



Sequenza for Voice

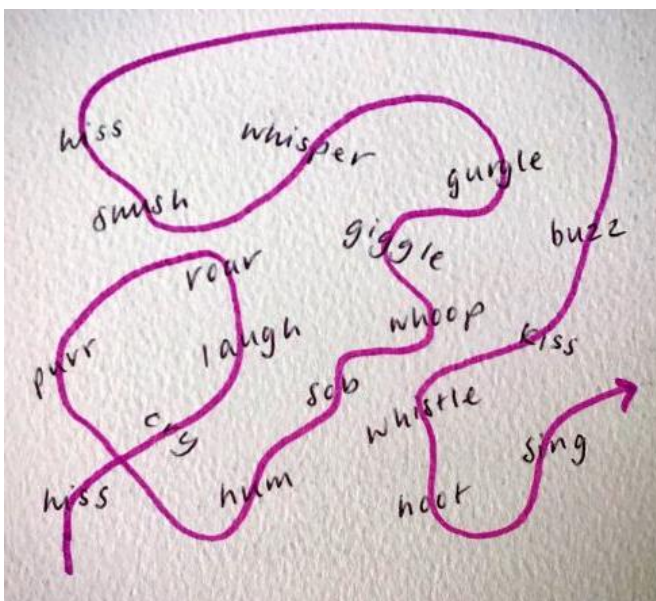
The **human voice** is a remarkable **musical instrument**. Not only can sing it in any number of **styles** and **languages** - from to **beat boxing** to **opera**, from **throat singing** to **Gregorian chant**, from **Indonesian Kecak** to **contemporary classical music** - it can also make an incredible range of **sounds**. Suggested listening is at the end.

One of the hardest pieces of music ever composed for voice is *Sequenza III for Voice* by **Luciano Berio**, which he composed for his wife, the singer **Cathy Berberian**. Here is the singer **Laura Catrani** performing it: Luciano Berio – Sequenza III for Voice
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0TTd2roL6s>

As you watched the video you will have noticed **words** and **musical symbols** appearing. These are taken from the **score** of the music. The score is created by the composer and, the singer, or other musician, reads it to know what to play or sing. Here's a video where you can see the score at the same time as the music:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGovCafPQAE>

What words did you see? There is a lot of **emotional** and **descriptive** words: dreamy, tense, relieved, bewildered, tender, wistful, noble witty, joyful, frantic... Berio also asks the singer to mutter, whine, click, hum, sing, laugh, whimper and gasp.

Your Turn!



Even if you don't have a musical instrument, you do have a **voice**! And, as we have seen and heard, composing for voice doesn't only mean singing. We are going to start by exploring the voice and creating a **sound poem**. **Write** all the different sounds your voice can make on a piece of paper and then **create a journey** through them with a **line**. **Move your finger** along the line and make the sounds as you go. This activity is based on an idea by composer R. Murray Schafer.

Berio composed **14 sequenzas** for different instruments. **Sequenza** simply means to put in an order which is what we are doing when we compose - putting **sounds into an order**.

You are invited to create your own 'lockdown sequenza' for voice to **describe** your **feelings** of being in lockdown. As you heard in the videos, the voice can express an enormous array of **emotions**. For many people, being in lockdown has brought on a lot of different emotions. Most of us will have experienced **ups** and **downs**. A little bit like Berio's Sequenza for Voice which goes from tense to frantic to joyful to tense to dreamy to urgent to whining all in a very short space of time.



Maybe you have felt **angry, frustrated, sad, bored or tired** during lockdown. At the same time, you might have had lots of **fun and laughter** in the sunshine and chattered excitedly to friends and relatives on Zoom or Skype.

Make a list of all the **emotions** you have felt during your time in lockdown. Maybe there are a **few lines of poetry** that describe how you have felt or a particular word(s). **Write** these down too. Now create of a **vocal sound** to go with each emotion or a **distinct way** of speaking for any word(s). It would be helpful to create a **symbol** to go with each one so that you can make a **score** of your music.

Now think about how you might **organise** or **sequence** your ideas. You could:

- Order them **chronologically** and take the **listener** through a **real** or **imaginary day** in lockdown
- Organise them in a way which you feel **expresses your experience** of lockdown
- Make another **sound poem** and either **draw a route** or take a **different route** each time you play it.

Remember you can use sounds **more than once** and, you can also use ideas from your original **sound poem**. Make a **score** of your music using your symbols then **perform** and **record** your piece. Please send any music you create to learning@bcmg.org.uk

Listening

Georgy Ligeti – Nouvelles Aventures <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD83jd1zlzQ>

Indonesia, Bali, Kecak dance, Borobudur

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WHx2ITKtUg>

Karlheinz Stockhausen – Stimmung <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hPkJW95jsw>

Shlomo and The Vocal Orchestra <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvgf5CeXVR8>

Liz Johnson – Watching Medusa <https://youtu.be/iejh7IULM0Q>

Meredith Monk – Panda Chant II <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sm06nqdG9wU>

Georges Asperghis – Recitation Nr. 11 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT8oPR2nj-8>