4

In the following example, the short climax suggests an intensification of expression. The tension can be accentuated by marking a microtonal background on the e^1 and b^1 strings – thus pressing them with fingernails (see example 21). In the 3rd system, it is worth noting the voices that move unequally.

Example 19 is a musical score for four staves. The top staff starts with a tempo marking $\text{♩} = 72$ and includes a section marked "CLIMAX". The second staff contains a melodic line with dynamic markings *pp* and *mf*. The third staff features a complex rhythmic pattern with dynamic markings *p*, *mf*, and *ff*. The bottom staff includes the instruction "Serrato e senza accenti" and a section marked "CLIMAX" with a tempo marking $\text{♩} = 72$ and the instruction "L'impresario sul piano".

Example 19. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 13, stave 1–4

An interesting transformation can be observed in the final passage of *Studio no. 4*, in which the *unisono* gradually splits – the $g\sharp^2$ sound on the (1) string is worth playing with the thumb of the left hand²¹, and the sound striving from gis^2 to dis^2 with finger 1 on the (2) string. Sounds of a certain pitch are lost by pressing the string harder with the fingertip, then there is a flageolet produced by gently touching the string with the fingertip. Again, a tremolo of indefinite pitch sounds, which finally transforms into a tremolo of $g\sharp^2$ (obtained by pressing the string fully against the threshold) (see example 22). For fluidity over such a long phrase, I suggest doing repetitions with a combination of *p-a-m-i* fingers.

The image shows a musical score for a single staff, likely for a string instrument. The score is divided into several sections. The first section is marked with a fermata and the instruction '(man)'. Below it, there is a box labeled 'P.S.' with a circled '1' underneath. The second section is marked 'Allargando' and features a tremolo. The third section is marked '(p)' and has the instruction '(unprimaria)'. Below the main staff, there are two additional staves. The first of these is marked '(p)' and has the instruction 'rimani - il più serrato possibile'. The second is marked 'mp' and has the instruction 'immobile, sospeso, sempre mp e serrato'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

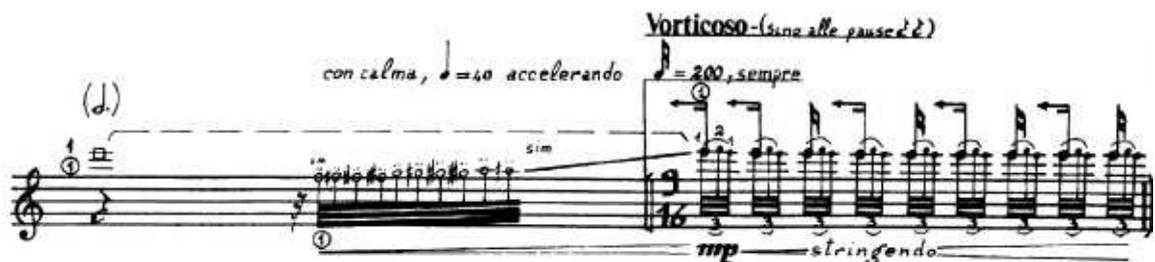
Example 20. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, pp. 15–16, stave 4–4

Studio no. 5

In *Studio no. 5* the composer uses both the techniques presented earlier - including several types of tremolo, sonoristic background (this time in triplets) or abrupt and accented *glissandos* – and introduces several new performance means, including exploring the extraction of sounds in a different place than over the sound hole. The piece

²¹ Tagged as “P.S.” - *pollice sinistro* (Italian) – left thumb.

in fact begins with a bitone²² – the e^2 , and the string also vibrates on the left side of the placed finger (I suggest choosing finger 2, which is the strongest). The bar is marked *con calma*, at a tempo of $\text{♩}=40$ and using *accelerando*. Then a shimmering *tapping* emerges from the quiet dynamics, consisting of striking the *i* and *m* fingers of the still-shortened ① string from the 1st to the 12th fret. This technique leads to the passage marked *Vorticoso*²³ in in tempo $\text{♩}=200$, the first time in the time signature is indicated – 9/16. The character of this bar corresponds to the performance means used – a series of triplet legato on the e^2 - f^2 - e^2 notes made with 1-2-1 fingers, with the first e^2 note of each group produced alternately with the right hand, over the hole and over the neck, with the other side of the finger, which allows for a quick realization of the value, obtaining a specific timbre and length of the outburst (see example 23).



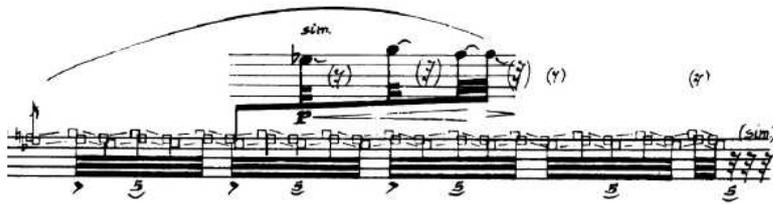
Example 21. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, p. 17, staff no. 1

Throughout the piece, the two bars repeatedly recur and separate processed motives taken from earlier movements. In the following passages, the tempo *con calma* is $\text{♩}=63$, while the number of triplets in the *Vorticoso* changes, and consequently the time signature changes as well, with 7/16, 11/16, 4/16, 2/16 or 5/16 present. The following example shows a motif referring to the quintuplet sonoristic background from *Studio no. 3*

²² Bitone – is a two-note sound produced simultaneously on the same string. On the guitar, it can be obtained by agitating the vibrating string with both sides of the finger located on a given fret. Bitones are produced by, among other things, very strong guitar legato; striking a shortened string simultaneously with the right hand over the hole and the left hand guitar legato over the neck; striking a string with the right hand over the neck and the left hand guitar legato closer to the resonant hole. See S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*, Bärenreiter, Kassel 2010, pp. 147–152.

²³ *Vorticoso* (Italian) – spinning.

(see Example 24.), and the following motives, which form the axis of the described etude (see Example 25).



Example 22. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 3*, Ricordi, p. 7, staff no. 1

The image shows a musical score for a piano etude. It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a 'String.' marking above it. The lower staff has a 'Tempo' marking above it. There are various dynamics markings: 'mp' (mezzo-piano), 'p' (piano), and 'sim.' (sforzissimo). There are also some circled numbers and other markings.

Example 23. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, p. 17, staff no. 3

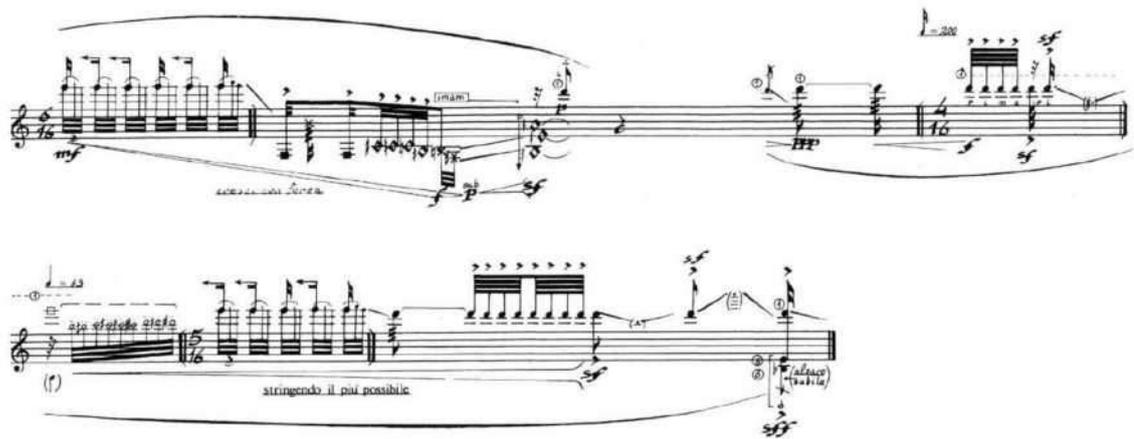
The novelty is a series of muffled sounds combined with single sounds produced traditionally. The following example finishes with a characteristic *circular tremolo* in one of the two most prominent climaxes in *Studio no. 5*. Note the accented *sforzatisissimo possibile*, in which Pisati indicates to press the marked notes with the left hand a little harder²⁴, at the limit of audibility of the conventional sound, indicating his intentionality in the degree of damping. To get the loudest and most articulate sound possible, I suggest performing the marked *arpeggio* with the outside of the fingernail of the *p* finger (see example 26).

²⁴ *Premere con la sin. [sinistra] quasi fino al suono ordinaro* (Italian) - press with the left [hand], almost to the usual sound.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for guitar. The top system is marked 'd'un fiato' and 'FP'. It features a series of notes with accents and dynamic markings like 'sf' and 'mf'. The bottom system is marked 'p' and 'mf'. It includes more complex notation with accents, dynamic markings, and a final chord. There are also some handwritten notes at the bottom right of the second system: 'Prendere con la sua, quasi fino al punto ordinario...'. The tempo is marked as '♩ = 84'.

Example 24. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, pp. 18-19, stave 4–1

The final climax takes place in the last two systems. A continuation of the resounding harmonics is the repetition, *de facto tremolo*, of the d^2 sound. *Sforzati* marked with an accent are suggested to be performed with the *p* finger or *apoyando* with the *m* finger – such a solution allows for a louder sound with selective timbre. There follows a return *con calma* and *vorticoso*, the whole concludes with tremolo, *sforzata* and glissando and the last chord $b\text{-flat } e \ d^2$, in which the lower sound should be performed *pizzicato bartok* and the upper one – topped with a dynamic *glissando*. This combination enforces the proper positioning of the guitarist's right hand, a lowered wrist and attention to the quality of the d^2 sound while clearly articulating the *b-flat* and *e* (see Example 27).



Example 25. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, p. 20, stave 1–2

Studio no. 6

Although tremolo is the binder of *Studio no. 6*, a new and dominant technique is the rubbing of the fingernail across the strings, as well as the staccato of dampened sounds, arousing the resonance of the guitar. The composition opens with a dynamic segment at a tempo of ♩=112 – circular tremolo, fingernail rubbing along the strings, repetitions extracted with *i-p* fingers combined with circular tremolo, a series of nervous glissandos and string rubbing that leads to the *Estatico* section. The thirty-second notes are written in bars 3/16 at a tempo of ♩.=92. It is preferable to perform them *sul ponticello* to evoke an audible resonance of the harmonics. *Sforzati* is most easily made expressive with the *i* finger (see example 28).

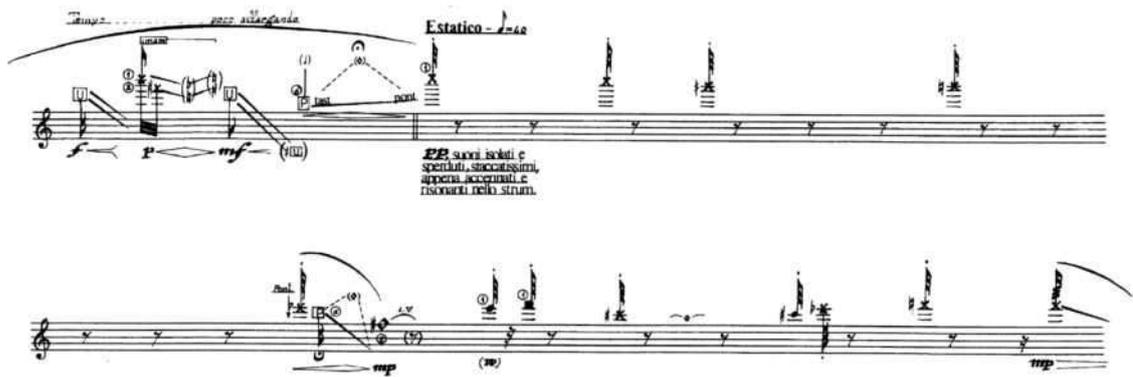
6

21

Example 26. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 21, stave 1–2

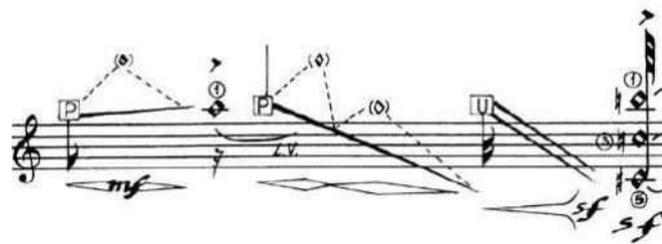
Estatico (in tempo ♩=40) seems to suspend the narrative not only of this etude, but of the entire cycle. It is maintained in *pianissimo* dynamics. As the composer points out, single notes realized *staccatissimo* should arouse the resonance of the instrument²⁵. In addition to articulation, I consider the aforementioned resonance crucial in this segment – care should be taken not to muffle any of the empty strings. An interesting juxtaposition is formed by a series of several isolated sounds, and each of them is brought out in a different way: muffled e^2 , friction of the ⑥ string, tremolo leading to harmonic $f\sharp^2$, conventionally performed e^2 , and then f^2 executed with only the finger of the left hand. For a brighter tone and more overtones, it is suggested that this segment be realized *sul ponticello*, taking care of a uniform dynamic level (see example 29).

²⁵ *Suoni isolati e sperduti, staccatissimi, appena accennati e risonanti nello strumento* (Italian) – Isolated and lost sounds, very short, barely marked, resonating in the instrument.



Example 27. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 21, stave no. 2–3

In the 2nd system on the 22nd page, the stormy narrative suddenly returns, and is introduced by rubbing a fingernail along the bass strings. The composer marks not only the physical direction (*sul ponticello – sul tasto*), but also the direction of the resulting interval. This can apply to one or two strings at the same time, and the effects are generated using both hands. The symbol P indicates the use of the right hand, and the symbol U indicates the use of the left hand. Rubbing is suggested to be implemented with the thumb nails of both hands. Growing the thumb nail of the left hand²⁶ helps to reach two strings, as well as produce a louder and more penetrating sound (see example 30).



Example 28. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 22, stave no. 2–3

Pisati combines string friction with muffled, conventional sounds or with glissandos in the higher register, which creates the indicated abrupt and nervous character²⁷. In order for this layer to sound clear against the sonority rub, it should be performed in forte dynamics. To achieve a *stringendo*, the rubbing is suggested to be realized simultaneously with both hands (see Example 31).

²⁶ It is also important to use a new set of bass strings, which – as soon as they are put on – generate sound, in this case very desirable.

²⁷ *Ancora, rapido e nervoso* (Italian) – again, suddenly and nervously.

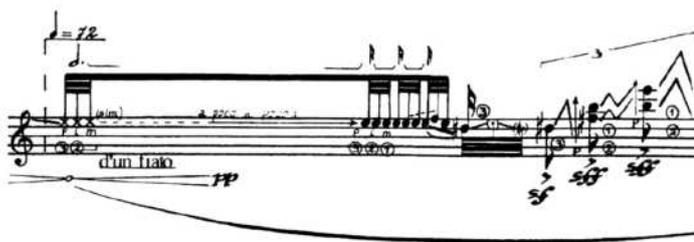
Example 29. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 22, staff no. 2

The climax occurs in the last phrase of the piece – the friction of the bass strings is combined with a circular tremolo and with an abrupt *glissando*. The final *sforzatissimo possibile* results in the excitation of a resonance of all the guitar strings, against which the composition is topped by a tremolo of muffled $g\sharp^2$ sound. The building of dynamics is influenced by the *circular tremolo*, which is as loud and intense as possible (it should be performed perpendicular to the strings, possibly *sul ponticello*), as well as the tightening of the strings with the fingers of the left hand, which influences a higher volume (see example 31).

Example 30. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 22, stave no. 3–4

Studio no. 7

Studio no. 7 is a summary of the previous etudes. Maintained at a tempo of $\text{♩}=120$, it should be performed “abruptly and suspending”²⁸ – individual phrases are characterized by a dense texture, and each time they are separated by pauses. The final part of the cycle does not introduce new techniques, the material was taken from the other links and deconstructed. The opening phrase consists of motifs from *Studio no. 4* (see example 33), *no. 3* (see example 34), *no. 6* (see example 35) and *no. 5* see (see example 36). It is quite a challenge to execute many of the techniques in a short section – with the *p-i-a* combination allows more fluidity, and with the *m* finger one can efficiently execute the e^2 , starting the quintuplet (see example 37).

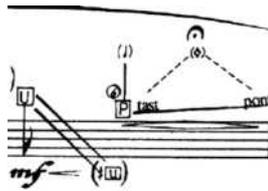


Example 31. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 12, staff no. 2



Example 32. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 3*, Ricordi, p. 7, staff no. 1–2

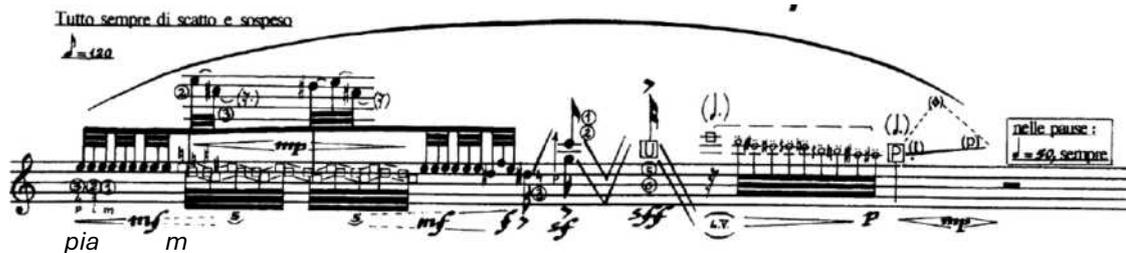
²⁸ *Tutto sempre di scatto e sospeso* (Italian) - everything always suddenly and suspending.



Example 33. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 21, staff no. 2



Example 34. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, p. 17, staff no. 1



Example 35. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 23, staff no. 1

The following example also illustrates the use of material from the other etudes in a new context. The circular tremolo from *Studio no. 4* (see Example 38), bitonic tapping from *Studio no. 5* (see Example 39), or friction along the strings from *Studio no. 6* (see Example 40). The phrase culminates in a *circular tremolo* across the six strings, producing tones of indeterminate pitch by placing the thumb of the left hand near the 19th fret, and a glissando toward the 1st position. In this case, a much more effective solution than the *circular tremolo* suggested by the composer is the use of a *rasgueado* with the p-m-i fingers, which makes it possible to reach all the indicated strings and achieve fortissimo dynamics. This technique should be used with continuity of tone in mind, rather than the rhythmic precision generally desired in *rasgueado* playing (see example 41).

