Karya

stretta for Disklavier

Martin Iddon (2011)

Performance instructions

Karya is divided into two parts, *Karya α* and *Karya β*. *Karya α* is notated on the upper two staves of the score and *Karya β* on the lower two staves. *Karya α* should be played as a 'normal' piano piece, but with the pianist's performance recorded by the Disklavier. For a performance of *Karya β*, the recorded performance should be replayed, with *Karya β* played over the top of it, so both *Karya α* and *Karya β* are heard simultaneously. In *Karya β*, the tape part should also be played through the Disklavier's internal speakers. This tape part should be kept *extremely* quiet so that it does not overwhelm the, itself very quiet, piano part. It is not possible to perform *Karya β* as a separate extractable piece.

Two forms of articulation mark are given, *tenuto* and *staccato*. *Staccato* notes should be very short and dry. Notes with a *tenuto* mark should be sustained for as long as possible (though no longer than the next attack on that note). These notes may be sustained either by the pianist keeping the finger used to sound them depressed *or* through the use of the pedals. In the latter case, it should be noted that, in *Karya α*, the Disklavier will record the use of the pedals, which will have consequences for the performance of *Karya β*. This ambiguity is intentional and is left to the discretion of the pianist.

A diamond-shaped notehead denotes a touch harmonic. In *Karya α*, these should be played *ordinario*, by touching the string and simultaneously striking the key. In *Karya β*, only the string should be touched, with no key depression, since the recorded performance of *Karya α* will lead to the depression of the key automatically. In *Karya β*, precise indications are given for how long the key should remain depressed. These should be adhered to as much as is possible, although there are some points at which the pianist will be forced to make decisions as to how long it is *physically* possible to continue touching the string. No indication is given as to *where* the string should be touched. This is at the pianist's discretion and need not be at a strong harmonic node.

A notehead enclosed by square brackets denotes that a preparation should be added to the indicated string. Given the relatively brief time available, preparations should always be simple, though no indication is given as to the particular nature of the preparation. Similarly, the point on the string at which a preparation is made is at the pianist's discretion. Preparations made during *Karya α* should be left in the piano for *Karya β*.

Accidentals apply continuously to any given grouping of notes. The indication *8b* denotes *ottava bassa* and applies only to a single grouping of notes, not to a whole system.

Karya is written in time-space notation. Each dotted barline denotes the passage of five seconds. Each part of *Karya*, then, lasts for six minutes, with a performance of both parts lasting twelve minutes.

Programme note

Karya is an extension of my earlier vocal quintet, *hamadryads*, and, like that earlier piece, makes use in the generation of its pitch material of Josquin's *Déploration* on the death of Johannes Ockeghem, *Nymphes des bois*. It is the first in a series of solo pieces taking Josquin's lament as a starting point, each of which will be based on a particular 'reading' of the source text and will take the title of one of the eight types of hamadryad named in the Greek mythological tradition. *Karya* is named for the hamadryad who was bonded to the walnut or hazelnut tree since, of the trees with which the various hamadryads were associated, walnut is the only wood regularly involved in the manufacture of pianos.

Karya consists of two separate pieces. The first, *Karya* α is for piano alone. The second, *Karya* β, comprises a second piano piece to be played alongside a Disklavier recording of the first. Since the Disklavier records not sounds, but the physically actions of the pianist, in this second part, keys and pedals which were depressed in the performance of the first piece are again depressed, leading to a physical 'interference' between the two performances.

Karya was written for Rei Nakamura and lasts some twelve minutes.

Martin Iddon, Leeds, 31 October 2011

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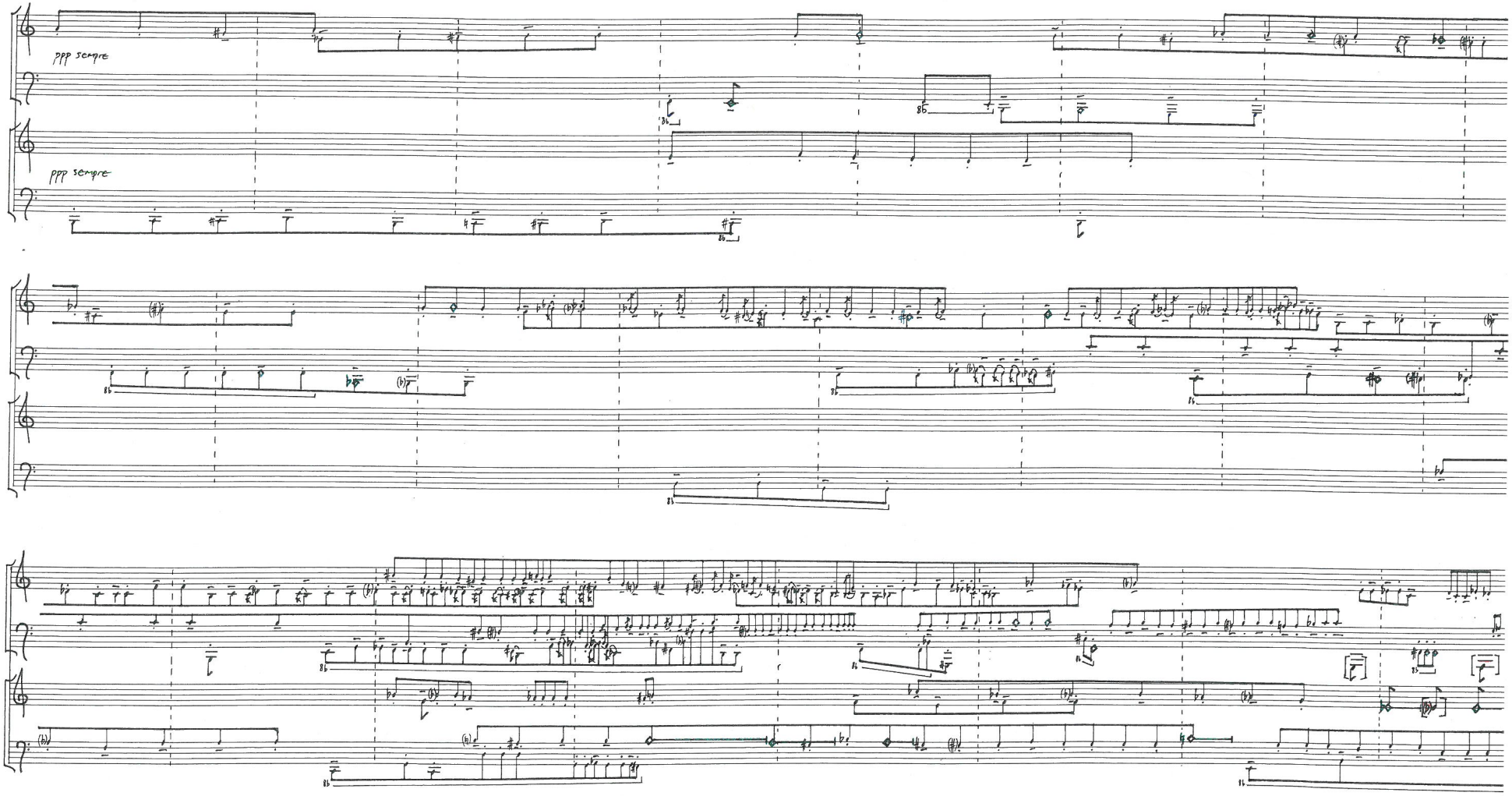

