

CHIME

for piano, flute, and secret choir

ALEKS PILMANIS (2023)

DURATION: 5 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES:

Chime was composed at the Starptautiskie Latviešu Jauno Mūziku Meistarkursi (International Latvian New Music Mastercourses) during my first trip to Latvia. The concept came to me at the beach in Jūrmala, from the sound of distant wind chimes and the Baltic Sea.

Later, when I arrived at the mastercourses and began composing, I found myself stuck. As I was staring at the title of this piece, unable to compose further, I had a revelation: when my Latvian grandmother passed away, we hung *wind chimes*—one in our backyard in upstate New York, and the other in the Latvian cemetery.

Three of my grandparents were Latvian, but none of them were alive to see me in Latvia for the first time. I saw them in the people there, in the landscapes and clusters of Birch trees. I recognized them in the food, in the sound of the language, in every folk dance. I heard their voices in my own music, at the beach, in the wind chimes.

Chime is dedicated to my friend, flutist and composer Jānis Vītols.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Piano Clusters—the desired sound in the left hand of the piano part from mm. 1 to mm. 15 is a random, almost unpitched, rumbling sound. Softly and rapidly play the pitches notated within each box in a random order, as if typing at a keyboard, and continue to do so until the next set of pitches is notated.

Playing inside the piano—at mm.28, the marking to *play inside piano* means the flutist should play under the lid of the piano, with their mouthpiece as close to the strings as possible until beat 4 of mm. 30. The pianist should depress the sustain pedal, and keep it depressed until the pedal marking at mm. 33.

Secret Choir—the choir should consist of at least 6 women, with an even amount of singers assigned to each of the 3 pitches (G#, D#, B). Singers should sit within the audience, and remain seated until their cue at mm. 34 (*CUE SINGERS*), at which time they should stand as they sing their first pitch.

For choirs of 9 or less, singers should sit together with the other singers assigned to their pitch. For larger choirs, singers should be dispersed randomly within the audience not according to their assigned pitch.

Pitches should be sung on the vowel [u] and without vibrato to achieve a very pure sound. At mm. 34, the three pitches in the flute part are each a cue for the singers assigned to that pitch to begin singing. When the flutist plays the first G#, the singers assigned to that pitch begin singing G#, etc.

All singers assigned to a pitch should begin singing at the same time, and hold their pitch until the *singers fade away* marking in mm. 50. Singers should stagger breathe, and sing slight crescendi and decrescendi to make their entrances and exits to breathe as unnoticeable as possible. Singers should be seated again once they have sung their last pitch.

Score

For Jānis Vītols

CHIME

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ALEKS PILMANIS

10" $\text{♩} = 80$

Flute

pp flz. air sounds

Piano

pp 8^{va}

2nd time only white key gliss.

3

p *f* *p* *f* *p* etc.

ord. flz.

ord. flz.

5

5

8^{va}

7

7

resonant, like wind chimes

p

8va

10

10

aggressive!

f

12

12

8va →

cresc. and accel

7/4

15

8^{va}

16

Slower ♩ = 60

8^{va} *sub. p* *n* *sfz p*

20

mf *p* *sim.* *mf* *p*

23

23

8va

27

Freely

flz.

ord.

p *sub. p* *f*

play inside piano

hold down pedal →

27

3

3

3

3

8va

30

W.T.

Fast ♩ = 75

ff *cresc.*

3 *sub. p* 7 7 7 7 5

30

7 7 7 7 5

8va

Red.

7

7

7

7

5

7

7

7

7

5

Freely

CUE SINGERS

Meditative ♩ = 50

32

p

pp

32

p

pp

-----*

37

mf

37

mf

mf

brighter, with more motion

42

p

42

p

46

ff *p*

8^{va}

50

8^{va} *n*

singers fade away

53

8^{va} *n*