♩ = 50 Pacato, con calma

triam — sempre — *triam*

① *pp* *La parte superiore pp*
 ② *sim...* *Leggerissima e scintillante*

① *pp* *La parte inferiore*
 ② *pp* *come un Caramello*
 ③ *pp* *e ben in salto*

Example 36. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 4*, Ricordi, p. 12, staff no. 3

$\left(\downarrow = 63 \right)$

sim

(p)

Example 37. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 5*, Ricordi, p. 17, staff no. 2

triam

fff

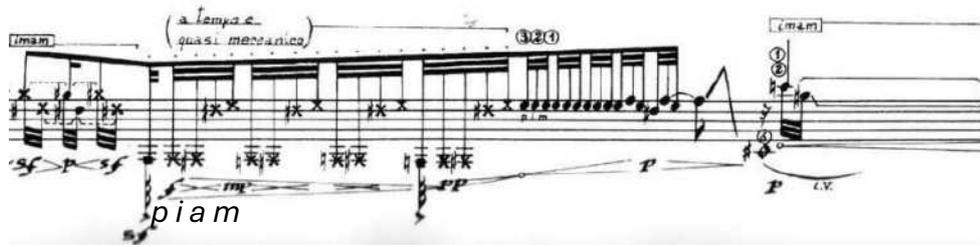
Example 38. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 6*, Ricordi, p. 22, staff no. 4

24

Example 39. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 24, stave no. 1–2

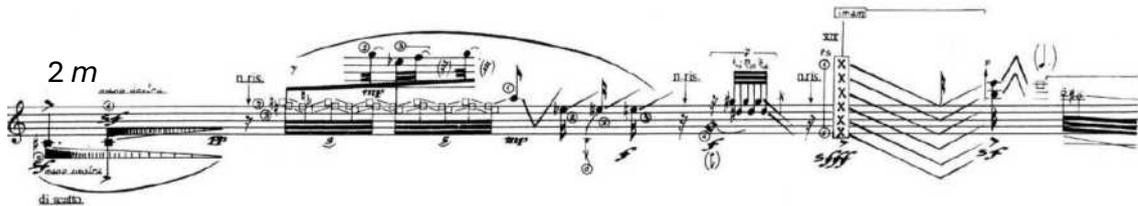
The indicated character of *a tempo e quasi meccanico* suggests the priority of rhythmic precision, which is not easy to achieve due to the varied dynamics, short articulation and the combination of techniques over a short stretch. According to the legend at the beginning of the piece²⁹, the F notes, seen in the example below, should be performed legato guitar using only the left hand, the other notes – by touching the strings over the corresponding frets. In developing the right coordination, thoughtful fingering and the right way to practice are crucial: I suggest strongly accenting the F notes, the *p-i-a-m* finger combination seems optimal, and the pattern is best mastered at a slow tempo using a preparatory technique (see example 42).

²⁹ M. Pisati, *Sette studi*, performance guidelines, Ricordi, Milano 1991.



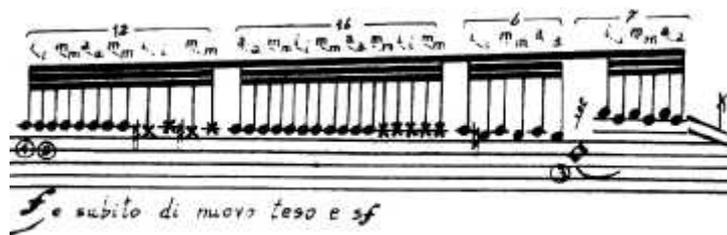
Example 40. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 24, staff no. 4

As the piece progresses, the narrative becomes more flowing: the phrases become longer and the pauses (at first equal to the value of a half note, a whole note, or even a whole note with a period) become shorter. Expression builds up due to the accumulation of many performance means. An interesting example is the guitar legato variation – in *Studio no. 7* sounds are produced with both hands and are characterized by full independence: the c sharp (with the left hand) is performed *rallentando*, and the c (realized with the right hand) – *accelerando* (see Example 43).



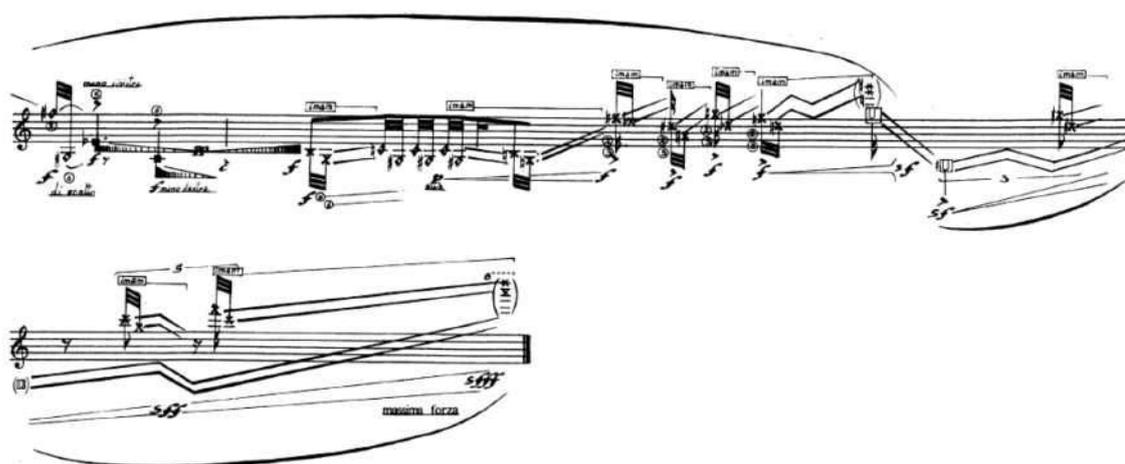
Example 41. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 26, staff no. 3

The figure taken from *Studio no. 1* is a dense tremolo performed in forte dynamics and with the *apoyando* technique, with the goal of keeping each sound clear. The challenge is to execute the entire phrase smoothly - a combination of sonorous motoric and percussive effects, as the unison of the a¹ sound is disrupted by sounds in the same rhythm, muffled by the left hand (see example 44). It is helpful to break this passage into smaller cells and practice this phrase with smaller and different fragments.



Example 42. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 27, staff no. 1

The etude is finished with a segment that evokes the material from *Studio no. 6*; abrupt *legato* and chaotic tremolo enhance the expression, and the whole closes with a rub along the strings combined with circular *tremolo* and *glissando* in the instrument's highest register. To achieve the “full power³⁰” both expressive and dynamic – the thumb nail of the left hand should be set to the strings at a 90° angle, pushed firmly against them, and the hand moved slowly toward the sound hole, resulting in an extremely loud sonoristic effect. On the other hand, the penetrating timbre from the violin strings can be brought out by shortening them with the fingernails of fingers 3 and 4. Combining these elements with a dense tremolo in maximum dynamics and *sul ponticello* register results in an expressive and impressive ending to the piece (see Example 45).



Example 43. M. Pisati, *Studio no. 7*, Ricordi, p. 27, stave no. 2–3

³⁰ *Massima forza* (Italian) – full power.

2.2 Pēteris Vasks – *Vientulības sonāte*

2.2.1 Biography of the composer

Pēteris Vasks was born in 1946 in Aizpute, Latvia, the son of a pastor. He studied double bass at the Emīls Dārziņš Music School in Riga (1959-1964) and then at the Lithuanian National Conservatory in Vilnius (1964-1970). He played double bass in leading Latvian and Lithuanian orchestras until 1974. Because of his own beliefs and his religious background, he experienced Soviet repression (among other things, he was not admitted to the double bass class at the Latvian Academy of Music, despite his excellent performance)¹. Without a graduate degree in composition, he was unable to emerge as an autonomous artist², so from 1973 to 1978 he studied – this time without difficulties – in the composition class of Valentin Utkin at the Latvian Academy of Music in Riga.

Since the late 1980s, he has worked with prominent performers (including Gidon Kremer, Kronos Quartet, Sol Gabetta, The Hilliard Ensemble, Latvian Radio Choir). He is the only Latvian composer whose works are published by Schott Musik International. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors: in 1994 he became a member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, in 2001 – an honorary member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. He was awarded the Herder Prize in 1996, as well as the Baltic Assembly Prize; in addition, he has won the Great Latvian Music Prize several times (1993, 1997, 2003). He is also the originator of the Pēteris Vasks Foundation, which supports the emergence of contemporary Latvian music³.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Vasks was greatly impressed by representatives of the Polish school of composition gathered around the Warsaw Autumn Festival⁴. In the Latvian's early work, one can see inspirations from sonorism or controlled aleatorism (e.g. in *Cycle* for piano (1976)), and the artistic development of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki proved to be a reference point for Vasks, as he claims:

¹ Source - [<https://www.schott-music.com/en/person/peteris-vasks>, accessed 14.08.2024].

² Ž. Deless-Vēliņš, *S01E03 Peteris Vasks Interview #vienabalsi*, [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwHppURNqYU>] [accessed 14.08.2024], 8:11–9:53.

³ J. Kudiņš, *Pēteris Vasks* [<https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/peteris-vasks-293#work>, accessed 14.08.2024].

⁴ Ž. Deless-Vēliņš, *op. cit.* [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwHppURNqYU>, accessed 14.08.2024], 13:55–15:46.

“[Górecki] was contemporary, avant-garde, extremely complex, then suddenly found a clear path”⁵. Growing up behind the Iron Curtain left its mark on Vasks' work – to avoid censorship and accusations about the content of his works, he wrote primarily instrumental music in his early years⁶. The core of the composer's artistic attitude is his attachment to his homeland, which manifests itself in the form of drawing motives from *Latvian* folk melodies⁷, titles (*Lūgšana Latvijai* (Prayer for Latvia) for choir and wind orchestra (2014), *Tēvu zeme* (Homeland) for mixed choir (2018)), or statements:

Through my work I express what it is like to be Latvian [...]. It's a great privilege – despite everything we've been through, we haven't lost our own language, culture or destroyed our environment [...]. To be Latvian means to do everything to make this country the most beautiful place in the world⁸.

Spirituality plays an extremely important role in Vasks' work, which he himself points out as follows:

What my father did as a pastor, and what he included in his sermons, I try to realize in music. To tell stories with sounds. To affirm faith. This can be called variously - faith in God, composition proving God's existence, harmony. My father exhorted us to draw perseverance and strength from faith. I try to do this in my compositions⁹.

Although spirituality permeates all of Vasks' work, he directly addresses religious themes most often in music for choir or choir accompanied by orchestra, including *Pater Noster* for mixed choir¹⁰ (1991), *Dona nobis pacem* for mixed choir and string orchestra or organ (1996), *Missa* for mixed choir¹¹ (2000) or *Da Pacem, Domine* for mixed choir and string orchestra (2016).

Vasks draws on personal experiences (including *Musica dolorosa* for string orchestra (1983) in memory of his sister, *Pater Noster* for mixed choir in memory of his father, and *Vientulības sonāte* for solo guitar (1991) in memory of his aunt),

⁵ A.S. Kupriss, *Conductor's Analysis of Four Secular Works by Pēteris Vasks: Māte Saule, Zemgale, Litene, and Three Poems by Czesław Miłosz*, Boston University, Boston 2019, p. 35 [in:] C. Bean Stute, *Two Cello Works of Pēteris Vasks: Structure, Symbolism, and Identity*, doctoral thesis, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York 2020, p. 19.

⁶ Ž. Deless-Vēliņš, *op. cit.*, 31:02-32:39.

⁷ M. Jablonski, *Vasks, Pēteris* [in:] PWM Encyclopedia of Music [https://polskabibliotekamuzyczna.pl/encyklopedia/vasks-peteris/, accessed 14.08.2024].

⁸ Ž. Deless-Vēliņš, *op. cit.* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwHppURNqYU, accessed 14.08.2024], 1:03:01–01:04:40.

⁹ D. Aperāne, *Pārdomas par Pēteru Vaska mūziku* [https://jaunagaita.net/jg213/JG213_MUZIKA.htm, accessed 14.08.2024].

¹⁰ A version for mixed choir and string orchestra was also created in 1995.

¹¹ A version for mixed choir and string orchestra or organ was also created in 2005.

gives programmatic titles to his compositions, readily refers to man's relationship with nature, and the various references are allegorical in nature. Leitmotifs include silence (*Silent Songs* for mixed choir (1979), *The Fruit of the Silence* for mixed choir¹² (2013)) or light (*Violin Concerto “Distant Light”* (1997)). A bird plays a unique role in his work, both in the titles and in the music itself. The symbol has multiple meanings: the voice of understanding between God and man, the richness of nature, homeland, freedom, or the departed soul¹³. In *Landscape with birds* for solo flute (1980), birdsong is imitated; in *Zīles ziņa*¹⁴ for female chorus¹⁵ (1981), birdsong symbolizes the soul of a man killed in war¹⁶.

Vasks prioritizes the melodic aspect, and points to “eternal singing” – *canto perpetuo*¹⁷ – as a musical ideal. His work is characterized by elegiacism, the use of modal and minor scales, sensitivity to colors that emphasize harmony and mood, neo-romantic melodic gestures, and simple harmonics. In terms of expression, meditation is juxtaposed with pathos, the narrative is developed through motivic work, and the composer draws on traditional forms and genres¹⁸ and readily enriches them with a sonoristic layer, especially at the climaxes of the works. Some researchers compare his work to the music of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Arvo Pärt, John Tavener¹⁹.

2.2.2 Background of composition

*Vientulības sonāte*²⁰ (1990) is Pēteris Vasks' only composition for guitar. It was written for German guitarist Reinbert Evers, who premiered it on March 17, 1991 at the Forum Artium festival in Osnabrück. Vasks dedicated the piece to the “memory of M.B.”²¹ – Martha Buividy, the deceased aunt of the artist, previously paralyzed and unable to communicate with the outside world²². It thus fits into the category of those

¹² There are also versions of this composition for mixed choir and string orchestra, mixed choir and piano, string quartet, piano quintet, mixed choir and organ, string orchestra and piano, string orchestra and flute.

¹³ J. Jonāne, *View on Sacred Minimalism and music by Pēteris Vasks as incarnation of theological idea*, "Menotyra" vol. 23 no. 3, Riga 2016, pp. 221–223.

¹⁴ *Zīles ziņa* (lv.) – *The message of the lark*.

¹⁵ A version of the piece for mixed choir was created in 2004.

¹⁶ J. Jonāne, *op. cit.* p. 221.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 220.

¹⁸ M. Jabłoński, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ J. Jonāne, *op. cit.* p. 216.

²⁰ *Vientulības sonāte* (lv.) – *The Sonata of Loneliness*.

²¹ P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte*, title page, Schott, Mainz 1992.

²² *AFTER THE SILENCE: Music in the Shadow of War* festival program, Manchester 2014, p. 14.

of his works in which he addresses the theme of suffering. It also corresponds with his perception of his own role as a composer:

It has always been my dream to have my music played where people are most unhappy: in hospitals, prisons, buses during rush hour – comforting and questioning. My father was a clergyman, and maybe that's why I feel it's my duty to preach and bring hope in times of anguish²³.

2.2.3 Interpretation and performance issues

The *Vientulības sonāte* consists of three movements – *Pensieroso*, *Risoluto* and *Con dolore* - within which the composer has separated and numbered 26 segments. All three movements contrast with each other in terms of texture, performance techniques used and sonoristic aura, but are consistent in character and motivic affinity. Of the compositions described in the work, the Sonata explores the instrument's timbral possibilities to the least extent. According to Hanna Kostrzewska, sonoristics can be understood more broadly and include more elements of a musical work. According to the researcher:

The primary factor that significantly determines the nature of sonoristic quality is timbre, tied here to the source of sound, i.e. to the choice of source material. On the other hand, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, articulation, color can equally co-create sonoristic structures, different in kind, but equally capable of calling up sonoristic value²⁴.

The aspect of timbre, on the other hand, is crucial in exposing and differentiating the character of musical thoughts, and the more sparingly used sonoristic means thus acquire a unique, even symbolic meaning. Baiba Jaunslaviete draws attention to the dialogue between sonoristic and non-sonoristic elements. In her view, the sonoristic material that opens and closes a composition can refer to mysticism and eternity. She also highlights Vasks' characteristic use of sonoristics to sharpen the climax²⁵. Reflecting on the extra-musical references, the title of the piece and its links, can be a powerful and inspiring stimulus for the performer, helping to expose the gloomy character of the *Vientulības sonāte*.

²³ Statement by Pēteris Vasks, *ibidem*.

²⁴ H. Kostrzewska, *Sonoristics*, Ars Nova, Poznań 1994, p. 20.

²⁵ B. Jaunslaviete, *Interaction of Sonoristic and Non-Sonoristic Material: Various Aspects of Musical Form and Aesthetics*, “Principles of Music Composing: Sonorism” No. 14, Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademija, Vilnius 2014, pp. 18–24.

I. *Pensieroso*

Pensieroso consists of several, as if poured, motifs, corresponding to the title reverie coexisting with anxiety²⁶. The motives are developed over the course of the movement, provide compositional material for the *Risoluto* movement and outline characteristic interval relationships. Awareness of these relationships helps the performer select appropriate means and emphasize expression with a sonoristic aspect.

A distinctive and frequently used interval throughout the piece is the tritone with which *Pensieroso* begins. The $f^2 h^2$ interval in pianissimo dynamics is made with a specific tremolo technique, which involves rubbing the ① and ② strings with the fingertip of the m finger, creating a sonoristic effect between hum and sound produced at the edge of audibility. These ratios can be modulated not only by volume, but also by the angle of the wrist and finger relative to the strings. The effect is repeated with the p finger, making it louder and more selective, in addition to being enriched by a *glissando* going down an octave, concluding with a single $h^1 f^2$ tritone hit with the *p* finger and an upward glissando leading to a repeated *rallentando* b^2 (see example 1).

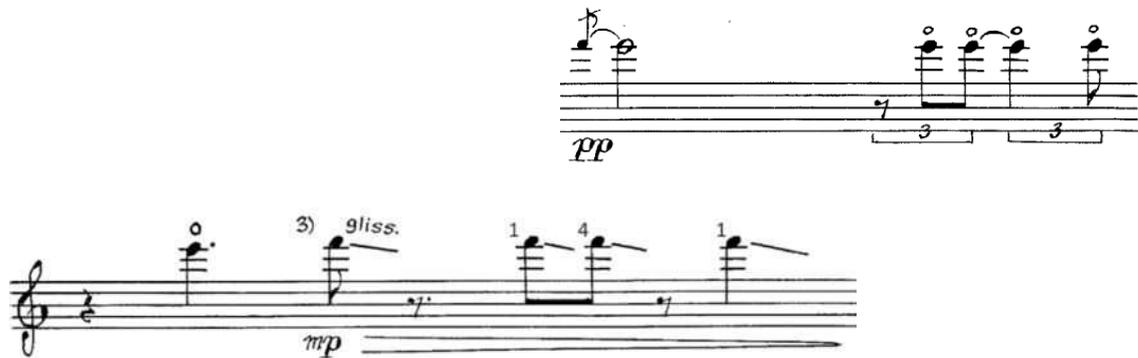


Example 1. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 4, stave 1–2

One can see the symbolism used by Vasks. Important is the role of the aforementioned silence, which involves the conscious realization of pauses and written gasps, which intensifies the restless character. *Glissandos* resemble the singing of a bird - a motive, perhaps referring to the soul of a deceased person. The symbol can be artfully reflected by differentiating the performance of the glissandos, including with

²⁶*Pensieroso* (Italian) – thoughtful, concerned.

the help of fingering – the combination of eighth notes with fingers 1-4 helps to consciously plan a phrase composed of limited material in the form of harmonics e^2 and *glissandos* beginning with f^2 . At the same time, another characteristic interval is marked – a minor second (see Example 2).



