

Marcel Zaes

# isomorph

String Quartet

Dedicated to the *Classicus Quartet*, Budapest

2016



# isomorph

Composed between March 2015 and April 2016 while in residence with Landis+Gyr in Budapest.

- Movement 1 composed in April 2015 in Budapest, last revised in August 2015 and in April 2016.
- Movement 2 composed in January 2016 in Budapest, last revised in January 2016.
- Movement 3+5 composed in April 2015 in Budapest, last revised in April 2016.
- Movement 4 composed in April 2015 in Budapest, last revised in August 2015.
- Movement 6 composed in April 2016 in Budapest, last revised in April 2016.
- Movement 7 composed in April 2015 in Budapest, last revised in January 2016.
- Movement 8 composed in April 2015 in Budapest, last revised in August 2015.

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Premiered (full version) in April 2016 at Gallery Stephan Witschi, Zurich, by Classicus Quartet.

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## Score Explanations

→ Bow a little too fast

⇒ Bow too fast

⇒⇒ Bow way too fast

← Bow a little too slow

⇐ Bow too slow

⇐⇐ Bow way too slow

● ordinario (full finger pressure)

⊘ half finger pressure (a little pitch, a lot of random components)

◇ loose finger pressure (noise and random natural harmonics desired)

▣  
∨ Bow changes: each musician changes the bow stroke at a different point in the line so that the sound of the other instruments masks the changeover

”p Play from the string

p” Bow remains on the string after playing

\* No pause at note change

♭ three quarter tones lower

♯ one quarter tone higher

# 1

Begin and end each note precisely together  
and avoid every fade-in and fade-out

The musical score consists of five staves, each with a treble clef and a dynamic marking of *p*. The staves are connected by a brace on the left. Vertical dashed lines indicate time markers at the top of the page: 0'10", 0'57", 1'03", 1'50", 1'55", 2'42", 2'46", 3'33", 3'36", 4'23", 4'25", and 5'12". Each staff contains a series of notes, with some notes marked with a square box and a downward-pointing arrow, and others with a diamond symbol. The notes are connected by horizontal lines, and some are enclosed in double quotes. The instruction "sul G" is written below several notes. The score concludes with a double bar line and a downward-pointing arrow.

*play the next  
movement attacca*

♩ = ca. 60  
tenuto, senza vibrato

# 2

sul tasto		meno sul tasto		leggero sul tasto	

più leggero sul tasto		ordinario		leggero sul ponticello	

sul ponticello		molto sul ponticello		alto sul pont. (no fundamental audible)	

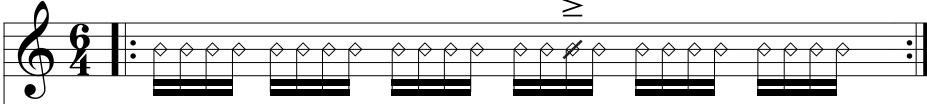
# 3

♩ = ca. 90

(play ca.)  
**60**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*

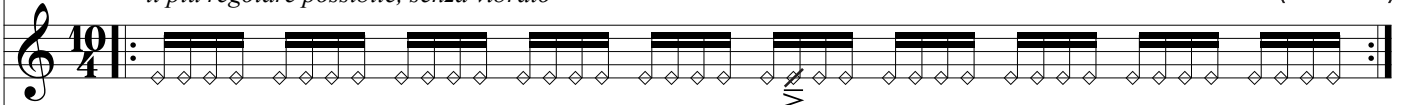
**>**



*pp*

(play ca.)  
**36**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*



*pp*

(play ca.)  
**40**  
times

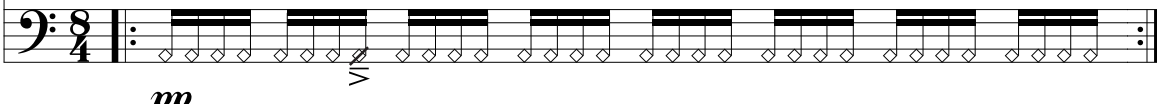
*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*



*pp*

(play ca.)  
**45**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*



*pp*

0'00"

4'00"

start all together;  
play in synchronicity

end perfectly together  
on the last beat  
without emphasis

*play the next  
movement attacca*

# 4

Insanely destructive towards  
the end of the movement

1 sec. 14 sec. 1 sec. 14 sec. 1 sec. 14 sec.

*pppp* *ppp* *pp*

This section consists of three measures of music. Each measure begins with a 1-second attack of a sixteenth-note triplet (3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1) followed by a 14-second rest. The dynamic level decreases from *pppp* in the first measure to *ppp* in the second, and *pp* in the third. The music is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs.

ord.

