

to Sam

# three thoughts on type

2020

written for EXAUDI

Darius Paymai

## Programme note

I found the text for this piece in a book entitled *The Visual History of Type*, which is a chronological collection of type specimens. The following four sentences are part of a sample sheet showcasing the typeface *Optima*. They are the most meaningful, evocative phrases I found while intentionally looking for a meaningless and austere text. The piece began as one movement, but eventually broke into three, as I found each line of the text suggesting different materials.

*(A letter is a designed area)*

*It is a pattern made within a space*

*Its outlines have the effect of motion*

*It begins and ends*

## Notes for performance

- short pause, enough to catch one's breath
  - ◡ longer pause, considered, making sure to listen
  - ‡ quarter sharp
- glissandi take the full duration of the written note

**Movement 1** is conducted

**Movement 2** is *not* conducted

S2, T2, and B2 tacet

The 2 altos drone the same note throughout, apart from a break near the end. They sing together but are independent of the other voices

S1, T1, and B1 sing together as a group. Durations are free to an extent, but it may feel most natural to sing each syllable relative to how long it is as spoken

**Movement 3** is conducted

Some rubato. Tempo should swell with the overlapping chords, especially from figure B onwards

At the end, each singer independently repeats the material in their own time, varying durations and tempo so as to try and not sing a unison with the person singing the same part

duration c. 9'30

to Sam  
three thoughts on type

1. it begins and ends

Darius Paymai

$\text{♩} = 52$

Soprano 1 *p* *pp* *ppp*  
it it it \_\_\_\_\_ \*be-

Soprano 2 *p*  
it

Alto 1 *p* *pp* *ppp*  
it it it \_\_\_\_\_ \*be-

Alto 2 *p*  
it

Tenor 1 *p* *pp* *ppp*  
it it it \_\_\_\_\_ \*be-

Tenor 2 *p* *pp*  
it it it \_\_\_\_\_

Bass 1 *p*  
it

Bass 2 *p*  
it

\*be and \*gins pronounced as in 'begins'

1. it begins and ends

9

The musical score consists of eight staves, each representing a different voice part. The staves are labeled S.1, S.2, A.1, A.2, T.1, T.2, B.1, and B.2. The music is written in treble clef for soprano and alto parts, and bass clef for tenor and bass parts. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamic markings include *p*, *ppp*, and *pp*. The lyrics are 'it begins and ends'. The score is numbered 9 at the beginning.

S.1 *p* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*  
it be- it be-

S.2 *p* *pp*  
it it

A.1 *p* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*  
it be- it be-

A.2 *p* *pp*  
it it

T.1 *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp*  
it be- it be-

T.2 *p* *pp* *ppp*  
it it be-

B.1 *p* *pp*  
it it

B.2 *p* *pp*  
it it

## 2. it is a pattern made within a space

**o = c. 4"**  
*pp*  
no gaps between notes - constant sound

Alto 1  
it a -tern with- a

Alto 2  
*pp*  
is pat- made -in space

continue material together, independent of the other three singers

**o = c. 2", loosely follow lengths of words**

Soprano 1  
c. 30"  
*p*  
it is a pat - tern made

Tenor 1  
c. 30"  
*p*  
it is pat - tern made

Bass 1  
c. 30"  
*p*  
-tern made

3. *its outlines have the effect of motion*

♩ = 66, some rubato

Soprano 1 *p* > its out- lines  
 Soprano 2  
 Alto 1 *p* > have the  
 Alto 2  
 Tenor 1 *p* > ef- fect of  
 Tenor 2  
 Bass 1 *p* mo - tion\_\_  
 Bass 2

The score consists of eight staves, each with a different vocal part. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. The lyrics are distributed across the parts: Soprano 1 sings 'its out- lines', Alto 1 sings 'have the', Tenor 1 sings 'ef- fect of', and Bass 1 sings 'mo - tion\_\_'. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and accents (>).

**A**

9

*p*

S.1  
its out - lines \_\_\_\_\_ ah \_\_\_\_\_

S.2  
ah ah

A.1  
*p*  
ah \_\_\_\_\_ have the \_\_\_\_\_

A.2  
*p*  
ah ah

T.1  
*p*  
ah \_\_\_\_\_ ah \_\_\_\_\_ ef-fect

T.2  
*p*  
ah ah

B.1  
ah ah

B.2  
*p*  
ah ah

**D**

rit. . . . .

46

S.1  
ah ah

S.2  
*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*  
lines ah ah

A.1  
*mf* *p*  
ah have the ah

A.2  
*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*  
ah have the ah

T.1  
*mf*  
ah ah ef - fect of

T.2  
*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*  
ah ah ef - fect

B.1  
*mf*  
ah ah ah mo -

B.2  
*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*  
ah ah ah mo -



repeat as indicated  
vary durations/tempo widely  
**F** try not to sing the same note as the other person  
singing the same part

64

S.1 ah *pp* 4x

S.2 ah *pp* 2x

A.1 ah *pp* 2x

A.2 ah *pp* 3x

T.1 ah *pp* 4x

T.2 ah *pp* 2x

B.1 ah *pp* 1x

B.2 ah *pp* 2x

Detailed description: This is a musical score for eight voices, labeled S.1, S.2, A.1, A.2, T.1, T.2, B.1, and B.2. Each voice part is written on a staff with a treble clef (S.1-T.2) or bass clef (B.1-B.2). The lyrics for all parts are 'ah'. The music consists of a series of notes with slurs, indicating a melodic line. Performance instructions include 'pp' (pianissimo) and repeat counts in boxes: 4x for S.1, T.1; 2x for S.2, A.1, T.2, B.2; 3x for A.2; and 1x for B.1. A large bracket on the left side of the page groups all parts together. The number '64' is written at the top left of the first staff.