Example 2. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 4, stave 2–3

Section 1 features a distinctive quasi-vocal motive composed of E-d-e-f-b-as, which is used repeatedly in the first and second movements of the sonata. To emphasize it, the f and b-flat notes on the (4) string are worth combining with the 2nd finger using a *portamento*, as well as vibrato. The phrase ends with a *glissando* beginning with a tritone (see example 3).



Example 3. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 4, stave no. 3–4

On the 5th staff there is again a tritone (f^1 b) combined with a *glissando*, this time played with either the *m* or the *i* finger. Because of the pianissimo indicated, it is advisable to play it perpendicularly with the fingernail, as strongly as possible *sul ponticello*, since the tension of the strings right at the bridge allows a faster repetition, bringing

out the interval in a very quiet dynamic and enriching it with an interesting timbre. This is followed by repetitions of the minor second f-e, played with the left hand (at this point the right hand should dampen the vibrating string above the neck, to the left of the struck note), which introduces a new sonoristic effect. This motive is also repeated several times and is the building block of the next movement of the sonata, the *Risoluto* (see example 4).



Example 4. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 4, staff no. 5

Previously presented motives Vasks develops, as exemplified in the following quasi-vocal segment no. 2. The realization of the melody using the *apoyando* technique with attention to *legato*, *vibrato*, and thoughtful fingering helps to bring out its character and achieve a darker timbre. As in the related segment no. 1, it is suggested to start the phrase in the V position, so that the notes on the (4) string can be vibrated and the phrase can be shaped more plausibly. The E sound can be played on an open (6) string and continued in 2nd position to preserve the *legato* and timbral cohesiveness of the h and f G (see example 5).



Example 5. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, pp. 4-5, stave no. 6-1

The climax of the movement comes in the *poco più mosso* section, which is made up of layered motives presented earlier. The eruption of energy occurs over the course of four chords, and each chord is performed successively *fortissimo*, *forte*, *mezzo piano*

and *piano*. The dynamics can be further emphasized with timbre: varying the chords within the *sul ponticello* – *sul tasto* range, as well as striking the *rasgueado* with the fingernail alone, the fingernail and fingertip, or the fingertip alone (see Example 6).

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The first staff is marked 'poco più mosso' and contains a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *mf*. The second staff features a more complex texture with dynamics *f*, *p*, and *ff*, including fingerings (1, 3, 0, 3, 2, 1, 1, 2, 3-4, 2, 1-1, 4) and a large horizontal line indicating a sustained or glissando effect. The third staff includes a box labeled '6 a tempo' and 'ord.', with dynamics *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *mp*, and a circled '4' below a measure.

Example 6. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 6, stave no. 1–3

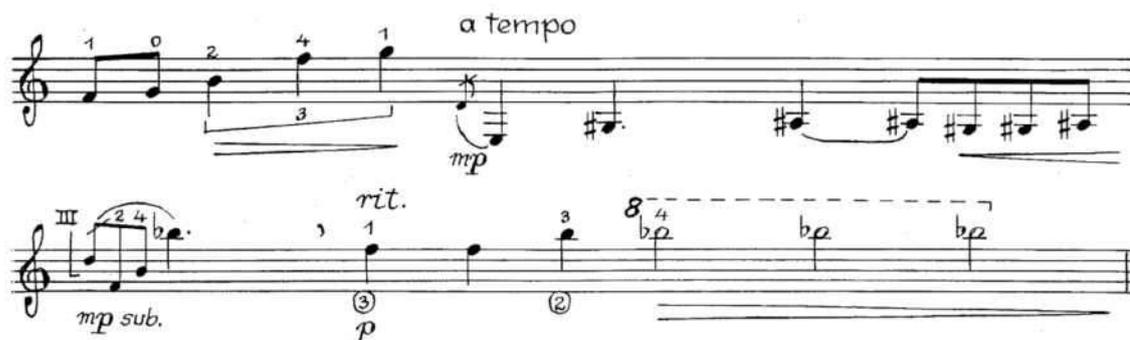
It is worth noting the role of *acciaccature*, which, energetically performed, intensify the sense of anxiety. Unlike many other elements of the *Pensieroso*, they do not appear in subsequent movements, while individual interval steps do. In the ending – *più mosso* – one should pay attention to the selectivity of the *acciaccature* and let the target sounds resonate (see Example 7).

The image shows a single staff of musical notation. It is marked 'più mosso' and contains a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mp*. Fingerings 1, 4, 2, 1, 2, 0, 3 are indicated above the notes. A circled '7' is placed at the beginning of the staff.

Example 7. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 6, staff no. 6

The narrative seems to freeze by gradually slowing down the tempo, lengthening the rhythmic values, *diminuendo*, and the sensitive handling of timbre further helps in emphasizing the character – the quietest low notes can be made with the fingertip of *p*. It seems exceptionally important to play the phrase *legato*, although the combination

of the last notes $f^1-h^1-b^2$ is quite challenging. Both smooth placement of the fingers of the left hand, precise synchronization of both hands, and use of the advantage of resonating open strings and overtones can help (see example 8). The smooth transition to the next part in the manner creates an interesting effect – a clash of two contrasting moods.



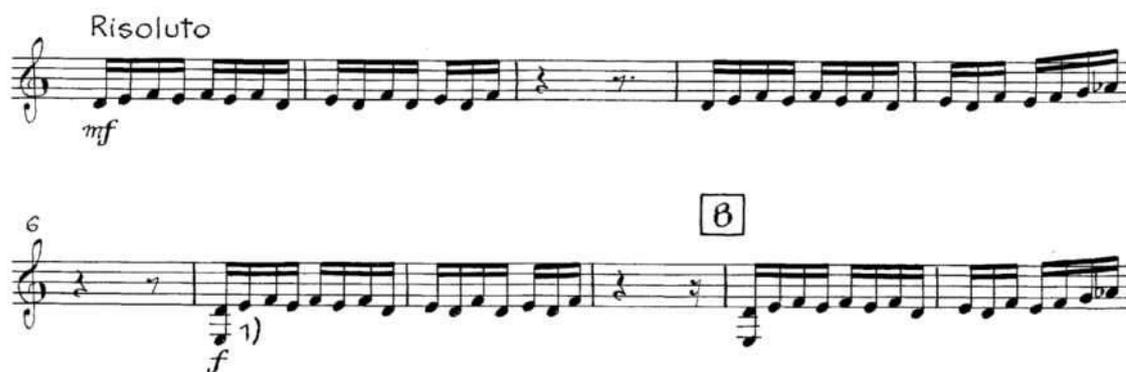
Example 8. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 6, stave no. 7–8

II. *Risoluto*

Risoluto has the character of a toccata with an irregular pulse – the score is divided into bars, although the composer did not write down the time signature. Streams of sixteenth notes are interrupted by pauses and accented dissonances in eighths. A chorale-like *con anima*, referring to the final movement catches the attention, and the movement concludes with a segment of parallel chords of dramatic expression. The motives and intervals presented in the *Pensieroso* evolve - the movement opens with a motive derived from the left-hand repetition of the notes f and e (see Examples 9 and 10).



Example 9. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Pensieroso*), Schott, p. 6, staff no. 5



Example 10. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 1–10

The affinity with segment no. 2 is also noticeable in the following example, which outlines Vasks' method of motive work throughout the piece (see examples 11 and 12):



Example 11. by P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (I. *Pensieroso*), Schott, pp. 4–5, stave no. 6–1



Example 12. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 12–15

The sonoristic aspect in this movement manifests itself primarily in terms of rhythm, articulation and color. As Kostrzewska notes, “the dominance of a given component (e.g., rhythm), even realized in perception (e.g., as movement), gives rise to higher-order values (e.g., motion is not a value in itself, but is the means on the basis of which the sonoristic quality is created)²⁷. Thus, the sonoristic quality of a piece is created by the rhythmicity of the piece, as well as pauses and eighth notes, disrupting the sixteenth-note pattern.

²⁷ H. Kostrzewska, *op. cit.* p. 20.

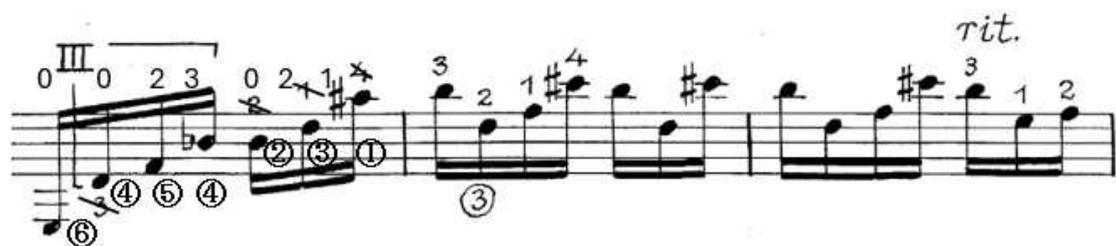
To emphasize this value, I suggest performing the described segments with *portato* articulation, which helps to avoid too fast a tempo and maintain rhythmic precision. The composer's indication to suppress the ⑥ string²⁸.

As I mentioned, the score lacks meter, and the whole seems to be framed in bars of irregular length only for graphic order. A performance suggestion is the beaming of the notated values, in connection with which it is advisable to mark with accent and longer articulation the first notes of groups of two, three or four sixteenths²⁹ (see Example 13).



Example 13. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 17–24

The direction of individual intervals, as well as the individual highest notes of the group, which outline the overall melodic direction of the entire passage, can also be a clue in shaping the phrase. As the successively higher notes are reached, the dynamics also increase and the musical tension builds (see Example 14).



Example 14. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 52–59

²⁸ P. Vasks, *op. cit.* p. 7.

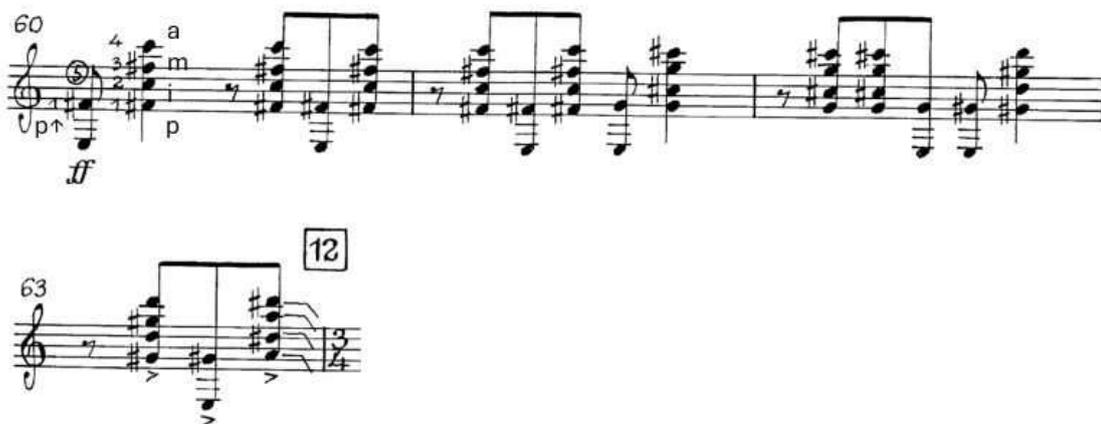
²⁹ The marking of individual sounds and the priority of articulation over tempo were pointed out by Pēteris Vasks himself to Italian guitarist Alberto Mesirca, who worked with the composer before his concert at the Stiff International Music Festival. A. Mesirca (in conversation with Radosław Wieczorek), Castelfranco Veneto, 11.04.2024.

In the following climax (and related excerpts), I decided to change the articulation in the form of resounding open strings and abandon the relentless *portato* in order to emphasize the increase in tension with such a measure. In addition, the fingering used seems much more comfortable than the one proposed by Reinbert Evers (see Example 15).



Example 15. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 57–59

The tritone interval exposed in 1st movement also appears in *Risoluto*. Segments of sixteenth notes are separated by fragments of *meno mosso*, which consist of tritones in eighth-note values. The co-sounding intervals move in parallel by minor or major seconds, and for the robust character of the chords, the precise execution of pauses, the damping of the ⑥ string – the E bourdon, and *fortissimo* dynamics are important. Intervals on the ⑤ and ⑥ strings are therefore suggested to be played through both strings with the *p* finger and *apoyando* technique (see Example 16).



Example 16. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 60–63

A narrative contrast is provided by the *con anima*, in which Vasks for the first time explicitly refers to music of previous eras. The tonal center is set by the pedal note *d*, the tenor - the middle voice - is based on the Phrygian scale, and the accompanying voices – a fifth higher and a sixth lower – move in parallel³⁰ in the *fauxbourdon* technique³¹ (see example 17). Moreover, the segment connects to the finale of the *Sonata*, as it anticipates the material used in *Con dolore*. Interestingly, this is the only passage (apart from the almost twin segment No. 26) in which the composer noted 3/4 meter.

The image shows a musical score for a guitar. It consists of two staves. The first staff starts at measure 63 and ends at measure 69. A box labeled '12' is placed above the first few measures. The tempo/mood is marked 'con anima'. The instruction 'sul E D' is written above the staff. The dynamics are marked 'mp' and 'p'. The second staff continues from measure 67. The score includes various musical notations such as chords, single notes, and rests.

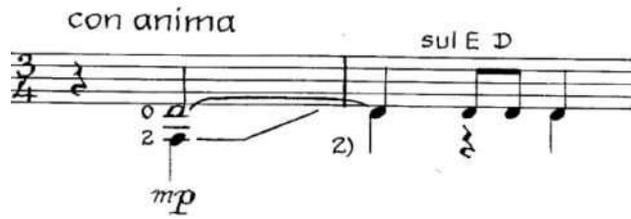
Example 17. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 64–69

In bars 64–82, the texture changes, *piano* dynamics dominate, and the *d* sound is repeated on strings ⑤ and ⑥ to prolong its duration, suggesting the need for a different treatment of timbre. The *d* repetitions can be performed with the fingertips of *p* and *i*, while the F-d glissando (after which, as the composer indicates, the *d* sound should not be struck again³²) is best performed with the fingertip of the 2nd finger to avoid unwanted overtones (see Example 18).

³⁰ Vasks leads the lowest voice inconsistently at crucial points in the drama (bars 69 and 75–82), thus changing the chord mode and momentarily referring to the major-minor system, which creates a surprising and suggestive rhetorical effect.

³¹ Brian Trowell notes that the most common form of *fauxbourdon* is voicing away from the tenor a quarter and a sixth lower to form a sext chord. Vasks breaks this pattern and instead of a quarter down, moves the component a fifth up, nevertheless the structure of the sext chord remains intact. As the researcher states: “‘Faux bourdon’, though not in itself a mandatory canonic instruction, is therefore a kind of trademark that tells the performers that they may increase the sonority of the music by adding one or two canonically derived parts”. See B. Trowell, *Fauxbourdon* [in:] Grove Music Online [https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.09373, accessed 09.08.2024].

³² P. Vasks, *op. cit.* p. 9.



Example 18. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 64–65

Given the vocal nature of the excerpt, it is exceptionally important to have the right chord balance and achieve legato, which can be achieved by emphasizing the highest voice. In addition to a smooth change of position with a relaxed left hand, I suggest leaving a finger on ① of the 4th string, and linking intervals larger than a minor second with a *portamento* technique (see Example 19). It is advisable to look for a warm tone *sul tasto* in combination with a perpendicular position of the fingernail with respect to the string, which allows better control of the chord in quiet dynamics.



Example 19. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 67–69

It is quite a challenge to maintain the mystical character, the calm, steady pulse and balance of the consonances in the climax *con anima*, which should be built up dynamically, using a *crescendo*. This is followed by a quieting, slowing down and suspension, and a return to *Tempo I* in bar 83.

Rhythmic precision, expressive articulation, and clear execution of pauses are particularly important in bars 133–146. The motive on which this passage is based is again based on the characteristic interval of the tritone. Its execution on the ② and ③ strings and the lifting of the fingers of the left hand allows for the desired articulation (see Example 20).

Example 20. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 133–145

The preparation of the greatest climax in the *Risoluto*, as well as in the whole *Sonata*, is bars 151–157, and in bar 158 the actual gradation of tension begins. It is based on the tritone harmonies used earlier, which this time are shifted in parallel until they reach the a^2 sound on the ① string (previously the highest sound was $d\sharp^2$). The passage begins in *fortissimo*, and the dynamics only increase; the composer noted a *meno mosso* at tempo $\text{♩}=104$, as well as a gradual *accelerando* to tempo $\text{♩}=144$ in bar no. 165 (see Example 21).

18 *meno mosso* $\text{♩} = 104$ → *accel. 3)*

158 *ff*

160

162

164 *gliss.* → $\text{♩} = 144$ *fff*

Example 21. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 158–165

The *fortissimo possibile* dynamic is led by a sliding glissando chord made tremolo, which in practice sounds as *rasgueado*. It is suggested to perform it with a combination of *p-m-i* fingers, mask the rhythmic aspect of this technique and treat the chord as a continuous sound band that leads to an eruption of energy (see example 22).

Example 22. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), Schott, bars 164–167

Vasks composed the final acceleration in the score and fragmented the rhythmic values – first there are eighth notes, which turn into triplets, and these are crowned by a chord extracted by *tremolo*. Incidentally, it is not possible to perform it in notated form, so I suggest dispensing with the lowest c# sound, which disrupts the smooth linking to the next chord. Priority is given to the sonoristic (rather than harmonic) aspect, hence the absence of the c# sound is not noticeable. On the other hand, the remaining notes can be covered with *barré* in X position through five strings, f² with 4 finger, c² with 3 finger and f#¹ with 1 finger, and the whole should be moved in this form using *glissando* and *tremolo* into an even higher register, reaching notes of indefinite pitch beyond the guitar neck (see example 23).

Example 23. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (II. *Risoluto*), bars 168–169

III. *Con dolore*

Con dolore (with the exception of the final segment of 26) lacks a time signature, bar lines merely separate the segments, and the melodic aspect – *canto perpetuo* – comes to the fore. Vasks alludes to medieval music: the melodic line evokes associations with Gregorian chant, as indicated by its reliance on the Aeolian scale, a small ambitus (which increases as the narrative unfolds), and a long, winding phrase. The composer

opted for a scordatura ⑥ string on the D note (which is also the tonal center), which allows for a strongly resonant bourdon on the empty A and D strings, while the punctuated rhythm gives the character of a funeral march. In order to achieve a uniform timbre and be able to shape (with the help of the vibrato) the sound produced, when playing the melody it is suggested to avoid the open strings, while prioritizing *legato*, which requires the use of several unusual but practical solutions (including swapping the fingers of the left hand during the sound, see Example 24). The *apoyando* technique makes it possible to produce a warm sound, corresponding to the dramatic and solemn spirit of the piece. The melody on the ④ string should be played with the *p* finger so as not to dampen the resonating bourdon.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The first staff begins with a circled '6' and an equals sign followed by 'D', indicating a scordatura. The tempo/mood is 'Con dolore' and the dynamic is 'mp'. The second staff features a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff starts with a circled '19' and includes dynamics 'mf' and 'mp'. The notation includes various note values, rests, and fingerings.