1 sec. 14 sec. 1 sec. 14 sec. 1 sec. 14 sec. 1 sec.

*p* *mp* *mf* *f*

This section consists of three measures of music. Each measure begins with a 1-second attack of a sixteenth-note triplet (3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1) followed by a 14-second rest. The dynamic level increases from *p* in the first measure to *mp* in the second, *mf* in the third, and *f* in the fourth. The music is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs.

*play the next  
movement attacca*

# 5

♩ = ca. 96

(play ca.)  
**60**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*

*ppp*

(play ca.)  
**36**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*

*ppp*

(play ca.)  
**40**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*

*ppp*

(play ca.)  
**45**  
times

*il più regolare possibile, senza vibrato*

*ppp*

0'00"

3'45"

start all together;  
play in synchronicity

end perfectly together  
on the last beat  
without emphasis

*play the next  
movement attacca*

# 6

♩ = ca. 60

Molto tenuto, keep the sound as regular as possible

No accents at the beginning of the note

As many notes as possible *sul G*

System 1: Treble and bass clefs. Treble clef has whole rests. Bass clef has a melodic line starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

System 2: Treble clef has whole rests. Bass clef has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Middle clef has a series of chords with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

System 3: Treble clef has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Bass clef has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Middle clef has a series of chords with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

System 4: Treble clef has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Bass clef has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Middle clef has a series of chords with a pianissimo (*ppp*) dynamic. A note in the middle clef is marked *(sul G)*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).



37

pp  
p  
p  
(sul G)  
ppp

Detailed description: This system covers measures 37 to 45. The right hand (RH) starts with a piano (*p*) texture of eighth notes, transitioning to a pianissimo (*pp*) texture of quarter notes. The left hand (LH) features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A *sul G* instruction is present in the LH. The system concludes with a *ppp* dynamic marking.

46

p  
(sul G)  
ppp  
8va  
pp  
p

Detailed description: This system covers measures 46 to 54. The RH continues with a *p* texture of eighth notes. The LH has a *ppp* texture of eighth notes, with an *8va* instruction indicating an octave shift. A *sul G* instruction is also present. The system ends with a *p* dynamic marking.

55

(sul G)  
ppp  
p  
(8va)  
p  
pp

Detailed description: This system covers measures 55 to 63. The RH features a *ppp* texture of quarter notes with a *sul G* instruction. The LH has a *p* texture of eighth notes, with an *(8va)* instruction. The system concludes with a *pp* dynamic marking.

64

p  
pp  
15ma  
pp  
p

Detailed description: This system covers measures 64 to 72. The RH has a *p* texture of eighth notes. The LH features a *pp* texture of eighth notes with a *15ma* instruction. The system ends with a *p* dynamic marking.

♩ = ca. 80  
non arpeggiato  
precisely

# 7

VI I, VI II, Vla, Vc  
play monorhythmic

pizz.

*pp*

*play the next  
movement attacca*

No pause at note change

0'10" 3'15" 3'17" 5'02"

” sul G ”

*ppp* *f* *ppp*

” sul G ”

*ppp* *f* *ppp*

” sul G ”

*ppp* *f* *ppp*

” sul G ”

*ppp* *f* *ppp*

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely for a string quartet. The score is divided into four measures by vertical dashed lines. The first measure starts at 0'10" and ends at 3'15". The second measure starts at 3'15" and ends at 3'17". The third measure starts at 3'17" and ends at 5'02". The fourth measure starts at 5'02" and ends at the end of the page. Each staff has a treble clef and a bass clef. The first and third staves are marked with a square symbol and a tilde, followed by 'sul G'. The second and fourth staves are marked with a diamond symbol. The dynamics are *ppp* (pianissimo) and *f* (forte). There are asterisks and arrows indicating specific performance instructions at the 3'15" and 3'17" marks. The score is enclosed in a large bracket on the left side.

♩ = ca. 80  
 non arpeggiato  
 precisely

VI I, VI II, Vla, Vc  
 play monorhythmic

A B

# 7

**A**  
 pizz.  
 pp

4

7

10

**B**

13

16

19

play the next movement attacca

# 8

No pause  
 at note change

0'10" 3'15" 3'17" 5'02"

sul G (the whole piece)

ppp

f

ppp

sul G (the whole piece)

ppp

f

ppp

sul G (the whole piece)

ppp

f

ppp

sul G (the whole piece)

ppp

f

ppp