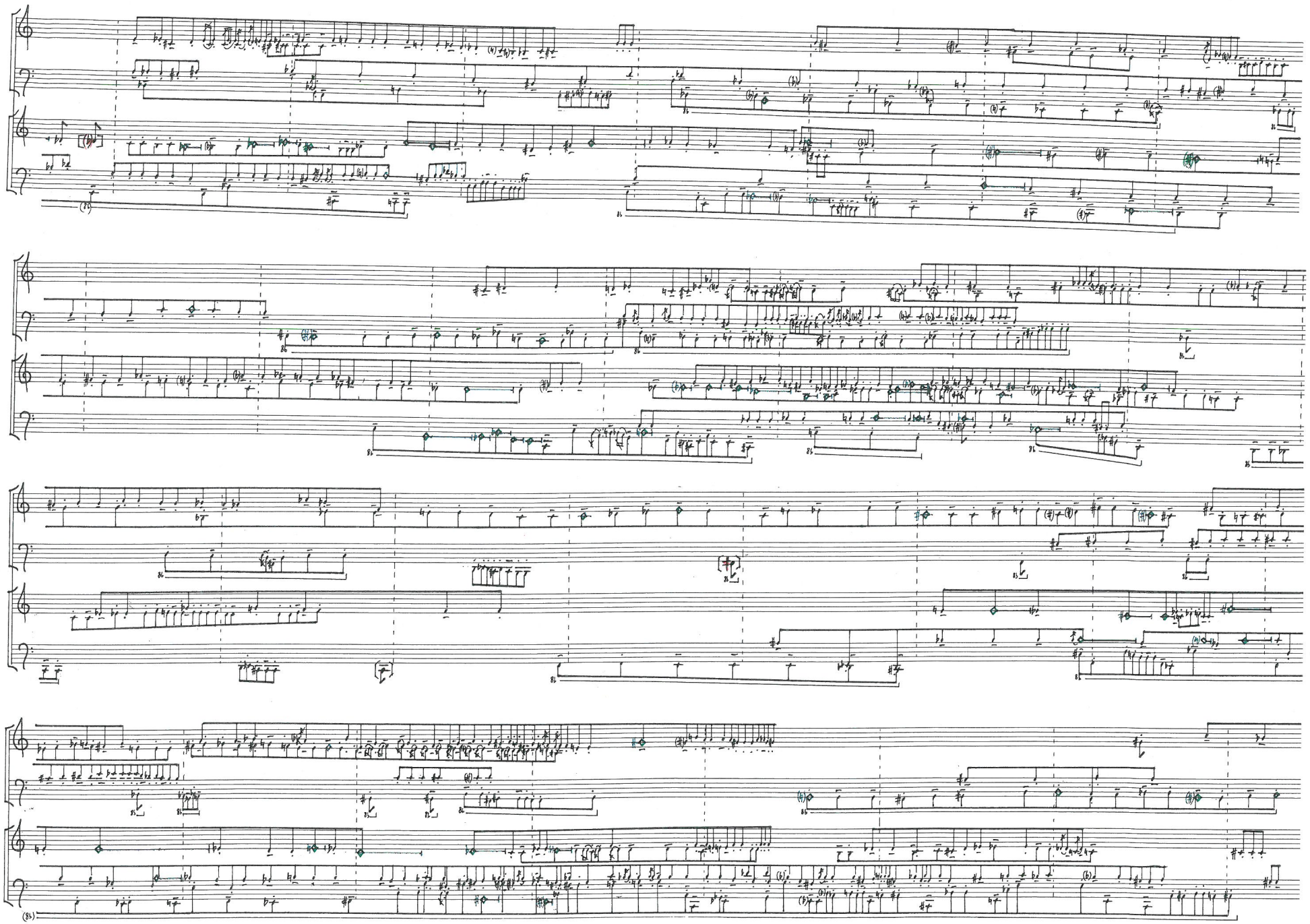

Leeds, 31. x. 11

Leeds/York, August–October 2011