Example 24. p. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (III. *Con dolore*), p. 13, stave no. 1–3

The appropriate dramatic effect can be pointed out by emphasizing the character of both layers in terms of timbre and rhythm. With the floating melody (note the quarter note triplets in this regard) contrasts the dotted bourdon, which should be articulated with precision. The recurring characteristic interval of the minor second (A-B) and its symbolic and rhetorical significance are worth noting.

Calmato is still based on the Aeolian scale, but the tonal center is the e sound. The double voice is conducted in the technique of *nota contra notam*. Phrases are

separated by pauses or breaths that suspend the narrative. *Piano* dynamics dominate and the entire segment is a dramatic contrast to the earlier passage, so it seems reasonable to bring out the appropriate timbre. I suggest a clear but vague *sul ponticello* and striking the strings perpendicularly with a fingernail to avoid overtones. For cohesive color, each phrase is best performed on the same string (see Example 25). Given the mystical nature of the segment and its unique significance in the context of the entire piece, the bright color – in a metaphorical sense – may correspond to the motive of light present in Vasks' work.

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note, and then a quarter note. Below the staff, there are bass clef notes and a dynamic marking 'p'. Above the staff, there are markings for 'rit.' and 'calmato', and a circled number '20'. The second staff continues the melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note, and then a quarter note. Below the staff, there are bass clef notes and a dynamic marking 'p'. The third staff continues the melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note, and then a quarter note. Below the staff, there are bass clef notes and a dynamic marking 'p'.

Example 25. by P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (III. *Con dolore*), Schott, pp. 13–14, stave no. 6–1

The *con dolore* returns in segment no. 21 and is an elaboration on the opening passage. The chromaticization of the modal melody introduces an element of surprise and enhances the dramatic character, and the whole passage is kept in *forte* dynamics. From the performer's perspective, the key is to keep the melody *legato* and perform it with an intense, rich sound, which can be achieved by playing *apoyando* on ② and ③ strings. It's a good idea to take advantage of the guitar's properties and let it resonate freely – in the example below, the a^1 note can resonate, despite moving the hand to the I position (see example 26).

Example 26. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte (III. Con dolore)*, Schott, p. 14, stave no. 2–3

The conscious use of *portamento* helps in position changes. Such a solution can be used in combinations of, among others, a^1-f^1 , g^1-e^2 , a^1-d^1 (see Examples 27, 28, 29).

Example 27. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte (III. Con dolore)*, Schott, p. 14, staff no. 7

Example 28. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte (III. Con dolore)*, Schott, p. 14, staff no. 7

Example 29. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte (III. Con dolore)*, Schott, pp. 14–15, stave no. 8–1

The 25th segment is again followed by a *calmato*, which this time is slightly more extended and moved an octave higher. Attention should be paid to the breaths, and in order to preserve the uniform tone of the melody, I suggest performing it on the ① string (see example 30).

Example 30. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (III. *Con dolore*), Schott, p. 15, stave no. 2–3

The segment no. 26 is a direct reference to *con anima* in *Risoluto*. It is in 3/4 time signature, a triplet pulse in the bass line is introduced, the passage is divided into two-bar phrases, each of which – symbolically – reaches higher and higher notes. The piece closes with a glissando made with a glass slide and at the same time an *arpeggio* through all the empty strings in *pianissimo* until *al niente* (see example 31). As Baiba Jaunslaviete notes³³, such a sonoristic effect, unprecedented in literature, evokes associations with the mystical field and may prompt reflection on the meaning of the title solitude.

Example 31. P. Vasks, *Vientulības sonāte* (III. *Con dolore*), Schott, p. 15, staff no. 6

³³ B. Jaunslaviete, *op. cit.* s. 18–24.

2.3 Pawel Malinowski – *untitled [largo]*

2.3.1 Biography of the composer

Pawel Malinowski (1994) is a composer born in Olsztyń, but has been associated with Krakow for years. He graduated with honors from the Academy of Music in Krakow, and in 2024, at the same university, he defended with distinction his doctoral dissertation written under the direction of Professor Wojciech Widlak. He also honed his craft under the tutelage of Juliana Hodkinson, Niels Rønsholdt and Simon Steen-Andersen at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus and Aalborg. He is the Grand Prix winner of the 58th Tadeusz Baird Competition for Young Composers, and a recipient of an Scholarship of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. His piece *Robotron* represented Polish Radio at the 66th UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers. Malinowski's works have been performed at music festivals such as Warsaw Autumn, Sacrum Profanum in Krakow, International Summer Courses of New Music in Darmstadt, “Wawel at Dusk” in Krakow, Pulsar Festival in Copenhagen, Musica Electronica Nova in Wrocław, Ostrava Days and Örebro Contemporary Music Festival. Malinowski has so far collaborated with many outstanding ensembles, including Airborne Extended, CORda Cracovia Orchestra, Friction Quartet, Hashtag Ensemble, Momenta Quartet, NJYD, Orchestra of New Music, Music Cooperative Contemporary Ensemble. In addition, during the 2020/2021 artistic season, he collaborated with the London Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the LPO Young Composers Programme¹.

In his work, he draws inspiration from elements of the past. In *Robotron* for chamber ensemble and electronics (2018), he draws on retro aesthetics, with its title derived from the name of an East German electronics company. The piece establishes a dialogue between a tape with a recorded human voice and a live ensemble imitating a synthesizer sound. The composer also refers to music of earlier eras, including Bach in *...über BWV 971* for flute and string trio (2016) and Mahler in *Nachwanderung* for orchestra (2018). Malinowski also references cinema, the work of David Lynch – *In It helps relieve tension* for bass flute, double bass and electronics (2017)² – or Stanley Kubrick – in *Faites vos jeux* for violin, cello, double bass, video and electronics (2018)

¹ Source – <https://www.pawelmalinowski.com/about> [accessed 20.09.2024].

² A version for solo bass flute and electronics was also created in 2018.

or the installation *Sommer Resort Darmstadt* (2018). He also reaches out to social contexts - the Polish economic transformation in *Dziś wydaje mi się że jest lepiej* for ensemble, video and electronics (2017), or global warming in *ice to weep* for voice, instruments and electronic sounds (2023)³. Paweł Malinowski's compositions are published by PWM since 2024.

2.3.2 Background of composition

Paweł Malinowski composed *untitled [largo]* at my request as part of the “Homage à Witold Szalonek” project⁴ funded by the ZAiKS Fund for the Promotion of Creativity. I asked the composer for a free interpretation of the sonoristics that bound together Szalonek's work, my own artistic and scientific inquiries and Malinowski's interest in the sound possibilities of the guitar. Talks about starting a collaboration began in October 2020, and the first sketches and sound samples of the guitar's sonoristic possibilities, which inspired Malinowski, were created in April 2022. Consultations on selected performance aspects and the search for sonoristic effects continued through October, and in November the composition was completed, and in December 2022 it was published by Modran⁵. I premiered the composition on April 26, 2023 at the Czestochowa Philharmonic Hall at a concert within the framework of the Third International Scientific and Artistic Conference of Doctoral Students and Young Scientists “Facets of Guitar in Scientific Research”, organized by the Department of Music at Jan Długosz University in Czestochowa.

The *untitled [largo]* is Malinowski's only piece for solo guitar. Despite the considerable - though unusual - technical demands placed on the performer, the piece was written in accordance with the idiom of the instrument, and the composer remained open to the practical solutions I suggested. Malinowski was also inspired by the characteristics of other plucked string instruments, according to him:

The idea of writing a piece for solo classical guitar seemed to me full of interesting creative limitations, but ones that would be interesting to tackle [...]. I discovered the fascinating

³ See J. Topolski, *Paweł Malinowski* [<https://culture.pl/pl/tworca/pawel-malinowski>, accessed 20.09.2024].

⁴ The aim of the project was to record in audio-video form Witold Szalonek's *Three Obereks* for Guitar, and to commission, publish and record a piece for solo guitar – inspired by Szalonek's work – by Paweł Malinowski. The performer was Radosław Wiczorek, and the impetus for this artistic project was the desire to honor the 20th anniversary of Szalonek's death, to popularize his work and to work for the emergence of new guitar music.

⁵ P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, Orzesze 2022.

sonority of the classical guitar thanks to Mikkel Egelund Nielsen, the Danish guitarist of the band NJYD; later on, work with the theorbo (*adagio sostenuto* written for Ensemble Linea) was also a significant inspiration. The reason I write about this is that I see getting used to the classical guitar as a process, and today - especially looking from a *largo* perspective – I am impressed by the extraordinary flexibility in shaping the timbre of this instrument⁶.

Subtle references to other eras or musical genres can be seen in the piece. As the composer points out: “In building the narrative, I was very much inspired by the *Sarabande* from Giovanni Zamboni's *IX Lute Suite*⁷, but at the same time I thought of the looped recordings of the experimental band Boards of Canada”⁸.

According to the first drafts of the piece, its concept from the beginning was based on multiphonics⁹, which, as the piece developed, were to form an ostinato against which chords were introduced. (See Examples 1 and 2).

⁶ P. Malinowski (correspondence with Radosław Wieczorek), Krakow 23.04.2023.

⁷ This is about a specific performance: L. Contini, *Zamboni: Sonatas for Lute*, Glossa, 2014.

⁸ P. Malinowski, *op. cit.*

⁹ Malinowski explains them this way: “The piece uses multiphonics, which involves producing at least two different sounds on a single string. They are created by gently touching between the frets of the struck string in such a way that several different component sounds of that string resonate at the same time”, [in:] P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, performance tips, *op.cit.*...

Gitarre I

3 versty:

1. rytmi, puls multifonacni 2,3

2. scordatura E ↓

3. *passendo tonale / atonalny*

The image shows a handwritten musical score for guitar, titled "Gitarre I". It consists of three systems of staves, each with a single treble clef staff and a corresponding guitar staff. The first system is annotated with "3 versty:" and "1. rytmi, puls multifonacni 2,3". It features a treble staff with two circled 'M' notes and a guitar staff with a series of notes and a bracketed section. The second system is annotated with "2. scordatura E ↓" and shows a treble staff with a few notes and a guitar staff with a dense, shaded area of notes. The third system is annotated with "3. *passendo tonale / atonalny*" and features a treble staff with a series of notes and a guitar staff with a series of notes and a bracketed section. The word "nochi" is written in the upper right of the first system, and "nochi" is written in the upper right of the second system. There are also some small symbols and markings on the guitar staves, including a '+' sign and a 'q' sign.

Example 1. P. Malinowski, *Sketchbook*

The image shows five systems of musical staves with handwritten sketches. The first system has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). It features a melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by a long horizontal line with an arrow pointing right, and a circled 'M' above it. The second system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, with a circled '1-2' above the staff and a long horizontal line with an arrow. The third system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, with a circled '1-3' above the staff, a long horizontal line with an arrow, and a section of notes with a wavy line underneath labeled 'fingers'. The fourth system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, with a circled 'D = molt' written across the staff. The fifth system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, with a bracketed section containing the text 'SP | flaut. rumor hib!' and a circled '1-2' below it, followed by a long horizontal line with an arrow.

Example 2. P. Malinowski, *Sketchbook*

The composer was interested in the scordatura of the ⑤ string, which facilitated the construction of an uninterrupted quarter-tone ostinato through repetitions extracted realized on the ⑤ and ⑥ strings. Common explorations also included various types of glissandi, tappings, and the use of the violin bow (see example 3):

Starting to work on the *largo* I had some residual ideas, I wanted to bring out the potential of flageolet multitimbral chords, over time our joint experiments went further, in the direction of extending the duration of the sound as much as possible. During our joint experimental rehearsals, I noticed that the bowed guitar has great potential to bring out chordal consonances, and the slightly muffled, deafening timbre of the bowed strings carries a piercing beauty¹⁰.

¹⁰ P. Malinowski (correspondence with Radoslaw Wieczorek), *op. cit.*

Handwritten musical score for "Boards of Canada" by Pawel Malinowski. The score is written on multiple staves. The first section includes a treble clef staff with notes and rests, and a bass clef staff with notes. A large bracket on the left side groups several staves. The title "Boards of Canada" is written in a stylized font. Below the title, there are dynamic markings "mp" and "f". The score includes handwritten notes in Polish: "z tego rytmu mychodze, chodly" and "e ctych chodas smutek (ans)". There are also some rhythmic diagrams and wavy lines at the bottom of the page.

Example 3. Pawel Malinowski, *Sketchbook*

During his first attempts to use the bow, Malinowski was inspired by the sound obtained by the e-bow - an electronic bow for electric guitar, which generates

an electromagnetic field and induces vibration of the strings, and consequently a sound of any length. The composer also considered the use of a bow built for acoustic and classical guitars - the Pickaso Guitar Bow¹¹, which allows for more comfortable repetitions with the bow facing deep into the resonance hole. The violin bow provides opportunities to produce specific effects in the form of several-second sounds, chords, as well as the vibrato of the bow, which determined the final decision to choose it.

2.3.3 Interpretation and performance issues

The sonoristic aura of the piece is primarily influenced by the scordatura ⑤ of the string in F \flat ¹², the use of multiphonics and harmonics, and the use of the violin bow. Also present are techniques in the form of *pizzicato*, transverse vibrato, pulling up the string, chords obtained only with the left hand, rubbing the fingernail along the string, and the mentioned elements are often performed simultaneously.

Searching for multiphonics on the guitar, Malinowski used a table describing the position of the extraction of multiphonics on the neck, developed by Seth Josel and Ming Tsao¹³, on which the components of sounds that are heard most strongly are also marked (see Example 4).

¹¹ The bow is 21.4 cm long, of which 14 cm is the length of the bristles. See <https://www.pickasobow.com> [accessed 02.08.2024].

¹² A quarter tone lower relative to the *F* sound.

¹³ See S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*, Bärenreiter, Kassel 2010, p. 121.

Figure 2.10. Select multiphonics on string 6

Example 4. S.F. Josel, M. Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*, Bärenreiter, p. 121.

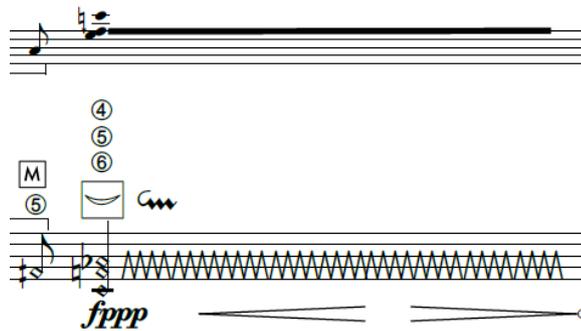
In order for the multiphonics to be heard, the frequencies of the successive partials must be amplified¹⁴, and this effect can be achieved by:

- (a) precisely placing the finger of the left hand on the string,
- (b) gently touching the string when it is struck (avoiding dampening of the overtones),
- (c) striking the string as close to the bridge as possible,
- (d) striking the string with the fingernail *p* and perpendicular to the string imitating the plectrum,
- (e) stimulating the string to vibrate strongly, thus benefiting from relatively loud dynamics
- (f) not suppressing the resonance induced on the other strings of the guitar,
- (g) use of a new set of bass strings¹⁵.

The scordatura used creates a quarter tone between the empty fifth and sixth strings of the guitar, where the multiphonics are most often produced, further emphasizing the resulting cluster-like chords. The *Largo* section opens with harmonics

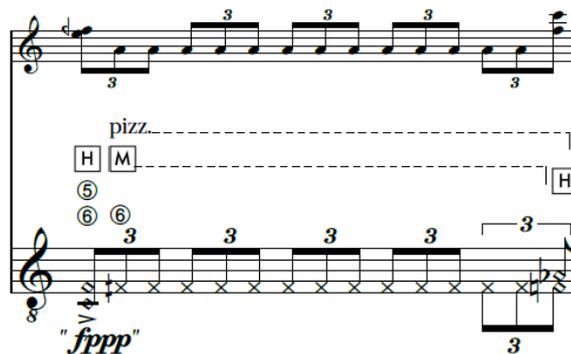
¹⁴ See C. Traube, *An Interdisciplinary Study of the Timbre of the Classical Guitar*, McGill University, Montreal 2004, pp. 29–30

¹⁵ Worn strings are more subject to “internal damping”, see *ibidem*, p. 60.



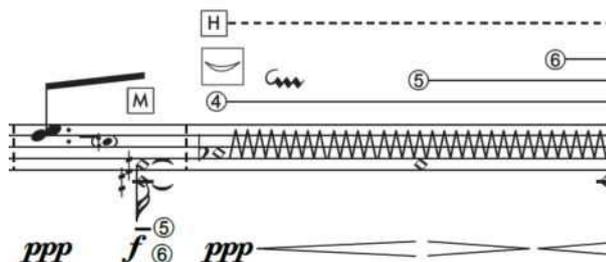
Example 6. . P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 3, staff no. 1

Quite a bit of control is required to bring out the multiphonic in combination with the pizzicato technique, while keeping the phrase flowing and not suppressing the resounding dichord opening bar (see Example 7). Such control is made possible by damping the ⑥ string with the fingertip of the a finger, while making triols with the *I* finger.



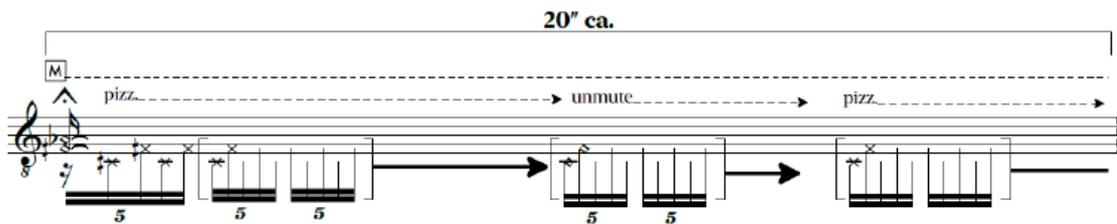
Example 7. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 3, staff no. 3

A smooth half-tone descent is possible by pulling up ③ of the string on the 6th fret in advance before producing the dichord, and, after it is struck, by gradually releasing it (see Example 8).

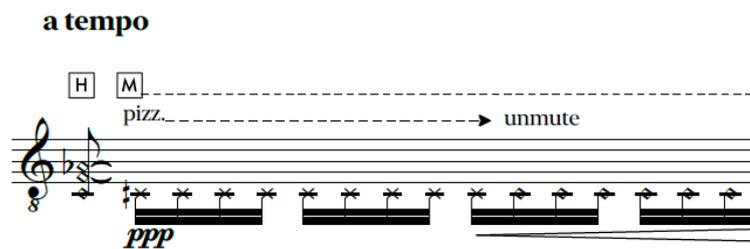


Example 8. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 3, staff no. 3

The timbre can be repeatedly modulated smoothly by varying the degree of dampening of the strings with the outer part of the right hand, the use of the pad and fingernail of the p finger, and by changing the place of sound production on the string (see Examples 9 and 10).



Example 9. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 4, staff no. 1



Example 10. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 4, staff no. 4

In order to maintain the coherent character and flowing narrative of the piece, it is extremely important to be aware of the sounding strings and overtones and not to suppress them, and consequently to preserve the legato throughout the phrase. Before changing position, it is necessary to muffle in advance with the right hand those strings that might become involuntarily agitated, as well as take care to maximize the sounding of open strings (see Example 11). In the example below, from f^1 to g^2 should be achieved with a glissando, and then the sound should be vibrated laterally; in the case of a chord, the best effect can be achieved by vibrating intensively along the neck.

sostenuto

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. At the top, the word "sostenuto" is written. Below it, there is a staff labeled "sounding:" which shows a sustained chord. The main staff below has a series of notes, including two triplets marked with "3". Dynamics are indicated as *ppp*, *p*, *ppp*, *p*, and *ppp*. There are also markings for "vib." (vibrato) and a "0" (open string) on the lower strings. A circled "6" indicates a fingering.

Example 11. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 4, staff no. 3

Another challenge encountered in many passages of the composition, and concerning the flowing narrative, is the precise realization of dynamics, not always in accordance with the performer's spontaneous intuition. An arpeggio chord must be played with great sensitivity to stay within the *piano* dynamics (see Example 11).

In the case of multiphonics combined with traditionally produced sounds, care should be taken to make the former sound clear, which can be achieved by playing it louder, *sul ponticello* and striking the string perpendicularly, reinforcing the subsequent component notes (see example 12).

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. At the top, there is a staff labeled "sounding:" which shows a sustained chord. The main staff below has notes with fingerings 4, 5, 6, and 5. Dynamics are indicated as *p* and *ppp*. There is a "rit." (ritardando) marking with a downward-curving line. Below the staff, there are markings for "C" and "M".

Example 12. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 4, staff no. 4

The aforementioned challenges are often piled up. In the following example (see Example 13), a multiphonic chord should be performed in *forte* dynamics, followed by a harmonic in *piano* dynamics, the entire structure should be left sounding, and then a five-note chord (using the *c* finger) should be produced in *pianissimo possibile* dynamics. The whole should be kept in a steady quintuplet pulse, after which the third string should be pulled up to move from the d^1 sound to the $c\sharp^1$ sound, and then perform a “baroque trill”. Each element should first be mastered separately. Again, the multiphone

and harmonic is best brought out by striking the string perpendicularly, with the fingernail and *sul ponticello*. To achieve the written dynamics of the chord (*pianissimo possibile*) and its proper balance, the strings are best aroused with the movement of the forearm and the fingernails themselves placed perpendicular to the strings, just above the resonance hole.

a tempo

f **p** **PPP** **PPP** **p**

Example 13. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 5, staff no. 2

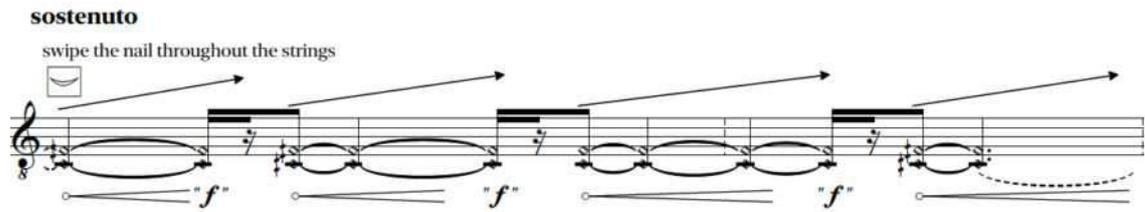
Harmonics and multiphonics acting as ostinato are generally produced around the VIII and IX fret, so that they can be simultaneously produced while holding the chord structures above, using the example fingering (see Example 14).

a tempo

p **PPP** **p** **PPP**

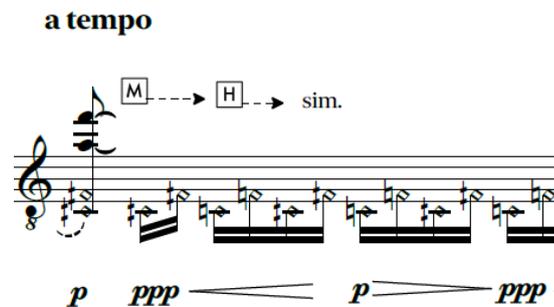
Example 14. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, p. 5, staff no. 5

The sostenuto fragment (see Example 15) evokes associations with the sound of bells. The peculiar timbre of these chords is achieved by rubbing the fingernails of the *p* and *i* fingers along the bass strings, realizing a *crescendo* topped by multiphonics. The precise execution of these consonances is aided by a conscious, rhythmic gesture of the right hand.



Example 15. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 6, staff no. 2

The last of the chords is combined with the classically mined dichord a^1 and f^2 , which creates an interesting juxtaposition of timbres, and at the same time establishes a link between the next segment of the piece (see example 16).



Example 16. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 6, staff no. 3

The part is *lekkó* is composed of two layers: a continuous ostinato of fluctuating harmonics and multiphonics, as well as chordal structures appearing against this background, which evoke a tonal system. The biggest challenge is to make the two layers function uninterruptedly and independently of each other, which requires careful consideration of the fingering.

The 16th note ostinato is set at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 72$ ca., in a dynamic between *pianissimo possibile* and piano with smoothly changing harmonics and multiphonics produced with finger 1 around the VIII and IX frets on ⑤ and ⑥ strings. Taking care of tone control, precise pulse and simultaneous chord extraction, the ostinato is best performed with the *p* finger alone, if possible *sul ponticello*. The composer also noted two-note chords using ④ strings, which, after consultation, he decided to include in brackets and leave some flexibility for the performer, since the overriding aspect should be the continuity of the two structures. Dichords can be performed until the chords appear, and then leave a steady unison (see Example 17).

1 e k k o (♩=72 ca.)

15" ca.

The musical score for Example 17 is written on a single staff. It begins with a tempo marking of 1 e k k o (♩=72 ca.) and a duration of 15" ca. The notation includes a sequence of notes with fingerings (M, H) and dynamics markings (ppp, p, sim.). The first section is marked with ppp, followed by p, and then sim. The second section is also marked with ppp, followed by p, and then sim.

Example 17. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 7, staff no. 1

According to the noted dynamics, the performer can explore the limits of audible sound. From gradual attenuation with the pizzicato technique using the pianissimo fingernail, then the pad alone, to gentle touching of the strings and complete silence (see Example 18).

8" ca.

10" ca.

pizz.....

The musical score for Example 18 is written on a single staff. It begins with a tempo marking of 8" ca. and a duration of 10" ca. The notation includes a sequence of notes with fingerings (M, H) and dynamics markings (p, ppp, p sim., ppp). The first section is marked with p, followed by ppp, and then p sim. The second section is marked with ppp. The third section is marked with pizz. and ends with a triangle symbol.

Example 18. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 7, staff no. 2

The chords written down by Malinowski are possible to perform with a continuous ostinato, but require combining traditional sounds with harmonics. The *p* and 1 fingers perform the aforementioned accompaniment layer, so the performer's other fingers are available for use. The triad $a^1 d^2 f^2$ can be most efficiently produced by playing the f^2 sound on the (1) string with 4 fingers, a^1 on the (2) string with 2 fingers and d^2 as a harmonic on the (3) string, placing the *p* finger (the interruption of the ostinato at one sixteenth note is imperceptible in practice) on the 19th fret and striking the string with the *i* finger (see Example 19).

15" ca.

Example 19. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 7, staff no. 1

A similar solution also works for other harmonics, such as $c^2 h^2$, in which the higher tone is produced as a harmonic on ① of the string at the 19th fret, or the $d^2 e^2$ – in which the lower one is produced on ③ of the string at the 19th fret (see example 20).

20" ca.

Example 20. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 7, staff no. 4

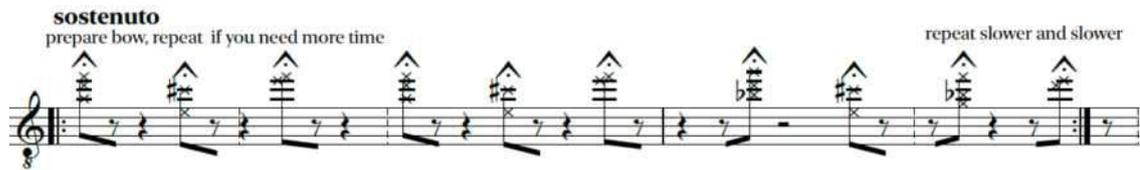
The challenge is to produce chords using the tapping technique with the left hand alone. The movement and stroke of the fingers must be energetic and precise enough to make the tones sound clear. In some cases, it is worth considering performing them by tapping, but also with the right hand. The dichord $d^2 e^2$ is basically unfeasible when performing the aforementioned ostinato at the same time. The e^2 sound can be made with finger 3 on the ① string, and the d^2 sound can be made with finger i on the ② string, so fingers 1 and p can still play the sixteenth-note accompaniment (see Example 21).

15" ca.

Example 21. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 8, staff no. 1

While the above-mentioned chords produced by tapping generally sound quite percussive, the triads in sostenuto have a very different character. While the balance of all

the components is important, they can be performed in piano dynamics, the slow tempo allows the chords to sound out, take care of precision, and prepare the bow to play the last part of the composition, the *Largo*, without interrupting the narrative (see Example 22).



Example 22. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 8, staff no. 3

The *Largo*, set at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 48\text{-}54$ ca., consists of two layers: a bowed bourdon and chords performed with tapping, which then develop into chords produced with a bow and fuse seamlessly with the aforementioned background. As in the part *l e k k o*, the harmony evokes tonality, which stands in contrast to the multiphonic background. The composer expects to achieve various effects with the bow: a multiphonic bourdon on the ⑤ and ⑥ string created when the sound is produced with the light bow, *sul ponticello* arousing successive partials; glassy triads produced on the trebles; an irregular bow vibrato accompanying the bourdon; and an irregular bow vibrato accompanying the consonances on the trebles strings. Because of the unusual performance issues, each layer and technique should be studied separately. Exploring these, very rarely used, possibilities can be an extremely inspiring process, and the resulting sounds evoke associations with the timbre of an electronic synthesizer. The segment using the bow corresponds with Malinowski's interest in electronic music and his reaching for similar tools in his other works.

In playing with a bow, the challenge is to find the balance in terms of the tension of the bristles and applying the right amount of rosin: a large tension makes it easier to bring out the multiphonics on the (metal) bass strings, but hinders the vibrato of the bow; on the other hand, a larger amount of rosin increases the grip of the bow and makes it easier to bring out multiphonics, as well as multitones by arousing several strings at the same time (on a guitar, after all, stacked at an equal height); on the other hand, it adversely affects the timbre of the (nylon) treble strings and the placement of a long chord in piano dynamics; not using rosin basically precludes bringing out a sound on the treble strings. One of the difficulties is leading the long sound, shaping its dynamics (oscillating between *piano* and *pppp*) and changing the direction of the bow

as imperceptibly as possible; moreover, it is necessary to simultaneously perform multiple tapping notes (see Example 23).

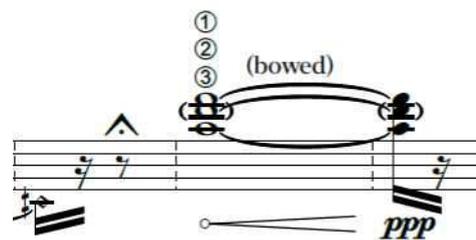
Largo (♩=48-54 ca.)
 RH arco, extremely light bow, sul ponticello "f" LH fingered "f" sim.

Example 23. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 8, staff no. 4

It is preferable to conduct the bow perpendicular to the string and almost above the bridge of the guitar – a tense string makes it easier to preserve the *legato*, moreover, it is at this point that the greatest richness of overtones can be brought out. In order to achieve the right timbre and uninterrupted sound, the bow should be led very lightly – using basically only its weight. In order to achieve a long phrase, the bow should be led slowly, and the direction of playing should be changed as rarely as possible and in thoughtful places. In the case of the following example, it is best to do this at the outburst of the multiphonic, just before the bourdon played on the ⑤ and ⑥ string (see example 24).

Example 24. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 8, staff no. 4

For bowed multitonnes, the outermost ① and ⑥ strings are the easiest to reach. The most problematic sounds are those on string ②, especially in the higher positions, where shortening the string comes closest to the top plate, and consequently the bristles do not reach it. Again, the solution is to play closest to the stand, where the strings are placed at a similar height, more rosin and, of course, the right angle of the bow. The composer's attempt to meet the realities of performance is also evidenced by the fact that he has noted the individual notes in parentheses, suggesting that they may sound lighter, with priority given to the timbre of the resulting chord (see example 25).



Example 25. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 8, staff no. 5

An interesting effect is an irregular bow vibrato involving alternate pushing and releasing of tension exerted on the bow, which develops into an irregular *ricochet* technique¹⁸, and which resembles the tremolo effect used in conjunction with the electric guitar. Malinowski annotated the technique with his own drawing, communicating the type of expression expected (see Example 26). The key to making a vibrato is proper bristle tension and a relaxed arm of the guitarist, which allows control of smooth movements and bounces of the bow perpendicular to the instrument's top plate. In addition, a very vigorous vibrato with the bow passing into *ricochet* allows the middle voice of chords to be brought out more clearly.

¹⁸ Ricochet (French) – In string playing, a bowstroke that bounces off the string. See *Ricochet*, [in:] Grove Music Online [<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.23412>, accessed 23.09.2024].

Example 26. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 9, staff no. 1

Some of the solutions to performance problems were planned while the piece was still being written. Malinowski wanted to achieve a $d^2 e^2$ second, almost unfeasible, due to the preceding chord interval and the difficulty of producing a d^2 sound on the ② string. The solution may be to harmonic d^2 on ③ string with 4 fingers, and sound e^2 on ① string with 1 finger (see Example 27).

Example 27. P. Malinowski, *untitled [largo]*, Modran, p. 9, staff no. 2

In *untitled [largo]*, Malinowski juxtaposes experimental, sonoristic sounds with references to music of past eras; the aforementioned recording of Zamboni's *Sarabande* may be a clue to the narrative, sense of tempo and character of the piece. The calmness also indicated by the performance terms (*largo*, *sostenuto*, *l e k k o*) regarding tempo, or the dominant pianissimo dynamics, contrast with the complexity of the performance challenges encountered. The most important element binding the interpretation should be a long phrase, a steady pulse, calm and smooth tempo changes. In terms of timbre – sharpening sonority effects and searching for timbre that imitates processed sound (multiphonics evoking the sound of bells of indeterminate pitch, “baroque trill”, overtone multiphonic bowed bourdon, jittery chords reminiscent of electronic instruments). Subtle references to early music can be outlined by paying attention to proportions and looking for tonal tensions between chords against an ostinato in the part *l e k k o* or using *rubato* in the “baroque trill”.

2.4 Luciano Berio – *Sequenza XI*

2.4.1 Biography of the composer

Luciano Berio (1925–2003) was born in Oneglia, Liguria, Italy, into a family with musical traditions - his father and grandfather were organists and composers. As a nine-year-old he was already playing the piano at chamber music evenings organized by his father, and in his teens he made his first attempts at composition. An arm injury he sustained during conscription training in the army of Mussolini's Italian Social Republic halted the development of his piano career¹. He began his studies at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Music in Milan, and thanks to the education he received at home, he was able to take fifth-year studies directly². Berio's main instrument was the piano, with clarinet as an additional instrument, but the consequences of the aforementioned injury set him on the path of composition. He studied counterpoint under Giulio Cesare Paribeni, during which time he was inspired by the works of Ravel and Prokofiev. He trained in the composition class of Giorgio Federico Ghedini, whose cautious approach to instrumentation, and awareness of Stravinsky's achievements in this area, influenced Berio's artistic development. In 1952, he was awarded a Kusewicks Foundation scholarship, through which he honed his skills under the tutelage of Luigi Dallapiccola at the Berkshire Music Festival in Tanglewood, Massachusetts. A little earlier, in 1950, he met American singer Cathy Berberian³, whom he married just a few months later. He dedicated several of his works to her, and the fruitful collaboration continued even after the marriage ended⁴.

During his fellowship, Berio witnessed his first electronic music concert in the United States, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Upon his return, he and Bruno Maderna persuaded the management of Italy's RAI Radio and Television to establish an electronic music studio, which finally happened in 1955. In 1956, his *Cinque Variazioni* for piano (1952–1953) and *Nones* for orchestra (1954) were heard

¹ D. Osmond-Smith, *Berio, Luciano*, [in:] Grove Music Online [<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.02815>, accessed 31.08.2024].

² At that time, the full cycle of education at the conservatory lasted ten years.

³ Berberian collaborated with leading 20th century composers, including Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, John Cage, Bruno Maderna, Sylvan Bussotti, William Walton and Roman Haubenstock-Ramati. See R.Y. Kim, *Cathy Berberian, Biography* [<https://cathyberberian.com/biography>, accessed 31.08.2024].

⁴ D. Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1991, p. 4.

at the International Summer Courses of New Music in Darmstadt. With Maderna, they also launched a series of concerts devoted to contemporary music, Incontri Musicali. Berio was friends with Umberto Eco, for whom the composer's work was an example of *opera aperta*⁵ – an open work. In 1958 he began composing *Sequenzas* – works for solo instruments, exploring virtuosity in the broadest sense. At the request of Pierre Boulez, from 1974 to 1980, he became director of IRCAM, the Research and Coordination Center for Acoustics and Music in Paris. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, he turned to vocal and instrumental music for larger casts and stage works⁶.

Luciano Berio is the recipient of numerous awards, *honorary* doctorates were awarded to him by the City, University of London, University of Siena, University of Turin, University of Bologna. He has taught at Darmstadt, Dartington, Tanglewood, Mills College, Juilliard School and Harvard University. In 2000, he was appointed rector and artistic director of the Academy of Music of St. Cecilia in Rome.

Berio's early compositions were written in a neoclassical spirit, as for example *Petite Suite* for piano (1947), his first publicly premiered work. Since then, his works have been published by Universal Edition⁷. His inspiration from Dallapiccola's work steered him toward serialism. His works from this period include *Chamber Music* for female voice, clarinet, harp and cello (1953), *Cinque Variazioni* for piano, and *Nones* for orchestra. In turn, his interest in sound color is reflected in *Tempi concertati* (1958–1959) for flute, violin, two pianos and four orchestral groups, *Sincronie* for string quartet (1964), among others.

With the establishment of an electronic music studio in Milan – *Studio di fonologia musicale* – Berio began to explore the possibilities offered by the new technology. The first composition for tape that he created entirely on his own was *Mutazioni* (1955). He continued to experiment in this area in *Perspectives* (1957). The result of his research with Umberto Eco on the relationship between language and music was *Thema (Ommagio a Joyce)* (1958), whose starting material was a recording of an excerpt from James Joyce's *Ulysses*, read by Cathy Berberian⁸.

Luciano Berio is considered one of the leading postmodern composers. As Angela Ida De Benedictis notes, “Berio’s musical research is characterised by his attainment of an

⁵ See U. Eco, *The Open Work. Form and indeterminacy in contemporary poetics*, transl. L. Eustachiewicz, J. Galuszka, A. Kreisberg, M. Oleksiuk, Czytelnik, Warsaw 1994.

⁶ D. Osmond-Smith, *Berio, Luciano, op. cit.*

⁷ D. Osmond-Smith, *Berio, op. cit.* p. 4.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 14.

equilibrium between a keen awareness of tradition and a propensity to experiment with new forms of musical communication. In his various creative phases the composer invariably tried to relate music to various fields of knowledge: poetry, theatre, linguistics, anthropology and architecture”⁹. He reinterpreted the works of prominent composers of past eras, including Bach, Monteverdi and Brahms – *Rendering* for symphony orchestra (1989–1990) was based on sketches of Franz Schubert's *Symphony No. 10*, while *Vor, während, nach Zaide* for 3 soloists, chorus and symphony orchestra (1994–1995) is a commentary on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's unfinished opera. References to a variety of contexts are illustrated in *Sinfonia* (1968) for orchestra and 8 amplified voices, in which Berio uses excerpts from the books *Raw and Cooked* by Claude Lévi-Strauss and *The Unnamable* by Samuel Beckett, pays homage to Martin Luther King, and quotes compositions by Mahler, Bach, Beethoven, Strauss, Stravinsky, Webern, Boulez and a number of other artists¹⁰. Many scholars consider *Sinfonia* to be an emblematic example of postmodernism in music¹¹. Berio also composed stage works, among the most significant are *La vera storia* (1977–1981), *Un re in ascolto* (1979–1984), *Outis* (1995).

Sequenzas

In 1958 he composed *Sequeunza I* (1958/1992) for flute for Severino Gazzelloni. Fourteen *Sequenzas* were composed by the end of the composer's life (the last, for cello, in 2002), each for a different solo instrument. The *Sequenzas* are one-movement pieces, usually several minutes long, and were always written for a specific performer. According to Berio, the title “Sequenza underlines the fact that the construction of these pieces almost always takes as its point of departure a sequence of harmonic fields, from which spring, in all their individuality, the other musical functions”¹². David Osmond-Smith defines “harmonic fields” as “temporally fixed pitch groupings characteristically dominated by one or two intervals — and the notes chromatically adjacent to them”¹³. In turn, Mark David Porcaro notes similarities to the major-minor system: “[...]”

⁹ A.I. De Benedictus, *Biography* [<http://www.lucianoberio.org/en/biography>, accessed 02.09.2024].

¹⁰ L. Berio, *Sinfonia (author's note)*, [<http://www.lucianoberio.org/en/sinfonia-authors-note>, accessed 02.09.2024].

¹¹ This is the opinion of Krzysztof Sz wajgier, among others. See A. Suprynowicz, K. Sz wajgier, *Sound Barrier*, radio program dated 25.02.2017 [<https://www.polskieradio.pl/8/3887/Artykul/1731437,Sinfonia-Luciana-Beria-i-inne-muzyczne-rewolucje>, accessed 02.09.2024].

¹² L. Berio, *Sequenzas*, editorial commentary, Deutsche Grammophon, 1998, p. 8.

¹³ D. Osmond-Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

'harmonic fields' to designate a compositional technique in which registrally fixed pitches act as a harmonic area that works much the same way that chords work in tonal music. Thus, when Berio moves from one field to another, there is a shift of harmony"¹⁴. Thus, "harmonic fields" consist of characteristic intervals that form an internal system of harmonic references.

Luciano Berio points¹⁵ to several elements characteristic of almost all *Sequenzas*: the exploration of the harmonic aspect through the melodic aspect, as well as the associated "polyphonic way of listening"¹⁶, based on the abrupt and variable nature of these pieces. He developed this idea to the greatest extent in *Sequenzas* for wind instruments (including flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet and trombone). In addition, virtuosity, as well as composing in harmony with the idiom of the instrument, are important issues that bind these works together.

Berio views virtuosity in a multi-level way, as the result of the tension between the musical idea and the instrument; between novelty and complexity, which reveals a new dimension of expression - and thus new technical possibilities. Thus, it requires from the performer not only instrumental, but also intellectual prowess¹⁷. This is how the composer characterized complete and competent virtuosos: "The best solo performers of our own time - modern in intelligence, sensibility and technique - are those who are capable of acting within a wide historical perspective, and of resolving the tensions between the creative demand of past and present, employing their instruments as means of research and expression"¹⁸. Furthermore, Berio points out that if these conditions are met, writing for a particular performer - worthy of being called a virtuoso - is at the same time an act that celebrates the thread of understanding between composer and performer – which explains why each *Sequenza* has always been created with the particular performer in mind.

Despite the richness of the instrumental means used and the large technical demands Berio places on *Sequenzas* performers, the works were always created in harmony with the idiom of the instrument. The composer notes that

¹⁴ M.D. Porcaro, *A Polyphonic Mode of Listening: Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI for Guitar*, master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2003, p. 3.

¹⁵ L. Berio, *op. cit.* pp. 8-9.

¹⁶ *A polyphonic mode of listening.*

¹⁷ L. Berio, *op. cit.* pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 9.

A musical instrument is in itself a piece of the musical language. Trying to invent a new one is as futile and pathetic as might be any attempt to invent a new grammatical rule in our language. The composer can contribute to the evolution of musical instruments only by using them, and by trying to understand, often *post factum*, the complex nature of that evolution [...]. I am much attracted by the slow and dignified transformation of instruments and of instrumental (and vocal) techniques across the centuries. Perhaps that's another reason why, in all my *Sequenzas*, I've never tried to change the genetic inheritance of the instrument, nor sought to use it 'against' its own nature¹⁹.

The combination of all the elements described creates an turbulent narrative, while at the same time each piece is characterized by an individual trait. According to Berio, in *Sequenza II* for harp he broke with the connotations of French Impressionism and decided to present the various facets of the instrument. In *Sequenza XII* for bassoon (1995), virtuosic value is combined with the discovery of an idiom that results in a color texture in the means of performance. *Sequenza III* (1965) for female voice (written for Cathy Berberian) is similarly developed – the composer explores a wide palette of vocal articulation and attempts to “assimilate into the musical process many aspects of everyday vocal behavior”²⁰, which are, after all, idiomatic. The performance of the composition is almost a monodrama - the theatrical aspect is also explored. Similar associations are evoked by *Sequenza V* for trombone (1966), written in memory of the famous Swiss clown Grock, Berio's neighbor when he still lived in Oneglia. The piece is accompanied by an extensive description, not only explaining specific instrumental and vocal techniques, but also specific gestures and behaviors, recorded in the score. What's more, in keeping with performance practice, the trombonist on stage performs in elements or full clown costume^{21 22}.

Berio used material from some of the *Sequenzen* to create works for solo instrument and orchestra, or orchestra alone, called *Chemins*²³. Based on *Sequenza XI* for guitar (1988) was *Chemins V* (1992) for guitar and orchestra.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 12.

²¹ See C. Lindberg, *Christian Lindberg - Luciano Berio Sequenza V*, [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnfApTtzJmk>, accessed 03.09.2024].

²² L. Berio, *op. cit.* pp. 11-14.

²³ *Chemins* (fr.) - paths.

2.4.2 Background of composition

Sequenza XI for solo guitar (1988) was commissioned in 1982 for Eliot Fisk²⁴, thanks to the Rovereto Philharmonic Association, which sponsored the project. The composition was completed in 1988 and premiered by Fisk also in Rovereto on April 20, 1988²⁵. The piece is readily performed and recorded, and was first recorded by Eduardo Fernández in 1993²⁶. Interestingly, the artistic work of this dissertation is the first recording of *Sequenza XI* by a Polish guitarist; I also made the Polish premiere of the composition on April 27, 2024 at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, as the piece has not been performed in Poland until then²⁷.

The axis of Lucian Berio's interest was to establish a dialogue between idiomatic harmony (resulting from the guitar's tuning in fourths) and non-idiomatic harmony, with the tritone interval serving as a bridge between the two. In addition, the composer juxtaposes his ideas of different guitar traditions - the expressive nature of flamenco music and the contrasting, lyrical nature of classical music²⁸.

The piece places very high performance demands on the guitarist – both technically and analytically - the dense texture and accumulation of performance means correspond to Berio's expectations of virtuosos. Fisk's influence seems significant. *Sequenza XI* is characterized by an uninterrupted, turbulent narrative, as well as extreme dynamic range, which evokes the characteristic expressive playing of this guitarist. The various techniques included in the piece, represent performance solutions that the American has used for many years in various repertoire, such as the trill through two strings²⁹. Berio claimed that *Sequenza XI*, of all the others, required the most work from him[6]. A note, attached to the score sent to Fisk, confirms this: “Here it is, *maledetta!* It will drive you to despair as it has me. Coraggio!”³⁰.

²⁴ E. Fisk (personal communication), 1995 after: G. Wuestemann, Luciano Berio's "*Sequenza XI per Chitarra Solo: A Performer's Practical Analysis with Performance Edited Score*", unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Arizona, Tucson 1998, pp. 11-12.

²⁵ L. Berio, *Sequenza XI per chitarra sola*, Universal Edition, Wien 1988, p. 1.

²⁶ E. Fernández, *Avant-Garde Guitar*, Decca, 1993. Gerd Wuestemann incorrectly states that the first recording was made by Eliot Fisk 1995 – the album in question is *Sequenza!* released by MusicMasters. See G. Wuestemann, *op. cit.* p. 14.

²⁷

²⁸ L. Berio, *Sequenza XI... op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁹ E. Fisk, *Baroque Guitar Transcriptions*, MusicMasters 1989.

³⁰ L. Berio (correspondence with Eliot Fisk) after: G. Wuestemann, *op. cit.* p. 18.

An interesting juxtaposition of the performers' different approaches to the piece is illustrated in an article by Dieg Castro-Magas, in which he compares all³¹ available recordings of *Sequenza XI* and tries to categorize them. One element that depicts these differences is the duration of the piece: in the score, Berio indicates that the piece should last 14 minutes; the shortest available recording is by Magnus Andersson (13:45), the longest by Andrea Monarda (19:18). The differences are primarily due to the treatment of the rhythmic layer of the composition.

Berio claimed that “the best way to analyse and comment on a musical work is to write another one using materials from the original work: a creative exploration of a composition is at the same time an analysis, a commentary and an extension of the original”³². Viewed in this way, *Chemins V* can provide an insight into the author's original intent – unlike *Sequenza XI*, the time signature is specified in the various segments, and some of the acciaccatura notes are carefully written out, so that the rhythmic framework can be maintained. Moreover, the collaboration with the orchestra enforces rhythmic rigor, as pointed out by Pablo Márquez, among others, according to whom the rhythmic layer is “non-negotiable”³³.

2.4.3 Selected analytical issues

In order to understand the overall structure of the work, it is useful to consult selected studies devoted to *Sequenza XI*. An interesting analytical perspective is offered by Mark David Porcaro. He refers to Berio's “polyphonic way of listening” and sees the piece as consisting of four separate layers that continuously follow one another. The result of their reduction to a single system is the score of the composition. Porcaro distinguishes the layers: 1 – six-voice chordal texture, 2 – a combination of chordal and linear texture, 3 – linear hexacords, 4 – two-voice counterpoint³⁴. This is what the first page of *Sequenza XI* looks like, structured in terms of layers (see example 1).

³¹ Castro-Magas omitted Arthur Tallini's 2018 recording. See A. Tallini, *Rosso Improvviso*, EMA Vinci records, 2018.

³² L. Berio, *Chemins V author 's note* [<http://www.lucianoberio.org/chemins-v-authors-note?626404300=1>, accessed 03.09.2024].

³³ P. Márquez (personal communication with Radoslav Wieczorek), 17.05.2024. The guitarist was the first to record *Chemins V*. He personally worked with Lucian Berio, and was also invited to perform *Sequenza XI* on the occasion of the composer's 70th birthday celebration.

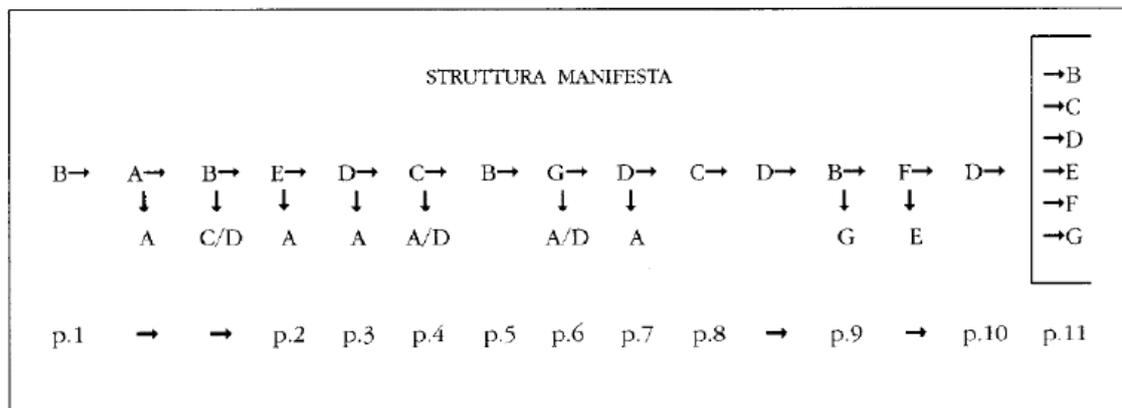
³⁴ M.D. Porcaro, *op. cit.* pp. 13-35.

Page 1, Arranged by Lucio



Example 1. M.D. Pocaró, *A Polyphonic Mode of Listening: Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI for Guitar*, p. 41.

Aldo Vianello describes the piece in a radically different way, taking into account the techniques used, and distinguishes the following segments: (A) *rasgueado*, (B) chords with ambitus exceeding two octaves, (C) repetitions, (D) *arpeggios*, often combined with *legato* technique, (E) *unisono* texture, (F) contrapuntal figures, (G) *tambora*. From a performer's perspective, this approach seems more practical, and the various segments can be intuitively related to the idioms of flamenco guitar and classical guitar. This is the general structure of the composition with the mentioned elements (see Example 2).



Example 2. A. Vianello, *La Sequenza XI per chitarra sola di Luciano Berio*, "Il Fronimo" 1994, no. 87, p. 47.

The most complete scholarly work describing *Sequenza XI* from a theoretical perspective seems to be Matthew Schullman's meta-analysis³⁵, in which he not only compares existing ways of categorizing composition elements, but also focuses on their interaction and evolution.

The consonances made up of intervals of pure fourths allude to the idiomatic guitar tuning mentioned by Berio. Such chordal structures are often enriched by the tritone, which, according to the composer, connects different harmonic worlds (see Example 3)³⁶.

³⁵ See M. Schullman, *Rethinking Patterns: Associative Formal Analysis and Luciano Berio's Sequenzas*, doctoral thesis, Yale University, 2016.

³⁶ L. Berio, *Sequenzas*, *op. cit.* p. 20.



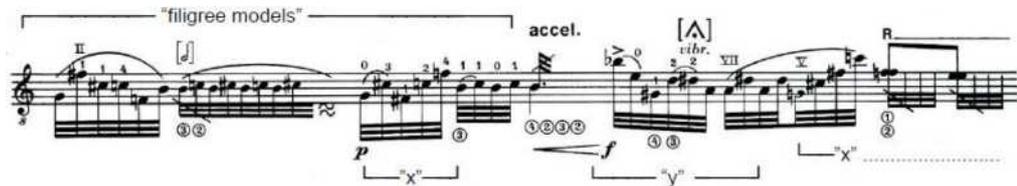
Example 3. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 1, system 1

Some researchers (such as Schullman) see dodecapronic structures, based on the following series (see Example 4):

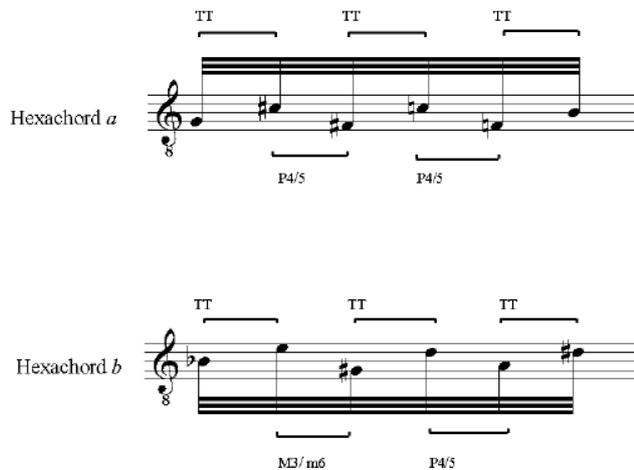


Example 4. M. Schullman, *Rethinking Patterns: Associative Formal Analysis and Luciano Berio's Sequenzas*, p. 268.

Where MacKay sees a dodecapronic series (see example 5), Porcaro points to two hexacords (see examples 6 and 7).



Example 5. J. MacKay, *Analytical Diptych: Boulez Anthèmes / Berio Sequenza XI*, p. 134.



Example 6. M.D. Porcaro, *A Polyphonic Mode of Listening: Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI for Guitar*, p. 26.



Example 7. M.D. Porcaro, *A Polyphonic Mode of Listening: Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI for Guitar*, p. 29.

These are structures based on the tritone - as Berio pointed out - an interval characteristic of this composition.

In contrast, Eliot Fisk, who collaborated with Berio on the piece, looks at complex theoretical analyses with reserve:

Many people try to just understand Berio using pitch class theory³⁷ or any one of the typical pre-made theories about contemp. music that may look brilliant on paper but often fail to get anywhere near the essence or *raison d'être* of the work! These sand castles in the air and other abstractions miss totally that the *Sequenza XI* is really a dramatic piece...a sort of mini opera or flamenco without compas all the way through. Also, there are many moments where the warm breeze of tonality blows through the complex harmonies even if just for an instant...the piece also has a sense of humor! [...] as if analytical constructs and dry-as-dust intellectual fact finding could substitute for the exhilaration of the search for meaning and the thrill of its discovery³⁸.

Despite the many analytical studies of *Sequenza XI*, the topic still does not seem explored. The research lacks a sonoristic perspective that also takes into account the performance issues of the composition.

2.4.4 Interpretation and performance issues

The piece begins with the consonance of the sounds of the empty guitar strings, corresponding to the harmonic relationships Berio wrote about. The character of the first segment – marked $\text{♩}=50$, *ma liberamente, come preludiando* – is definitely related to the

³⁷ A. Jarzębska, “Teoria zbiorów klas wysokości dźwięków Allena Forte’a”, [in:] *Z dziejów myśli o muzyce. Wybrane zagadnienia teorii i analizy muzyki tonalnej i posttonalnej*, Musica Iagiellonica, Kraków 2002, pp. 197–204.

³⁸ E. Fisk, (correspondence with Radosław Wieczorek), 03.08.2024.

classical guitar idiom, with piano dynamics dominating. The challenge is to maintain the fluidity of the phrase despite the many changes of position, to achieve a balance between a clear rhythmic structure and a dose of the indicated “freedom”. The first chord, made with the *tambora* technique (marked with a “T”), is worth treating harmonically rather than percussively. This can be achieved with a rotary motion of the relaxed wrist, striking the strings with the thumb rather than the baseplate, emphasizing the upper notes, which benefits the clarity of the consonance. I suggest realizing chords in pianissimo with the p finger (striking the ①-⑤ strings) and the *i* finger (reaching the ① string). As a result, the e-flat²-e² tones stand out and play a quasi-melodic role, which facilitates the classical shaping of the phrase. The d e s g a h e² chord realized arpeggio I suggest performing in the *sul ponticello* register. This results in a timbre similar to the consonance in the quintola, made with the *tambora* technique, which closes the phrase. To maintain *legato*, the harmonic in the E d# a h e² chord is best performed with the right hand, while the arpeggio is played with the p finger through the ⑥-④ strings and the m finger should strike the ② string. The consonant c d f# e² should be struck perpendicular to the strings to avoid overtones. The highest tone of the c f# g d¹ chord I suggest playing as a harmonic, so that its resonance, along with the ③ of the g string, will preserve the legato in the phrase. The phrase is best performed in the *sul tasto* register, and to further emphasize the *dolcemente* character, the F sound can be brought out with the *p* fingering pad and remain in this timbral register by performing a warm-sounding cluster f# g a, and end the whole thing with a marked breath (see Example 8).

The image shows two staves of musical notation for guitar. The top staff begins with a tempo marking of a quarter note equal to 50, followed by the instruction "ma liberamente, come preludiando". The notation includes several chords, some marked with a "T" for the *tambora* technique. Dynamic markings include *p*, *pp*, and *p*. There are also fingering numbers like "5" and "1". The bottom staff is marked "harm." and "dolcemente", showing a harmonic line with a *p* marking and a breath mark.

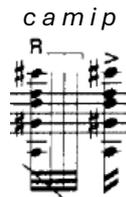
Example 8. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 1, stave no. 1–2

The next segment is kept at a tempo of ♩=60 and grows out of Berio’s idea of flamenco music. This is indicated by the *fortissimo* dynamics, the marking *improvvisamente*

*violento*³⁹ and the rasgueado technique used, of which several types are distinguished⁴⁰. Some groups have been precisely notated with the corresponding rhythmic values, but there are also rasgueado in the form of forewords (performed with the *c-a-m-i* fingers) (see Example 9), sometimes followed by an accented chord performed with the *p*-finger (see Example 10) or to be performed as fast as possible, imitating the continuous rasgueado used by flamenco guitarists (see Example 11). Berio suggests a combination using several fingers of the right hand (including the *p*-finger), or alternatively, he allows chords to be executed with an alternating up and down motion.



Example 9. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, performance guidelines



Example 10. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, performance guidelines



Example 11. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, performance guidelines

Since *Sequenza XI* lacks bar dashes, it begs the question, how important is the precise execution of the rhythmic layer? A related passage in *Chemnis V*, which has been described in terms of meter (see example 12), may provide a suggestion. Moreover, in the flamenco music to which this excerpt refers, rhythm is a priority, indicating that the *Sequenza* performer should focus on preserving the written rhythmic relations.

³⁹ *Improvvisamente violento* (Italian) - suddenly violent, suddenly violent. Wuestemann mistranslates as “violently improvised” See G. Wuestemann, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁴⁰ L. Berio, *Sequenza XI...*, *op. cit.*, executive instructions.



Example 12. L. Berio, *Chemins V*, Universal Edition, guitar part, p. 5.

This also provides a suggestion in relation to the performance of individual rasgueado figures, which play a rhythmic role in flamenco music. The clarity of the stroke of each finger is extremely important (including in figures performed “as fast as possible”), so it is necessary to practice the independence of the fingers in this technique, expose the upper voice, and use a thoughtful appliqué of the right hand. As a rule, I suggest that continuous rasgueado be implemented with an *i-p-a* combination – for every sixteenth note, there will be one such group. After the *acciaccatura* (made *c-a-m-i*), it is best to use the *p*-finger, if the rasgueado should be continuous, again use the *p-p-a* combination, so you can continue the *i-p-a* pattern. Thirty-second notes are worth performing with *i-p* fingers, nine tuplet – *i-p-a*, tentuplet – *a-m-i-p-p* or *i-p*. Rhythmic precision in *rasgueados* helps give the passage a Spanish flavor (see Example 13).

cami ppaipa ipip ipa

♩ = 60

dolcemente *improvvisamente violento*

Example 13. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 1, stave no. 2–4

In a series of thirty-second notes based on the tritone interval, Berio is keen to use sounds possible on open strings (which is worth taking advantage of in order to maintain a smoother narrative), illustrating his understanding of the guitar idiom. Several types of trills appear in *Sequenza XI*. In the example below, the figure should be performed with the right hand – I suggest a slight trill across the strings with the *p-a-m-i* finger combination. For the second trill, I suggest changing the fingering of the left hand to 4-1-4-2, affecting better synchronization of both hands. The chords made by the *arpeggio* refer to the material at the beginning of the piece and momentarily evoke associations with the nature of classical guitar. To emphasize this character, the consonance is worth playing dolce, and attention should be paid to the marked vibrato, as the last motive is quasi-melodic (see Example 14).

The image displays three staves of musical notation for guitar. The top staff features a series of notes with a trill indicated by a wavy line and the label 'pami' above it. A '3"' marking is also present. Dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *ff* (fortissimo). The middle staff includes a section labeled 'ipa amipa' with a 9-measure rest and a 10-measure rest, followed by a trill and a vibrato marking. The bottom staff continues the melodic line with a vibrato marking and a circled '4' above a note. Fingering numbers (1-5) are provided for many notes throughout the score.

Example 14. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 1, stave no. 4-6

In the next segment, the energy of flamenco music suddenly returns. The twelve-tuplet suggested to be performed with an *a-i-p-p* finger combination, which helps the rhythmic structure. The *tambora* this time plays a percussive role. This effect can be achieved by moving the right hand over the sound hole. A new type of trill appears in the form of tapping performed with a combination of right and left hand fingers: 1-2-1-*i*. The

accent that begins the figure can be emphasized with the *apoyando* technique (see example 15).

Example 15. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 2, stave no. 1–2

The following excerpt illustrates the abrupt changes in character over the course of the composition. Given the applied phrasal bow and harmonics, I suggest going even further and treating both phrases, which begin with a quintuplet, as *campanella*⁴¹. I suggest executing the e^2 and a sounds each time as harmonics, and performing the rest of the phrase in 3rd position. This corresponds with the repeated chord motive again in piano dynamics. A new sonoristic effect is a surprising Bartok pizzicato preceded by a *sstremolo* in the form of a quasi-rasgueada, executed with the fingers *c-a-m-i*. I suggest staying in the I position and realizing legato another chord against a resounding F sound. From the resulting consonance, the seed of a melody emerges (see example 16).

⁴¹ *Campanella* (Italian) – bell. A technique involving the realization of a course of sounds on several strings, allowing them to ring out, which may evoke the sound of a “bell”.

Example 16. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 2, stave no. 4-5

As the piece progresses, sudden changes in character become more frequent, enhanced by markings that suggest the use of contrasting colors. I suggest changing the fingering and using ④ of an open string, which will smooth out the course of the thirty-second notes, which is worth ending with an accent brought out using the *apoyando* technique. The melody, which is made up of the notes g-B-E-F-G-h, begins in *forte* dynamics, followed by a *diminuendo*; it is worth performing it with an *ordinario* timbre, while the quintuplet—expressively in the *sul ponticello* register, perpendicular to the strings, so that you can get two clear layers. *Dolcemente* I suggest realizing in the *sul tasto* register, the sound *fis* vibrates on the ⑤ string. The delicate character is surprisingly interrupted by *tremolo* and Bartok *pizzicato* – the dynamics indicate opposing natures colliding (see Example 17).

Example 17. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 2, stave no. 6-9

One of the performance challenges is the differentiation of thirty-second notes in fast tempo and rapid acciaccatura groups, as well as the execution of alternating dynamics. Arpeggio with the *i-p* fingers allows for airy harmonics, as well as the efficient realization of a group of acciaccatura in the eighth position (it's worth using open strings) with a very dynamic, bright tone. In turn, in the following related row of thirty-second notes, each sound should be articulated separately. In terms of dynamics, accented notes – as usual – I suggest emphasizing with the apoyando technique, and the sudden dynamic collapse (before the g-a-flat-g-a trill) can be further emphasized with a pause (see Example 18).

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Example 18. The first staff begins with a series of thirty-second notes marked *mf* and *pppp*, followed by a *dolcemente* section with a dynamic of *p*. A guitar fingering diagram 3014000 is shown above the notes. The second staff starts with a trill marked *f*, followed by a section marked *espr.* with a dynamic of *f*. It includes a right-hand (RH) trill marked *p* and a section marked *p* with a dynamic of *f*. The piece concludes with a section marked *vibr.* and a dynamic of *f*. Various fingerings and techniques like *pont.* and *tasto* are indicated throughout.

Example 18. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 3, stave no. 3–4

Berio experiments with different types of articulation throughout short sections of the piece. A trill performed with the right hand (during which the register gradually changes from *sul ponticello* to *sul tasto*) is followed by two thirty-second notes marked *ordinario*, followed by *staccato*. The next group is connected by a phrasal bow, followed by a third type of trill, performed with the left hand with fingers 1-2-1-3 (see Example 19).

The image shows a single staff of musical notation for Example 19. It begins with a right-hand (RH) trill marked *p*, with a dynamic of *p*. The trill is followed by two thirty-second notes marked *ordinario*, followed by a *staccato* section. The piece concludes with a left-hand (LH) trill marked *p* with a dynamic of *f*, performed with fingers 1-2-1-3. The fingerings 3232 and 12131213 are indicated below the notes.

Example 19. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 3, staff no. 5

The following example illustrates two spots where the techniques used flow seamlessly one into the other: a series of thirty-second notes transforms into a *tremolo* of the b sound (on three strings); a longer series of notes emerges from an interesting-sounding *unisono rasgueado* on strings ① and ② (see example 20).

Example 20. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, p. 3, stave no. 6–7

To achieve a varied expression of the repetitions, they can be varied not only in terms of register (*sul tasto – sul ponticello*), but also performed on different strings. The first time thirty-second on the notes of *A and dis* I suggest performing *sul tasto* on ⑤ string, after the eighth-note pause you can change the register to *sul ponticello* and strike alternately strings ⑥ and ⑤ and ⑤ and ④ respectively. They are followed by a melody and an *accelerando*; the figure in later passages will be transformed into a conventional guitar tremolo, the seed of which is the last group seen in the example below (see Example 21).

Example 21. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, p. 4, stave no. 1–2

To keep the listener's attention in the flow of a rather long piece, written in contemporary musical language, it is useful to further emphasize the sudden changes in character. After *rasgueados* and Bartok *pizzicato* in *fortissimo* dynamics, a looped motive $h-cis1-fis1-d2-fl-cis1$ in *pianissimo* dynamics begins. The effect evokes an association with a skipping gramophone record. The bright timbre keeps the sounds as legible as possible in the quietest possible dynamics, followed unexpectedly by a dynamic explosion in the form of an E struck by a Bartok *pizzicato*. Against this backdrop, a series of thirty-two notes and a quintola in the dark register and *mezzo forte* dynamics appear in *piano* dynamics (see Example 22).



Example 22. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 4, staff no. 4

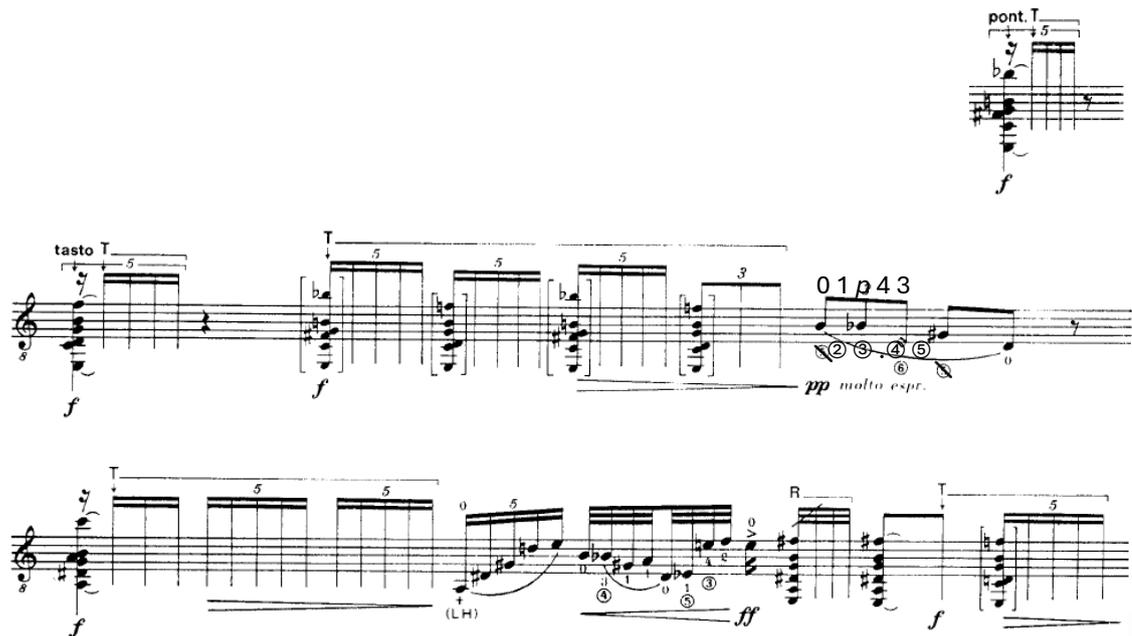
I interpret the following segment as one of those in which Fisk saw an admixture of humor. It is based on a traditional guitar technique – *tremolo*. In the literature of the instrument, as a rule, the technique is used to extend the short sound of the guitar and imitate a cantilena in the upper voice. This time, the accompaniment is made up of repetitions, and the sounds of the bass line move in intervals of wide ambitus, in addition, a tritone is exposed. In order to emphasize the mischievous – In my opinion – character, the lower voice is suggested to be performed primarily on ④ and ⑤ strings, which allows for intense vibrato in passages marked *espressivo*; it is also worth noting the big changes of position with *portamento*. Individual phrases are separated by the effects presented earlier. The trill seems to stop the narrative for a few seconds (see Example 23).

The figure below I suggest performing with a technique known from *Sette studi* – the *circular tremolo* (see example 25).



Example 25. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 5, staff no. 6

The timbral changes indicated by Berio can be emphasized accordingly: a chord in the *forte* dynamic and *sul ponticello* register can be brought out with a fingernail right at the bridge, while the *sul tasto* consonance can be emphasized by striking the strings with the fingertip of the *p*. Using the *tambora* technique, the focus should be on the clarity of the upper voice, and the *molto espressivo* phrase can additionally be treated with a *campanella* and allowed to resound with all sounds, using the following fingering (see example 26).



Example 26. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, pp. 5–6, stave no. 9–2

The following excerpt concludes a longer chordal segment in *fortissimo* dynamics. According to Berio's performance instructions⁴², the first two groups should be performed

⁴² L. Berio, *Sequenza XI...*, *op. cit.*, performance guidelines.

by executing a glissando with the left hand, while the right hand should be used for the fastest possible rasgueado. The chord emphasized by the accent should be struck with the finger of *p*. The first group is written in the form of thirty-two notes, the second – in the form of pre-note. Although the composer does not differentiate it⁴³, the first group can be performed precisely, *loco*, the second – with a combination of *p-m-i* fingers. The trill in the 1st position provides a bridge to the next, chromatic section (see Example 27).



Example 27. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 6, staff no. 7

The texture seen in the example below, despite being in unison, appears to be very dense due to its uninterrupted narrative, fast tempo, small interval steps and fairly low register. The whole piece is kept in *forte* dynamics, and the energy is created by groups, built from related material and composed of a variable number of notes – 7, 12, 6, 8, 9. To emphasize the pulse, the accents that begin each group are extremely important. I suggest an alternative fingering that takes this aspect into account and performs these sounds with the *apoyando* and finger *i* technique. My proposed solution takes more into account the use of open strings, which has a beneficial effect on the blending of sounds, and the homogeneous articulation and the abandonment of *legato* with the left hand, helps achieve a cohesive sound. In addition, this arrangement benefits from better stabilization of the right hand by resting the finger *a* on ③ string (see Example 28).

⁴³ Nor does he differentiate this in the performance indications for *Chemnis V*, published four years later. See L. Berio, *Chemnis V*, performance guidelines, Universal Edition, Wien 1992.

Example 28. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 7, stave 1–3

An interesting mean of performance, as defined by Berio⁴⁴, is a dichord acciaccatura followed by an abrupt *glissando* and tremolo sound in *unisono* on two or three strings (made with a combination of *p-a-m-i* fingers). I suggest executing the dichord d# e with the *p* finger, the *glissando* leads to the *g* sound, and the *tremolo* is preferably started with the *a* finger rather than the *p* finger (as indicated in the score), which will not dampen the resonance (5) of the string and allow for better dynamic control and, consequently, the construction of a more convincing *crescendo* (see Example 29).

Example 29. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, Universal Edition, p. 7, staff no. 3

An expressive effect is created by a segment consisting of a series of dense rasgueado combined with glissandi, concluding with a chord on the open strings, repeated with the *tambora* technique, which foreshadows the next passage, referring to the tuning of the empty strings of the guitar (see example 30).

⁴⁴ L. Berio, *Sequenza XI...*, *op. cit.*, performance guidelines.



Example 30. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 8, staff no. 1

Some of the techniques used - most notably the Bartok pizzicato - detune the guitar greatly. The composition lasts over a dozen minutes, and the narrative is extremely dense, making it difficult to carve out even a moment to tune the instrument. According to Gerd Wuestemann, after listening to *Sequenza* in its entirety, Berio was horrified by the fact of how delicate an instrument the guitar is from this perspective⁴⁵. Further evidence of the composer's sensitivity to the guitar's idiom is a segment composed in the piece in which the notes on the open strings can be optionally repeated, precisely to correct the tuning. At the beginning of the following example, it is worth noting the legato of the E-F-E notes, which is created by striking ⑥ of the empty string and turning the corresponding peg, resulting in the noted interval of a minor second (see Example 31).

⁴⁵ G. Wuestemann, *op. cit.* pp. 42–43.

Example 31. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, p. 8, systems 2–5

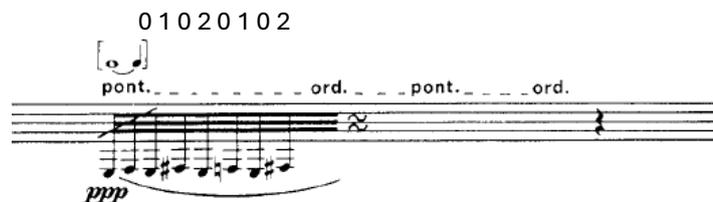
It is worth noting a number of acciaccatura that can be performed with the *arrastre* technique⁴⁶, used by flamenco guitarists. It involves striking from ① to ⑥ (in this case to ⑤) of the string with a single finger movement, resulting in a very fast succession of notes, their clarity and bright color. The flamenco color enhances the following *rasgueado* group (see example 32).

Example 32. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 8, staff no. 4.

The following sequence of acciaccatura should be performed in *pianissimo possibile* dynamics and while modulating the timbre playing in the *sul ponticello* – *ordinario* – *sul ponticello* – *ordinario* register. Moreover, the figure should be executed

⁴⁶ G. Nuñez, *La guitarra flamenca de Gerardo Nuñez*, Encuentro Productions, Meilen 2004, p. 12.

“as fast as possible”, hence I suggest that it be realized as a trill with the left hand. The change in timbre can be achieved by gently damping ⑥ of the string with the *m* finger *just* at the base (and then releasing it), which produces an effect similar to moving the right hand to the *sul ponticello* or *ordinario* register (see example 33).



Example 33. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 8, staff no. 9

The following segment again draws on flamenco music, resulting in the richness of the techniques used. It opens with energetic *ragueado* in *fortissimo* dynamics, the tension is calmed by chords made with *tambora* technique. As it turns out – only seemingly, since there is an *accelerando*, a sudden *rallentando*, followed by another *accelerando*, which leads to groups of acciaccatura made with the *arrastre* technique, from which the *tremolo* of the *b* emerges; the *sforzatissimo* of the *b-flat*¹ sound should be clearly emphasized. To give the right character, the clarity of the flowing notes is important, which can be achieved – in addition to the precise execution of the runs – by attacking the string in front of the resonance hole (towards the *sul ponticello* register) and emphasizing the highest notes of the chords (see Example 34).

Example 34. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 9, stave no. 1–4

The following example shows a two-voice segment through which Berio builds a long climax. Phrasal bows mark the motive, which begins a minor second higher with each repetition. A distinctive tritone interval is marked in the upper melodic line. The texture is so complex that, unfortunately, it does not allow both voices to perform consistently. Nevertheless, it seems that the dominant aspect is the clear direction of the phrase and the growing tension, the arrival point of which is the performance of a group of acciaccatura four times. I suggest executing them using the *arrastre* technique, alternating *p* and *i* fingers, so that an uninterrupted, expressive *crescendo* and selectivity of consonance can be achieved (see Example 35).

♩ = 60

(mp)

ff

f

p ↑ i ↓

ca. 4x

mf

ff

Example 35. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, p. 9, stave no. 5–8

The *tremolo* of the *h* sound and the *sforzatissimo* of the $b\text{-flat}^1\text{-}b\text{-flat}^1\text{-}c^1\text{-}c\sharp^1\text{-}b\text{-flat}^1\text{-}e^1$ emerge from the climax described earlier. Those that the composer indicated to be left on the bulge form a quasi-melody. The abbreviated ones, which moments later act as a signal, initiate successive iterations of the dodecaphonic series (see Example 36). The fluidity of the phrase is greatly affected by the performance of the $d\text{-}d\sharp$ is *legato* notes, which can also be performed when there is an *A* note between them.

Example 36. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, p. 10, stave no. 1–4

In the following example, it is a good idea to add legato between the d-d \sharp notes, and I suggest performing the repetitions marked *mormorando* in *pianissimo* dynamics with the finger combination: *p-i-m-a-m-i-m-i* (see example 37).

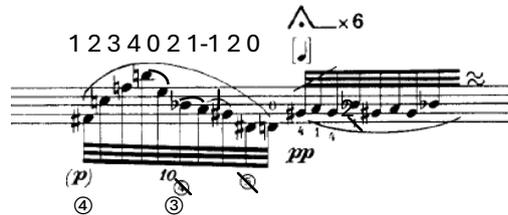
Example 37. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 10, staff no. 5

The passage described earlier is followed by a single-voice segment, so it is important to maintain the clarity of the melody – suppressing resonance – as well as rhythmic precision to give it the energetic character indicated by the *forte* dynamics (see Example 38).



Example 38. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 10, stave no. 6–7

The following fingering helps to give lightness and selectivity to ten tuplet and trills⁴⁷ in *pianissimo* dynamics (see example 39).



Example 39. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 11, staff no. 2

A return to the narrative in the character of *sempre piano e dolcissimo* from the beginning of the piece, can be prepared by means of a slowing down and a “widely” executed arpeggio in the *sul tasto* register, and instead of an eighth-note pause, a slightly longer pause can be realized. It is worth noting the rasgueado on the E sound, which this time leads not to a Bartok *pizzicato*, but to the F sound realized in *forte* dynamics, against which another chord will sound (see example 40).

⁴⁷ An error seems to have crept into the trill notation, and in fact the sounds should be *g# -a-g#-b-flat*, not *g#i-a-g-b-f-flat*. In related places in *Sequenza XI*, trills are always based on two or three sounds, and never on four.

Example 40. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 11, stave no. 5–7

In the following phrase, I propose two performance solutions. The harmonic e I fact can be performed simultaneously with the chord by touching the nose (*sic!*) ⑥ of the string on the 12th fret. On the other hand, pentatonic chords can be realized as compact chords with *p* and *m a c* fingers (see example 41).

Example 41. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 12, staff no. 1

At the point where the tempo change $\text{♩} = 60$ occurs, I also suggest the following fingering in the ranks of the pre-note: finger 4 can be used to make the d-e-flat, 3 to make the B-flat, so that you just move the 3rd finger to the 8th fret and add the 2nd finger. In the case of the third group, I suggest using ④ of an empty string and in the meantime moving the hand to the VII position, e-f-e to be realized with legato technique, and leaving the hand in position to perform $c\sharp$ -d-e consonance. In the passage marked *vibrando le note gravi* – according to the composer's vision – the low notes should be vibrated. It is best to use vibrato across the neck, which allows for a distinctive effect despite

the rather fast tempo and strong string tension (in the case of the F sound). I suggest performing the fourth group of *acciacciatura* with fingers 3 and 1, so that one can efficiently prepare a c-c♯-d cluster with fingers 4 and 1, followed by a *poco accelerando* to a tempo of ♩=72 (see example 42).

The image shows three staves of musical notation for Example 42. The first staff begins with a 5x quintuplet of notes, with fingerings 0 4 1 4 1 4 0 written above. The second staff starts with a 6x sextuplet (0 4 1 4 1 4 0 1 0 4 1 3) and includes dynamic markings *ff* and *f*. The third staff features a 3x triplet and ends with a double note marked *p* and *f*.

Example 42. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 12, stave no. 2–4

The last segment is composed of short excerpts from various motives that recur throughout the piece. There is a motive with chords made *arpeggio*, evoking the beginning of the piece. A quintuplet built from tritones, a tremolo of the b sound, a short classical guitar tremolo marked *accelerando*; then – at an increasingly slower pace – chords produced in the manner of a *tambora*. *Sequenza XI* is topped by four double notes marked *molto lento* at a tempo of ♩=40, and the last double note, B e², when brought down to one octave, forms a tritone interval characteristic of the composition (see Example 43).

Example 43. L. Berio, *Sequenza XI*, Universal Edition, p. 12, stave no. 4–7

2.5 Sonoristics and expression

The study of the influence of sonoristics on expression in the previously described works seems to be a very broad issue, so it is useful to adopt a capacious research method that deals with many aspects of the compositions, including notation, realization or its perception. A holistic view of a musical work is proposed by Mieczysław Tomaszewski in the author's theory of integral interpretation, according to which four phases of a work's existence can be identified:

- a) creative concept, in which it is a musical text, noted by the composer,
- b) artistic realization, in which it is performed by an instrumentalist,
- c) aesthetic perception, in which it is a psychophysical object; Tomaszewski also postulates the inclusion of the “competent listener: in the research¹

¹ M. Tomaszewski, *Interpretacja integralna dzieła muzycznego*. Rekonesans, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2000, pp. 46-47.

d) cultural reception, in which it is read, decoded and verbalized².

According to Tomaszewski, each phase of a work's existence can be studied in terms of expression³. It seems that such a perspective can be not only an interesting theoretical construct to describe a given composition, but also a practical tool for the performer, to whom it can facilitate a multifaceted interpretation.

2.5.1 Comparison of the analyzed works

Sette studi

In Maurizio Pisati's *Sette studi*, the degree of use of sonoristic means is very high – both in terms of their quantity and quality. They form the basis of the compositional material and define the overarching idea that binds the work together. On the sonoristic spectrum, the work is close to sonoristics in its pure form. This is manifested through a small number of sounds produced traditionally, or structures that fit into a specific harmonic-melodic system - in this sense, the etudes present a kind of inverted order in relation to the classical-romantic tradition. At the same time, it should be mentioned that these are highly idiomatic compositions – Pisati's familiarity with the guitar, as well as his collaboration with guitarists, resulted in a cycle that - from the perspective of the interpreter – is performed with great pleasure. The time spent reading the score, mastering unusual techniques and developing a coherent interpretation results in a satisfying, surprising and highly expressive performance of the work, which is not the case with many other contemporary compositions that require a lot of work on the part of the performer. In accordance with the integral interpretation, it is worth noting that the peculiarities of *Sette studi* make it impossible to take into account chronologically the various phases of the work's existence. They intertwine and influence each other: when starting to work on a piece in the concept phase (in the form of complex notation, dense texture, number of verbal markings, etc.), it is necessary to keep in mind the execution phase (effective execution of individual techniques), as well as the perception phase (so that the performance solutions resulting from the aforementioned phases

² *Ibidem*, pp. 55–65.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 42–48.

are convincing and clear to the listener) and the reception phase (so that the artistic decisions made allow the composition to resonate in the popular consciousness). Following Tomaszewski, *Sette studi*'s expressions in the musical concept phase can be described as “verbally specified”⁴, as the composer is very precise in formulating the nature of individual fragments. Due to the innovative techniques used and the changing dynamics, it is useful to give an “reinforcing” character to the interpretation in the implementation phase⁵. Clarity of the performer's intentions will allow the work to have a stronger impact in the perception phase and, consequently, in the reception phase as well.

Vientulības sonāte

At the opposite end of the sonoristic spectrum is Pēteris Vasks' *Vientulības sonāte*, in which the performance challenges overlap with those encountered in work on repertoire that uses classical-romantic tropes (such as refined sound, traditional phrasing, precise hand synchronization). Moreover, *strictly* sonoristic techniques are used very sparingly. For the most part, the layer is influenced by the result of other elements of the musical work - in this case, primarily rhythmic, harmonic and textural. On the other hand, the role the selected innovative techniques play in the construction of the narrative of the entire work is crucial. Careful use, it seems, enhances their expressive significance in the context of the work's theme. In addition, the conscious use of other performance aspects (such as color of sound, the manner, place and position of its production, articulation and resonance), which can co-create sonoristic values, profitably affects the interpretation of the work in general.

The legibility of the *Sonata*'s score, enables a somewhat more orderly approach to the various phases of the work's existence - the precise reading of the score does not at the same time impinge on the execution phase. It seems that the starting point for the performer may be the reception phase, since the extra-musical inspirations contained in the work are clear and widely known (among other things, they are marked on the title page of the work). Vasks' knowledge of the context and personal experiences

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 44–45.

helps the guitarist select the appropriate performance means in the realization phase of the work. In the reception phase, it seems extremely important to illuminate the aforementioned context to the listener, and thus, to expand his competence as an audience. Given the title of the work and the terms for the individual movements, the expression of the *Sonata* in the conception phase has a predetermined, or “apriori”⁶. In the realization phase, a “faithful”⁷ interpretation seems adequate. In the reception phase, individually experienced expression can be enhanced by knowing the context of the work's creation. In the reception phase, it is already coherently verbalized.

untitled [largo]

The most distinctive elements of the compositional material in Paweł Malinowski's *untitled [largo]* are the multiphonics. Their combination with the scordatura of the ⑤ string and the use of the bow, creates a coherent microtonal aura. The main performance issues include effective - sonorous realization of multiphones, mastery of *pianissimo* dynamics, smooth narration, as well as mastery of sonoristic techniques in the form of “baroque trill” or bow playing. Malinowski accumulates these techniques, which together create a new sonority quality (e.g. the combination of scordatura with multiphonics and the “baroque trill” or multiphonics extracted with a bow). In the piece, he juxtaposes two contrasting layers – the aforementioned – sonoristic, and those referring to tradition, represented by a succession of multitimbral consonances. In my opinion, the coexistence of these two distinct aesthetic realities defines the sonoristic character of the composition. For this reason, on the sonoristic spectrum, the composition can be placed in a register similar to *Sette studi*.

The concept phase is intertwined with the realization phase in the case of selected sonoristic techniques – “baroque trill” or string playing. The phase of realization is combined with the phase of perception especially in terms of the dynamics and legibility of multiphonics - the performer must keep in mind whether these measures will be clear to the listener. The task is all the more complicated because the *untitled [largo]* is a new composition, therefore undecoded, in this sense the listener may not have a point of reference.

⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 44–45.

Expression in the musical concept phase is “implicit” and requires “reading into the piece”⁸ Since expression in the reception phase is still forming, a “faithful” interpretation seems appropriate in the realization phase. From the perspective of the perception phase - and especially in concert settings – an “reinforcing” expression – which highlights the composer's intentions in using sonoristic means of performance – seems adequate.

Sequenza XI

Luciano Berio presents the guitarist with a similar challenge to Maurizio Pisati. Although the list of symbols used in *Sequenza XI* is not as long as in *Sette studi*, reading a score with such a complex texture proves even more time-consuming than in the case of the etudes. All the more so since the piece is not divided into individual sections, making it difficult to organize the daily work and develop a coherent interpretation. In terms of sonority, Berio relies on existing, idiomatic guitar techniques (such as *tremolo*, *rasgueado*, and trills). Like Malinowski, he juxtaposes the disparate facets of the guitar – classical and flamenco - as a result of which the piece abounds in sudden changes in dynamics, rhythm, color and the techniques used. He places both natures in the context of a coherent harmonic system, which constitutes the synthetic character of the piece. From a sonoristic perspective, the guitarist's task is to expressively differentiate the means of performance, typical of the classical or flamenco idiom, as they decisively influence the turbulent narrative. The role and degree of use of the means described, allows *Sequenza XI* to be placed in the register of the sonoristic spectrum between *Vientulības sonāte* and *untitled [largo]*.

As in the case of *Sette studi*, the interpreter should simultaneously take into account each of the phases of the work's existence – primarily because of the dense texture, the complex rhythmic layer, or the need for a convincing and precise implementation of sonoristic techniques.

The expression of *Sequenza XI* in the phase of musical conception is of a “posterior” nature - resulting “from the nature of the forms used and the expressively ambiguous means”^[6] - a result of the juxtaposition of classical and flamenco idioms. Given the varied nature of the means used, it is worthwhile to steer towards an “amplifying” interpretation in the phase of sound realization, which,

⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

as in the case of the other pieces, facilitates the listener's phase of perception. In this regard, it can also be valuable to illuminate the contexts that guided Berio – they are well verbalized in the reception phase.

Conclusions

Sonoristic guitar works are the result of using the idiom of this instrument in the context of new sounds and expressive possibilities explored by composers since the mid-20th century. The artistic context required previously uncondacted research that took into account the performance perspective.

The purpose of this study was to discuss the role of sonoristics in works for solo guitar written at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, using the example of compositions by Maurizio Pisati, Pēteris Vasks, Paweł Malinowski and Luciano Berio recorded on CD. It was crucial to present the performance challenges faced by the guitarist and their authorial solutions. In the context of this research, it was important to consider the degree of use of sonoristic techniques, their impact on expression, and consequently, the preparation of a coherent interpretation. According to the main hypothesis of the work, the use of extended sonoristic possibilities of the guitar enhances the expression of the works. The main research question was how and for what purpose composers used sonoristic means of performance and how to implement them convincingly in practice. The research shows that the concept of sonoristics also includes works for classical guitar, which used innovative performance techniques. The presented panorama of compositions, created from the 1960s to the present day, illustrates the enormous range of expressive possibilities, expressed through the means described. They are reflected both in the postmodern joke, expression of conceptual art, experimentation on the nature of sound, percussive treatment of the instrument, discussion of the guitar idiom, preparation, as well as in the expression of the deepest personal or mystical experiences. Understanding the composer's overall intention prompts reflection on the convincing performance of the sonoristic means encountered, and the performance challenges associated with them are individual in nature. This approach is illustrated by the detailed performance issues presented for the works recorded on the album. These works can be placed on a scale representing (descending) the degree of use of sonoristic means in the following order: Maurizio Pisati's *Sette studi* - Paweł Malinowski's *untitled [largo]* - Luciano Berio's *Sequenza XI* - Pēteris Vasks' *Vientulības sonāte*. An extremely valuable proof of the actuality of sonoristic means was the newly created composition *untitled [largo]* by Paweł Malinovsky, written in the course of the preparation of this work. In the case of all the works described, it turned out that in each phase of the work's existence

the sonoristic aspect plays a key role, and therefore only by taking it into account can a coherent interpretation be prepared.

In view of the presented conclusions, it is possible to fully confirm the research hypothesis and state the overriding importance of the influence of sonoristics on the expression of works from the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, in which extended performance means were used.

Since the issues presented in the paper are related to a previously unexplored area, further inquiries in this area seem justified. An analysis of the sonoristic aspect in the context of chamber music with the use of the guitar could be an interesting perspective. In the light of the presented artistic and research work, it is reasonable to demand that the sonoristic aspect be taken into account in the process of interpreting contemporary guitar compositions.

I believe that drawing attention to the timbral possibilities of the classical guitar will encourage performers and composers to further creative explorations, and will bring listeners many unforgettable artistic experiences.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Michal Nagy, for his valuable comments, inspiration to expand the means of expression, and support, which made this work possible.

To Darek Kupiński, thank you for your dedication, inexhaustible patience and valuable guidance during the recording sessions and post-production process.

To Paweł Malinowski, thank you for exploring new sounds together and for the *largo* dedicated to me.

I would like to thank my whole family, especially my grandmothers, my reliable sister Ania, my supportive parents Basia and Marek, as well as my parents – for their dedication, unwavering faith, creating conditions for my development and serving with good advice.

In particular, I would like to thank my wife, Monika, not only for her accurate insights and help in editing my work, but also for her understanding and encouragement over the years.

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